PROCESS DRAMA AS A METHOD IN AN INTEGRATED DAY

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Abstract

The paper aims to present process drama as an effective method in achieving educational outcomes in the correlation-integration system in primary education. The correlation-integration system appears as one of the responses to the demands of modern society, where the emphasis is placed on the active position of pupils in the educational process. Since the correlation-integration methodical system is based on the theory of cross-curricular connections, process drama, as a method of experiential learning and teaching, enables the correlation and integration of educational outcomes and contents of different school subjects. The paper will present process drama and its application in the educational process, which encourages active learning of pupils, and is also a valuable contribution to the methodology of numerous teaching areas.

Keywords:correlation-integration methodological system, cross-curricular correlation, process drama, primary education*

Introduction:

Today's educational system reflects the need of modern society for interdisciplinarity, linking different sciences and leaving the traditional closed nature of a particular subject. This imposes the need to integrate different content and areas of knowledge necessary for the pupil to become an active participant in society. Jensen (2003) stresses that the educational process needs to be organised in an interdisciplinary way and in a way that is related to real life to enable learning. Learning is planned from the pupil's perspective, and an interdisciplinary approach to learning is best suited to real-life learning that integrates and connects different areas of development and gives a new quality to learning (Krumes Šimunović, Blekić, 2013). Learning is an active process that grows from the confrontation between the individual and his environment, and the fundamental form of confrontation between a person and the world is activity and action (Terhart, 2001). This process of confrontation with the active world is

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embedded in social relations, processes, and interactions that contribute to the development of the individual, where experiential learning comes to its full expression. Bransford, Brown and Cockin (2002) argue that integrated learning through multiple disciplines creates pupils with more understanding and a higher level of knowledge than was the case with the study of science in separate parts. In this way, the role of the teacher changes because they create the pupils' experiences and help in the learning process by suggesting the directions in which learning can go (Lucan, 1981).

Under the *National Curriculum for Early Childhood Education* (2015), there has been a restructuring of the subject curricula at the level of primary education in the Republic of Croatia. Cross-curricular topics that go beyond subject specialization have been presented and affirmed. This allowed changes in the methods and forms of work during the lesson. Therefore, the curriculum proposes methical systems that allow pupils and teachers to increasingly apply research-based teaching and an interdisciplinary approach to teaching in order to develop the pupils' core competencies.

The correlation-integration system best fits the guidelines of the *National Curriculum* because *it is based on connecting the teaching areas within the subject, the subjects within the educational area, and educational areas with one another* (Rosandić, 2005, 206). The correlation-integration system encourages intra-subject and inter-subject (cross-curricular) permeation and connection of content with the aim of integrating new knowledge into the pupil's cognitive, emotional, and life experience. According to Krumes Šimunović and Blekić, (2013) intra-subject and inter-subject connectivity is an important form of methodical preparation for classes in which the teacher leads the pupil to appropriate and successful ways, forms, and methods of work, as well as to the realisation of the anticipated educational outcomes.

Process drama is a method by which pupils acquire the knowledge and skills they need to function in everyday life situations. *In a process drama, creating, playing, experiencing, and reflecting on the dramatic world and the events in it are completely interdependent and occur practically simultaneously* (Gruić, 2002, 18). The value of process drama as a teaching method is reflected in creating a dramatic event and a dramatic experience, which encourages the pupils' cognitive and metacognitive abilities, and develops their socio-emotional skills and communication competencies (developed by mimicking everyday-life situations).

In Croatia, research on the effectiveness of process drama has only just begun and often only examples of good practice are published (mostly preschool practice) and reviews of workshops, while studies on process drama or the applications of process drama are still rare. International studies (Zanitsch, 2009; Piazzoli, 2011; Anderson, 2012; Simons, 2013; Branscombe, 2015) speak in favour of process drama as an effective method of learning and teaching and point out the positive attitude of pupils towards drama activities. In this paper, the authors wanted to point out the efficiency and advantage of process drama in a correlation-integration system that allows participants to actively engage in testing knowledge, developing ideas and searching for solutions through their work in a dramatic context (Freebody, 2010). The paper presents the

processing of one teaching topic *Environmental Protection,* in Year 4 of primary school, in the correlation-integration system by applying process drama.

