Television Contents and Children's Free Kindergarten Play

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Abstract

Despite the new media, television is the most influential electronic medium in our society. Almost every household owns a television set, and, besides in their families and educational institutions, children encounter various television (further in the text: TV) contents and advertising in shopping malls, dining establishments, healthcare institutions, etc. Using the adequately controlled and planned TV content, there can be a positive influence on children's motivation, thinking process, employment of cognitive strategies, etc. On the other hand, excessive and uncontrolled exposure to TV content can lead to a series of problems including obesity, aggressive behavior, fear, and so on. When it comes to playing, which is a synonym for learning during the preschool age, a significant influence of TV has been noticed. Apart from the fact that exposure to television reduces playtime and the acquisition of experience from the real situations, it significantly influences the course of playing as well. Characters, vocabulary, and scenes – they all have a role in children's play, even in places in which the child does not have contact with the television set. Watching and documenting children's playtime and other related activities gives us an insight into their interpretation of the content they watched, and also of the context in which the child is growing up, in which television has formed his or her experience.

Key words: electronic media; free play; preschool child, television.

Introduction

TV in the Child's Life

As is the case with every other aspect of life, television in children's lives is not an exclusively positive or negative factor. There have been a number of research

efforts in the last decades which have provided us with insight into some of the ways television has influenced a child's life. All of them offer a similar conclusion stating that TV influences almost all aspects of children's development. However, since the early surveys, the media environment has become more and more complex, so children today are exposed to a larger number of channels, different contents, more expressive techniques, etc. It takes place almost everywhere; in their homes, preschool institutions, shopping malls, and even in the doctors' waiting rooms. Along with the classic television sets and TV contents, the modern childhood is inconceivable without mobile phones, computers and the Internet, gaming consoles, DVDs, and so on. Despite such a wide variety, television has still remained the most prominent medium in a preschool child's life (Rideout, Vanderwater & Wartela, 2003).

Scientists from different areas of science (Funk, Brouwer, Curtiss & McBroom, 2009), whose primary interests focus on children's development, point to the fact that children are especially sensitive from their birth until the age of six. Neurodevelopmental research states that a child's brain upon birth is not as developed as other organs are. That is why it is extremely important that it be stimulated in the first 24 months. During that period, parent interaction, object manipulation, movement through the child's surroundings (Vandewater, Bicham & Lee, 2006) and problem solving activities are of paramount importance, all of which are hindered due to inappropriate media exposure. Because of this, pediatricians (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1999) recommend no more than two hours of exposure to electronic media for children above the age of two. Younger children, due to the particularities of the brain development, should not be exposed to any such media at all.

However, reality is very different from the recommendations. Despite the children's development experts' advice, research shows that even the youngest children are inappropriately exposed to the media (Rideout, Vandewater & Wartella, 2003). An average child between the age of two and five uses the computer 27 minutes per day, and spends about 80 minutes per day watching television or DVD (Woodard & Gridina, 2000). The Kaiser Foundation's research states that typical days for 83% of children younger than six include watching TV, DVD, or a computer screen (Rideout, Vandewater & Wartella, 2003).

Interdisciplinary scientific research proves that excessive and uncontrolled exposure to electronic media can bring about a series of health issues, varying from obesity to aggressive behavior (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001). During the preschool age, there is an even greater specter of potentially negative consequences (such as fear, aggression, sleep disorders, etc.) of exposing children to the media (Zimmermann, 2008; Li & Atkins, 2004; Harrison & Cantor, 1999). Due to a lack of media usage culture in preschool education, inadequate contents and excessive usage of the electronic media bring about disorders which make the learning process harder later on (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001; Zimmermann, 2008; Li & Atkins, 2004). Apart from this, electronic media exclude movement from the learning process, which is crucial for the development of cognitive processes during the preschool age (Piaget, 1926, 1952).

