

MUSICAL GAMES IN CLASSROOM TEACHING

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Abstract. *Contemporary concept of education involves a student maximally engaged intellectually, independent in gaining new knowledge and directly involved in the teaching process. Bearing this in mind, in the initial teaching it is necessary for students to be maximally engaged as active factors in the teaching process. One of the way, close and familiar to them, is to achieve it through the game. Teaching contents in primary music education are adequate for application of various didactic music games which shall engage the students in many ways and enable them to acquire elementary concepts in theory of music through play and fun. Therefore, the main goal of this paper was to estimate the adoption of dynamics as the variation in loudness and their marking in the musical notation through didactic music games. The sample consisted of 240 students of the third grade of primary schools in Vranje., On the basis of the assessment scale index the absorption and reproduction of dynamic variations through the game „Izgubljeno pile“ was examined. The best results were achieved by the students for the strong dynamic performance (forte), then the gradual increase (crescendo), while the weaker results were achieved for reproduction of soft dynamic performanse (piano) and gradual decrease (decrescendo). The obtained results can contribute to the overcoming of dynamic shading, as well as in the use of didactic music games as a Special purpose songs when learning from a musical notation.*

Key words: *game, didactic music games, dynamic variations*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays contemporary education implies the integration of scientific and artistic in the process of knowledge acquisition, primarily in the period of initial teaching, with the aim of students development as a complete personalities. It is generally accepted that „education in the first half of the 21st century, in the global context, will have a continuous exponential development influenced by three factors: a change in scientific

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and technological knowledge which requires an increase of the intensity of regular education, a change in the world trade and economy, which requires access to knowledge improvement and retraining and third factor - dramatic cultural changes from the angle of the young generation“ (Zdravković, 2010, 181). In summary, cultural changes from the perspective of young generations in the process of education in classroom teaching are the actors and subjects of contemporary school today.

Contemporary teaching is inclined to the student who is in the centre of teaching process and is, also, its active factor. Therefore, the intention of contemporary society is that traditional teaching, where students only receives complete gained knowledge and learn how to reproduce it, and the aim is memorizing itself, replace with teaching where the student is directly involved and mentally engaged. The reason is that „efficiency of education largely depends on how does one educated, whether and how is motivated for educational activity and whether engages all his intellectual and creative abilities or passively adopt the facts. Effective education is achieved only if knowledge is acquire consciously and enables the successful practical application“ (Malinović-Jovanović & Stojanović, 2013, 473).

„Different forms of learning engage mental processes of different sort and complexity. Those forms that require complex and higher mental processes, creativity, interconnection and application of knowledge, self-reliance, initiative, freedom of students' choice and expression, can be rightfully qualified as active methods compared to those that require simpler and lower mental processes, activities of reproduction, imitating models, applying already learned forms and work patterns“ (Ivić, Pešikan, & Antić, 2001, 195). In that sense, active learning leads towards self-reliance in acquiring new knowledge which becomes more improved and permanent, while mastering skills is spontaneous and unaffected. Some of the basic active learning indicators are: students' mental activities, diversity of activities (from active, receptive and meaningful learning to resolving problem situations and creative learning), as well as the fact that activities are specific and they change depending on the area of learning.

From the other side, contemporary teaching must aim at determining the base or the source of our musical culture. „By creating great acts and pieces, Serbian artists defend their culture, the continuity that follows and the identity that they will fight in the near future. Tihomir Đordjević believes that the basis of our culture is the original folk culture that is reflected in folklore. The national culture in material and spiritual terms, viewed from the perspective of today, allows easier understanding of the changes that have gradually occurred“ (Zdravković, 2004, 38).

Due to the tendency of contemporary teaching to make the student an active participant in the teaching process, and because learning through thoughtful engagement contributes to the independency of students in acquiring new knowledge and to their motivation to learn spontaneously and do research into something new, in this work we starts from one of the most natural aspects of learning, from what students are familiar with and close to, from the game.

2. LEARNING THROUGH MUSICAL GAMES

Many authors covered the phenomenon of musical games. „The term *musical games* implies such types of games where a music thought is both a driving force and carrier of all the activities happening in the game“ (Djurković-Pantelić, 1998, 139).

The role of games in children's development is the most intense in preschool age which represents the basis for learning in initial education. For children, games represent work, and thinking, and art, and reality, and fantasy and rest – *the source of joy*.

„The function of the game in children development is twofold: cognitive functions and willingness development. The basic functional value of the game is that it releases children from attachment to situations....in the game a divergence between meaningful and optical field appears for the first time... In the game a child learns how to act in a recognizable, mental and not obvious situation, relying on inner tendencies and motives but not on motives and stimuli coming from things“ (Vigotski, 1971, 54, 55).

