

# Chapter 11

## Music as a Tool for Interculturalism

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### ABSTRACT

*The world is always more connected. The result of this advance is globalization, a factor that silently affects daily life. Migratory movements have modified the environment, generating cosmopolitan cities, enriched by cultural diversity. This is reflected in the increasing variety of students. So, it is necessary to propose strategies that normalize this coexistence, taking advantage of this ethnic and cultural fusion. The goal is to offer an education based on respect and meaningful learning. This reality is a challenge for teachers. The objective of any lecturer should be focused on training future citizenship. This project, carried out at the Education Faculty of Albacete, University of Castilla La Mancha, (Spain) was implemented in the subject 'Musical Perception and Expression' during the 2022/2023 course. It has tried to highlight the cultural richness inherent in the music, folklore, and dances of different places. Music has been revealed as an ideal vehicle to share cultures.*

### INTRODUCTION

The words multicultural and intercultural education have been discussed for a long time. Multicultural education and intercultural education are often considered synonymous (Hill, 2007). In multicultural and intercultural literature, it is often unclear what these terms mean and whether they refer to the same or different realities. Therefore, it is important to clarify the terminology used in this paper, because different words can be deployed with a similar meaning.

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UNESCO's Guidelines for Intercultural Education (2006) define multiculturalism as the presence of cultural diversity within human societies, encompassing nations or national cultures as well as linguistic, religious, and socioeconomic diversity. However, it does not include race. On the other hand, interculturalism is built upon multiculturalism and arises from intercultural exchanges and dialogues at various levels, such as local, regional, national, or international. This understanding is also evident in the policies of the Council of Europe and the European Commission, as they have incorporated the concept of intercultural education (Mateo y Bravo, 2019). The key distinction between multiculturalism and interculturalism lies in their theoretical perspectives. Multiculturalism primarily refers to the 'coexistence of multiple cultures in a rather static manner, while interculturalism emphasizes the interactions and relationships between different cultural groups' (Hill 2007, p.250). Given this context, this article will specifically focus on exploring the concept of 'interculturality'.

Interculturality could be defined as an ideology or model of social organization that affirms the possibility of living together harmoniously between ethnic groups or communities that are culturally, religiously, or linguistically different (Weda *et al.*, 2022). Cultural diversity is seen as a positive and desirable factor that encourages people to practice their own traditions and seek ways of understanding and acceptance despite differences. As Spradley (2016) indicates, people define and identify themselves through their culture and, consequently, the shared values and characteristics of their society or group. Culture and society are inseparable. People's cultural beliefs and behaviors tend to be common within geographic locations and social networks (Daud & Prihatmojo, 2022).

Throughout the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years, the University of Castilla-La Mancha has participated in the program '*ENTER*' *Cultures 2.0 Learning Project. Youth and Education Against Racism*. The project seeks to promote the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values of a global intercultural nature. The team was composed of more than twenty teachers from the Faculty of Education of Albacete and from different disciplines and subjects. Lecturers and students from the Faculty of Education became transforming agents for a more inclusive and equitable global society. As Leiva-Olivencia (2017) points out, intercultural education is key to generating bridges of dialogue among cultures in schools and in the training spaces of future education professionals.

For this reason, the Department of Physical Education, Artistic Education and Music, and more specifically the Music area of the Faculty of Education of Albacete has joined this project. Music as a universal language facilitates the elimination of cultural, religious or any other barriers, favoring an environment of respect, empathy, and sensitivity (Higgins, 2012; Clarke *et al.*, 2015).

Furthermore, inclusive, and cultural education is increasingly present in our society. The fourth point of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, remarks the need to guarantee inclusive and equitable quality education. Likewise, the need to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all students is highlighted (Ministry of Social Rights, Consume and 2030 Agenda, 2024).

If we consider Nelson Mandela's quote, 'education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world, inclusive education in the classroom will create an environment in which students feel not only accepted but also included' (Moh, 2024, p.3). In the same vein, Romanova (2019) discusses the importance of being prepared to work intercultural competence as a personal trait that improves the interpersonal interactions in a multicultural educational environment.

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