

# Preschool Children's Reactions to Active Music Listening through Movement, Visual Arts and Verbal Expression

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## Abstract

*Active listening to music is an experience which preschool children may find interesting and enjoyable. Preschool children often enjoy activities which enable them to be creative and to express themselves without any limitations. As a result of providing children with activities in which they learn about their environment through their senses and are encouraged to express their experience, their perception and the perception of what they are offered is facilitated through music. This study, which included 204 participants (preschool children) in three different kindergartens in Zagreb, examined preschool children's reactions to active music listening. Three types of children's expression, i.e. expression through visual arts, verbal communication and movement were examined. The results showed that children react positively to active music listening and enjoy the whole music activity. In other words, children were active participants in the process of development and learning. Moreover, they enjoyed that type of music activity.*

**Key words:** active music listening; preschool children; research.

## Listening to Music – The Function and the Importance

Listening to music alongside singing, playing and creative work are important areas of music in the educational system. Music listening provides children with the opportunity to gain knowledge about musical heritage and in such a way realise the value of musical art (Gospodnetić, 2011, 2015). Children's aesthetic education

and designing criteria for music evaluation are the goals of listening to and learning about music. Listening to worthy musical works leads to the realisation of these goals (Dobrota, 2012a; Novosel, 2003). A child experiences music foremost physiologically and emotionally, and then intellectually. In this process, a child learns about the expressive music elements, recognises, follows and distinguishes them (Denac, 2012). For a child, listening to music is a fundamental and integral process in the reception of music. Music is primarily a sound, i.e. acoustic phenomenon and acoustic sensitivity or hearing is the basis for developing music sensitivity (Sam, 1998). According to Lekić and Lekić (1998), the tasks of music listening are connected to acquiring listener's experience. By listening to music children gain experiences in differentiating the colours of sounds, types of human voices, colours of the sounds of musical instruments and other sounds from their surroundings, simultaneously developing musical memory. Children adopt valuable achievements of musical heritage through music listening and in doing so they get accustomed to attentiveness in listening. Also, music listening creates prerequisites for experiencing musical works and sets foundations for further nourishment of children's musical tastes.

Wolvin and Coakley (1982) have come to the conclusion that listening to music is a process which includes hearing, directed attention and giving importance to whatever is listened to or heard. They consider that everything that creates our sound environment functions as sound information. In addition, the music processed through listening also possesses "visual information" - that is, written notation which is processed in sound through mental processes.

Rankin (1926, as cited in Ajtnik, 2001) researched listening in the USA and divided the listening ability into four groups. Abilities to choose, dissect, differentiate and evaluate the important are in the first group. The second group implies the connection between what was heard with the listener's knowledge and the organisation of listening. The ability for critical assessment of the heard material falls under the third group and the last ability is following the musical flow. Weaver (1972, as cited in Ajtnik, 2001) completed these findings several decades later and stated 41 skills of human listening all together.

Sam (1998) considers that the process of music listening in an educational situation implies experience, cognition and analysis. Music cognition is based on music experience. Music reception includes the complexity of melodic perception which implies the tone, rhythm and harmonic perception. In that, there are two possibilities of a developed listening perception and they are linear or melodic listening and polar, cyclic or harmonic listening. Linear or melodic listening means that the listener is capable of following the movement of a melody, i.e. tonal relations in their various pitches. Harmonic listening is the ability of listening based on the functionality of tonal relations. Both ways of listening lead to the conclusion that listening is an acoustic, physiological, intellectual and emotional phenomenon.

Expressive music elements are structured into some form so the music acts through it. It is also possible to view listening quantitatively and divide it into three basic phases. According to Sam (1998), the trait of the first phase is enjoying the tone itself. The pleasantness and hearing enjoyment is provoked with music rhythm and the influence of colour and volume of a tone. The second phase is associative listening which is, in its essence, a negative phenomenon because the listener can perceive expressiveness of music to be stronger or weaker depending on the intensity of his/her preconceptions. The third listening phase is intellectual listening, i.e. a developed listening ability. A listener with a developed listening ability can hear music impressions in which he/she can follow the form, structure, tonal and rhythmic relations, tempo, dynamics, agogics, types of instruments of a composition, and define him/herself aesthetically. The three ways of listening are intertwined and depend on the mood, motivation and listening tasks.

