

The Teaching Experience of using Props in Creative Movements to Develop Children's Imagination

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Abstract: This article explores how children's imaginative abilities in creative movements can be developed by using props. Props can be important tools to enable children to explore various ways in portraying their creative ideas. Due to the children having individual ideas in creating movements, focus on kinaesthetic stimulation to achieve series of movements is an important factor to develop the children's imagination. The components of creative movements such as body, space, time, and energy, are applied as the basis in the formation and development of creative movements. In the beginning stages, diagnosis was carried out to determine what was lacking in the imaginative aspects of the children. After that, the researcher conducted creative movement activities for 18 weeks. As a result from the 18-week activities, a performance portfolio was developed. Analysis by means of observation and checklist were done to evaluate and interpret the performance portfolio. This article also discusses the implementation, researcher's experiences, and challenges encountered in conducting these activities. This helps to discover more useful alternatives in varying the teaching methods based on imaginative exploration, for the children to portray more expressive communication through props and movements.

1 INTRODUCTION

According to Salmah Ayob (1994), stimulation of emotional exploration of children can be released using creative movement activities. The key to success in this activity is to provide fun in teaching sessions. It is important in the growth process for it provides the understanding on the meaning of life to be fully appreciated by them. The researchers found that focus in providing space for children to make their activities expressive and creative is often discussed. The major key is to provide fun and enjoyment for the children in the teaching session.

The creative movement activity embraces the process of creative imagination experience to explore movements according to the movements that a person wants to create. The mastery in creating a set of movement movements is the core in interpretation to regulate thinking operations into an active and dynamic stage.

Stinson (1988) has expressed his opinion on the value of creative movements related to the movement's sense of consciousness through the involvement of a new and exciting experience. Its existence is able to develop an important value for

discovering the potential and talent to be developed into expressive (Lloyd, 1998). Therefore, this experience is not only for the children but also for the teachers' experience in carrying out this activity is able to build imagination and detect the sense of joy in designing movements for children.

Klein (1982) states that the learning process using creative movements is not static for it provides the child an opportunity to express their feelings. Through an appealing and unique space preparation application is the learning method that includes the aspect of accepting new knowledge. It even covers the channelling of experiences on various teaching situations as a medium for the teachers to interact with children in heading towards creative thinking (Mayer, 1989).

Through this article, the experience that will be discussed involves the researchers' 18 weeks of experience in conducting creative movement activities in a kindergarten. The discussion includes the use of five types of props such as: (1) Hula Hoop - a circular shaped hoop made of plastic; (2) Pom-pom - props made of plastic shredded to fine streamers; (3) Handkerchiefs - fabrics cut into square shapes; (4) Ribbon - colour papers cut into long

streamers; (5) Hand Fan – folded semi-circular paper or fabric with holder made of plastic.

This study also discusses several level of the researcher's experience in carrying out this activity: (1) Method of playing with the children using appropriate modules through elements (body, space, time and force) and; (2) instructions when using props.

2 METHODS OF PLAYING

In the first phase, the researchers started the day by meeting up 16 children under 6 years old who are following this activity. The researchers introduced themselves as researchers who will be with them every week. Then, the researcher instructed them to introduce themselves in an ice-breaking session to strengthen the relationship between researchers and the children. The module started with giving a brief explanation on breathing. Breathing is very important in every activity. Breathing correctly is by using the diaphragm. Proper breathing is very important before doing movement activities. The researchers have taught them to right techniques to inhale and exhale.

Next, the activity is continued with a brief exercise. This is to see the child's ability to move and the level of receiving the given instructions. Additionally, researchers used previously administered modules with the aim of bringing themselves closer to the children and providing comfort to them to move without stress. After that, the "Walk and Think" module is conducted. This module provides instruction for children to run according to tempo 1, 2, 3 and spontaneously positioned themselves to stop, sit or walk. This module aims to see the child's sensitivity by listening to instructions while thinking. After conducting the "Walk and Think" module, the researchers found that some of them could not follow the instructions given by the researchers. The "Walk and Think" module also found that children had sensitivity problems in receiving instructions while remembering the assigned position. However, three minutes after that they were able to execute the task faster. Thinking skills and co-operation with each other can be nurtured and made the task easily solved by the children.

