

17. THE VALUE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC EDUCATION AND MUSICAL ANIMATION: EDUCATION FOR MUSIC, EDUCATION THROUGH MUSIC AND THERAPY THROUGH MUSIC

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Abstract: *Contemporary music education is based on criteria of globality, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity, which even if it focuses on sound language, it is designed constantly on other learning areas involving the ludico-expressive, psychomotor, verbal and logical-mathematical sphere, to which are added the auditory-musical experiences of the child: perception, selection, storage, analysis, notation, handling and production. In the XXI century, music education is no longer a solitary discipline, codified for the untrained people, but rather a social experience of music that belongs to the whole community. Contemporary musical activities, in preschool and school education, are organized in so-called music workshops, where dynamic activities combining music and movement are practiced, education being achieved by musical animation, which replaces the rigid teaching methods and adapts to each individual. Musical animation is a cultural phenomenon, a social practice and a new teaching strategy in music education. This includes three main directions for the application of music education: education for music, education through music and therapy through music. Music education has the noble mission to activate, to raise awareness and to balance the child's receptivity, giving them opportunity to know the sonorous world by directing them to express through sounds, to promote and develop the potential of the child, rich in expressive-communicative resources, the musical experience being also important in shaping intelligence.*

Key words: *Music Education, Musical Animation, Education for Music, Education through Music, Therapy through Music*

1. Introduction

Contemporary music education is based on criteria of globality, interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity, which even if it focuses on sound language, it is designed constantly on other learning areas involving the ludico-expressive, psychomotor, verbal and logical-mathematical sphere, to which are added the auditory-musical experiences of the child: perception, selection, storage, analysis, notation, handling and production. In the XXI century, music education is no longer a solitary discipline, codified for the untrained people, but rather a social experience of music that belongs to the whole community.

2. The concept of Active Method in Artistic Education

The necessity of music education initiated from the childhood and adolescence was promoted by the XIXth century teachers. However, only during the XXth century this idea has become common for educational thinking, providing the opportunity for teachers and musicians to perform projects and educational programs, which later became methods and systems of music education taught in active schools⁹⁶. The concept of active method in artistic

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⁹⁶ Active method was applied in public schools by Georg Kerschensteiner and his fundamental results were published in the work *Der Begriff der Arbeitsschule* (1912); Pierre Bovet, Swiss psychologist and teacher,

education refers to situations in which children learn music in the prenotation period, without resorting to theoretical concepts, graphics and conventional representations, an idea in conformity with Rousseau's view: "*the knowledge of the musical notes is not necessary for to know how to sing, as well it is not necessary to know the letters for talking*"⁹⁷.

3. The New Methods of Learning Music

The new methods of learning music are the result of educational proposals made by Justine Bayard Ward, Edgar Willems, Shinichi Suzuki and those of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, Carl Orff, Zoltan Kodaly, Edgar Willems, Giordano Bianchi, which are therapeutic teaching methods. Through active methods proposed by them, the fundamental elements of music education, such as learning to understand and interpret music, have become available since early childhood, through vocal singing, musical game, improvisation, movement and listening to music.

The characteristics of the methods proposed by the XXth century musicians and teachers can be found in the *Music Learning Theory* (MLT), belonging to the researcher in education and music psychology, Edwin E. Gordon⁹⁸. The Gordon's theory (1971)⁹⁹, developed in fifty years of research, has as the main premise the fact that music can be learned through similar processes to those of the mother tongue learning, from the neonatal period. Since its birth, the child is surrounded by sounds of spoken language, so that, he will develop along the time, its own vocabulary through imitation and repeated attempts. A child surrounded since an early age by the musical sounds will have the opportunity to develop their own musical vocabulary and thus he will can interact with the world of music through spontaneous and then deliberate actions. Gordon claims that if the child is not given, from an early age, the opportunity to develop their own vocabulary of music listening, as speaking vocabulary happens, brain cells responsible for the development of the sense of hearing, will be, in the best case, routed to another sensory system and no further attempt will completely repair the damage caused¹⁰⁰.

