The Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Folklore Activities in Slovenian Schools with a Special Educational Programme

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Using a representative sample (240 professionals from all 28 Slovenian primary schools with a special educational programme), we partially confirmed the hypothesis, which states that professionals who teach in schools with a special education programme agree with the statements about the inclusion of students with special needs in folklore activities. The hypothesis, which asserts that there are statistically significant differences between groups of professionals (special and rehabilitation pedagogues, special needs teachers, inclusive pedagogues, social pedagogues, teachers with special pedagogical qualifications and other pedagogical staff) regarding their agreement with statements referring to the inclusion of students with special needs in folklore activities in schools with a special education programme, was rejected based on the results obtained.

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1 Introduction

The origins of music extend back to the beginning of human development. On various occasions, rituals are part of the rich cultural heritage of nations around the world. This embodies folklore, which we understand somewhat differently nowadays – too often, we associate it with something old or irrelevant: as something that has long since faded away. In the field of dance (as in all fields of education), it is necessary to prepare a good foundation for further education. Without proper teaching of the elements of dance, we cannot expect students to show a positive attitude towards what the Slovenian folk-dance tradition offers them (Knific, 2007).

1.1 Special education programme in Slovenia

The starting point of the Slovenian special education programme (Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport; Zavod RS za šolstvo, 2014) is the educational process of children with moderate, severe and more severe intellectual impairments, which is built on a special pedagogical and andragogical foundation. These children need a substantial amount of support for their personal development due to their special characteristics and possible related deficits. The special education programme is divided into two parts: the compulsory part (students aged 7 to 15) and the continuing programme (students aged 16 to 26). The compulsory part consists of three stages, each of which lasts three years. The special programme departments may be located in the same buildings as regular primary schools or primary schools with an adapted programme or in special institutions (Jurišić, 2020). The rules issued on the level of education of teachers and other professionals in special educational programmes of primary schools with equivalent educational standards (Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport, 2015) established the criteria for teaching in a special education programme that teachers and other professionals must meet.

1.2 Ways to include children with special needs in folklore activities

The curriculum for music education in the special education programme (Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport; Zavod RS za šolstvo, 2004) for the area of movement with music suggests activities such as singing and listening to music (children's folk and original songs) in such a way that children listen to their teacher singing or playing familiar melodies while expressing their experiences in their own

way. Research (Antilla, 2007) has found that children outperform adults in creating their own culture. The extent of children's understanding has been studied, and it has been found through thinking in this direction that children are an active subject of today's society. The situation is similar in the classroom, where some students think differently. Thus, even in dance, children actively seek solutions and diversions, so they can be termed active agents of dance, and being an active agent in learning is very important for children with special needs (Shogren et al., 2015). In the curriculum for movement and physical education of the special education programme (Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport, Zavod RS za šolstvo, 2004), the following activities are suggested for the first part of the primary school level: dancing regionally specific folk dances, playing counting games and consolidating known dances. Experiences from China and New Zealand have shown the importance of being aware of one's cultural heritage. Preserving awareness has been included in the curriculum so that future generations maintain a positive attitude towards what their ancestors once created (Ashley, 2012). In the Slovenian school area, teachers often find ways to promote such content in electives. In this area, the special education programme (Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport; Zavod RS za šolstvo, 2014) offers the possibility of an elective subject of dance activities (dance, folk dance or social dance) that lasts 32 hours. The elective subject can be taught by all teachers who have the prerequisites for working in a primary school and already have relevant knowledge in the field of dance or acquire it through at least three seminars, amounting to at least 16 hours for each set. The curriculum for teaching music in the special education programme (Ministrstvo za šolstvo in šport; Zavod RS za šolstvo, 2004) states that we must enrich and supplement regular sports activities with optional activities of interest. Students participate in them voluntarily, according to their interests and abilities. We enrich their free time with content and increase their quality of life. When creating a stimulating sound environment, all individuals have the opportunity to make musical progress, despite their different levels of musical potential. It is important to remember that musical development is most intense between the ages of six and nine and then stabilizes, so this time is irreplaceable. Group leaders need to be well aware of the movement and dance abilities of the participants and select dances and songs that are appropriate for the particular age group and students' abilities. Music teachers can involve students who are less developed motor-wise and lack social skills (Gaberščik, 2009). A prerequisite for successful work is communication, which includes parents. When parents are informed about remedial instruction for their child, they often question what is more

important: instruction aimed at achieving minimum standards for that grade or instruction that is more focused on acquiring social skills. Since parents spend the most time with the child, the ideal planning for inclusion would be for the professional to take the parents' opinion into account when setting goals and to make a professional and objective judgement about whether to follow their recommendations. The decision must be communicated to the parents, and they need to know how to justify it appropriately (Bryant et al., 2012).

