



"PAISII HILENDARSKI" PLOVDIV UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL
PEDAGOGY

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THE COMIC AND LITERARY EDUCATION OF BILINGUAL
STUDENTS IN THE 4TH GRADE

ABSTRACT

of a doctoral dissertation for the award of the academic and scientific
degree "Doctor"

Field of Higher Education: 1. Pedagogical Sciences Professional
Direction: 1.3 Pedagogy of Teaching... Doctoral Program:
Methodology of Teaching Bulgarian Language and Literature

Supervisor: Prof. DSc Margarita Terzieva

Plovdiv 2024

The dissertation work has been discussed and directed for public defense before a scientific jury at a meeting of the Department of Elementary School Pedagogy at the Faculty of Education of Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University, held on February 21, 2024.

The defense of the dissertation will take place at an open meeting of the Scientific Jury, which will be held on June 10, 2024, starting at 11:00 a.m. in the Meeting Room of the New Building at Paisii Hilendarski University.

Scientific Jury:

- Prof. Dr. Neli Stoyanova Ivanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")
 - Prof. Dr. Luchia Malinova Angelova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski")
 - Prof. Dr. Penka Petkova Kozhuharova (University of Shumen "Episkop Konstantin Preslavski")
 - Prof. Dr. Rumyana Dimitrova Tankova (Paisii Hilendarski University)
 - Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ekaterina Georgieva Cherneva (Paisii Hilendarski University)
-

The dissertation consists of 211 pages, including 181 pages of main text, 10 pages of bibliography (comprising a total of 137 sources, including 97 in Cyrillic, 16 in Latin, and 24 internet resources), and 20 pages of appendices.

The structure of the dissertation includes: introduction, three chapters, conclusions, and contributions to the dissertation work. The presentation includes 56 figures, 23 tables, and 12 diagrams.

The materials for the defense are available in the library of Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University.

For the support, recommendations, and invaluable advice provided to me throughout the entire period of work, I extend special thanks to Prof. DSc Margarita Terzieva.

INTRODUCTION

The topic of the present dissertation work aims to address the problem of educating bilingual students, which is one of the main unresolved issues in our educational system. Children from ethnic minorities, mainly from Roma and Turkish ethnicities, who mainly communicate with members of their own ethnic community and have not attended preschool educational institutions, find it difficult to master the Bulgarian language, which is fundamental for acquiring knowledge in school subjects.

The problem of language learning in bilingualism conditions is still underexplored in the methodological literature. "Despite the numerous publications on the topic, education in Bulgarian language for bilinguals with a dominant mother tongue is developed only in conceptual projects and experimental systems. Therefore, any new study in this area would have a contributory nature." [7, p. 5]

Literature classes have always been a challenge for students who do not have a sufficient command of the Bulgarian language to cope with their academic tasks. Limited communication in the official language, poor vocabulary, and the characteristics of the home environment are reasons for poor results in the subject. Students who can read and write often do not understand the meaning of what they read. Due to the language barrier, they lose interest in the study material, motivation, and desire to complete their tasks. In this case, the teacher's approach plays an important role, as it should provoke a positive attitude towards the literature lesson and Bulgarian language in general. Practice necessitates finding means and approaches that are playful, artistic, and involve utilizing students' strengths.

In seeking answers to how success in literature education could be achieved by students who primarily use their mother tongue, different from Bulgarian, the topic of the dissertation work is formed: "The Comic and Literature Education of Bilingual Students in the 4th Grade."

The object of the study is literature education at the primary stage of secondary school.

The research work is related to the specifics of this education for bilingual students - children from the Roma and Turkish ethnic groups in Bulgaria who predominantly use their mother tongue.

The subject of the study is the perception of literary works through working with comics by bilingual students in the 4th grade.

Given the topicality of the subject, we set the goal of developing didactic tools based on working with comics, which would facilitate the perception of literary works and contribute to achieving better results in literature education for bilingual students.

Research objectives:

1. To study the scientific literature related to the specifics of comics and to find good practices for its use as a means of education.
2. To analyze the specificity of literature education at the primary stage under bilingualism conditions.
3. To conduct a survey with teachers and students regarding the use of comics in literature classes.
4. To investigate the skills of working with comics of students at the primary stage.
5. To develop new models for working with comics for initial literature education for bilingual students and to experiment with their introduction in the fourth grade.
6. To diagnose the level of literary competencies of students in the control and experimental groups.
7. To perform the necessary statistical analyses of the results of the conducted study.

First hypothesis:

We assume that if bilingual students master literary works through the technological model developed by us for working with comics, they will achieve a higher level of understanding in reading and development of the Bulgarian language compared to the results of classical education.

Second hypothesis:

If bilingual students use comics in literature education, their motivation for learning will increase.

To fulfill the tasks we set for the implementation of our research, we used a variety of research methods and procedures. An analysis was made of existing educational approaches in the world practice based on working with comics, as well as of existing technologies in literature education at the primary stage under bilingualism conditions. An author's concept was developed for possible models for working with comics that could help bilingual students master literary works. These models were trialed in specific educational conditions - preparation and conduct of an experiment with formative character, during which the qualities of the proposed conceptual model were evaluated, and the research hypothesis was tested. Testing and targeted pedagogical observation were carried out in the experimentation process. An incoming and outgoing diagnosis of the literary competencies of students in both the experimental and control groups was applied. The results of the study were processed using statistical methods to assess the effectiveness of the education implemented by the conducted experiment.

CHAPTER ONE. REVIEW OF SPECIALIZED LITERATURE ON THE ISSUE

1. Comics as a Literary and Educational Phenomenon

1.1. Comics – Definition, Essence

In the first chapter, the essence of comics is presented, outlined as a global literary and educational phenomenon. Basic definitions described by popular researchers in this field – David Kunzle, Will Eisner, Scott McCloud, Petar Stanimirov, Hristo Kaftandzhiev, Nikola Kazanski, and others – are presented. Although there is no universally accepted definition of comics, it is acknowledged that comics are a form of art, a unique genre – a combination of narrative text and visual action that follows its own rules, with specific ways of presentation and evaluation.

In this work, we adhere to the definition by Hristo Kaftandzhiev: "a narrative of sequential drawings and verbal text connected by a common plot" [5, p. 26], which is close to the classical definition of comics by Coulton Waugh, cited by Nikola Kazanski: "Comics are stories told through a series of pictures, with sequentially connected acting characters from one episode to another, with dialogue and text included in the picture" [4, p. 39].

In section 1.2, "**History of Comics – Origin, Periodization,**" the main periods of the emergence and development of comics in different countries are outlined. Special attention is given to its emergence and development in Bulgaria. The historical-chronological data presented allow us to make the following periodization of comics:

1. Precursors of comics – cave paintings; murals, friezes, and medieval manuscripts; early narratives from the 15th to the 19th century.
2. 19th century – creation of the first comics.
3. 20th century – pre-World War II period, the "golden age."
4. 20th century – post-World War II period, the "silver age."
5. 21st century – the "modern age" in the history of comics.

This chronology can be related to the development of comics in Bulgaria.

In section 1.3, "**Classifications of Comics,**" a variety of classifications are proposed: based on the plot, depending on the audience, the use of graphic language, etc. For the purposes of our study, we take into account the classification by genres, as it most accurately helps us see how the comic format is integrated into literary education. This is the most widespread Anglo-American classification of comics, based on the content elements included in them:

- Narrative comics – mainly associated with Walt Disney's famous animated series.
- Detective comics (initially the most popular genre, but with the advent of superhero comics, it gradually loses its leading position).
- Science fiction comics.

- Heroic comics. [according to 4, p. 68]

Elementary school students are offered a variety of stories that provide a suitable basis for experimenting with the comic format.

In **section 2, "Comics, Literature, and Arts for Children – Intersections and Divergences,"** the connections between comics and children's cinema are highlighted, and the contributions of the French writer and humorist René Goscinny are emphasized, thanks to whom the profession of a comic scriptwriter receives genuine recognition (**2.1 René Goscinny - an era in the development of comics**).

Point **2.2. The Role of Comics in Children's Cinema** explains the proximity of comics to cinema. This proximity is primarily justified by their common goal – creating action. In cinema, this is achieved through optical effects, while in comics, it is through mechanical sequence. Many cinematic techniques are borrowed from comics – editing, cutting, framing, close-ups. They share possibilities for retrospection and prospecting, different visual angles, and perspectives. There is also a significant reverse influence of cinema on comics, not only in terms of technique but also as an inspiration for many comic series [according to 4, p. 40]. In literary education, both cinema and comics can be equally successfully integrated, as both arts offer visualization of the studied work. The advantages of film education in literary education have been noted [8].

In **section 3, "Educational Potential of Comics in Elementary School Age,"** various applications of comics in education on a global scale are described, emphasizing its main function as an educational tool – the ability to motivate learners.

Point **3.1. Comics and Literary Education in Grades 1-4** focuses on the didactic potential of comics as a form of conveying information and fundamental ideas, helping to focus attention on the most important aspects. Good practices in literature education – non-traditional teaching methods using comics – are described. When students perceive and comprehend comics in the context of literary education, they have the opportunity to: perceive various comics; discuss elements of comics; explore and study the conventions of comics in a practical way, as well as the general content it contains; plan their own versions of comics; apply what they have learned about comics in practice by creating their own comics, and more [3, p. 14].

