Tihana Škojo, Kristijan Žakić
Academy of Arts in Osijek, University of Osijek

THE USE OF GAMES IN MUSIC EDUCATION TEACHING

Izvirni znanstveni članek/ Original Scientific Article

Abstract

This paper explores the presence of games in the current Music Education teaching. From the results obtained, it is clear that teachers use games featuring singing, movement, rhythm and/or melodies, as well as music games featuring listening. The research shows that teachers are not fully recognized the possibility of implementing games in the teaching of Music Education and that they do not use information-communication technology in their implementation. The need to encourage teachers to implement games at all stages of the lesson has been updated, as well as the one to modernize the music curriculum with new media and make the games as innovative following the achievements of the modern era.

Keywords: Music Education, music teachers, elementary school, music arts teaching, music games

Izvleček
Uporaba glasbeno-didaktičnih iger pri poučevanju glasbene umetnosti

Namen naše raziskave je bil preučiti prisotnost glasbenih iger pri poučevanju glasbene umetnosti na razredni stopnji osnovne šole. Raziskava je bila izvedena s pomočjo anketnega vprašalnika. Sodelovalo je 40 osnovnošolskih učiteljev glasbe, ki poučujejo na razredni stopnji. glasbe ne prepoznavajo možnosti implementiranja glasbenih Rezultati so pokazali, da učitelji iger v svoje poučevanje glasbene umetnosti v celoti. Prav tako se je pokazalo, da pri implementiranju glasbenih iger v pouk ne uporabljajo IKT sredstev.

Ključne besede: glasbeno izobraževanje, učitelji glasbe, osnovna šola, pouk glasbene umetnosti, glasbeno-didaktične igre

Introduction

In the last eighty years, instigated by Vygotsky's research (1933), numerous scientific works were aimed at emphasizing the positive effects of games on different development aspects of the child. Piaget's results (1962) point out the games' significant influence on the development of children's cognitive abilities and the fact that games change together with the intellectual development of the child (Nikčević-Milković et al., 2011). Newman (1990) emphasizes the positive effects of games on the children's memory. Vidanec (2006) points out the motivational role of games, while Tanis's research (2012) focuses on the games' positive effects on the children's emotional development.

Those insights were the basis for the study of the use of teaching games (Bognar 1986; Kamenov 1997; Mahmutović 2013; Aladrović Slovaček et al., 2013). The authors concluded that learning through games enhances the students' concentration, resulting in an evidently increased student interest and a more positive attitude toward specific

teaching content. In addition, the authors emphasized the increase of student activity in relation to other forms of learning, together by achieving better learning outcomes.

A variety of games is present at all levels of the educational process, from preschool to higher education, regardless of the teaching subject (Močinić, 2012; Skender and Kalas, 2017; Šulentić-Begić, 2016). They can be used at all stages of the teaching process, and are mostly used to motivate students in the introductory part of the classroom or the revision and evaluation of the teaching content (Škojo and Jukić, 2015). They can be implemented in all social forms of work, from frontal and group work, working in pairs to individual forms of teaching (Bognar, 1986; Nikčević-Milković et al., 2011). Learning through games, due to a natural way of learning and the dynamics of the activities themselves, has an extremely positive impact on the social and emotional teaching atmosphere and is therefore often included in the teaching methods of creative and competent teachers.

Games in Music Education Teaching

In the Republic of Croatia, music games were first introduced in Music Education teaching in elementary education in 1960 (Rojko, 1996), and to this day they have retained their place in the current curriculum (Curriculum for Elementary Schools 2006). In the fourth grade, when Music Education teaching begins to be performed by the subject teacher, music games – together with singing, listening to and getting acquainted with music, performing, and learning the music alphabet – are foreseen by the curriculum as an equal teaching area based on a psychological principle, which points to the need for appreciation of the fact that the students love music and wish to be actively involved with it and that it is necessary to select those activities that will, following the acknowledgment of diversity in development skills, result in the desired learning outcomes. The implementation of this teaching area is entirely theoretically and methodically based on the *free creation of games of the teacher's choice: free rhythmizing by imitating the teacher, free and stylized movement with a musical background, playing (without excessively high aims) on simpler instruments etc.* (Curriculum for Elementary Schools 2006, 72). In the next educational cycle, which includes the fifth and sixth grade, music games are implemented within the teaching area called *free, improvised rhythmizing, movement to music, dancing, and playing* with respect to individual musical abilities and preferences, with a view to targeting students to actively and musically perform the rhythmic activities: moving to music, dancing, playing (Ibid. 2006). In the last cycle, the seventh and eighth grade, music games are performed in classroom by playing (synthesizer), creativity, computer (MIDI equipment) (Ibid. 2006), with the aim that the students link music and music creativity in terms of the production and reproduction of sound and music with modern technological devices that have become an indispensable part of their lives and the modern, technically advanced society.

