

Ivan Lešnik*

Univerza na Primorskem /University of Primorska

Pedagoška fakulteta / Faculty of Education

Koper, Slovenia

УДК 37.333:37.017.92

37.036:78

DOI 10.7251/NS1601326L

Прегледни рад

MULTICULTURAL MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE PROCESS OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Abstract: *Music education and education in general play an important role in learning the cultural heritage of one's own nation and in strengthening national identity. The United Europe has been creating an increasingly homogenous and multicultural society, which is facing the problem of migrations. Understanding and accepting differences and diversity is a prerequisite for life in European multicultural community, where above all mutual respect is repeatedly emphasised. Multicultural education endeavours for equal opportunities in the education of all children in all areas irrespective of the differences such as race, ethnic affiliation, social background, and other categories. It creates the circumstances for equitable education of all children. The goals of multicultural education are clear and represent an ideal both for teachers, parents, and children. The process of their implementation is gradual and long-term. The development of multicultural community in Europe is a reality and a future, and on this way education systems including the multicultural music education will play an important role.*

Key words: *multicultural music education, differences, diversity, European integration.*

Introduction

The education principles of the united Europe of the 21st century are inter alia based on just education systems that ought to provide for optimal development and education of children. Also emphasised have been active participation of local communities and parents in the design and implementation of curricula according to the principles of inclusion. In this context multicultural music education is extremely important, as in addition to language the diversity of a nation most clearly reflect precisely in musical expression.

Music education must equally have regard both of the national and of the multicultural domain. It is important to preserve, learn, and experience the music of one's own cultural environment and thus to consolidate national identity; no less important, however, is the learning and valuing of other cultures, which means education both in respect of and in tolerance toward others.

* ivan.lesnik@pef.upr.si

Multiculturalism and Europe

Most frequently the term multiculturalism denotes societies where people from different cultural and ethnic contexts live (cf. Black, 1998, 76), while the same term also frequently indicates the actually achieved degree of plurality in a society.

Multiculturalism as the idea of a consensual approach based on the acceptance of cultural particularities does not solve the problems of inequality, which are reflected not only in culture but also in the economic, social, educational and other domains. The discourse is often present about majorities and minorities, and in this also the united Europe is no exception. Various nations have been emerging in European space as the dominant and at the same time elsewhere as minority populations. This means the coexistence of different and differently influential cultures, which requires a lot of understanding, tolerance and respect for others, for the different. Often, other cultures are used for the evaluation of one's own.

Europe is certainly regarded as a plural area, where different national interests exist. Casmore (cf. 1996, 275) poses the question "*how many different ethnic groups with different interests can live together without their diversity giving birth to conflicts*". I believe what is essential is not the number of different groups or interests, but the distribution of influence and power, which depends on various categories such as gender, religion, national and cultural adherence, social origin, physical and mental health.

European nations have been and still are too much focused on their own national identity. The universalistic discourse that tends to denote all the people of a community with common characteristics, neglects the characteristics of different, most often marginalised groups. This means negation of the concept of inclusion that is the precondition for coexistence and living together of different cultures leading to just multicultural community.

The aim of the integrational process in Europe, part of which is also the education system, is the shaping of a coherent European community. We are all involved in it, including the immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers with or without nationality. And because integration is not just a one-sided process, the majority population must play the main part in it and accept minority populations as equal to themselves. The concept of educational systems should follow this and adapt the methods of work to the modern multi-ethnic and multicultural context.

European community is multicultural not just because of the different nations it consists of, but also because of the differences that are evident within the framework of a single ethnic group. Both adults and children differ from one another in various categories, which usually are cause for mutual

misunderstanding. School systems and with them educators and parents should be oriented toward mutual respects, justice and equality for all, and toward tolerance in the sense of coexistence of different cultures.

The adopted principles of the European community that should warrant optimal intercultural education with the intention of creating a homogeneous multicultural community of European nations are well known. Inter alia they speak about understanding of and respect to all nations, their cultures, civilisations, values, and their ways of living, and further about the rights and responsibilities of both individuals and nations towards each other in the sense of co-existence and about solidarity toward the fellow human being.

