

## The process of musical teaching-learning in the Camerata Reference Group of *Plucked Strings* of the Guri Project



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### ABSTRACT

This article presents the results of an academic research focused on the teaching-learning process in the rehearsals of the Camerata Reference Group of *Plucked Strings* of the Guri Project - ACIF Franca, SP. The general objective was to understand how the musical teaching-learning process occurs in this Reference Group (RG). The specific objectives were: to know how the structure and organization of the rehearsals of the GR Camerata of *Plucked Strings* (CCD) impact on the musical teaching-learning process; learn how CCD students learn music; understand how the social relationships established by the students participating in the CCD enhance their musical learning. Data were collected with the help of the

Field Diary, through the observation of six CCD trials, which took place in Franca, SP, between May 3 and September 6, 2019. They were analyzed and categorized according to the specific objectives established. The results showed that the process of musical teaching-learning in the CCD is provided by the social relations that occur not only in the institutionalized times of the rehearsal, but also before its beginning and in the interval. It was observed that the students were guided by the sound result of the group and visually observing the body gestures of their colleagues, which constituted tricks for musical reading solutions or instrumental technique. The relationships established among the members of the CCD potentiated socio-musical interactions between the students, the conductor-educator and the area coordinators who sometimes visited the group. Despite some observed conflicts, these interactions allowed them to (re)recognize the experiences and abilities of the other, and this strengthened the students' engagement in group musical practice.

**Keywords:** Guri Project, Camerata Reference Group of *Plucked Strings*, Rehearsal as time and space of musical teaching-learning.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The perspective of the rehearsal as a time and space for musical teaching and learning is not unprecedented. The review of Brazilian academic texts presents four authors (FIGUEIREDO, 1989, 1990; MENDES, 2008; SILVA, 2011; SILVA, 2012) that transcend the interpretation of the rehearsal as having only the objective of preparing for a musical performance. The reading of these authors reveals two different theoretical perspectives: Figueiredo (1989; 1990) and Silva (2011) approach the essay from a didactic perspective, concerned with the contents to be taught, the methodology capable of better managing the teaching process (SILVA, 2011), and the teaching procedures that should be mastered by the conductor during the rehearsal (FIGUEIREDO, 1990). Mendes (2008) and Silva (2012) approach the essay from a sociological perspective, interpreting the process of musical



teaching-learning as an exchange between the subjects of the pedagogical action (conductor and musicians) and seeing the latter as "social people inserted in a [social] space" (SILVA, 2012, p. 121).

This last perspective, which perceives the participants of a rehearsal as pedagogical subjects to establish relationships with each other and with music, who are agents of their learning and learn while teaching others, was the one that guided the research reported in this article, which had as its general objective to understand how the process of musical teaching-learning occurs in the rehearsals of the Reference Group (GR) Camerata de Cordas Dedilhas of the Guri Project - - ACIF<sup>1</sup> pole Franca, SP; and as specific objectives: to know how the structure and organization of the rehearsals of the Reference Group (GR2) Camerata de Cordas Pluckadas (CCD) <sup>3</sup>of the Guri Project (PG)<sup>4</sup> impact on the musical teaching-learning process; learn how CCD students learn music; understand how the social relationships established by the students participating in the CCD enhance their musical learning. Following the qualitative research approach, the research data were collected, and recorded in a field diary, through the observation of six CCD trials that took place in Franca, SP between May 3 and September 6, 2019.

Although the word observation is linked to the perception of what is in front of our eyes, it is important that we be aware of the aspects that are not captured by the simple look, these aspects will depend on the theoretical resources of the person who looks (MORATO; GONÇALVES, 2014). Therefore, remembering that the Guri Project is a social project, in order to understand the process of musical teaching-learning forged<sup>5</sup> in the CCD rehearsals, we theoretically base ourselves on the thought of SOUZA (2014) on music education in social projects.

According to Souza (2014), "when taking into account the characteristics of Brazilian society, music education began to face new challenges". These new challenges refer to "the epistemological and political-social dimensions of the practice of music education" (SOUZA, 2014, p. 12), that is, understanding the process of musical teaching-learning in social projects (and even in other spaces) does not depend only on the musical practices involved, but also on the social relationship engaged in the time/space of educational environments.

Souza (2014) presents some important concepts to reflect on the practice of music education in social projects: inclusion, diversity and social transformation. The term inclusion means music for everyone. In the field of music education, the term inclusion implies "considering that the reason for learning may be more important than the [musical] skills or competencies to be acquired" (SOUZA,

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<sup>1</sup> Association of Commerce and Industry of Franca - SP.

<sup>2</sup> The expression Reference Group, as it appears many times in the text, will be abbreviated to GR.

<sup>3</sup> The name of the Reference Group of the ACIF Franca pole of the Guri Project, *Camerata de Cordas Pluckadas*, will also be abbreviated to CCD.

<sup>4</sup> Projeto Guri is also an expression that is repeated a lot during the text, it will be abbreviated to PG.

<sup>5</sup> To forge in this context means to shape, to give shape to. In this sense, we want to say that CCD trials have certain characteristics that "forge" a teaching-learning process that they are only capable of enabling.



