

Identifying the Features of “Aesthetic Flow Experience Activities” in the Kindergarten and the First Years of Primary School Education

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Abstract

The aim of this paper was to outline school activities which, when used, would encourage students to actively engage in the teaching process. The theoretical underpinnings of the activities included two approaches: the theory of flow, and that of aesthetic experience. These two fields were chosen as a fertile area for identifying situations in which individuals voluntarily engage in a process from which they derive meaningful experiences. More particularly, studies providing information on using flow and aesthetic activities in school were considered here. Then, by combining flow and aesthetic activities for school, a list of qualities was compiled to make up what could be called “aesthetic flow activities for school”. Finally, indicative examples of such activities were provided for preschool children and children in the first grade of primary school.

Key words: *aesthetics; arts; education; flow.*

Introduction

In recent research, traditional educational methods have been criticised because it seems that to a large extent they fail to give rise to experiences that students find meaningful (Andersen, 2005; Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). The time dedicated to experiences – an essential part of the teaching process – is limited (Johnson, 2007). Emphasis is placed on prediction and control, rather than on exploration and discovery; to the literal, rather than to the metaphorical; to reality, rather than imagination (Eisner, 2002). Education is mainly centred on performance, while deeper educational values, such as focusing on one’s efforts and self-motivated learning, are ignored (Smith, 2005).

Modern schools abound with high levels of stress, insufficient challenges and motivation for learning (Whitson & Consoli, 2009). Pupils do not have positive feelings towards school challenges, either because they are very difficult for their level of skill, or because they do not require even the level of skill pupils have already acquired (Boyer & Lamoreaux, 1997). Pupils frequently reported that they felt uncertain as to what was required of them, and what they were expected to learn through the educational process and that they believed the feedback they got was not direct enough. Pupils also stated that there were not enough opportunities in school for movement and expression in class. Some indicative and worrying percentages, that resulted from a "high school survey of student engagement", showed that 91% of pupils were not interested in the content of their learning, 42% reported that their lessons had nothing to do with their real life, and 35% stated that interactions with their teachers were not positive (Suttie, 2012). Observation of contemporary classrooms shed light on characteristics, such as a passive following of lessons, a large percentage of individual tasks assigned and a lack of autonomy for children. Furthermore, it is clear that the assessment criteria of traditional teaching systems undermine students' abilities for self-motivation, while the demands of the teaching schedule frequently interrupt children's focussed efforts, and thus, prevent them from immersing themselves in their work (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

With regard to this problem, educational programmes must be designed in such a way to encourage pupils' self-motivation and their substantive, spontaneous involvement in the teaching process. In other words, it is necessary to increase the levels of students' concentration in school, and their enjoyment of learning and interest in it (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). The goal of this paper is to outline school teaching activities which, when used, will encourage students to actively engage in the teaching process. The theoretical underpinnings of the activities lie on two approaches: the theory of flow, and that of aesthetic experience. These two fields were chosen as a fertile area for seeking situations in which individuals engage voluntarily in a process from which they derive meaningful experiences. More particularly, studies providing information on using flow and aesthetic activities in school will also be looked at. Then, by combining flow and aesthetic activities for school, a list of qualities may be compiled that make up what could be called "aesthetic flow activities for school". Finally, indicative examples of such activities will be provided for preschool children and the primary school first graders. Outlining "aesthetic flow activities for school" will constitute the basis for further research on increasing the spontaneous engagement in the learning process for children in preschool institutions and the first grades of primary school.

Experiencing Flow

The concept of "optimal challenge" in learning was already acknowledged by Lev Vygotsky (1978) and Jean Piaget (1952). Their basic idea was that learning is more effective when people are engaged in activities that use the maximum of their abilities

and activate their best efforts. Indeed, according to the term used by Vygotsky (1978), the optimum challenge for a child occurs when an activity in which they take part requires abilities that are high in their “zone of proximal development”, that is, their potential development.

In the more contemporary literature, an effort where both body and mind have reached their limits trying to master something difficult and worthwhile is termed “flow experience” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Such experiences arise from flowing activities which offer someone a sense of participation in what he or she defines as substantive in life.

The elements which constitute the so-called “flow” or “optimal” experience are the following (Conti, 2001; Csikszentmihalyi, 1991; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009): subjects believe that they can have an absolute control over their emotions fully aligned with the aim of the activity. Also, the absolute focus on the activity they are working on is one of the most frequent characteristics when someone is in the psychological flow. The high level of concentration on a limited field of one’s attention allows the person’s consciousness to become deeply engaged in an activity. Similarly, the person feels that they can have complete control over the process of the activity. Another element in flow experiences is time distortion. When the conscious mind is in flow, time may be experienced as briefer or more extended. Moreover, when a person is undergoing flow experience, his or her actions and awareness merge. A situation arises in which there is no surplus energy for anxiety, fear; only for information related to the activity in question. Thus, the self is perceived as integrated into the actions one is carrying out, and the result is that every action comes spontaneously and automatically. This frequently results in the loss of self-consciousness or low concentration on the self. Finally, an important element in flow is the experience of the activity as intrinsically rewarding, also referred to as autotelic experience. The activity is conducted without any expectation of future benefit, and the reward comes from participating.

Studies have shown that activities resulting in flow bring about diverse positive and beneficial results for the individual. Experiencing flow brings greater concentration, happiness, power, internal motivation, optimism, self-confidence, friendliness, control and high performance (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993). Also, such experiences increase the complexity of consciousness and often contribute to mastering skills (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Inghilleri, 1999; Massimini & Carli, 1988; Massimini & Delle Fave, 2000). Furthermore, undergoing experiences that bring flow results in a person’s realisation of his or her uniqueness, in personal development, as well as an improvement in the society they live in (Butler-Bowdon, 2003). Flow experiences also prevent mental illness (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997).

Flow Experiences for School

Studies into flow experiences and their applications in a school environment have been carried out mainly in secondary education, despite the fact that they also seem

to have results at lower levels. Some schools have accepted syllabi that focus on flow (Andersen, 2005, Whalen, 1998). Some indicative examples are the Montessori system (Haines, Baker, & Kahn, 2003; Rathunde & Csikszentmihaly, 2005), the Key School in Indianapolis where they have a "flow activities room" (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), the Nova School in Washington (Johnson, 2004), and selected schools in Denmark, Japan and Finland where the students' high level achievement has been ascribed to the high levels of flow observed during teaching (Andersen, 2005). Studies carried out in schools have expanded the impact of traditional teaching methods on children's motivation, emotions and behaviour during learning compared to the kinds of behaviour and the prevailing atmosphere in schools that promote flow. Studies have also expanded insights into the qualitative features of school activities and the learning environment that encourages optimum experiences, the benefits that incurred by undergoing meaningful experiences during learning, the personality traits of pupils who often experience flow, and how experiencing flow is related to teachers.

One of the main benefits observed was that flow activities, when compared to traditional teaching approaches, give rise to a more profound engagement in learning. The conditions arising from this have a positive affect not only on students, but also on teachers (Bowles, 2008; Whitson & Consoli, 2009). Therefore teaching based on flow activities can bring about changes in the students' opinions about their educational experience and relieve them of the negative feelings of stress and boredom. It can contribute to the personal development of children (Butler-Bowdon, 2003), as it helps them acquire a variety of skills. Flow experiences in school also seem to improve the quality of pupils' work (Cawley, 2009). In fact, students experiencing flow are more interested in their academic performance (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009) and have higher rates of performance for a greater period of time when compared to their peers who do not experience flow (Carli, DelleFave & Massimini, 1988; Nakamura, 1988; Shernoff & Hoogstra, 2001).

The Characteristics of School Flow Activities

Despite the fact that flow may arise due to the coincidence of certain internal and external conditions, it is very likely to occur as the result of particularly designed activities that can be used in controlled situations. According to Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi (2002), there are some basic prerequisites for activities that encourage self-rewarding internal involvement characteristic for flow.

It would be interesting to analyze the conditions which are considered positive so that a pupil might experience flow. One factor that increases the chances of students becoming involved in school is clarity (Beveridge & Milner, 2006; Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993). Experiences of flow are more likely to arise as a result of structured activities that clearly define what a pupil must do. Studies also highlight how important immediate feedback is to maintaining pupils' interest (Beveridge & Milner, 2006). Thus, it seems that the teacher must give clear instructions and take care to provide frequent feedback.

Also, enhancing the autonomy of students by encouraging them to set goals and choose the activities they will be doing increases their intrinsic motivation (Goslin, 2003; Mason 2009). Another factor is a perception among students that they control the learning environment (Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Schneider, & Shernoff, 2003). Conditions of flow are also created when the content of the activities reflects pupils' interests (Shernoff, 2002). Moreover, flow is more likely to occur in an environment which promotes social interactions. Participating in cooperative learning activities gives one the opportunity to experience flow, unlike teaching in large groups (Peterson & Miller, 2004). It seems that the learning environment which can create flow experiences provides pupils with the ability to act by themselves and control the development of activities. It is also a flexible environment, adaptable to children's interests, and allows social interactions.

From another viewpoint, a flow experience arises from the proximity between the level of challenge and the level of personal skill, with a continuing tendency for one to attract the other to ever larger extents (Custodero, 1999; Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). It is important to recognize that a high level of challenge with a low level of skills will produce stress in a pupil, while an unchallenging work for pupils with highly developed skills will produce boredom. Therefore, conditions of flow are created when there is a balance between challenges and skills.