The value of the music education has been demonstrated and brought in the foreground through the scientific study conducted by Professor Hans Günther Bastian¹⁰¹, who highlighted the beneficial influence that music has on the character and the evolution of each person, especially in childhood. The study

translate the term *arbeitsschuhe* through *active school* (l'école active, 1917); René Hubert, *Histoire de la pédagogie*, Arno Press, New York, 1979, p. 129

⁹⁷ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emilio o dell'educazione*, Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, Milano, 1997, p. 236

⁹⁸ Edwin E. Gordon (b. 1927), PhD Research Professor at the *University of South Carolina*, Columbia, teacher, editor, author of several reference works in the field of music education.

⁹⁹ idem, *A music learning theory for newborn and young children*, GIA Publications, Chicago, 1997, passim

¹⁰⁰ Edwin E. Gordon (b. 1927), *Listening: The Critical Component for Understanding Music*, in "The GIML Audea, A Journal for Research and Applications of Music Learning Theory", Vol. 18, No. 1, 2013, p. 6

¹⁰¹ Hans Günther Bastian (1944-2011), PhD Professor of music education at the *Mozarteum University of Salzburg* and the *Goethe University of Frankfurt am Main*; founding director of the *Institut für Begabungsforschung und Begabtenförderung in der Musik* (IBFF).

was conducted during 1992-1998, on a group of 170 students aged from 6 to 12 years, both coming from normal schools and music schools of Berlin. The children who have studied music for four years in music schools, irrespective of they were predisposed to music or were less talented, have developed a range of competences and cognitive skills to a higher level, compared to students from regular schools. This fact proves that the study of music develops skills that are transferred to other cognitive activities, increasing creativity, the flexibility of thought, the concentration on the logical reasoning, the analysis to visually and manually levels. Thus, children who study music are able to concentrate better and to have good results in mathematics and linguistics, the musical experience being one of the most important in shaping the intelligence. Bastian emphasizes the importance of music instruction, stating that "*politicians wanting to economise money at the expense of musical education these days, will have to spend it tomorrow on psychiatry and rehabilitation*"¹⁰².

4. Musical Animation

Contemporary musical activities, in preschool and school education, are organized in so-called music workshops, where dynamic activities combining music and movement are practiced, education being achieved by musical animation, which replaces the rigid teaching methods and adapts to each individual.

Musical animation is a cultural phenomenon, a social practice and a new teaching strategy in music education. It is not a form of a schematic and notional learning, but rather it is occurred as an educational interactive project, ludic at the same time, that involve any individual person, or group of persons, developing the spontaneous expressiveness and operating the gradual stimulation of the cognitive processes. Thus, learning music is done through interdisciplinary activities: body expression, graphico-pictural, logical-mathematical, verbal language, which replace the traditional technical methods that are accessible to a smaller group. In the course of interdisciplinary activities, music is the non-verbal language that shapes the activities developed. Musical animation is used in different contexts of preschool and school education, in rehabilitation centers, hospitals, and is accessible to all ages. Is addressed groups up to twenty people and requires the active participation of each member to create respective activity.

The animator is the person that has the ability to entice the interest of the people and to develop the capacity of single components of a group, to involve them in a ludic project through practical activities. He is the person able not only to convey the music, but he has the capacity to elaborate the music, together with the others participants. To get out of traditional methodology patterns, the followed path begins from the practice, an important role having the creativity, activated by means of the operativity, improvisation and liberty of expression.

¹⁰² Sebastian Matthias Lorenz, *Cognitive Neuroscience. Gender dependent critical periods*, Schule Schloss Salem, Baden-Württemberg, 2007, p. 2

The animator provides the required teaching materials, that are melodic instruments (piano, flute, guitar), percussion instruments (*Orff instrumentarium*) and eurythmy materials (ribbons, veils).