Controlled and guided media exposure can assist in the development of many skills, from creativity to the gathering of information regarding the areas which would be hard to visit due to geographical or cultural differences (Gunter & McAleer, 1997). Exposure to electronic media may have an impact on visual intelligence (Subrahmanyam, Greenfield, Gross & Kraut, 2001), and there is also a mention of a positive influence on special skills, and especially on children's verbal skills (Rice & Woodsmall, 1988). With an adequate, controlled, and planned usage of television contents, there can be a positive influence on the children's motivation, thinking, and use of cognitive strategies (Wartella, Caplovitz, & Lee, 2004). All this is a result of research on the effects of, above all else, educational television contents, whose goal is to encourage positive behavior and skills.

One thing which may not be forgotten is that children need to be protected. They are not influenced only by "what is received through the media, but also by the passivity of the surroundings in which the children are growing up, along with the personal passivity and the emotional and intellectual unpreparedness for living with the media" (Sindik & Veselinović, 2010, p. 109). With that fact in mind, in the right conditions, in the hands of a conscientious and competent educator, television contents can become good means of education (Goodman, 2003). They offer educators and teachers the possibility of inserting into their educational institution the type of communication directed to critical media literacy which is closer to children in that way, because of the link with their everyday lives (Gainer, Valdez-Gainer, & Kinder, 2009). To ignore the fact that the media, especially television, are a significant educational factor in the child's life, although located outside the learning institution, would mean to relinquish that particular segment of development to the child's "self-education" or, in the best case, to the (in)competence of the parents.

What about the contents in which this is not the primary goal? Children also learn from such contents how to react in specific situations, what to want, what to feel; especially if they did not have a chance to see similar examples in reality. In one of the first studies conducted on the influence of television on children's behavior, children between 35 and 69 months of age, who had been shown aggressive behavior on TV, later showed the same amount of aggressive behavior as the children who were exposed to the real model of such behaviour (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963). The same author, in the study undertaken two years later (Bandura, 1965), discovered that children imitated aggressive behavior in a significantly smaller number of cases if the TV model was punished for his undesirable actions, as opposed to the instances when the consequences of such behavior were not shown, or when the model was rewarded for such behavior. The same studies (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1963, Bandura, 1965) cited significant gender differences in the imitation of violent behavior. Boys imitate physical and psychological violence in a more significant number than girls. This information will prove to be significant in our own research. It should be noted that children more frequently imitate the violent behavior of the "good guys",

heroes, because their aggression is usually for a "good" cause (Eron & Huesmann, 1986). Although all children are born with the capacity and motivation to learn, TV literacy requires certain pre-learned capabilities (Davies, 1997). Children must first "understand the world they live in" (Davies, 1997, p. 3).

Apart from the educational, entertaining, and informative contents the impacts of which we have discussed so far, children are also exposed to promotional contents. Quite frequently all of these TV segments are interdependent, so it is difficult to ascertain if the TV contents were created in order to "sell", or if the merchandise is simply the result of the significant ratings of a certain TV show, or possibly both. Although advertising was originally aimed at adults, during the 1970s the manufacturers started to divert their attention towards children (Strasburger & Wilson, 2002) for various reasons, one of them being the fact that their influence on the family is strongest during the preschool age (Žderić, 2009). Marketing activities which promote and sell children's programs, TV shows, computer games, and all kinds of merchandise (toys, picture books, clothing) are constantly expanding (Funk, Brouwer, Curtiss & McBroom, 2009). Although they cannot understand the reason for advertisements, a research from 2002 (Pine & Nash, 2002) proved that children at the age of 3.5, who had been exposed to a larger number of TV advertisements, requested a significantly larger number of brand products than their peers. Therefore, preschool children significantly prefer brands (Hite & Hite, 1995).

Excessive and premature exposure to advertisements can lead to a series of undesired consequences. Smith and Atkin (2008) have divided them into the intended and unintended effects of advertising. According to these authors, one of the basic goals of advertising is brand recognition and being constantly reminded of the brands. Furthermore, other intended effects are desire and the "shopping plea" of the child to the parent for a specific product, the emersion of consumer patterns, and incentivized shopping (various rewards that come with a product). As unintended effects, the authors cite conflicts between parents and children, children's dissatisfaction, materialism, bad eating habits, and the formation of a different self-perception (Bushman & Huesmann, 2001). In our research, the intended effects were clearly noticed and, except for the playtime which features contents seen on TV, children "wear" their heroes on clothes and shoes, "eat" on cakes, play with them using various toys, or "read" them in magazines.