2014, p. 18). Diversity is also an important concept when we talk about music education in social projects. For Souza (2014), "social projects are aimed at minorities who are often excluded or 'less visible' to society, such as the elderly, young people, children, women, blacks, members of the LGBT community [*sic*], bringing up issues of gender, race, generation, among others" (SOUZA, 2014, p. 20). The third concept that Souza (2014) describes is about social transformation; For the author, "music in social projects produces a musical education that should have the objective of raising awareness and contributing to transforming reality" (p. 20), that is, the student who develops musically in a social project must leave that environment aware of the process of which he was part as an agent and commit himself to the transformation of social groups such as those to which he belongs.

Given these concepts, we can understand that the function of music education within social projects goes beyond making music. In the CCD rehearsals, we pay attention to understanding the teaching-learning process in the face of the relationships that the students established beyond the instrumental performances and the repertoire.

## **2 THE GURI PROJECT AND THE *CAMERATA REFERENCE GROUP OF PLUCKED STRINGS OF FRANCA, SP***

23 years ago, the Guri Project began its work with children and young people in the Mazzaropi workshop, in the east zone of São Paulo; in 1996 the Guri Project extended the service by inaugurating the first center within the CASA[6] Foundation, a unit of the Tatuapé complex. (CULTURAL TERRITORIES, 2018).

The above quote was transcribed from a journalistic article about the Guri Project that TV Cultura de São Paulo aired in 2018; therefore, considering this source and timeline that can be found in Projeto Guri (S.d.(d), he was born in 1995 and completes in 2023, 28 years of musical educational activity.

The PG consists of a sociocultural program of musical education for children and young people from 6 to 18 years of age living in the capital, coast and interior of São Paulo. It also serves young people from 12 to 21 years old at the CASA Foundation centers in the State of São Paulo. It is, therefore, a social project that promotes education and collective musical practice for children and adolescents, in which music is not seen only as a result or skill to be achieved, but "is presented as an antidote to violence, to the street, to idleness, to risk" (HIKIJI, 2004, p. 3).

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<sup>6</sup> The Foundation Center for Socio-Educational Assistance to Adolescents (Fundação CASA/SP), formerly the State Foundation for the Welfare of Minors (FEBEM), is an autarchy created by the Government of the State of São Paulo with the function of operationalizing the socio-educational measures applied by the Judiciary to adolescents who commit infractions. At the CASA foundation, they can serve a prison sentence up to a maximum of 21 years of age, as determined by the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA). Available at: [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Funda%C3%A7%C3%A3o\\_CASA](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Funda%C3%A7%C3%A3o_CASA). Accessed on: 24 set. 2023.



The program has more than 384 teaching centers spread across 282 cities in the state of São Paulo (PROJETO GURI, 2023), where courses such as musical initiation, choral singing, luthiery, plucked and rubbed string instruments, woodwinds, keyboards, and percussion are offered, with the objectives of promoting music education and collective music practice, stimulating creativity and teamwork, and spreading musical culture in its diversity.

Since 2022, the program has been managed by Santa Marcelina Cultura through a management contract with the Government of the State of São Paulo. The organization also has the participation of other governmental spheres such as city halls, entities of the System for the Guarantee of the Rights of Children and Adolescents, individuals, in addition to being sponsored by companies through the Culture Incentive Law (SUSTENIDOS, 2021).

In Franca, SP, the PG was established in 2002. In 2007, ACIF, which gives its name to the center, took over the management of this social project in the city. With this partnership, PG was able to move to a larger headquarters, expanding the capacity of vacancies and "serving about 805 young people" (PROJETO GURI, 2017). In 2021, with a new change of headquarters, the ACIF Franca center of the PG obtained the capacity to serve "826 boys" working "from Monday to Friday, in classes in the morning (8 am to 11 am) and afternoon (2 pm to 6 pm), and [offering] courses in plucked strings ([cavaquinho], guitar, viola caipira), percussion and drums, high strings (viola and violin), low strings (cello, double bass), children's musicalization, musical initiation and choir, keyboard, piano, woodwinds (clarinet, transverse flute, saxophone) and brass (euphonium, trombone, trumpet and tuba)" (PROJETO GURI, 2021), as well as luthiery (PROJETO GURI, 2018).

In 2010, the PG started the so-called Reference Groups, "a space for musical practice" that brings together students in more advanced stages of musical learning to participate in a collective of instrumentalists and/or choristers with "greater technical development and in a position to perform original works and more elaborate arrangements" (PROJETO GURI, 2019a). In addition to the improvement of musical training, the GR's value the professionalizing initiative that takes place from an incentive program of the sponsors, offering a scholarship with a maximum duration of 12 consecutive months for all members as a way of helping with transportation and other expenses, guaranteeing their participation in rehearsals and activities (PROJETO GURI, S.d.(b)).

Young people between 12 and 21 years of age participate in the GR's, selected by a selection process aimed at PG students and alumni, "the candidates go through tests and interviews, being evaluated by a team formed by professionals in the areas of Education and Social Development" (PROJETO GURI, S.d.(c)). The GR's enable them to develop their musical practice through various activities – collective rehearsals, interaction with other poles, public presentations, and the opportunity to play with musicians of nationally and internationally recognized performance. The GR's provide, therefore, a musical training that is socially and professionally referenced.