Aesthetic Experience

Aesthetic experience is one of the most important, yet vaguest and insufficiently defined terms. It covers a wide range of experiences (visual, literary, auditory and kinaesthetic), and includes bodily, intellectual and emotional processes (Consoli, 2012). The results of studies conducted in the 20th and 21st centuries have radically developed the view of aesthetic experiences.

In the 1930s, in order to explain the aesthetic experience, Dewey (1934) differentiated between an experience that is felt through the senses in daily life, and "the Experience", which is an intentional situation occurring when one is faced with art. The latter strengthens the individual's ability to understand reality in a personal way, and is characterised by feelings of fullness, unity, and an intense sense of being moved. Dewey was so convinced of the importance of being in contact with art, so he claimed that, for any intellectual activity to be complete, it must include an aesthetic experience. The experience of thinking satisfies us emotionally because it is internally integrated, and yet no intellectual activity is integrated in this way unless it has aesthetic quality. At the same time, Heidegger's philosophical positions proved to be significant in the same area, as he advocated the view that there are facets of knowledge that are not open to scientific or logical understanding (Pike, 2004).

In the early 1960s, the change in understanding arts was strongly supported by the fact that behaviourism began to be replaced by cognitivism (Efland, 2004). Behaviourism and positive philosophy had divided the mind into the cognitive

and the emotional, two opposite categories. In translating this view, mathematics, language and sciences were cognitive fields, while art belonged to the category of emotions. Cognitivism changed the definition of "intellect" and included in it the processes of non-observable types of thought. From 1970, the consequences of this change have begun to show up in the theory and practice of teaching arts. Eisner, (1969) contributed greatly to this dialogue. He began by acknowledging differences between the parts of knowledge, dividing them into those that could be assessed by educators (where the answers are already known from the outset), and "expressive aims" (in which neither the teacher nor the pupil knows the educational result from the beginning), when learning is discovering. In 1983, Gardner introduced his theory of multiple intelligences, according to which development is supported and manifested by varied cognitive skills. Some of these arise from creativity and art criticism.

At the same time, Goodman's (1984) important view that any artistic means is of itself a symbolic system analogous to a language arose. This idea contributed to the acknowledgement that arts are cognitive fields, and that each art functions with a different symbolic system. It is, thus, clear that aesthetic and cognitive development are mutually linked. Indeed, during an aesthetic experience, emotions and cognitive processes constitute in an indivisible unity (Langer, 1954; Winner, 1982). In an enlightening example, Goodman (1984, pp. 333-348) noted that when a person appreciates a work of art, he or she compares and correlates information so as to integrate it into his or her entire experience of the world. In a person's contact with the aesthetic dimension of things, he or she can compare, deduce, classify, assess, analyze, synthesize, and reason out conclusions (Markovic, 2011).

More recently, Eisner stated that cultivating different forms of representation is a virtue, given that some facets of human experience are better expressed through some types of representation than others (Eisner, 1994, 1998). This view was confirmed by neuroimaging studies (Cupchik et al., 2009), which showed that, when the observers of the same paintings were alternately oriented to their pragmatic and the aesthetic aspects, distinct cortical areas were activated.

Eisner also believed that the forms of representation offer the individual the ability to expand their perceptions and also to communicate them to others (Efland, 2004; Eisner, 1982). In other words, the forms of representation are a means through which perceptions, whether they are auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory, tactile, or gustatory, become an object of profound processing and acquire a public form as words, images, music, dance, etc. From this process, the individual acquires what Eisner calls "aesthetic understanding".

The greatest cognitive importance of aesthetic experience also arises from Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading and writing (1968, 1986), a theory which belongs to the philosophical trend of aesthetic realism (Siegel, 1981). At the centre of this theory is the view that a person can learn to love the world when he or she sees its aesthetic structure. According to the theory, in the process of constructing meaning

from a text there is a transactional relationship established between the reader and the text. The reader transforms it into a series of symbols imbued with meaning and “brings to the work personality traits, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupations, a particular mood of the moment, and a particular physical condition. These and other elements in a never-to-be-duplicated combination determine his or her response to the peculiar contribution of the text” (Connell, 2000, p. 31). In this way, aesthetic experiences are created, the ones in which the body, emotions and intellect are involved. It is worth noting that the basic condition for the reader’s aesthetic response is that he or she perceives sections that are open to varied interpretations in the text, which he or she wishes to fill in. This encourages the reader to act creatively, interpret meaning and introduce his or her own vision.

The biological approach to a model of aesthetic experience (Leder, Belke, Oeberst, & Augustin, 2004) is illuminating as to its phenomenology. The aesthetic experience is described in five stages of information processing, which are interconnected. In the first stage, attention focuses on the complexity and symmetry of the stimulus. In the second stage, perceptual information is connected to experiences from the past. People compare what they see to what they know. In the third stage, information is classified. The penultimate stage, referred to as cognitive mastering, is the moment at which interpretation or meaning is imposed on the artwork. In the last stage, the interpretation reached in the previous stage is assessed as an aesthetic judgement (assessment of the beauty of the aesthetic stimulus), and as an aesthetic emotion (for example, a sense of pleasure). It seems that the aesthetic experience consists of five cognitive stages that are inextricably bound with an emotional element.

Summarizing the above-mentioned, the term “aesthetic experience” refers to a particular situation, which is qualitatively different from an everyday experience, which includes sensory, affective and cognitive elements and determines the total result of what the recipient perceives while interacting with aesthetic reality (Jennings 2000; Markovic, 2011).

The writers referred to in this paper can be found at the heart of some fundamental views in which aesthetics is no longer considered or studied in the context of works of art, and has ceased to be restricted to visual perception. It includes other characteristics, beyond the experience of the senses, penetrates into the region of life and human existence, and touches upon every human activity. The interest of scholars has focused on aesthetic experiences as a holistic and original process with which every person can construct his or her world (Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, 2007; Stamatopoulou, 1998). Having an aesthetic experience is an opportunity to liberate one’s imagination, through which the individual comes face to face with an unexpected viewpoint compared with what they have previously had, or is called upon to place this knowledge in a previously unexplored network of cognitive and affective connections (Greene, 2001). The aesthetic experience helps the person expand his or her knowledge and understand beyond the here and now, beyond the aesthetic

stimulus and immediate environment. The aesthetic experience provides the basis for symbolism and expression, and is connected with the basic facets of a person's communicative behaviour (Johnson, 2007). In conclusion, aesthetic experience is the symbolic representation of reality and contributes to a direct grasp of the aesthetic and expressive characteristics of objects (Bresler, 2007), about which the subject constructs new knowledge (Lachapelle, Murray, & Neim, 2003).

Aesthetic Experiences for School

The updated definitions of the concept of aesthetic experience changed the place of arts in education and refined the aims of aesthetic education. In the last decades, research highlighted issues such as: the educational role of arts in primary and secondary education, the benefits which aesthetic activation can offer in the school environment, the correlation between children involved in various artistic fields and their academic performance. Some of the biggest research programmes in this area included the Project Zero (Gardner, 2000) and the Discipline-based art education (DBAE) (Dobbs, 1992; Eisner, 1988).

Analyzing the educational benefits offered by pupils' aesthetic activation in schools, it seems that many of these touch upon mental development. It became clear that arts reinforce neurobiological systems closely related to cognition, as well as the efficiency and performance of the brain (Catterall, 2005). In a learning environment where arts are used, pupils develop profounder, broader and "higher-order" thinking skills, such as comprehension, interpretation and problem-solving. Moreover, aesthetic activities positively influence the development of skills such as self-direction, complex thinking, self-assessment, fluency, originality and elaboration (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999; Darby & Catterall, 1994; Psilos, 2002). Many researchers studied the "transfer" of skills brought through art to other learning fields (Catterall, 2002b). Data show a positive correlation between involvement in theatre and pupils' performance in reading and writing, as well as between music and a better understanding of maths and spatial-temporal concepts (Catterall, 2002a; Deasy, 2002).

The benefits arising from an aesthetic activity in school help pupils develop not only intellectually, but also emotionally. It seems that children who have curricula rich in arts activities develop a more positive stance towards school, compared to their peers who do not have such an education; they have more motivation to become involved in various fields of learning, and higher self-esteem (Johnson, 2007). Furthermore, students' participation in aesthetic activities contributes to the development of creative types of behaviour (Jensen, 2001; Rooney, 2004). Children feel strong using their imagination and more willing to try new things and explore uncertain situations (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999; Ritter, 1999; Stronge, 2002).

From another point of view, the benefits of aesthetic experiences are related to the social development of children in school. Communicative behaviour is inextricably linked with aesthetic experience (Johnson, 2007), which helps children connect with

themselves, others and the world. Movement, music, visual arts are all part of the early repertoire of children's communicative behaviour and provide them opportunities for personal expression and collaboration with others. When systematically involved in arts, children improve their relationships with their schoolmates, their teachers and, more generally, with society (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999; Fiske, 1999; Rooney, 2004). Arts also make the teaching process more attractive for a larger number of children of differing cultural backgrounds and children whose performance is not high (Ingram & Riedel, 2003). Briefly, in line with the multifaceted (bodily, emotional, intellectual) structure of aesthetic experiences, participation in school aesthetic activities helps pupils develop these parts of themselves and, thus, has a positive impact on their entire personality.

