

SOME PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON MUSICAL EDUCATION

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SUMMARY. Nowadays, the educational system faces multiple challenges regarding pupils' education, whether socio-human or professional education. Music education is the oldest component of Romanian pedagogy, highlighting values which have been structured throughout the years and represent not only cultural and historical facts, but the elements of a world outlook. It is then compulsory to present the real, correct aesthetic education within the educational system. Music teaching has had serious, acknowledged impact on artistic, humanistic, moral, civic, intellectual education. The importance of these aspects requires broader historical and cultural investigation. The full pedagogical and ethical meaning of meta-knowledge is developed in a didactic and epistemological context. As a means to acquire knowledge and strategies for success, meta-knowledge is a factor in pupils' identification within their culture. It is used in relationship with the other, by producing a set of knowledge research and knowledge building. In this way, students can progress from music consumers to music users and producers, knowledge and aesthetic taste gatherers who strive for ideals and beauty.

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Nowadays, the educational system faces multiple challenges regarding pupils' education, whether socio-human or professional education. Attempting to offer as much information and broad knowledge, school tends to inhibit the students' harmonious development. Subjects are increasingly numerous and complex, and children are less willing to learn and at risk to abandon school and learning, because of information overload. If you stop to watch pupils on their way to school, something strikes you, wherever you are: most of them are listening to music! Music is a constant presence in youth life, it has practically grown into a social phenomenon. But does school teach them about music? What do youngsters know about the art of sounds? What relationship do they form

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with music? Music is a way of expressing oneself, but to have access to its language one needs a facilitator, a teacher and some classes, just as one does in the case of art – literature, for instance. Music is not a lesser art than literature, an art studied for several hours a week, from primary school to the end of high-school! Paradoxically, few pupils still read nowadays, but all listen to music, in what seems an attempt to compensate for the disinterest of the educational system in a very valuable subject, an important part of universal culture. From the 2nd to the 7th grade, there is a music class a week in the curriculum, and this class lasts for just half an hour (!?!) in the 8th grade. In primary school, music is taught by the primary school teacher, who does not have special training in teaching music. As a consequence, the result of teaching is practically null. In the 5th grade, pupils do not even have elementary knowledge of music. In high-school, music is a compulsory subject in humanistic studies only, for half an hour a week, in the 9th and 10th grade, and this is where the study of music stops. And yet ... Music education is the oldest component of Romanian pedagogy, highlighting values which have been structured throughout the years and represent not only cultural and historical facts, but the elements of a world outlook. It is then compulsory to present the real, correct aesthetic education within the educational system.

Education has been an essential part in society, and art has been a fundamental, irreplaceable means for ennobling humans. Since ancient times civilizations have developed ideas and concepts about art and the relationship between art and humans. The pervasive idea is that without using art's educative value there can be no moral improvement in man or society. Music, visual arts, literature or the performing arts have always have educational impact and have been strongly influential in consolidating and developing human qualities, such as sensibility or conscience. In the same time, those are important factors in balancing and improving one's personality.

The history of Romanian musical pedagogy has not have a smooth ride, but the important landmarks for the future of this teaching sphere are there. Music teaching has had serious, acknowledged impact on artistic, humanistic, moral, civic, intellectual education. The importance of these aspects requires broader historical and cultural investigation. Music teaching has been heavily supported by great European and Romanian pedagogues, philosophers, historians, writers and men of letters in general. From this perspective, it is desirable that the result of research be not only a contribution to Romanian pedagogical history, but our culture's history, in general. Harmonizing music pedagogy with general pedagogy, through enterprises of general pedagogy prominent figures in aesthetic and music education, through promoting its representatives among education researchers and theoreticians, are some of the steps in developing this

field. In support of the idea of complementarity of various music fields, let us give the example of children's folklore study by ethnomusicologists and educators but also by composers writing children's scores. The study of children's folklore has been seen as an important part of Romanian folk music and as introduction to various other folk genres and species. There have also been attempts to establish a relationship between Romanian children's musicality and what Constantin Brăiloiu called 'the previous life', and George Breazu, 'the musical psychology of the Romanian child'.

Great representatives of Romanian musical pedagogy started from children's need for music and the necessity to pay attention to this education, in the spirit of millennia-long traditions. In the same time, music pedagogy offers specific data for getting to know children, psychology and pedagogy receiving valuable input into otherwise intangible spheres.

George Breazu, a great pedagogue, does not propose to teach a kid about music, but to introduce the child to this wonderful world and get him interested in listening and making music. A preoccupation with teaching music to all pupils, from pre-schoolers to high-schoolers, confirms the cultural and social importance of this field of pedagogy.

Authentic education requires communication between educators and the pupils. The teaching-learning relationship between a pupil and his teacher is a two-way process, at a conscious level (interpersonal communication) and unconscious (affective) level. Asking questions in class, looking for answers, saying where they can be found, directing pupils to explore new tracks, all suppose teachers' availability and flexibility.

An important request in contemporary teaching is group work. Pupils know what this approach means in relational terms: words addressed to every single one of them, time given to all of them. A constructive approach supposes dialogue making the pupil aware of the intellectual or material means he will have to employ to reach a certain objective. Mediation and interaction are fundamental to this process. The pupil builds knowledge himself, but he can only reach that knowledge by building a relationship with others. In this way is created in a small group socio-cognitive conflict, the driver of true learning.