The Correlation-Integration Methodological System

The Croatian educational system offers extensive knowledge of different areas within different subjects, which implies focusing attention on a specific topic within one subject under its educational outcomes. Although specific topics, phenomena, and problems may occur at different levels of education in the same subject or other subjects, it is common in school practice to indicate correlation only as a side note or a brief digression. Therefore, it is desirable to plan and realise lessons within the correlation-integration system to achieve complete knowledge (Krumes Šimunović, Blekić, 2013).

The correlation-integration methodological system is based on the theory of cross-curricular connections, the basis of which is the interrelation and interweaving of educational outcomes, content, goals, and activities of various subjects into a single whole. Težak (1996) describes correlation as an association by a certain level of similarity in which the connected units do not change significantly. Correlation has a positive effect on the teaching process because it facilitates and improves learning. It enables pupils to connect their knowledge more skilfully, as well as develop special skills and routines with the fostering of educational values (Visinko, 1994). In addition to linking educational outcomes, correlation enables the permeation of the life experience of all participants of the teaching process gathered into a whole.

The application of the correlation-integration system requires great innovation in the processing of related content from different sciences, which can be planned in teams. Regarding the methodological strategy in the correlation-integration system, it is important to emphasise the importance of the role of pupils, teachers, and educational outcomes and, keeping this in mind, select the best teaching methods and methodical procedures. Independent research or group work are preferred forms of work in which pupils can express their abilities and see the results of their work, which greatly affects intrinsic motivation (Bežen, 2008).

The correlation-integration system is distant from reproductive and established teaching methods, and what distinguishes it from more traditional approaches is the importance of the active position of pupils in lessons and the need to develop critical thinking and the pupils' creative possibilities (Krumes Šimunović, Blekić, 2013). The former role of the teacher was to transfer knowledge to the pupil. Although this role of the teacher has not changed, the social context has set different conditions. Today, knowledge is easily accessible thanks to the development of technology. The teacher must find methods to interest the pupils and offer them complete knowledge. Therefore, the teacher must find a way to bring the curriculum closer to the pupil, so that it remains in their long-term memory (Vukojević, 2016).

Since the correlation-integration system implies the harmonisation of educational outcomes and teaching content from different subjects, Rosandić (2005) calls the planning of lessons based on the principles of correlation and integration "correlation-integration planning". In such planning, a common topic is determined, which represents a conceptual-informational and

methodological connection with the educational outcomes of other subjects (Rosandić, 2005). Under the categories established by comparative aesthetics (Kajić, 1991), special types of correlation that are derived from the organisation of the educational process can be determined. This is a synchronous correlation based on the simultaneous acquisition of content from different subjects (a topic belonging to different subjects is studied at the same time). This type of correlation can be realised in lower primary years, where the material can be connected into thematic units. The second correlation is asynchronous, occurs in higher grades of education, and is characterised by different subspecies (Rosandić, 2005). Based on the synchronous correlation, Bežen (2008) designed the framework structure of stages for the implementation of classes in the correlation-integration system (Tab. 1).

Table 1 Stages of the correlation-integration system

1.	Agreement on the topic and setting the goal
2.	Selection and determination of problems on which correlation and integration will be carried out
3.	Distribution of individual tasks to pupils, development of the activity program
4.	Performing the activities
5.	Solving the problems
6.	Presenting the results
7.	Peer evaluation

Source: Bežen (2008)

Process Drama as a MethodofLearningandTeaching

Process drama is a relatively new concept in Croatian educational practice. Cecily O'Neill (1995) introduced the term process drama into the dictionary of drama pedagogy. The main feature of process drama is the revival of the drama world during the process. Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton emphasise the importance of drama as the best means for restoring and revitalising the educational process. They emphasise the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of life and its problems through dramatic experience as the end goal of drama for learning (Krušić, 2014). Dorothy Heathcote explores *learning through drama through the entry of participants into an imaginary drama world where they face different problems* (2002, 16). Gavin Bolton and Cecily O'Neill point out that drama education serves as a medium for questioning social and personal problems, but also for exploring the dramatic form itself and the creative expression of its participants (Gruić, 2002).   To understand the process drama in the educational process, it is necessary to show how the process drama builds an imaginary world that is at the same time a space for learning in the real world. According to Gruić (2002), the essential features of the process drama are the episodic structure, the participants, the absence of an external audience, the teacher in a role and the reflection.

