

REVIEW

MUSICAL EDUCATION AND GENERAL TEACHING: research, narratives and the behavior of single-teachers



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Bellochio, Cláudia Ribeiro (Org.).
Educação Musical e Unidocência:
pesquisas, narrativas e modos de
ser do professor de referência. Porto
Alegre: Sulina, 2017.

The relationship between music education and single-teaching is a topic that has been frequently noticed in researches in the field of Music Education for at least 18 years. In general, these are studies that deal with music (or the lack of it) in the training of single-teachers and that show how it manifests itself in the kindergarten classrooms and the initial grades of elementary school based on the work of the general teacher.¹

In a literature review conducted in the issues of the magazine of the Brazilian Association of Music Education (Revista da Associação Brasileira de Educação Musical ABEM), published in the last ten years, Schwan, Bellochio and Ahmad (2018) notice a relative decrease in the interest for developing research in this topic. The authors show that between 2001 and 2008, the production represented 5.02% of the magazine's total titles. Between 2009 and 2014, the percentage dropped to 4.22%, and increased to 4.45% between 2008 and 2017 (p.12).

¹ In general, the terms single-teacher, generalist teacher and teacher-pedagogue are used to refer to the teacher that is not expert in music, but who works in early childhood education and in the early grades of elementary school.

Unlike these authors, who analyze these declining data regarding the interest in the subject, we understand that such production is relatively stable, especially if we consider that it covers the period of a decade. We also noticed a significant growth in the number of textbooks for non-expert teachers that have been published since 2008 (REQUIÃO, 2018), which may indicate an interest of the music teacher in the training and performance of the non-expert teacher.

Although we somehow "listen" to music and practice it in the school context, studies such as Carvalho's (2017) show us that, considering Pedagogy courses, "only 11% of the public universities in Brazil have at least one subject of music in their curriculum" (p.39). In this sense, the universe of teacher training seems to ignore document guidelines such as the National Guidelines for the Operationalization of Music Teaching in Basic Education (BRASIL, 2016). This document indicates the need for the inclusion of music teaching in the curricula of Pedagogy courses, aimed at assisting students in early childhood education and those in the early years of elementary school (paragraph 3, item III).

Taking as an example the states of Espírito Santo, Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro, Leal (2019) points out the presence of music in the curricula of pedagogy courses in 11 syllabuses out of 54 related to arts teaching, but "only seven of the total verified were exclusively aimed at topics in music" (p.55).²

In this context, the book "Educação Musical e Unidocência: pesquisas, narrativas e modos de ser do professor de referência" ("Musical Education and General Teaching: research, narratives and the behavior of single-teachers"), organized by the pedagogue and music teacher Cláudia Ribeiro Bellochio, points out issues concerning how non-experts think and behave, based on research about the teachers' narratives. The studies show the research conducted by the research group called Fapem (Formação, Ação e Pesquisa em Educação Musical - Training, Action and Research in Musical Education), led by professors Cláudia Ribeiro Bellochio and Luciane Wilke Freitas Garbosa at the Federal

² It is worth mentioning that, since 2015, the undergraduate course in Pedagogy at the Angra dos Reis Institute of Education/UFRJ, after its reformulation, has included the discipline Music and Education as a compulsory curriculum subject.

University of Santa Maria, in Rio Grande do Sul. In this book, we will find 12 texts produced by 15 authors.

Three guiding questions translate the discussions undertaken from the research conducted by each author, namely: *What does it mean to be a general teacher? What are the behaviors and features that characterize the teacher whose professional life is based on single-teaching? How is music a part of your classroom practices and what is its relevance in the class?*

The opening chapter seeks to conceptually situate the “nature” of generalist teachers and single-teaching. It concludes that

single-teaching, taken as a professional action and a conceptual perspective, is associated with the ways teachers work as generalist teachers in early childhood education and in the early years of elementary school. Single-teaching is combined with the teacher’s daily practices in classroom, whose teaching performance is characterized by the professional commitment to enhance the children’s organizational knowledge, which gives this professional a unique importance in the context of basic education (p. 23).

The two following chapters present and discuss narrative inquiry from the context of research in Education and Music Education. This narrative is approached as “a way of knowing the school culture from the perspective of those involved in it, giving a personal, subjective, sensitive and real perspective to the educational process and its surroundings” (p.37-38), through the (self-) biographical approach.

From this perspective, the subsequent works bring specificities in relation to the performance context of the single-teacher who is not expert in music. These works bring perspectives on the narratives of teachers in the early grades of elementary school focusing on the presence of music in the classroom and the ways in which these teachers interact with the musical content, giving meaning to it. Among the specific topics, the chapters show indicators of professional development of music teaching and teacher training in Pedagogy courses linked to the Universidade Aberta do Brasil.

One exception is the chapter written by Professor Dr. Sérgio Luiz Ferreira Figueiredo, the only one of the 15 authors who is not part of Fapem. The researcher is one of the first to conduct research in music studies about training

and performance of single teachers. His doctoral dissertation, entitled "The musical preparation of generalist teachers in Brazil"³, dates from 2003. His text in this book is about an experience of continuing education of teachers-pedagogues in Santa Catarina.

The topics discussed in "Educação Musical e unidocência: pesquisas, narrativas e modos de ser do professor de referência", aimed at training teachers who are not experts in music, as well as their performance, summarize the discussions that have been held in the research field of Music Education in Brazil. In general, the works mention the need to expand "the meanings of music as an area of knowledge" (p.188) in the school environment. Therefore, they point out to the single teacher training as a path to be pursued. Thus, this work is not only relevant to the field of music, but fundamentally to all those who are interested in teaching in the area of early childhood education and the early grades of elementary school.

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³ "The music preparation of generalist teachers in Brazil". PhD in Music Education, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, RMIT UNIVERSITY, Australia.

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