TV and Playing

Play is a primary and irreplaceable activity of children. A child learns through playing; it is at the same time an object, the means, and a method of a child's understanding of the world, of verifying what was learned, experimenting with what was seen, imagining, establishing social relations, developing communication, emotional experiencing and of establishing control.

Although playing is common for all the children in the world, and it exists in all cultures and all periods, each child plays in an authentic way, shaped by his or her

experience, environment and inner motives. While playing, the child tests and verifies what was previously learned, and discards it if it does not make sense. A child shapes his knowledge of the surroundings in his own special way and makes them a part of his concept of knowledge (Slunjski, 2008). Play is specific because of the intensive intrinsic motivation of the child, and represents an activity which was chosen by the child himself. Due to this fact, play offers the widest range of options of including a child as an active participant. On the other hand, because it creates a feeling of satisfaction in the child, it is relaxed and informal, it is its own purpose and the child sees it as a reward. It is a functional and purposeful way of learning for preschool children. By such a way of learning, the child can acquire complex skills which will be useful during his entire lifetime.

Due to the listed meanings of play in a child's life on the one hand, and a significant role of television in the lives of today's children on the other, scientists have been intensively researching into what the media and TV, as the most frequent medium during the early childhood, do that is "bad" or "good" for the child itself, and what is the relationship between TV and children's free play.

In the 1980s, Williams (1986) carried out a study on communities with and without television sets, and concluded that the children who did not have contact with TV had shown a higher level of creativity than the children who had a TV set in their household. However, the same research showed that the level of creativity starts decreasing when the children from TV-free households get access to TV (Williams, 1986). A newer study (Vandewater, Bickham & Lee, 2006) showed the same – one hour of watching TV, for children in the ages of 3, 4 and 5, had as its consequence the reduction of time spent in creative play by 9% during the week and by 11% during the weekend. It is actually logical, but it does not say if the increase in watching TV contents has caused the changes in the contents and creativity of play itself. Television allows for the construction of imaginary worlds through play (Lemish, 2007). Therefore, while researching the influence of TV on play, the relationship between play and TV should be surveyed in several domains:
  – the influence on time spent playing,
  – the context and contents of play,
  – the use of toys manufactured as a result of TV contents,
  – children's understanding and knowledge of the previously mentioned relationship between TV and play.

Methodology

The choice of qualitative research comes from the intention to learn the educational practice process or experiences in as much detail as possible. Qualitative methodology allows for the gathering of a plentiful amount of information which can lead to a better understanding of the problems which are the subject of this research.

Slunjski (2011) notes that the subjects of qualitative research are people who represent a starting point and a goal, and can be surveyed in their natural surroundings.

In this article, the theme and the goal of the research are aimed at a "profound testing and intensive analysis of various phenomena which comprise a life cycle of the watched unit" (Halmi, 2005, p. 200). The case study deals with questions such as *how* and *why*, whereas quantitative research methods such as polls ask questions such as *what*, *who*, *where* and *how much*.

Ethical questions and dilemmas are an integral part of every research that includes children, and this article is no exception. Special attention was given to the confidentiality of the acquired data and to the well-being of each child participant. While preparing the research, the goals and the course of the research were explained to their parents, and the written consent was requested for their children's participation in the research, for documenting the game, and for publishing the photos. All parents of the children who comprised the sample gave their consent. The acquired data was presented to the parents who were interested in a theme workshop.