Environments for School Aesthetic Activities

Environments which encourage the aesthetic development of pupils have become more important in current curricula. The part of school programmes designed chiefly with the aim of educating children on an aesthetic level is the time devoted to the so-called "arts classes". More specifically, as a part of "teaching arts", children are engaged in music, arts, movement and theatrical activities, in the context of discrete teaching hours (Bamford et al., 2006; Poyet & Bacconnier, 2006). These lessons have as their aim to cultivate children's aesthetic criteria, bring them into contact with the works of art, familiarize them with the arts of their countries and other cultures, help them master artistic knowledge and skills and generally understand the phenomenon of art.

Opportunities for pupils to undergo aesthetic experiences are also offered in the so-called "arts integration activities", that is, when arts are integrated into other, non-arts subjects in the curriculum (Bamford, 2006; Burnaford, 2007; Catterall, 2002b; Deasy, 2003; Winner & Hetland, 2007). In the research referred to in this section, it was made clear that it is desirable to have aesthetic experiences as a central part of any educational procedure, since they contribute to learning in a unique way. In this spirit, a situation that seems to provide more opportunities to undergo aesthetic experiences in school is with "aesthetic teaching" (Granger, 2006; Johnson, 2007; Macintyre-Latta, 2004; Pike, 2004; Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, 2012b). In using aesthetic teaching, arts provide a means with which pupils can approach every lesson in an aesthetic way. Aesthetic teaching is based on the acknowledgement that human beings can perceive the world in one or more ways. That is, aesthetic teaching can offer pupils opportunities to process what they are taught, not only logically or linguistically, but also kinaesthetically, musically, and spatially, and to enrich their non-arts lessons with a musical, theatrical, kinaesthetic or artistic contents (Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, 2012a). Consequently, it is clear that this type of teaching puts the student in the centre of the process and respects different ways in which every individual learns and expresses ideas in various life stages.

It is worth noting that contemporary researchers (Gardner, 2000; Johnson, 2007; Winner & Hetland, 2000) have reached the conclusion that in an environment where

aesthetic activation is integrated into the teaching of other subjects, school curricula should include aesthetic activities based more on their inherent, rather than their functional value. The teaching of arts does not need to prove its value in competition with academic classes. The necessity of including aesthetic activities in modern curricula is proven by the fact that they seem to cultivate skills that other fields cannot do. This is based on the determination that aesthetic experiences contribute to the reinforcement of intelligence and offer the opportunity for expressing various meanings and views of reality, which are not easily comprehensible through rational arguments (Eisner, 2001; Winner & Hetland, 2007).

Characteristics of School Aesthetic Activities

Based on all that has been discussed, it would be interesting to clarify the traits of activities that aim to help children have aesthetic experiences during the learning process. Opportunities for pupils to undergo aesthetic experiences exist when they can process knowledge in many aesthetic modes and express different ways of thinking and feeling with regard to the subject being taught. Building meaning through varied channels leads to a deeper conceptual thought and allows the pupil to see and judge without having rules, to process the aesthetic nature of the world around him or her, and as such, to understand its complexity.

Another characteristic of fertile conditions for aesthetic experiences in school is a holistic activation of a child with regard to the taught subject. As a part of their aesthetic engagement, pupils must be encouraged to become active with regard to the subject being taught on a sensual, emotional and intellectual level.

The part of school aesthetic education that offers opportunities for aesthetic experiences consists of activities in which students feel free to act, without being led to standardized results and without being bound by conventions. The activities must be flexible and adaptable to pupils' interests and abilities. The environment must not create distractions and must give pupils the ability to engage for a satisfactory period of time and to work in detail and with precision. In such an environment, children will dare to engage in an unexplored aesthetic experimentation, and let their imagination work. The activities must be playful and the satisfaction of having taken part must be the reward.

Finally, in an environment which cultivates aesthetic experiences, pupils interact socially, that is, they can exhibit their individual work and can participate in group work. In doing this, they evaluate themselves, and try to interpret the work of others. In brief, the activities which offer opportunities for aesthetic experience in schools must allow the use of a wide range of modes of representation, giving pupils the opportunity to understand and interpret knowledge in different ways, activate children holistically, let them feel free to work by themselves, and play without oppressive rules. These activities must provide the aesthetic stimuli that will encourage children to interact with the rest of the group. Doing such activities, children work creatively and become absorbed in educational play that has to do with the subject they are being taught.

“Flow Aesthetic Activities for School”

The following section will discuss the combination of the two types of activities that were analyzed above, that is, those that give students the opportunity to have flow and aesthetic experiences with regard to the subject they are being taught. Combining elements from these two types of activities, we shall look at the criteria for designing a type of activity which can increase engagement in the learning process for pupils, and thus, increase their motivation and improve the school learning environment. It is proposed that the activities which will emerge from this process be called “flow aesthetic activities for school”.

On the one hand, light will be shed on the manner in which aesthetic activities can attract children to a greater degree. On the other, the manner in which a situation of flow can be induced in the class will be clarified. That is, in order to design “flow aesthetic activities for school”, one can combine the issues and the methods, that is, the ‘what’ and the ‘how’, of the two theories.

Some research data are encouraging with regard to combining flow with aesthetic situations. The study on experiencing flow came from the desire of Csikszentmihalyi and other scholars (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Perry, 1999; Sawyer, 1992) to understand what artists experience when they create a work of art. What interested them was that these people were so absorbed in their work they forgot to eat, drink or sleep. It was confirmed that achieving a flow situation is positively correlated with artistic creativity. It is worth mentioning different ways in which the correlation can occur, and benefits that ensue.

It would seem that the meeting of these two types of activities and experience, flow and aesthetic, could reinforce their common characteristics, i.e. that both are enjoyable situations, interesting, holistically involving, controlled by subjects themselves, and experienced as autotelic, creative and playful. During an aesthetic experience, people are in a situation of intense engagement, concentration and alertness. They lose their self-consciousness, awareness of the external environment, and sense of time, as occurs during a flow experience.

Furthermore, it has been observed that the traits that appear in one of the two activities (flow or aesthetic) create a fertile ground for the appearance of the other type. For example, aesthetic activities seem to reinforce the emotional dimension (pleasure, high confidence, internal motivation), which is a prognostic indicator of long-term performance (Shernoff, 2002). Also, the communicative dimension of aesthetic activity gives children the opportunity to perform their skills, which is a situation that increases the chance for flow (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). In addition, when children process and interpret the reality they are taught, participating in an aesthetic activity, they are encouraged to work in a way that has meaning for them, intervene in developments, act of their own accord and become absorbed in what they are doing. When they are called upon to create or analyze an aesthetic work, they can adjust the level of difficulty to their own level and can work without

worrying about external evaluation. Also, children’s tendency to exhibit through their work their aesthetic views about what they learn increases the chances of social interaction in a flow environment. On the other hand, in a flow experience, children can be more aesthetically receptive. Being absorbed in an activity that challenges their skills helps them express themselves in alternative ways, and work creatively. The flow environment gives them the opportunity to freely choose aesthetic materials, adapt the aesthetic goals to their interests and perform without distractions.

In the attempt to outline the suggested “flow aesthetic activities for school”, we can present how they must be designed and used, also the educational outcomes they help bring about. Presented in this order, in Table 1 below, it would seem that “flow aesthetic activities for school” must:

Table 1

Characteristics of “flow aesthetic activities for school”

Characteristics of “flow aesthetic activities for school”

- Be developmentally appropriate
- Be challenging in terms of children’s physical, emotional and intellectual abilities
- Focus children’s attention on the process more than the product
- Have to do with alternative modes of representation
- Presuppose active participation
- Encourage children to approach their school subjects as aesthetic stimuli
- Encourage children to create their own works based on their school subjects
- Be experienced by children as play situations
- Call upon children to use their imagination and other creative types of behaviour
- Encourage children to act by themselves and control developments in the activity
- Cultivate social interactions
- Include emergent processes
- Have clear directions
- Provide frequent feedback
- Be used in an environment without distractions
- Not be limited by strict time deadlines
- Give room for correction and improvisation on the part of the educator
- Be open to self-assessment in terms posited by participants
- Allow emergent and non-programmed outcomes

Examples – Discussion

Based on the above-shown characteristics, two examples of flow aesthetic activities will be described; these were designed to be used in teaching language arts. The first one is for kindergarteners, and the second one is for the first-graders. These classes were chosen because the issues of pupils’ self-motivation and substantive spontaneous involvement in the teaching process have not been much explored at the lower levels of education until now. Furthermore, these activities will be used along with others, as a pilot intervention, designed as a type of “design experiment” (Christensen, 2000).

The subjects in which examples of the given flow aesthetic activities could be used are “the variety of verbal communication” and “the connection between verbal and written communication”, as these are described in the Greek curriculum on Language (Hellenic Pedagogical Institute–Hellenic Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs 2003, pp. 3753-3754).

In the kindergarten activity, the teacher asks children “what would our lives be like if letters disappeared?” to prompt a discussion about where letters can be found, and why. Children are prompted to give examples of the written word in our daily lives (books, favourite stories, addresses, computer, birthday party invitations, TV subtitles, diaries, grandmother’s recipes, road signs, toy manuals, labels). The discussion focuses on what could happen if, in each of the examples, there were no letters. Then, children are divided into small groups, and each group thinks up of a small scene to present to the other groups. Children then explain their sketches to the others, while the others comment.

