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Music teachers. Model perspectives

You become a teacher when you demonstrate a personal value when meeting a child. The teaching profession is a never-ending process of discovery and acceptance of certain values that are important for humans

(Tischner, 1981, p. 76)

ABSTRACT

Music teachers are repeatedly confronted with new challenges. They are no longer educators closed in their classrooms, but animators of cultural activities for the local environment. Expansion of mass culture and the current collapse of the system of universal music education have instigated a reflection on the new role of the profession. The author scrutinises and characterises some selected models of working practices.

Key words: Music Education, Music teacher, model workstyles

INTRODUCTION

The profession of Music Education teacher largely depends on the concept of culture, on organisational transformations in musical life or enhanced artistic requirements within a given community. On the other hand, the requirements posed before modern education mean that teachers, including Music teachers, are expected to be able to cope with multiple tasks, such as: organis-

ing and directing pupils' work, creating conditions for the development of cognitive and musical abilities, as well as interests in interaction with the environment. Raising one's own professional skills, developing the didactic repertoire and accurate record keeping are example of additional, responsible tasks. Preparation and participation in school celebrations and extracurricular activities, competitions, thematic and artistic involvement in the implementation of the different areas of school life also constitute an everyday professional reality for Music teachers.

1. OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Music Education is meant to develop comprehensive, active, creative personalities and basic musical skills through various types of exposure to music. Its aim is to prepare individuals for active participation in culture and dissemination of musical culture (see: Rogalski, 1992; Goriszowaki, Kowolik, 1994, pp. 88; Przychodzińska-Kaciczak, 1987; Przeremska, 2002).

Music Education has multifaceted functions, such as: cognitive, educational, educational, aesthetic, therapeutic and compensatory, so the initiatives undertaken to implement them are marked by their own specificities. The cognitive and didactic function is meant for pupils to acquire, deepen and consolidate their musical knowledge, as well as its processing and manipulation of listening and analysing. The art of music depicts reality and produces in its recipients a special kind of vision of the world. Through music, the state of mind of individuals is enriched with experiences and sensations, and thus, they acquire fullness and depth.

The educational function not only facilitates relationships with others, but may also connect the past with the present and demonstrate their importance for the future. While playing music, peer relationships come to life, discipline develops, a sense of responsibility for the performed artistic work appears, as well as national and family traditions are cultivated.

The compensatory function facilitates a psychological release through musical activity, makes it possible to spend free time in an attractive manner and compensates for missing creative experiences. This function may have beneficial influence on self-esteem, recognition and self-presentation.

The therapeutic dimension of music lies in the detection and discharge of blocked emotions and tensions, in the improvement of communication, psychophysical condition, as well as in the art of rest, relaxation and positive attitude to everyday life.

The aesthetic is expressed in the provision of musical sensations, joys, tastes and interests. Aesthetic experiences are of subjective nature and depend on historical and social factors. Also shaping musical tastes and satisfying the need to experience the beauty of musical art are determinants of this function.

2. THE SPECIFICITY OF MUSIC TEACHER'S WORK

In his article *Wychowanie muzyczne nad przepaścią?* (Music Education over the abyss?) (2003), Mirosław Niziurski emphasizes that action must be taken to prepare teachers well, as well as to adapt the curriculum and the material base to modern educational needs. The best program will not prevent the disaster if we do not restore the rank of the subject, and if this fight for valuable music does not integrate musical, educational, psychological and scientific environments. Musical initiation is necessary and depends on families, nurseries, preschools, schools and the media.