### ***Ways of Listening to Music***

Listening to music is not only a source and integral part of the development of music hearing and nurturing, but also a general problem of the didactics of music at all levels of general education. Developed listening ability and its growth should be viewed upon firstly as a musical problem, but also as educational, sociological, aesthetic and psychological issue.

Music theorist and psychologist Alt (1973, as cited in Sam, 1998) promotes three types of listening: sensitive listening (sensory-motor and emotional), aesthetic and emotional listening. Psychologist Rauhe (1972, as cited in Sam, 1998) differentiates between motor, passive, associative (emotional, out-of-music reception) and cognitive listening (acquiring abilities). Music psychologist Krutzfeld-Junker (1972, as cited in Sam, 1998) sees listening as pure cognition, listening as naive aesthetic reception, listening that evokes out-of-music naturalistic associations, listening which leads to various experiences, conscious and active listening, and symbolic listening. The stated listening phases and diversities in the process of musical education facilitate the categorisation of listening into passive and active listening.

Sam (1998) states that passive listening does not include emotional or intellectual engagement. Every listening can provide hearing pleasure, and create mood or atmosphere. Associative listening is also passive because the associations eliminate music attention. In musical-educational practice passive listening is a negative phenomenon. However, it is not only present, but also desirable in the preschool institutions. Passive music listening can be an incentive for playing in various activity centres, game of dance, falling asleep, waking up, arriving to and leaving the kindergarten. In those situations, passive music listening can be an incentive and motivation for active music listening and at the same time it can gradually develop children's need for musical surroundings (Sam, 1998). Andreis (1967) defines passive listening as music listening without background, devoid of consciously directed

attention. He states the existence of positive and negative listening and stresses three conditions which need to be fulfilled for positive listening. These conditions are accessibility of the work for the listener, the quality of the performance and listener's collected relationship with the work. The author tries to prove that people of different musical education listen to and receive music differently. Andreis also has a clear conviction that music education is an important part of listening. Cady (1977, as cited in Rojko, 2012) claims the opposite and estimates that good listening does not require expert music education or knowledge of the notes. Ortmann (1927, as cited in Rojko, 2012) has tried to categorise the ways of reacting to music taking into consideration the type and complexity of psychological processes involved. Ortmann speaks of sensory, perceptive and imaginative listening. The foundation of sensory listening is sensory material. Sensory reaction is limited to individual tones and is characterised by not perceiving higher units. It is a physiological reaction present in animals, children, untrained adults and untalented people. Sensory response requires minimal mental strain. Sensory type of reaction is present on the musical, i.e. listening plain and in reacting to visual art or literary works. Perceptive type of reaction implies noticing progressions, sequences, motives, phrases, contrasting forms and alike. The details are perceived as parts of the whole and interpreted as such. In this type attention is not spontaneous, but willing, i.e. deliberate and directed. The highest type of reaction is imaginative listening which is characterised by noticing phenomena such as tonality, higher melody, harmonic segments and anticipating musical flow. This way of reacting is inherent to trained musicians (Ortmann, 1927, as cited in Rojko, 2012).