1.3 Some of the reasons for including children with special needs in folklore activities

Dance, as a consequence of the need for expression, is deeply rooted in humans. The practice of this activity perfects us and, in a certain way, shapes us (Soares & Lucena, 2013). The power of music was already recognized by the ancient Greeks, and it was used for spiritual purposes (Pauwels et al., 2014). The effects of movement and dance activities on the individual has also been researched (West, 1984), and it has been found that they improve self-awareness as they provide tremendous opportunities to form an appropriate body image, reduce impulsive behaviour, help individuals to discover themselves, increase satisfaction, improve non-verbal communication skills, help to improve social skills and trust, establish cooperation and problem solving in a team, follow the rules, distribute attention to all participants, promote empathy, improve leadership skills and learn subordination, provide the opportunity to express emotions and imagination through communication with movements, give a sense of satisfaction and achievement, increase the impact of internal and external stimuli, improve the functional abilities of the neuromuscular system, increase organizational, orientational and co-ordinational skills, and cultivate a positive attitude towards experiencing dance activity. When creating a stimulating sound environment, all individuals have the opportunity to make musical progress despite having different levels of musical potential (Gaberščik, 2009). In addition to promoting students' well-rounded development, music plays an indispensable role in their aesthetic and personal growth (Roblek et al., 2004). The vital role in the acquisition of social skills was highlighted by a study that supported the positive effects of dance with empirical evidence. It was conducted with forty children who came from socially disadvantaged families and were randomly divided into two groups – the experimental and the control group. Those who participated in the dance

programme twice a week were observed to make progress in the areas of attention, behaviour, mind–body connection, communication, safety and contact (Lobo & Winsler, 2006). Teaching children with special needs is difficult because, during the process of education, there is an intertwining of external and internal factors that blurs the line between cause and effect relationships. Children with special needs are less able to perceive things, show reduced motor skills in everyday situations and cannot form complex thought processes (Pečavar, 2004). In this case, folklore offers opportunities for progress because, as B. Kroflič noted, in dance activities, the body acts as a receiver, mediator and performer as it receives and responds to kinaesthetic, rhythmic and social stimuli. The child begins to become aware of the body and its parts and of the many possibilities of movement in time and space with varying levels of energy consumption and with their own unique patterns of movement. Children long for this. Dancing offers them a wide range of challenges and opportunities to use all their senses (Kroflič, 1999). However, we must be careful in selecting content as over-intrusion can cause side effects that are difficult to correct later (Bucik, 2003).

2 Methodology

The main purpose of the research was to focus on the views of some professionals regarding the work and inclusion of folklore activities and content within a special educational programme. We also investigated whether statistically significant differences in statements exist between groups of educational professionals working in Slovenian schools with a special educational programme.

2.1 Hypotheses

H1: Professionals who teach in schools with a special education programme agree with the statements about the inclusion of students with special needs in folklore activities.

H2: There are statistically significant differences between groups of professionals (special and rehabilitation pedagogues, special needs teachers, inclusive pedagogues, social pedagogues, teachers with special pedagogical qualifications and other pedagogical staff) regarding their agreement with statements referring to the

inclusion of students with special needs in folklore activities in schools with a special education programme.

2.2 Sample

We conducted an anonymous survey via mail from November 2019 to February 2020. The research sample consists of 240 professionals from all 28 Slovenian schools with a special education programme, specifically 72 special and rehabilitation pedagogues (30.0%), 69 special needs teachers (28.7%), 41 inclusive pedagogues (17.1%), 32 social pedagogues (13.3%), 22 teachers with special pedagogical qualifications (9.2%) and 4 other pedagogical staff (1.7%). The structure of the sample by gender is completely dominated by women (236 or 98.3%). We evaluated the sample as representative (Černela, 2020).