The didactics of Music Education has come to use several innovative methods to popularise the art of music and to inspire pupils to creative artistic activities. Music teachers are expected to know the basic rules of voice emission/hygiene, how to teach singing, to make proper use of vocal exercises and how to assemble attractive repertoire. Contemporary trends in Music Education indicate at music or dance bands as good teaching practices, so teachers are expected to demonstrate proficiency in accompaniments to songs, games and musical movement exercises. A good methodical workshop, including psychological and musical teaching materials, as well as good knowledge of music literature, current trends in popular music, etc. are advocated. Inspiring musical creativity in pupils requires strong commitment on the part of teachers. The multifaceted nature of teacher's work includes organising and conducting integrated forms, such as: music and art, drama, literature, etc. Music teachers make use of a variety of methods and concepts, such as: by Emil J. Dalcroze, Carl Orff, Edwin E. Gordon and others. Margaret Suświłło (2000, p. 38) proposes the following as ways of making teaching more attractive:

- “1. to change the subject,
2. to introduce an element of humour,
3. to introduce physical contact, such as patting on the back, if we know that it will be positively received,
4. to change roles (teach me as you want me to teach you)
5. to encourage telling own stories with their punch line,
6. to ask students to help organise lessons,
7. to teach hidden instructions and suggestions,
8. to be open when talking about own problems with explaining complexities,
9. to do something totally unexpected,
10. to change the rhythm and tempo of lessons
11. to encourage pupils to move “.

Music Education is expected to develop pupils' abilities and interests and to arouse in them the desire and need for contact with high art and willingness to participate in culture.

3. THE MODEL OF MUSIC EDUCATION TEACHER

The desired model of Music Education teacher became a subject of scientific discussion in Poland a little later than in the United States or Western Europe. In the pedagogy of Music, the model consisted of three elements: general skills related to the specificity of the musical profession, practical skills and creativity. The educational process of bringing music home to pupils is interactive in nature, so teachers are obliged to examine and evaluate their teaching, as well as the value and relevance of curricula.

As an instructor of choral, instrumental or dance music bands, Music teachers point to musical values and to familiarization with Polish and foreign musical literature. Making music is conducive to cooperation, discipline and solving creative and reproductive musical tasks. As competent teachers/IT teachers, they can create websites, etc. The multitude of roles and tasks to be performed makes it possible to conduct model inspections of e.g. Music teachers as: organisers, artists, teachers of Elementary Music Education, culture animators, music therapists, music tutors, transmitters of regional culture, researchers, IT specialists, etc.

3.1. Teacher – organiser and artist

As artists, Music teachers display their virtuosity, music knowledge competence, executive competence, or professional and conscious interpretations of vocal, instrumental and dance music. The competence of creative expression (compositional) involves the creation of original compositions based on different musical styles and proper arrangements of songs. Musical competence involves analyses of the world of sound, emotional description of musical structures and systematic self-improvement.

A pedagogical model “pupil-master”, proposed by Andrzej Góralski (for more see: Łaszczyk, 1997) functions as a universal model in literature. Actively performing teachers are masters, whereas pupils observe or participate in the implementation of joint music ventures (concerts, festivals, competitions, workshops, etc.). Musically gifted pupils are characterised by many personality features that involve volition-incentive aspects, i.e.: a set of features associated with thinking, memory, sensitivity and creativity. Teacher-master is expected to creatively direct pupils’ artistic development. It is an ideal and an expert in artistic matters.

3.2. Elementary music education teacher

Musical Education of the youngest children requires a special emphasis and interest in the current reality. Teachers are expected to display special skills required in carrying out musical activities. Observations of practical activities carried out by staff working at preschools and in early years of primary schools, as well as research studies demonstrate that in most cases teachers are not sufficiently trained to run Elementary Music Education classes. The specificity of Music teacher’s profession requires high competence levels meant to contribute to the development of young learners’ musical skills, which are shaped in approx. 10-year-old children. It is not sufficient to use ready-made recordings, but it is advisable to play live music, i.e. singing for children and with children, teaching songs in stages (children imitate teachers’ performances). Also, fun music and movement, learning dances, improvising instruments, musical experimentation, etc. are important elements in children’s development. In rare cases, there are specialists who conduct separate Eurhythmics classes, which should not exempt preschool teachers from the ob-

ligation to participate in these activities. (see: Kataryńczuk-Mania, 2009; Ławrowska, 2003). Musical competence of preschool teachers, as well as Music teachers, are perceived as their “level of technical and methodological expertise against the background of their talents and personality traits” (Sacher, 1997, p. 19), formed in the course of education and further self-improvement through participation in musical activities. The need for conscious contact with music, participation in various active musical forms, knowledge of music, literature, aesthetic understanding and experiencing of music are all of utmost importance in this process.