The open program, which has been present in Music Education teaching since the introduction of the Croatian National Educational Standard in 2006, gives teachers the freedom to act as responsible and competent experts in what they think is useful for students of a specific class in terms of music (Rojko, 2012). In addition to the compulsory

core curriculum related to the activity of listening and getting acquainted with music, the teacher chooses music games and other music activities according to their personal choice and creativity as well as to students' interests, taking into account that the students' music activity, not only the teaching content, is of crucial importance.

In the content framework of Music Education, music games are most often present as games featuring singing, rhythm and/or melodies, and listening (Manasteriotti, 1982).

Music games featuring singing belong to the kind of movement-related games in which each specific games contains pre-established rules during singing (Šulentić-Begić, 2015). As a singing background with this type of games, a quality and interesting song is used, appropriate to the students' age and previously adopted by the methodically established way of learning a song by listening: getting acquainted with the song, analysing the lyrics, learning and analysing the song, and music interpreting (Rojko 2005). In addition to these games, the basic movements are implemented: walking, running, jogging, and arm movement (Manasteriotti, 1978), as well as specially designed choreographies. They can be performed in different formations, and are usually performed as games in a circle or a line, as free or mixed form games (Manasteriotti, 1982). Music games featuring singing can also be implemented as creative activities through which students will strengthen, but also evaluate the knowledge and skills gained through singing activities (Lazarin, 1992).

Music games featuring rhythm/melodies help develop music abilities in a creative way. In the initial phase, they primarily use imitation and later focus on the activities of musical creation, in accordance with the students' wishes and possibilities.

Music games featuring melodies can in an inventive way develop a sense of pitch, strength, duration, metric, and tone, and influence the development of auditory attention and melodic memory (Škojo and Jukić, 2015). These games, other than as independent activities, can also be carried out for the purpose of warming-up, as methodical exercises for expanding the vocal scope, or for influencing articulation.

Music games featuring rhythms can be used in practice in the form of rhymes, rhythmic tables, questions and answers, resuming rhythm games, matching text and/or melody to an existing rhythmic example (Šulentić-Begić, 2016) and improvisation of closed music forms that can include the percussion instruments included in Orff's instruments (Škojo and Jukić, 2015).

Music games featuring listening, due to listening as the dominant activity in the open model of Music Education teaching, are most common in teaching practice as a means of consolidating musical knowledge. These games can be directed at the beginning of the acquisition of musical knowledge toward encouraging the listening curiosity (Sam 1998), and later toward detecting individual elements of musical expression, determining the structure of musical works, composers, compositions, styles, etc. Music games featuring listening are recently present in teaching through various products of information and communication technology. Created inventively and in an interesting didactic way, as computer games they can offer valuable factual knowledge, develop listening skills and

positively affect the students' musical preferences. In addition to having a nurturing effect on the fulfilment of cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning outcomes, the implementation of such games entirely transfers the activity from the teacher to the learner and achieves an overall departure from the traditional way of acquiring knowledge.

All the said types of music games are valuable lesson activities that, in addition to creating musical knowledge and developing musical skills, contribute to the creation of a pleasant and stimulating learning atmosphere, cooperation, and creativity, and most certainly support the quality of Music Education teaching.

Research Methodology and Aims

This paper describes the research conducted to determine the extent to which teachers use games in Music Education, which types of games they use, and for which teaching purposes. The research was conducted with the aim of highlighting the wide possibilities of using the games in the teaching of Music Education and enrichment of all teaching stages with such an active way of learning and teaching.

In accordance with the set aim, the following issues were listed:
  • Identify the presence of games in the current Music Education teaching
  • Identify the types of games used by teachers
  • Identify the teaching tools used by teachers when implementing games in Music Education teaching
  • Examine the teaching purpose of games in Music Education teaching.