In **Point 3.2, Comics and Literary Education in Bilingual Conditions,** the use of comics as an educational tool in the education of bilingual students is taken into account. Models of working with comics are described. Comics provide an opportunity, on the one hand, to use visual images as a visual support, and on the other hand, to prompt students to express themselves spontaneously, motivated by encounters with familiar and amusing characters. The visual image supports the operational memory of students, serving as a strong argument for creative activity. The goal is for bilingual students to learn

to use and understand visual means of communication through comics, which are essential for understanding meaning based on the heard or read text, compensating for language deficits with non-verbal information [2, p. 155].

The conducted studies prove that comics have a place in the classroom. The conclusions we can draw about its position in the literary education of bilingual students are:

Comics can serve as a visual aid for understanding studied literary works in literature classes.

Comics can be used and incorporated into various interactive tasks to make the learning process enjoyable for students, putting them in an active position.

Through their unconventional and entertaining way of conveying information, comics can be a means to increase motivation for learning and a method for retaining students' attention in class.

CHAPTER TWO. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

2.1. Organization and Methodology of the Study

The present study utilizes both theoretical and empirical methods.

Theoretical methods include theoretical analysis, summarizing, and systematizing scientific literature describing the specifics of comics and existing educational approaches based on the use of comics. An analysis of technologies in literary education in the early stage under conditions of bilingualism is also conducted.

Empirical methods include a pedagogical experiment.

Conducting a pedagogical experiment with 70 students from the 4th grade of "Pencho Slaveykov" School in Plovdiv, distributed into control and experimental groups.

Stages of Implementation: preliminary-diagnostic, observational, formative, and control.

The preliminary stage includes studying the opinions of teachers and students about activities related to integrating comics into literature lessons—observation and surveys of teachers and students to track the use of comics in an educational environment with bilingual students in the 4th grade.

The observational stage is conducted to establish the initial skills of students to answer questions regarding the content of literary works, formulate conclusions, and identify messages in the text. For this purpose, a lesson is conducted to diagnose the level of mastering working with texts and reading comprehension through independent completion of selected educational tasks.

In the formative stage, the qualities of the proposed conceptual model are evaluated, and the hypotheses of the study are tested. The model is aimed at developing reading comprehension skills and Bulgarian language production in

bilingual 4th-grade students. It consists of creative tasks involving the use of comics in literature classes to aid in the perception and interpretation of the studied literary work.

The control stage determines the changes in the literary competencies of bilingual 4th-grade students due to the applied work system in the formative stage. For this purpose, observation and testing methods are applied—implementing a lesson to diagnose the level of mastering working with texts and reading comprehension through independent completion of educational tasks.

The results of the experiment are processed using statistical methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the education realized by the mentioned experiment.

The tasks implemented through the proposed model are:

- Developing Bulgarian language and literacy;
- Forming skills for perceiving, comprehending, and interpreting literary works;
- Building relationships related to universal human values;
- Increasing self-esteem and confidence in abilities;
- Enriching vocabulary;
- Developing teamwork skills;
- Engaging all students;
- Increasing motivation for learning;
- Creating interest in the learning process and a positive atmosphere in classes.

The main idea of the innovative model is to generate interest in reading among students through working with comics, both individually and in groups. Interactive interaction of students with literary works aims to stimulate the development of their speech and cognitive activities, imagination, and creative expression.

2.2. Criteria and Indicators

Research criteria:

1. Perception and recreation of a literary work (finding explicitly expressed information in the text) (C1).
2. Interpretation of ideas and formulation of direct conclusions (C2).
3. Creative potential – production of connected speech (C3).

Indicators for each criterion are as follows:

- K1 - Perception and Recreation of Literary Work (identification of explicitly expressed information in the text). Indicators:

1. Answers questions about the content of the literary text.
2. Identifies the characters in the literary work.
3. Reads selected excerpts from literary works in response to teacher's questions.
4. Retells with a visual reference the literary text of the studied literary work.

- K2 - Interpretation of Ideas and Formulation of Direct Conclusions.

Indicators:

1. Identifies the connection between the motives and actions of the characters.

2. Expresses emotionally evaluative attitudes towards characters and episodes in the work.
3. Expresses opinions about the studied or independently read literary work.
4. Substantiates their answer to a question related to the content of the literary text.

- K3 - Creative Potential - Production of Connected Speech. Indicators:

1. Describes vividly (outlines with words) scenes from the studied works.
2. Illustrates episodes and scenes from the studied works.
3. Creates plot compositions based on given keywords.
4. Dramatizes a literary work.

2.3. Research Contingent:

Main Sample.

The pedagogical experiment included 70 students from “Pencho Slaveykov” School, Plovdiv, divided into control (CG) and experimental (EG) groups.

Each of them consisted of fourth-grade students.

4th "a" class (EG) – 17 students

4th "b" class (CG) – 17 students

4th "c" class (CG) – 18 students

4th "d" class (EG) – 18 students

Both the experimental and control groups underwent the examination of the initial level to establish the level of literary competencies (the diagnostic stage of the experiment) and the final examination (the control stage of the experiment). Only the EG underwent the forming stage of the pedagogical experiment.

The students are entirely from the Roma ethnic group, perceiving themselves as Turks – ("millet") with Turkish as their mother tongue. They mainly reside in the closed ethnic community of the "Stolipinovo" quarter in Plovdiv. We can define them as children with mass, asymmetric, incomplete, mixed, functionally incomplete bilingualism, with a level of language proficiency L-1/L-2, where L-1 is their mother tongue.

Additional sample – includes 26 primary school teachers from “Pencho Slaveykov” School, Plovdiv, who were surveyed for the purposes of the pedagogical research.

2.4. Diagnostic Toolkit:

The research traces the students' abilities to perceive literary works, comprehend literary texts, and produce connected speech. A research method is used: a pedagogical experiment, which includes an author's methodology, a survey, and a test to track the level of students' literary competencies.

Surveys for teachers and students are related to attitudes towards working with comics in literature classes and aim to check their readiness to use it in literature classes. The survey is conducted in writing and anonymously, and the

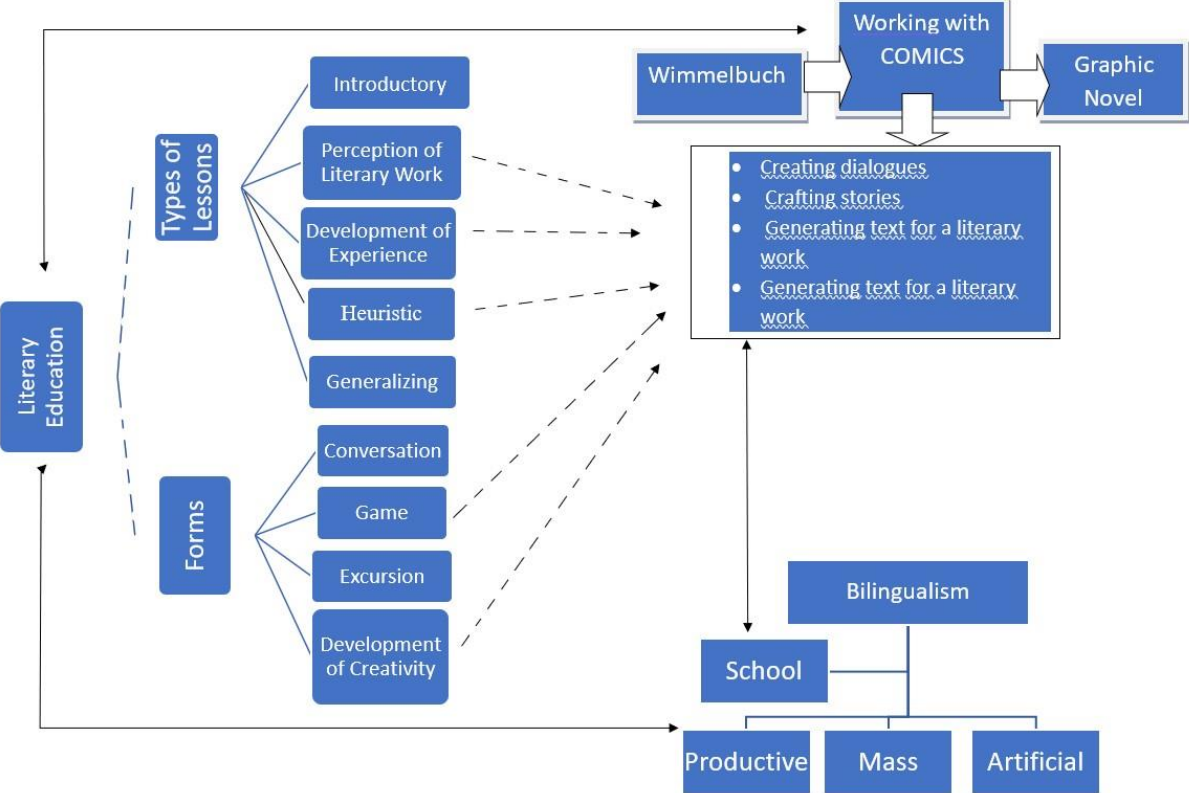
survey cards are filled out during the experiment for assessing reactions and opinions.

