


## The limits and possibilities of music in the early years of elementary school

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### ABSTRACT

In the context of curricular organization at the national level, there are several institutions that still find it difficult to integrate music teaching into the educational context, given its specificity. This article is an excerpt from a master's research in which a study was carried out on the pedagogical practice of teachers regarding music in Elementary School. The research field was a municipal school, located in the municipality of Goiânia, State of Goiás, the participating subjects were: 01 manager, 14 (fourteen) teachers and 132 (one hundred and thirty-two) regularly enrolled students. This qualitative study had the data collected through a structured interview, after approval by the Ethics Committee of the Military Police College - FPM (CAAE: 61333922.4.0000.0145, Opinion No. 5.586.122) and the dissemination of the results was authorized by the research participants, who signed the Free and Informed Consent Form and the Informed Consent Form. It was found that most of the teachers did not have any discipline on Music in the initial training. The students signaled the reproduction of classes focused only on activities that involve the Visual Arts, data identified through the interviews carried out, a fact that contributes to the fragility in the initiatives of the Municipal Department of Education regarding the process of implementing the teaching of music in schools, given the inclusion of music as a proposed content for the teaching of this discipline.

**Keywords:** Music at School, Pedagogical Practice, Teacher Training, Elementary Education.

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## INTRODUCTION

The cultural traditions of each era have always been related to music. From this perspective, what can be observed is a diversification of musical tastes that are established throughout the changes that have occurred in society. Thus, teaching proposals, especially in school institutions, need to consider this musical diversity so that the student can experience the joys of music in the classroom. This implies that access to diversified musical works contributes to the formation of critical and sensitive individuals.

Since the nineteenth century, music has always been present in Brazilian schools. Contrary to what is proposed today, the learning of music was based on technical musical elements, in a more systematic way. Over time, by the end of the 1930s, the way music was conducted in school spaces began to change.

With the insertion of Law No. 11,769 published in the Official Gazette of the Union in 2008, which amends the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (LDB) – No. 9,394, of December 20, 1996 and makes the teaching of music mandatory in elementary and high school. According to the aforementioned Law, all public and private schools in the country must include music in their curricular structure.

This research aims to investigate the way in which the pedagogical practices of teachers who work in the teaching of the early years in Elementary School are configured, within the scope of the legal and curricular bases that guide the teaching of music as mandatory content in schools.

Music in school encompasses historical, cognitive, conceptual, physical, and sociological issues, serving as a gateway to deep and fundamental discussions about how to provide adequate music education. There are many challenges until the inclusion of music in schools as a tool for the full development of children and young people is achieved.

In view of the above, it is possible to understand the need for the involvement of all education professionals, to increasingly strengthen pedagogical practices that can present music as a privileged laboratory for the development of the most diverse skills.

## METHODOLOGY

This article is an excerpt from a master's research in which a study was carried out on the pedagogical practice of teachers regarding music in Elementary School. The research field was a municipal school, located in the municipality of Goiânia, State of Goiás, the participating subjects were: 01 manager, 14 (fourteen) teachers and 132 (one hundred and thirty-two) regularly enrolled students. This qualitative study had the data collected through a structured interview, after approval by the Ethics Committee of the Military Police College - FPM (CAAE: 61333922.4.0000.0145,



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## MUSIC AND ITS CONCEPTIONS

Music in Early Childhood Education is used at various times. So that the child recognizes organized sounds and uses the voice as an instrument. Some important products of music are: compositions, improvisations, and interpretations. Music is a powerful educational resource, an important source of stimuli. In this way, musical facts should lead to actions such as: motor behaviors, gestures, body expressions. According to the National Curriculum Framework,

Music is one of the important forms of human expression, which in itself justifies its presence in the context of education. Thus, the work of music in Early Childhood Education contributed to improve learning performance, favoring the cognitive, linguistic, psychomotor and socio-affective development of the child. And thus to discover which methods are most effective and used by educators in schools (Brasil, 1998, p.45).

It can also work on musicalization in a teaching and learning process, making the school environment more receptive, joyful and that all children can study in harmony. Music is increasingly used to teach literacy, aiding in the construction of knowledge and exploring cultural diversity. In this sense, it is important to insert music in games in Early Childhood Education, so it will become more interesting. When the teacher starts content in the middle of music, the children will be learning in a fun way.

