

Musical-pedagogical thought in Santiago de Cuba: a strategy for its historical study

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ABSTRACT

This research deals with the historical-pedagogical process of music in Santiago de Cuba and the insufficient knowledge of the subject for its application in teaching. It aims at an improvement strategy for the transmission of this content to music teaching professionals, and to fulfill it, an analysis is carried out with emphasis on the fundamental ideas of the pedagogical conceptions and methods that have set the tone in social development, contextualized in its historical moment, as well as its contribution to the current educational process. The application of educational research methods and instruments made it possible to define the strategy.

Keywords: Musician-pedagogues; Local musical-pedagogical thought; Strategy.

Introduction

In the evolution of humanity, education has played an essential role in the transmission of knowledge and experiences from one generation to the next. Different paths of knowledge have led to a rich cultural heritage reflected in the different spheres of life.

Within this inherited cultural knowledge is music, a key element in the life of the human being, which in its historical development has been distinguished by the work of institutions and individuals who have bequeathed a great diversity and musical richness demonstrated in the interpretative quality and composition of important works that represent particular styles and trends of the historical-musical evolution, and others, masters who have paved the way in teaching to reach the development reached in the present.

In the particular case of Cuba, the intellectual wealth of thought -theoretical work and action- of the most relevant Cuban musician-pedagogues who demonstrated a deep sense of identity and belonging to our country is appreciable (Rodríguez & Barceló, 2009). Through their actions, these musician-pedagogues influenced the social context and conditioned the projection and ways of thinking towards definitions, types of behavior and vocations that were reflected in different spheres of culture and are part of Cuban society. However, there is still insufficient research and dissemination of pedagogical-musical history in the country, and even more in local studies.

Studying the pedagogical and educational thought of the music of the past in the localities allows analyzing, valuing and interpreting the actions of the musicians-pedagogues in their context and unveiling their contributions for the generations that succeeded them. With reference to this, Senú, Naranjo, Torres and Oliva (as cited in Oliva, Senú and Santiesteban, 2022) warn about the importance of today's professionals knowing the educational traditions and taking from them the positive experiences to achieve better results in their educational work. This highlights the value of knowledge and dissemination of the historical-pedagogical memory of music as a contribution to local and national culture and identity.

Accordingly, this article addresses the process of musical-pedagogical thinking in the context of Santiago de Cuba during the period between the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, motivated by the observation of limitations to address the issue in teaching, which reveals little knowledge of what happened in the localities of the country.

These theoretical-practical cracks in the study programs limit the performance of teaching professionals, as well as the knowledge of students and, therefore, the analysis, understanding and interpretation of music, since for an adequate music teaching, historical references are needed to preserve the value of outstanding personalities and

institutions that bequeathed novel contributions to this practice and that are currently little known.

As an objective, it is proposed to develop an improvement strategy for the transmission of this content to music teaching professionals based on the analysis of the fundamental ideas of the pedagogical conceptions and methods that set the tone in social development, contextualized in its historical moment. Likewise, the possible contributions to the current educational process are evaluated, and an analysis of the most significant aspects of the music teaching process is made, while the historical characteristics of this pedagogical process are revealed.

From the bibliographic review it could be seen that referred to music teaching in the national context are the works of León (1955, 1986); Gramatge (1982); Sánchez (2012); Ponsoda (2002, 2005); Rodríguez and Barceló (2009); Rodríguez (2010); Lolo (2012, 2014) among others. In the context of Santiago de Cuba, bachelor's or master's degree theses were observed that punctually work on the biography of a musician, the history of institutions or events, as well as didactic issues of music, but do not emphasize the historical pedagogical-musical process, except Ramos (2012) who makes an approach to the history of music teaching and Borlot (2016) who systematizes the historical-pedagogical conceptions of music education in a given period.

Development

Buenavilla (2002) states that the concept of educator includes not only those who move in the sphere of the school and the national education system, but also those who have exercised an educational influence, although not strictly speaking from the school system. Thus, within this concept we can include teachers of any academic background, who in their historical-social context achieved prestige or renown either by the use of methods and techniques, by their constancy and expressed wisdom, their tact and pedagogical mastery with their students, among other characteristics that highlight or identify them as an honorable person of the locality, the region or even achieve national or international recognition.

