

# Effectiveness of Classical Music as Background in the Story Video Comprehension Strategy among Students with Multiple Intelligence

Adelfa C. Silor

**Abstract**—Music is the language of man's soul. It has an effect on the behavior and emotions of people of all ages. Music helps create a more positive school environment. Many students prefer to listen to music while studying because they believe it helps them to focus on their work.

Hence, this study investigated the effectiveness of classical music as background in reading story video using headset in improving comprehension of students with multiple intelligence.

In gathering the data, one section of the developmental reading class (Ed109A) who are diverse learners with multiple intelligence in the teacher education program served as the respondents. There were fifty (50) students took the two sets of comprehension test. First, they took the comprehension test as well as the multiple intelligence in the ICT laboratory using the video presentation with classical music background with headset. Another type of comprehension test was conducted through plain text printed in the paper. Students read the story and answered the comprehension test without background of classical music.

The results show that students who read the stories and answered the comprehension examination with the use of classical music as background in the story video, got higher scores compared to the results of students taking the comprehension test without the background of classical music.

Hence, findings revealed that students with multiple intelligence in music could really comprehend effectively once there is classical background music in the story video presentation with the used of headset while reading the story and analyzing the context.

**Index Terms**—Classical Music, Effectiveness, Multiple Intelligence, Video Comprehension Strategy.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Multiple Intelligence concepts and learning styles models offer relatively simple and accessible methods to understand and explain students' preferred ways to learn and develop. Students have all a mixture of styles and preferences, and not just one single type. These styles and preferences of the students should be the focus of the teachers in the teaching and learning process particularly in choosing the best method and strategy that fits to the multiple intelligences of the students. In other words, in order to be an effective teacher, the principle of knowing the individual differences of the students must be always core of teaching.

Therefore, as with any methodology or tool, use Multiple

Intelligences concepts, and other learning styles ideas with care and interpretation according to the needs of the situation.

Hence, this research study focused on the effectiveness of classical music as background in the story video comprehension strategy among students with multiple intelligence.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There are several types of music within our culture. Jazz, rhythm and blues, rap, rock, and classical are some examples of types of music people listen to. Each individual has their own preference for the type they like the best. People of all ages listen to music. Everyone knows someone who likes to listen to some music while they work. Maybe it's one of your kids, listening to the radio while they try to slog through their homework. Or maybe, god forbid, it's a college senior browsing his iTunes as he desperately writes a last-minute blog post for his psychology seminar. Either way, they're not alone – it's a widely held popular belief that listening to music while working can serve as a concentration aid, and if you walk into a public library or a café these days it's hard not to notice a sea of white ear-buds and other headphones. Some find the music relaxing, others energizing, while others simply find it pleasurable. But does listening to music while working really improve focus? It seems like a counterintuitive belief—we know that the brain has inherently limited cognitive resources, including attentional capacity, and it seems natural that trying to perform two tasks simultaneously would cause decreased performance on both.

Music can affect us in many different ways. Music can cause arousal or it can lower arousal depending on the type of music we listen to. Several students listen to music while studying. Music can affect our moods as well as our ability to concentrate depending on how often we listen to music and the type of personality we have, according to some of the research. One factor that may affect studying with music is the complexity of the music that is listened to. Kiger as cited in by Lee performed a study testing reading comprehension with one of three conditions. One was no sound, second was low information-load music and the third was high information-load [1]. He characterized the information-load as the amount of loudness, variety, complexity, and tonal range of the music. The results of his study showed participants who read passages in the presence of low information-load music performed significantly better than either that who read in silence or with high information-load background music.

Kiger as cited in by Lee states that high information-load

Manuscript received June 11, 2012; revised August 20, 2012.

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may produce tension and anxiety which impair the performance of complex tasks [1]. As for low information-load, the study shows a lowering of arousal and thus improves performance. Experience with music at a young age in effect can "fine-tune" the brain's auditory system. "Increasing music experience appears to benefit all children -- whether musically exceptional or not -- in a wide range of learning activities," says Nina Kraus, director of Northwestern's Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory and senior author of the study. "Our findings underscore the pervasive impact of musical training on neurological development.