The researcher's presence is maintained after explaining the questions and motives for conducting this survey. Students are given a test to establish the baseline, as well as a diagnostic test to assess the outgoing level of literary competencies and reading comprehension skills at the end of the 4th grade. The experimental study is structured on a worksheet where students work independently.

Expected results after completing the tests include: students answering questions about the content of the literary work; identifying connections between episodes of the plot; formulating conclusions and finding messages in the text; substantiating their answers to questions related to the content of the fictional text. The lesson is constructed on an individual worksheet where students independently perform the included learning tasks.

2.5. Methodological Model

Fig. 1. Methodological Model - Comics and Literary Education in Bilingualism Conditions



Legend:
 ———> Directly considered connections in the dissertation work
 - - - -> Connections directly related to the dissertation work

The methodological model illustrates the relationship between literary education, comics, and bilingualism. The intersecting point between them is the school. In the process of literary education, bilingual students can offer dialogue

replicas from familiar works in Bulgarian language literature classes, invent stories, and create texts based on literary works in the form of comics. They can discover the subtext of the work and dramatize according to a comic scenario. Working with comics is expected to take place during lessons designed for the perception of literary works and practice lessons. These lessons can take the form of games, heuristic lessons leading to new perspectives and non-standard solutions, as well as those developing the creative potential of students.

2.6. Methodology of the Formative Stage

For the purposes of the study, a specially designed technological model for working with comics was applied, aiming to develop reading comprehension skills and enhance communicative and speech abilities of bilingual students in the 4th grade.

The model comprises seven methodological algorithms with varying levels of complexity, intended for use in literature classes.

1. Comics - Games on Worksheets

Students are provided with worksheets containing different variations for working with comics based on popular fairy tales. The teacher's task is to recall the content of the fairy tales included in the worksheet, thereby giving students who are unfamiliar with the story the opportunity to handle the corresponding tasks. The task conditions are explained since students predominantly have a command of their mother tongue and often do not understand what is expected of them when solving academic tasks, thus requiring clarification from the teacher. Students who regularly attend classes and have mastered reading to a greater extent can work more independently. The overall level of mastering the official language is unsatisfactory, as students apply it only when interacting with teachers.

The tasks on the worksheets aim to assess students' level of reading comprehension, recognition of a known fairy tale, familiarity with fairy tale characters from popular works and their dialogues, understanding the plot sequence, and creative potential in producing related speech.

Sample tasks:

1. Identify the characters from the fairy tale based on their words.

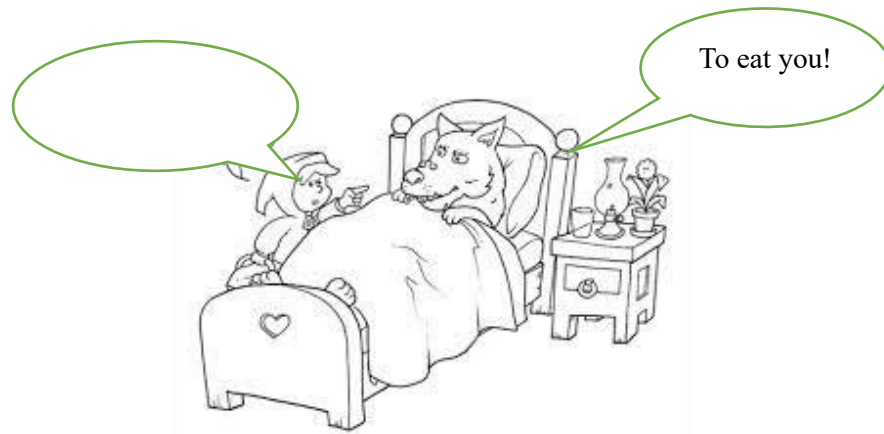
Granny, why are your ears so big?

Go see how your grandma is, as I heard she's not feeling well! Take her this loaf of bread and this butter dish!

Ah, caught you, scoundrel! I've been looking for you

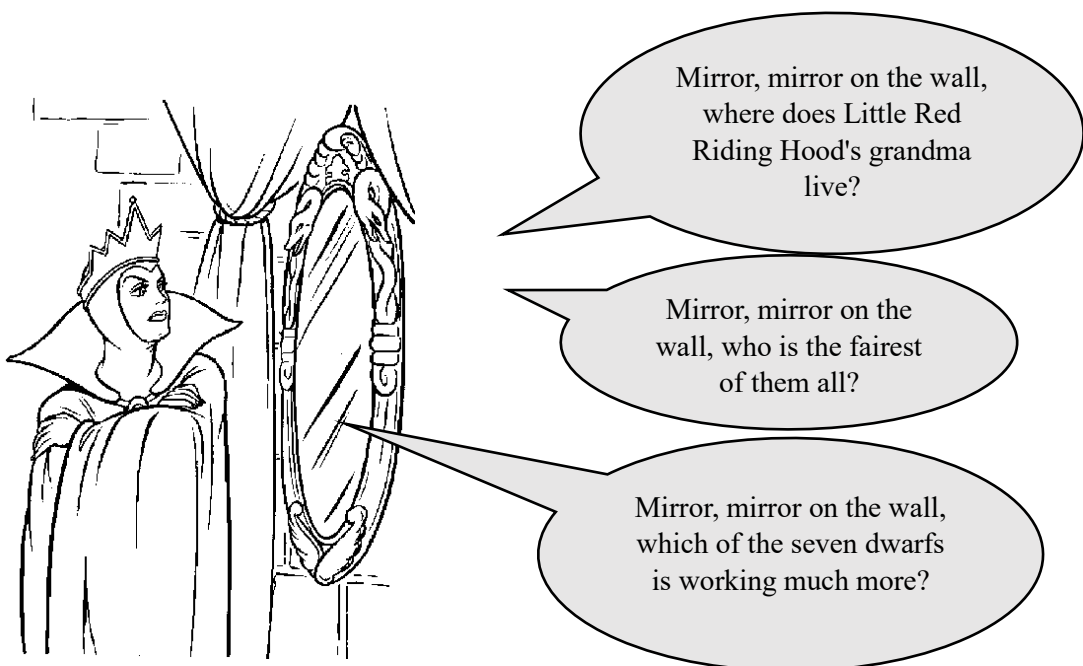


Color the picture and write what Little Red Riding Hood asked?



2. Who are the characters from the fairy tale "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs"?

What did the evil queen ask the magic mirror? Color the image it showed her.

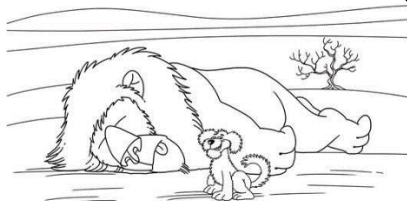


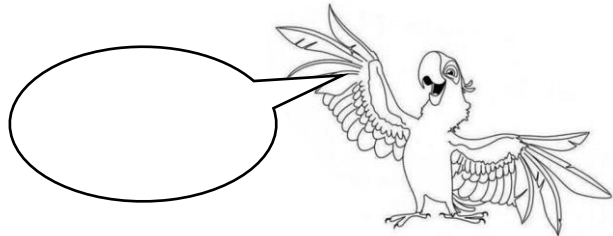
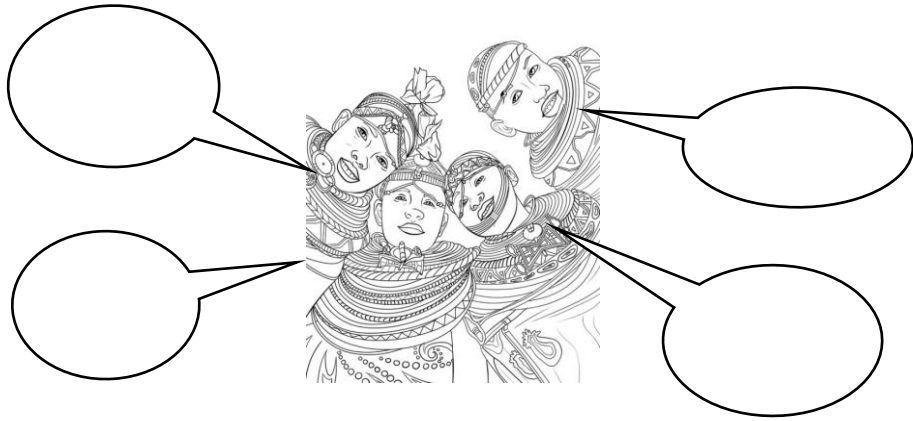
2. Creating Comics Based on Texts from the 4th Grade Reader by "Prosveta" Publishing with Authors Rumyana Tankova and Viktor Samuilov
Three literary works have been selected from the reader, and students are assigned the task of creating a comic strip using pre-prepared materials provided by the teacher:

1. "The Rich Ant" by Elin Pelin
2. "How Lion Fear Is Cured" by Maya Duglacheva
3. "Magical Flight with a Car" from "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" by J.K. Rowling

After familiarizing themselves with the text in the reader, students are given worksheets with images from the literary works and empty speech bubbles directed towards the characters. The task for the students is to identify the dialogues of the characters in the literary text and correctly transcribe them into the speech bubbles. Students work independently during practice hours, and the teacher provides guidance when needed. The goal of the exercise is for students to navigate through the plot of the literary works using images of the characters and understand their dialogue. Characters, their dialogues, and the images in the worksheets are discussed and colored during the class.