In the fifth week of the same phase, the activity is continued with a simple exercise with the children. Researchers looked for abnormalities by the children performed workouts with music. This is to see the children's tendency to follow movements through music. For example, the children were given an

exercise known as "Chicken Dance". They look very cheerful while doing this activity. Apart from that, the exercise aims to provide early identification of an animal, which is a chicken and imitate the chicken's movement while dancing with the music.

The activities are then continued with the identification of animals and plants. The researchers interacted with the children to mention the types of animals and plants. The children were able to interact with the researchers and imagine the respective animal's movements and sounds. They were also playing cheerfully while improving their creativity. Through the module, the researchers found that the children were walking and creating children's movement exploration based on their chosen animal.

After that, a module called "Know ABC" is conducted in class. This module is known as ABC because through this module, the child remembers and imagines each letter learned and then describes the letter using movements involving small groups or large groups. This is followed by another module known as the "Toxic Flower". This module is called "Toxic flower" due to the existence of characters like tigers and butterflies. The butterfly is assigned to guard the flower so as not to be eaten by the tiger. The children were very happy and excited about the activity. They were also actively involved in this module and asked for this activity to be continued the next week.

Based on these activities, the children have experience in blowing balloons. They were ecstatic when they saw the researcher blowing a balloon. They have excellently done the task and in fact, some of them still wanted to continue this game. They have fostered a high level of cooperation. The following is the result of analysis from meeting up with the children in carrying out the module activities to enhance children's creativity in the creative movement. The children's ability to perform activities based on module 1 until the module 8 recorded by the researcher can be seen in the table.

Table 1: Schedule of activities with children in phase one.

Modul	Jurnal analisis persiapan beasiswa anak-anak bakat NCPD							
	Minggu 1 Minggu 1	Minggu 2 Minggu 2	Minggu 3 Minggu 3	Minggu 4 Minggu 4	Minggu 5 Minggu 5	Minggu 6 Minggu 6	Minggu 7 Minggu 7	Minggu 8 Minggu 8
Murid 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 7	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 9	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 11	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 13	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 14	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 15	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Murid 16	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes based on the table above:

Murid – Children

Modul – The activity of creative movement administered by the researcher using elements (body, space, time and force).

Based on Table 1, the researcher found that at the beginning of the first week, the children showed good response during the ice-breaking session. This is evidently shown because only 5 children were shy when introducing themselves. For the breathing module application session, the children were able to execute the instructions given by the researcher. Only 3 out of 16 children were running and showing dislike reaction during the activity. For "Walk and Think" module, there were 8 out of 16 children who were able to perform this activity. Almost half of the whole can perform movements according to the tempo but they cannot do two things at a time. The "Chicken Dance" module revealed that 7 children still could not perform the movement although the researcher has shown repeated examples to the children before starting activities. However, 9 children successfully performed the movement until the activity ended.

In addition, the fifth module known as the animals and plants identification module has shown that only 2 out of 16 children were unable to imitate the animal movement. For the plant identification, a total of 5 out of 16 children cannot execute plant's movement. The researchers noticed that the children were more likely to be attracted to the "Discover Animals" module than the "Discover the Plant" module. Through "Discover the Plant" module, the children were asked to imagine movements made by a tree. The children were able to show how a tree moves when it is hit by a storm. Next, the "Know ABC" module conducted in the seventh week revealed that the children can create movements based on the letters given by the researcher. They tried their best and only 4 children were unable to perform the activity. The researchers found that they were able to perform the activity only as an individual but not as a pair or in a group.

3 TEACHING EXPERIENCES USING PROPS

3.1 Hula Hoop

Based on the use of hand props that is the Hula Hoop, the data revealed that 8 children were not able execute the movement tasks using the Hula Hoop. From the observation, it can be seen that the children only used

the Hula Hoop by simply turning the hoop using their hands while the researcher is with them during the activity. There were 8 children who were able to manipulate movements by using the hoop. These children were the ones who were excited and scrambled to get the Hula Hoop when it hoops were distributed the first time. During the second week, a total of 5 out of 8 children's who were unable to perform this activity in the previous week have successfully done the task. However, 3 children were still unable to do it.

3.2 Pom-pom

The session using pom-pom revealed that during the introduction of the props by the researchers, the children have never seen a pom-pom. This clearly revealed that they never held the props at all. During the distribution of the pom-pom, the researchers found that the children only move the pom-pom using their wrists either in a circular motion, up and down or sideways. This can be seen in the early stage of movement exploration. In this activity, there were only 7 children who were able to perform the movements required. The rest of the 9 children were making fun of each other and doing their own things.