In the first grade activity, children are called upon to think of either a mood, or a role (e.g. anger, peace, television news anchor) and then read the text of the day’s language lesson either in the mood they have chosen, or in the style of the role they have chosen. At the end of each presentation, the child reveals why they have chosen to read the text like that, and the rest of the group discusses the choice.

These activities were designed to highlight the connection between the theoretical framework discussed in this paper and the school practice. In fact, the methodological analysis of the examples described above could constitute an evaluation of the suggested theoretical approach. The analysis of the activities might provide guidelines for designing situations that contribute to the development of spontaneous engagement in the learning process for children in kindergarten and the first years of primary school.

Indicatively, it seems that, in the two activities provided as examples, children could focus on the process itself, as the expected results are not pre-defined. Furthermore, children who would take part in the activities could function at their own developmental level, as their individual differences would not be an obstacle to the outcomes of the situations. In both activities, players are asked to work collectively and influence each other. The activities encourage children to play an aesthetic game, which can lead to unconventional, creative processing of the subject being taught. It is also worth noting that both activities require the active participation of children on a physical, emotional and intellectual level, as well as the creation of atmosphere that goes beyond traditional schooling.

Specifically, in the kindergarten example above, children are given the opportunity to create a theatre situation, which connects the subject they are being taught to their lives. They are encouraged to become active with regard to the subject they are being taught, using their bodies, emotions and minds to enrich their work with experiences and imagination. Although the process is connected to the specific objectives of the

curriculum for Language, it is different from usual teaching practices and lets children act by themselves and control the development and outcome of the activity. Finally, the activity pushes children to expose and evaluate themselves.

In the second example, the first graders are asked to act with their intellect, but also to use their emotions. Every child/reader is encouraged to look upon the text used for the language lesson as a theatrical stimulus. From this point of view the child does his own "reading" which includes not only the elements denoted in the text, but also the connotations the child imbues the text with. Based on the instructions given, the child enriches the text relevance and functions creatively. The result for each child is unique, and is then commented upon, by both the creator and the recipients.

In conclusion, based on the above-stated, one could consider that "aesthetic flow activities for school" constitute a special type of activity during which pupils analyze the knowledge they are acquiring via aesthetic channels. From another point of view, "aesthetic flow activities for school" could be considered a special type of aesthetic activity, during which children are given the chance to become engaged in an aesthetic creation. In other words, with "aesthetic flow activities for preschool and the first years of primary school", children are given the opportunity to engage substantively in the learning process, as they can learn from what they create, and create from what they learn.

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Utvrđivanje karakteristika estetskih aktivnosti zanesenosti u vrtiću i prvom razredu osnovne škole

Sažetak

Cilj je ovog rada istaknuti aktivnosti koje će, kada se koriste u školi, potaknuti učenike na aktivno sudjelovanje u nastavnom procesu. Temelje se na dvjema teorijama – zanesenosti i estetskog iskustva. One su odabrane kao plodno tlo za otkrivanje situacija u kojima pojedinci dragovoljno sudjeluju u jednom procesu u kojem stječu smisljena iskustva. Specifično gledano, razmatrana su istraživanja s pomoću kojih se dolazi do podataka o primjeni aktivnosti zanesenosti i estetskih aktivnosti u školi. Zatim se, kombiniranjem karakteristika obiju vrsta aktivnosti, predlažu zajedničke karakteristike onoga što bi se moglo nazvati estetskim aktivnostima zanesenosti za školu“. Na kraju se navode indikativni primjeri aktivnosti namijenjenih predškolskoj djeci i učenicima prvog razreda osnovne škole.

Ključne riječi: edukacija; estetika; umjetnost; zanesenost.

Uvod

U novijim su istraživanjima tradicionalne edukacijske metode kritizirane jer se čini da ne uspijevaju potaknuti iskustva koja su učenicima smisljena (Andersen, 2005; Shernoff i Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Vrijeme posvećeno doživljajnim iskustvima – vitalni dio nastavnog procesa – ograničeno je (Johnson, 2007). Naglasak je više stavljen na predviđanje i nadziranje nego na istraživanje i otkrivanje; ono što je doslovno umjesto onoga što je metaforičko; prije na realnost, nego na maštu (Eisner, 2002). Obrazovanje se usredotočuje na izvedbu, a dublje su edukacijske vrijednosti poput oslanjanja na vlastita nastojanja i učenje s pomoću vlastite motivacije zanemarene (Smith, 2005).

U suvremenim školama prevladava visoka razina stresa, a izazova i motivacije za učenje nema dovoljno (Whitson i Consoli, 2009). Učenici nemaju pozitivne osjećaje o izazovima u školi ili zato što su vrlo zahtjevni za razinu na kojoj su njihove vještine ili zato što ne podrazumijevaju čak ni onu razinu na kojoj su već usvojili vještine (Boyer i Lamoreaux, 1997). Učenici često priznaju da nisu sigurni u ono što se od

njih traži i očekuje da nauče u toku nastave pa vjeruju da povratna informacija koju dobivaju nije izravna u dovoljnoj mjeri. Također spominju da nemaju dovoljno mogućnosti kretati se u školi ili se izraziti u razredu. Indikativni i zabrinjavajući postotci, proizašli iz „istraživanja o angažiranosti srednjoškolskih učenika“, pokazuju da 91% učenika nije zainteresiran za nastavni sadržaj, 42% ih smatra da njihova nastava nema nikakve veze sa stvarnim životom, a njih 35% tvrdi da njihova interakcija s nastavnicima nije pozitivna (Suttie, 2012). Promatranja u suvremenim učionicama otkrivaju, primjerice, pasivno praćenje nastave, veliku zastupljenost individualnog rada i nedostatak dječje autonomije. Jasno je, štoviše, da kriteriji ocjenjivanja u tradicionalnom sustavu potkopavaju sposobnost učenika da se sami motiviraju, a zahtjevi koje pred njih postavlja raspored često onemogućuju da se fokusiraju na svoj rad i tako ih sprječavaju da se dublje angažiraju (Shernoff i Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

S obzirom na spomenuti problem obrazovni se programi moraju planirati tako da potiču učenike da sami sebe motiviraju i samostalno, spontano sudjeluju u nastavi. Drugim riječima, potrebno je povećati koncentraciju učenika u školi, kao i njihovo uživanje u učenju, odnosno zanimanje za njega (Shernoff i Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

Cilj je ovog rada istaknuti školske aktivnosti koje će, kada se primjenjuju, potaknuti učenike na aktivno sudjelovanje u nastavnom procesu. Temelje se na sljedećim pristupima: teoriji zanesenosti i teoriji estetskog doživljaja. Ta su dva područja odabrana kao plodno tlo u potrazi za situacijama u kojima pojedinci rado sudjeluju u procesu iz kojeg crpe smislena iskustva. Specifično govoreći, razmotrit će se također istraživanja koja pružaju informacije o primjeni zanesenosti i estetskih aktivnosti u školi, dat će se popis obilježja koja bi se zajedno mogla nazvati „estetskim aktivnostima zanesenosti za školu“. Na kraju, navest će se indikativni primjeri takvih aktivnosti za djecu predškolske dobi i učenike prvih razreda osnovne škole. Pregled „estetskih aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“ činit će osnovu za daljnje istraživanje još snažnijeg spontanog angažmana djece predškolske dobi i učenika prvog razreda osnovne škole u nastavnom procesu.

Iskustvo zanesenosti

Koncept „optimalnog izazova“ pri učenju već su priznali Lav Vygotsky (1978) i Jean Piaget (1952). Njihovo je glavno stajalište da učinkovitije učimo onda kada sudjelujemo u aktivnostima u kojima se maksimalno koristimo svojim sposobnostima i kada aktiviramo svoja nastojanja najbolje što možemo. Doista, prema terminu koji je upotrebljavao Vygotsky (1978), dijete se suočava s optimalnim izazovom kada aktivnost u kojoj sudjeluje zahtijeva sposobnosti koje se nalaze visoko u njegovoj „zoni proksimalnog razvoja“, tj. njegova potencijalnog razvoja.

U novijoj literaturi nastojanje da i tijelo i duh dostignu gornju granicu, pri pokušaju ovladavanja nečim teškim i toga vrijednim, opisano je kao „iskustvo zanesenosti“ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Takvo iskustvo proizlazi iz aktivnosti koje pojedincu daju osjećaj sudjelovanja u onom što ga u životu čini samostalnim.