2.3 Measuring instruments

For the purpose of the study, a questionnaire, which contains formatted statements, was designed. Respondents expressed their agreement with these using a five-point Likert scale: (1) I do not agree at all, (2) I do not agree, (3) I neither agree nor disagree, (4) I agree or (5) I totally agree. The objectivity, from the point of view of testing, is high because the instructions and the statements studied are clear and unambiguous, so all the respondents experienced the same conditions when filling in the questionnaire. The objectivity in terms of scoring the responses is also high because the five-point rating scale was the same for all the participants. The reliability of the questionnaire is high as the value of Cronbach's coefficient $\alpha = 0.846$. The content validity is based on the literature discussed (Černela, 2020; Kovačič, 2021).

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Overall results of the sample in relation to professionals' attitudes towards and experiences regarding the inclusion of students in folklore activities

Table 1 shows the overall results in relation to the statements of the professionals (special and rehabilitation pedagogues, special needs teachers, inclusive pedagogues, social pedagogues, teachers with special pedagogical qualifications and other pedagogical staff) about the inclusion of students in folklore activities.

Table 1: Frequency distribution (f%), mean (M) and standard deviation (SD).

Statement	(1) (%)	(2) (%)	(3) (%)	(4) (%)	(5) (%)	M	SD
Students show interest in engaging with folklore content.	2.1	27.9	32.9	25.0	12.1	3.17	1.04
Children with intellectual impairments can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	1.3	22.9	37.1	38.8	4.13	0.81
Blind and partially sighted children and children with impaired visual function can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	1.3	20.0	44.2	34.6	4.12	0.76
Deaf and hard of hearing children can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	5.0	25.4	42.9	26.7	3.91	0.85
Children with speech and language impairments can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	3.8	14.2	38.8	43.3	4.22	0.83
Children with reduced mobility can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	2.1	17.9	40.0	40.0	4.18	0.80
Children with long-term illnesses can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	0.0	13.8	43.8	42.5	4.28	0.69
Children with learning disabilities can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	0.0	13.3	34.2	52.5	4.39	0.71
Children with autistic spectrum disorders can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	10.4	18.3	28.3	42.9	4.04	1.02
Children with emotional and behavioural disorders can be included in folklore activities.	0.0	2.9	18.3	32.9	45.8	4.22	0.85
Including children with special needs in folklore activities improves their social skills.	0.0	0.0	22.5	36.3	41.3	4.19	0.78
Including children with special needs in folklore activities improves their motoric skills.	0.0	0.0	17.1	33.3	49.6	4.33	0.75
Including children with special needs in folklore activities improves their well-being.	0.0	0.0	18.8	42.9	38.3	4.20	0.73
For including children with special needs in folklore activities, individual work is the most appropriate form of learning.	9.6	15.0	50.4	20.4	4.6	2.95	0.96
For including children with special needs in folklore activities, pair work is the most appropriate form of learning.	0.0	4.6	56.7	31.3	7.5	3.42	0.70
For including children with special needs in folklore activities, group work is the most appropriate form of learning.	0.0	3.3	40.8	34.6	21.3	3.74	0.83

Notes: Column headings: (1) I do not agree at all, (2) I do not agree, (3) I cannot define, (4) I agree, (5) I completely agree; M – mean, SD – standard deviation.

The results presented in Table 1, related to the possibilities of including different groups of children with special needs, are quite similar. A slightly higher percentage of disagreement is apparent for the views on the possibilities of including deaf and hard of hearing students (5.0%) and students with autism spectrum disorders (10.4%). In the other groups, the disagreement is minimal or non-existent. Such a

belief may significantly influence the selection of content to include folklore elements.