How Lion Fear Is Cured







3. Comics as Part of Project-Based Learning

Project activities take place during literature, visual arts, technology, and entrepreneurship classes in a role-playing, game-based project with an open character of collaborative activity.

Stage 1: Project Planning. The main idea is defined - a theatrical performance representing a dramatization of a fairy tale for World Theatre Day. The first class is in literature and takes place in the school library, where students can explore numerous books, choose, and familiarize themselves with the text of the literary work they will present to the audience. An interactive method - group discussion - is used.

Stage 2: Project Implementation. Students' interest is stimulated during the second literature class through a proposed film adaptation of the fairy tale. Students discuss the content of the fairy tale and the characters with the help of the teacher, distribute roles, clarify rules, stages, work time, and necessary products.

Stage 3: Guided Research and Product Manufacturing. This stage consists of several sub-stages:

- In the technology and entrepreneurship class, students make masks of the characters they have chosen to embody. The creative tasks on the text provide perspectives for activating their creative thinking - an activity applied as a means of self-expression for children who have a weak command of the Bulgarian language. Positive emotions dominate this creative process and have a favorable impact on the good psychoclimate during the lesson.

- In the visual arts class, students create a script for the literary work in the form of a comic. Preparation for the class includes printing images of the characters by the teacher. The children color, cut, and paste them onto large cardboard pieces, which play the role of comic panels. Students work in groups, with each group tasked to arrange the characters in one episode and write their dialogues in separate text bubbles. Based on the images, students provide a verbal description of the characters - characteristic elements and gestures, distinguish the locations and details of the decor. The text in the "bubbles," with

its brevity, simplicity, and easy accessibility, is emotionally perceived by students, showing a strongly expressed attitude toward the characters.

- In the next literature class, a theatrical play is held based on the prepared script. Students use the masks they have made for the characters, and getting into the role of the hero helps understand their point of view.

Stage 4: Project Completion. A presentation of the product is organized: a dramatization of the fairy tale at the school for World Theatre Day, in front of teachers, parents, and students.

4. Creating Comics Based on Famous Fairy Tales

For the task of creating comics based on well-known fairy tales, three works have been selected: "Grandpa's Loaf" - a Bulgarian folk tale, "Masha and the Bear" - a Russian folk tale, and the tale "Kose Bose" by Ran Bosilek.

The fairy tale "Grandpa's Loaf" has been previously studied and dramatized by the students. During the class, students work in groups. Each group receives pictures representing shuffled episodes from the folk tale. The task is to arrange the pictures in chronological order according to the development of the plot, paste them onto sheets, and draw speech bubbles where necessary to represent dialogue. Students write the character dialogues in them. For students who have difficulty, the teacher writes the beginning of the dialogues on the board. After writing them, students color the pictures, and the comic is assembled on large cardboard or in the form of a book.

Students are familiarized in advance with the content of the fairy tale "Masha and the Bear." They watch an animated version. The content, plot sequence, and words of the characters are discussed. Creating the comic is similar to working with the Bulgarian folk tale "Grandpa's Loaf."

Preparation for creating a comic based on the tale "Kose Bose" by Ran Bosilek requires familiarization with the text's content, discussing the qualities of the characters, their actions, and dialogues. Students are shown a narrated presentation to visually understand the tale's plot and hear the conversation between the characters. After discussing the episodes, students receive worksheets with blank comic templates and the characters' dialogues. Their task is to choose an episode, draw the characters and the setting, write a suitable dialogue in speech bubbles, or replace it with their own that matches the drawn scene.

5. Creating Comic Dialogues for a Given Speech Development Situation

In Bulgarian language and literature classes, speech acquisition and development are built on linguistic knowledge and students' speech experience. The teacher's task is to select exercises that develop not only language proficiency but also communicative competence. Redirecting students' "clip" thinking towards developing communicative competence can be achieved using comics in Bulgarian language and literature classes.

Creating dialogues for a given situation requires studying the illustration and focusing on the specifics of comic speech. The teacher must emphasize to

the students that the picture and text in a comic cannot exist separately. Comic readers primarily rely on the image. When analyzing the illustration, students must answer the following questions:

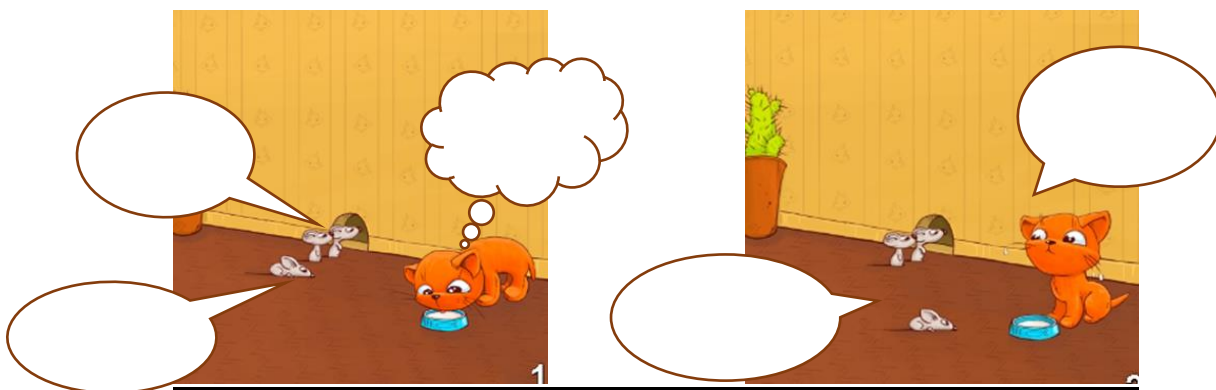
- Where is the action taking place?
- What is happening?
- Who are the characters and how many are they?
- Describe the characters.
- Describe the characters' emotions.
- How does the action unfold from frame to frame?

Students are given five tasks to create comic dialogues with varying degrees of difficulty, intended for speech development classes – one task weekly or at the teacher's discretion.

The first task requires students to discuss the action, characters, and write words for exemplary dialogues provided by the teacher. The dialogues are scrambled, and an additional task for students is to find the corresponding picture. The second task is similar to the first, with the difference that students are not provided with exemplary dialogues. They must show creativity and compose a dialogue between characters. Students work in groups, with each group members offering different suggestions, discussing them, and writing down the most suitable ones. The third task is to create a comic dialogue on a teacher-provided theme and characters. The theme is discussed in advance, describing the characters, and their common ground is explored. Students can work individually or be divided into group work. The fourth task is to write a dialogue between characters who are opposed to each other. The action is discussed in advance, the characters and their intentions are debated. The fifth task is to compose a continuation of a comic story based on a given beginning. Students are given a worksheet with two pictures, and the task conditions are for them to continue the story by drawing one or two pictures and creating a dialogue between the characters.

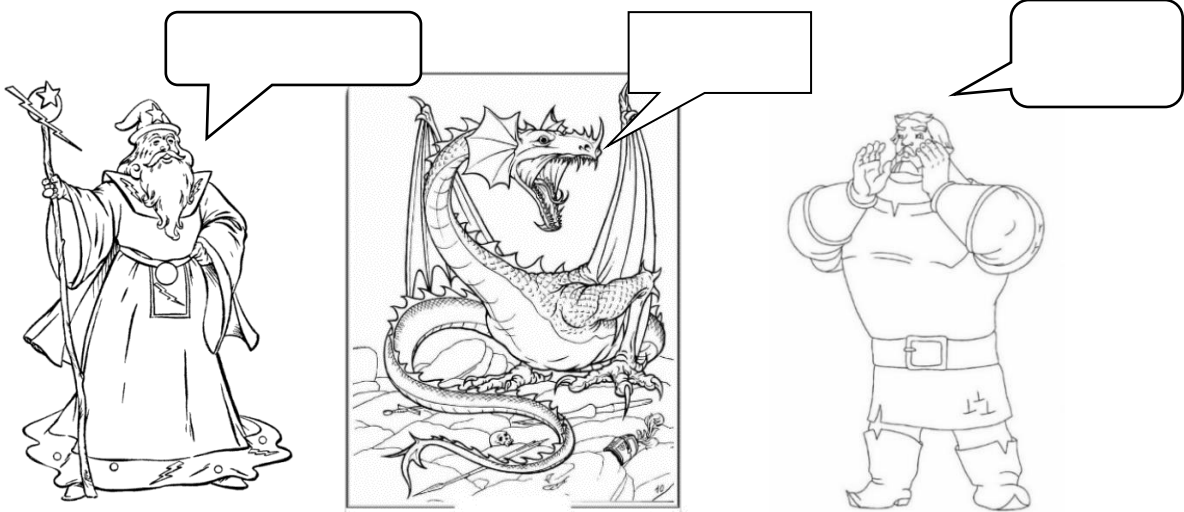
Sample tasks:

