

Chapter 9

Didactic Sound Addition as Pedagogical Practice Around Film

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ABSTRACT

Didactic sound addition is a basic procedure for implementation in music classrooms in compulsory education. This strategy combines aspects of active musical methodologies (especially the use of instruments) with the need to analyze and interact with film products. It involves application of sounds on a specific audiovisual by the student. This sound insertion can be of various types: through live music or pre-recorded sounds, maintaining the original soundtrack, removing sounds from the original audiovisual, etc. In all cases, the potential benefits are obvious and the simplicity of the action model makes it easily applicable at all levels from the earliest ages. Attempts at motivating its generalization in the K-12 classroom environment are shown together with examples of the application of sound in its various modalities.

INTRODUCTION

In many parts of the world there is despair around musical educational models (Savage, 2021), and the difficulty in obtaining tools that help teachers implement a realistic and valid educational framework for students (Ballantyne, 2006; Benedict & Schmidt, 2014), due to the constant need to adapt to changing contexts (Legg & Green, 2015; Stavrou & O'Connell, 2022). One of the main issues for music education teachers in the compulsory stages is to merge curricular content with the informal sound experience of the students (Cain, 2004; Green, 2008; Harwood & Marsh, 2018). This circumstance not only concerns musical style adopted, but also regards procedures followed within the classroom (Hess, 2020). In this regard, it is difficult to approximate musical pedagogies generated over the past century (DeVries, 2001) –which have great benefits, but were devised for other contexts–, with more current trends, derived from ICT (Della Ventura, 2021) and mass media (Pećanac, Jeremić & Milenović, 2016).

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Consequently, we are immersed in a time of change that directly concerns music education (Clements, 2018; Jorgensen, 2003) where methods not only involve traditional materials from written texts (Williams, 2000). Therefore, there is no need to fear the use of audiovisual resources that though not always apparent, can become didactic (McKeague, 2018), as their potential is immense. Thus, it is pertinent to formulate questions on the type of musical education intended through the participation of audiovisual media, taking into account they are present in the lives of teachers and students. Questions on the use of technology in music education (Crawford, 2010) not only refer to implementation of cybernetic materials, but can also be answered by referring to cinema and education (Brand, 2001). Therefore, it is necessary to research the impact of its use on students, the need to change pedagogical practice and the pros and cons of these practices regarding music education. Despite existing studies based on films, especially for children, in order to address the creative impulse these can foster (Bae, Yoo & Yoon, 2016), increasing knowledge in this field will bring benefits to music teaching, particularly in the K-12 classroom. After a long career working in both compulsory and university education, strategies are presented for the treatment of cinema in music education.

The careless use of cinema in education has often meant its potential is underestimated (Hobbs, 2006). Nevertheless, it will be argued that the approach to film music and other audiovisuals is of particular interest as an agent for generation of high-impact educational practices in students (Fleming et al., 2016). Moreover, it usually be explained that collaborative projects integrating several languages, such is the cinema case, are highly beneficial (Barrett, McCoy & Veblen, 1997). For all these reasons, one of the main aims of this text is to offer teachers of artistic education didactic tools related to film music, within the compulsory stages of education.

To carry out this approach to the compendium of audiovisual languages, several paths can be chosen (Lum, 2009). The possibilities found by Keown (2015), delimited by the sections of his study, are as follows: creating film music, singing the score, using temp tracking, teaching through film music, exploring disciplines outside music, developing production experiences and resources about this trend. The two most common practices are as follows:

Firstly, extrapolation of melodies, this option has been commonly used, due to its ease in direct application in classrooms. It involves selecting a charismatic melody, coming from a film widely used by students, and applying it in the classroom in the desired way (musicalization, dance, etc.). It is known that music does not limit its possibilities to its original format, but that it is shown to be valid outside it, hence this pedagogical strategy is used repeatedly. Therefore, extracting music from its original context and doing exercises based on it should not be complicated. If the music is recognizable, the student will be satisfied during the activity, nevertheless, this role model does not imply interactivity between musical and visual codes, therefore, it is not recommended, if a global approach to the film is sought.

Secondly, working from the film argument, implies selecting a specific audiovisual reference, biopics are very useful, despite the fact that mediation work must often be done to differentiate reality from fiction (Viljoen & Viljoen, 2018). Examples of this procedural type vary, depending on the teacher's aims. However, although this can bring good results, the lack observed in this type of application is the same: there is no full interaction between visual and auditory languages, so students do not experience mixture of both codes.

On the contrary, there are other more interactive ways of influencing the work on audiovisual fragments from the film, which take into account auditory and visual set. Among these, the didactic sound addition stands out as an extremely useful strategy. This chapter will focus on exposing what type of realization

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