3.3 Handkerchief

The children also did exercises such as jumping, running, and walking. They used the existing space and it appeared that some children did not follow the instructions given. The researchers gave directions to make a circle by holding the corner of each other's handkerchief. Through this activity, a total of 14 children have demonstrated that they understood the instructions easily and performed these activities. Only 2 children seemed quiet and unable to carry out this task. This is evidently shown because they placed their handkerchief on their shoulders.

3.4 Ribbon

The use of ribbon as props revealed that the children have shown their likes and interest in the ribbons. They were excited to get their own ribbons during the distribution and immediately explored the ribbon using their own movements. The researchers felt that these props were easy for them to carry out the activities. 3 out of 16 children's were not able to perform the activity but were able to do so in other activities probably because they have the tendency to have more fun with the other props.

3.5 Hand Fan

The researchers distributed the hand fans to children. It was difficult for them to open and close the fan. This may be due to their small hands. However, 6 children showed that they seemed to have normally played and used the hand fan before. The researchers demonstrated several simple movements using the fan among which were swivels and flicking left and right. These 6 children seemed to be interested in the activity. In fact, they were also able to do the movement easily. However, 10 children's were still hesitant to move, changed the movements and did not pay attention.

4 IMPLICATIONS TO THE TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF IMAGINATION TO CHILDREN

Through the philosophy proposed by Laban (1975), the structure of motion construction is based on the forms of experience present. This experience is thought to be a form of taste that can be interpreted by the unique idea of an individual creating movement. These forms include physical, mental and emotional controls that generate imagination for creative movement outcomes.

The process emphasizes on the development of communication interactions in student's way of thinking through creative movement (Joyce, 1973). Fleming (1976) also supports creative movements as a framework for children's to develop an understanding of expression and interaction. This is to create an expression of inner feelings when meeting the demands of school activities as a medium to release stress. Interacting with creative expressions generates the development of thinking ideas that will shape the imagination of the mind. The movements carried out in the activities functions to fulfill the values that reinforced the unique thinking style.

Through the activities carried out, the effort to understand the nature of children in person is very challenging. This is not an easy matter. However, giving them experience about movement expressions is an act of forming values that are likely to give a positive impression on their cognitive development. For example, physical exposure is related to body awareness, physical growth, and physical appearance. This ability provides a good response to the mechanisms of the body to build confidence in children.

In addition, the teaching style in providing skills includes the exploration and imagination process. The process is not merely teaching, explaining, clarifying solely but taking into account the method of forming a goal based on the structure of teaching in providing the challenge of experience so that the foundation of the potential self-development is achieved. The children have different tastes, the expressing aspect is the content used in the creative movement activities as a process for experiencing and deepening the sense of presence as well as the desire to do. Through movement, feel and feeling is a form of expression as well as creative imagination through the movement created. This process is seen as a creative form of mental digestion in producing cheerfulness in children's emotions. Here is an example of activity being handled.

Table 2: Explanation of activity 1.

ACTIVITY	DETAILS OF ACTIVITY
INSTRUCTION:	
1. Sit down (squatting) with action and mimicking face (angry, sad, furious and happy) by using a handkerchief	Expressions through command that has been instructed should be made by the children to look for an action and facial mimic for them to imagine and then to be demonstrated in front of their friends using the props given.
2. Kick forcefully and voice up while moving with your pom pom.	

Table 3: Explanation of activity 2.

ACTIVITY	DETAILS OF ACTIVITY
INSTRUCTIONS:	
1. You are like a tall Giraffe and keep walking by jumping on the Hula Hoop you see in front of you.	Children need to display acts that give them fun to play with what they want to create. Physical assisted care is a way for them to find what they think can be done as directed.
2. You are a mouse looking for food in the Hula Hoop circle while eating very fast.	

Table 4: Explanation of activity 3.

ACTIVITY	DETAILS OF ACTIVITY
INSTRUCTIONS:	Need to be in good body position as a pathway to create a steady and vibrant body shape
1. INSTRUCTIONS: In a low position, hold the ribbon while walking and pose (pause and show the action)	
2. Hold the ribbon and pose with the ribbon on the floor surface.	