In 2012, the GR *Camerata de Cordas Dempilhadas de Franca*, SP was created, bringing together the instruments guitar, cavaquinho and viola caipira. In 2013, with environmental responsibility in mind, CCD was chosen to set up the Green Orchestra, a PG subproject that enabled the acquisition of musical instruments manufactured by the Oficina Escola de Lutheria da Amazônia, made of solid wood certified by the *Forest Stewardship Council* (PROJETO GURI, 2013).

Since its inception, CCD has promoted the coexistence of "boys" with renowned musicians. Thus, with the aim of contributing to the musical and professional training of its participants, in 2013 CCD debuted as a Green Orchestra alongside violist Ivan Vilela at the SENAI Theater in Franca, SP; in 2014 CCD was selected to be part of the scenic-musical show *Lendas Amazônicas*, recorded on DVD and presented in São Paulo (Theatro São Pedro, 2014, and Sala São Paulo, 2015); in 2018 he participated in the rereading of the work *Milagre dos Peixe* (Milton Nascimento) with Ivan Vilela. In 2020, with the impossibility of social agglomeration of people due to COVID-19, CCD recorded – remotely – the work *Vida Marvada* (Rolando Boldrin) with Renato Teixeira for the program "Juntas e juntos: cada qual no seu quadrado", which aired on December 18, 2020<sup>7</sup>. These are some of the landmark events for CCD.

### 3 THE REHEARSALS OF THE *PLUCKED STRING CAMERATA*: STRUCTURE, ORGANIZATION AND MUSICAL TEACHING-LEARNING

During the observations, the CCD grouped 20 young people into four instrumental sections, five cavaquinists, five violists, and 10 guitarists, divided into two sections: guitar 1 and guitar 2. In 2019, rehearsals took place once a week, on Fridays, starting at 2 p.m., with an average duration of four hours, and a break for the break. Rehearsals tended to have a standard sequence of events: first the suits rehearsed separately, then there was a snack break, and after that, the work returned with the dress rehearsal. However, depending on the objective, the rehearsals were structured differently, such as when the public presentations approached, or when a visit was received from a pedagogical coordinator of the PG – on these occasions, the suit rehearsals were not carried out.

#### 3.1 MOMENTS BEFORE STARTING THE REHEARSAL AND THE BREAK

Before the rehearsal started, some students were already starting to warm up their fingers on their instruments playing songs they liked, others were playing songs from the GR repertoire, still others were talking about various subjects. There was a day when three guitar students, together, observed the musical performance of one of them (Diário de Campo, 24 May 2019). Although they were outside the institutionally established time and space for the rehearsal, it seemed to have begun,

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<sup>7</sup> See *Vida Marvada* (Rolando Boldrin), Guri Invites 2020, can be enjoyed on the video-sharing platform YouTube, available at: <https://youtu.be/grakLbsw698>. Accessed on: 24 set. 2023.



as the teaching-learning relationship between the three girls was materialized with the observations of the performance of one of them, interested as they were in solving typing problems on the guitar.

Another moment of sharing in the organization of the GR rehearsals was the break for snacks. Each week, a suit was responsible for taking and preparing the snack for everyone. At lunchtime, the students rested for a while, talked, played cards, played together songs that were not necessarily from the GR repertoire, and surfed the internet on their cell phones.

In these moments "outside" the rehearsal (before starting it and during the break), the students interacted, getting to know each other better and strengthening bonds that resulted in a better engagement in the musical teaching-learning process. Acknowledging the musical expertise of the other is an important characteristic for the musical practice of the group, however, establishing and maintaining a good affective relationship, respecting each other, their tastes, their habits and values, can lead to good musical and social teaching-learning relationships. This is a precept of social projects, advocated by the Guri Project, which values the "activities [...] always practiced in groups, which encourages student participation. Everyone is part of a team that goes through the same challenges and learning" (PROJETO GURI, S.d.(a). This precept is considered by Souza (2014) as the foundation of musical inclusion, the author argues:

[...] To make music together, collectively, means not only to perform many sounds – which someone alone could not accomplish – but, on the contrary, to perform other important functions, such as preparing for readiness, being available and creating possibilities to organize oneself in the group; express themselves, listen to each other, exercise self-criticism, receive criticism, evaluate themselves (SOUZA, 2014, p. 19).

### 3.2 SUIT REHEARSALS AND DRESS REHEARSAL

Suit rehearsals preceded the dress rehearsal and took place before intermission. It was in the rehearsals of the suits that the students share their musical experiences on the instrument itself, solving questions of instrumental technique or reading scores, preparing, finally, to perform the songs together at the time of the general rehearsal.

It was also in the suit rehearsals that the GR students learned the division of labor and their respective professional functions within the musical groups. In each suit there was a student responsible for directing the rehearsal. The conductor of the CCD called this student the "head of the suit", similar to the professional orchestras and their heads of suit, *spalla* and other divisions of work, characteristics of this musical group.