In order to accomplish the maximum validity and understanding of the acquired data, the researcher was included in the research process from the very start: preparation, planning, field work, creation of transcripts, and data processing (Ajduković et al., 2008, p. 130). In the spirit of developing a teacher-researcher, the research was implemented by the teacher of the monitored group and an "outside" researcher. For this purpose, the teacher took the role of the observer of the children's play, without disturbing their daily routine or influencing the changes in the context of their play. The children were accustomed to the presence of this researcher, as well as to the presence of a camera and a video camera, which reduced the influence of behavioral changes due to the presence of the observer. On the other hand, there was a danger of the observer's partiality as he was a part of the observed group, which was balanced by the inclusion of an "outside" observer, who watched and analyzed the recordings without being involved in a direct contact with the children. The authors of this article are of the opinion that this model, which includes two researchers, one from the "theoretical" and one from the "practical" background, one who enables the observed situation to be an everyday one, and the other who ensures impartiality, allows for the credibility of the research itself.

A special interest of our research was to establish if the children incorporate the elements of TV contents in their free play, and if there are other components of TV contents in children's daily life, apart from playing, which form their reality. Our initial thesis was that TV contents are deeply implemented in children's daily life.

Documentation which can enrich the research process consists of written notes, a recording diary or children's activity diary, conversation transcripts, children's drawings, photos, etc., all of which contribute to a better understanding of the knowledge possessed by the children and make it possible to follow their learning process. All of the above mentioned materials were collected for the purpose of this article. The process of collecting the documentation allows the researcher to undergo a reflexive process which runs parallel to children's play activities. This research devoted

a great deal of attention to listening to children, documenting their free play, and analyzing certain aspects of play. Considering the children to be competent persons, capable of expressing their view of the world that surrounds them, significant attention was directed towards listening to their statements during play. The children stated their emotions, imitated the characters from animated movies and culinary TV shows.

The sample consisted of children aged between 3 and 7; the total of 26 members of the mixed group of Kindergarten Rijeka, a sub-center which operates on principles of the Waldorf pedagogy. This is a significant piece of information, since such kindergartens avoid using electronic media, so there was no television set in this particular case. The research was undertaken in the period during January and February of 2013. Before conducting the research itself, the researchers had made a plan of recording children's play, which comprised the morning and the afternoon playtime, and play in the indoor and outdoor areas. Together with the recording process, the researchers collected and registered all supporting materials which could additionally explain the situation, which the children brought with themselves daily.

After the information was gathered, each of the researchers analyzed the documentation on their own and kept a "journal". The researchers then exchanged notes and comments, and made joint notes. A transcript of the video footage was made, and photos and parts of text which prove certain observations were singled out.

The Analysis of the Gathered Documentation

While gathering documentation, the researchers noticed that children bring various elements "seen" on TV into the context of the preschool institution on a daily basis. This is of special significance, knowing that the research was done in a preschool institution where there is no TV set and where no TV is ever watched.

Apart from observing the play, as the most significant children's activity, while gathering additional materials pertinent to the analysis of the situation, several components were noticed and included. All of them were brought into the kindergarten environment from the family home, without any encouragement from the educational institution or its employees. The following items were brought:

1. Clothes – children dress daily in clothes featuring characters important to them from animated movies. This includes almost all types of articles of clothing: shirts, pants, hats, pajamas, etc.
2. Toys, magazines, and picture books – children bring them to the group from home and make them a part of play; dolls and automobiles from animated movies are dominant, as well as magazines and picture books with the same themes.
3. Birthday cakes – based on their interests, the children pick a cake motive which they find most interesting.

Another significant component that was included in this research was the process of collecting and analyzing children's drawings.

During the research, it was noticed that children, while playing, dominantly "cite" animated movies, and that is why this article places the emphasis on this very segment. In a lesser amount, there is play which features documentary or live-action TV contents.

In all periods of recording for the research, some type of TV content was involved in the playing process. Playing was done in groups from three to ten children.

No differences were noticed in play related to the time of day, but girls showed a difference in the way of playing and their role in the play, depending on whether playing was taking place indoors or outdoors. While playing indoors, boys imitate i.e. "become" characters from animated movies, while girls use most of the time to create scenery and play scenes with their dolls. They bring objects and materials from different centers of their room to their play. Most of the time while playing, they question their roles and reasons for bringing certain materials, make arrangements together, and comment on what was done.