Table 5: Explanation of activity 4.

ACTIVITY	DETAILS OF ACTIVITY
INSTRUCTIONS:	Feeling the impact from creating how much is felt by varying the sense of body drop or fallen with effective physical controls and should be felt by the children.
1. ACTIVITY: Use your handkerchief and drop yourself on the floor	
2. ACTIVITY: Swinging both handkerchiefs to the right and left then jump and sing	

Based on these four tables, each has a diverse range of experience sharing pattern for the children. The instructions in Table 2 focus more on facial expression with the addition of the pom pom as props. The use of this pom pom is actually giving the children an opportunity to prepare the right moves. For Tables 3 to 5, each provides a rich form of expression experience to prevent the children from getting bored. In addition, these props have made them more active because they are able to use them in a variety of exciting action. This situation can be considered as interesting for it has led the children to a creative exploration experience through creative movement activity that uses props.

Based on the above description, the effect of this experience has given the connection between generating the children to think of an exciting action and the experience of the researchers giving whatever space so that the children can explore. They are required to show a wide range of movements while the researchers look for the presence of creative movements that can bring out the fun while the kids are playing. It is important for the researchers to be more actively in looking for whatever desire they want in the movement.

The desire and meaning in the form of movements that the body delivers intends to shape, accept and

present movement through the experience. According to Fraleigh (1987) states that the unity between the mind and body also helps to provide the experience of building a form of movement. The process of growth from each level leads to the experience of forming feelings through the various channels that give stimulus to the thinking process. Transmission of various forms provides space for the children to express their inner feelings or ideas and feeling is a useful tool to ensure that the need for emotions and feelings is highlighted in the perfect space. Methods helps to express the children’s inner feelings and shape the sense of interpretation of activities of exciting and fun movements.

Every child has its potential. The essence of their souls is that diverse talents may be easily displayed or vice versa. The task of the researchers is to provide how to develop the children’s potential in this activity. How can the application of the props in the activities provide the experience of the feelings they that they have to be processed and freed using the space for them to express themselves. This is a process of movement creation to produce explorations which involve what needs to be done, what is seen and what is preferred to be the foundation of the construction of various movements.

Encouragement is crucial to providing space for children to find and demonstrate the potentiality that is present within them. Every child has a unique talent and has different backgrounds, physical and tendency of interests, how far their creativity is developed depending on the experience, feelings and encouragement in participating in creative movement activities. The conclusions of this discussion can be seen in the following table:

Table 6: Summary of implications to the teaching experience of imagination to children.

Creative Movement Activities	Props Application	
EXPERIENCE		
Interaction (Researchers) + (Children)		
Physical	I M A G I N A T I O N	Playing
Self-Potential		Trying out new things
Desire		Fun
Exploration		Create unique movements

5 CONCLUSIONS

Through this article, the conclusions give an overview that the experience in improving the performance of a child through creative movement activities using props is reviewed in terms of how the exploration activity can provide them an active stimulus to think of finding and displaying the skills available to be performed through the movement:

- Develop the skills present in the children in order to develop and expand their experience in movement creation.
- The passion and activeness of body parts exploration.
- The use of energy practiced with various feelings to be released.
- Play with space as the process of enjoying the surroundings around the children.
- Improvement in the children's self-confidence for they are able to present their creative ideas together with their friends.

The researchers suggested that such teaching elements can highlight awareness about activities that can provide experience to help in bringing out the children's potential and uniqueness. The experience felt, is a recognition of new links that is capable of detecting ways of thinking, responding and communicating about ideas and feelings. These implications provide opportunities for solving problems, exploring, taking risk, forming abilities, finding answers based on decision-making to prepare the children heading towards critical thinking. This refers to the development of thinking power for constructing the emotional processes to attain a high level of attainment in the children's achievement. This article suggests that creative movement activities need to be enhanced by using tools such as props as well as activity instructions that will help teachers to provide experience opportunities in the creation of space for expressions towards exploring a more creative imagination for children.

AUTHOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Muhammad Fazli Taib Saearani, graduated summa cum laude from Universitas Gadjah Mada with a Doctorate in Performing Art and Visual Art Studies in the field of dance education in the classical court dance heritage of Yogyakarta. He received his Master's degree (Drama & Theatre) in creative movement education at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang in 2014, Bachelor's Degree in Creative Arts

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