Episodes are rounded units that are not related to the level of the story, but to the level of activity of the process drama (Gruić, 2002). The episodic structure of a process drama does not imply that the episodes are intermittent or arbitrary, but rather, *the episodes are selected and*

structured to emphasise either the past, present, or future (O'Neill, 1995, 109). The boundaries of episodes are exiting/entering the role, changing the form of the work (pair work, group work, or individual work), changing the place and time of the action, etc. (Gruić, 2002). The episodic structure of the process drama allows one to approach a subject or a cross-curricular topic unconventionally and originally, i.e., in a way that will require openness, curiosity, and critical thinking from the pupils.

In the process drama, participants usually take on group roles and enter an imaginary world (Gruić, 2002). Participants in the process drama create events and thus participate simultaneously in the real and imaginary worlds (O'Neill, 1995). Gruić (2002) states that the process drama is not limited to group roles, but that individualised roles develop within the group roles. Individualised roles allow the story to develop. The process drama is characterised by the whole group entering the imaginary world at the same time, which means that there are no observers or spectators. In a process drama, *participants oversee important aspects of what is happening in the drama moment, simultaneously experience (create an experience) and organise, evaluate, and assess what has happened, and make connections with other experiences. These activities require the use of perception, imagination, speculation, and interpretation, and at the same time develop dramatic, cognitive, and social skills of participants* (O'Neill, 1995, 1).

Participants in the process drama do not function as an audience or as a group that creates and performs a theatre play (Gruić, 2002). According to O'Neill (1995), the absence of an external audience does not nullify the process drama as a theatrical form, but the participants of the process drama establish the sense of the audience and complete the theatre equation. We can say that the participants in the process drama take over the functions of the main actors who participate in the creation of a theatre play (actor, director, writer), but their goal is not to perform for others, but to create an individual and collective experience of creative expression (Gruić, 2002).

In the development of the process drama, in addition to the participants, an important role is played by the teacher. Applying the *teacher in role* drama technique as a character in a dramatic event, the teacher is actively involved in the process of his pupils' experiences (Morgan and Saxton, 1987). The *teacher in role* drama technique is the easiest way for the teacher to participate in the drama world together with the pupils. *By entering the role, the teacher must simultaneously participate in the real and imaginary world, because their task is to merge the real and the dramatic time.* (O'Neill, 1995, 126). By connecting these two times, the teacher enables pupils to reflect, debate, seek solutions, and think about the entire dramatic story created during the process.

When planning the process drama, one should start with educational outcomes, then take into account the age of the pupils, their knowledge, skills, experience, and motivation. The teacher should pay attention to the elements of the story: the place and time of the action (they determine the context of the action), the roles of the pupils and the teacher (they are related to the context and the action) and the motive that drives the action. *The goal of the motive that*

drives the action is the emergence of tension (Gruić, 2002, 33). O'Toole and Haseman (1988) mention several ways to create tension: *a difficult task, the conflict between characters, an expected or unexpected surprise, a secret, etc*.

An important determinant of the process drama is the reflection that allows the pupils to discuss the experience. According to O'Neill (1988), reflection does not have to happen immediately after the process drama, it can also be an integral part of the process itself. Reflection can be realised through discussion, oral presentation, or writing diaries, thought maps, and various forms of drama activities. Since reflection is most often carried out in the final part of the work, *it is certainly necessary to allocate enough time for it, because, like experience, it leads to understanding* (O'Neill, 1988, 17).