The conductor of the GR would go to the "heads of the suit" to give them the indications of what would be worked on that day (which song to play first, how to give the entrances of the songs, what time to give a rest, etc.) and they guided their colleagues coordinating the dynamics of the rehearsal. Thus, "the 'head of suit' of the cavaquinho always expedited the staff to tune their instruments at the beginning of the rehearsal" (Diário de Campo, 24 May 2019). Similarly, in professional



orchestras "it is the responsibility of the chiefs of section to transmit to the group, in a first moment of preparation for each show, the instructions defined by the conductor for the execution of each work" (PICHONERI, 2006, p. 89).

The "heads of suit" of the CCD, however, were not paid more than their colleagues, they were only responsible for this function because they were students with more time and musical experience in the group. In any case, it cannot be denied that this function simulated a professional, and also musical, hierarchy within the group.

During the suit rehearsals, the students also had functions that went beyond the musical object, such as taking care of the instrument that was under their responsibility, organizing their materials and taking care of the place where they sat. We observe, for example, the students changing the string of the ukulele; the strings were provided by the PG, however, it was the students who changed them, and their instruments had to be ready for the dress rehearsal (Field Diary, 03 May 2019).

In the dress rehearsal, the groups were grouped together and the conductor took over the direction of the musical work. However, unlike what happens in professional orchestras, the conductor was at the head of the group not only to guide the progress of the works and conceive their interpretation, but to exchange with the students, listening to them, mediating them, guiding them, receiving their tips on instrumental performance and sharing them with the whole group. In other words, in the CCD, the regent was also an educator.

### 3.3 THE ORGANISATION OF THE TEST SPACE

As previously mentioned, the CCD rehearsals took place in two stages: the suit rehearsal and the general rehearsal. During the suit rehearsals, the students organized themselves in separate rooms, always without the conductor-educator. In the ukulele section, the students sat in a circle, allowing them to better interact and visualize everyone's musical performance. On the day we observed the viola suit rehearsal, the students were divided into two subgroups; even so, they kept in touch, moving between the rooms so that they could exchange ideas about the performance of some musical excerpts (Diário de Campo, 10 May 2019). The guitar players, as they were part of a larger group, always rehearsed together in the main room, the same room where the general rehearsal took place with the conductor.

At the dress rehearsal, the whole group was accommodated in the largest room of the PG headquarters, they sat in a different way from the suit rehearsals – in the shape of a semicircle, with the conductor-educator at the front.

The two spaces used for the CCD rehearsal, the suit rehearsal and dress rehearsal rooms, frame different social relations between the musicians in training. To understand this difference, we turn to Certeau (1998) who differentiates place from space, and who understands space as social space.



Space, from the perspective of Certeau (1998), is the practice of place, the way in which subjects transform it based on their uses, interactions and experiences. The headquarters of the Guri Project - ACIF Franca pole, before being a space for musical teaching and learning, was designed as a residential house, <sup>8</sup>a place (Certeau, 1998) to host family uses and interactions. In other words, the rooms of the house were transformed into teaching-learning spaces: bedrooms and living rooms, for example, became classrooms and rehearsals of the CCD, as well as the coordinator's room; the covered garage became the largest room in the headquarters (used for the CCD's dress rehearsal); Hallways, backyard *and entrance hall* have become spaces for waiting, for interaction outside of class and break. In the new configuration of these places – spaces for teaching and learning music – students, educators and coordinators coexisted and established other types of social relations. Bourdieu (2003) calls this relationship between individuals – not innocent of hierarchies and conflicts – occurring in the place, "social space", differentiating it from the physical space, but being shaped by it. Therefore, it is important to reflect on the social relations that this place provided to its visitors when it was transformed into the PG headquarters.

The rehearsal rooms, old rooms, were small and perhaps for this reason, the students positioned themselves in a circle so that everyone could observe each other (the small place did not allow them to position themselves in a row). It was interesting to observe that in the cavaquinho rehearsal room, for example, the students always sat in the same place and with the same arrangement of chairs in a circle (Diário de Campo, May 24, 2019), configuring social relationships where, even with the presence of the "head of suit", the students seemed to share teaching-learning in a more horizontal way.

The dress rehearsals were held in the largest room in the headquarters, so the students could be arranged in the shape of a semicircle, similar to the traditional formation of an orchestra, but only in two rows. The CCD's general rehearsal room, like the stages for the performances of large musical groups (orchestras, *big bands*, choirs, etc.), did not hold a single queue for everyone to position themselves on the same plane. The arrangement of people in rows, even if in a semicircle, configures hierarchical social relations, intensified with the division of musical labor.

The students who had been in the group for a longer time and had, therefore, better instrumental technical development, musical reading and more experience in musical performances in the GR, occupied the first row of chairs. On the other hand, the younger students, both by age and time of participation in the group, sat in the second row.

In the dress rehearsals observed, the young people always occupied the same chairs. However, when someone from the front row was absent, the conductor-educator would call another person from

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<sup>8</sup> In 2021, the ACIF Franca, UF of PG pole moved to a new headquarters (PROJETO GURI, 2021), whose construction architecture is not for residence. It was not possible to investigate the origin of the building, but it appears to be a construction made to house a basic education school.





the back row to sit in the front, but his call was not always heeded. One occurrence caught our attention: Fabiana<sup>9</sup> and Douglas, who sat in the front row of the guitar 1 suit, when they arrived late, had to sit in the second row, because their seats were occupied with two other students who used to sit in the back. However, after the break, everyone changed places, the students in the second row, who had sat in the first row, returned to their seats and those who had been late were able to occupy their "due" places in the front row (Field Diary, 31 May 2019).