Participants

The research was conducted with the help of a sample consisting of forty Music Education teachers (90% female and 10% male participants) employed in Croatian elementary schools in Osijek-Baranja, Brod-Posavina, Požega-Slavonia, and Vukovar-Srijem counties. The average number of teachers' week hours in direct teaching is 20.05 hours. Most teachers (65%) are full-time workers in one school, 27.5% of teachers teach in two schools, while 7.5% teach in more than two schools. Of the total number of teachers, 97.5% carry out extracurricular activities, while 2.5% are not engaged in any extracurricular activity. The most attended extracurricular activity is the choir (61.70%), followed by the orchestra (14.89%), a music workshop (6.38%), a dance group (4.25%), and a drum group, folklore dancing, instrumental group, synthesizer, tamburitza orchestra, and a music arts workshop (2.13%).

Methodological Approach

For research purposes, a survey consisting of two parts was devised. The first part of the survey is composed of questions related to socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents: gender, age, work experience, number of teaching hours in the immediate educational work, number of schools in which the respondent achieves full-time work,

and participation of teachers as heads of extracurricular activities. The second part of the survey contains 23 closed questions in which respondents, by using the Likert type scale and choosing the numbers from one to five, indicated their level of agreement with certain statements. The estimates indicated the following: 1 - no, never; 2 - mostly not; 3 - neither yes nor no; 4 - mostly yes; 5 - yes, always. After the survey and data collection, their processing was carried out. The baseline statistical parameters for the research variables (M, SD) were calculated using the IBM SPSS Statistics 20 Programme.

Results and Interpretation

The first group of questions related to the determination of the general attitude of teachers towards games in teaching (Table 1). According to results, the highest mean values were used by teachers to indicate that the purpose of using games in teaching is to create a relaxed atmosphere (M = 4.03), achieve a more dynamic way of teaching, and avoid monotony in class (M = 4.00). The established mean values, encompassing the statements *neither yes nor no, mostly yes,* show that teachers are using games only to a certain extent. Teachers determined that games help overcome individual differences among students and encourage their socialization. They also concluded that, although the students' successfulness in games is an additional means of praise, they generally do not evaluate them based on the success achieved through games. In the light of the results, we can conclude that students mostly do not design games that are implemented in class, but that the games in Music Education teaching are designed and formed exclusively by teachers.

Table 1: *Evaluation of the Teachers' General Attitude toward Games in Class*

Statements	M	SD
I use different games in class	3.43	.903
ghtI design games myself	3.23	1.074
Students design games that we implement in class	2.88	1.114
Games are more efficient than the regular learning	3.53	.933
I use games to create a relaxed class atmosphere	4.03	.800
I avoid monotony and contribute to interest in teaching contents	4.00	.816
Games help me overcome individual differences among students	3.61	.946
Games help me with the socialization of students	3.65	.949
In class, I evaluate students through their successes achieved in games	2.55	1.176
Students' successfulness in games serves as an additional means of praise	3.50	.934

The second group of questions concerned the evaluation of the use of games from the aspect of the educational process stages (Table 2). As can be seen in the table, it was determined that the use of music games in teaching is most often used during the revision or practice of the teaching content, as shown by the mean value (M = 3.56). The mean value, concentrated on the estimate *neither yes nor no*, determined that games are less used in class when introducing students to new teaching content, and least used as a method for adopting new teaching content.

Based on the answers related to the use of games with regard to forms of work in class, the teachers evaluated groups games as the most common social form in which music games were implemented (M = 3.38). Teachers' answers, ranging between *mostly no* and *neither yes nor no*, showed that games in pairs and competition games were least used in class.

Table 2: *Evaluation of Games' Use with Regard to Education Process Stages and Social Forms*

Statements	M	SD
I use games as a method for adopting new teaching content	3.20	1.043
I use games when introducing new teaching content	3.25	.981
I use games when revising or practicing teaching content	3.56	.852
I implement games in pairs	2.88	1.067
I implement games in groups	3.38	.963
I implement competition games	2.72	.905

According to the answers on the evaluation of the use of music games types in Music Education teaching (Table 3), teachers gave the highest mean value, concentrating on the estimates *mostly yes* and *neither yes nor no*, thereby establishing that they most frequently used music games featuring singing (M = 3.62) in their classes. With a somewhat lower mean value, the teachers demonstrated that they sometimes use music games featuring listening (M = 3.43) and motion-related music games (M = 3.35), while the lowest mean value (M = 3.32) was given to the implementation of games featuring rhythm and/or melodies in Music Education teaching.