(Girls T 4.5 yrs. and M 5.8 yrs., and a boy D 5 yrs. are playing with the Winx indoors. The playing begins using only the Winx figures. In the middle of the game, the children make arrangements about bringing in several different elements – fabric, chairs and dishes):

> M: Let's make a house for them! This will be like a house when they play!
> D: So they can play hide and seek, to hide somewhere, like in this house.
> T: You know what, we can put something here, I'll put a pony in this circle...
>   Can I only put ponies in the circle?

(Later on during the game, they negotiate the roles and comment on what was done):

> T: *Come on, climb the tree!*
> D: *And why don't you M. be a green snake, and you a sorceress? This looks to me like a jumping trampoline, hop, hop.*
> M: *It's not a trampoline...*
> D: *But it looks like a trampoline! Like someone made a swing...*
> M: *T, let's put this inside, you stack it, I'll pass it to you...*
> T: *Okay!*
> M: *Here, here their friends will be...*

Only outdoors do the girls start playing a game in which they take on movie roles, and the scenery is now the outdoor area. While imitating the characters they identify with, they point out their basic characteristics:

"I'm walking on air... Amazing!" and *"Icy hairstyle: fssssssss!!!"*

While doing so, the girls imitate both the moves and the sounds which are a part of the characteristic movements. We noticed that, when it came to the characters' external characteristics, the children accentuated the walking style and hair of the *Winx* heroines, which will be noticeable in the drawings shown below. This expression of the heroes' external features is also visible from the example of a boy saying "*I'm*

Mickey Mouse!", while holding two large wooden balls next to his ears and walking like the cartoon character.

Therefore, there is a division of play according to gender. Girls play using the contents from animated movies featuring female lead characters. An exception is a boy who joined the girls while playing *Winx*. A possible cause of his awareness of the contents of this animated movie could be the fact that he has an older sister. During the whole time of the research, the girls acted out the scenes from the *Winx* animated movie.

Figures 1 and 2. *Girls mimicking specific* Winx *moves while playing outdoors.*

On the other hand, boys play contents from animated movies with male lead characters. Older boys (6 and 7 years) mimic the moves they saw, words and sounds from the movie, while a younger boy (3 years), apart from his cape, does not imitate the animated movie, but participates in the older boys' game by improvising or repeating their moves.

Figures 3 and 4. *Boys playing* Ben 10 *in the living room mimicking specific moves.*

This clear differentiation between "girls" and "boys" animated movies is also apparent from the children's drawings.

Figures 5 and 6 show drawings made by girls, representing the *Winx* heroines. Many similar drawings were collected during the research, and all of them exhibit some shared characteristics. The lower body parts (legs or skirts) of *Winx* characters are longer than their upper body parts in all of the drawings. Their hair is painted in vivid colors – blue or pink. Below are two drawings featuring the most frequently drawn parts of the *Winx* characters – flowers and houses. The drawings are filled with colors, and the heroines are always smiling. All of the *Winx* characters are positioned in the center of their drawings. Most frequently only one of the *Winx* characters is drawn, rarely there are two.

Figure 5. T. 4.5 years, *Winx Bloom*   **Figure 6.** P., 6.9 years, *Winx Flora*

The dominating characters for boys during the research period were superheroes, but their drawings featured ships which were a part of some scenes in animated movies (*Lego Ninjago* – Figure 7), and in live-action movies (*Titanic*). Bright colors dominate, and in superheroes (Figure 8), their suits are drawn deliberately. In the example below, the suit is red and blue, with a pattern showing the muscles. The drawing also features Spiderman's well-known spider thread coming out of his palm, directed towards the house. Again, in the boys' drawings as well, the heroes are in the center of the Figure while the less important additional contents which help to describe the main hero are located in the corners.
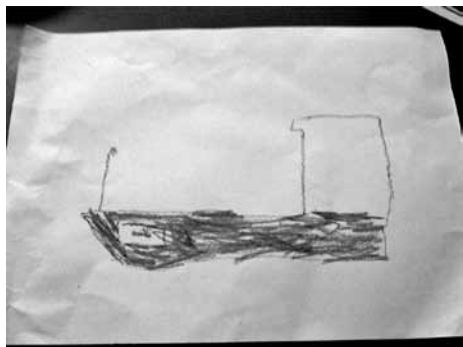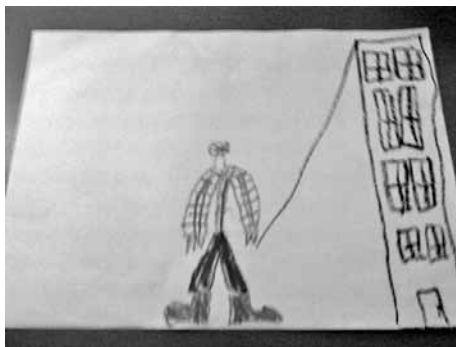