The statements relating to the effect of folklore on students were generally met with a positive response, with around 20% of the respondents in each case being unable to decide whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement. Adaptation is necessary because dance activity is performed in multiple domains simultaneously (social skills, motor skills and well-being) (Zagorc, 2008), so the professionals' beliefs confirm the finding (Drev, 2013) that movement with music has a significant impact on improving individuals' physical and mental functioning. In determining the most appropriate form for teaching folklore activities, we found that as many as 24.6% of the respondents disagreed that the most appropriate form of learning is individual work; 4.6% of the respondents disagreed with pair work and only 3.3% disagreed with group work. At the same time, 55.9% of the respondents agreed that the latter form is the most appropriate, while a quarter of the respondents chose individual work. However, about half of the respondents could not decide which form of learning is the most appropriate. We assume that the choice of the most appropriate form depends on the individual situation. The most appropriate form of work is chosen by the contractors themselves as it depends on the chosen goals, incentives and working conditions. Group leaders learn the correct dance postures and the way to teach dance steps in various training sessions. They also adapt certain dance postures and motifs that younger children cannot perform as they should. For example, they adapt the three-step and two-step polka appropriately for children, often adapt the waltz step, adapt the three-step and omit more intense turns, rocking with the hips, kneeling and so on, but this is not always undertaken appropriately (Ramovš, 2000).

The mean values show that most of the professionals agreed with the statements about the possibilities of including students with special needs in folklore activities. The mean values range between 3.91 and 4.39, and the standard deviations range from 1.01 to 0.69. The respondents affirmed the positive impact of folklore activities on social ($M = 4.19$; $SD = 0.78$) and motor skills ($M = 4.33$; $SD = 0.75$) and improved well-being ($M = 4.20$; $SD = 0.73$) in children with special needs. When choosing the most appropriate form of learning, we found a slightly lower mean for individual work ($M = 2.95$; $SD = 0.90$), a higher mean for pair work ($M = 3.42$; $SD = 0.70$) and the highest mean for group work ($M = 3.74$; $SD = 0.83$).

The hypothesis, which states that professionals who teach in schools with a special education programme agree with the statements about the inclusion of students with special needs in the folklore activities, can be partially confirmed. It is confirmed that professionals support the inclusion of children with special needs in folklore activities as effective activities contribute to the improvement of well-being, provide comfort and satisfy arousal needs (Tomori, 2010). Teachers can use creative movements in all areas of teaching (Kroflič, 1999). A stimulating link between appropriate motor activity and the development of cognitive skills or the structure of the central nervous system was noted (Planinšec, 1995). There is a lack of studies involving music and folklore activities in special education settings, although it appears that music can be an effective didactic tool offering many benefits. Thus, research has pointed out that music and dance are forms of communication, a language that addresses our emotions, and motivation, which promotes collaborative learning and helps to create a positive classroom climate (Habe, 2018). Music can help students with developing motor skills and vice versa (Marinšek et al., 2020), and dance can have a positive impact on students' holistic development (Stergulec et al., 2013). In folklore dance activities, the body acts as a receiver, mediator and performer as it receives and responds to kinaesthetic, rhythmic and social stimuli (Palawat & May, 2012; Polak & Wojtuń-Sikora, 2020). Multidisciplinary teaching through the inclusion of students with special needs in music and movement folklore activities is one of the current challenges of modern education (Sutela et al., 2020). The benefits and advantages of folklore activities can relate to the development of physical skills, physical activity and motor development (Patcharapon & Singhanat, 2019; Šipek Vodnjov, 2004). In many ways, participation in dance may also lead to improved physical fitness, socio-emotional gains, and academic gains (Munsell & Bryant Davis, 2015).

3.2 Results of the comparison between groups of professionals regarding their agreement with statements about the inclusion of students in folklore activities

Table 2 shows a comparison between groups of professionals (special and rehabilitation pedagogues, special needs teachers, inclusive pedagogues, social pedagogues, teachers with special pedagogical qualifications and other pedagogical staff) regarding their agreement with statements referring to the inclusion of students in folklore activities.

Table 2: Number (N), mean (M), standard deviation (SD), minimum (min.) and maximum (max.) and Kruskall–Wallis test (p) for statements referring to the inclusion of students in folklore activities.