1. Examine the pictures. What is happening? Who are the characters? Write their dialogues.
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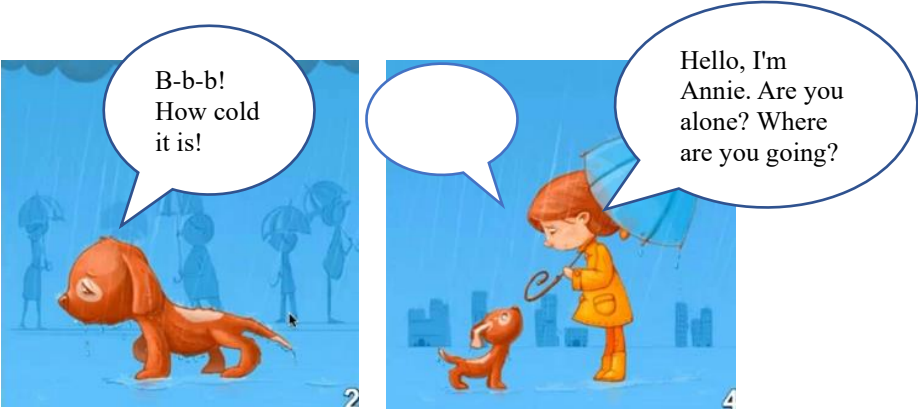




2. Who are the characters? Describe them. What are they saying? Write their dialogues. Color the positive characters in light shades, and the negative characters in dark colors.



3. Continue the story in 1 or 2 pictures. Draw and write the dialogues of the characters.



6. Playing with comic cards.

The card game with narrative plots is known and practiced both in the past and today. There are many variations of cards, ranging from classic fairy tales, folk tales, and creatively crafted stories featuring familiar fairy tale characters. The proposed version allows for two games with educational cards, as both sides are utilized. The deck contains 21 cards. One side is colorful, while the other features black and white images.

Comic card game "Puss in Boots"

The first game is a comic version of the tale "Puss in Boots," unfolded in a narrative sequence on 21 black and white picture cards. The preliminary preparation for the game requires familiarizing (or reminding) the students with the fairy tale, analyzing the plot, and understanding the characters.



Fig. 2. Comic cards "Puss in Boots"



Fig. 3. "Seven Tales"

The game has three variations, and the first two can be played by a single player or as a team.

1. Variant - Arrange the story in a narrative sequence by numbering the cards with the letters of the alphabet.

2. Variant - Separate the cards without text and identify the characters without words. Then, provide suggestions for dialogues.

3. Variant - Distribute seven cards to three students (or three teams), and their task is to arrange them in their narrative sequence in front of them. The next challenge for the players is to connect the entire story like dominoes. The winner is the first one to place their cards on the playing field.

Comic card game "Seven Tales"

The pictures in the second game are on the reverse side of the cards. They represent colorful images of characters from seven popular fairy tales – three characters from each tale. The characters are from the tales "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," "The Little Mermaid," "Beauty and the Beast," "Aladdin and the Magic Lamp," and "Little Red Riding Hood." Attached to the cards are cardboard pieces in the form of "speech balloons" with some of the characters' lines. Each character has two or three lines.

The task for the players is to:

- Group the characters from the same tale, distinguishing between positive and negative characters.

- Distribute the dialogues in the speech balloons for each character.

Arrange the characters' dialogues in the order they are spoken in the narrative and suggest other suitable lines.

- The game can be played as a team, individually, or in pairs (following the "Old Maid" principle).

7. Comic Competition

Students are divided into two teams and choose captains. A series of questions is started on a multimedia platform like "Kahoot." Captains register their team's name on a smartphone or tablet. The allotted time for each question is 3 minutes. Team members discuss the question, and when ready with the answer, the captain marks it on the device. The game generates points for a correct answer and for time. The team with the most points wins.

CHAPTER THREE. EXPERIMENTAL WORK WITH COMICS

The experiment was conducted during the 2022-2023 academic year in four stages.

3.1. Preliminary Stage

In the preliminary stage of the research, the opinions of elementary school teachers and students from "Pencho Slaveykov" Primary School were studied regarding the introduction of comics in the literature class. Twenty-six teachers and 70 students were surveyed to examine the use of comics in an educational environment with bilingual students in the 4th grade.

Table 1. Summary of survey results from elementary school teachers

Question	Answers	%
1. What is your definition of a comic?	a) a story in pictures;	34.62%
	b) pictures telling a story, with equal participation of words and illustrations;	57.69%
	c) unity of narrative and visual action.	7.69%
2. Do students enjoy looking at and reading comics?	a) yes;	65,38%
	b) sometimes;	34,62%
	c) no.	0%
3. Which literary texts can be presented through the use of comics in literature textbooks? You can choose an unlimited number of answers!	a) fairy tales;	84,62%
	b) fables;	65,38%
	c) stories;	42,31%
	d) poems;	3,85%
	e) myths;	30,77%
	f) specify others - legends.	3,85%

4. What methods and approaches do you apply when working with comics in literature class? You can choose an unlimited number of answers!	a) drawing a comic with added dialogues;	65,38%
	b) written dialogues without depicting the character, for guessing the characters;	19,23%
	c) arranging comic drawings in their narrative sequence;	65,38%
	d) coloring comic drawings;	80,77%
	e) introducing a comic character from another plot;	7,70%
	f) composing a dialogue between comic characters from different plots;	19,23%
	g) creating a comic based on a popular plot;	11,54%
	h) identifying logical and factual errors in a comic drawing/narrative;	3,85%
	i) dramatizing a comic plot.	34,62%
5. With which groups of students will working with comics in the literature class be most effective?	a) students with special educational needs (SEN);	57,69%
	b) bilingual students;	84,62%
	c) students with low academic performance;	73,08%
	d) students with high academic performance;	26,92%
	e) others – specify and explain.	0%

The conducted survey indicates that teachers have the necessary information for working with comics in literature classes, but additional clarification and adaptation are needed to achieve accessibility in their implementation. This is essential to transform comic materials into a desired form of organizing educational activities for innovative teachers, allowing for the combination of traditional teaching methods and varied didactic and educational tasks.

Conclusions:

1. Most teachers believe that students enjoy looking at and reading comics, suggesting that their use in literature classes would contribute to a positive impact and motivation for more active participation in the learning process by the students.

2. Teachers have a positive attitude towards the use of comics in literature classes and are willing to employ various methods and approaches when working with them.

3. A significant number of teachers are of the opinion that working with comics in literature class would be most effective with bilingual students, aligning with the goals of our research.

Table 2. Summary of survey results from bilingual students in the 4th grade

Question	Answers	%
1. Do you understand the texts from the reader?	a) yes;	23%
	b) no;	28%
	c) sometimes.	48%
2. Do you enjoy looking at or reading comics?	a) yes;	63%
	b) no;	14%

	b) sometimes.	23%
3. Do you like it when there are comic games in literature classes?	a) yes; b) no; c) I cannot decide.	70% 11% 19%
4. Which comic games would you like to see more often in literature classes?	a) adding dialogues to a comic drawing; b) guessing the character from a comic based on the dialogues; c) numbering comic drawings in their sequence; d) coloring comic drawings; e) introducing a comic character from another work; f) composing a dialogue between characters from different comics; g) creating a comic based on a familiar tale; h) identifying mistakes in a series of comic drawings; i) creating stage costumes, decor, and acting out a scene from a comic series.	29% 41% 60% 77% 9% 10% 17% 7% 20%

Conclusions:

1. More than half of the students enjoy reading and looking at comics, indicating that both arts have the potential to engage their attention, mutually complementing each other for greater effectiveness in learning.

2. A significant number of students find the use of comic games interesting in literature classes.

3. Most students want to color comic drawings and number comic drawings in their sequence. They face difficulties when composing dialogues between characters, introducing a comic character from another plot, and identifying mistakes in comic drawings.

Working with comics in literature class with bilingual students poses an educational challenge that should awaken interest in literature and art, contribute to the enhancement of their academic knowledge, and improve their skills.

3.2. Analysis of the Results from the Descriptive Study

For the purposes of the dissertation study, participants were divided into two groups - experimental and control, each consisting of 35 students. The level of literary competencies of students from both groups was assessed through an independent work containing 7 questions/tasks related to a literary text. These questions measured knowledge and skills such as finding information in the text, identifying characters based on their dialogues, recognizing and retelling a text episode, expressing emotional-evaluative attitudes towards the characters in the literary work, arranging episodes in their narrative sequence from a plot perspective, formulating direct conclusions, and unfolding creative potential – illustrating episodes and scenes, as well as creating narrative compositions. The

maximum score was 18 points. Upon evaluation, students from both the control and experimental classes showed the following results:

Table 3. Results from the diagnostic assessment of EG (experimental group) and CG (control group)

Points	0 – 3	4-7	8-11	12-15	16-18
Experimental group	17	8	10	0	0
Control group	12	14	9	0	0

As an assessment criterion, the five-point grading scale is adopted: Weak 2, Average 3, Good 4, Very Good 5, Excellent 6.

