



CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS IN CLASS TEACHING ON THE SUBJECT OF MUSIC EDUCATION

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This text represents qualitative research in the field of music education in the first cycle of primary education in the Republic of Macedonia. Given the fact that education is an open process that continuously strives for modernization, we were interested in correlating the acquired knowledge and its application in class teaching. The initiative came from the previous data about the status of the subject *music education* in which is evident its low positioning in the entire educational system. The targets were the students (N 115) of the pedagogical faculty in Skopje in the last phase of studies who had passed the methodologies of all subjects, as well as the pedagogical probationary period implemented compulsorily in the primary school. The results showed that teaching and study programs (textbooks, music equipment, etc.) directly influenced the shaping and organizing of class teaching. Also, the subjective treatment of the music education among the respondents proved to be decisive in practical application. However, research results also highlight the need to implement compulsory procedures for auditing the overall acquired knowledge in educational institutions.

Keywords: Music education, Acquired knowledge, Practical applications, Class teaching.

Introduction

The significant role of music education within the educational system is confirmed by numerous studies in many countries of the world. Generally, the conclusion is that music education, in addition to developing musical abilities, contributes to the overall development of a young person, which is reflected through inducing self-discipline, work habits, sense of responsibility, multi skills, successful integration in the society, and so on. Music education, at the same time, has its benefits of forming educated public and filling one's high-quality leisure time, especially today, when the virtual communication among the youth is mostly represented via social networks, as well as the possibility of further dealing with this art. That is why the contemporary views on the development psychology emphasizes music education in children through greater musical activity in the initial educational cycles.

The system of music education in the Republic of Macedonia is implemented in the context of formal and informal music education. Formal education covers institutions that implement

compulsory and unified curriculum and a program verified by the Ministry of Education in all stages of compulsory education: primary and secondary (gymnasium direction), as well as in the specialized music schools. Informal music education is realized by free choice in many ways: private classes, private music schools, CAS, CC, etc.

Music education in class teaching (1st class) is the first cycle of compulsory education where a child starts with the systematic study of this subject. This subject is taught by a class teacher, who is not specialized in music, and that is why his competence is a subject of numerous polemics in our country and in a number of other countries in the world. In addition to the music competence issues, recent researches in the Republic of Macedonia have been made in order to perceive the treatment of the subject of music education in class teaching in general-educational state schools in Skopje. The results show that the teaching topics of this subject are not paid enough attention by the teachers (Kolarovska, 2008, Peneva 2009).

For the complexity of the issue concerning the music education evidence the previous findings obtained from surveying the future teaching staff in order to find out the role of music education during the studies, in function of the conduction of classes in schools (Islam and Leskova 2009, Leskova and Islam 2010).

General education is an open process that strives to be continuously improved and modernized, which implies monitoring and implementation of the new European trends by all the factors of this system. In this sense, efficient music education implies the necessary complementarities of these parameters as educational policies, the curriculum, the teacher, the didactic resources, conditions in which teaching takes place, and the equipment.

In this study, we focused on the teacher, specifically on the future teaching staff, as the most important factor in conveying the knowledge to the students. More precisely, we wanted to observe the correlation between the acquired knowledge of the subject of music education during the studies and its practical application in class teaching. We were interested in this issue even more, because, in this year, for the first time is applied the mentorship as a way of monitoring the pedagogical probation period of the students, and in that way recording the deficiencies to overcome the said.

