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Orff schulwerk elementary music applications in interdisciplinary education in chair of primary school education

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Abstract

Orff Schulwerk's approach and elementary music method, one of the modern approaches in music education, is used in Marmara University Chair of Primary School Education. During works, where teacher has a leading role, students are always active through improvisation, rhythm and dance. Teacher is the founder and observer of creative games. This method can be used primary schools instead of traditional music education so that primary school students express themselves confidently and improve their creativity. So, students can be encouraged to be inquiring and interpreting through this education approach which unites music and rhythm and improves sense of rhythm.

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Keywords: Primary School Education; orff approach; interdisciplinary.

1. Orff Schulwerk Elementary Music Applications in Interdisciplinary Education in Chair of Primary School Education

Education is “acquiring adequate knowledge, producing, developing emotional and intellectual attitudes, converting knowledge and scientific data into production and work.” (Topses 1982). Music education, as a branch of art education, is one of the most important dimensions of modern education. Through music education, children acquire knowledge and abilities related to music. Music is also an important tool facilitating personality development, intellectual development, physical psycho-motor development, language development, emotional and social development, and a tool for self expression. Families, society and education institutions have certain roles in education of modern individuals. Modern methods in these education institutions requires that lessons are planned and applied using education methods which facilitate easy learning, develop creativity, and encourage research. “In modern education approach, the beginning point of the education is the student. Education has to address students. The form and method of education has to be shaped according to the development features, interests and needs, and perception manners of students.” (Küçükahmet 2001). The structural approach of education which is applied today, perceives students as active individuals participating to the learning process, and knowledge as a subjective thing.

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“Students are autonomous, willing to learn and also have ability of self-determination, and take responsibility of their behavior. Therefore, here, knowledge is something conducted by students.” (Saban 2000). When Orff approach which includes the structural approach of education, is applied in music lessons, it facilitates that music is used as a tool in various disciplines. Orff approach is invented and applied firstly by German composer Carl Orff. Along with his music works, Orff was interested in music pedagogy, and in methods and techniques of musical teaching addressing children. Orff approach which has been used world-wide for a half century is based on movement, dance, rhythm, language and improvisation. Potential abilities such as creativity, using body language and esthetic perception can be improved with the help of this approach. Studies are made as groups in Orff approach. Teacher has a supervisor role and students are always active by doing improvisations. Music is used as means of self expression. “Making elementary music is a process of spontaneous activation and automatic realization.” (Jungmair 2003). “Everyone has the ability to express him/herself artistically, everywhere and every time. The beginning of the lesson is the same principally for children and adults. The beginning point is the human being. For children, instinct of playing games; and for adults, instinct of moving. The difference stems from conditions.” (Orff 1931). Orff places the creative human being at the focus of all artistic pedagogic activities. Purpose is to use Orff approach activities, regardless of level of music knowledge or ability of the person. During activities, instruments produced for Orff approach are used in order to make rhythm, music, and dance. These instruments are triangle, castanet, cymbal, maraca, xylophone etc. Sometimes someone can accompany rhythm and music with instruments made from waste materials. Orff instruments develop creativity, sense of rhythm, power of work and expression. Orff activities can differ according to cultures of each country. The main purpose here is to add music into experience, and to connect different disciplines with the help of music. Using music as a tool will facilitate easies comprehension of interdisciplinary subjects. It is hard to make lessons in accordance with the level of students and endearing music through traditional methods. Because children have to ability sing willingly, but it is boring for them to understand and learn music theory. Many people including some of primary school teachers perceive music lessons as lessons closely related with special abilities. In this context, teacher candidates have to be educated in a certain manner, so they can use Orff Schulwerk applications during music education and in order to use music interdisciplinary. Moving from this idea, some empirical studies about interdisciplinary application of Orff approach is made on a part of teacher candidates attending selective Orff Approach lessons in Marmara University Atatürk Faculty of Education Primary School Department Chair of Primary School Education. This paper is prepared in order to evaluate results of these empirical studies.

1.1. Problem

Teacher candidates cannot use activities interdisciplinary in music lessons.

1.2. Purpose

Researching what primary school teacher candidates think about Orff Schulwerk, and identifying the impact of Orff approach on the comprehension of subjects in interdisciplinary education

1.3. Significance

Higher activity of students in music lessons through Orff Schulwerk approach,
Application of Orff Schulwerk applications in interdisciplinary applications,
Using music as a tool in interdisciplinary education,
Improvement of rhythm conception through Orff Schulwerk approach,
Improvement of creativity through Orff Schulwerk approach.

