

Revised Selected Papers

Accademia Musicale Studio Musica
Michele Della Ventura, *editor*

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Proceedings of the International Conference on New Music Concepts and Inspired Education

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Accademia Musicale Studio Musica
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Editor

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Preface

This volume of proceedings from the conference provides an opportunity for readers to engage with a selection of refereed papers that were presented during the International Conference on New Music Concepts and Inspired Education. The reader will sample here reports of research on topics ranging from mathematical models in music to pattern recognition in music; symbolic music processing; music synthesis and transformation; learning and conceptual change; teaching strategies; e-learning and innovative learning. This book is meant to be a *textbook* that is suitable for courses at the advanced undergraduate and beginning master level. By mixing theory and practice, the book provides both profound technological knowledge as well as a comprehensive treatment of music processing applications.

The goals of the Conference are to foster international research collaborations in the fields of Music Studies and Education as well as to provide a forum to present current research results in the forms of technical sessions, round table discussions during the conference period in a relax and enjoyable atmosphere.

36 papers from 16 countries were received. All the submissions were reviewed on the basis of their significance, novelty, technical quality, and practical impact. After careful reviews by at least three experts in the relevant areas for each paper, 12 papers from 10 countries were accepted for presentation or poster display at the conference.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all participants who have worked hard to make this conference a success. Thanks are also due to the staff of “Studio Musica” for their help with producing the proceedings. I am also grateful to all members of Organizing Committee, Local Arrangement Committee and Program Committee as well as all participants who have worked hard to make this conference a success.

Finally I want to appreciate all authors for their excellent papers to this conference.

April 2019

Michele Della Ventura

Contents

Playlist Shuffling given User-Defined Constraints on Song Sequencing	7
<i>Sterling Ramroach, Patrick Hosein</i>	
Perceptual foundations for a nonlinear asynchronous expression	21
<i>Mitchell Bercier</i>	
A Mathematical Insight into Balakirev’s Orientalism in Islamey	34
<i>Nikita Mamedo</i>	
Generative Conceptual Blending of High-Level Melodic Features: Shortcomings and Possible Improvements	43
<i>Maximos Kaliakatsos-Papakostas</i>	
The use of virtual instruments in the process of creating a soundtrack with film music. Is this the twilight of film music played by man?	52
<i>Adrian Robak, Wojciech Wieczorek</i>	
MGTGAN: Cycle-Consistent Adversarial Networks for Symbolic Multi-track Music Genre Transfer	72
<i>YanLun Peng, Haitao Zheng</i>	
Kinetic Sound Art and The Sound Canvas	79
<i>Ian Costabile</i>	
The Dagbon Hiplife Zone in Northern Ghana Contemporary Idioms of Music Making in Tamale	85
<i>Dominik Phyfferoen</i>	
Raga classification in Indian Classical music - A generalized approach	116
<i>Jayaganesh Kalyanasundaram, Saroja TK</i>	
The Music Education Project: Voices from Future Teachers	123
<i>Giovanna Carugno</i>	
Laying the Foundation For the Inclusion of indigenous Music in Elementary and Secondary Puerto Rican Music Education	129
<i>Francisco L. Reyes</i>	
An Outline of Foreign Language Anxiety Research	135
<i>Zdena Kralova</i>	

Emotions and Foreign Language Learning: A Mysterious Relationship	141
<i>Jana Kamenicka, Zdena Kralova</i>	
Exploring primary education teachers' perceptions of their Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge	146
<i>D. Roussinos, and A. Jimoyiannis</i>	
Educational Non-visual Environment for Symbolic Programming of Cartesian Motion to include Children with Visual Impairment into Robotic Sciences	154
<i>Francisco J. Ruiz-Sanchez, Enrique Mireles-Rodriguez, Gustavo Guzman Solis</i>	