Scale for mapping test results to the six-point grading system:

From 0 to 3 points – Poor (2.00)

From 4 to 7 points – Medium (3.00)

From 8 to 11 points – Good (4.00)

From 12 to 15 points – Very Good (5.00)

From 16 to 18 points – Excellent (6.00)

Table 4. Grades from the diagnostic assessment of EG (experimental group) and CG (control group)

Grades	2	3	4	5	6	Grade Point Average
Experimental group	17	8	10	0	0	2,80
Control group	12	14	9	0	0	2,91

From the analysis of the results from the initial level, it is evident that students from both groups possess almost identical abilities for tasks related to literary texts. The average performance from the conducted independent work is Average 2.80 for the experimental group and Average 2.91 for the control group. The students' knowledge is at the same level with a negligible difference of 0.11, indicating that the classes are suitable for a pedagogical experiment as they are comparable in terms of the number of students and equivalent in terms of academic performance.

Table 5. Descriptive statistical characteristics of EG and CG

<i>Column1</i>		<i>Column1</i>	
Mean	2,914285714	Mean	2,8
Standard Error	0,132026408	Standard Error	0,14667176
Median	3	Median	3
Mode	3	Mode	2
Standard Deviation	0,781078763	Standard Deviation	0,867721831
Sample Variance	0,610084034	Sample Variance	0,752941176
Kurtosis	-1,314311926	Kurtosis	-1,568659002
Skewness	0,154223636	Skewness	0,412522231
Range	2	Range	2
Minimum	2	Minimum	2
Maximum	4	Maximum	4
Sum	102	Sum	98
Count	35	Count	35

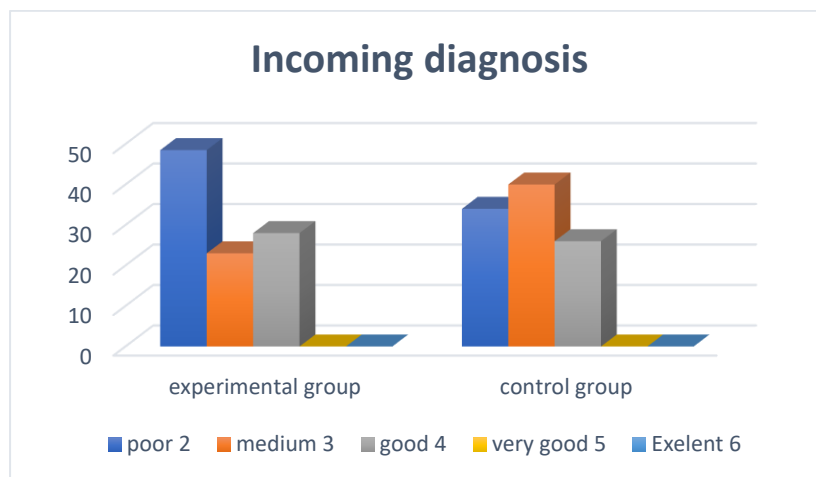
Since the initial data is in grouped form, i.e., in the form of a statistical distribution table, the so-called weighted formula has been used to calculate the mean, where the values of the feature, before averaging, are weighted by their respective frequencies:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^m x_i f_i}{\sum_{i=1}^m f_i}$$

where f_i is the frequency in the i -th group of the averaged feature, e is the class representative in the i -th group, and k is the number of groups.

The value of the variance is 0.75 for the experimental group and 0.61 for the control group, while the standard deviation is 0.87 for the control group and 0.78 for the experimental group. The coefficient of variation is calculated based on the absolute indicators of dispersion using the following formula: $V\sigma\% = \sigma / \bar{x} \cdot 100$. The obtained values are: $V\sigma\% = 31.07\%$ for the experimental group and $V\sigma\% = 26.80\%$ for the control group. The values of the coefficient of variation are below 50%. This indicates that the samples are homogeneous, as the results show little dispersion around their mean value.

Diagram 1. Results from the initial independent work



In the experimental group, the percentage of students receiving low grades is higher compared to the control group, but in both groups, there are no students who have received Excellent or Very Good grades. The low success is due to the fact that the independent work was conducted at the beginning of the school year when a large number of students had not yet sufficiently adapted to the educational process, had not communicated in Bulgarian, and had frequent absences from school, leading to delays in mastering the curriculum and gaps in knowledge.

3.3. Results from the formative stage of the experiment

For the implementation of the experiment, the methodologies in the formative stage were provided to the teachers of the two experimental parallel classes, explaining the goals and ways of working with the respective tasks. The model

includes seven methodological algorithms with different levels of complexity, designed for use in literature classes.

The first methodological algorithm – comic games on worksheets aims to assess the students' level of reading comprehension, recognition of narrative plots and characters based on their dialogues, and the students' competence in producing connected speech. There are eight worksheets, offered to students twice a week during literature classes, and their place in the lesson is determined by the teacher's discretion. Students receive a certain number of points based on specific criteria for each worksheet, which are then equated to the previously defined five-point scale.

Table 6. Results from the Comics Tasks

Points	0 – 6	7 - 13	14 - 20	21 - 27	28 - 32
Grade	2	3	4	5	6
Number of students - EG	0	9	19	10	0

Students who achieved the best results are 10. The highest number of points was earned by one student – 26 points. Three students received 23 points each, and one student received 21 points. The lowest number of points, 10 points, was obtained by one student.

From observations and the analysis of the results of the worksheets, it is evident that students respond willingly to the proposed questions, which turn out to be accessible and achievable for them, leading to an improvement in their abilities to work on tasks related to literary texts. The average success from completing the tasks is Good 4.02. The highest percentage of students received a Good (4) grade. A significant number of students also received a Very Good (5) grade.

The average grades are influenced by frequent absences of some students and their insufficient communication in the Bulgarian language. This leads to a lag in acquiring the skill of reading and understanding the text.

The second methodological algorithm involves creating comics based on works from the 4th-grade reader published by "Prosveta" with authors Romyana Tankova and Viktor Samuelov. The selected works are three: "The Rich Ant" by Elin Pelin, "How to Cure Lion Fear" by Maya Dalgacheva, and "Magical Flight with a Car" from "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" by J.K. Rowling. For the first work, after getting acquainted with the text from the reader, 9 students identified the characters' dialogues in the literary text with the help of the teacher and correctly transcribed them into the speech bubbles on the worksheets, 13 recorded only part of the dialogues, and an equal number did not work on the task. For the second work, 16 students completely filled in the dialogues of the characters, 7 worked partially, and 12 did not complete the task. For the third work, 14 students filled in the dialogues, 10 recorded part of them, and 11 did not fill in.

These tasks were managed by students who can read and write and have regularly attended classes. Sixteen students worked actively on all three works, 9 worked partially, and 10 students did not fill in due to absence from classes or illiteracy.

The third methodology, involving comic work, is integrated with a project activity carried out in literature, fine arts, technology, and entrepreneurship classes. Project planning defines the main idea – a theatrical performance representing a dramatization of a fairy tale on the occasion of World Theatre Day. The first literature class was conducted in the school library separately with the two experimental classes. Students looked through the books and chose to present the fairy tale "Under the Mushroom" by Suteev. Their interest was also stimulated during the second literature class through a proposed adaptation of the fairy tale. The plot and characters were discussed, and with the teacher's help, roles were assigned. In the technology and entrepreneurship class, students made masks of the characters they chose to portray. In the fine arts class, students prepared the script in the form of a comic strip. For this purpose, they received pre-printed images of the characters from the teacher. Students worked in groups, with each group preparing one episode – coloring, cutting, and pasting on large cardboard, which played the role of comic panels, and writing the dialogues in designated text bubbles. In the next literature class, a theatrical game was conducted according to the prepared script, with students using the masks they made. The participating students from both classes actively worked on all project activities. A theatrical performance was presented to first graders on March 27 on the occasion of World Theatre Day.

Observations during the project activity noted: increased interest in the learning process; enrichment of vocabulary; increased motivation for students' work; gaining confidence and self-esteem for knowledge and skills; positive atmosphere in classes.

Creating comics based on well-known fairy tales was also well-received as an assignment by the students. The work was done in teams, with each team receiving pictures – episodes from Bulgarian folk tales "Grandfather's Loaf" and Russian folk tale "Masha and the Bear". The episodes were arranged in chronological order according to the development of the plot, and speech bubbles were placed with written dialogues of the characters. The pictures were colored, and the comic was assembled on large cardboard. All students participated in team work with their assigned tasks.



Fig. 5. "Grandfather's Loaf"



Fig.6. "Masha and the Bear"

A small number of students showed interest in creating a comic based on the fairy tale "Kose Bose" by Ran Bosilek, as the task requires independent work, more effort, creativity, and imagination - students choose an episode from the fairy tale, draw the characters, and compose the dialogues themselves.