Statement	Profession	N	M	SD	Min.	Max.	p
Students show interest in engaging with folklore content.	SRP	72	3.26	1.06	1	5	0.374
	SNT	69	3.19	0.96	1	5	
	IP	41	2.93	0.88	2	5	
	SP	32	3.09	1.15	1	5	
	TSPQ	22	3.46	1.22	1	5	
	Other	4	2.75	1.26	1	4	
Children with intellectual impairments can be included in folklore activities.	SRP	72	4.15	0.74	2	5	0.318
	SNT	69	4.19	0.85	2	5	
	IP	41	4.20	0.81	3	5	
	SP	32	4.10	0.73	3	5	
	TSPQ	22	3.77	0.92	3	5	
	Other	4	4.50	1.00	3	5	
Blind and partially sighted children and children with impaired visual function can be included in folklore activities.	SRP	72	4.13	0.73	3	5	0.509
	SNT	69	4.23	0.71	3	5	
	IP	41	4.12	0.81	2	5	
	SP	32	3.91	0.82	2	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.05	0.84	3	5	
	Other	4	4.25	0.96	3	5	
Deaf and hard of hearing children can be included in folklore activities.	SRP	72	3.96	0.83	2	5	0.780
	SNT	69	3.87	0.86	2	5	
	IP	41	4.02	0.82	2	5	
	SP	32	3.81	0.86	2	5	
	TSPQ	22	3.91	0.97	2	5	
	Other	4	4.50	0.58	3	4	
Children with speech and language disorders can be included in folklore activities.	SRP	72	4.18	0.74	2	5	0.747
	SNT	69	4.29	0.85	2	5	
	IP	41	4.29	0.81	2	5	
	SP	32	4.09	0.73	2	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.09	0.92	2	5	
	Other	4	4.50	1.00	3	5	
Children with reduced mobility can be included in folklore activities.	SRP	4,30	0.68	3	5	4.30	0.099
	SNT	4,26	0.76	3	5	4.26	
	IP	4,12	0.71	2	5	4.12	
	SP	4,06	0.80	3	5	4.06	
	TSPQ	3,77	1.19	2	5	3.77	
	Other	4,25	0.96	3	5	4.25	
	SRP	72	4.45	0.60	3	5	0.202

Statement	Profession	N	M	SD	Min.	Max.	p
Children with long-term illnesses can be included in folklore activities.	SNT	69	4.26	0.72	3	5	
	IP	41	4.22	0.69	3	5	
	SP	32	4.19	0.74	3	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.14	0.77	3	5	
	Other	4	4.00	0.82	3	5	
Children with learning disabilities can be included in folklore activities.	SRP	72	4.46	0.67	3	5	0.448
	SNT	69	4.41	0.67	3	5	
	IP	41	4.46	0.71	3	5	
	SP	32	4.28	0.77	3	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.14	0.83	3	5	
	Other	4	4.50	1.00	3	5	
Children with autistic spectrum disorders can be included in folklore activities.	SRP	72	4.10	1.05	2	5	0.270
	SNT	69	3.93	1.05	2	5	
	IP	41	4.32	0.82	2	5	
	SP	32	3.78	1.07	2	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.00	1.02	2	5	
	Other	4	4.25	0.96	3	5	
Children with emotional and behavioural disorders can be included in folklore activities.	SRP	72	4.31	0.85	2	5	0.796
	SNT	69	4.19	0.83	2	5	
	IP	41	4.22	0.88	2	5	
	SP	32	4.16	0.77	3	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.05	0.95	2	5	
	Other	4	4.50	1.00	3	5	
Including children with special needs in folklore activities improves their social skills.	SRP	72	4.22	0.74	3	5	0.724
	SNT	69	4.19	0.79	3	5	
	IP	41	4.24	0.86	3	5	
	SP	32	4.00	0.80	3	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.18	0.73	3	5	
	Other	4	4.50	0.58	4	5	
Including children with special needs in folklore activities improves their motoric skills.	SRP	72	4.31	0.74	3	5	0.318
	SNT	69	4.28	0.85	3	5	
	IP	41	4.41	0.81	3	5	
	SP	32	4.19	0.73	3	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.45	0.92	3	5	
	Other	4	5.00	0.00	5	5	
Including children with special needs in folklore activities improves their well-being.	SRP	72	4.22	0.72	3	5	0.468
	SNT	69	4.10	0.77	3	5	
	IP	41	4.39	0.70	3	5	
	SP	32	4.13	0.75	3	5	
	TSPQ	22	4.14	0.64	3	5	