The Music Education Project: a Training Activity for Future Teachers

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Abstract. This paper aims at illustrating the results of a training activity (named “Music education project”) carried out with a small group of students, enrolled in a bachelor’s degree program in music pedagogy, with an emphasis on early childhood education, in an Italian Conservatory. The activity was entirely based on the elaboration of a music education project, as a simulation of a task that the students will tackle when entering into the labor market. It was carried out in three different phases: after participating in four workshops specifically addressed to the understanding of the basis of active music education methods (Orff, Dalcroze, Kodály), the students attended a lecture dedicated to the explanation of the structure of a project to be presented to an ideal school principal and then they were involved in creating their personal project of music education. The outcomes of the training activity show that most of the students have proposed interdisciplinary projects, that put music education in dialogue with other subjects, and have chosen a mixed methodological approach, combining the main features of the music education methods explored during the preliminary workshops. Moreover, the project proposals gave some hints on the identity of the students, helping them in becoming aware of their interests, needs, motivations and competences as future teachers.

Keywords. Music education; Music teachers’ training; Project-based learning.

1 Introduction

In the Italian school system, curricular or extra-curricular activities carried out by expert teachers, usually employed as external practitioner, are an invaluable resource for the enrichment of the educational offer. The development of such activities reflects the necessities of each school context, considering the needs of their protagonists and the relevance of opening the learning institution’s doors to the surrounding geographical, cultural and social environment, in a spirit of collaboration that valorizes the capital of the local territory, in terms of human and material assets. This idea is particularly emphasized by the legislator in drawing the framework of the “school of autonomy”, not by chance defined also as the “school of the project”. By means of the Decree of the President of the Republic n. 275, 8 March 1999 [1] that have implemented art. 21 of the Law n. 59, 15 March 1999 [2], recognizing to the schools the freedom of elaborating their own educational program – called Piano dell’Offerta Formativa, POF – (art. 3, par. 1), the autonomy guarantees the freedom to teach and the cultural pluralism, consisting in programming and realizing educational and learning initiatives, aiming at supporting the growth of the human person (art. 1, par. 2). Then, the legislator underlines that these initiatives have to be adequate to the specific situation of the school, taking into account

the demand of families, and the characteristic of the students population, to achieve the best “educational success”, in coherence with the aims and general objectives of the school system and with the exigence to increase the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process, at all levels.

This enhancement perspective inspired in the last eighteen years the inclusion of music education projects in many POF of preschools and primary schools [3], raising the number of external teachers dealing with the task not only to teach music, but also to program and design educational routes connected with a projectual idea.

In this sense, future generations of Italian music education teachers have to acquire the essential knowledge on projecting musical activities, especially in hypothesis of absence of guidelines provided by the school – different is the situation where this latter has already devised a project and looks for a teacher to carry it out – or by the legislator; for instance, from the 1990s music education at preschools is neglected by national laws, that lacking references to the methodologies and teaching strategies to be used with students aged 3-6 [4]. Moreover, the theoretical and practical implications connected to the implementation of an external project of music education are sometimes underestimated within the training of future teachers, to the point that the students are – after graduation – not very skilled to tackle them independently, with the consequent risk not only to lose job opportunities, but also to propose projects that are not appropriate for the chosen educational destination.

Starting from these premises, the present paper will illustrate a training activity conceived to fill the gap of professional preparation of the music education teachers of tomorrow, realized with a small group of students of music pedagogy in an Italian Conservatory.

2 The Music Education Project: aims and participants

The Music Education Project was a training activity created with the objective to introduce the students to the basics of a preparation of a project of music education addressed to preschools and primary schools, enabling them to get elementary professional and methodological skills to apply in their future teaching career. The training activity was conducted with six students enrolled in the second year of a bachelor’s degree course in music pedagogy, with an emphasis on early childhood education, in an Italian Conservatory. Most participants were aged less than 30 years (four of them), and two participants were aged 30-40 years. A relevant element was the fact that only one of them had a previous experience as a music teacher at schools; the others were musicians or singers, without any teaching background.