In the educational field, music is a great resource for distraction and fun, resulting in knowledge building. According to the NCP (1997, p.76), any teaching proposal that considers this diversity needs to make room for the student to bring music into the classroom. In this way, it allows the student to build hypotheses and feel free to express themselves in the best possible way.

Jeandot (1993) says that children like to accompany music with body movements, such as clapping, tapping, dancing, head volleys, but initially it is this bilateral movement that will be performed. Through this relationship of gestures, sound, listening, singing, imitating, dancing that the child builds his knowledge about music. When he begins to have contact with objects, he soon begins to communicate with the sound world.

Snyders (1997, p.29) says that "modern music pedagogy has been able to develop very simple instruments and procedures for students to carry out personal constructions". There are several ways for there to be a good development of students through the insertion of music. Therefore, when they are involved in this musical environment, they will learn without even realizing it.

When children build their musical instruments, they awaken the desire to explore them musically. There are numerous varieties of musical instruments that children can make on their own, with the guidance of the teacher in the classroom.



In this sense, it can be said that music is a very positive factor, which contributes to the development of the child, to the formation of the personality, to the balance so that they live their musical experiences through language and thus helping in intelligence and motor skills.

Teaching and learning being made possible by the introduction of musical repertoire does not in fact mean music teaching, but a strategy that reaches the sensory aspect in school practice, also allowing the appreciation of culture, depending on the songs that will be used in these learning moments. In this sense, all subjects in the curriculum benefit from music. In view of this, it is known that discussions about the absence of teachers with specific training in meetings held with professionals in the field of music education are common. This fact may result from structural and conjunctural conditions.

Penna (2002) contributes to this discussion when he proposes questioning the way in which music education has been committed to music in basic education schools, understanding a commitment in the sense of a collective effort to occupy this school space, to seek pedagogical and methodological proposals appropriate to this context and its own needs.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF MUSIC IN BRAZIL

Music as it is known today has its roots in ancient civilizations and has played, throughout history, an important role in the development of the human being, in view of religious, moral and social aspects; It contributes to good human formation and the exercise of citizenship.

The etymological study of the word "music" points to the term from the Greek language – "Mousikê" – and designated, along with poetry and dance, the "Art of the Muses". Rhythm, the common denominator of the three arts, was summed up in music. The ancient Greeks and other civilizations of their time attributed to the gods all the inspiration for the creation and exercise of music; It was defined as a creation and integral expression of the Spirit, a means of achieving perfection.

From this vision, the Greeks made music an art that influenced the way of thinking and being in society. From childhood they learned singing as something capable of educating and civilizing. The musician, in Greek society, was seen as the guardian of a science and a technique, and his knowledge and talent had to be developed by the study and exercise of music.

In this context, the recognition of the formative value of music gave rise to the first concerns with the pedagogy of music in that country. Thus, music went beyond its initial limits, of a religious and aesthetic nature, purely. It has become a school subject, an object of mastery, providing the measure of ethical values; as well as the good formation of the human being.

Gradually, "mousike" came to encompass everything related to the development of intelligence. Faced with this reality, for the citizen to receive a musical education did not only mean



learning to play musical instruments such as piano, violin, or bassoon, but studying in depth all the liberal arts, writing, mathematics, drawing, declamation, physics and geometry, this was related to "competence and development of intelligence - knowing how to sing in a choir and play at least one instrument perfectly" (Loureiro, 2001, p. 36).

With the development of societies, many concepts have been modified and the very objectives of the application of music in human activities have also undergone profound transformations. Nowadays, music is intertwined with the very history of the development of human intelligence and culture. According to Jeandot (1993), music is the language of the heart. A universal language that involves different ways of playing, singing, and organizing sounds and traditions.

In this sense, Brazilian music is a mixture of origins, it was formed from the mixture of cultural and religious elements of European, African and indigenous peoples, brought together by the colonization of Brazil in the sixteenth century; this process took place, initially, by the Portuguese colonizers and the natives who inhabited the so-called New World, and later, by the African peoples, enslaved by the Colony.

From the seventeenth century onwards, brotherhoods of musicians began to form, some made up only of blacks and mulattoes, brotherhoods that began to monopolize the writing and performance of music in much of Brazil. However, already at the time of the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazil, these Europeans saw with astonishment the customs of the natives and the way they made music: singing, dancing, playing instruments (rattles, flutes, drums).