1.4. Assumptions

Survey test used in research is appropriate for measuring level of knowledge regarding to the research subject.

1.5. *Restrains*

Research is made with a 40-person group of 4th class students attending selective Orff lesson in Marmara University Primary School Department Chair of Primary School Education, Kadıköy, Istanbul, in 2006-2007 school year.

1.6. *Research model*

Research is made according to the observation and screening model.

1.7. *Data collection*

Research data is collected through survey.

2. **Application of Activities**

Name of Lesson: Orff Approach

Lesson of Application: Social Studies

Class Level: Primary School, 5th class

Subject: Turkey, Step by Step

Benefits:

Knowledge of regions of the country

Knowledge of general features of regions

Comprehension of cultural differences between his/her region and other regions

Knowledge about folklores of regions

2.1. *Teaching through traditional methods*

The subject in the social studies book is taught by asking questions to students and giving them task of research about features of regions.

2.2. *Teaching through orff approach*

As warm-up exercises, students dance freely accompanied by music from various regions. Dancing according to the instructions given to the students related to region of the accompanying music.

Stickers with names of certain historical places of Turkey (Sümela Monastery, Aspendos, Troy etc.) written on them are put onto back of students without they know which is put on their backs. Dancing students try to find which place is written on their back according to the information that other students give about them.

Features of regions are put into a data pool.

7 groups are made from students, and every group is given one region. Every group has to compose a song consistent with the features of that region. Composed song is prepared as a piece for presentation including music, lyrics, rhythm and dance.

Students sit down to ground building a circle, and every group show its presentation to other friends.

Et the end of lesson, a discussion is held about which applications are made, and which further application can be realized.

3. Survey Results at the End of Lessons with Traditional Methods

Question 1: How willing were you to lesson with traditional method?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
A BIT	8	20
VERY	12	30
NORMAL	20	50

Question 2: Did lesson with traditional methods make easier to understand the subject?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	8	20
NO	25	62.5
PARTLY	7	17.5

Question 3: Did you use music as a tool in lessons of different disciplines?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	18	45
NO	3	7.5
PARTLY	19	47.5

Question 4: At which activities did you use music interdisciplinary?

	SONG	COMPOSITION	DANCE	IMPROVISATION
NUMBER	40	-	-	-
PERCENTAGE	100	-	-	-

Question 5: Was it hard to use music as a tool in interdisciplinary applications?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	4	10
NO	15	37.5
PARTLY	21	52.5

4. Survey Results at the End of Lessons with Orff Approach

Question 1: How willing were you at the beginning of Orff approach applications?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	-	-
NO	-	-
PARTLY	40	100

Question 2: Did warm-up exercises at the beginning of lesson help for preparation to subject?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	36	90
NO	-	-
PARTLY	4	10

Question 3: Which made interdisciplinary applications easier for you, traditional method or Orff approach?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
TRADITIONAL METHOD	2	5
ORFF APPROACH	32	80
NO DIFFERENCE	6	15

Question 4: From your point, was it good to use music interdisciplinary with Orff approach?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	38	95
NO	-	-
PARTLY	2	5

Question 5: Did group work increase your self confidence?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	37	92.5
NO	-	-
PARTLY	3	7.5

Question 6: Did Orff applications in interdisciplinary education make feel you better?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	38	95
NO	-	-
PARTLY	2	5

Question 7: Did Orff applications lead to learning without rote and through practice?

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
YES	38	95
NO	-	-
PARTLY	2	5

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

Education applied in our country gives students the possibility to express themselves. It is now possible to add music into experience in lessons from various disciplines, and to apply it in various forms (composition, improvisation, dance, rhythm). “Role of teachers is to discover these possibilities. They have to think about concepts again and again, to test them, and to find out meanings of these concepts in the light of results of contemporary researches and newly reached data. Another duty of teachers is to discover and show significance of these concepts for the transformation of the society and for modern education.” (Jungmair 2003). “Our mission does not end by teaching to students the subjects in curriculum. The purpose of education in schools is to educate students in general terms and to prepare them for the rest of their lives.” (Koçak 2003). We see that students feel themselves better and comprehend subjects in lessons better through application of Orff approach. Applying Orff approach in lessons which is applied world-wide today has to be one of the keys in order to reach the purpose of modern education.

1. Orff approach has to be included in curriculum of teacher candidates in Chair of Music Education, Chair of Primary School Education, and Chair of Preschool Education.

2. Present music, primary school and primary school teachers have to be educated about Orff approach through in-service courses.

3. Researches have to be encouraged about Orff Schulwerk elementary music approach, and an Orff literature adapted to our culture has to be developed.

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