3.3 Artist and animator of artistic culture

A graduate of the course Art Education in the field of Music Education, according to its curricular guidelines, is expected to possess qualifications of a musician and a teacher of broadly understood artistic education and musical animation, as well as should lead music bands. Studies prepare candidates to conduct professional vocal, instrumental, or vocal/instrumental music ensembles of sacral, jazz, folk character and to participate in amateur musical movements. Music teachers may work for cultural institutions and in the media (film, radio, TV). Music animators can run or support festivals, competitions or musical events.

It is expected from teachers-animators to display knowledge, skills and marketing competence. They should perform tasks fit within the area of their local culture. They may be initiators of artistic projects, such as: festivals, music reviews, concerts, workshops, etc. They may as well undertake promotional and advertising activities (posters, brochures, press releases etc.), or publish music information in local newspapers, building musical awareness in their audiences. Another example would be involvement in documenting the activity of local artists or local traditions. When working with the media and revealing their oratory skills, they may highlight the importance of music in people's lives.

3.4. Teacher – music therapist

From the model perspective, teachers who use elements of music therapy should possess knowledge in the field of psychology, pedagogy (special educa-

tion) and psychotherapy. They are expected to understand and use a wide range of therapeutic techniques, to be able to carry out diagnostic procedures, to navigate smoothly through different areas of music, i.e. have knowledge and musical, vocal, instrumental, dancing skills, have a good ear for music and a good psychophysical condition. Such teachers should also be able to plan and carry out different types of music therapy, depending on pupils' mental condition. It is advisable that they have a dedicated musical-therapeutic office.

Music teacher must update and deepen their knowledge of pedagogy and psychology. According to literature and school practice, the group of pupils with special educational needs (a large group has not been diagnosed), requiring an individualised approach and specific working methods is on the increase. By creating situations of artistic workshops with expressive forms, Music teachers may allow such pupils to make a positive "mark" in the eyes of the rest of their class, to facilitate the satisfaction of their need for acceptance, etc. (see: Kataryńczuk-Mania, 2010, pp. 132–142).

3.5. Teacher as researcher

The profession of Music teacher should accept people with passion, engaged, lovers of the art of music and broader culture. As **researchers and inspirers** of valuable learning situations, they should possess multiple skills and professional attitudes, among other things. Conducting scientific research by teachers allows comparing theory with practice, which facilitates observation of educational processes and consultations with experts. Such personality traits that relate to capacity and effectiveness in making various initiatives, developmental activities and allow for proper diagnosis of conducted educational tasks, are desirable (for more see: Kołodziejski, 2011, pp. 287–308). Teachers as **reflective researchers** ask themselves questions about their own workshop or teaching style, compare theory with practice, create conditions for positive learning and strive to promote own musical intentions within their social environment.

3.6. Music teacher as class teacher

The educational tasks that should be addressed by Music teachers-class teachers involve creating such conditions that support pupils' development, the

process of their education, especially their learning to function within their social or family environment. At the beginning of the year, they should familiarise pupils with the Internal Assessment System and grading criteria for conduct. Recognition of personalities, interests, abilities (musical) and needs, as well as of the position of individual pupils in their class, followed by provision of safety and personalised care in collaboration with other teachers, school counsellor, nurse, psychologist and common room teachers, are all valuable assets. Teachers should ensure that both pupils and parents receive comprehensive information on school requirements, activities, and pupils' achievements. They should scrutinise family environment through observation of pupils, contacts with parents at school and in pupils' homes or during group meetings with parents. It is important to shape attitudes of respect for the autonomy of beliefs and opinions, responsibility and self-reliance, all leading to the development of appropriate interpersonal relationships in the classroom. Through planning and implementation of educational tasks at themed educational lessons and through the use of educational methods, teachers can enrich their workshop and present their results in reports at Teachers' Board meetings (for more see: I. Nowosad, 2001).