Each chair, in each row, occupied by the students materialized a space related to the social hierarchy and the division of functions of the musical work in the group, whether in rehearsals or in the public presentations of the CCD. That is, the organization of the place where the CCD's general rehearsals took place configured a social space that taught young musicians how hierarchical relationships work in the music profession. They learned where to sit; Thus, those who sat in the front row could encourage the students in the second row to make an effort to occupy a seat in the front row, but this arrangement of the space could also generate conflicts, if a student in the back row, for example, wished to occupy the front row, after all, in the front row every musician is always better seen by the public.

Therefore, the social spaces of the CCD headquarters and the reiteration of the musical habit of organizing rehearsals in rows, dividing the group's work between the "head of the suit" and the others, forged a social and professional learning in music, after all, each one should know the place that belonged to him in the configuration of the chairs in the rehearsal room.

## **4 TEACHING-LEARNING STRATEGIES IN THE REHEARSALS OF THE *PLUCKED STRINGS CAMERATA***

Several teaching-learning strategies were observed in the CCD rehearsals, from the communications between conductor-educator and students to, and mainly, the interactions between the students themselves during the musical performance. In this context, "verbal communication in rehearsal was not the only form of communication. Gestures, looks and body movements were also part of the essay" (SILVA, 2012, p. 113). Each of these forms of teaching-learning has its own characteristics and always permeates each other.

### **4.1 LISTENING AND OBSERVING**

Although learning to read music was important for musical development and one of the objectives of the GR's of the Guri Project – after all, musical reading is part of the concern to create an environment conducive to musical professionalism (PROJETO GURI, S.d.(b), reading music was not the only learning strategy practiced by the students.

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<sup>9</sup> All names quoted are fictitious.



At CCD, learning music by ear was quite recurrent during the group's musical development, both in section rehearsals and in general rehearsals. The sounds produced by the young musicians assumed a fundamental role for musical learning, from the moment the student was able to reproduce them on his own instrument, with the understanding of the repertoire.

In the quote below, in an essay on the ukulele suit, the students discussed a rhythmic cell that contained spindles:

Caio, who has been in the group for a long time, was trying to explain these bars to his colleagues and said: "The important thing is to fall into the head of time in the next bar, not the number of notes [that are played], for now" (Field Diary, 03 May 2019).

Caio, the "head of the suit" of the cavaquinhos, was not concerned with the number of figures written on the score. As it was to give an effect of speed, he instructed his colleagues to take care to fall correctly in the strong tempo of the next bar, guided by the ear. Caio also told his colleagues not to worry "for now", not ruling out the need for theoretical understanding of these rhythmic cells in the future.

Similar events occurred during dress rehearsals, where students also used ear learning, even if the score was front on the shelf:

There is a part of the song [Pablo N. 2, Milton Nascimento] that no one on the guitar was remembering, so the conductor-educator gave the students a little time to remember the reading of the score. Daniel, who has a very good musical ear, was recalling the music without the sheet music (even with the sheet music in front of him); he asked Jonas to play for him to catch his ear (Field Diary, Sept. 06, 2019).

Learning by ear helped the students a lot, since many still had poorly developed music reading. Thus, the resource of auditory perception became an adjunct in this learning, in which they were guided by the musical performance of the group, observing their colleagues.

Although the conductor-educator played a fundamental role in structuring time/space in the rehearsal, it was to the instrumental performance of the colleagues that the students' gaze was directed during the rehearsals. In the CCD, students helped each other by showing how to play so that others could imitate them. Therefore, looking at the other enabled an important form of musical teaching and learning. In addition to the indications of the conductor-educator, the members of the CCD opened their ears and attentive their gaze to observe and allow themselves to be observed, worrying about the learning of those next to them:

At the end of the song Job's Slave, Carla asked Hannah what the ending was like, as she had forgotten. Ana showed her how she played on the guitar for her to remember, she played it twice, Carla observed well what she did and remembered it (Diário de Campo, 31 May 2019).



By unraveling the possibilities of musical learning in the interaction between the participants within the group, we realized that the students became responsible for the group's actions, while the whole group also became responsible for theirs. It wasn't just being part of, or being another member of the group, it was thinking that you are the group and the group is you, so the teaching-learning processes spilled over into everyone within the group, which resulted in the musical interaction of everyone present at the rehearsal.

#### 4.2 LEARNING TO READ SHEET MUSIC: A COLLECTIVE CONSTRUCTION

The score is "a fundamental element in the organization and in the strategies for the preparation of musical works [of a] rehearsal" (SILVA, 2012, p. 126), understanding it is fundamental for the execution of musical works and arrangements.

As mentioned, the CCD students were in the process of learning to read music. In addition to individual strategies used to understand it, these musicians developed and exercised group readings during rehearsals. During an observation of the viola section rehearsal, we witnessed the moment when two students worked together to read the score of a new song in the repertoire:

Jennifer and Eliane help each other to read a new song. Before playing, they look at the key armor and see the accidents; together, they orally read the notes of the score (of the melody); They also solfege some rhythms. At that moment, they read bar by bar: they analyze the score, pick up the instrument and play, then start all over again in the next bar (Diário de Campo, 10 May 2019).