ArticulationofProcess Drama intheCorrelation – Integration System

The application of process drama in the correlation-integration methodological system does not deprive us of the basic characteristics of process drama but opens up many new possibilities, from the study and analysis to the research of an imaginary world in which different and similar teaching areas are connected. By placing the process drama in the correlation-Integration system, a correlation between multiple subjects and cross-curricular topics is achieved. By implementing the process drama in the correlation-integration system, the traditional lesson structure is lost and the subject-period deviation occurs because the contents overlap and complement each other. Similar contents of different school subjects are integrated into the whole and help students to explore the topic more successfully in the episodic structure of the process drama. In one stage, several school subjects were correlated through different drama activities. This way of working results in an integrated day in the form of a process drama for which many educational outcomes are expected. Considering the structure of the correlation-integration system and the characteristics of the process drama, the coverage of the *Environmental Protection* topic in Year 4 of primary school shall be presented. This articulation requires a longer period of performance (1 day) – to achieve the expected learning outcomes and to enable the pupils to have a quality approach to problem solving.

Topic: Environmental Protection

Learning outcomes:

Croatian language

- The pupil talks and speaks out the texts.
- The pupil forms the text using nouns, verbs, and adjectives, respecting grammatical and orthographical rules.
- The pupil listens to the text and recounts the content of the listened text.
- The pupil connects the content and topic of the literary text with their experience.
- The pupil expresses themselves creatively according to their interest, motivated by various experiences and the experiences of the literary text.
- The pupil finds data using various age-appropriate sources.
- The pupil distinguishes age-appropriate and interest-appropriate printed publications.

Mathematics

- The pupil uses different displays of data.

Science and Social Studies

- The pupil comes to conclusions about the organisation of the local community and compares the representations of different spaces.
- The pupil discusses the importance of a responsible attitude towards oneself, others, and nature.
- The pupil comes to conclusions about the changes and relationships in nature and the mutual dependence of living beings and spaces using examples from their environment.
- The pupil can orient themselves in an area, interprets the plan of the area and the map of their homeland, makes a plan of immediate surroundings and comes to a conclusion about the connection between the spatial characteristics of their homeland and the people's way of life.
- The pupil discusses the impact of rules, rights, and duties on the individual and the community.
- With guidance, the pupil explains the results of their research on nature, natural and/or social phenomena and/or various sources of information.

Expectations of cross-curricular topics:

Personal and social development

- Develops a self-image.
- Controls their emotions and behaviour.

Learning to learn

- With the support of a teacher or independently, the pupil seeks new information from various sources and successfully applies it when solving problems.
- The pupil uses creativity to shape their ideas and approaches to problem solving.
- The pupil distinguishes facts from opinions and can compare different ideas.

Sustainable development

- The pupil distinguishes the positive and negative effects of humans on nature and the environment.
- The pupil recognises interaction and interdependence in nature.
- The pupil considers the impact of using different energy sources on the environment and people.
- The pupil explains that action has consequences and results.
- The pupil describes how an individual can affect the protection of natural resources.
- The pupil recognises the importance of preserving the environment for general well-being.

Entrepreneurship

- The pupil applies innovative and creative solutions.
- The pupil manages to cope with uncertainty and the risks it brings.

Civic education

- The pupil participates in decision-making in the democratic community.

Teaching stage	Drama activity	Description of the activity
Agreement on the topic and setting the goal	Simultaneous work of smaller groups in a role	Pupils are divided into five groups. Each group receives one stanza of *Our planet*, a poem by JosipaFranjićRadulović.
	1. Frozen images	1. Group: Show the first stanza using frozen images.
	2. Sculpting	2. Group:

		Recognise nouns and adjectives in the second verse and, based on them, sculpt in pairs.
	3. One mouth	3. Group: Discover the figurative meaning in the third verse and, together, as one mouth, pronounce the figurative in one sentence.
	4. Mime	4. Group: Using mime, present the nouns from the fourth stanza.
	5. Improvisation	5. Group: The pupils play the fifth stanza townspeople.
Selection and determination of the problem	Teacher in role	The teacher enters the role of the representative of the environmental protection agency and presents themselves to the students. The representative of the environmental protection agency uses a PowerPoint presentation to show photographs of a polluted environment (water, air, soil, animals, hungry children) and asks the pupils to comment on the photos and clarify what they represent. The pupils, in the role of environmental scientists, address the following three problems: 1. Behaviour-wise, how do we destroy