In musical dances, a harmonious matching of movements with music, children have the possibility to respond in a natural way to music content, music phenomena and patterns. In that way, the musical dance, motivated by pleasure, not only directly affects the development of various musicality components – sense of rhythm and melodic phrase, expressiveness in tempo and dynamics, musical memory, the ability to listen in an active way, to experience, observe and express music, but it also encourages the act of creation. In that way, children become aware of their musical capacities, they create their own ways of musical expression and reproduction; they discover and get familiar with their observations, feelings, needs, fantasies, ideas and thoughts, their range of creativity.

Many dances are performed accompanied by singing and are significant for the development of children's voice volume and sense for beautiful and expressive singing. Everyone participates in a collective musical dance, each one of them according to their capacities, so harmonious collective performance is achieved, which meets aesthetic criteria.

The value of musical dances is that they develop children's ability to express music using movements, to express, first of all, music's character or nature, while at the same time music affects children's movements in a way that it makes them more balanced and rhythmically more expressed. Accordingly, dances should be used to influence the development of children's musical abilities, first of all the most basic ones – sense of rhythm and tone's pitch. The use of musical dances develops the ability in children to detect, experience and appreciate the beauty in music. Psychology, children's psychology in particular, confirmed strong links between melody that is song and movement. Motor skills, which are highly visible in children, can be evenly stimulated and properly directed. Thanks to music, children's movements get appropriate impulse. Getting to know the value of music games from the past, by getting to know their period and creators, there is an opportunity for children to develop awareness of themselves as participants in three eras, the past, the present and the future. In this context, children master the skill of adapting to changes in music culture, and then to changes in culture in general.

Musical games, like all other games, also develop intellectual skills in children, enrich their mental life and contribute to their aesthetic education and the development of versatile personality. Whether they are games accompanied by singing, games to instrumental accompaniment, dance or folk dances performed in “kolo”, didactic games or musical dramatizations, they do not only affect musical skills development but they also provide possibility for proper education and upbringing of young humane person. In games, children behave spontaneously, so teachers can easily notice their musical predispositions and a level of their real musical development.

3. DIDACTIC MUSIC GAMES

The use of didactic games in teaching encourages the development of perception, detection, logic, speaking, musical and many other abilities of students and they affect their overall intellectual development in a multiple positive way. They represent “activities in which children get new experiences by structuring and integrating experiences they possess, by moving on the cognitive development scale towards its higher and more sophisticated forms. Through didactic music games children are motivated to affect the world surrounding them in a spontaneous, creative and their own manner, while improving their mental and other capacities at the same time. Thus uniting the positive influence of upbringing as an organized practice and of development as a process of becoming mature“ (Kamenov, 2009, 117).

Didactic music games are performed with previously defined goals and objectives through which students develop their musicality and acquire certain musical knowledge.

Milena Djurković-Pantelić (1998) gives descriptions of some musical games that enable students to acquire contents planned for this area in an amusing and appropriate way for students. She divides them into:

- games for sound types learning,
- games for tone’s pitch recognition,
- games with singing for voice timbre recognition,
- games for quiet and loud singing and
- games for learning singing techniques.

In the first and second grade of primary school, students learn songs by hearing. Through didactic games, they naturally adopt musical components of dynamics and tempo, tone’s pitch and duration apart, but they do not know their names yet, they identify musical instruments and performers’ voices. In the third and fourth grade, when musical literacy starts, students should learn to: detect and recognize voice timbre and children’s instruments, notice and perform changes in dynamics, memorize, reproduce and improvise of melodic and rhythmic pattern and other things.

Didactic music games are particularly effective for developing students’ thinking skills due to their structure and orientation, since favorable conditions are created for situation where it is possible to cultivate generalization of thinking skills. Teaching contents in primary music education are adequate for application of various didactic music games. Students can adopt many terms from music theory through musical games. If they are well designed and used, can influence students to become familiar with sound types, tone qualities, tempo, rhythm, dynamics, musical instruments and other concepts relating to initial music teaching.

