Music: a capacity in education – interaction to serve human needs

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Human communities, attitudes and cultural atmosphere are changing. Digitalization surrounds us, and has entered education, starting from early childhood. Through the efficiency misinterpreted at human communities, such like at the educational organizations, it is difficult to succeed in creating such cultures of encounters, that would help us genuinely produce a humanly sustainable, strong societal capital – which is here comprehended as the aim of university education. Human efficiency is comprehended from a variety of approaches with separate ways to define it. Economic efficiency does not cover the needs of human efficiency, helping us gain significance for the society at a longitudinal perspective. The result of an education: professional expertise and competence, is grounded on the ability to encounter each other, and to create environments to support those. When changing the educational spaces, the encounters will change as remotely designed, with arts-based experiences and flow being found challenging, if we do not pay special attention to that. So, it is worth exploring and developing the best practices also for digital environments through music. Learning is strongly connected with musical experiences, and thus arts-grounded understanding is needed when planning and implementing education (Marjanen 2021; Regelski 2021). We need the arts in the structures and innovations of education, to be included as a part of the connected world.

Arts, because of the musical-linguistic elements, help us to pass on emotions (Brown 2017). Mother-baby interaction starts already before the birth of the baby (Chamberlain 2003). It is grounded on shared, multisensory experiences, and the abilities to sense one another (Marjanen 2021). The mother-child bonding and attachment is constructed because of those multisensory, sounding experiences. We need these kinds of natural instincts in all encounters. They are even a condition for the baby to stay alive, because of the dependability of other human beings: without the skills of nurturing and responsible behavior, a loving parenthood,
the baby could not capture the parent’s notice. The motivation for parenthood is the ability to love. It carries on from the sprouting relationship of the mother and the child, and the holistic dialogues of the family, as a strong ground for life. Our primary resources are constructed on emotional capacities (Brown 2017). Observing those in analytical ways helps us comprehend how encountering, learning, innovations, creative thinking and the multiple ways of constructing knowledge are grounded on the highways of human arts-based comprehension (Marjanen 2021).

Tacit knowledge (Patel 2008) and flow (Csikszentmihayi 2008) foster creating exchange between generations and cultures (Bronfenbrenner 1979, 1995), with a tonal center and a musical-linguistic fingerprint, originating at the core of prenatal and early postnatal sound experiences as people begin to reflect, interpret, organize, and understand the world (Krumhansl 1990; Patel 2008; Rosch 1973, 1975). Sounding music and language experiences in early interaction are the same, being used for transmitting emotional and social information (Brown 2000; Mithen 2005). Physical-emotional-chemical dialogue creates early awareness (Chamberlain 2003; Hannaford 2004) to continue later with vocalizations (Brown 2017). Music as an acoustical mode is emotional, and language a meaningful, linguistic mode (Brown 2000, 271–275).

Already at the prenatal stage we sense our environments especially as sounds and voices, with sound-based and bodily-emotional messages. Those are constructed on musical-linguistic elements, such as rhythm, pitch, tone of sound, harmony, dynamics, structures and forms, tempo, and even, according to Patel (2008) the distance and direction of the sound source, which open us the possibilities for learning. The same elements explain the artistic phenomena in general (Marjanen et al. 2021), and our need for the arts: they are written in us. Capturing that human resource is extremely important, starting from the recognition of the arts towards the support for the artistic qualities. Arts are much more, much deeper than an artistic product. However, we need to take care that arts would not be lacking from our human communications. It would cause a thinning and narrowing of life experiences. Arts connect with wellbeing and malaise. Our connections with “music in us” starting from the prenatal phase, are partly being fragile. As a necessity for a human comprehension, artistic features need to be saved, to support the breathing of the nature and a man, breathing together. It is grounded on the human right to learn music (Vision for Finnish music education 2030).

Early childhood teachers and fosterers are being insecure of what can or cannot be said to a child or his family, or where can we find the borders and structures for respect. We have created a society where it is difficult for young adolescents to live. All is unclear, nobody shows the direction to avoid stepping on someone’s toes. While avoiding that we tend to create a sterile environment, where another person cannot be recognized. With the variety of possibilities
in front of us, children, adolescents and families are being lost. Individual rights, personal needs, and the right to care of another human being seem not to connect. We think, that sharing our life experience would be about interfering with someone’s life, about disrespect for individual rights, which a respectful encounter never can be. Through the arts experiences with direction, a mental resource as interaction and comprehension can be accessed (Regelski 2021). Expressing one’s opinion should not hurt someone, but it should create a reflective surface, to mirror own opinions and learn to recreate and define them. Openness and equality are starting points for the arts (Marjanen 2021), to support the individual needs, and learning processes within the social networks (Wenger 1998).

Education is a condition and resource for the society. At the Finnish society, it has served as a common ground already during the long history of education. Currently, arts are not shown enough in the development, contents, interaction, or wellbeing of education. It would be important to observe, what would happen for learning processes and the appreciation of values, when arts and arts educators would keep on shining with their absence from various educational levels: experiences of the arts would thus not be possible for a learner – or a teacher and a fosterer. Our abilities to understand wellbeing and the structures for knowledge are grounded on encounters, spaces, and dimensions of time in education, to strengthen the structures for learning (Marjanen 2021). The essential parts of those will be lost without the artistic capacity and with the power for regulation. Education organizations and – communities should be able to breathe together. Thus, we need to confirm educational pathways and working opportunities for the multiple fields of arts (see table for structures in Marjanen et al. 2021) in the future, as a support for our comprehension of the laws of education and wellbeing.

Culture, human societies, and education function in a dialogue. The roots and wings of education cannot be cut, because in Western societies we would in return loose individual comprehension, culture, the touch to the nature and the arts. A wellbeing person learns and grows as a responsible member of the society and as a global citizen. Economics cannot lead a human being. We need economical support towards the longitudinal structures for wellbeing, arts, education, culture, and civilization, to cut the root causes for malaise. Music as interaction creates the ground for other arts, education, learning, wellbeing and culture.

References


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