The educational practice and the day-to-day interaction between the teachers and students at different school levels are helpful in identifying the students' intelligence types. Despite the fact that the notion of general intelligence had long been broadly accepted by psychologists, it was replaced by multiple intelligences theory proposed by Gardner. Gardner as cited in by Deems defines "intelligence as the ability to solve problems or to create fashion products that are valued within one or more cultural settings"[2]. Musical intelligence is described as the feeling of musical pitches, sound rhythm and tempo as well as being emotionally affected by such musical components. Intelligence, however, is easily seen in the learners who can automatically remember melodies, identify pitches and rhythms. Learners are thus described as more inclined to hear music and are highly sensitive to sounds around them.

Gardner argued that musical intelligence varies according to people as everyone has his own musical ability, while some others have nothing to do with music. Musical intelligence is related to the identification of tones, melodies, sounds, rhythm, and tempos, particularly, the sense of tone types, melody composition, and sensitivity to sounds as well as using charts for music hearing and understanding musical structure. Musical intelligence is the most emerging type of intelligence in the early stages of a person's life. It can be identified by the followings characteristics: a disposition to music hearing and attraction to songs, a tendency to read music related topics, playing musical instruments, making musical compositions, writing songs, recognizing consistent and inconsistent sounds, memorizing more songs and melodies, self-singing while doing tasks, easily memorizing melodies, listening to bird sounds, imitating sounds, and a desire to let others listen to the person's voice.

Ever since Howard Gardner presented his theory on Multiple Intelligences, musical intelligence has become a vital part of many teachers' differentiated instruction. Gardner himself noted that musical and linguistic intelligences employ similar skill sets. Much of children's programming takes this idea into account, including musical numbers to help their audience learn, memorize and interpret new information. Teachers have also found that using songs in the classroom helps children remember new information more effectively.

Music in the classroom is a controversial topic among educators, many of whom consider a student's education incomplete without it. Research tends to support this theory, indicating that students who receive a comprehensive musical education do better in other subjects—in particular,

and reading [3]. However, many conflicting reports exist on exactly how music can improve student performance.

A study done by Etaugh and Michaels as cited in by Osamah found that college students who normal listened to music while studying did better on the reading comprehension test [4]. Hence, many parents also mistakenly believe that listening to classical music will help their children to think and focus well; this phenomenon is commonly known as "The Mozart Effect". There seem to be conflicting studies on the effect of music on reading comprehension; But the test of different music and different characteristics of the individuals. For example, Fogelson as cited in by Catterall studied the effects of popular instrumental music to eighth graders that were classified as bright and non-bright students. The results of her study showed that the control group with no music outperformed the experimental groups. The non-bright students were more adversely affected by the music [5].

According to Gardner, all human beings possess all different intelligences in varying degrees and each individual manifests varying levels of these different intelligences [6]. Jonathon Bolduc's overview of research regarding the connection between music and literacy shows that music instruction can improve a student's reading skills when used in conjunction with more traditional instruction. This is not surprising, considering the skills required to understand and learn music—such as phonemic awareness, rhythm and rhyme schemes, and literary devices such as metaphor and simile—also play a vital role in reading comprehension.

Moreover, in a study by Rauscher, Shaw and KY as cited in by Rashidi showed that the effect of music (Mozart Sonata) on the IQ of college students, the participants who had been exposed to Mozart Sonata for ten minutes scored higher on spatial-temporal reasoning tasks [7]. In the study, Register, Darrow, Standley, and Swedberg reported that music made improvement in the reading skill of the students who had already had disability in reading [8].

Furthermore, Drowns conducted a piece of research to see the effect of classical background music on silent reading comprehension. Although the results showed an improvement, the researcher doubted whether the improvement was due to the sole role of music or other factors were also involved [9].