Within aesthetic education, music education has an important role, and so does the one guiding children towards acquiring good taste, valuing arts and great creations. It is only by direct contact with the most authentic values of religious, popular and universal music that young generations can be helped against pseudo-cultural or kitsch phenomena, and this is especially true in moments of aesthetic, axiological, moral crisis, which must be counteracted through spiritual order, where music has a major part. This is only possible by changing the merely decorative role of this subject, after centuries of due consideration in school. If history is to cast

light on the future being born of the past, if our history of pedagogy is to be reconsidered, then the history of music pedagogy has to contribute to acknowledging and retrieving the most valuable traditions in order to create culture. These traditions have confirmed major preoccupations and results acknowledged theoretically and practically, didactically and methodologically, in order to contribute to the development of a complex spiritual life in the youngest generations.

Education, like other sectors, tends to change its technology, following trends in industry, Nowadays school faces an explosion in learning means, starting with the simplest, traditional ones, and moving on to the most complex, which have started a new teaching revolution, together with content and didactic strategies.

Teaching and learning means represent the set of auxiliary, traditional and modern set used by teachers and pupils to transmit and acquire knowledge and skills, but also evaluate results obtained in the teaching-learning process. They support teachers' explanations and demonstrations, contributing to the increase in the efficiency of teaching and the solidity of acquired skills. They evolve with the development of science and technology and their evident results contribute to the improvement in education. Let us remember the functions of education: cognitive, formative, aesthetic, professional orientation and training, teachers' training through teaching methods in the Romanian school.

The following are used in the music lesson:

- Teaching means, by the use of apparatus or installations, art books, maps, photos, displays, song collections;
- Technical teaching and communication means: visual (photos), audio (records, radio shows), audio-visual (films, videos), audio-motor (musical instruments or pseudo-instruments: drums, pipe, tambourine, xylophone, piano, and so on).

These means can be used as follows:

- Before new knowledge communication (preparing the apperceptual basis), becoming the basic elements of fundamental ideas within the lesson;
- During knowledge communication, by use of simultaneity and succession;
- After knowledge communication, to support and synthesize the previously taught elements;
- During the testing of knowledge and acquired abilities and skills, to correctly evaluate the accomplishment of lesson objectives and methods taught.

Starting from the idea that use of educational content, respectively the circulation of culture as a specifically human binder ensuring the

various generations' unity of conscience, constitute one of education's goals, the teachers attempt to accomplish this following the quickest, most efficient ways. The assimilation of culture cannot ignore the implications of using certain instruments. According to didactic principles, intuition, conscious, active learning, link between the theory and practice, sound learning, accessibility of teaching and aesthetic education, during music lessons traditional teaching means (the book, the blackboard) can be combined with modern, visual means (listening, conversation, exercise, explanation, demonstration).

'Living music is a basis for musical ear which should not be educated as a goal in itself beyond music understanding and living ... Psychologically, we cannot proceed to educate the ear without emotional perception, because this emotional aspect is the very trait of this human activity, musical art; that is why the musical ear needs to be perceived as emotional hearing'²

Teaching as a creative process involves the teacher as a mediator between the pupil and the surrounding world. He needs to link students' answers to teaching strategies. There is complex interaction between deep knowledge of the subject and pupils' knowledge.

The teacher needs to acquire this balance between his obligations towards the subject and towards his students, in an interactive, creative approach. The necessity for permanent dialogue and collaboration among various subjects' pedagogues, exchanges, are all landmarks in an interdisciplinary approach. In a pluralistic, democratic, flexible, stimulating, creative cultural context, a transfer of structures (ideas, languages, methods, techniques and so on) takes place permanently, which will contribute towards reciprocal enrichment.

In creative education, we need to take into consideration the development of manipulation techniques that various actors can use. It is necessary to get students acquainted with independent work, after they have acquired the necessary experience and knowledge to create their own platform towards various possibilities. Trainers need to be able to invent strategies to overcome difficulties; didactic innovation can be planned or occasional. But teachers' efforts need to be remarkable.

Aesthetic education overlaps with intellectual education by developing observation, imagination, flexibility in thought and originality in triggering superior motivations. There is complex interaction with moral education, with strong impact on moral traits (behaviour, attitude). Physical education is influenced by aesthetic education objectives and means

² B. M. Teplov, (*Psihologhia muzikalnih sposobnostej*), pag. 190, cf. C. A. Ionescu, (*Music Education*), Bucharest, Editura Muzicală, 1986, pag. 163.

(hygiene, sports games, dance, gymnastics). There is an organic relationship between teaching's aesthetic principle and the current requests to increase the output of didactic activity.

Numerous works by psychologists and sociologists show the relationship between meta-knowledge (an activity referring to the student's self-representation and responsibilities), school performance and motivation. Students who are successful are able to anticipate, operate conscious decisions on their activity in relation with their aim, become aware of their mistakes, know how to ask for help, instead of refusing any help from the teacher by saying 'I do not understand a thing'; they are aware of transfers, can use strategies, mainly because they know they have acquired these strategies; they know what they know and what they do not and what is left for them to know.

The full pedagogical and ethical meaning of meta-knowledge is developed in a didactic and epistemological context. As a means to acquire knowledge and strategies for success, meta-knowledge is a factor in pupils' identification within their culture. It is used in relationship with the other, by producing a set of knowledge research and knowledge building. In this way, students can progress from music consumers to music users and producers, knowledge and aesthetic taste gatherers who strive for ideals and beauty.

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