4. MUSICAL EXAMPLE FOR VARIATIONS IN DYNAMICS

With the aim of learning the concept of dynamics and enabling students to sing loudly and quietly, most often used musical game, as one of students favorite musical games, is game called *Izgubljeno pile*. This game is similar to the game called *hot-cold*, but instead of these words, words *loudly* and *quietly* are used. The game starts when one student goes out of the classroom and does not come back until other students hide *the lost chicken* (for this purpose a toy chicken can be used or any other object). After hiding the chicken, the student comes back to the classroom and he/she has to find the hidden object. In order

to help him/her find the object more easily, the other students sing the song *Izgubljeno pile*, namely, they sing quietly – *piano* (when the student is away from the object – chicken), and they sing loudly – *forte* (when the student is near or close to the object). The closest to the object the student is, the louder their singing becomes, whereas their singing quiets down as the student moves away from the object. Thus, this game is suitable for practicing variations or changes in loud and quiet singing that is gradual increase – *crescendo* and gradual decrease – *decrescendo* in the vocal interpretation of the song.

Izgubljeno pile game is used in the final part of the class, after learning the song by hearing or from musical notation, depending on the school grade in which it is used.

In the text below, we give the musical notation of the *Izgubljeno pile* song.

ИЗГУБЉЕНО ПИЛЕ

В. Томерлин
З. Васиљевић

Весело

И - ма - ли смо пи - ле, ма - ло пи - ле,
је - дно ма - ло пи - ле од по ки - ле.
А - ли пи - ле не - ста - де, и - ди па га тра - жи.
Мо - жда ће се ја - ви - ти: дај му ша - ку ра - жи.

Imali smo koku, malu koku,
jednu malu koku, zlatooku.
Ali koka nestade, idi pa je traži.
Možda će se javiti: daj joj šaku raži.

We were interested in whether the processed didactic music game *Izgubljeno pile* can contribute to the adoption of spontaneously acquired dynamics shading when it is being learned by hearing and from musical notation.

5. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The main goal of the research was to estimate the adoption of dynamics as the variation in loudness and their marking in the musical notation through didactic music games. In addition, the adoption and reproduction of the following dynamics were

examined: forte and piano as two basic dynamic indications; crescendo and decrescendo as gradual changes in volume.

The basis for the research was the music game *Izgubljeno pile*. Through the procession of the song by hearing, students spontaneously studied dynamics thorough the musical game. After that, in order to consciously observe and reproduce the marked elements of dynamics, students process the same from the musical notation. We highlight the important musical activities used in the research:

- musical game is done at the very beginning of the class in the form of revising the song already covered and learned by hearing in the previous grade;
- spontaneously accepted notions of variations in dynamics are clarified and explained;
- model songs for all pitches contained in the song are revised, musical notation is analyzed, and the song is being done, that is learned by stages (rhythm, parlato, singing by solmization and poetic text accompanied by knocking and moving hands to the beat);
- the title and the text of the song are hidden although the majority of students already recognizes the song after the first solmization singing;
- in the last stage of the interpretation adjustment of the song, focus is on reading and reproducing dynamic markings.

The sample consisted of students of the third grade of primary schools in Vranje. A total of 240 students were examined, i.e. two classes from each of the six primary schools. The research was conducted in the second semester of the 2015/16. school year. All the students who participated in the research were studying the song *Izgubljeno pile* by hearing in the second grade.

The fact that students had already mastered the musical game was established at the beginning of the class. After that, the researchers started evaluation of vocal reproduction of every student in the class, in the stage of dynamic shading of interpretation in musical notation and recorded the results.

The assessment scale with three parameters was used as the instrument on the basis of which the level of adoption and reproduction of elements of dynamics was determined:

- A (3) – sufficiently adopted and good reproduction,
- B (2) – partially adopted and reproduction with a small mistake,
- C (1) – insufficiently adopted and bad reproduction.

The scale values index is calculated according to the following formula:

$$I_{sv} = (A+B)/(A+B+C) \cdot 100$$

In that way, quantitative data was obtained as an indicator of student performance expressed as the average value of the adoption of each individual dynamic element.

On the basis of the obtained value of the scale index, the level of adoption of dynamic elements is concluded – the higher I_{sv} indicates a higher level of adoption of dynamic elements. The obtained results are interpreted by the descriptive analysis method and presented using a graph with the corresponding comment.

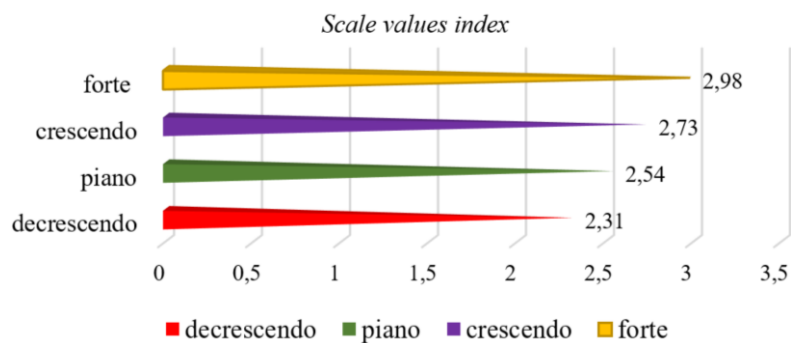
Assessment of the adoption of appropriate variations in dynamics was carried out by examiners who, in cooperation with teachers, evaluated where a certain aspect of students' behavior is on the offered scale.