3 The Music Education Project: the three-steps-approach

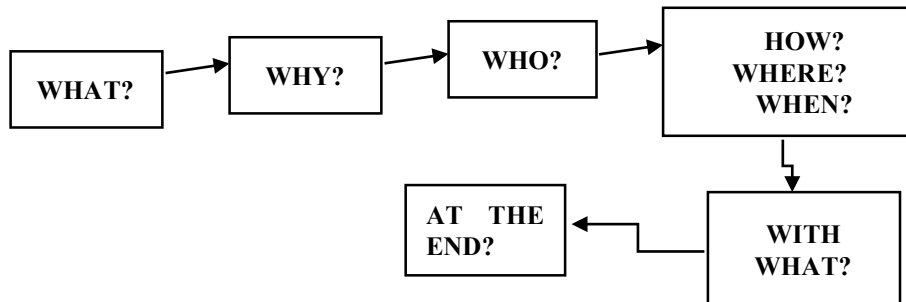
The Music Education Project was carried out in three phases: a) in the first one, the students were involved in four theoretical-practical workshops, that introduced them to the pedagogical works and education theories developed by well-known representatives of the so-called “active music education” methods founded during the last century, namely

Carl Orff, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze and Zoltán Kodály. They also received some information on the most significant findings of music psychology research on the music development of infants and toddlers (ages 0-3), analyzing the meaning of key concepts as “musical aptitude”, “musical acculturation” and “habituation to music”, and then becoming familiar with the Music Learning Theory (MLT) formulated by Edwin E. Gordon; b) the thematic workshops were followed by a three-hour lecture, entirely dedicated to the explanation of the structure of a project to be presented to an imaginary school principal. The lecture was held by the professor of music pedagogy of the Conservatory, who adopted a mixed teaching method, with alternance between giving information about the topic and stimulating the debate and contributions of students in brief brainstorming sessions.

The main ideas emerged during these sessions concerned the importance of projectuality as a competence of every teacher, that must be well-trained in supporting the whole educational program of the school, providing a high-quality intervention in line with the real needs of the students and with the designed objectives. In other words, projectuality requires the capacity to make concrete an ideal plan, promoting the tangible achievement of the expected aims [5]. The nature of these aims was placed at the center of the discussion by a group of students, that had reservations on the prevision in some music education projects of a final performance or demonstration, that can divert the attention of the teacher from working towards the educational goals; c) in the last phase of the activity, the students were asked to create their personal projects of music education, due to be completed in ten days’ time.

The framework of the project was provided by the professor of music pedagogy, giving to the students some samples and indicating them that, while there was not a rigid structure to follow in the elaboration of the projects, it would have been important to specify some elements, not only to deliver an accurate proposal, but also to have a compass for the practical implementation of the project: 0. title and subtitle; 1. premise (or analysis of the educational context, answering a variety of questions: “In what situation is the musical activity provided? Is there a comprehensive project concerning the school that includes it? Is there a specific request by the school for particular activities: e.g., instrumental playing, choral singing, body percussion, etc.? What is the geographical, social and cultural context in which the project is proposed? Are there some special educational needs of the students or inclusion objectives to be taken into consideration within the whole project? What is the general mission of the project?”); 2. objectives (“What musical competences will the children acquire in participating in the activities of the project?”; “What are the meta-objectives that the project tends to pursue?”; “What enrichment will the project offer to children’s growth as individuals and members of the school community?”); 3. participants (indication of the classes or groups of students to whom the project is addressed); 4. method and steps of implementation (timeline, venue, use of the space, teaching methodologies, and phases of development of the project); 5. resources (material, human and financial); 6. assessment method and general evaluation (internal and/or external) of the project experience.

To facilitate the memorization of the main points of the project proposal, the following diagram was shown to the students [6].



Some of the above-mentioned elements could be better specified at the end of the project proposal: for example, the financial resources could be indicated as “budget”, listing the expenses for educational materials, the staff and teaching costs, and adding information on the availability of external funds and on “the cost sharing” or “per student cost” option. The project proposal could become more attractive by including some illustrations, as well as a biographical note and a picture of the music teacher. In addition, it could be included into the proposal a reference to any materials that could have been produced during the project, as a documentation of the activities (for instance, a CD of the compositions created by the students or a teachers’ logbook). At the end of this phase, each student presented his/her proposal to the colleagues and to the professor of music pedagogy; both of them gave feedbacks on the project, suggesting possible improvements.