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used in this study was an experimental method using classical music as background in reading story through the use of video presentation. The other style of reading and analyzing the story was through the use of plain text copied in the paper and distributed to the students with multiple intelligence. The same content of story and comprehension questions given to the students of "Developmental Reading Class" for the second semester 2010-2011. For the story found in the video presentation, it has the classical music background while they read and comprehend the story, and then took the comprehension questions after the reading the story found in the video clip. In the next day, the same group of students read the story and then took the test through the use of plain text in the paper

without any classical music background.

IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

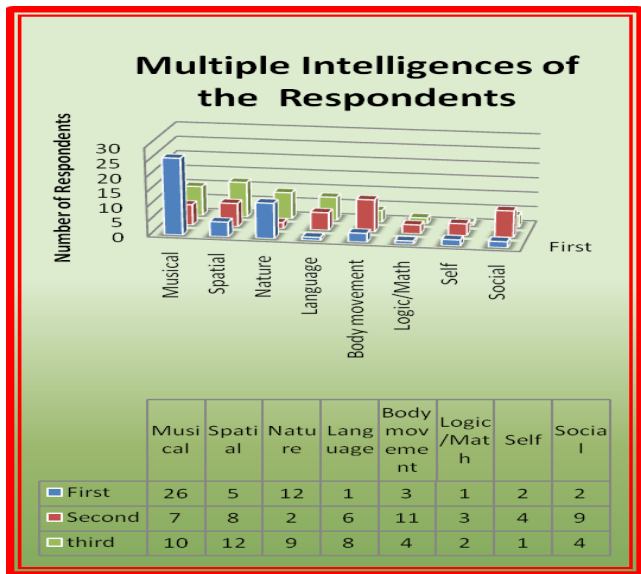


Fig. 1. Multiple intelligences of the respondents

This table shows that majority of the respondents of this study who are the students in “Developmental Reading” class have musical intelligence. Hence, they are musical minded which lead them easily to understand the lesson once there is classical music integration as background in the method of teaching.

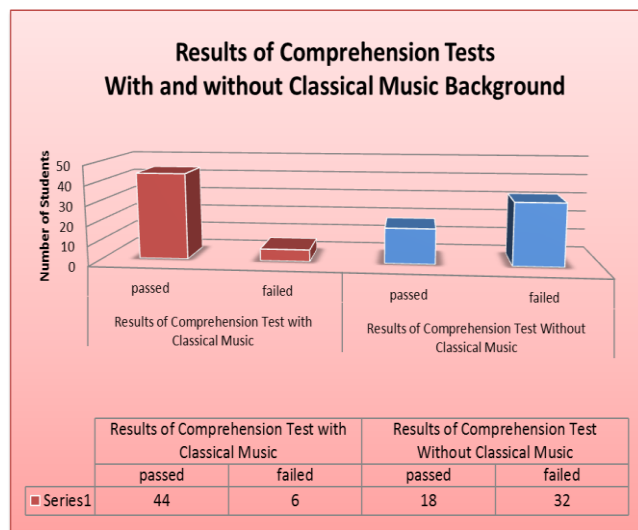


Fig. 2. Results of comprehensive tests with and without classical music background

The results show that students who read the stories and answered the comprehension examination with the use of classical music as background in the story video , got higher scores compared to the results of students taking the comprehension test without the background of classical music.

Hence, findings revealed that students with multiple intelligence could really comprehend effectively once there is classical background music in the story video presentation with the use of headset.

V. CONCLUSION

Based from the findings of the study, I conclude that in the teaching and learning process, information technology is very effective in the integration of the methods in teaching. Indeed, teachers should consider the learning styles and multiple intelligences of the learners. This will be the basis of using the best strategy that fits to the types of learners like classical music used as background in video comprehension strategy.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Special thanks to the administrators of MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology, Philippines for the support extended to the author of this research endeavor.

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