The learning of that musical excerpt was, therefore, built jointly by the students, analyzing the musical notes written on the score to perform them on their instruments.

It is also important to mention the concern regarding the comprehension of musical writing, from more experienced students to novice students. There was a moment when Ariel was in doubt and tried to solve it with her colleague Beto, who, however, before helping him, told her to look in the score for the part in which she was playing. This was not because Beto didn't want to answer, but to see if Ariel was aware of the part he was playing (Field Diary, May 10, 2019); after Ariel found the piece of music he was in doubt about, Bob helped him with what he needed.

Some authors, such as Mendes (2008), believe that the score is an element that can hinder the communication of musicians, "because students 'get stuck' and stop communicating with others, at least through visible gestures" (MENDES, 2008, p. 40). In professional orchestras, where the skill of reading music is greatly developed and the musicians play what the composer of the work and the conductor direct, the score can indeed hinder the communication between the musicians during rehearsals. However, in the CCD, the score was another element on which the students relied to communicate musically within the group, developing the teaching-learning process, tracing together



in the speeches, gestures and roles, strategies to facilitate the understanding and execution of the arrangements and musical works of the RG repertoire.

### 4.3 STANDARDIZATION STRATEGIES FOR PLAYING PRACTICE

We classify the three instruments that make up the CCD (guitar, viola caipira and cavaquinho) in the family of plucked string instruments, that is, played with the fingers of the hands. They are very versatile instruments in relation to the possibilities of sonorities they contain, being seen as good harmonic accompaniers, with infinite rhythmic and melodic possibilities.

Plucked string instruments present several possibilities for locating the same pitch or musical note, as well as a variety of chords and their inversions, levada patterns and possible fingerings for the same musical passages. Faced with so many possibilities, CCD students used to standardize their fingerings, types of touch, and note location. The process of construction and negotiation of this standardization took place mainly in suit rehearsals, through face-to-face interaction. In this quote, the students outlined strategies for standardizing the execution of the chords and levadas of the repertoire, in one of the cavaquinho rehearsals:

Caio commented on the difficulty of making a chord that was not suitable for this instrument; it was a song whose arrangement they were reading was for the guitar, so it was necessary to adapt it to the ukulele. [We asked:] *Have you ever tried reversing the chord?* He said yes, but it didn't work, so he said he made a division of the chord between the members of the suit (Field Diary, 03 May 2019).

The strategy was to divide a chord that had several notes among the members of the section, while some made some notes, others made the missing notes (such as a *divisi* of voices).

We observed a student of the guitar section writing down some figures on the score and realized that "rock" was written on one of the chords in the score in which he was reading (Diário de Campo, 06 Sept. 2019). We asked him why this chord was from rock, he picked up the guitar and showed us the position of the chord, whose hand shape is similar to the popular rock gesture, see Figures 1 and 2 below:



Figure 1 - Position of the "rock chord"



Source: Author's photograph (Field Diary, 06 Sept. 2019).

Figure 2 - Hand gesture characteristic of rock



Source: <https://escolaproarte.com.br/dia-mundial-rock/>. Accessed on: 24 set. 2023.

He named it this way because he didn't know the correct chord nomenclature, passing this tip on to all his peers.

The standardization of chords, levadas and fingerings occurred through the interaction of the students themselves, but also with the conductor-educator who personally assisted in the discussions of which fingering the suits should use.

The strategies used by the members of the CCD to teach and learn songs with each other included learning music by ear, observing visually, developing musical reading in a group and establishing gestural or non-gestural standardizations. These strategies built throughout the suit and general rehearsals showed us that the students exchanged experiences, making the whole group more aware of the possibilities of making music together; The student who built a strategy to understand some musical element, shared it with others so that everyone, through musical performance, mirrored each other learning music.



## 5 POWERS OF THE SOCIAL RELATIONS ESTABLISHED IN THE *PLUCKED STRING CAMERATA*

The social relationships established among the members of the CCD potentiated musical and personal interactions in the daily interaction between the students, and between the students, the conductor-educator and area coordinators who used to visit the rehearsals of the GR.

SOUZA (2014) states that music education in social projects involves the interaction and intervention of the members of a group. For this author, the musical inclusion advocated in social projects should privilege collective musical activities (2014, p. 19), but making music collectively does not only mean performing sounds together, but "performing other important functions" such as "[...] create possibilities to organize oneself in the group; to express themselves, to listen to each other, [...] to evaluate each other" (SOUZA. 2014, p. 19).

These "other important functions", exercised in the interactions between the students, were perceived during the observations of the CCD rehearsals, and they concern the recognition of the skills and musical development of the classmates (despite the conflicts that existed), the exchange of experiences, tastes and musical repertoires acquired outside the CCD, the coexistence with the heterogeneity of gender, and the development of concentration and group consciousness.

### 5.1 CONFLICT AND RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OTHER

In one of the rehearsals observed, the conductor-educator asked the viola section what would be the best tempo for the performance of a certain song, because the section would make a more difficult solo.