### ***Active Music Listening in Preschool Age Children***

Active music listening includes experience and cognition and it is realised through integrative, analytical, comparative and creative expression and experiencing in the course of methodological procedures. Active listening is conscious listening in which the listener accompanies his/her aesthetic experience with cognitive elements of music expressiveness. A listener experiences the music emotionally; he/she feels special excitement or soul serenity and also reacts physiologically, which is visible from the facial expression, heart beats and alike (Denac, 2012). One of the motives for music listening is its emotional effect because music activities get their emotional meaning through the connection with important events in one's life and one's own feelings (Balkwill & Thompson, 1999; Dobrota, 2012b; Jeremić et al., 2015; Juslin & Laukka, 2004; Kivy, 1980; Vickhoff, 2008). Listener's intellectual strain is focused on a certain music phenomenon or trait. The result of such listening is aesthetic, sensory and formal perception (Sam, 1998). Active listening to musical work of art means following the flow of music emotionally, aesthetically and intellectually. Sam (1998) states integrative and analytic listening as two formal-content possibilities of active listening. Integrative listening implies a listener who is preoccupied with the entire piece of music and his/her perception follows every music-expressive detail shaped into formative music whole. Listening to a musical work in its entirety is the

key moment for the first musical experience (Gospodnetić, 2011, 2015; Sam, 1998). Analytic listening is focused on a completely defined musical particularity or detail, i.e. directed to the tone colour, instrument, rhythmic phenomenon, dynamics, tempo, aesthetic category or form. Borota (2013) states more ways of listening to music. They are experiential, experiential-analytical and analytical listening. Experiential way of music listening is most frequently implemented with younger children in whom it evokes moods and emotions. Such listening is related to expressing experiences through movement, visual arts and verbal expression (Borota, 2013; Denac, 2012). Oblak (2001) feels that every guided listening is essentially experiential-analytical because it not only includes the experience, but also its analysis. Guiding such listening depends on the child's age and the quality of activity implementation. Pesek (1997) states the importance of speaking as little as possible during listening because the goal is to direct the child to music and its aesthetic and emotional dimension, not to accentuate formal knowledge about music.

Active listening is a musical – intellectual ability which is gained in music education. Systematic and everyday music listening is a condition for its development (Sam, 1998).

## Researching Reactions to Active Music Listening

According to Gospodnetić (2015), one of the six activities implemented in Croatian kindergartens is the activity called *active music listening*. It implies expressing the impression during and after directed listening. Active music listening in the kindergarten is an important musical area whose goals are to acquire knowledge about differentiating sounds and voices, nurture children's musical experience and develop their sense of beauty. The activity of music listening is most frequently related to movement, but can also be connected with visual arts and children's verbal response (Borota, 2013; Gospodnetić, 2015). Active music listening can help a child in developing sensory-motor skills and in expressing emotions because children most commonly experience music with all of their senses. A child possesses the ability to express one media through the other, i.e. he/she can express the experience of active music listening verbally or in the artistic way, and enrich his/her music experiences in doing so. Aesthetic surroundings, i.e. active music listening can influence the development of a child's sense of beauty (Denac, 2012).

Considering the aforementioned, the work examined the ways preschool children react to active music listening. Guided musical activity through active music listening was directed towards children's visual art reactions, verbal reactions and reactions through movement.

## Methodology

The research was done in September 2015 in Zagreb. Two age groups (middle and older) from three kindergartens participated in the research. Each group from these kindergartens had their task which was connected with the music listening activity. All

the preschool groups listened to the same piece of music in the course of the activity. Observation methods and the interview were implemented during and after the activity. The choice of musical literature in the preschool institution is important for music listening. Quality pieces of music from different parts of the world and various musical eras are desirable (Denac, 2012). It is a way of opening a doorway for a child toward the diversity of music expression and the possibility of developing appreciation for this diversity. For preschool age children, mainly short compositions are chosen, but also rounded segments of longer musical works. Voglar (1989) states 30 seconds to two minutes as the most appropriate length of compositions for the preschool age. As children get older, the compositions are longer. In the course of the research children listened to Robert Schumann's *Wild Rider* (approximately 35 seconds long). In each kindergarten, after active music listening, one group expressed themselves verbally, the second artistically and the third with movement. The research was implemented within one musical activity in every group.