Elementi takozvane „zanesenosti“ ili „optimalnog“ iskustva su sljedeći (Conti, 2001; Csikszentmihalyi, 1991; Nakamura i Csikszentmihalyi, 2002; Shernoff i

Csikszentmihalyi, 2009): pojedinci su uvjereni da mogu imati apsolutni nadzor nad svojim emocijama koje potpuno odgovaraju cilju aktivnosti. Osim toga, njihova pažnja apsolutno usmjerena na aktivnost koju provode jedna je od najčešćih karakteristika nečije psihološke zanesenosti. Velika usredotočenost na ograničeno područje koje izaziva pažnju omogućuje pojedincima da se svjesno, duboko angažiraju u nekoj aktivnosti. Slično, osjećaju da mogu imati potpuni nadzor nad procesom aktivnosti. Iskripljenost vremena još je jedan element iskustva zanesenosti. Kad je u pitanju svjesna zanesenost, vrijeme se može iskusiti kao kraće ili duže. Štoviše, kada je netko izložen iskustvu zanesenosti, njegove su aktivnosti i svjesnost povezane u jedno. Dolazi do situacije u kojoj nema viška energije za zabrinutost i strah, već samo za informaciju koja je povezana s konkretnom aktivnošću. Prema tome, osobnost je integrirana u aktivnosti koje se provode, pa je tako svaka aktivnost spontana i automatska. To često dovodi do gubitka samosvijesti ili loše usmjerenosti na samog sebe. Na kraju, važan je element zanesenosti aktivnost doživljena kao intrinzična nagrada, što je također poznato kao autotelično iskustvo. Aktivnost se provodi bez očekivanja neke buduće koristi, a nagrada proizlazi iz sudjelovanja u aktivnosti.

Istraživanja pokazuju da aktivnosti proizašle iz zanesenosti pojedincu donose razne pozitivne i korisne rezultate. Iskustvo zanesenosti dovodi do veće koncentracije, sreće, snage, unutarne motivacije, optimizma, samopouzdanja, prijateljstva, kontrole i velikog uspjeha (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde i Whalen, 1993). Takva iskustva također čine svjesnost još složenijom i često pridonose usavršavanju vještina (Csikszentmihalyi i Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Inghilleri, 1999; Massimini i Carli, 1988; Massimini i Delle Fave, 2000). Štoviše, iskustvo zanesenosti navodi pojedinca da shvati svoju jedinstvenost, da se osobno razvija i usavršava u društvu u kojem živi (Butler-Bowdon, 2003). Osim toga, iskustvo zanesenosti sprječava pojavu mentalne bolesti (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997).

Iskustvo zanesenosti u školi

Istraživanja o iskustvu zanesenosti i njegovoj primjeni u školskom okruženju uglavnom su se odnosila na srednjoškolce unatoč činjenici da će ono vjerojatno pokazati rezultate i na nižim razinama obrazovanja. Neke su škole prihvatile silabe utemeljene na zanesenosti (Andersen, 2005, Whalen, 1998). Znakoviti su primjeri: Montessori sustav (Haines, Baker i Kahn, 2003; Rathunde i Csikszentmihaly, 2005), škola Key u Indianapolisu u kojoj imaju „prostoriju za aktivnosti zanesenosti” (Nakamura i Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), škola Nova u Washingtonu (Johnson, 2004) i neke škole u Danskoj, Japanu i Finskoj, gdje se dobar uspjeh pripisuje velikoj zanesenosti učenika koja se može primijetiti u nastavi (Andersen, 2005). Istraživanja provedena u školama proširila su utjecaj tradicionalnih nastavnih metoda na motivaciju, emocije i ponašanje djece u toku učenja na vrste primjetnog ponašanja i prevladavajuću atmosferu u školama koje promiču zanesenost. Ona su također umnožila kvalitativna obilježja školskih aktivnosti i nastavnog okruženja, koji promiče optimalna iskustva, prednosti

zanesenosti učenika u nastavi, karakterne crte učenika koji često doživljavaju zanesenost i načina na koje se iskustvo zanesenosti odnosi na nastavnike.

Jedna od glavnih zapaženih prednosti bila je ta da aktivnosti zanesenosti, u usporedbi s tradicionalnim pristupima poučavanju, potiču dublji angažman kada je u pitanju učenje. Okolnosti koje iz toga proizlaze imaju pozitivan učinak ne samo na učenike nego i na nastavnike (Bowles, 2008; Whitson i Consoli, 2009). Prema tome, poučavanje koje se temelji na aktivnostima zanesenosti može promijeniti mišljenje učenika o iskustvu učenja, osloboditi ih negativnih osjećaja stresa i dosade. Može pridonijeti osobnom razvoju djece (Butler-Bowdon, 2003) jer im pomaže da usvoje rane vještine. Iskustva zanesenosti u školi po svoj prilici unapređuju kvalitetu učeničkog rada (Cawley, 2009). Učenike s iskustvom zanesenosti zapravo više zanima njihov školski uspjeh (Shernoff i Csikszentmihalyi, 2009) i duže imaju bolje rezultate od vršnjaka bez spomenutog iskustva (Carli, DelleFave, i Massimini, 1988; Nakamura, 1988; Shernoff i Hoogstra, 2001).

Karakteristike aktivnosti zanesenosti u školi

Unatoč činjenici da do zanesenosti može doći kada se neke unutarnje i vanjske okolnosti podudaraju, vjerojatnije je da će ona proizaći iz posebno planiranih aktivnosti koje se mogu provoditi u kontroliranim situacijama. Prema Nakamura i Csikszentmihalyi (2002), postoje određeni temeljni preduvjeti koji potiču interni angažman koji sam po sebi nagrađuje, što čini obilježje zanesenosti.

Bilo bi zanimljivo analizirati uvjete koji se smatraju pozitivnima zato što učeniku omogućuju zanesenost. Jedan čimbenik koji omogućuje veći angažman učenika u školi jest jasnoća (Beveridge i Milner, 2006; Csikszentmihalyi i Rathunde, 1993). Vjerojatnije je da će se iskustvo zanesenosti pojaviti kao rezultat strukturiranih aktivnosti koje jasno definiraju što učenik mora učiniti. Istraživanja također naglašavaju da će relevantna, izravna povratna informacija zadržati učenika zainteresiranim (Beveridge i Milner, 2006). Čini se, dakle, da nastavnik mora davati jasne upute i paziti na to da često daje učeniku povratne informacije.

Nadalje, intrinzična će se motivacija kod učenika povećavati s unapređenjem autonomije, bit će stalno poticani da postavljaju ciljeve i biraju aktivnosti (Goslin, 2003; Mason 2009). Dodatni je čimbenik predodžba koju učenici imaju o tome kako nadziru nastavnu sredinu (Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Schneider, i Shernoff, 2003). Do zanesenosti učenika također dolazi kada sadržaj aktivnosti odražava njihovo zanimanje (Shernoff, 2002). Štoviše, zanesenost će se prije pojaviti u sredini koja promiče društvenu interakciju. Sudjelovanje u aktivnostima suradničkog učenja pojedincu omogućuje stanje zanesenosti, za razliku od poučavanja u velikim skupinama (Peterson i Miller, 2004). Drugim riječima, nastavno okruženje koje može dovesti do iskustva zanesenosti učenike vjerojatno osposobljuje za samostalno djelovanje i nadzor nad razvojnim fazama aktivnosti. Osim toga, riječ je o fleksibilnom okruženju, prilagodljivom interesima djece, onom koje omogućuje društvene interakcije.

S jednog drugog stajališta, iskustvo zanesenosti proizlazi iz stupnja podudarnosti između izazova i vještina, pri čemu postoji stalna tendencija njihova sve većeg privlačenja (Custodero, 1999; Shernoff i Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Važno je znati da će veliki izazov u kombinaciji sa slabim vještinama proizvesti stres kod učenika, a da će rad bez izazova kod učenika s dobro razvijenim vještinama izazvati dosadu. Zanesenost, dakle, nastaje kada postoji ravnoteža između izazova i vještina.

Estetsko iskustvo

Estetsko iskustvo jedan je od najvažnijih, ali najslabije i najmanje definiranih termina. Odnosi se na široki spektar iskustava (vizualna, literarna, slušna i kinestetička), a obuhvaća tjelesne, intelektualne i emocionalne procese (Consoli, 2012). Rezultati istraživanja u 20. i 21. stoljeću radikalno su promijenili stajalište o estetskim iskustvima.

Tijekom trećeg desetljeća prošlog stoljeća, da bi objasnio estetsko iskustvo, Dewey (1934) je razlikovao iskustvo koje stječemo u svakodnevnom životu s pomoću osjetila i „Iskustvo“ koje čini svjesnu situaciju u kojoj se netko suoči s umjetnošću. To potonje iskustvo još više omogućuje pojedincu da sam spozna realnost, a obilježavaju ga dojmovi punoće i jedinstva, kao i snažan osjećaj dirnutosti. Dewey je bio vrlo uvjeren u važnost kontakta s umjetnošću, pa je tvrdio da svaka intelektualna aktivnost mora sadržavati estetsko iskustvo da bi bila potpuna. Razmišljanje kao iskustvo zadovoljava nas emocionalno jer je interno integrirano, nijedna intelektualna aktivnost nije tako integrirana ako ne posjeduje estetsku kvalitetu. Istodobno, Heideggerova su se filozofska stajališta na tom planu pokazala važnima jer je zastupao gledište o postojanju znanja koje nije otvoreno znanstvenom ili logičkom shvaćanju (Pike, 2004).

