

Professional paper

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doi: 10.5937/inovacije1603128O

Paper received: May 11th 2015

Paper accepted: September 29th 2016

Article Published: October 31th 2016

Writing the consonant J in Lower Grades of the Primary School

Extended summary

The aim of our research was to determine in which extent children were able to apply grammar and spelling in praxis. Children of the fourth grade of the primary school were our respondents. The subject of the research is the degree of application of the learned materials concerning the fourth year students. Students got the test similar to knowledge tests in regular classes the main method used in this research is the descriptive method. The subject of the research was the degree of application of the learned materials concerning spelling of the materials.

The research was done in the end of the first term, within regular classes. Data were processed by calculating frequencies and percentage for the sample as a whole. The entire knowledge of students about writing the consonant *j* is very good, if we take into account the fact that this teaching unit appears only twice during the four year studying.

In the task in which students recognised correctly written words, there were replies of 84.5% correct, and students with incorrect replies were of 15.5%. Satisfactory knowledge and skills were shown in the second task in which they were supposed to write words. The total number of correct replies was represented in 73.3%, and the number of mistakes 26.7%. Weaker knowledge was shown in naming and writing the words from the picture, and 59.4% of students were successful, whereas incorrect replies had 40.6%, and this is surprisingly great percentage. In the fourth task, in which students were supposed to copy the sentences correctly, students showed great achievement. 90% of replies were correct, and 10% of the incorrect ones. In the fifth task, students showed weaker knowledge in comparison to previous tasks. They were supposed to fulfil the sentences with words in the brackets. 59.2%, of replies were correct

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and 40.8% of replies were incorrect. The cause of this kind of statistics is the dilemma occurring when pronouncing the sound *j* in some words. Sometimes it cannot be heard, and sometimes it can. The sixth task is one of the best done in the test. It was required from the students here to circle the written form. 95% were correct answers. The reason for this high percentage of correct answers might be in the subjects correlating with Serbian. In the task, in which students were supposed to write the names of the objects or creatures given in the questions, the students showed great results when the use of consonant *j* was in question. There were correct answers in the percentage of 77.5%, and the number of mistakes was 22.5%. One more task with the greatest percentage of correct replies (95%) was realized in writing the imperative of some verbs. The greatest results were achieved in the tasks in which the students correctly copied the text. 86.9% of replies were correct and 13.1% of replies were incorrect. The last task, which required recognizing correctly written sentences, i.e. words, was completed well. 75.6% of replies were correct and 24.4% were incorrect.

In the end, we should be satisfied with the knowledge our students showed in the field of spelling. However, this is not the case in everyday praxis. There is a great discordance between the test and written papers of the students, and we cannot be satisfied with this state. A great number of students 82.6% gave correct answers to our questions, and 17.4% were with weaker knowledge and this warns us that there should be additional effort to lessen this number. When we talk about written test, we often witness students' papers with good contents but with spelling errors. The explanation can be found in reference books telling that students always think more about the contents of the essay, so that they do not think about spelling and punctuation. We reviewed thirty students' papers. The most frequent mistake was the word *bijo*. Forms similar to this are also frequent in essays of our students: *popijo*, *otkrijo*, *raidator*. The reason for this is pronunciation of the sound *j*, but it is not written. When we sum up everything, there is discordance between the test and written essays of students. Results of the test show excellent knowledge, but in practical work, there are mistakes, which seemed to have been overcome. The only solution might be using more spelling exercises, which would enable students to pay attention to spelling requirements, and their stylistic and logical use.

Small corrections in the curricula, course books and classes in the field of literacy are sufficient for realising better results. For the purpose of students gaining better results, the teacher should use different contents, methods, means and forms of work and motivate students for work. In this way, more efficient relationship of tasks and aims concerning literacy will be accomplished.

Key words: consonant *j*, primary school, spelling and writing.

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