### **Research Problem and Goal**

This paper examined children's reactions to active music listening through movement, verbal expression and visual arts. The problem of the research was founded on the question whether children listen to music actively and whether they express their experiences through other fields after listening. The goal was also to examine children's visual art reactions, verbal reactions and reactions through movement to directed or active music listening.

### **Sample**

The research was done in three kindergartens in nine children's groups in Zagreb. Table 1 displays the researched preschool groups according to age, number of enrolled children, as opposed to the number of children who participated, and ways of reacting to music listening. The convenience sample was chosen, i.e. the one which was available, nonprobabilistic (Mejovšek, 2013).

Table 1  
*Research groups (N=204)*

Reaction to the activity	Age	N of children enrolled	N of children who participated	% of children who participated
1 Visual arts	Middle Older	87	64	73.6
2 Verbal	Middle Older	87	67	77.0
3 Movement	Middle Older	85	63	74.1
Total		259	204	78.8

In the first group 73.6% of the enrolled children participated and they expressed themselves through visual arts after the active listening. In the second group 77% of the children participated in the research and their task was to verbally express themselves after active music listening. In the third group 74.1% of the children participated in the research reacting to active listening with movement. All age groups participated and reacted to active music listening through visual arts, verbally, and expressed themselves in movement in the course of active music listening.

### **Work Method**

This is a qualitative research and it is a case study. This type of research is done in real life, that is, “natural” conditions (Halmi, 2005; Vogrinc, 2008). The researcher - preschool teacher is a full participant of the research. Those factors make quality research an applied one because it is done in real conditions (Mesec, 1997). Sagadin (2001) states the researcher is an instrument of this type of research. As a participant, he/she understands the research group, feels and experiences it (Mesec, 1997). As one of the foundation principles, the principle of quality research verifiability is reflected through description of research procedures, the analysis in which ideas are formed and regularities and behavioural patterns, experiences and interactions established (Vogrinc, 2008).

### **The Course of Music Listening Activity**

The course of music listening activity consisted of introduction, motivation, main and final part (Table 2).

Table 2

*Work design*

Activity	Movement	Verbal expression	Visual arts expression
Introduction	Breathing exercises	Breathing exercises	Breathing exercises
Motivation	Playing with a ball; movement which all repeat	Playing with a ball; children name the favourite thing	Playing with a ball; children name the favourite colour
Main part	Active music listening; Moving with the music	Active music listening; Talking about the experience	Active music listening; Expression through visual arts
Final part	Breathing exercises	Breathing exercises	Breathing exercises

The activity started with breathing exercises in all nine groups. They were done to relax and direct the children towards the activity. The technique of breathing in through the nose and breathing out through the mouth was used. The exercise was repeated several times.

A ball was used for motivation. In the course of active music listening and expression through movement, children’s task was to take the ball in their hands, say their names and make a movement with any part of their bodies while the other children repeated

the movement. For motivating active listening through visual arts, children needed to take the ball, say their names and favourite colour. For motivating active music listening through verbal expression, a child's task was to take the ball and name his/her favourite object, i.e. toy.

The main part of the activity was divided into two situations. The first situation was identical for all research groups and it implied active music listening in the living room space, which was the most appropriate for this activity. After the first music listening, children were given the oral task to listen to the composition one more time and think about what they see, hear or how they would want to move. The oral task depended on the reaction which was researched. The task assigned to the group in which visual art expression was examined was trying to perceive the colours and think how they would draw the music, in which colours. The group in which expression in movement was examined was motivated to move with the incentives such as, "Let the music take you", "If music tells you a story, show it with movement!" and "How would you swing or pace to this music, show it!" After active listening, the group which explored verbal expression answered general questions stating their experience of the music they listened to.

The final part of the activity was the same for all three groups. The activity ended with breathing exercises which rounded it up calming down the children.

### ***Instruments and Materials***

Researcher's word and a ball for children's motivation were used during the activity to examine children's reactions to active music listening. White A4 sheets of paper, markers and felt pens were used for artistic expression. The researcher used the method of observation and notation for recording verbal reactions. A CD with the recorded piece of music was used for the music reproduction on a player present in every living room in the kindergartens.

