

Dramatic and Movement Expression of a Song for Children

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Abstract The presented paper offers practical examples of song dramatization, which can be applied to various educational activities not only within music and drama education. We place particular emphasis on linking vocal, dramatic and movement activities, which are often used in isolation in kindergartens. The dramatic and movement rendering of a song can also serve as motivation and enliven the lesson.

Keywords Song, dramatization, movement, integration, pre-primary education

1. INTRODUCTION

Pre-primary education provides children the opportunity to get acquainted with songs, dramatization, movement, musical instruments and listening, through which they acquire basic knowledge of music and drama education. Vocal activities form the basis for the development of tonal and rhythmic feeling, musical imagination and memory. At the same time, they participate in the development of vocal skills and habits. Pre-school children are characterized by spontaneous musical and movement expressions, which are their natural reaction to external stimuli. These motivate the child to perform various activities, the basis of which is a game. In kindergarten, working with a song is often utilized in music education. The children learn well-known folk and author songs and create their own collection, which will expand in further education.

2. WORKING WITH A SONG

The teacher sings the unknown song first, then learns the words with the children. If parts of the text rhyme, children tend to remember them more quickly. The children also learn the verses of the song by rhythmizing or clapping, which also exercises their perception of rhythm. When the children retain the melody, we accompany it with a musical instrument. By improvising on the instrument, as well as body play, children can express individual situations, characters, story themes or tell the content of a song without words. The song can be accompanied by playing Orff instruments (rhythmic or melodic). These tools are both easy to use and most suitable for preschool children. Other objects that create sounds can also be utilized as a musical instrument, such as a plastic bottle, kitchen utensils (spoons, graters and covers), paper, sheet metal, plastic

bags, pebbles or branches. When mastering the instrumental accompaniment, we name the musical instruments so that the children can consolidate their names. First, we allow them, through improvisation, to play the accompaniment to the song the way they feel. Of course, there might be noise, possibly chaos. This is the reason why we lead the children to the point that the music cannot be so noisy and that is why the children play the accompaniment gradually (Pospíšilová, 2015, p. 12). The movement expression of the song is based on the spontaneous expression of children. It leads them to a cultivated movement harmonized with the music, rhythm and content of the songs. We can use movements on the spot - bending and stretching, squatting, turns, turning the hips, stomps, various simple swing movements, body play; or movements with progress into space - one step, two steps (which can be enriched with simple bouncing), walking, running, hops, gallop sideways / forward / backward (Derevjaníková, 2016, p. 48). The second option - movement in space, in addition to dancing, also develops children's ability to orient themselves in space. We can use movement forward, backward, sideways, alternate levels (on the ground, on all fours, standing) and formations (in a circle, in a row, in a line), children can dance individually, in pairs or in a group. In individual movement activities we use elementary movement improvisation to music, improvisation with assignments (movement on the spot / in space) with an emphasis on inspiration based on the musical background, or we compile a simple dance, respecting the form of the song and cultivated body movements.

3. DRAMATIZATION OF A SONG

Dramatic education is reflected in the work with the lyrics of the song, which is explained to the children followed by a demonstration. It is advisable to choose a song that is simple, attractive and thematically close to children. Not every song is suitable for dramatization.

The process of dramatizing a song:

1. Choosing a song

When choosing a song, we take into account the age peculiarities of children, musical experience, singing skills and interests of children, the character and structure of the song, vocal range, rhythm, tempo, intonation skills, or the current theme of the lesson. Folk songs are also suitable because they have appropriate musical construction elements (rhythm, melody, vocal range), they are an expression of

the musical feeling of ordinary folk artists, they have been proven and selected by ages, and to this day only the most popular ones have been preserved and translated (Šímanovský, 2011, p. 168-169).

2. Song analysis

After the children got acquainted with the melody and lyrics of the song, an analysis of the content on which the dramatization will be based follows. During the discussion, the children come up with many interesting answers and ideas that can become an inspiration for further activities with dramatic elements. We will analyze the lyrics of the song so that the children can grasp it. We focus on what happened in it, why it happened, who appeared in it, the characters, what characteristics they had, what the author wanted to tell us, what lessons can be learned from it. We talk about what emotions the song evoked in us. We talk about the mood of the song and the characters that appear in the story. We are looking for motivation for their actions, which led them to their actions (Pospíšilová, 2015, p. 11).

3. Playing a song

If we make sure that the children understand the content of the song, we can continue to work with it. Working with the lyrics of the song is diverse. We can focus on the situation that happened before the song, continue to play it, or show the situation after the song. Children can play out short stage formations or portray the main characters in the form of live sculptures. Another option is to accompany the singing of the song with a pantomime (Šímanovský, 2011, p. 168-169).

4. SONGS SUITABLE FOR DRAMATIZATION (the names of traditional Slovak folk songs are not translated because of their special meaning)

Songs about animals

Bola babka; Maličká som; Krásna, krásna, Medvedku, daj labku; Skáče žaba; Na dvore býva sliepočka naša; Kukulienka, kde si bola; Po nábreží koník beží etc.