Figure 7. R. 5.5 years, *Lego Ninjago*   **Figure 8.** M. 7 years, *Spiderman*

Apart from the drawings, photos were also collected during the research, giving a clear insight into the importance of animated heroes in a child's life. The gender division can be noticed even at the earliest age, which confirms the notion that children construct their gender identity from a very early age, based on which they classify the available TV contents (Davies et al., 2008). Apart from the gender difference, the age difference was also noticed when it came to the preferred heroes and the way of playing. Younger children choose characters from the full-length animated movies or from slower or "gentler" movies. Older boys choose characters from currently popular animated movies, whose common dominant characteristic is violence, while the dominant characteristic for movies chosen by girls is physical appearance. However, the common feature of all the contents of choice for older children is popularity. Girls do not wear clothes featuring their heroes so much, but their clothes bear more resemblance to the colors of the clothes the cartoon characters wear.

Figures 9 and 10 show boys with their heroes featured on their clothes. The first boy is 3.4 years old and almost everything he wears features his favorite character from the "*Cars*" animated movie. During the research period, besides the shirt, he wore pants, socks, and underwear featuring "*Lightning McQueen*". The other boy (Figure 10) is somewhat older and is showing interest in *Spiderman* and other action heroes, so he chose the *Ninjago* costume (Figure 12).

Figure 9. *F., 3.4 years*

Figure 10. *D., 5 years*

During the carnival, kids can be anything they like, make their fantasies come true, and possess various powers. Powers are the exact thing that children show to one another and express while explaining their costumes. The masks children wear provide a good insight into their idols. What was seen during the carnival confirms once more the gender and age differences (Figures 11 and 12). Girls mostly choose "gentle" characters, and the boys choose "superheroes". Younger boys will more often choose characters without "superpowers", which are closer to them because of their characteristics.

Figure 11. T. 4.5 yrs. Fairy; I. 4.5 yrs. *Simba*

Figure 12. D.,5 yrs. and R. 5.10 yrs. *Ninjago;*
M. 4.5 yrs. *Spiderman*

The motives from animated action movies can also be found on birthday cakes, and are chosen by the child celebrating his or her birthday. The motive is usually a character from a popular animated movie. During the research period, three birthdays were celebrated in the group, by three boys aged 4 and 5, and their motives of choice were "superheroes" – *Spiderman*, *Batman*, and *Ninjago*, respectively (Figure 13).

Figure 13. *Birthday cake*

Figure 14. *Gormiti magazine*

Along with all that, it should be mentioned that children were bringing to the group, on a daily basis, their own toys, magazines, and picture books inspired by TV contents (Figure 14), which could be an aim of a future research study itself. It was noticed that the girls were mostly bringing *Winx* and *Monster High* dolls, stuffed *Disney* toys, and *Winx* and *Hello Kitty* magazines, while the boys were bringing *Ben 10* and *Gormiti* magazines, and car toys from the "*Cars*" animated movie.