### ***Data Collection***

According to Opić (2016), every scientific discipline develops specific types of research in accordance with the given issue. The research described in this paper was empirical, i.e. experiential. It means that data collection was done in the course of the educational process using various methods and instruments, namely observation and interviews. Interviews imply an oral questionnaire, time engagement and researcher's preparation (Opić, 2016). Group interview, i.e. method of data collection, was necessary because the subjects cannot read or write. Semi-structured interview was implemented in all three groups. As stated by Opić (2016), the interviewer is a moderator because he/she coordinates the interview members' participation in group discussions. Moderator's role, i.e. preschool teacher's role, in this research was to motivate children to talk and express their opinions. The other data collection method was systematic observation, and it focused on systematicity. Mejovšek (2013) stresses



the particularity of systematic observation due to it being carried out according to a certain plan, being directed towards the observation object and the data noted parallel to observation. The observer intervenes and incites certain circumstances and activities in order to observe particular forms of behaviour.

The main data collection procedure is nonstructured observation alongside active researcher participation in the observed activity and situation. According to Jones and Smokeh (2005), no structured observation is based on a holistic approach. The communication between the researcher and the participants is important for data collection. For this reason, Firestone and Dawson (1972) consider the procedure of analysing quality data to be intuitive, procedural and intrasubjective. The basic component of data analysis contained the completion and editing the collected data which were categorised and classified. Vogrinc (2008) stresses that the collected data analysis can yield descriptive information about the studied topic.

## **Interpretation of the Results**

The obtained results were interpreted according to the way children reacted to the music listening activity. The reactions included movement, verbal expression and expression through visual arts.

### ***Reactions to Active Music Listening through Movement***

In kindergarten groups where children reacted to active music listening through movement, children reacted well to music and to the expression of reactions through movement. The movement was simple during the first listening. Children's movements gradually became more intense. Girls spun round and the boys stomped their feet. The boys had sharp movements ("as lightening") and the girls were dancing individually and gently turning and doing soft hand movements. Boys danced in groups (in *kolo*<sup>1</sup>, hands on shoulders). As reactions to active music listening, children's movements were in accordance with their developmental possibilities so the children reacted positively to the whole activity.

In the second kindergarten, children reacted to active music listening with movement, but the activity of relaxation (breathing) was considerably more interesting to them since they laughed and enjoyed themselves more. The children moved their upper and lower body parts to the music. Boys hopped and stomped their feet on the floor in fast motions while the girls showed repetitive movement patterns of spinning around ("like ballerinas"). At certain points, all children instinctively raised their hands above their heads. A couple of girls danced in *kolo* although they were told that the music "speaks" to everyone differently and to express themselves individually. Boys also danced in pairs, in embraces. Girls and boys alike lifted their legs high in the air and held their waists. All children accompanied the music with short and intense

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<sup>1</sup> Croatian circle dance

movements. It was observed that children followed the music with movement and, besides with hopping and turning, expressed their impression of the music listening with loud laughter and cries.

In the third kindergarten, the children reacted best to the music listening activity through movement because few boys normally dance and they motivated others to move by performing different moves. The children moved and performed hand and leg actions. Initially, the jumping was short and on one leg for most of the boys. They used their hands less and expressed themselves more with leg movement. Spinning and jumping were repetitive movement patterns. Short and swift leg moves were also repetitive. Children had specific facial mimes - they smiled and laughed. When they used their arms, they lifted them above their heads and the girls slowly lowered them against their bodies. The boys lifted and lowered their arms in short and swift moves. Some boys also did a hand-stand or squat-jump. Just before the end of the listening, most boys hopped on both legs or with legs stretched out accompanying the character of the music in such a way. According to the described, it is visible that children experienced and expressed the composition through appropriate movements. According to Starc et al. (2010), a child at the age of five or six should be able to hop from one leg to the other, jump ten or more times on one leg and move along with the rhythm of the music. This research has confirmed that, as well as the fact that some children have shown higher level of motor development than their peers have.