4 The projects into the project

Narrowing the analysis to the project proposals elaborated by the students, it can be observed that they were perfectly in line with the structure indicated during the lecture and they were delivered in time by the students. The students fulfilled the assignment through elaborating creative proposals, most of them based on an interdisciplinary approach, that put music education in dialogue with other subjects, such as science education, and transversal aims, like the one to respect the natural environment. This demonstrates that the future teachers are conscious of the fact that music education, as other disciplines, pursues meta-objectives that encompass the whole school curriculum [7].

Three projects were target for primary school students, one for preschoolers age four and five, and the last two for infants aged 0-3 years, involving the ideal participation of parents.

The following table illustrates the main features of each project.

N.	Title	Destination	Method	Interdisciplinarity
1	<i>Moving the first steps into music</i>	Nursery school (children aged 0-3 years, divided into three different groups)	Music Learning Theory (MLT)	
2	<i>Singing the human body</i>	Children attending class II and III of the primary school	Mixed approach (Orff, Dalcroze, Kodály)	X
3	<i>Musical instruments' artisans</i>	Children attending class III, IV and V of the primary school	Mixed approach (Orff, Dalcroze, Kodály)	X
4	<i>Popular sonar cantando</i>	Children attending class IV and V of the primary school	Mixed approach (Orff, Dalcroze, Kodály)	
5	<i>Musical proposals after birth</i>	Nursery school (children aged 0-1 years)	Music Learning Theory (MLT)	
6	<i>Music and nature</i>	Preschool (children aged 4-5 years)	Mixed approach (Orff, Dalcroze, Kodály)	X

Examining the above-mentioned results in light of the comments that the students added during the presentation of their projects at the Conservatory, emerges that each work gives some hints on the identity of the students as teachers.

In other words, the experimental activity helped the students in becoming more aware of their interests, needs and competences – a reflection that cannot be ignored when deciding to become part of an educative relationships [8].

This was confirmed by the fact that most of the students justified the choice of the topic of the project proposal making references to his/her musical studies (“I am a singer, so I decided to propose a project on singing education”, said A.), personal life (e.g., K. reported that she chose to present a project for children attending the primary school because she was mother of a boy age seven), musical tastes (M. affirmed, “I like folk music and I comprised this repertoire on the content of my proposal”) and past professional experience (M. remembered when she was a music teacher at the preschool and she had to solve the problem of a lack of funds, that precluded the purchase of new musical instruments for the children).

This demonstrated the potentiality of project-based learning as an inspirational model, that leads to the elaboration of valuable products grounded on the application of acquired knowledge (in this case provided during the lecture and the four workshops) and on the solution of real-worlds difficulties [9].

Therefore, drafting the project proposals gave to the students the possibility to develop problem solving and communicating skills, clarifying the aims, the operative modalities, the contents and the motivations that are placed at the basis of their educational action (even if “virtual”), offering them an opportunity to focus on technical details that there will be parts of their task as music teachers, dealing with potential problems by themselves, although supported by the music pedagogy professor.

Last but not the least, the students found the activity enjoyable and useful at the same time and some of them expressed the desire to put in action the project proposal after graduating in music education, making their ideas turn into reality.

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- [5] L. Milani, “La progettualità educativa. Come svilupparla in educatori e pedagogisti”, *Pedagogia oggi*, vol. XV, n. 2, 2017, p. 236.
- [6] Cf. V. Iadeluca, A. Sangiorgio, “Il progetto didattico e la programmazione in educazione musicale”, paper presented at the Centro didattico musicale, Rome, February 2007, unpublished.
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- [8] J. Tafuri, “L'educazione musicale. Teorie, metodi, pratiche”, Turin, EDT, 1995, p. 19.
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This book presents a collection of selected papers that present the current variety of all aspect of music research, development and education, at a high level. The respective chapters address a diverse range of theoretical, empirical and practical aspects underpinning the music science and teaching and learning, as well as their pedagogical implications. The book meets the growing demand of practitioners, researchers, scientists, educators and students for a comprehensive introduction to key topics in these fields. The volume focuses on easy-to-understand examples and a guide to additional literature.

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