To create comic dialogues based on a given speech development situation, students were provided with five worksheets. Students performed well on the first two worksheets, which aimed to introduce them to the nature of the task and practice their skills in composing dialogues based on a given scenario and characters. As the work was done in groups (participants in each group provided different suggestions, discussed them, and recorded the most suitable dialogues), almost all students successfully completed the exercise.

The next three worksheets were designed for independent work. Students received points for all three tasks and an overall assessment.

Table 7. Criteria and Indicators for Creating Dialogues for Task No. 3

Criteria	Indicators
1. Creates a dialogical text	Fills in the characters' dialogues appropriately – 3 points Partially fills in the characters' dialogues – 1-2 points Does not fill in the dialogues – 0 points
2. Applies speech characterization	Describes the characters – 3 points Describes partially and incompletely – 1-2 points Unable to describe – 0 points
3. Works in accordance with the theme	Emphasizes the friendship between the characters – 3 points The dialogues partly correspond to the theme – 1-2 points The dialogues do not correspond to the theme – 0 points

Table 8. Criteria and Indicators for Crafting Dialogues for Task No. 4

Criteria	Indicators
1. Creates a dialogical text	Fills in the characters' dialogues appropriately – 3 points Partially fills in the characters' dialogues – 1-2 points Does not fill in the dialogues – 0 points
2. Applies speech characterization	Reveals the characters' personalities through speech – 3 points Applies partially and incompletely – 1-2 points Unable to characterize – 0 points

3. Colors the characters according to their roles in the comic	Colors the characters correctly – 3 points Colors partially or makes mistakes – 1-2 points Does not color correctly – 0 points
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Table 8. Criteria and Indicators for Crafting Dialogues for Task No. 5

Criteria	Indicators
1. Creates a dialogical text	fills in the characters' dialogues appropriately – 3 points Partially fills in the characters' dialogues – 1-2 points Does not fill in the dialogues – 0 points
2. Applies speech characterization	Reveals the characters' personalities through speech – 3 points Applies partially and incompletely – 1-2 points Lacks speech characterization – 0 points
3. Offers a conclusion to the story	Concludes the story – 3 points Partially addresses the task – 1-2 points Does not conclude the story – 0 points

Scale for aligning results with the six-point grading system:

From 0 to 5 points – Poor (2.00)

From 6 to 11 points – Medium (3.00)

From 12 to 17 points – Good (4.00)

From 18 to 23 points – Very Good (5.00)

From 24 to 27 points – Excellent (6.00)

On the first criterion, when creating a comic on the theme of "Friendship" – creating dialogical text, 15 students received 3 points, 12 received 2 points, and 8 received 1 point. On the second criterion, 9 students received full points, 19 worked partially for 2 points, and 13 for 1 point. On the third criterion, 14 students received 3 points, 13 with 2 points, and 8 with 1 point. No student scored 0 points on this task. A significant percentage of students managed to create dialogical text in line with the task's theme, incorporating partial speech characterization of the characters. All students worked on the task and successfully created a limited dialogue between the characters.

Eleven students fully composed dialogues between opposing characters and received 3 points, while the same number worked for 2 points, and 13 received 1 point. Full speech characterization of the characters was achieved by one student, while 17 partially applied it and received 2 points, and the same number worked partially for 1 point. No student correctly completed the coloring of the characters and received 3 points. Twenty-five students colored partially or made mistakes and received 1-2 points. Unlike the first two criteria, where no student scored 0 points, in the third criterion, 10 students received 0 points. Despite students' enjoyment of coloring, they struggled to finish it as they invested more effort into creating the dialogue, taking up more time and energy. A smaller percentage of students successfully completed the entire task, with most working partially, but none refused to complete the exercise.

The third task is entirely creative. Students must complete a story based on a given beginning in the form of a comic, drawing one or two episodes and composing a dialogue between the characters. The task is more challenging, and a smaller portion of students managed to complete it. Three students created dialogical text for 3 points, 12 wrote partially, and 20 wrote nothing. One student characterized the characters through their speech for 3 points, six received 2 points, the same number received 1 point, and 22 did not manage the task. Four students brought the story to a conclusion, 12 worked partially and received 1 or 2 points accordingly, while 19 received 0 points. Seventeen students refused to work entirely on the worksheet, earning 0 points across all three criteria.

Here, as with other more challenging exercises, there is again a refusal from almost half of the students to work on the tasks. This is attributed once again to frequent absences and falling behind in the curriculum. The remaining half, who have developed regular work habits in class, showed a willingness to unleash their creative skills and imagination, with some of them performing quite well.

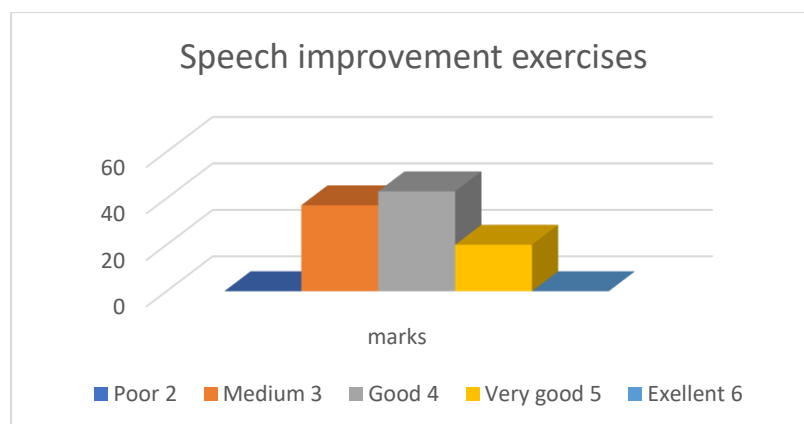
Table 10. Results from Speech Development Tasks

Points	0 - 5	6 - 11	12 - 17	18 - 23	24 - 27
Grade	2	3	4	5	6
Number of students - EG	0	13	15	7	0

The highest scores were achieved by two students, each earning 23 points, while the lowest scores were obtained by 6 students, each receiving 6 points. Similar to the comic tasks, a large number of good grades are observed, but here, average grades prevail over very good ones. The reason for this is that the tasks are more complex, and some of them may not be feasible for all students.

The average success from task completion is Good, with a score of 3.83, and the highest percentage of students achieved a Good grade (4).

Diagram 2: Summarized Results from Speech Development Tasks



Observations have revealed that students willingly engage with tasks involving comics during speech development classes. The visual representation facilitates tracking the plot's events, and the communicative nature of comics

stimulates speech production. The conclusion we can draw is that comics can serve as a visual tool for speech development when incorporated into various interactive tasks, making the learning process enjoyable for students by placing them in an active role.

All students participated in the card games, repeating them several times. Students who had not watched film adaptations of some of the fairy tales expressed a desire to familiarize themselves with them.

The most enjoyable experience for both teachers and students was the competition on the "Kahoot" platform. This exercise, being competitive, allowed the use of mobile devices. Students conducted the competition in class, dividing into two teams and choosing captains. A series of questions in the "Kahoot" platform were initiated on the multimedia, and team members actively discussed the answers and provided suggestions, primarily trusting their captains. Naturally, there were incorrect answers, as well as assistance from the teacher. The educational game's benefit was that it motivated students to actively participate in class, offering an enjoyable way for each to update their knowledge. They were the active "players" and requested the game to continue in future classes.

Observations demonstrated that exercises following this model enrich students' cognitive experience. Creating comics enhances children's self-expression, particularly for those with weaker command of the Bulgarian language. Visual aids facilitate the perception and memorization of educational material, and the visual image serves as a strong argument for creative verbal activities.

1.5. Analysis of Results from the Control Study To assess participants' knowledge in the experimental and control groups, an outgoing test was conducted. Similar to the diagnostic incoming test, the outgoing independent work contained 7 questions/tasks related to a literary text, measuring knowledge and skills based on previously established criteria. The maximum score was 18 points. During the assessment, students demonstrated the following results:

Table 11. Results from the Outgoing Diagnostic Test of the EG and CG

Points	0 – 3	4-7	8-11	12-15	16-18
Experimental Group	2	15	15	3	0
Control Group	10	13	10	2	0

Scale for Equating Test Results to the Six-Point Grading System:

0 to 3 points – Poor (2.00)

4 to 7 points – Medium (3.00)

8 to 11 points – Good (4.00)

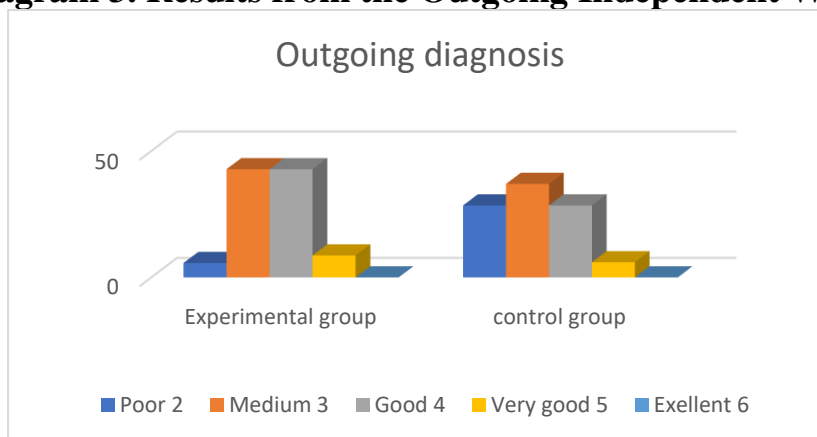
12 to 15 points – Very Good (5.00)

16 to 18 points – Excellent (6.00)

Table 12. Grades from the Outgoing Diagnostic Test of the EG and CG

Оценки	2	3	4	5	6	Среден успех
Експериментална група	2	15	15	3	0	3,54
Контролна група	10	13	10	2	0	3,11

From the analysis of the results of the initial level, it is evident that the ability to work on tasks related to literary texts for students in the experimental group has improved. The average success from the conducted independent work is Good, with a score of 3.54 for the experimental classes and Average, with a score of 3.11 for the control classes.