Bob ("head of suit") then indicated a tempo, but the conductor-educator asked Ariel if he could play the tempo proposed by the first. The interesting thing was that Ariel looked at Bob and asked him: *I can play along with this one, right?* (Field Diary, 03 May 2019).

There was a friendship that was also educational: Ariel trusted the "teacher's" advice of her more experienced colleague, Beto, who in turn knew the tempo that his classmate would be able to play in that song. The students' complicity leveraged the cohesion of the group and made the music happen, showing that it "is part of a socialization process [and] for this reason, it has a strong potential for mobilization and aggregation" (SOUZA, 2014, p. 16).

However, the social relations established in the CCD, which aggregated and mobilized the students, favoring the process of musical teaching and learning, were also marked by conflicts. This characteristic is not exclusive to this group, and can happen in any environment where there are interactions of several people.

In one of the conflicting situations observed, "Jennifer said that she preferred the old group, because she thought that the crowd was more united, there was no one 'in it'. In her opinion, [in the



group observed] there were some boys who want to show that they are the best" (Diário de Campo, 10 May 2019).

Even though the conflicts generated problems of affinity among the students, when they had the opportunity to get to know each other better, they were able to "recognize and endure [the] conflicts" (SOUZA, 2014, p. 19). We noticed during the observation of the rehearsals that Jennifer had more affinity with the people who participated in the CCD in previous years, however, she recognized the musical development of her classmates.

## 5.2 THE PRESENCE OF OTHER SONGS OUTSIDE THE CCD REPERTOIRE

At the moments of rehearsals when the performance of the repertoire was not the main event, the members of the group interacted by talking about their daily lives and tastes for the most varied things, and playing together other songs that were not part of the CCD repertoire. Thus, they made their individual tastes and musical styles known, and promoted the exchange of repertoires brought to the CCD space, as in the interval scene of one of the rehearsals in which "Daniel (guitar 1) and Beto (viola) played a choro [Pedacinho do Céu, Waldir de Azevedo]" (Diário de Campo, May 24, 2019), thus sharing musical experiences through a musical repertoire brought from outside the CCD space.

It was also common for the students to play other songs at the time of exchange of the works of the repertoire within the rehearsal itself. This allowed us to understand a little who the CCD students were based on the music they liked and the musical experiences they brought from outside of it.

Some members developed musical works outside the CCD, such as Erik, guitarist in a gospel music band, and Caio who played viola and guitar accompanying a country duo from the city of Franca, SP – both were part of the cavaquinho section in the CCD (Diário de Campo, May 24, 2019). The experiences that the students brought from their musical practices in other groups enhanced their musical formation and could impact the teaching-learning process at CCD, given the interactions within the group already mentioned.

## 5.3 GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE CCD

For Souza (2014), "the pedagogical conceptions present in social projects begin to consider diversity and heterogeneity as a rule and not as an exception" (p. 20). The author also considers that

[...] Diversity is the norm and not a simple conjuncture phenomenon. Therefore, it is necessary to treat the different with understanding and not just with tolerance. Music can be connected to ethnicity, ideology, religion, sexuality, it can increase our understanding of the world. It can help us understand who we are and, thus, communicate with others (SOUZA, 2007, p.19 apud SOUZA, 2014, p.20).

In 2019, the year in which the observations were carried out in the CCD, its composition was balanced, with 11 men and nine women. In the ukulele section there were four men and one woman;



in the viola section, three male boys and two female women; and in the guitar section, four men and six women.

Ravet (2006) says that the forms of professionalization and construction of musical careers are distinguished due to different aspects of socialization, one of which concerns the gender of the instrumentalist. According to this author,

The representations and images of instruments strongly condition the "choice" of the instrument made by the child and the educational community (parents and teachers). This [gendering] of instruments acts, then, from the beginning of the musician's training. Instrumental socialization is done in classes of men or women, where male and female sociabilities are separated, the learning of modes of instrumental performance (light/strong, etc.). These differences reappear later in the differentiation of careers (RAVET, 2006. Our translation).

Plucked string instruments are not very popular among women in Brazilian society. Silva Neto (2019), who studied the professional situation of graduates who completed the undergraduate course in music at the Federal University of Uberlândia, MG between 2010 and 2016, attested, for example, that among 47 graduates of the guitar course, only seven were women (p. 24). The fragile presence of women in the world of music can be confirmed if we consider another survey that had as a reference the database of members of the Brazilian Union of Composers (UBC) – an entity with 40 thousand holders, between men and women, responsible for 56% of the distribution of copyrights in the country: the participation of women in this entity has remained around 15% since 2019. The data from the research entitled *For women who make music* (published in 2021 ) are from 2020, and the professional categories that composed the research were: author and versionist, performer, musician, and phonographic producer (GANDRA, 2021).

These data are brought to highlight the importance of CCD in the training and possible professionalization of female musicians, after all, even in a slightly smaller number than men, women made up 45% of all CCD members (nine women to 11 men), contrary to the Brazilian reality demonstrated in the data of Silva Neto (2019) and Gandra (2021). This becomes even more important if we consider that CCD's instruments – cavaquinho, viola caipira and guitar – are not very common among female musicians. So much so that even in the CCD, women represent 20% of the cavaquinhos (one woman for four men) and 40% of the violas caipiras (two women for three men).