Multicultural education

The purpose of multicultural education is, inter alia, understanding oneself from the perspective of other cultures, learning ethnic and cultural differences, developing abilities in the framework of one's own and of other ethnic groups, understanding discrimination that leads into disagreement, acquisition and learning of a variety of intercultural topics. This leads to understanding other cultures and to better knowledge of one's own (Banks, 1997: 3).

The mentioned values, however, are not innate to anyone and do not develop automatically, this is why in the sense of multicultural education the school system must perform an important part in developing democratic values and in transferring these to future generations.

The principles of multicultural education speak about the social aspect, when it is easier for children to understand the community in which they are growing up, to build their positive self-image and to accept tolerance with others. The third principle emphasises the relation of man towards Earth, tolerance, the ecology of population in different cultures, which means awareness raising in the care for future generations and for the future (Volk, 1998, 5).

It is a responsibility of pedagogues to bring children up to respect, tolerance toward other cultures and thus toward fellow people with whom they are creating a common cultural space together and will also be creating it in the future. Understanding and acceptance of diversity is therefore the basis of intercultural education.

Multicultural music education

The principles of multicultural music education represent upgrading of general multicultural education. They define the art of music as a global phenomenon and in this framework emphasise the role and use of music in society and in consequence in school. Essential is learning works of art and folk contents

of other musical cultures and understanding as well as aesthetic experience of the latter (Volk, 1998, 6).

Today in all member states of the united Europe a discourse about school of equal opportunities is present that would assure all learners optimal development with regard to the categories that define their identity, such as: gender, religion, national and cultural affiliation, social background, physical and mental state. Children live with these categories, accept them and develop along with them, which directly affects their view of the world and their self-image. The said categories define their identity, which develops in relation to the other, the “different”. Undoubtedly, however, the “equal” and the “different” are closely interrelated, they form along each other and determine their individual as well as collective identity. It is in no case acceptable to define music contents according to the dominant community, its economic and political power.

The concept of equitable school means opportunities for the more able and better performing learners, while at the same time a duty to take care of the learners from socially and culturally less stimulating environments in the best possible way. Being aware and accepting abovementioned otherness in school arrangements we both come across meritocratic as well as egalitarian systems (Medveš, 2006, 12). The selection and differentiation of the different is questionable both according to the first concept as well as according to the second one, which does not acknowledge otherness and individuality.

Practice points to different approaches in multicultural music education. The most often we meet emphasising musical contents of the dominant national community, while others are neglected as being inferior. This leads into monoculturalism, which is frequently a consequence of inappropriate teachers' education and orientation. As a matter of fact, the multicultural approach acknowledges the existence of other cultures in a given space; within their circles, however, the different cultures are preserved and developed independently of each other. This does not yet lead to coexistence, understanding, and respecting other musical cultures. The next stage, which means musical cooperation of members of different communities, is denoted with the term interculturalism. In this, every group retains its own characteristics while simultaneously accepting and respecting the musical contents of other groups as equal to their own. Ideal coexistence of different cultures in the same space could be denoted as trans-culturalism, where differences are accepted and musical cultures fertilize each other, yet this would lead to unification and impoverishment of the diversity of cultures in the concept of ethnocentrism (Pesek, 2004, 8).

It is a fact, in school children are different from each other. This is conditioned by natural and social factors most often neither children nor their parents can influence. Taking account of the differences among children is an

uneasy task of the pedagogue who would need to be sensitive for just and different approach to each individual child. Inequalities are therefore legitimate if they are in favour of the marginalised and less successful. In this context we can thus speak about “equal opportunities” for all and about fair “equity and diversity” in the sense of multiculturalism and integration (Rawls, 1999, 86–87). This should be evident in the musical practice of every school community.