It is important to highlight that there was a social segregation, and consequently, a musical one, because, until the beginning of the eighteenth century, most of the classical music was practiced only in the states of Bahia and Pernambuco, but at the end of that same century a fusion of various melodic elements and African rhythms began to delineate the identity of popular music in Brazil. with its own sound; This spread throughout the country and formed the first names in Brazilian music: classical, romantic, national; modinha, choro, samba, among others.

Considering the cultural and ethnic miscegenation of the Brazilian nation, with regard to the origins of popular music, its roots are rooted in African culture, but nowadays, its various rhythms and sonorities have expanded and reached an extraordinary diversity, which presents an infinity of musical genres, enriching Brazilian culture more and more.

## MUSIC AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Many studies show that music awakens intense brain stimuli in the human body. They generate assimilation of new information and new learning. Even if the teacher does not have musical training, he can take courses and programs such as continuing education, so he will learn methodologies that will help him in the practice in the classroom, when the subject is music.



Among the teachers' needs for the realization of their pedagogical-musical practices, most highlight that the musical training received was not enough. They wish to have more in-depth musical knowledge, which could bring, according to their statements, more security to carry out their work, improving their practice (Diniz, 2005, p. 95).

Thus, it is clear that it is important to include music in the midst of education. The gains it brings with this work are positive, in which the benefits are diverse, more diversified classes, getting out of the routine and providing meaningful learning.

Therefore, teachers can make a study on methodologies related to music in continuing education. So that they learn to take this into the classroom and provide students with more fun, relaxed learning with good results. It is important for the teacher to keep in mind that the student's knowledge construction process is continuous. It should involve perceiving, feeling, experiencing, limiting, creating, and reflecting. Placing the teaching of music in the midst of activities in an interdisciplinary way, thus providing a comprehensive education.

Music is the result of countless experiences and reflections on music from different civilizations with the insertion of several individuals who fell in love with making, singing, composing music within different cultures. Thus involving the children's universe, where music is present in everyday life and refers us to the particular experiences and experiences of each person. From the first years of life, the individual participates in this musical universe, which influences life and marks a culture.

Silva (2010, p.16) says that music can contribute to making the school environment more joyful and favorable to learning, providing a joy that is experienced in the present moment and this is the essential dimension of pedagogy, and it is rewarded by this environment. It is understood, then, that when music is inserted in the school environment, it results in a pleasurable learning. And the reward that the teacher has is to see that this insertion of music in the school is working.

Thus, the child always has this musical universe around him. When the teachers insert it in the middle of the classes, it is not strange because they are already used to this environment full of music. In view of the above, it is possible to perceive what music awakens in students, in their perception of getting to know the culture better and creating a taste for knowledge. It enables a better development and the proposed objectives are achieved obtaining better results.

Music has been serving several purposes in the day-to-day of Brazilian Education, according to pedagogical conceptions that are currently in force in the country. Activities that awaken, stimulate and develop the taste for musical activity such as: listening to music, learning a song, playing in circles, making rhythm toys, hand games, also meet the needs of expression that pass through the affective, aesthetic and cognitive spheres, learning music means integrating experiences that involve living, reflection and perception, directing them to increasingly elaborate levels (Soler, 2008, p.18).



In this way, music has been bringing several purposes that only bring gains to students. It is important to arouse interest in the student, working in a way that seeks their curiosity, such as inserting objects that catch their attention in the middle of the classes, they can even be made by the students themselves so that meaningful learning occurs. The issue of the insertion of music is always linked to culture, and in the midst of education it is important that the teacher seeks to diversify in the best possible way. Because music, being well crafted, allows for better learning.

It is up to the teacher to seek several strategies so that the work with music is meaningful, always seeking to innovate in their classes. For this, it is important that in the act of planning you think about what you will put into practice.

### MUSIC AND ART TEACHING IN BRAZIL: EXISTING RELATIONS

Throughout history, music has played an indispensable role in the process of human development in all aspects. According to Loureiro (2001), the word music comes from the Greek —Mousikê and designated, along with poetry and dance, the — Art of the Muses. Rhythm, the common denominator of the three arts, fused them into one. As in other ancient civilizations, the Greeks attributed their music to the gods, defined as a creation and integral expression of the spirit, a means of achieving perfection.

It is worth considering that Brazil has undergone, in recent decades, several reformulations in terms of school legislation. From this perspective, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education - No. 5.692/71 stands out, which at that time already advocated the obligation of artistic education in the then 1st and 2nd grade education.