Diagram 3. Results from the Outgoing Independent Work

In the control group, the percentage of students receiving weak grades is higher compared to the experimental group. In both groups, there are no students who have received an excellent grade. The success rate of three students from the experimental group and two from the control group is very good. There is an increase in the good results of students from the experimental group, and accordingly, the percentage of students with a weak grade of 2 has decreased.

Table 13. Descriptive Statistical Characteristics of Results from the Initial and Outgoing Levels of the EG

t-Test: Paired Two Sample for Means		
	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	2,82857143	3,54285714
Variance	0,73445378	0,54957983
Observations	35	35
Pearson Correlation	0,79889987	
Hypothesized Mean	0	
df	34	
t Stat	-8,149003	
P(T<=t) one-tail	8,3364E-10	
t Critical one-tail	1,69092426	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1,6673E-09	
t Critical two-tail	2,03224451	

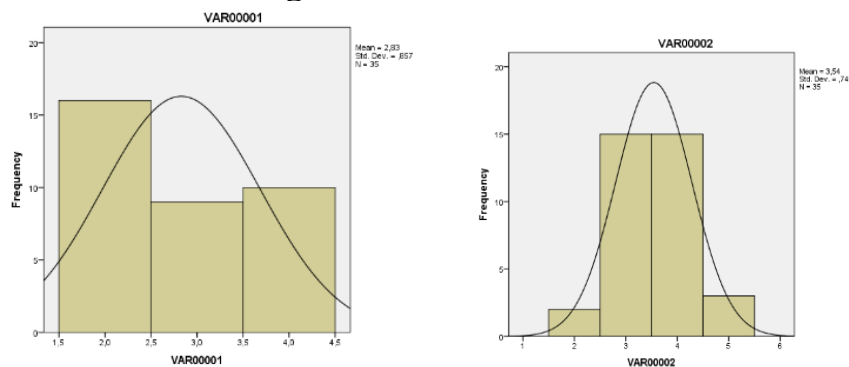
For the comparison of the mean values of the results from the initial and outgoing levels of the experimental group, we use a paired-sample t-test to examine the significance of the impact of the methodology we applied. The table shows that there is a significant difference between the mean values of the initial and outgoing levels. The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.7989 indicates a good degree of correlation between the two variables, and they move in the same direction. The strength of the correlation is determined by the following interpretive scale:

- If the correlation coefficient is between 0 and 0.3 (absolute value), the relationship is considered weak.
- If the correlation coefficient is between 0.3 and 0.7 (absolute value), the relationship is considered moderate.
- If the correlation coefficient is between 0.7 and 1 (absolute value), the relationship is considered strong.

Therefore, the correlation coefficient of 0.7989, which is greater than 0.7, indicates a strong positive linear correlation between the mean values of the initial and outgoing levels after the application of the methodology in the formative stage.

The null hypothesis assumes that there is no difference between the obtained mean values from the two tests. The alternative hypothesis is that there is such a difference. The t-statistic is -8.149. This is the value we use for comparison with the critical t-value for a specific level of significance. The absolute value of the t-statistic (-8.149) is greater than the critical value of 2.032, indicating statistical significance of the results at a significance level of 0.05, which is considered standard. In this case, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Histograms 1 and 2 of the grades from the incoming and outgoing diagnostics of the EG



In summary, the results of the t-test indicate that the t-statistic is very low, and the probability of this happening by chance is extremely small. This can be interpreted as a strong basis for rejecting the null hypothesis that the difference between the mean values of the incoming and outgoing levels is zero. Instead, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between these two variables.

Statistical analysis of the results from the outgoing level of students in the control and experimental groups was conducted using the t-test, which is used to compare the mean values of two independent groups.

Table 14. Descriptive Statistical Characteristics of the Results from the Outgoing Independent Work of the EG and CG

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances		
	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	3,542857143	3,114285714
Variance	0,549579832	0,810084034
Observations	35	35
Pooled Variance	0,679831933	
Hypothesized Mean	0	
df	68	
t Stat	2,174410111	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,016578702	
t Critical one-tail	1,667572281	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,033157404	
t Critical two-tail	1,995468931	

We define the null hypothesis (H0) and the alternative hypothesis (H1).

The positive changes in students' achievements in the experimental group are due to:

H0 - random factors;

H1 - experimental impact.

We set a significance level of 0.05 (or 5%), which represents the standard probability at which the results are considered statistically significant. This significance level determines how small the probability (p-value) of the result should be for the null hypothesis to be rejected. If the probability (p-value) of the result is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis can be rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis.

We check the validity of the hypothesis using the Student's t-test. From the obtained data, it is seen that with variance values of 0.54 for the experimental group and 0.81 for the control group (low variance suggests that the data is stable and predictable as it is close to the mean), the t-statistic is 2.17441. This is the value used for comparison with the critical t-value for a certain significance level. The critical t-value (two-tailed) is 1.99547 and is smaller than the t-statistic.

In summary, the results show that the t-statistic is quite high, and the probability of this happening by chance is low. This can be interpreted as a statistically significant difference between the mean values of the results from the outgoing diagnostics of the experimental group and those of the control group. The probability (p-value) for this difference is below 0.05 (for combined values of the t-statistic), which is used as the significance level. As a result, it can be accepted that the difference between the mean values of the two groups is statistically significant. This means that the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected in favor of the alternative (H1). In other words, the difference in the results of the

experimental group is not random but is significant and is due to the experimental impact.

The conducted statistical analysis of the outgoing diagnostics proves our first hypothesis, which assumes that if bilingual students master literary works through our developed technological model for working with comics, a higher level of reading comprehension and development of Bulgarian speech will be achieved compared to the results of classical education.

The test results also confirm the second hypothesis, which states that if bilingual students use comics in literature education, their motivation to learn will increase. The students in the experimental group have significantly improved their performance, and no student has refused to work on the test compared to the initial level.

Observations show that the third hypothesis, which states that working with comics will contribute to instilling a love of books and acquiring lasting reading habits, cannot be confirmed for the time during which the experimental study was conducted. We assume that a longer period and more consistency in applying the proposed methodology are needed.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Researched theories related to the characteristics of comics and discovered best practices for its use as a teaching tool contributed to the development of new models for working with comics for initial literature education for bilingual students.

2. Analyzing the specifics of interactive methods and literary education at the early stage in bilingualism conditions allowed experimenting with the developed models and implementing them in the fourth grade.

3. The results of the conducted diagnostics suggest that skills for interpreting, analyzing, and creating one's own text need improvement. Some students manage communicative tasks but struggle to independently formulate their thoughts because they cannot make an adequate choice of language means due to their limited vocabulary.

4. More extended work with comics is needed to acquire lasting reading habits that contribute to instilling a love of books.

5. The application of creative tasks involving comics in literature classes helped in understanding and interpreting the studied literary work, developing reading comprehension skills, and producing Bulgarian speech.

6. The use of comics in literature education increased students' activity and motivation to learn during classes.

7. The applied methodological model for working in literature classes sparked teachers' interest, met students' needs, and was suitable for increasing the effectiveness of acquiring knowledge and skills by fourth-grade students.

The results obtained from the research give us confidence to consider this model of working with bilingual fourth-grade students successful. Working with comics in literature classes helps improve the level of preparation and development of Roma students in the early grades regarding the mastery of study material, their intellectual growth, and their independence. We recommend paying personal attention to their artistic-aesthetic development by systematically applying similar interactive methods in their education to adapt the study material to the cognitive abilities of the students.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The conducted research confirms the relevance of the issue regarding reading education and the inclusion of children from minority ethnic groups in the world of literary literature. It holds special importance for educators and the scientific community, given the requirements laid out in the Bulgarian language and literature curricula. This significance of literary education for the overall development and education of bilingual students was the motive for the current development.

It includes the following scientific-theoretical and scientific-applied contributions:

1. The characteristics of comics were studied theoretically, and its educational potential as a tool for literary education was revealed.
2. The specifics of literary education through comics at the early stage and its characteristics in conditions of mass bilingualism were clarified.
3. An interactive education model was developed, tested, and implemented to master literary competencies based on working with comics.
4. Educational resources for teachers instructing students of Roma origin were created, enhancing the effectiveness of the learning process in literature classes.

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