Coexistence of diversity

For many the migration phenomena that mean arrival of foreigners to our space are cultural stress, for some a challenge and for many people a completely unacceptable phenomenon. The reason for this is obvious cultural unawareness and unpreparedness for otherness. The consequences are unnecessary fears, prejudices, aggression, which leads into assimilation-homogenisation process and further to ethnocentrism and impoverishing of the cultural space. The educational alternative of intercultural relationships rejects the dogmatic monolith attitude of a monoculture as well as the fragmentation of multi-culture. The optimal intercultural relationships show in respecting an open and creative identity, which is ready for dialogue with otherness.

In theory and practice we often come across “ego-principle” as the basis of our life, which is of a closed type and not capable of dialogue with the other, the different. It can be denoted as racist, nationalistic, military, destructive. On the other side the “principle of dialogue” represents the alternative, where the different becomes recognised, listened to and accepted as equal. This kind of relationship can represent for us the ideal as “coexistence of diversity”, as in diversity we are all equal.

If adults were aware and took account of this our concern for children would be superfluous. We know, though, that children follow the example of adults, which in the sense of multiculturalism is a fact raising concern.

Conclusion

Today multiculturalism as an idea, movement, or process can no longer be ignored. It is discussed at the highest forums, we find it in popular press, it is present in every curriculum, while practice points to a very diverse implementation of what has been written.

Globalisation and enlargement of the European community bring new dimensions into education and demand for research in the area of intercultural pedagogy. Ethnically mixed societies are a logical consequence of migration currents, which are not yet defined by living together in the same space, where the majority often determines the rights of the minority. Multiculturalism really comes into life only when a society does everything to make the social, legal, and political

equality in its own state a reality and also recognises this right and responsibility to others. It takes the universal principles that define human rights irrespective of ethnic or social origin, religion or race as a guideline. Ethnic and cultural differences may and must be preserved. Sensitiveness and understanding of this kind of values needs to be consequently taught and consciously cultivated and developed.

References

- Banks, J.A. (1997). *Multicultural Education: Characteristics and Goals*. In: Banks, J. A.; Banks C.M.A. (eds.), *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 3–31.
- Black, L. (1998). *Local/Global*. In: Jenks, C. (ed.), *Core Sociological Dichotomies*. London: Sage Publications, 63–76.
- Cashmore, E. (1996). *Dictionary of Race and Ethnic Relations*. London: Routledge.
- Medveš, Z. (2006). *Upoštevanje drugačnosti – korak k šoli enakih možnosti*. In: Resman, M. (ed.), *Sodobna pedagogika*, 57 (123): 10–24. Ljubljana: ZDPDS.
- Pesek, A. (2004). *Pomen glasbene vzgoje in izobraževanja pri utrjevanju nacionalne identitete ter razširjanju odprtosti za multikulturne vsebine*. In: Žvar D. (ed.), *Glasba v šoli*, IX: 5-8. Ljubljana: Zavod RS za šolstvo.
- Rawls, J. (1999). *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford: University Press.
- Volk, T.M. (1998). *Music, Education, and Multiculturalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Иван Лешић

МУЛТИКУЛТУРАЛНО МУЗИЧКО ОБРАЗОВАЊЕ У ПРОЦЕСУ ЕВРОПСКИХ ИНТЕГРАЦИЈА

Сажетак

Музичко образовање и образовање уопште играју важну улогу у учењу културног наслеђа неког народа и јачању националног идентитета. Уједињена Европа стварала је хомогено и мултикултурно друштво, које се сада суочава са проблемом миграција. Разумевање и прихватање разлика и различитости је предуслов за живот у европској мултикултуралној заједници, у којој је изнад свега важно узајамно поштовање.

Мултикултурално образовање настоји да створи једнаке могућности у образовању све деце у свим областима, без обзира на разлике као што су раса, етничке припадности, друштвено порекло, и друге категорије. Оно ствара околности за праведно образовање све деце. Циљеви мултикултуралног образовања су јасни и представљени као идеални и за наставнике, родитеље и децу. Процес њиховог спровођења је постепен и дугорочан.

Развој мултикултуралне заједнице у Европи је реалност и будућност, и на тај начин образовни системи, укључујући и мултикултурално музичко образовање, ће у будућности играти врло важну улогу.

Кључне речи: мултикултурно музичко образовање, разлике, различитости, европске интеграције.