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Modern Approaches in Music Education and its Peculiarities

Kalmenov Jalgasbay Sarsenbaevich

Nukus State Pedagogical Institute named after Ajiniyaz,
Teacher department of music education

Ibadullayeva Zamira Kuanyshovna

Nukus State Pedagogical Institute named after Ajiniyaz,
Teacher department of exact and natural sciences

Abstract

This article deals with important facts about importance of musical education in human life. In addition to this modern approaches that can be used in teaching music for learners and its special features are noted.

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Art and music are basic human functions. Humankind and art cannot function without one another. We have the burning desire to create, whatever it may be and however tiny or grand. The interaction with sound is unavoidable, either to make it or take pleasure in it. People have always found music significant in their lives, whether for enjoyment in listening, the emotional response, performing, or creating. Music is a universal language. It transcends cultures and generations, bringing people together in moments of shared joy and unending connection. Through the power of music, students feel motivated to learn; they become more confident speakers; they develop analytical thinking skills; and most significantly, they discover hidden passions that give them a lifelong advantage. Since music education is highly beneficial for students, many schools have started music education programs to develop creative and social skills in students. Plus, music education is always enjoyable for both students and teachers[1].

A music education, or any other type of education method, is a teaching approach that has:

- 1) an identifiable underlying philosophy or set of principles;
- 2) a unified body of pedagogy unique to it with a body of well-defined practice;
- 3) goals and objectives worthy of pursuit;
- 4) integrity.

Although these approaches are often taught in music education classes, they are highly applicable, accessible, and integrated methods appropriate for anyone interested in working with children and the arts, or music in education in addition to music education. All educators can incorporate the basic techniques used in these methods as they offer creative, arts-driven curricula through which to teach. The music methods of Jaques-Emile Dalcroze, Zoltan Kodály, Carl Orff, and S. Suzuki are time-tested and contain well-practiced and researched techniques for teaching music. All of these approaches to music learning contain fundamental similarities in that they:

- ✓ Are systematic and sequential in design;
- ✓ Utilize music with authenticity and integrity, such as folk music;
- ✓ Are based on incorporating the “mother-tongue” approach to rhythm, pitch, and timbre from the child’s perspective, innate behaviors and how interaction with their natural environment;
- ✓ Encourage active engagement with the student.

They are also “comprehensive and holistic children to be artists, creators, and producers and not just consumers of music. They pair active and actual music-making with conceptual learning experiences offered in a systematic approach”. The holistic nature of these highly integrated approaches, is still conducive today for implementation in an integrated arts program. This is due to the fact that their core identities, particularly Orff and Dalcroze, contain elements of drama, movement, sound, and music. Since the beginning of time, children have not liked to study. They would much rather play, and if you have their interests at heart, you will let them learn while they play; they will find that what they have mastered is child’s play. Orff Schulwerk is the only approach that is not a systematic “method” per se, although it does entail fostering creative thinking through improvisational experiences. Rather than a system, Schulwerk combines instruments, singing, movement, and speech to develop children’s innate musical abilities. There are four stages of teaching:

- ✓ Imitation;
- ✓ Exploration;
- ✓ Improvisation;
- ✓ Composition;

Orff Schulwerk is rooted in arts and subject integration. In the early 20th century, Carl Orff met gymnastics and dance educator Dorothee Gunther and established an innovative school for children based on the idea that all human beings are musical by nature. Their approach was to combine movement (gymnastics), music, and dance. Orff developed the concept of elemental music based on the synthesis of the arts of the Greek Muses, which combined tone, dance, poetry, image, design, and theatrical gesture. Gunther and Orff’s approach was to create a comfortable environment that approximates the child’s natural world of play, thus allowing children to be introduced to a range of musical skills in a relaxed and stress-free setting. Carl Orff’s definition of elemental music is based on small-scale musical patterns familiar to the students.

Elemental music is never music alone but forms a unity with movement, dance and speech[2]. It is music that one makes oneself, in which one takes part not as a listener, but as a participant. It is unsophisticated, employs no big forms and no big architectural structures, and it uses small sequence forms, ostinato and rondo. Elemental music is near the earth, natural, physical, within the range of everyone to learn it and experience it and suitable for the child. Orff Schulwerk utilizes children's natural behaviors of play—experimenting, improvising—to access children's innate musicality. Schulwerk uses the native language, sounds, timbres, rhythms, melodies, and tonal material surrounding the child, particularly in its folk music repertoire. Similar to many of the other methods, the Orff Schulwerk emphasizes that children should experience first and then analyze or intellectualize about music afterwards, and encourages hands-on music-making regardless of skill level.

In early 20th century Germany, there were few instruments accessible to children. Orff began by buying recorders, which were rare at the time. Since no one knew how to play them, Dorothee Gunther created instructional books to teach recorder to children. No one knew how to play them, so Dorothee Gunther created instructional books to teach them. Carl Orff came across an African xylophone, and developed a way to transform the xylophone into an instrument for the children at the school to play. He then developed the metal-barred metallophones from the idea of the Indonesian gamelan orchestra and the German glockenspiels, which were small metal-plated instruments found in Germany. Thus the instrumentarium was born—the complete set of which includes bass bars, bass, alto/tenor, and soprano metallophones, xylophones and alto and soprano glockenspiels. While each instrument is limited in range to fewer than two octaves, all together, from bass bars to soprano glockenspiel, the ensemble covers six octaves, creating an entire orchestra!

Orff believed that one of the easiest ways to encourage student participation in music while also contributing to beautiful music-making is to have them play a simple accompaniment on a xylophone. By second grade, most students will be able to keep a steady beat, with a fair number able to do so by first grade. Below are some basic accompaniment patterns on the xylophone or metallophone that students should be able to perform easily. Students begin to understand and even apply the knowledge learned through imitation. They hear the movement of pitches, the content of rhythms, the movement of meter, and explore the timbre of whatever instrument or voice with which they have access. The Orff Instrumentarium provides almost limitless possibilities for exploration[3]. Schulwerk's elemental music is based on both experimentation and improvisation, allowing children to explore the tones, rhythms, and timbres of music from their own abilities and creative perspectives. To this end, Orff created frameworks or pathways to help children experiment without pressure or stress.

In conclusion it should be highlighted that music education can help kids and students enhance their memorization skills if started early. This is because students use their memory to remember the notes and lyrics while performing. Especially if they use a sheet for performing music, they can engage their memory entirely. This is why parents and teachers use songs and melodies to help students learn, memorize, and remember things[4]. This enhanced memorization skill can later help them in their academics. In today's classroom, music is an effective tool for supporting students in learning beyond reading and writing. Music gives students unique opportunities to express themselves creatively and build confidence. From math and science to history, music can support any subject area and help keep students engaged in class. Music can open doors to many opportunities for students; they get a chance to perform in choirs, orchestras, and different competitions. Schoolgoers will learn how to work and learn with a team and get a chance to meet and perform with new people.

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