	Mantle of the Expert	our environment? 2. Give three environmental protection guidelines for adults. 3. Give three environmental protection guidelines for children and young adults. Analysis of the answers leads to the main problem: *How to reduce pollution on Earth?*
Distribution of individual tasks	Simultaneous work of small groups in a role Teacher in role Pupils in role Meeting	 The teacher takes on the role of the world's environmental representative. The world's environmental representative informs scientists that there is a major pollution problem in the world. Pupils are divided into five groups. Each group receives sources and resources to learn as much as possible about environmental pollution. The pupils decide who investigates what. 1. Group – Bangladesh (polluted waters) 2. Group – India (polluted air) 3. Group – China (polluted soil) 4. Group – Argentina (GMO food) 5. Group – Singapore (light pollution) 6. Group – Iceland (clean environment)
Performing the	One minute, please.	1. Group: discuss Bangladesh's

activities	What did you do today? Chatroom Figure on the wall Improvisation Hot seat	problems in a minute 2. Group: recount what they have learned about the problems in India. 3. Group: Two pupils talk about the same topic. They complement each other and share the data they have learned about China. 4. Group: Pupils write down the good and bad sides of Singapore with an emphasis on light pollution. 5. Group: Pupils are in the role of Argentinians and present their problems. 6. Group: Students answer questions from other groups.
Solving the problems	Meeting	Scientists decide to clean up the world. Within their groups, they agree on ideas and proposals for each polluted state.
Presenting the results	Radio show	Each group presents the results of its research and offers proposals for environmental conservation and protection.
Evaluation of achievements	Chatroom	The pupils and the teachers leave their roles. A question for them to answer: *Have we managed to develop an awareness of environmental conservation and protection with these proposals?* The pupils' attitudes to their work, feelings during the process, what was good, what needs to be worked on, etc. are evaluated. Finally, a chart of the advantages and disadvantages of this integrated day is created.

Conclusion

Planning one's teaching includes methods of encouraging and facilitating such learning that contributes to active, pupil-oriented teaching, aimed at action and integrated learning. Learning is planned from the pupil's perspective, and an interdisciplinary approach to learning is best suited to real-life learning that integrates and connects different areas of development and gives a new quality to learning. An interdisciplinary approach to the curriculum is imperative because it is an aspiration for pupils to develop into thinkers, thinking about things holistically, in a rounded and integral way.

The correlation-integration system abolishes the boundaries between school subjects and opens up the possibility of connecting into a certain whole. It also provides the possibility of establishing relationships and connecting different arts and sciences with an emphasis on educational outcomes and teaching content. Since each pupil has different abilities, capabilities, knowledge, and learning style, the correlation should be based on the needs and interests of the pupils. Therefore, teachers are required to have expertise, teamwork skills, willingness to cooperate and spread knowledge, and use different sources of information and different methods.

Process drama as a method is educationally intriguing because it represents the context of an agreed reality (Stoll and Fink, 2000) in which pupils are provided with contextual learning and teachers with effective teaching, and it can be understood as purposeful entertainment (O'Toole andHaseman, 1988). Participants in the process drama are simultaneously engaged as pupils (students), drama creators, and drama characters/roles (Freebody, 2010, 213), so we can talk about a sort of meta-learning during the process. By applying process drama, we enable pupils to overcome the rhetorical and abstract nature of theorising on controversial issues by allowing them to actively engage in testing theories, developing ideas, and seeking solutions through their work in a dramatic context (Freebody, 2010, 209). By applying process drama, pupils and teachers learn about themselves, learn from each other, and learn about each other, i.e., what our attitudes and goals are, what is important to us, and how we experience the world in which we live and the relationships in it. The process drama combines almost all cross-curricular topics, especially personal and social development, as well as civic education, enabling pupils to critically reflect on social values and themselves, and, accordingly, to assume personal and social responsibility.

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