

Creative Movement Project activities: exploration of play with themed movement approach with indigenous children

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Abstract

The creative movement project I'm working on is a planned exercise that is a component of the Teaching and Creative Movement class I've been teaching to dance majors pursuing their Bachelor of Performing Arts. 30 kids from Kampung Chingung in Perak, Malaysia are involved in this project, which they voluntarily took up to pass the time. The students and I conducted observations before the project was completed to determine the proper activities that can be carried out based on their physical and emotional capabilities. Based on these insights, a type of structured activity that gives indigenous kids a chance to interact with dance students' creative endeavours was developed. This structured activity uses a thematic approach as a management tool. This study explores how engaging in creative movement activities with indigenous kids affects both their physical and behavioural well-being. Analyzed is the project's exploration of play using theme approaches and play methodologies. This project aims to promote indigenous children's comprehension and awareness of the topics covered by the planned activities. Dance students are given the opportunity to share space, explore ideas, expression, and movement via creative movements, which allows them to learn information that may be passed on to the local indigenous children's community.

Keywords: Creative movement, Orang Asli Children, Community work,

How did I begin the project?

This project serves as a field demonstration for my students who studied the subject "Teaching of Creative Movement." These students proposed holding creative movement classes for the village's Orang Asli children (indigenous children). This undertaking was planned in stages: Students observe children's activities in the Orang Asli Village, prepare the activities that will be carried out, and then display those activities during the three meetings that they have with the children. The decision to choose these children is based on the necessity to show how the students teach, plan, and comprehend the needs of the Orang Asli children, who are frequently linked to academic underachievement and marginalisation. The decision to choose these kids was made after an arrangement between Perak's Orang Asli Department and the Head of Kampung Chingung to fulfil these children's recreational activities on weekends. Kampung Chingung (Chingung Village) is one of the settlements of Orang Asli which is located in Behrang, Perak, Malaysia. Kampung Chingung is about 5 km from Behrang Ulu, and also located near the Banjaran Chilo Titiwangsa (Chilo Titiwangsa Range). This village is also not far from the Sultan Idris Education University, Perak, Malaysia.

Planning the activities

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The intended activity will introduce students to the body, time, space, and energy as well as other elements of creative movement. Students can use this component as a planning tool to decide which activities are suitable for these Orang Asli children. The activities are designed to stimulate the body and mind, which calls for feedback and two-way communication between students as (instructors) and Orang Asli children as (participants). Understanding how Orang Asli children respond as (participants in) creative movement activities is dependent on this input. Before participating in outdoor activities, students should observe the children and conduct unstructured interviews with them. This is important because it makes it easier to comprehend how Orang Asli children behave and think. As a result, students need to carry out several research projects and tasks in order to answer the following questions:

- I. What are the children's interests?
- II. What is the culture and life of the children involved?
- III. Time and space to perform the themed activity?

The following phase is for the students, after receiving the answers to the three questions, to organise thematic activities that are suitable for Orang Asli children to handle together. A thematic approach is best since it considers the environment, location, person, ability, and skills when teaching. So, utilising a themed method satisfies the needs of Orang Asli children, who must take into account their aptitudes and capabilities.

Exploration of Creative Movement Theme and activities

In order to plan a creative movement activity, Lloyd (1998) asserts that expressiveness and theme (the notion of movement) are essential steps. A space for discovery is provided by creative movement, which involves two exchanges that spur creativity under the direction of the teacher (Muhammad Fazli T.B.S, 2010). For the Orang Asli children, the activities serve as platforms for physical activity in order to improve their physical flexibility. In addition, the youngsters are given the freedom to increase the variety of their motions, which the Bachelor of Performing Arts students can watch. This is because Orang Asli children have been exposed to knowledge about using their imaginations to create various sorts of movement. Students employ the following procedures as they prepare themed activities at various stages:

- 1) Identify the appropriate theme
- 2) Generate ideas related to the theme
- 3) Create a theme
- 4) Brainstorming based on selected topics
- 5) Identify activities based on themes
- 6) Provide an activity space with an appropriate theme
- 7) Implementation of activities
- 8) Feedback

Students have planned activities related to themes and activities based on the eight stages listed above (Table 1.1). The planned theme is in accordance with the Thematic Approach Guide for National Curriculum Implementation (2020). A themed