The main goals of the musical animation are the audio-motor and oculo-manual coordination, the development of the capacity of intonation, memorizing and associating of an antecedent with a consequent, active listening, spatial orientation depending on the sense of hearing, studying of the various instruments, gestural imitation, orthophony, readiness of the reflexes and the association between the visual image and the sound event. Musical animation objectives are implemented in practice by means of the game, involving mind, body, voice, the peculiar activities of the musical animation being done in musical laboratories by means of various disciplines: animation and basic music teaching, mimic, theater and music, vocal technique, contemporary dance, each child developing not only his musical universe, but also cognitive, linguistic, motor, expressive, aesthetic, moral, religious and social skills.

The importance of the game was already known to Greeks and Romans in ancient times, but it was only a theoretical discipline that was not acquired spontaneously, practically. The idea of introducing of the active game in education field belongs to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Before him, the school was conceived as a place where the student had to memorize mechanically certain concepts and to learn certain customs in a climate of excessive severity, a dictatorial system characterized by physical punishment. Modern teachers as Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi and Friedrich Froebel, have revealed the importance of psychological and educational children's games. Froebel make available to the children the *Gifts*¹⁰³, that stimulate the symbolic, evocative, creative activity, and John Dewey, Jean-Ovide Decroly, Édouard Claparède have conceived the game as a development psychophysical tool for the child. Owing to the power of the game to involve the creative and social power, this activity becomes a means to overcome the psychophysical differences of the group, having among its multiple purposes and the one to not exclude disadvantaged people, such as those with disabilities, too.

4.1 Education for Music, Education through Music and Therapy through Music

Musical animation includes three main directions for the application of music education: education for music, education through music and therapy through music. In case of children, they facilitate socialization and communication through the game, improves and treats emotional inhibitions, sensory and motor handicaps, autism, respectively¹⁰⁴.

The education for music is achieved through techniques that are the result of practice and aim to read, write and play music. The practice develops fixed and stringent rules that determine the method, that makes possible the

¹⁰³ The *Gifts* are teaching material invented by Froebel, composed by games of geometric shapes, linking between play and learning.

¹⁰⁴ Ioan Bradu Iamandescu, *Muzicoterapia receptivă. Premise psihologice și neurologice, aplicații profilactice și terapeutice*, Editura InfoMedica, București, 2004, p. 153

understanding of the rhythm, tempo, melody and harmony, appreciating all the music elements for what they are, without a formal representation of musical elements. Through some expressive actions is educated the musical hearing, the sense of rhythm, the voice, giving to the person the required means for a proper coordination of the actions, in the case of the vocal and instrumental interpretation.

The education through music signifies the usage of the music as a means for socialization, to overcome certain situations of egocentrism and emotiveness of the children who make up a group or a class. The education of the musical hearing is aimed to habitude of receiving not only the musical notes, but all sound events that can be classified as sounds, by differential recognizing of the melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre and intensity.

By means of the musical animation, the therapy through music establishes a contact between educators and persons with a compromised psychophysical condition, unlocking and activating communication channels that connect them with the world around, succeeding to improve the quality of life, to develop the capacity of self-control, concentration, creative expression and relaxation. In contemporaneity, the child lives in a noisy world where are present sonorous stimuli produced disorganized and excessively, that diminishes attention and interest for the world of sound and causes a harmful passive reception. As a tool of operating within the music laboratory, the music education has the role to facilitate the balance, the psychosomatic maintenance and psychosomatic evolution of the child.

5. Conclusions

The contemporary music education and musical animation launches auditory-perceptual education to a new dimension, which exploits the natural relationship between human and sound, in which the person is located in the center of formative processes through ludic and creative experiences.

Music education has the noble mission to activate, to raise awareness and to balance the child's receptivity, giving them opportunity to know the sonorous world by directing them to express through sounds, to promote and develop the potential of the child, rich in expressive-communicative resources, the musical experience being also important in shaping intelligence.

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