Početak šezdesetih godina 20. stoljeća promjena u načinu shvaćanja umjetnosti pojačana je činjenicom da je kognitivizam počeo zamjenjivati bihevizizam (Efland, 2004). Do tada su bihevizizam i pozitivna filozofija podijelili um na kognitivno i emocionalno, dvije suprotstavljene kategorije. To bi značilo da matematika, jezik i znanost pripadaju kognitivnoj domeni, a da umjetnost pripada kategoriji emocija. Kognitivizam je promijenio definiciju „intelekt“, obuhvaćajući njome misaone procese koji se ne daju promatrati. Od 1970. godine posljedice te promjene počele su se primjećivati u umjetničko-nastavnoj teoriji i praksi. Eisner (1969) je uvelike pridonio tom dijalogu tako što je najprije priznao razlike unutar znanja, onog što nastavnici mogu vrednovati (tamo gdje su odgovori već poznati od samog početka) i „ekspresivnih ciljeva“ (onog gdje ni nastavniku ni učeniku nije poznat rezultat edukacije od početka), kada se analizira učenje. Gardner je 1983. godine uveo teoriju višestruke inteligencije prema kojoj razvoj ima uporište u različitim kognitivnim vještinama i u njima se manifestira. Neke od njih proizlaze iz kreativnosti i umjetničke kritike.

U isto vrijeme pojavilo se Goodmanovo (1984) važno stajalište prema kojem je svako umjetničko sredstvo samo po sebi simbolički sustav analogan jeziku. Ta je zamisao pridonijela priznavanju umjetnosti kao kognitivnog područja i shvaćanju da svaka umjetnost funkcionira s pomoću različitog simboličkog sustava. Stoga je

jasno da su estetski i kognitivni razvoj povezani. Doista, emocije i kognitivni procesi čine nedjeljivu cjelinu pri estetskom iskustvu (Langer, 1954; Winner, 1982). U jednom indikativnom primjeru Goodman (1984, str. 333-348) je primijetio da netko, kada se divi umjetničkom djelu, uspoređuje informacije i međusobno ih povezuje tako da ih integrira u cjelovitost svoga iskustva i svijeta. Pri kontaktu s estetskom dimenzijom predmeta može se uspoređivati, zaključivati, klasificirati, procjenjivati, analizirati, sintetizirati i izvoditi zaključke (Markovic, 2011).

U novije vrijeme Eisner ustrajava na tvrdnji da njegovanje različitih formi reprezentacije predstavlja prednost, pod pretpostavkom da se određeni aspekti ljudskog iskustva bolje izražavaju s pomoću nekih vrsta reprezentacije u odnosu na druge (Eisner, 1994, 1998). To je potvrđeno neurološkim istraživanjima (Cupchik i sur., 2009) koja su ukazala na aktivaciju različitih područja ovojnice dok su promatrači istih platna bili usredotočeni na njihove pragmatične, odnosno estetske aspekte.

Eisner je također uvjerenja da forme reprezentacije omogućuju pojedincu da proširi vlastite percepcije i prenese ih drugima (Efland, 2004; Eisner, 1982). Forme reprezentacije zapravo su sredstvo s pomoću kojeg percepcije, bez obzira na to jesu li auditivne, kinestetičke, olfaktorne, taktilne ili se tiču okusa, postaju predmetom dubokog procesiranja i zadobivaju javnu formu (riječi, slike, glazba, ples, itd.). Zahvaljujući tom procesu, pojedinac dolazi do onog što Eisner naziva „estetsko razumijevanje“.

Najveći kognitivni značaj estetskog iskustva dodatno proizlazi iz transakcijske teorije čitanja i pisanja Louise Rosenblatt (1968, 1986), teorije koja pripada filozofskom trendu estetskog realizma (Siegel, 1981). U središtu je spomenute teorije stajalište prema kojem je moguće naučiti voljeti svijet tek kada se uoči njegova estetska struktura. Dakle, između čitatelja i teksta izgrađuje se transakcijski odnos u toku procesa konstrukcije značenja u tekstu. Čitatelj ga pretvara u niz simbola prožetih značenjem, dok „u djelo unosi osobne karakteristike, sjećanja na prošle događaje, sadašnje potrebe i brige, neko posebno trenutno raspoloženje i fizičku okolnost. Ti i mnogi drugi elementi u kombinaciji koja se nikada ne ponavlja određuju njegovu reakciju na čudan doprinos teksta“ (Connell, 2000, str. 31). Na taj način nastaju estetska iskustva u kojima sudjeluju tijelo, emocije i um. Treba primijetiti da je temeljni uvjet za čitateljevu estetsku reakciju taj da on/ona uočava dijelove koji su otvoreni raznim tumačenjima u tekstu, koje želi dopuniti. To potiče čitatelja na to da djeluje kreativno, tumači značenje te unosi svoje osobno viđenje.

Biološki pristup modelu estetskog iskustva (Leder, Belke, Oeberst, Augustin, 2004) rasvjetljava taj fenomen. Estetsko iskustvo se opisuje u pet faza procesiranja informacija, koje su međusobno povezane. U prvoj se fazi pažnja usmjerava na sklop i simetriju poticaja. U drugoj se fazi perceptivna informacija povezuje s iskustvima iz prošlosti. Ljudi uspoređuju ono što vide s onim što znaju. U trećoj fazi dolazi do klasifikacije informacija. Predzadnja faza, nazvana kognitivnim usavršavanjem, predstavlja trenutak u kojem se umjetničkom djelu pripisuje tumačenje ili značenje, a u posljednjoj se fazi tumačenje iz pretposljednje faze vrednuje kao estetska prosudba

(prosudba ljepote estetskog poticaja) i kao estetska emocija (primjerice, osjećaj zadovoljstva). Čini se da estetsko iskustvo obuhvaća pet kognitivnih faza koje su neraskidivo povezane s emocionalnim elementom.

S obzirom na sve navedeno, termin „estetsko iskustvo“ označava određenu situaciju, kvalitativno drugačiju od svakodnevnog iskustva, koja obuhvaća senzorne, afektivne i kognitivne elemente te određuje ukupan rezultat onoga što primatelj percipira u interakciji s estetskom realnošću (Jennings 2000; Markovic, 2011).

Autore na koje se pozivamo u ovom poglavlju možemo pronaći u samoj srži nekih od temeljnih gledišta prema kojima se estetika više ne razmatra niti istražuje u kontekstu umjetničkog djela i nije više ograničena na vizualnu percepciju. Sadrži druga obilježja, izvan iskustva osjetila, prodire u područje života i ljudskog postojanja i dotiče se svake ljudske aktivnosti. U središtu zanimanja znanstvenika nalazimo estetsko iskustvo kao holistički i originalni proces s pomoću kojeg svaka osoba može konstruirati svoj svijet (Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, 2007; Stamatopoulou, 1998). Imati estetsko iskustvo znači moći osloboditi maštu, zahvaljujući kojoj se individua suočava s neočekivanim stajalištem u odnosu na ono što je prije imala ili je pozvana smjestiti znanje u neočekivanu mrežu kognitivnih i afektivnih veza (Greene, 2001). Estetsko iskustvo pojedincu pomaže da proširi znanje i bolje razumije ono izvan ovog ovdje i sada, izvan estetskog poticaja i njegove neposredne okoline. Estetsko iskustvo čini podlogu za simbolizam i ekspresiju, a dovodi se u vezu s osnovnim obilježjima nečijeg ponašanja u komunikaciji (Johnson, 2007). Zaključimo, estetsko iskustvo predstavlja simboličku reprezentaciju stvarnosti i pridonosi izravnom shvaćanju estetskih i ekspresivnih karakteristika predmeta (Bresler, 2007), o čemu pojedinac konstruira novo znanje (Lachapelle, Murray, i Neim, 2003).

Estetsko iskustvo u školi

Novije definicije koncepta estetskog iskustva promijenile su mjesto umjetnosti u školi i iskristalizirale ciljeve estetskog obrazovanja. Proteklih desetljeća u istraživanjima su se istaknule sljedeće teme: edukacijska uloga umjetnosti u osnovnom i srednjem obrazovanju, prednosti koje estetska aktivnost može donijeti školskom okruženju, korelacija između uključenosti učenika u razna umjetnička područja i njihova školskog uspjeha. Neki od najvećih istraživačkih programa u tom području bili su projekti Zero (Gardner, 2000) i DBAE (Dobbs, 1992; Eisner, 1988).

Kada se analiziraju edukacijske dobiti estetske aktivnosti učenika u školama, čini se da se mnoge tiču mentalnog razvoja. Već je jasno da umjetnost učvršćuje neurobiološke sustave povezane sa spoznajom te pojačava učinkovitost i rad mozga (Catterall, 2005). U nastavnoj sredini gdje se primjenjuje umjetnost, učenici snažnije razvijaju više vještina mišljenja, onih višeg reda, kao što su: razumijevanje, tumačenje i rješavanje problema. Estetske aktivnosti čak pozitivno utječu na razvoj sljedećih vještina: samousmjeravanje, složeno mišljenje, samovrednovanje, tečnost, originalnost i elaboracija (Burton, Horowitz i Abeles, 1999; Darby i Catterall, 1994; Psilos, 2002).

Mnogi su autori istraživali pitanje „transfera” vještina, posredstvom umjetnosti, na druga područja učenja (Catterall, 2002b). Rezultati ukazuju na pozitivnu korelaciju između uključenosti u kazalište i uspjeh u čitanju i pisanju, između glazbe i boljeg razumijevanja matematike, kao i konceptata prostor – vrijeme (Catterall, 2002a; Deasy, 2002).