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approach to teaching and learning can benefit both students (instructors) and children (participants):

- Children can delve deeper into the topics listed. In addition, children can learn through their own experiences.
- Interesting and varied themed teaching. With a theme that unites a curriculum, program or activity, children's teaching and learning materials can be diversified. Therefore, the themed approach allows children to engage in various strengthening and enrichment activities, in addition to gaining comprehensive and in-depth knowledge about the subject or main idea.
- When planning an activity schedule, students as instructors will not have any suggestions for finding relevant activities.
- Apart from increasing children's cognitive knowledge, this themed teaching and learning also promotes leadership characteristics, self-confidence, mutual help, tolerance of different opinions and cooperation between children.
- A themed approach that gives children the opportunity to work in groups to complete projects can increase social awareness and understanding of social roles and responsibilities as group members.

Three topics have been selected: personality, physical creativity, and communication. These three topics are connected to children's capacities, including their enjoyment of play, self-expression, engaging in physical activity, and the difficulties of enjoyable pursuits. The purpose of creative movement is to cultivate a sense of individuality that is increased by using the body as a vehicle to boost self-esteem. 2006 (Kaufman). According to McCall (2000), a style of perception with design that is applied employing components of intelligence as mastery of building movement is found using the concepts of creative movement learning. By appreciating the satisfaction of constructing movement to be fit and healthy, this is known to relieve stress. These tools are necessary to research, generate, and develop original ideas with increased aesthetic sensitivity to movement stimulation to communicate using the body. According to Haberman and Misel (1970), movement development combines elements of release of feelings as an interactive process, — in other words receiving feedback allows children to build self-confidence to communicate with outsiders. The approach is a partnership that is present in oneself with friends nearby, which can help solve the problem. It refers to how children receive similar activities to enjoy a learning environment that works to improve emotional intelligence.

If merely the movement is produced without being felt or experienced with a certain topic, creative movement creation techniques that stress the creation of movement are not realized (Fleming, 1976). In order to create creative movement, the fusion of physicality and creativity incorporates psychomotor stimulation and imagination. Teaching creative movement requires instructions that must be heard, seen, observed, and felt (Julius, 1978). According to Exiner (1974), exploring rhythm with

musical instruments that can evoke the inner emotional space is the beginning of the magic of producing creative movement in particular. This awakening serves as a vehicle for the physical application of human instincts as a response to be liberated through the interaction of rhythm and physicality.

An important concept in engaging in creative movement activities is the production of movement requiring physical response. It can supply perfection for the planning of both physical and mental strengthening in addition to enhancing fitness. Kirchner (1981) outlined the guiding principles for teaching creative movement involving the body, including a number of elements like: (1) Body awareness - how to control, move, and balance different parts of the body; (2) Range of motion - how the body moves by adjusting factors like: Force, pressure, and flow; (3) Spatial awareness is the understanding of the number, shape (whether in public or private), as well as the direction in which the centre of movement is built. (4) Relationships: People or groups move in accordance with particular ideas and objects

Kollen (1981) states that the efforts to learn the experience of building movement include integration that is done according to skill and mastery of the object to be presented. He described the field of creative movement education as related to building movement experiences to integrate the body and mind so that it becomes something more meaningful in oneself. Through his research, when the experience is combined with meaningful ideas and creative themes, it will show students' ability to interact positively. Children can master their own need to interact with their own styles that they think can attract the attention of anyone who sees.

This phenomenon is a strengthening of the building of one's potential to become a person who is more courageous to present thoughtful ideas. The concepts highlighted are more aimed at giving understanding so that children appreciate and develop the talents that are present in order to become a confident child. The building experience that involves self-confidence is focusing on student leadership, moving the mind to act more actively and presenting an idealization full of seriousness.

Kaufman (2006) stated that building self-confidence through creative movement activities is closely related to personal characteristics. He described the space to achieve self-confidence as a personal right to be conquered. A child for example has room to be a good and creative child. The process emphasizes the development of a child's intellectual communication interaction that can be applied through creative movement (Joyce, 1973). Fleming (1976) also supports creative movement as a framework for children to develop expressive and interactive understanding. This is to create an expression of inner feelings to meet the demands of recreational activities that are a medium to release stress. Interact using creative expression to discover the development of thinking ideas to form the mind's imagination. The use of movement in the activities carried out plays a role in fulfilling the values of strengthening the unique way of thinking.