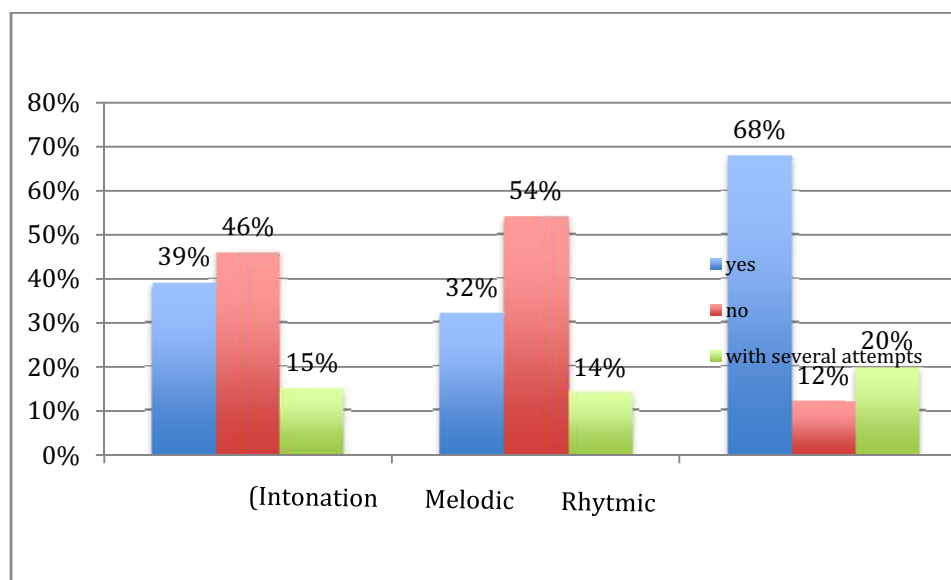
Research Results and Discussion

The target groups were the students in the last phase of studies on the Faculty of pedagogy in Skopje, who had passed the methodologies of the subjects as well as the pedagogical probationary period implemented compulsorily in the primary schools for a duration of 60 teaching hours, that is, 12 working days.

We surveyed a group of 115 students. This specimen is a representative, considering the fact that it is the stable number of students who, most often, in continuity, attend the classes on this subject.

The questionnaire was conceived of questions referring to obtaining data on: their musical abilities, evaluation of acquired knowledge during the studies, and application in practice during the pedagogical probationary period. It additionally stimulated the need to find out about their attitude to the importance of the subject of music education.

We conducted the testing of the musical skills individually by way of already applied methodology (Leskova, Islam 2010), which included *repetition of the tone of the given chord, intonation on a given melody, and repeating of a rhythmic pattern*.



Graph 1:

According to graph No. 1, it can be seen that only 39% of the respondents correctly intoned one tone of a given chord (major and minor triads); 46% of them failed to hit the intonation; 15% succeeded to hit the intonation after several attempts.

As for the melodic pattern, 32% of respondents successfully repeated the entire melodic pattern, 54% failed completely, and 14% of them repeated the said in smaller parts and after multiple attempts.

From graph No. 1, it can be seen that 68% of the population correctly repeated the rhythmic pattern, 12% after multiple attempts, and 20% failed in general.

The questionnaire covered the issues in the area of *Theory of music, Methodic of the music education, and the Musical instruments with the musical styles*, according to the subjects that were represented in the study program, pertaining to the curriculum for music education in the class teaching. The possibility of responding was under the principle of multiple choice. Though the results obtained in relation to the *Theory of music* show a high percentage (57%), we believe that the same would have been higher if the duration of the study of the subject was not shortened from two to one semester. This lack was especially evident from the theory of musical scales and tonalities, intervals, and chords, since earlier studies have shown that a longer period of time is required for the above-said, in the process of absorbing, considering the quantum of musical knowledge and the predispositions of this population.

The results of the third part of the questionnaire, *Methodic of the music education*, also showed high percentage of knowledge, and hence mastering of the matter (didactic principles, teaching forms, teaching methods, teaching topics, and planning of the classes) up to 84%. However, the true picture of the level of mastering and applicability of the matter will be shown in the section pertaining to its implementation during the practical work.

It was anticipated for the students to show the best results in the *Knowledge on musical instruments* (82 %) and musical styles (63 %), considering the fact that it is a matter of general music culture and previous music knowledge.