Table 3: *Evaluation of the Use of Types of Music Games*

Statements	M	SD
I implement music games featuring singing	3.62	.990
I implement music games featuring listening	3.43	1.107
I implement motion-related music games	3.35	1.272
I implement games featuring rhythm and/or melodies	3.32	1.047

Although it is difficult to imagine contemporary teaching without the use of information-communication technology, teachers have given an extremely low mean value (M = 2.32) to the implementation of music games with the help of ICT. From the results obtained, it is obvious that teachers do not use computers, mobile phones, nor mobile applications (Table 4).

Table 4: *Evaluation of the Use of Music Games with Regard to ICT*

Statements	M	SD
I use computers in games implementation	2.32	1.185
I use mobile phones in games implementation	1.70	.992
I use mobile application in games implementation	1.83	1.083

Conclusion

Although the research has identified a number of positive effects of games on different aspects of teaching activity, it shows that the teachers Music Education are only partially using games in their classes, mostly with the aim of creating a relaxed atmosphere and avoiding monotony.

Based on the results, it is obvious that teachers use games as group activities through which students most frequently revise or practice the teaching content. All types of games featuring singing, listening, movement, rhythm and/or melodies are equally used by teachers in their classes. The teachers' answers clearly show that they do not use information technology in the implementation of games and that they have not recognized the possibility of introducing computer media into this teaching segment.

We can conclude that the use of games is an important step towards a more interesting, active, and didactically diverse teaching and that it is necessary to additionally encourage teachers to further refine their teaching methods through these activities. We point to the need for a permanent updating of the Music Education curriculum with new media and contemporary strategies in order to gradually didactically innovate the teaching in line with the needs of the modern age and students who wish to actively participate in teaching activities.

References

Aladrović Slovaček, Katarina, Ivanković, Melita, Srzentić, Dunja (2013). Jezične igre u nastavnoj praksi. In: *Igra u ranom djetinjstvu* (ed. Petrović-Soči, B., Višnjić-Jevtić, A.), Zagreb: OMEP Hrvatska i Alfa, pp. 14-23.

Bognar, Ladislav (1986). *Igra u nastavi na početku školovanja.* Zagreb: Školska knjiga.

Lazarin, Branko (1992). *Solfeggio 1: udžbenik za učenike 1. razreda osnovne glazbene škole.* Zagreb: Školska knjiga.

Manasteriotti, Višnja (1978). *Zbornik pjesama i igara za djecu, Priručnik muzičkog odgoja*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.

Manasteriotti, Višnja (1982). *Muzički odgoj na početnom stupnju: metodske upute za odgajatelje i nastavnike razredne nastave*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.

Mahmutović, Alisa (2013). Značaj igre u socijalizaciji djece predškolskog uzrasta, *Metodički obzori* 8, 18, pp. 21-33.

Močinić, Snježana Nevia (2012). Active Teaching Strategies in Higher Education. *Metodički obzori*, vol. 15, 7, pp. 97-104.

Nastavni plan i program za osnovnu školu. (2006). Zagreb: Ministry of Science, Education and Sport.

Newman, Leonard (1990). Intentional and Unintentional Memory in Young Children: Remembering vs. Playing. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* 50 (2), pp. 243–258.

Nikčević-Milković, Anela, Rukavina, Maja, Galić, Maja (2011). Korištenje i učinkovitost igre u razrednoj nastavi. *Život i škola*, 25, pp.108-121.

Piaget, Jean (1962). *Plays, Dreams and Imitation in Childhood*. New York: Norton.

Rojko, Pavel (1996). *Metodika nastave glazbe. Teorijsko-tematski aspekti*. Osijek: Josip Juraj Strossmayer University.

Rojko, Pavel (2005). *Metodika glazbene nastave – praksa II. Dio: Slušanje glazbe*. Zagreb: Jakša Zlatar.