Table 1.1

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Creative Movement Theme and Activities

THEME	ACTIVITIES
COMMUNICATION	Focuses on expression to communicate, portraying ideas and feelings. Plays a role in shaping, receiving, and performing the movement through experience encountered.
PHYSICAL & CREATIVITY	Emphasizes the component of physical activities such as rhythmic movements that not only apply vocals in portraying the rhythm, but also musical instruments and explore the movement creativity. The Bachelor of Performing Arts students use music to accompany individual movements, as well as collaborative movements among themselves physically by means of feet stomping, hands clapping and others, to interact with one another.
PERSONALITY	Activities constructed emphasize the level of challenges in exploring imaginations and personality. Exploration of the shapes of movements that follow the expression and rhythmic movement is the basis in developing self-confidence for the children, in terms of familiarizing with creating movements.

After planning the theme, students also need to plan the activities that are carried out in stages at each meeting session with the Orang Asli children:

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Table 1.2

Creative Movement Activities

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	DURATION
1 ST Phase <i>Warm Up</i>	The students led the children in the warm-up session	(15 minutes).
2 nd Phase <i>Movement Exploration</i>	The students provide instructions to the children on movement exploration activities <i>(Discussed in Table 1.3)</i>	(20 minutes).
3 rd Phase <i>Cooling Down</i>	The students instruct the children on cooling down explorations	(20 minutes).



Picture 1.1 Warm up Session. Source: Muhammad Fazli Taib (2020).

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Picture 1.2 Movement Exploration. Source: Muhammad Fazli Taib (2020).



Picture 1.3 Cooling Down Session. Source: Muhammad Fazli Taib (2020).

The method that comes next is an exploratory exercise that fits with the intended concept. The chosen topics have their own activities based on the features of the subject from the Malaysian National Curriculum (2020) Thematic Approach Handbook. The details of the actions taken are in Table 1.2:

Table 1.2

Exploration of Play with Themed Movement Approach

THEME 1: COMMUNICATION
Activity 1: Who Am I?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Said and state personal details - name, age and gender.• Look and hold a My self's card.• Hands up when names are called.• Give simple answer about their self.• Sing a "Who am I" song.
THEME 2: PHYSICAL & CREATIVITY
Activity 2: <i>Anak Itik</i> (duckling)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warm up – movement exploration• Singing children Malay Song 'Anak Itik'.• Using Malay Drum to create a movement and sing together
THEME 3: PERSONALITY
Activity 3: My Body
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name parts of the body.• Sing the action song "Head, shoulder, knees and toes".• Pupils able to trace over dotted of letter.

The experience of orang asli children by joining creative movement activities

Based on the three meetings my students held. I proceeded to ask the children direct questions based on their understanding. The queries are as follows:

- 1) *Seronok ke ikut aktiviti hari ini?*
Are you enjoying the activities?
- 2) *Aktiviti mana yang disukai?*
What activities did you like?
- 3) *Bagaimana anda rasa?*

How do you feel?

This quick question is chosen at random by choosing each distinct age bracket, such as ages (6, 7, 8, 9 and 10). These inquiries are straightforward so that answers can be given quickly and clearly. English translations of Malay questions are provided. Below are their answers to the three questions listed above:

Table 1.4

Respond to Orang Asli Children after Creative Movement Activities

Participant	1st session	2nd session	3rd session
Children 1 (6 years old)	“Saya tak faham arahan cikgu”	“Aktiviti ini mudah”	“Saya suka itik dan menyanyi seperti itik”
	I don't understand teacher's instruction	The activities are easy	I like duck and sing like a duck
Children 2 (7 years old)	“Saya takut nak buat”	“Saya suka lagu itik”	“Saya suka lompat, menyanyi dan terbang”
	I'm scared	I like duckling song	I like jumping, singing and flying
Children 3 (8 years old)	“Saya tak pandai menari”	“Saya suka lagu itik dan menyanyi seperti itik”	“Saya suka lompat, menyanyi dan terbang”
	I can't dance	I like duckling song and copy duck movements	I like jumping, singing and flying
Children 4 (9 years old)	“Saya bosan”	“Aktiviti 2 dan 3 seronok”	“Saya suka buat aktiviti ini sebab ramai kawan boleh jumpa”
	I'm bored	I like activity 2 and 3	I like to do these activities because I can meet all of my friends