This law, which has been enacted for more than 50 years, guided the work of Art Education teachers, often without any experience or specific preparation. In this context, the teacher acted as an advisor for all artistic languages, which consequently compromised the quality of teaching, especially in this discipline.

Subtil (2012) reflects on this historical moment, asking how and why in an authoritarian context, which excluded philosophical and political reflection, which prevented free expression and expression, which imprisoned, tortured and extradited its artists, at the same time made artistic education in schools mandatory. The author uses the following hypothesis:

One of the hypotheses would be that art, an area historically linked to the exercise of freedom and creative expression, should remain under control, become an instrument in favor of conservation and the developmentalist objectives proclaimed by the military dictatorship. Evidently, the obligation of artistic education came clothed in a discourse centered on the individual development of the students, based on a technical-scientific character and with a rigorous planning that concealed criticism and contradiction. One might ask at this point, forty years later: what is the importance of bringing these issues to the fore? (Subtil, 2012, p. 13).





In fact, these questions may not be so productive since after this law, other legal bases were instituted in order to value the discipline of Art in the School Curriculum. However, considering the teaching of Art Education mandatory in the middle of the military regime meant meeting the demands of the area, which, through theoretical debates, put on the agenda the free expression and creativity that are indispensable and inseparable elements of the artistic context. In general, the weekly workload was minimal: only one hour per week, or forty hours per year, a fact that is still observable even in schools considered reference.

Law 5.692/71 contributed significantly to the elaboration of the new LDB, No. 9.394/96 and that, in a certain way, reflected in the DCNs as well as in the PCNs that brought Music, Theater, Dance and Visual Arts as specific content. As can be seen, there were several factors that contributed to the teaching of music in Brazil, including the methods disseminated in Europe and that reached Brazil. Such methods used percussion, games, and singing circles.

The PCNs highlight the idea of the importance of teaching and learning Art, stating that:

Since the beginning of human history, art has always been present in practically all cultural formations. The man who drew a bison in a prehistoric cave had to somehow learn his craft. And in the same way, he taught someone what he learned. Thus, the teaching and learning of art are part, according to norms and values established in each cultural environment, of the knowledge that involves artistic production at all times. However, the area that deals with school education in the arts has a relatively recent trajectory and coincides with the educational transformations that characterized the twentieth century in various parts of the world (Brasil, 1997, p. 20).

The 1980s and 1990s were marked by discussions about the situation of the arts in general and Music Education in Brazil. Professors organize themselves in national meetings for the promotion of research, in associations, to discuss a new direction for the teaching of the arts. It is from the 1980s that a national movement in favor of the teaching of the arts emerges, which multiplies throughout the country through meetings, seminars and events promoted with universities, with the aim of raising awareness and organizing professionals in the area: the Art Education movement. New proposals are then configured for the progress of educational action in art.

During this period, several documents were sent to the Ministry of Education with the objective of strengthening the teaching of Art, bringing back to the classroom, specialist teachers, in view of the specificity of the discipline.

Oliveira (2007) highlights the National Symposium on Research and Graduate Studies in Music (SINAPPEM), the first being held in Paraíba in 1987, and the creation of music associations at the end of the twentieth century – the National Association of Research and Graduate Studies in Music, the Brazilian Association of Music Education, and the Brazilian Association of Ethnomusicology as elements that contributed to the development of music education in the country.

Musicians of various nationalities offered proposals for music education that still raise





discussions and reflections due to the elements presented for the musical development of children, young people and adults. Such proposals, which can also be identified as methods of music education, are still applied today in various educational contexts.

In this historical course of the teaching of Art in Brazil, the different orientations inherent to the purpose of Art are visible, especially with regard to educational policies, which includes teacher training and performance. The teaching of this discipline has always been marked by a philosophical and humanist vision that definitively demarcated the New School and traditionalist approaches.

The discipline Drawing, presented in the form of Geometric Drawing, Natural Drawing, and Pedagogical Drawing, was considered more for its functional aspect than an experience in art; In other words, all orientations and knowledge were aimed at immediate application and qualification for the job.

The activities related to performing art and dance were valued and recognized only in the festivities related to the Commemorative Dates held in schools.