Rojko, Pavel. (2012). Metodika nastave glazbe: Teoretsko-tematski aspekti, accessed at: https://bib.irb.hr/datoteka/566005.ROJKO_Metodika_nastave_glazbe._Teorijsko_tematski_aspekti.pdf 18. 5. 2018)

Sam, Renata (1998). *Glazbeni doživljaj u odgoju djeteta*. Rijeka: Glosa d.o.o.

Skender, Lana & Karas, Dajana (2017). Učestalost i svrhovitost primjene igara u nastavi likovne umjetnosti. *Život i škola*: časopis za teoriju i praksu odgoja i obrazovanja, 63, 2, pp. 113-126.

Škojo, Tihana & Jukić, Renata (2015). Iskazivanje kreativnosti nastavnika primjenom igara u nastavi glazbe, In: Mojca Orel (ed.) *Modern Approaches to Teaching Coming Generation*, Ljubljana: EDUvision, pp. 432-443.

Šulentić Begić, Jasna (2016).). Glazbene igre u primarnom obrazovanju. In: *Umjetnik kao pedagog pred izazovima suvremenog odgoja i obrazovanja,* Jerković, B.; Škojo, T. (ed.). Osijek: Josip Juraj Strossmayer University; Academy of Arts in Osijek, pp. 685-701.

Tanis, David Jay (2012). *Exploring Play/Playfulness and Learning in the Adult and Higher Education Classroom*. A Dissertation in Adult Education, accessed at: https://etda.libraries.psu.edu/catalog/16086

Vidanec, Dafne (2006). Kritičko-analitički pristup razumijevanju Gadamerovog pojma umjetnosti, Umjetnost kao igra, simbol i svetkovina. *Filozofska istraživanja*, 27 (1), pp. 143-161.

Vygotsky, Lev Semenovich (1933). Play and Its Role in the Mental Development of the Child. *Soviet Psychology*, 5, pp. 6-18.

Povzetek

Odprti kurikulum poučevanja glasbene vzgoje v trenutnem izobraževalnem sistemu Republike Hrvaške je omogočil hrvaškim učiteljem glasbe, da lahko uporabljajo številne metodične in didaktične rešitve, s katerimi lahko izvedejo pedagoške dejavnosti na ustvarjalen in zanimiv način. Ena izmed dejavnosti, ki prinaša pozitivne učinke na nivoju pridobljenega znanja in motivacije učencev, so glasbeno-didaktične igre (GDI). Možnosti izvajanja GDI so mnogotere in raznolike. GDI lahko vključimo v vse faze učnega procesa. Omogočajo nam individualizacijo in diferenciacijo učnega procesa, zato so zaželen sestavni del sodobne glasbene vzgoje.

Na Hrvaškem je GDI prvič predstavil leta 1960 Pavel Rojko (Rojko 1996), ko so GDI postale tudi del kurikula glasbene vzgoje v osnovnih šolah in to mesto ohranile do danes (Kurikulum za Osnovne šole 2006).

Cilj naše raziskave je bil preučiti prisotnost in načine uporabe GDI pri pouku glasbene umetnosti v nižjih razredih osnovne šole. V ta namen je bil oblikovan anketni vprašalnik. V raziskavo je bilo vključenih 40 učiteljev glasbene umetnosti na nižji stopnji osnovne šole.

Kljub temu, da so rezultati pokazali številne pozitivne učinke GDI na različne vidike poučevanja glasbe, nakazujejo tudi na to, da učitelji glasbe le delno izrabljajo učinke GDI pri svojih učnih urah. Največkrat uporabljajo GDI za ustvarjanje sproščujoče atmosfere in v izogib monotoniji učnega procesa. Vse vrste GDI, vključujoč petje, poslušanje, gibanje ter ritem in/ali melodijo so enakovredno zastopane pri njihovi uporabi v učnem procesu. Odgovori učiteljev jasno kažejo, da pri izvedbi GDI ne uporabljajo sodobne računalniške tehnologije in ne prepoznavajo potrebe po vključevanju IKTja v process izvedbe GDI.

Zaključimo lahko, da so GDI pomemben korak proti zanimivemu, aktivnemu in didaktično raznolikemu poučevanju. Zato bi bilo potrebno učitelje glasbe v nižjih razredih osnovne šole spodbuditi, da preoblikujejo svoje metode poučevanja, vključujoč več GDI, pri čemer bi bilo zaželeno tudi sledenje trendom sodobne računalniške tehnologije, ki je učencem blizu.