The importance of the practical application of the acquired knowledge is confirmed with the introduction of systematic evaluation of the student during the sit in on the lectures and the probationary period. For that purpose, in 2013 was created a handbook, by the OSCE and the faculties of education in the country, for a unified systematic monitoring of the practical work. In addition to general and technical aspects, the handbook contains protocols relating to the administrative part and the way of conduction of the teaching by the student. The data from these protocols are monitored continuously by the mentors—teachers of the schools and the professors of the faculty. In the following paragraph will be elaborated some protocols that directly pertain to the conduction of the practical classes.

In the protocol for *Daily preparation of the teaching hour*, 89% of the respondents made an adequate selection of the didactic–methodical–educational forms of realization of the teaching, which is evident from the written reports of the protocol. It was also confirmed by the formal statements by the protocols filled by the mentor teachers. However, self-evaluation of the students is expressed by the protocol for self-assessment through the following questions, with a possibility for assessment from 1 to 5:

1. I assess the achievement of the objectives with the implementation of the overall practical teaching with (mean 3.5)
2. I assess the implementation of the teaching hour/educational activity with (mean 3.1)
3. I assess my interaction with students/children in the educational activity with: (4,5)
4. I assess my collaboration with the mentor—educator/teacher/pedagogue in the educational process with: (4.8).

To the question regarding the implementation of the practical classes, the students pointed out that they faced difficulties that vary depending on the teaching topics that they attended. Of the planned six educational topics on the subject of Musical education—studying of song by ear and by note, listening to music, musical literacy, playing children’s musical instruments, music and movement, and children's creativity, the greatest difficulty for them was in studying the songs. According to the survey results, the general stage fright of the public presentation and the music performance freight were among the highest positioned difficulties. Uncertainty primarily occurs due to the need of the intonation-accurate, synchronized, and continuous musical performance by singing and playing. Taking into account the fact that a large percentage of students come from secondary schools in which the subject of music education is not studied (63 %), there is a vacuum in the continuity of systematic upgrading of knowledge.. To this is added the fact that 95% of the population in the course of studies for the first time starts systematical studying of the musical instruments, playing keyboards, and the musical intonation. In this regard, the main problems occur with the students with poor musical ear and musical abilities, because of which they have problems with intonation.

A large number of respondents (85%) declared that it was the lack of musical instruments in the domestic conditions for the preparation of musical material as one of the main factors of uncertainty and appearance of the mentioned disadvantages,. All these confirm our initial theses in relation to the fact that the conditions for practicing the instruments are the essential and initial factors for the successful mastering of the practical part of this group of subjects.

In the last part of the protocol, students can express their perceived knowledge and ideas for improving the practical classes. In this way, their views and suggestions about the weaknesses, advantages, and the possible solutions to improve the practical part of the studies can be

precisely perceived. In this context, in relation to the limited opportunities for practical musical performance on the instrument, students propose improvement on the practicing conditions apart from the classes (84%), an increase in the duration of studying the musical instruments—keyboards (68%), and a greater opportunity for individual work with the professor in the playing part (36%).

Conclusion

According to its nature and specifics, music requires absolved theoretical knowledge, skills, abilities, way of behavior, and communication. Generic and subject area related competences of the teacher formed throughout the studies are not per se a guarantee of achievement in practice. A very important moment is maintaining a good form of the acquired knowledge and skills, particularly in the area of playing the instrument, melodic intonation, and the rhythm.

In affirmation, a competent teacher may hinder institutional and legal matters, as well as cultural–mentality awareness. The subjective treatment toward the subject of music education among the respondents appeared to be crucial in practical applications. Students should begin to like and accept the great importance of the subject, and in that way overcome their musical indisposition, the main reason for the negative attitude in practice.

The survey confirms the thesis that there is a positive correlation between the acquired theoretical knowledge and the needs in practical teaching. With certain improvements in the practical part of the teaching process, future teachers would be able to achieve greater self-confidence and musical skills.

However, the observations of the study have opened a general dilemma about the necessity of enforcing the necessary procedures for the revision of the overall knowledge gained during the studies at employment in educational institutions.

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