In Music, the traditionalist tendency had its maximum representative in Orpheonic Singing, a project prepared by the composer Heitor Villa-Lobos, in the 30s. This project is an important reference for having intended to bring the musical language in a consistent and systematic way to the whole country. The Orpheonic Song<sup>8</sup> disseminated ideas of collectivity and civility, principles consistent with the political moment of the time. Among other issues, the Villa-Lobos project ran into practical difficulties in guiding teachers and ended up transforming the music class into a musical theory based on the mathematical and visual aspects of the musical code with the memorization of orpheonic pieces, which, reflecting the time, were of a folkloric, civic and exalting character (Brasil, 1997, p. 27).

In this historical construction, between the 1920s and 1970s of the twentieth century, there were several experiences lived within Brazilian schools about the teaching and learning of art. Gradually, the Fine Arts and Drawing classes gave way to a more expressive practice, valuing the spontaneity and artistic progress of the students.

The PCNs for the teaching of Art (1997) situate the 1920s to the present day as a period of several attempts to work with art outside the schools as well, in addition to the growth of cultural movements, announcing modernity and avant-gardes. Also noteworthy in the late 1960s and 1970s were song festivals and large student mobilizations involving theatrical experiences. Also noteworthy is the lack of teacher training courses in the area of Art.

The inclusion of Art Education in 1971 in the school curriculum was an advance, especially with regard to the formation of subjects with renewing thinking, even though teachers were not prepared to guide this area of knowledge.

Art Education teachers, initially trained in short courses, had as their only alternative to follow official documents (curriculum guides) and textbooks in general, which did not explain foundations, theoretical-methodological guidelines or even specific bibliographies. The very faculties of Art Education, created especially to cover the market opened by the law, were not equipped for the most solid training of teachers, offering eminently technical



courses, without conceptual bases (Brasil, 1997, p. 32).

It was only in the 1980s that the movement of art educators was formed, which initially emerged with the objective of organizing professionals in this area in order to broaden the discussions about the appreciation and improvement of art teachers. Barbosa (1989) clarifies some questions about art education, stating that:

Art educators in Brazil are politically very active. The politicization of art educators began in 1980 at the Art and Teaching Week at the University of São Paulo, which brought together 2,700 art educators across the country. This was a meeting that emphasized political aspects through debates structured in small groups around pre-established problems such as the immobilization and isolation of art teaching; educational policy for the arts and art education; cultural action of the art educator in the Brazilian reality; education of art educators (Barbosa, 1989, p. 173).

Law No. 9,394/96 is clear when it states in its article 26, § 2 that —The teaching of art shall constitute a mandatory curricular component, at the various levels of basic education, in order to promote the cultural development of students. Thus, it is worth considering the advances of the proposals for the teaching of Art and its contribution to the formation of students.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

In general, Brazilians have a close relationship with music and with the different productions played in each region. Thus, the return of music in the school curriculum brought the hope of new transformations, in which creativity, joy and culture become elements present in society and especially in school.

The research carried out made it possible to understand that music in school encompasses historical, cognitive, conceptual, physical and sociological issues, serving as a gateway to deep and fundamental discussions on how to offer an adequate musical education. There are many challenges until the inclusion of music in schools as a tool for the full development of children and young people is achieved.

In the context of curricular organization at the national level, there are several institutions that still find it difficult to integrate music teaching into the educational context, given its specificity. From this perspective, this study met the researcher's understanding of the importance of studies and experiences on the best use of music, in view of the lack of a consistent education that can meet the pedagogical challenges inherent to the teaching of music in the classroom.

Music is a human activity that manifests itself in making, in musical practice. Thus, the first function that can be attributed to music education is to insert students in musical contexts based on an authentic, artistic and critically reflective musical making. In view of this, it is possible to understand the need for the involvement of all education professionals, in order to increasingly strengthen



pedagogical practices that can present music as a privileged laboratory for the development of the most diverse skills.

Thus, reflecting on the need to consider the student's sound/musical universe in the development of a meaningful musical education, this research considered the need to propose a reflection on the various questions about pedagogical practices that can provide access to new paths in relation to music teaching in the early years of Elementary School.

At the end of the research, it is expected to be able to contribute to the discussions about the presence of music as mandatory content in school. It is also hoped that this study can serve as a reference for further research, guaranteeing and expanding the field of work of the teacher with a degree in Music, or of those who aim to be a specialist in this area of knowledge, thus ensuring that the student actually has the right to this content described in the legal repository.



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