All three educational groups reacted positively to active music listening, and responded to the task of expression through movement. Two middle groups reacted to music in a more unstable manner when it comes to motor skills. This was to be expected because of their age and developmental phase. However, all three groups actively and joyfully participated in the activity. The children were motivated to freely express themselves with movement. Their motions were in accord with their own individual experience of the music work.

### ***Verbal Reactions to Active Music Listening***

In the first kindergarten, children's verbal reaction to active music listening was required. The children gave short and clear answers. To them it was more interesting to clap and pace with the music than to verbally communicate about it. Communication with children was positive. Most children had good pronunciation and applied grammar rules so they had no difficulty in stating their opinions. All children named their favourite colours clearly and surely, reacted positively to music listening and participated in the group conversation. They also reacted to the incentive to walk or clap with the music very positively. This fact shows that children not only reacted well to the music listening activity, but also that movement would have been a more interesting incentive for expressing their reactions. Although this was an activity in which children expressed themselves verbally, it was impossible to implement the activities with them only verbally. So, the activity of expression through movement

was included because the children showed the desire for it. In doing so, the preschool teacher made it possible for them to express themselves in both ways.

In the second kindergarten, children were interested in music listening and open to communication. Most children listened to music with their eyes closed, whereas some children could not relax and listen in silence. All children were ready to state their experience and some had original ideas while the others repeated theirs. The children have shown imagination and knowledge about various names of instruments. They mostly spoke correctly and grammatically accurate, and responded to the whole activity positively.

In the third kindergarten, called *Joy*, children's verbal reactions to active music listening were the best. They were interested in active music listening and expressed their reactions verbally very well. The children had no difficulty in verbalising their thoughts, and their ideas were very original. They were relaxed and very interested in the group conversation about the musical work. They had various opinions about the emotional experience of the music (Table 3).

Table 3  
*Children's verbal reactions to active music listening*

Kindergarten	Verbal reactions
1 <sup>st</sup> Kindergarten	<p><i>Preschool teacher: What did you hear?</i>  <i>Everyone: Music!</i>  <i>Preschool teacher: What did you think about when you heard the music?</i>                      All children talked about ghosts.  <i>I: I thought of ghosts.</i>  <i>D: I thought of a dog.</i>  <i>L: To me it seemed like a horse running.</i>  <i>Preschool teacher: How would you name this music?</i>  <i>D: Poor dog.</i>  <i>I: Locomotive.</i>  <i>Preschool teacher: Who would you listen to this music with?</i>                      All the children in the group name their best friend.</p>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Kindergarten	<p><i>Preschool teacher: What did you hear?</i>  <i>S: I heard the guitar.</i>  <i>Z: The piano!</i>  <i>Preschool teacher: What did you think about when you heard the music?</i>  <i>M: As someone was in a hurry to get somewhere.</i>  <i>F: Like someone was telling a story.</i>  <i>C: I heard the guitar, they were playing the guitar, drums, accordion.</i>  <i>R: Like someone was running on a horse, some cowboy.</i>  <i>Preschool teacher: How would you name this music?</i>  <i>D: Soldier.</i>  <i>R: A bee.</i>  <i>Preschool teacher: Who would you listen to this music with?</i>  <i>Everyone: With friends.</i></p>

Kindergarten	Verbal reactions
3 <sup>rd</sup> Kindergarten	<p><i>Preschool teacher: What did you hear?</i> K: I heard a cowboy's song. B: As when someone runs merrily across a meadow. <i>Preschool teacher: What did you think about when you heard the music?</i> B: Someone was running. M: Someone was playing music like opera L: I thought someone was lying on the grass and looking at the clouds. K: It was fast. <i>Preschool teacher: What name would you give to the music?</i> K: I would name it bumblebee. D: Bedbug. <i>Preschool teacher: Who would you listen to this music with?</i> G, L and L: With friends. T: With boys and girls.</p>

After conversing, as the continuation of the musical activity, children expressed their verbal reactions by drawing. Children's drawings in this group were vivid, full of colour, and they transferred emotions.