Also recognized as educators are political personalities, or social educators, who without coming specifically from school education, have had a great influence on the

education and formation of the new generations of their countries or peoples, especially because of the high social responsibilities they have performed, and because they have bequeathed valuable reflections, initiatives and proposals in the educational field that have caused transcendental impulses to the educational and pedagogical systems of their time and of future times.

From these reflections, we begin to assess what was and who constituted a historical-pedagogical background in music teaching in Santiago de Cuba between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The study carried out evidences the need, in the development of the continuous training process of the music teaching professional, of improvement actions to transmit the content referring to the historical-pedagogical process of music teaching, starting from the cognitive insufficiency of the teachers. The actions to be developed have a pedagogical nature, so a professional improvement strategy is designed from a theoretical construct.

We agree with the definition offered by Márquez (2002) when he states that a strategy is a [...] dynamic and flexible system that is executed in a gradual and staggered manner, allowing a systematic evaluation in which all participants are actively involved, emphasizing not only the results, but also the procedural development. (Part II, p.1)

The proposed improvement strategy presents a systemic, dialectic, interdisciplinary and interactive character, since it guarantees the exchange between specialists-teachers involved in the improvement process in various contexts of action. Likewise, it takes into account the epistemic bases of sciences and disciplines such as Psychology, Pedagogy and Sociology, with emphasis on the analysis and understanding of the pedagogical process under study, energized in self-improvement.

Its objective is: To develop the professional improvement of music teachers by highlighting the contribution of musician-pedagogues and institutions to the musical-pedagogical thought in Santiago de Cuba, all of which will favor a more integral projection in the formation of professionals from an analytical and interpretative vision. All this taking into account that the professional improvement aims to contribute to the permanent education and systematic updating of university graduates, the improvement of the performance of their professional and academic activities, as well as the enrichment of their cultural heritage. (RM 140/19).

Likewise, it aims to contribute to the improvement of the teaching-learning process of music with actions that promote the improvement and updating of teachers.

This professional improvement strategy for music teachers is contextualized in the province's music teaching centers at the elementary and middle levels, initially aimed at teachers of music theory subjects. Its stages are structured as follows:

- First stage: analytical-organizational

This stage corresponds to the moment of diagnosing the cognitive needs of the teachers with reference to the research topic. It also presupposes the preparation of the teachers for their thematic projection according to the level of teaching they provide.

In order to evaluate the levels of preparation of the teachers, the following indicators were established:

- Teachers' competence in terms of the pedagogical-musical history of the locality.
- Place of music history to guide the integration of contents in the music specialty.
- Relationship of the contents of the history of music as ways to identify and plan the research-integrative work with other disciplines.

From this exchange, elements will be obtained for the diagnosis that, through the application of instruments to teachers and directors, as well as the review of documents, will make it possible to characterize the level of updating of this personnel in relation to the historical process of musical-pedagogical thought in the locality.

From the thematic point of view, the improvement actions are divided into two historical moments: the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century.

- Second stage: execution and socialization

Objective: To carry out training actions aimed at guiding teachers in the use of qualitative methods to approach the life and work of representative figures of musical education in the period studied. Also, to carry out workshops of reflection and inquiry about these educators.

This stage corresponds to the moment of execution and socialization of the process. In general terms, it presupposes:

- To carry out improvement actions with the teachers in order to contextualize the historical-musical moment, as well as the pedagogical conceptions of the same.
- To promote the deepening of the life and work of the representative figures.

The fundamental actions are aimed at the professional improvement of the music teacher; the establishment of a generalized common language in the study of the musician-pedagogues; the self-preparation of the teacher as a continuous action for the activities he/she carries out.

At this stage of the research, the following organizational forms of work are planned and executed: training with postgraduate figure, conferences, theoretical-practical workshops, as well as directed self-improvement, all aimed at the understanding and analysis of the importance of the knowledge of the pedagogical support that has reached our days, justified by the rich legacy of teachers such as Esteban Salas, Juan París, Laureano Fuentes Matons, Rafael Salcedo, Pepe Sánchez, Miguel Matamoros, Dulce M^a Serret, Harold Gramatges and others that have been forgotten in the musical historiography of the Island.