Apart from the dominant animated movies, during the research period the children were also introducing elements of documentary, live-action, and reality shows (with an emphasis on culinary shows) into play. It is interesting that mostly boys participate in games featuring the imitation of competitions and the imitation of chefs. Even when the girls participate in the play, the boys "lead" it. In the video footage taken during the research period, the main role was taken by a boy, E. (5.4 years old), who was dressed as a chef and loudly uttered stimulating phrases "*Cook!*", "*Come!*". Another boy, M. (5.1 years old), stated that he was "French", alluding to a famous chef from another culinary show. The boy named E. (5.4 years old) also played "sinking ships" during our research period, which was inspired by the movie "Titanic" and a recent accident of a cruise ship. In his play, he found a partner in a boy named L. (3.8 years old) who did not imitate TV contents, but played "ship parts", a job which is his family tradition, which he often mentions.

Conclusion

Modern childhood is unfathomable without the modern media. The dominant research on the influence of the media on children's lives generally covered violent behavior and other negative consequences of its consumption, with the positive achievements of the application of educational contents while working with children. In the preschool age, the most frequent medium is still television, which is often used in an improper way in the family home, both in terms of the time spent in front of it and the contents featured on it, which are not appropriate for children. Even when used adequately, its influence is so significant that it can be seen in all the segments of children's lives. Free play, as the dominant children's activity, is constantly influenced by television, whose contents shape it on several levels. Children bring to their play elements seen in television contents. They create relationships and peer groups, and choose the children who are familiar with certain TV contents and have positive attitudes towards them as partners. Their heroes are a part of their lives, their role models and a part of their identity, so it is necessary to have the heroes as a part of their "property", e.g. in the form of clothes, toys or birthday cakes.

In today's world, the immediate surroundings of a child are not only those physically available to him, because through the modern media children bring temporarily, spatially and culturally diverse experiences into their "room". During the period when a child's experience is particularly important for his development and leaves a permanent mark in his notion of the self and of the environment, what is being

shown and how and why it is being shown, is very important. During the research period, while children were playing in the kindergarten, especially visible were the components of animated movies which were being shown on weekends on national television, and were also available on DVDs. All of these movies came with numerous additional merchandise items (toys, clothes...), whose target group is exactly the preschool child. It turned out that the children's daily free play, in conditions without a television set, was created through the children's experience and interests, awoken due to popular TV contents. The educator has a commitment and a responsibility, knowing developmental characteristics and qualities of preschool children and the effects of watching television, to implement incentives, work methods and forms in order to use the positive potential of TV in the best possible way. This requires work at several levels – with children, parents, and also at the professional competence level. This can help reduce the negative consequences and to place the TV in the sole function of achieving educational accomplishments and developing critical and creative skills in the children.

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Tv-sadržaji i slobodna igra djece u vrtiću

Sažetak

Unatoč novim medijima televizija je najutjecajniji elektronički medij u društvu. Gotovo svako kućanstvo posjeduje televizor, a osim u obitelji i odgojno-obrazovnim ustanovama, djeca se s televizorima, raznim sadržajima i oglašavanjem susreću u trgovačkim centrima, uslužnim objektima, zdravstvenim ustanovama itd. Adekvatnom, kontroliranom i planiranom upotrebom tv-sadržaja može se pozitivno utjecati na motivaciju djece, razmišljanje, upotrebu kognitivnih strategija. Suprotno tome, pretjerana i nekontrolirana izloženost može dovesti do pojave niza problema, od gojaznosti, agresivnog ponašanja, straha i sl. Kada je u pitanju igra, kao sinonim za učenje u rano i predškolsko doba zamijećeni su značajni utjecaji televizije. Osim što izloženost televiziji skraćuje vrijeme za igru i stjecanje iskustva iz stvarnih situacija, uvelike utječe i na sam tijek igre. Likovi, rječnik, scene – sve to znatno oblikuje dječju igru, čak i u prostoru u kojem dijete nema doticaja s televizorom. Promatranje i dokumentiranje dječje igre i ostalih popratnih sadžaja daje nam uvid u dječje poimanje gledanog sadržaja, ali i kontekst u kojem dijete odrasta, u kojem televizija oblikuje njegovo iskustvo.

Ključne riječi: *elektronički mediji; predškolsko dijete; slobodna igra; televizija.*