3.7. Music teacher as transmitter of cultural values

Music teachers are often links between tradition and modernity, history and today. Essential knowledge of the history of music and music literature often takes pupils back to the cultures of different eras, combining it with other arts, such as: painting, literature, film, theatre and contemporary media. As transmitters of cultural values, especially in small towns in villages, teachers facilitate contact with all sorts of culture, such as: outings to philharmonic concerts, theatres, museums, visiting exhibitions, trips to the cinema, school and non-school events cultivating Poland's cultural traditions and roots (festivals, fairs, competitions, etc.).

3.8. Music teacher in media model

Music teachers may adapt computers to classes of Music. Through professional selection of computer programs they can: shape, develop interest in

music and the media, boost pupils' auditory imagination, expand musical vocabulary, disseminate news about music and introduce issues related to musical notation by means of note editors. Through the presentation of carefully selected videos or photos, teachers can familiarise pupils with composers, Polish and world music literature, costumes, instruments or vocal, instrumental, dance recordings. M. Tanaś maintains that educational relevance and attractiveness of ICT in teaching is due to specific characteristics of computers, i.e.: their ability to transfer, process and store information. The author emphasises their importance in terms of their poly-sensory and multimedia potential (possibility of combining multiple media and their functions in hardware and software of a single device), interactivity (human-computer dialogue) simulation (the potential to imitate real phenomena, processes, equipment), communication skills (visual or symbolic voice communication with another person, another computer), virtualisation (creation of fictional realities, cyberspace) (Tanaś, 2004, p. 37). Programs for managing ready-made fragments of music (so called patterns, loops) have proven to be very helpful, especially among pupils who are not familiar with notes. By means of computers, it is possible to record, edit and process a variety of musical material. Programs such as: *Nero Wave Editor* or *Reaper*, which are used for recording and editing audio files and contain a set of effects: fading, strengthening, pitch/pace change, Graphic EQ, echo, phaser, may be useful. Among musical tasks, teachers may offer creation of sound collages based on selected audio samples, cutting out specific portions of songs, electronic modification of pupils' recorded voices, dynamics/tempo change, etc. (see: Grusiewicz 2006, no. 5, pp. 64–68; Panasiuk, 2005, no. 4, pp. 34–46; Kataryńczuk-Mania, 2010, pp. 358–364; Kisiel, 2003).

SUMMARY. THE BUILDING OF TEACHER'S AUTHORITY

How to build authority in didactic work with pupils? First of all, teacher should have very good subject knowledge and the teaching skills to pass the knowledge. They should perceive pupils as partners, treat them as entities, show respect, develop proper communication, i.e. listen and interact, be forgiving and tolerant of different needs and react in different situations.

In their artistic, didactic and educational practice, they should simultaneously use two types of authority, i.e. institutional authority, based on the rules and standards of education, and personal authority, based on individual characteristics. Teachers who are endowed with caution and charisma are able to judiciously and wisely manage teams. Good teachers, spiritual and moral, should always be examples for pupils.

Music teachers' professional skills are "different", because apart from book knowledge, they must possess specific artistic skills, i.e. the ability to sing, musical ear, sense of rhythm, and above all, play a musical instrument. This gives them an advantage over other teachers. Music classes at school will always be different from other classes, as they require more frequent and more intensive interactions with pupils, on the one hand, and knowledge may be imparted a more flexible manner (combining different fields of knowledge, varied content, and in consultation with other teachers) to develop skills by means of various means of artistic expression, on the other hand. Music classes, usually in a form of workshop, require cooperation, openness, tolerance, spontaneity and creativity.

The proposed Music teacher models may constitute a venture points for further disputes, research and polemics over the disclosure of the image of contemporary musical education, so that it may exist with dignity in the contemporary culture and the education of each individual.

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