### ***Artistic Reactions to Active Music Listening***

In the first kindergarten, in the older group, children's task was to express their reactions to active listening with drawing. According to Starc et al. (2010), a child of five to seven years of age is in a phase of simple pictures and occupies him/herself with conceptual groups such as humans, houses and animals. The drawings at that age are more and more like reality, and a child wants to tell a story with drawings whose content is enriched as children's life experience and self-apprehension grow.



Figure 1. P. (6.5), "Dancing colours"



Figure 2. K. (5.5), "Colours - red, pink and green. Colours mix together."



Figure 3. K. (5), "Gold exploration.  
A man who is looking for it."



Figure 4. M. (6), "Green and black colours are flying.  
And orange is flying."



Figure 5. N. (6), "A girl dancing on a ball.  
An aquarium is next to her."



Figure 6. T. (5), "Colours playing and whistling,  
playing instruments and dancing."

Children's drawings show that they are in the phase of simple drawings without many details, but full of bright colours and interesting ideas. Several boys and girls have shown music and colours in their drawings, while the other children portrayed their interests or desires. It is visible from the drawings that children expressed their impression through diversity of bright colours and marked the experienced work dynamics through various strokes. Children described the drawings shortly and succinctly wanting to move along to the next activity as soon as possible, but they also seemed pleased with what they had drawn, and impatiently awaited to answer questions about what they had drawn.

It was interesting for the children to watch what was being written about what they had drawn and especially when they tried to read their names written in someone else's handwriting. They showed great interest in written signs.

In the middle group, children's task was to express themselves through visual arts after the active music listening. Considering their age, they responded to the activity of music listening very well, i.e. to the task of listening to music peacefully with their eyes closed.



Figure 7. P. (3), "I drew mum and dad."



Figure 8. J. (4), "This is mum and dad and Dora and Dora's sister. And this is a big ice-cream."



Figure 9. J. (4), "I drew colours."



Figure 10. I. (3), "I drew colours and the wind."



Figure 11. S. (4), "I drew my way home. This is the house and the trees."



Figure 12. D. (4) "The music told me to draw an ice-cream."

Children in this educational group drew colours, mums, dads, spiders, friends, monsters and alike. Some drawings show that children portray things important to them (parents), but not linked to the activity although the choice of bright colours and short random movements can be connected with the experience of the musical work tempo. Most parents' figures are in proportion with their importance which is in accord

with the developmental phase of scheme or expression through complex symbols in which the children were at the time (Starc et al., 2010). Children's statements gave the meanings to the drawings. Most children held their felt-pens correctly. They were interested in why they were listening to music, when it would finish, why it spoke to them, why they were drawing it, what else to draw, if they would listen to music tomorrow and also draw, and many more questions which can be explained with the phase of speech they were in (Starc et al., 2010). This is the only educational group in which children wanted to keep their drawings eagerly so that they could show them to their parents. This can also be attributed to their age.

The third group of children, the older ones, were interested in the music listening activity and reacted to the task positively and well. After the active listening, children named their favourite colours. This group paid special attention to naming the colours so some children volunteered to name their "favourite colour" more than once. It can be attributed to their enthusiasm over the learned colour nuances and the desire to show it.



*Figure 13. I. (6), "Sea where the fish are."*



*Figure 14. L. (6), "How the colour floats."*



*Figure 15. I. (5), "Purple."*



*Figure 16. J. (5), "Colours, colourful."*



Figure 17. E. (6), "Colourful colours, black colour as the music goes."



Figure 18. T. (5), "Colours which sing along with the music."