Children songs

Pec nám spadla; Tancuj, tancuj; Fašiangy, Turíce; Červený kachel'; Červené jablčko; Ak si šťastný, Spi dieťaťko etc.;

Children's movement games

Kolo, kolo mlynské; Oli, Oli Janko; Medvedku, daj labku; Zajačik do lesa; Tancovala babka s dedkom; Lavá nôžka, pravá nôžka; My sme malí muzikanti; Čížiček, čížiček; Mám ručníček, mám; Zlatá brána etc..

Kukulienka (traditional slovak folk song)

Before dramatizing the song, we introduce the children to the situation in the winter forest with a short descriptive narration. We suggest that they play cuckoo and snowflake together. The children are marked with the headbands they created in the morning and divided into:

- trees: individually (in a straddle stand, which represents a den) or in pairs (turned back to back, with hands up) imitating a forest. During the song, they imitate the movement of the branches in the wind;
- kukulienka: "sitting" in the thicket (under the friend's crouched legs), waking up with the words: "hajajaj kuku".
- snowflakes: at the beginning of the dramatization, sitting clustered on the carpet, to the music they begin to slowly dance in space with the idea of being gently carried away by the wind. They are looking for a way between the trees in the forest by using graceful walking or running on round paths, turns and hops with accompanying arm movements (Poláková, Puncová, 2016, p. 54) (care must be taken to ensure that

children perceive other "flakes" and "trees" in space and adjust their path accordingly to they did not collide). At the words "hajajaj kuku" they find a cuckoo and as the snowflake gently hits the ground, they descend to the cuckoo and wake it with a touch. Then they dance again in the space out of the forest, finishing the dance improvisation by sitting back on the carpet.

Spi dieťaťko (traditional slovak folk song)

Lullaby is one of the basic types that preschool children encounter and are aware of its function. They realize that a lullaby helps put a baby or doll to sleep. We can expand this experience knowing that this song expresses the affection, tenderness and the mother's love for the child. We carry out the activity in a quiet, pleasant atmosphere. Our performance should also be calm, gentle, ideally on piano. We will also focus on the issue of the performance in a discussion about the song. We will elaborate on how to sing it so that the baby drifts away. After mastering the song, we will involve other activities. We can enrich the song with a gentle rhythmic accompaniment. A group of children can whisper the words "spi že" (sleep) in the rhythm of quarter notes (Kopinová, Felix, 2002, p. 55). We can include dramatization in the form of depicting the child's sleep to the instrumental accompaniment. We will use favorite toys or we can make puppets. We put them to sleep during the song with a pendulous movement. In the movement portrayal, we can give children the idea that they are little elves in the forest, who carry a light in the middle of their chest, which shines far ahead during the day, but goes out when they fall asleep. The feeling of the light emitting stimulates the children to extend their spine vertically and when they are released into the forward bend or curled into a ball (fall asleep) the light goes out. We play or sing the first verse of the lullaby. Children dance in space, using elevated movements while sitting, standing and walking with the light on, i.e. in a vertical body position. They shine on the road with the light, when they meet a friend, they show each other the lights (stand opposite each other), and then they turn their backs on each other - they shine on the road for the next meet up. The movement may be more dynamic at first, and gradually the movements slow down due to the gentle tones of the lullaby. At the beginning of the second verse (we can highlight this moment by striking the triangle), the elves will slowly find a place in the forest where they will fall asleep and turn off their lights (Poláková, Puncová, 2016, p. 53). We can repeat the task, or divide the children into two groups at the beginning. One group first sings with the teacher, the other group dances and then they exchange.

Maličká som (traditional slovak folk song)

We will introduce the theme of the song to the children and tell them the story of how the girls from the village used to go to graze geese in the green meadows. As a pastime, they made and wore wreaths of flowers and sang to each other. Most often they sang the song Maličká som. Right after learning the first verse, we can complement the singing with simple movements - one step, two steps, turning, squatting, jumps. Children can stand in a row or be arranged to position themselves in the chessboard pattern (each child has its own space).

Movement combination:

Bar 1: squat down, closing an arch with hands,

Bar 2: stand up, opening hands in an arch,

Bar 3: one step to the right,

Bar 4: one step to the left,

5th and 6th bar: two steps to the right,

7th and 8th bars: one turn around the axis to the right with a backside kicks, hands sideways,

9th and 10th bars: two steps to the left,

11th and 12th bars: one turn around the axis to the left with a backside kicks, hands sideways,

We can add a simple variation to the second verse:

5th and 6th bar: 3x gallop sideways to the right,
7th and 8th bars: 4 steps following the left hand with rotation around the axis,
9th and 10th bar: 3x gallop sideways to the left,
11th and 12th bars: 4 steps following the right hand with rotation around the axis,
The third verse will contain the same movements as the first verse to better grasp and remember the dance combination.

5. CONCLUSION

Working with a song is the most commonly used form of acquiring various competencies in pre-primary education. The learning of well-known melodies of folk and author songs takes place through vocal, instrumental (using Orff's instruments), movement and music and drama activities. Combining these activities into one activity is a suitable way to develop several abilities and skills (rhythmic feeling, perceptual and instrumental skills, the ability to control and process emotions and functioning in a group). We selected children's songs for integrative activities. We carry out individual activities in the form of a game, thus ensuring active participation during the entire educational process. Due to the integrative approach, we have a positive effect on the development of the child's holistic personality.

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