6. RESEARCH RESULTS

The results obtained from the observation of the examiners and calculated according to the formula for calculating the scale value index are shown in Table 1 and Graph 1.

Table 1 Scale values index for analyzed elements of dynamic variations

Elements of dynamics as the variation in loudness	I_{sv}
forte	2,98
crescendo	2,73
piano	2,54
decrescendo	2,31
Average adoption and reproduction	2,64



Graph 1 Scale values index for analysed elements of dynamic variations

If we observe the results obtained for each dynamic element individually (Graph 1), we see that all obtained scale value indexes are in the interval between partial and good adoption and reproduction of the estimated dynamic elements. In addition, a high degree of adoption and reproduction was obtained for the strong dynamic performance (*forte*) – $I_{sv} = 2,98$, and gradual increase (*crescendo*) – $I_{sv} = 2,73$. In the case of quiet performance (*piano*) with $I_{sv} = 2,54$, and gradual decrease in performance (*decrescendo*) where $I_{sv} = 2,31$, the obtained results indicate a lower level of adoption and reproduction, which is on the assessment scale in the case of *decrescendo* closer to a partial, but sufficient adoption.

7. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the obtained results, it can be concluded that the adoption of dynamics as the variation in loudness and their markings in the musical notation through didactic music games is high in the case of strong dynamic performance – *forte* and gradual increase – *crescendo*, while closer to partial adoption in the case of quiet performance – *piano* and gradual decrease – *decrescendo*. Although, in the case of the adoption of the piano and *decrescendo*, a lower scale value index in relation to the other two elements of the dynamic performance was obtained, the results obtained are satisfactory, since the maintenance of quiet performance in vocal reproduction is considered to be the most difficult,

especially at this age of the students. It has also been shown in practice that such a way of interpreting usually entails deviations in the pace of execution, which leads to a slowdown.

Also, since didactic music games are very suitable when the song is learning by the hearing, it is necessary to use as often as possible in the teaching of primary music education, especially as the *Special-purpose song* in the form of didactic music game during learning from musical notation.

Teaching music in primary school, especially in initial teaching, encounters a large number of problems that should be adequately and timely solved in order to prevent students' negative attitude towards musical art. In order to provide diagnosing, keeping track of musical skills and their development which are necessary for reception of musical messages, to enable students to deal with the musical notation, as well as to be motivated to learn, it is necessary to take in consideration what students of that age know and are familiar with, and that is primarily GAME!

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MUZIČKE IGRE U RAZREDNOJ NASTAVI

Savremeno shvatanje vaspitanja i obrazovanja podrazumeva učenika koji je maksimalno angažovan u intelektualnom pogledu, koji je samostalan u sticanju novih znanja i direktno uključen u nastavni proces. Imajući to u vidu, potrebno je da učenici u početnoj nastavi, budu maksimalno angažovani kao aktivni činioци u nastavnom procesu, a jedan od načina, njima blizak i poznat, jeste da se to ostvari kroz igru. Početna nastava obiluje sadržajima koji su pogodni za primenu raznovrsnih didaktičkih muzičkih igara koje će učenike višestruko mentalno angažovati i omogućiti im da kroz igru i zabavu usvoje elementarne pojmove iz teorije muzike. Zbog toga je osnovni cilj ovoga rada bio da se proceni usvojenost dinamičkih elemenata putem didaktičkih muzičkih igara. Uzorak je činilo 240 učenika trećeg razreda osnovnih škola u Vranju. Na osnovu indeksa skalne procene ispitivana je usvojenost i reprodukcija elemenata dinamičkog nijansiranja kroz igru Izgubljeno pile. Najbolje rezultate učenici su postigli kod elemenata jakog dinamičkog izvođenja (forte), zatim postepenog pojačavanja (crescendo), dok su slabiji rezultati postignuti kod reprodukcovanja elemenata tihog(piano) i postepenog utišavanja (decrescendo). Dobijeni rezultati mogu doprineti u savladavanju elemenata dinamičkog nijansiranja, kao i u primeni didaktičkih muzičkih igara kao Namenskih pesama prilikom učenja iz notnog teksta.

Ključne reči: *igra, didaktičke muzičke igre, dinamičko nijansiranje*