Estetske aktivnosti u školi učenicima pomažu da se razviju ne samo intelektualno nego i emocionalno. Čini se da djeca koja su imala kurikulum bogat umjetničkim aktivnostima razvijaju pozitivniji stav o školi za razliku od vršnjaka koji nisu imali takvo obrazovanje; motiviraniji su da se uključe u različita područja učenja, imaju bolje samopoštovanje (Johnson, 2007). Štoviše, sudjelovanje učenika u estetskim aktivnostima pridonosi njihovu razvoju kreativnih vrsta ponašanja (Jensen, 2001; Rooney, 2004). Djeca se osjećaju snažnima zbog primjene mašte, spremnija su pokušati nešto novo i istražiti neodređene situacije (Burton, Horowitz i Abeles, 1999; Ritter, 1999; Stronge, 2002).

S jednog drugog stajališta prednosti estetskih iskustava povezane su s društvenim razvojem djece u školi. Komunikacijsko ponašanje neraskidivo je povezano s estetskim iskustvom (Johnson, 2007), što pomaže djeci da se povežu sama sa sobom, ostalima i sa svijetom. Pokret, glazba, likovna umjetnost, sve je to dio ranog repertoara ponašanja u dječjoj komunikaciji i pruža im mogućnost osobnog izražavanja i suradnje s drugima. Kada sustavno sudjeluju u umjetničkim aktivnostima, djeca unapređuju odnose s prijateljima u razredu, nastavnicima i, općenito gledano, društvom (Burton, Horowitz i Abeles, 1999; Fiske, 1999; Rooney, 2004). Umjetnost također čini nastavni proces privlačnijim većem broju djece iz različitih kulturnih sredina i djeci čiji uspjeh nije velik (Ingram i Riedel, 2003). Ukratko, s obzirom na višedimenzionalnost (tjelesno, emocionalno i intelektualno) estetskih iskustava sudjelovanje u estetskim aktivnostima u školi učenicima pomaže u razvoju upravo onih dijelova sebe, pa tako pozitivno utječe na njihovu cjelovitu osobnost.

Školske sredine za estetske aktivnosti

Sredine koje potiču estetski razvoj u djece danas postaju sve važnije u nastavnim planovima i programima. Dio školskog kurikula, uglavnom planiran s ciljem estetske edukacije, podrazumijeva vrijeme posvećeno takozvanim „satima umjetničkih predmeta”. Specifično govoreći, u sklopu „nastave umjetnosti” djeca sudjeluju u glazbenim, likovnim, plesnim i kazališnim aktivnostima, na posebnim nastavnim satima (Bamford i sur., 2006; Poyet i Bacconnier, 2006). Ti su sati fokusirani na njegovanje estetskih kriterija kod djece tako što ih se povezuje s umjetničkim djelima, upoznaje s umjetnostima njihove zemlje i drugim kulturama, pomaže im se da usavrše umjetničko znanje i vještine, kao i da općenito shvate fenomen umjetnosti.

Učenici mogu također doživjeti estetsko iskustvo u takozvanim „umjetničko-integracijskim aktivnostima”, odnosno onda kada se umjetnost integrira u druge, neumjetničke predmete iz kurikula (Bamford, 2006; Burnaford, 2007; Catterall, 2002b; Deasy, 2003; Winner i Hetland, 2007). U istraživanju na koje se pozivamo u ovom dijelu jasno je da su estetska iskustva poželjna kao središnji dio edukacijskog procesa

jer pridonose učenju na jedinstven način. U tom svjetlu situacija koja naoko pruža više mogućnosti za estetsko iskustvo u školi nastaje s „estetskom nastavom“ (Granger, 2006; Johnson, 2007; Macintyre-Latta, 2004; Pike, 2004; Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, 2012b). Putem te vrste nastave umjetnost nudi učenicima sredstvo kojim mogu pristupiti svakom nastavnom satu na estetski način. Estetsko poučavanje temelji se na priznanju da ljudska bića mogu percipirati svijet na jedan ili više načina. Drugim riječima, estetska nastava omogućuje učenicima da procesiraju ono čemu ih poučavaju, ne samo logički ili jezično već kinestetički, glazbeno i prostorno, kao i da obogate nastavu izvan umjetničkog područja glazbenim, kazališnim, kinestetičkim ili umjetničkim sadržajima (Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, 2012a). Samim time jasno je da takva nastava postavlja učenika u središte procesa i poštuje različite načine na koje pojedinci uče i izražavaju svoje ideje u različitim životnim fazama.

Potrebno je primijetiti da su suvremeni istraživači (Gardner, 2000; Johnson, 2007; Winner i Hetland, 2000) došli do zaključka da u sredinama u kojima je estetska aktivnost integrirana u nastavu ostalih predmeta, kurikuli trebaju sadržavati estetske aktivnosti, utemeljene više na njihovoj inherentnoj nego na funkcionalnoj vrijednosti. Nastava umjetnosti ne treba potvrđivati svoju vrijednost u odnosu na nastavu utemeljenu na sadržaju izvan dosega umjetnosti. Nužnost uključivanja estetskih aktivnosti u suvremene kurikule dokazuje se činjenicom da one, po svemu sudeći, njeguju vještine koje druga područja ne mogu. To se temelji na shvaćanju da estetska iskustva dodatno jačaju inteligenciju i nude mogućnost izražavanja raznih značenja i stajališta o realnosti, koja nije lako razumjeti s pomoću racionalnih argumenata (Eisner, 2001; Winner i Hetland, 2007).

Karakteristike estetskih aktivnosti u školi

Polazeći od svega što je do sada navedeno, bilo bi zanimljivo razjasniti karakteristike aktivnosti čiji je cilj pomoći djeci da dožive estetska iskustva u nastavi. To je moguće kada učenici znaju procesirati znanje na više estetskih načina te izraziti različita mišljenja i osjećaje s obzirom na konkretan predmet učenja. Tvorba značenja raznim kanalima dovodi do dublje konceptualne misli i učeniku omogućuje da vidi i prosudi bez pravila, procesira estetsku prirodu svijeta oko njega i tako shvati njegovu složenost.

Druga karakteristika plodnih uvjeta za estetsko iskustvo u školi jest holistička aktivacija djeteta s obzirom na predmet poučavanja. U sklopu estetskog angažmana učenici moraju biti poticani na osjetilnu, emocionalnu i intelektualnu aktivnost s obzirom na predmet poučavanja.

Dio edukacije u školi koji omogućuje estetska iskustva sastoji se od aktivnosti tijekom kojih su učenici slobodni djelovati, a da ih se ne dovede do standardnih rezultata i da ih se ne sputava konvencijama. Takve aktivnosti moraju biti fleksibilne i prilagodljive interesima i sposobnostima učenika. Sredina ih ne smije ometati i mora im omogućiti da se angažiraju onoliko dugo koliko im odgovara i da rade detaljno i precizno. U takvoj će se sredini usuditi sudjelovati u neistraženim estetskim

eksperimentima i prepustiti mašti. Aktivnosti moraju biti zaigrane, a zadovoljstvo zbog sudjelovanja u njima mora biti nagrada.

Na kraju, u sredini koja njeguje estetska iskustva učenici ulaze u društvenu interakciju, odnosno mogu predstaviti individualni rad i sudjelovati u grupnom radu. Na taj način vrednuju sami sebe i nastoje tumačiti rad drugih. Ukratko, aktivnosti koje učenicima omogućuju estetsko iskustvo u školi moraju obuhvaćati brojne načine reprezentacije, dati im mogućnost da različito razumiju i tumače znanje, holistički se aktiviraju, pružiti im slobodu da sami rade i igraju se bez nepodnošljivih pravila. Takve aktivnosti djeci moraju ponuditi estetske poticaje koji će ih dovesti do interakcije s ostatkom grupe. Dok ih provode, djeca rade kreativno i usredotočuju se na edukacijsku igru povezanu s predmetom poučavanja.

„Estetske aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“

U nastavku teksta slijedi rasprava o kombinaciji dvaju tipova aktivnosti koje su već analizirane, to jest onima koje učenicima omogućuju da dožive zanesenost i estetsko iskustvo s obzirom na predmet poučavanja. Kombinirajući njihove elemente, razmotrit ćemo kriterije za kreiranje aktivnosti koje će moći povećati sudjelovanje učenika u nastavnom procesu i tako im podići razinu motivacije i unaprijediti školsku sredinu. Predlaže se da aktivnosti koje će proizaći iz tog procesa budu nazvane „estetske aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“.

S jedne će se strane rasvijetliti kako estetske aktivnosti djecu mogu više privući, a s druge strane razjasniti kako se može potaknuti zanesenost u razredu. Da bi se kreirale „estetske aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“, potrebno je povezati teme i metode, tj. „što“ i „kako“ te dvije teorije.

Rezultati nekih istraživanja ohrabruju s obzirom na povezanost zanesenosti s estetskim situacijama. Istraživanja o iskustvu zanesenosti proizlaze iz želje Csikszentmihalyi i drugih autora (Csikszentmihalyi i Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Perry, 1999; Sawyer, 1992) da shvate što umjetnici doživljavaju kada stvaraju neko djelo. Ono što ih je zanimalo jest to da su umjetnici toliko obuzeti svojim radom da zaboravljaju jesti, piti ili spavati. Potvrđena je pozitivna korelacija između iskustva zanesenosti i umjetničke kreativnosti. Potrebno je spomenuti različite načine na koje do te korelacije može doći, kao i prednosti koje iz toga slijede.