Within the training, teachers are provided with qualitative methods for research, fundamentally that of life history where, as Pujadas (1992) explains, investigating the life history of a subject requires taking into account not only the stories of his life, but any other type of information or additional documentation that allows the reconstruction of his biography in the most exhaustive and objective way possible.

The workshops constitute a reflective place, with an exchange of experiences, and their main objective is to inquire about the outstanding figures in the teaching of music in the stage conceived, as well as to broaden the cognitive vision as regards the study of the historical context in which each of the musician-pedagogues studied lived, as well as the currents of thought and education that may have influenced their actions and their work in general. For this reason, criteria are established to organize the procedure to be followed in each particular case:

- Determine the historical-social and cultural context of the educational figure to be studied, and in what way this may have influenced his work.
- Signify the role of social and academic institutions in the development of musical education in the periods studied.
- To carry out the study of the life history of the musician-pedagogue under study, this allows highlighting the most outstanding facts of his life.
- Establish a chronology of the life and educational work of the figure studied, identifying stages or sub-stages through which his life passed and his link with historical events.

- Emphasis is placed on the individual work of the participants for the study of pedagogues of their disciplines through their life history, their musical-pedagogical thinking and their educational actions. Contribution of the same ones as for methods and/or works for the use as material of study (repertoire) at the present time.

Of great importance is the work done with the scores bequeathed by these educators, which are transcribed into standardized writing, analyzed in a comprehensive manner as a tool for the construction of musical knowledge, studied and finally socialized in concerts offered by teachers and students of the various disciplines. This facilitates the process of systematization of the works in teaching.

It also stimulates and directs teachers to search, from self-improvement, for characteristics in the works of the composers studied to obtain stylistic regularities and, in the same way, to reveal the technical and interpretative difficulties of the works for subsequent work with the student, considering their limitations and potential to face the interpretation (Silva, Rodríguez & Marín, 2021).

- Third stage: Evaluation-assessment

Objective: To evaluate and assess how what was planned for each stage has been fulfilled, the actions planned, as well as the receptivity and meaning of what was planned for the professionals who participated.

Bearing in mind that evaluation is both a process and a result, in this stage the results of the applied strategy are evaluated, since throughout the process the participants' actions and involvement were evaluated, as well as the assessment of the contributions of the musician-pedagogues studied from the legacy repertoire and its possible systematization in music teaching.

In this sense, actions are carried out to guarantee a valuation criterion such as: the dissemination of the studies carried out on musician-pedagogues and the interpretation of their work in the teaching repertoires. Likewise, to stimulate in music teachers the diffusion in different contexts of the study of the research, contributions and performance of the works of representative figures of musical education in the locality not only of the period worked on in this article.

Likewise, it is the moment to show the research work carried out with the life history of Laureano Fuentes Matons, an important musician-pedagogue of the 19th century, and to signify his contribution to the Cuban musical pedagogy that widens the repertoire for

the interpretation in diverse disciplines and the musical-sound spectrum of that period. Likewise, to exchange with teachers regarding the transcription of his works for a systematization in teaching.

In view of the above, it is considered that through the actions carried out, a higher level of knowledge has been achieved on the subject related to the study of music teaching educators in the 19th century and first half of the 20th century, and their contribution to music pedagogy.

Conclusions

Channeling the study of the history and musical-pedagogical thought in Santiago de Cuba with a group of music teaching professionals allowed evidencing that there is limited knowledge on the subject, and at the same time revealed the potentialities and insufficiencies that are presented in the theoretical-methodological order in the teachers. The strategy for the study of musical-pedagogical thought and representative figures of music teaching in the 19th century and first half of the 20th century enriches the research carried out so far and encourages the search and deepening of this topic, which has been little approached from the artistic-musical field in the locality.

The work of study and systematization of the contribution of Laureano Fuentes Matons creates a precedent for the studies of other personalities of the music from the pedagogy not only in the period here approached. In addition, it constitutes a contribution to the musical heritage and contributes to reaffirm the sense of identity and belonging to the locality.