We see, therefore, that the social relations made possible in the more heterogeneous environment of the CCD, in terms of gender, potentiated a musical formation that was more in line with diversity.

#### 5.4 DEVELOPING CONCENTRATION AND GROUP AWARENESS

Maintaining concentration during rehearsals was not easy and the GR experienced several events at the same time, such as the section rehearsals, the dress rehearsal, the preparation of the songs,





the technical difficulties that arose, the tiredness, the number of people playing at the same time. There were many events that could make it difficult to concentrate. Thus, it was up to the conductor-educator to keep the group focused, encouraging the students and making them aware of the importance of everyone during the rehearsals.

The students missed their classmates who were distant, either because they were absent or because they were unfocused, that is, the students needed to walk all together for the group's engagement. At a certain point in the observation, two students had left to change the strings of their instruments at the beginning of the dress rehearsal, "the whole group, then, missed the students who were missing in the suit; some even told the conductor-educator that they were not listening to the viola" (Diário de Campo, May 10, 2019). One might think that, in a musical group with 20 instrumentalists, two people would not be so missed, after all, even with the absence of these students, there were still three other instrumentalists covering the viola section in the general rehearsal. However, in the CCD, a musical group that depends on each and every one of its members, the absence of these students was felt.

Realizing that it is necessary to listen to one's own instrument plus the instruments of the 19 instrumentalists composing the group is the result of a teaching-learning process built over time, which requires the musical and social (re)knowledge of each student.

By getting to know and recognize the other in the social relationship that sustained the process of musical teaching-learning, discovering and perceiving the facilities and difficulties of each one within the group, interactions were intensified during the execution of the repertoire in the CCD rehearsals.

## 6 CONCLUSION

The general objective of the research presented in this article was to understand how the process of musical teaching-learning occurs in the rehearsals of the *Camerata de Cordas Dempilhadas*, Reference Group of the Guri Project - ACIF Franca-SP pole.

In the pursuit of this objective, we interpret the CCD essay as a time/space of teaching-learning in which its members engage musically establishing social relations, each one carrying their musical experiences and personalities, but all composing a group with a different identity from that of its members. The students were performers and also listeners of their own musical making, enabling teaching-learning processes through the relationships established during the musical performance together. Unlike musical performances, being a listener of one's own musical making enabled the group to share musical knowledge through the experiences that the students lived during the rehearsal, through the exchange with each other and with the conductor-educator, and through interaction in various ways: observations, conversations, scores, gestures and looks.



The structure and organization of the CCD rehearsals showed that the process of musical teaching-learning is provided by the social relations that occur not only in the institutionalized times for the rehearsal, but also before its beginning and in the interval.

If we consider that PG, as a social project, has among its guidelines: "to invigorate children, adolescents and young people their aesthetic, affective, cognitive, motor and social dimensions", to intensify their offer of "enriching experiences of sociability", to strengthen their "recognition of their resources [so that] they can be used in future projects", to provide them with "access to and appreciation of different cultural expressions" and to stimulate their "creations and presentations of musical groups" (PROJETO GURI, S.d(d), we suggest that the moments outside the institutionality of the rehearsals be taken into account, they are pregnant with all these intentions.

The places where the CCD's suit and general rehearsals took place, taken as social spaces, taught the GR participants about socio-professional hierarchies and the division of musical labor. That is, the PG's opportunity to stimulate, through the GR's, the professionalization of students and former students, offering them "a wide range of musical experiences", increasing their references (in meetings "with renowned names in the artistic world and presentations on the most important stages of the Brazilian music scene"), and enabling them "technical improvement, expressive capacity and the practice of composing and improvising" (PROJETO GURI, 2019a; S.d.(b), goes hand in hand with the social teaching-learning process of the profession.

The students exchanged experiences, making the whole group more aware of the possibilities of making music together; The student who built a strategy to understand some musical element, shared it with others so that everyone, through musical performance, mirrored each other. Within the rehearsal, the process of musical teaching-learning depended on the relationship that the students established with each other, and in this case, the others could be the group taken as a whole. Thus, it was in the group that the students mirrored themselves, allowing even those who sat farther away to interact by listening to the sound result of the musical performance together and observing the musical making of their closest other.

The relationships established among the members of the CCD were interpreted as capable of enhancing musical and social interactions between the students, the conductor-educator and the area coordinators who sometimes visited the group. Despite the conflicts observed, these interactions allowed them to (re)recognize the experiences and skills of their colleagues, and this strengthened the students' engagement in the group's musical practice. The musical interactions outside the CCD repertoire, during breaks and even in the exchange of songs during rehearsals strengthened their bonds, which also enhanced their engagement in the musical performance together.

The reflections that this research provides are important for music education. The CCD rehearsal is a space/time in which the process of musical teaching-learning took place synchronized



with the social relations established between the members of the group, present in the environment of the Guri Project, a social universe involved in musical content. Such reflections can also help conductors, students, musicians, researchers and music educators to identify the rehearsal and also the collective practice as a time/space in which all its members are able to interact by teaching and learning music. They can also add to the importance of music education in social projects, as several studies have already pointed out, by showing the bonds built (often through the resignification of conflicts) among young people from CCD, when they related socially through music.



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