Možda bi ta dva tipa aktivnosti i iskustva, iskustvo zanesenosti i estetsko iskustvo, učinila njihove zajedničke karakteristike snažnijima, tako da se u oba slučaja misli na situacije koje pružaju zadovoljstvo i zanimljive su, sudionici su u njima holistički angažirani i sami ih kontroliraju, te ih doživljavaju kao autotelične, kreativne i zaigrane. Pri estetskom iskustvu ljudi se nađu u situaciji snažnog angažmana, koncentracije i opreza. U stanju zanesenosti izgube svijest o sebi samima i o vanjskom okruženju, kao i osjećaj za vrijeme.

Čak je primijećeno da karakteristike jedne od tih aktivnosti (zanesenost i estetsko iskustvo) stvaraju plodno tlo za onu drugu. Primjerice, estetske aktivnosti vjerojatno

pojačavaju emocionalnu dimenziju (zadovoljstvo, veliko samopouzdanje, unutarnja motivacija), što prognozira dugotrajnu zanesenost (Shernoff, 2002). Osim toga, komunikacijska dimenzija estetske aktivnosti djeci omogućuje da pokažu svoje vještine, što predstavlja situaciju koja povećava mogućnost za pojavu zanesenosti (Shernoff i Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Također, kada djeca procesiraju i tumače realnost o kojoj ih poučavaju, sudjelujući u nekoj estetskoj aktivnosti, potiče ih se da rade na način koji za njih ima neko značenje, interveniraju u svoj razvoj, djeluju svojom voljom i unose se u ono što rade. Kada ih se pozove da kreiraju ili analiziraju umjetničko djelo, težinu zadatka mogu prilagoditi svojoj razini i raditi bez zabrinutosti za vanjsko vrednovanje. Nadalje, dječja nastojanja da radom izraze svoja umjetnička stajališta o onome o čemu uče, povećavaju mogućnost društvene interakcije u situaciji zanesenosti. No, moraju biti estetski prijemčivija kada je riječ o iskustvu zanesenosti. Uronjenost u aktivnost koja njihove vještine stavlja pred izazove pomaže im da se izraze na alternativne načine i rade kreativno. Situacija zanesenosti omogućuje im da slobodno biraju estetske materijale, prilagođavaju estetske ciljeve svojim interesima i neometano djeluju.

Nastojeći prikazati predložene „estetske aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“, pokazat ćemo kako se one moraju planirati i provoditi i kojim obrazovnim ishodima pridonose. Iz redoslijeda u tablici 1 proizlazi da „estetske aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“ moraju:

Tablica 1.

Karakteristike „estetskih aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“

Karakteristike „estetskih aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“

Biti razvojno adekvatne

Biti izazovne s obzirom na fizičke, emocionalne i intelektualne sposobnosti djece

Usmjeravati pažnju djece prije na proces, nego na proizvod

Biti povezane s alternativnim načinima reprezentacije

Pretpostavljati aktivno sudjelovanje

Motivirati djecu na pristup školskim predmetima kao estetskim poticajima

Poticati djecu na stvaranje vlastitih radova utemeljenih na školskim predmetima

Kod djece stvarati iskustvo igre

Pozvati djecu da se koriste svojom maštom i drugim kreativnim vrstama ponašanja

Poticati djecu na samostalno djelovanje i nadzor nad razvojnim fazama aktivnosti

Njegovati društvenu interakciju

Uključiti nove procese

Imati jasne smjernice

Često pružati povratnu informaciju

Provoditi se neometano u nekoj sredini

Biti neograničene vremenskim rokovima

Ostaviti prostor za nastavnikove ispravke i improvizaciju

Biti otvorene za samovrednovanje onako kako sudionici to određuju

Dopustiti nove i neprogramirane ishode

Primjeri – rasprava

Polazeći od navedenih svojstava, opisać će se dva primjera estetske aktivnosti zanesenosti, planirana u nastavi jezika. Prvi je primjer namijenjen djeci predškolske dobi, a drugi učenicima prvog razreda osnovne škole. Navedene su skupine odabrane zato što učenička samomotivacija i samostalna, spontana aktivnost u nastavnom procesu do sada nisu znatnije istraživane na nižim razinama obrazovanja. Štoviše, te će se aktivnosti provesti s drugim ispitanicima, kao pilot istraživanje, planirano kao određeni „dizajn eksperiment“ (Christensen, 2000). Nastavni konteksti u kojima bi se spomenuti primjeri estetskih aktivnosti mogli koristiti su „razni oblici verbalne komunikacije“ i „povezanost verbalne i pisane komunikacije“, kako su opisani u Grčkom jezičnom kurikulumu (Helenski pedagoški institut – Helensko ministarstvo za obrazovna i religiozna pitanja, 2003, str. 3753-3754).

U aktivnosti predviđenoj za provedbu u vrtiću odgajatelj pita djecu „kakav bi bio život da nestane slova?“ da bi potaknuo raspravu o tome gdje se slova mogu naći i zašto. Djeca se navode na primjere pisane riječi u našem svakodnevnom životu (knjige, omiljene priče, adrese, računalo, rođendanske pozivnice, TV titlovi, dnevnici, bakini recepti, putokazi, priručnici za igračke, oznake). Rasprava se fokusira na ono što bi se moglo dogoditi da u svakom od tih primjera nema slova. Djeca se potom dijele na manje skupine, a svaka od njih smišlja kratki prizor koji će prikazati pred drugim skupinama. Zatim objašnjavaju svoje skečeve ostalima, a ovi ih komentiraju.

U aktivnosti za provedbu u prvom razredu osnovne škole od djece se traži da se prvo dosjete nekog stila izražavanja ili uloge (npr. bijes, mirnoća, voditelj TV vijesti), a zatim čitaju tekst predviđen za nastavni sat jezika toga dana, ili na način koji su sami odabrali ili u ulozi za koju su se sami odlučili. Na kraju svake prezentacije dijete otkriva zašto je odabralo upravo tako čitati tekst, a ostali raspravljaju o tom izboru.

Navedene su aktivnosti predviđene da bi se istaknula povezanost teorijskog okvira o kojem se raspravlja u ovom radu sa školskom praksom. Metodička analiza primjera „estetskih aktivnosti zanesenosti“ zapravo bi mogla poslužiti vrednovanju predloženog teorijskog pristupa. Analiza tih aktivnosti mogla bi dati smjernice za kreiranje situacija koje pridonose razvoju spontanog angažmana u procesu učenja kada su u pitanju djeca u vrtiću i učenici prvog razreda osnovne škole.

Indikativno je kako se čini da bi se u tim dvjema aktivnostima, navedenim ovdje kao primjeri, djeca mogla usredotočiti na sam proces jer očekivani rezultati nisu unaprijed određeni. Štoviše, djeca koja bi sudjelovala u tim aktivnostima mogla bi funkcionirati na osobnoj razvojnoj razini jer im individualne razlike ne bi ometale ishod situacije. U objema su aktivnostima oni koji sudjeluju u igri pozvani da zajedno rade i utječu jedni na druge. Takve aktivnosti motiviraju djecu na estetsku igru, što može dovesti do nekonvencionalnog, kreativnog procesa poučavanja. Potrebno je također primijetiti kako obje aktivnosti zahtijevaju aktivno sudjelovanje djece na fizičkoj, emocionalnoj i intelektualnoj razini, kao i stvaranje ozračja koje nadilazi tradicionalno obrazovanje.

Specifično, u prvom primjeru djeca predškolske dobi dobivaju mogućnost stvarati situaciju teatra, što predmet učenja dovodi u vezu s njihovim životom. Potiče ih se na tjelesnu, emocionalnu i intelektualnu aktivnost s obzirom na konkretni predmet, kako bi rad obogatili svojim iskustvima i maštom. Premda je taj proces povezan sa specifičnim ciljevima nastavnog plana i programa za jezik, razlikuje se od uobičajene nastavne prakse, djeci omogućuje da samostalno djeluju te kontroliraju razvoj i ishod aktivnosti. Na kraju, takva aktivnost potiče djecu da se sama predstave i vrednuju.

U drugom su primjeru učenici prvog razreda pozvani da djeluju intelektom, ali i emocijama. Svako dijete/čitatelj potiče se na to da promatra tekst predviđen za nastavni sat jezika kao kazališni poticaj. Stoga dijete čita onako kako ono hoće, što ne obuhvaća samo elemente naznačene u tekstu već i konotacije koje ono pripisuje tekstu. Polazeći od zadanih uputa, dijete daje novu važnost tekstu i djeluje kreativno. Za svakog od njih rezultat je jedinstven, a komentiraju ga obje strane – stvaratelj i primatelj.

Da zaključimo, imajući u vidu prethodno navedeno, moglo bi se smatrati da „estetske aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“ čine specijalnu vrstu aktivnosti za vrijeme kojih učenici analiziraju znanje koje usvajaju estetskim kanalima. S jednog drugog stajališta, „estetske aktivnosti zanesenosti za školu“ mogle bi se tumačiti kao posebne aktivnosti tijekom kojih djeca dobiju mogućnost sudjelovanja u estetskom stvaranju. Drugim riječima, s pomoću „estetskih aktivnosti zanesenosti u slučaju djece predškolske dobi i prvog razreda osnovne škole“ djeca dobiju mogućnost za znatno sudjelovanje u nastavnom procesu jer mogu učiti iz onog što stvaraju, a stvaraju iz onog o čemu uče.