Children had original ideas although several girls and boys, best friends, copied from one another, i.e. made four very similar drawings. This could mean they were not interested in expressing reactions to music, but more in stressing their own ideas and interests. All children's works were detailed and ideas developed clearly. Children in this group signed their works independently and relatively successfully, which testifies to the achieved level in fine motor development. According to Starc et al. (2010), a child at the age of five to six can make vertical and horizontal lines assuredly and a seven-year-old can write his/her name. It is evident that children accompanied the character of the musical piece with the colours and dynamic of the drawings because they used very bright colours or elements which are in movement solely by their nature. For example, they drew the sea, the wind or fish, and in doing so expressed their impression of the music, i.e. the tempo of the work they were listening to.

A child and an adult have different concepts of beautiful in music. A child firstly experiences beauty in music physiologically and emotionally, and then intellectually. A child feels pleasant and enjoys the emotion displaying it by expressing him/herself in other media. Listening, i.e. experiencing an instrumental piece of music, and at the same time feeling nice and enjoying its beauty, is a proof of emotions being correlated to form and not content as in other arts (Sam, 1998).

## Conclusion

Listening to music is an extremely important music activity for a child's emotional growth, his/her aesthetic education and music abilities development (Denac, 2012). A child develops his/her senses in a deeper and more meaningful way through active listening. If a child is presented with the opportunity to participate in music listening activities every day or at least several times a week, development of his/her sense of beauty will be motivated (Dobrota & Kovačević, 2007). Unesco's Guidelines for Arts and Cultural Education (2006) state the development of aesthetics appreciation, creativity and the ability of critical thinking through art education as basic rights of every child and young adult.

The integration of musical art with other educational areas is a segment of musical



activities (Curriculum for Kindergartens, 1999; Sicherl-Kafol, 2007). Implementing activities which pervade all areas of children's interests at the same time helps children's development (Sicherl-Kafol, 2001). Active music listening is connected with children's expression through movement, visual arts and verbal expression. These ways of reacting to music enable children to express themselves spontaneously and freely. Children who participated in the research have shown a great interest for such type of activity by expressing their ideas and creating new ones. Through active music listening activity, the children developed their language when they spoke with their peers; they also developed their motor skills and flexibility through moving or dancing and expressed their ideas in drawings, without guidance or any imposed subject. It was visible that children expressed themselves best through movement and then verbally. The lowest level of creativity and free expression was found in children who were drawing, although all the children have enjoyed the activity and they transferred their ideas to drawings with pleasure.

When participating in musical activities, children feel pleasure and gradually develop a critical view of their own work. In doing so, it is important that a child feels his/her ideas are original and accepted with enthusiasm. Stimulating environment and the role model of a preschool teacher influence children's creative expression (Denac, 2012). Preschool teacher is the one who enriches the culture of a preschool institution by transferring his/her musical knowledge and skills and introducing art content in his/her work with children (Miočić, 2012).

Music experience in active listening to music is not learned; it is realised (Sam, 1998). As such, it is a foundation of musical-didactical practice which is reflected in the originality of musical-educational content.

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# Reakcije djece na aktivno slušanje glazbe kroz pokret, likovnost i verbalnost

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## Sažetak

*Slušanje glazbe jedno je od najmlađih područja u sustavu ranoga i predškolskoga odgoja i obrazovanja. To je glazbena aktivnost u kojoj djeca aktivno upoznaju svijet glazbe putem osjetila unutar kojeg se potiče izražavanje glazbenih doživljaja posredstvom različitih odgojno-obrazovna područja. Cilj rada bio je ispitati reakcije djece na aktivno slušanje glazbe putem tri načina izražavanja – pokretom, likovnošću i verbalno. Sudjelovala su djeca iz tri zagrebačka vrtića u devet vrtićkih skupina (N=204). Istraživanje je pokazalo da djeca pozitivno reaguju na glazbu te se rado uključuju u takvu vrstu glazbene aktivnosti putem sva tri načina izražavanja reakcija.*

**Ključne riječi:** *aktivno slušanje glazbe; djeca predškolske dobi; istraživanje.*