Statement	Profession	N	M	SD	Min.	Max.	p
	Other	4	4.25	0.96	3	5	
For including children with special needs in folklore activities, individual work is the most appropriate form of learning.	SRP	72	2.76	0.88	1	5	0.942
	SNT	69	2.91	1.09	1	5	
	IP	41	3.17	0.70	2	5	
	SP	32	3.00	1.14	1	5	
	TSPQ	22	3.18	0.85	1	5	
	Other	4	3.25	0.96	2	5	
For including children with special needs in folklore activities, pair work is the most appropriate form of learning.	SRP	72	3.36	0.66	2	5	0.099
	SNT	69	3.30	0.69	2	5	
	IP	41	3.73	0.78	3	5	
	SP	32	3.38	0.61	2	5	
	TSPQ	22	3.45	0.67	2	5	
	Other	4	3.25	0.96	2	5	
For including children with special needs in folklore activities, group work is the most appropriate form of learning.	SRP	72	3.72	0.74	3	5	0.113
	SNT	69	3.70	0.90	2	5	
	IP	41	3.83	0.86	2	5	
	SP	32	3.66	0.87	2	5	
	TSPQ	22	3.86	0.77	3	5	
	Other	4	3.75	1.26	2	5	

Notes: SRP – special and rehabilitation pedagogues, SNT – special needs teachers, IP – inclusive pedagogues, SP – social pedagogues, TSPQ – teachers with special pedagogical qualifications.

For all the statements, the results show that there are no statistically significant differences between the six professional groups. Based on the obtained results, we can reject the hypothesis that states that there are statistically significant differences between groups of professionals (special and rehabilitation pedagogues, special needs teachers, inclusive pedagogues, social pedagogues, teachers with special pedagogical qualifications and other pedagogical staff) regarding their agreement with statements referring to the inclusion of students with special needs in folklore activities in schools with a special education programme. The views of the professional groups are thus unified and implicitly show the potential and awareness of the advantages and benefits of and opportunities for connecting and integrating folklore activities into the field of special needs. Such educational processes can be viewed more uniformly, and the school conditions can be key factors in the quality of the educational process, especially when it comes to music (Borota, 2017). We need to spread awareness that, with the help of music/movement and folklore, a student with special needs can transform from being a passive student into an active participant in the school setting as well as outside the classroom (Sutela et al., 2020).

This situation is also conditioned by the teachers' competences regarding inclusion, which are often related to their general didactic and pedagogical competence (Retar, 2017; Riccarda Kiswarday & Štemberger, 2017; Sevšek & Črčinovič Rozman, 2018; Štemberger, 2013).

4 Conclusion

In this research, we were interested in the views of professionals from Slovenian schools with a special education programme. According to the respondents, students are not particularly interested in becoming involved in folklore activities. Possible reasons could be insufficient teaching of content, insufficiently discussed topics or negative connotations that have been attached to folklore for quite some time. However, it would be particularly interesting to examine in depth the reasons for such attitudes towards folklore. Professionals are otherwise in favour of the idea of including all kinds of students with special needs in folklore activities. A more detailed analysis has shown that, although there are some differences according to specific needs, they are negligible. Professionals agree that the inclusion of children with special needs in folklore activities improves their motor and social skills and increases their well-being, a view that has been confirmed by research in this field. The class is an active system that requires different forms of work, procedures, methodology and didactics to achieve the objectives. In this regard, each professional decides which form of work to choose to provide the students with the conditions for balanced physical, social and mental growth in accordance with their needs. For this reason, it is difficult to determine the most appropriate form of work and teaching of folklore elements. This was also confirmed by the respondents' views, with no significant statistical differences in the form of work. With additional training in the field of folklore, professionals would deepen their knowledge and, together with students, create and at the same time preserve cultural heritage. The traditions of adults cannot be automatically and unthinkingly passed on to children. It is right for children to learn about them, but they should not be passed on in the form in which they exist in the adult world (Knific, B. & Knific, M., 2009). Children's folklore groups should focus on children's play, combining it with simplified folk dances, folk songs and other elements that provide evidence of children's lives in the past (Knific, B. & Knific, M., 2007). In conclusion, it should be stressed that professionals, teachers and dance educators in general must pay particular attention

to the appropriate choice of folk dances, which must not exceed the abilities of children at a certain stage of development, and to their simplification.

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