Children 5 (10 years old)	“Aktiviti ini menyeronokkan”	“Saya suka menyanyi kuat sambil bergerak”	“Saya suka semua aktiviti semua cikgu baik dan kelakar”
	These activities is fun	I like to move and sing loudly	I like all the activities and all the teachers are funny

According to the random answers given above, a thematic approach that starts by considering the environment's requirements and the children's capacities can offer significant advantages. The kids' ability to effectively demonstrate the activity is a sign of this advantage. The process of providing children with a variety of activities centred on a single concept, as defined by Kostelnik (1989), is known as theme teaching. This viewpoint is supported by Machado (1989), who defined a theme as a group of activities centred on a specific topic or idea. This topic or concept is applicable to a wide range of teaching activities.

Thematic approach emphasizes on learning themes. Thematic or unit teaching strategies provide the content and framework to organize learning activities and integrate various areas of the curriculum. Children can build skills and learn specific topics in a wider scope. The skills and concepts that the children will master are adapted to the learning theme. The thematic approach provides content and a framework for organizing learning activities and across multiple areas. The teaching of the skills presented is in stages according to the age level of the children.

In addition, opportunities are open for children to explore various areas of experience through active involvement in teaching and learning activities. The experience of students as (instructor) and also the experience of children as (participant) needs to be emphasized before starting themed teaching. The units should be planned based on the children's interests and appropriate to their background experience and developmental level. This approach involves other fields but discusses the same things, namely communication, physicality and creativity and personality as themes. The thematic approach involves a broad but not in-depth field. Different skills but not the purpose of going deep into the topic. A theme can be considered as a stimulus towards learning.

Conclusion

In this programme, students have the chance to take part in activities that can better their understanding of their objectives and desires. As a result, emphasis should be placed on this aspect of students' education because it can teach them how to plan their own activities. This type of learning makes two-way communication possible since it can help students comprehend both what they are learning and their own objectives.

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Activities involving creative movement provide a stimulating learning environment that encourages imagination. The development of intelligence and critical-thinking abilities can be facilitated by developing and communicating new, intriguing ideas. Learning through activities is a process of coming into contact with thinking abilities. To comprehend the feelings and intents being expressed, it is necessary to be exposed to aspects like senses and sensitivities in this regard. Several of the activities also encourage students to first take in and enjoy the activities before interpreting the movements with their bodies. The students' experiences from this emotional exchange are afterwards to be understood in light of how the Orang Asli children portray their feelings. Students will be assisted in developing both their academic and creative talents by the implementation of teaching strategies include creative movements.

The thematic approach has a number of benefits and advantages. The ability to face challenges, express feelings through value-based activities based on knowledge and prior experiences, instill creativity through exploration, make appropriate and relevant life choices, and improve interpersonal and intrapersonal skills are some of the advantages of the themed approach to education for Orang Asli children. The ability of Orang Asli children to use creative movement to convey their feelings based on verbal and nonverbal experiences is one of the benefits of thematic learning. Also, children may integrate their knowledge and skills when engaging in creative movement activities, which boosts their confidence and makes them more enjoyable. By this action project, children can also explore and relate new thoughts and imaginative concepts.

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Biography

Muhammad Fazli Taib Bin Saearani (Fazli), graduated summa cum laude from Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia with a Doctorate in Performing Arts and Visual Art Studies. The research was on dance education in the classical court dance heritage of Yogyakarta. He received his Master's degree (Drama & Theater) in creative movement education at Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang in 2014, Bachelor's Degree in Creative Arts with dance concentration at Universiti Malaysia Sabah in 2007, and Diploma in Performing Arts (Acting) in 2004 at Universiti Teknologi Mara. His research focuses on dance education and dance heritage through non-formal education, creative movement education, and sociology of dance. Currently, he is the Dean of the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts at Sultan Idris Education University in Malaysia.

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