

General musical education in Poland - conceptual assumptions and reality

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Abstract: This article is of a review charactr. It is the result of the review of the literature, scientific research, author's own observations and afterthoughts related to the issue of general Polish concept of musical education in the context of its theoretical-conceptual assumptions and the practical realisation. Due to the organisational, pedagogical and research experience in the area of general musical education, this article presents both some criticism and normative suggestions regarding the educational reality in Poland.

Keywords: General musical education in Poland. Theoretical background. Musical education and upbringing. Musical education practice in Poland.

Educação musical na Polônia – realidade e questões conceituais¹

Resumo: Este artigo tem o caráter de uma revisão crítica. É o resultado de pesquisa científica, revisão da literatura, e das próprias observações do autor e suas reflexões sobre o conceito polonês de educação musical no contexto dos conceitos teórico-conceituais e da realização prática. Com base em experiência organizacional, pedagógica e de pesquisa na área da educação musical em geral, este artigo apresenta algumas críticas como também sugestões normativas em relação à realidade educacional na Polônia.

Palavras-chave: Educação musical. Contexto teórico. Educação musical e formação. Prática da educação musical.

¹ Tradução de Ingrid Barankoski.

Educación Musical en Polonia – realidad y cuestiones conceptuales²

Resumen: Este artículo tiene el carácter de una revisión crítica. Es el resultado de la pesquisa científica, revisión de literatura, y de las propias observaciones del autor y sus reflexiones sobre el concepto polonés de educación musical en el contexto de los conceptos teórico-conceptuales y de la realización práctica. Con base en experiencia organizacional, pedagógica y de pesquisa en el área de la educación musical en general, este artículo presenta algunas críticas como también sugerencias normativas en relación a la realidad educacional en Polonia.

Palabras clave: Educación Musical. Contexto Teórico. Educación Musical y Formación. Practica de la Educación Musical.

² Tradução de Eduardo Lagreca Fan.

General assumptions of Polish concept of general musical education

The pattern for general musical education in Poland is significantly based on the concept elaborated in the 1980s by Maria Przychodzińska and the team of her collaborators. However, it is a pattern (concept, formula) partially taken from the assumptions and inspirations of an American system by the musical pedagogue James Mursell (Przychodzińska 1989, pp.138-142) and is characterised with the following indicators which, due to their capacity, are only mentioned at (Przychodzińska 1989; see to: Sacher 2012):

- ▶▶ it assumes the universal character of the access to the musical education (compulsory, after-classes and after-school) within the diversified musical aptitudes spread among the population with normal distribution,
- ▶▶ it assumes extensiveness,
- ▶▶ it assumes conducting musical-educational research on the theoretical and psycho-pedagogical background of musical education and on the empirical indicators of successful music learning,
- ▶▶ it refers to theoretical-empirical ideas of eminent personalities of the world of science and art (S. N. Coleman, B. M. Brooks, H A. Brown),
- ▶▶ it places musical upbringing within aesthetic upbringing as specific form of education and upbringing based on scientific background,
- ▶▶ it offers to consider variety of musical activity forms of children conditioned by necessity of perceiving child's psychics and didactic rules incorporated into pluralism of musical education forms,
- ▶▶ it underlines the generally educational character of music integrated with the whole process of education and upbringing in cohesion with other forms of art and science as well as education and upbringing in the spirit of humanism,
- ▶▶ as the superior form of musical expression it considers singing, then playing the instruments, rhythm and motional expression, listening to music and musical creativity,
- ▶▶ what is observed it is the use of the conceptual achievements of great pedagogical-musical implementation Zoltan Kodaly, Carl Orff and Emil Jaques Dalcroze being present in theoretical

background, musical-repertoire contents, musical-didactic form preferences, building the attitude of conscious and spontaneous contact with music and upbringing character of music functions. Musical education is theoretically treated in Polish concept mainly as the means of expression of child's feelings and not as art in its attributive, artistic dimension. However, it was assumed that various paths can lead to art and each of them can be equally good, dependently on the accepted ones by the pedagogy teachers and educational strategies.

- ▶▶ in Polish concept what can be also found is the national traditions (folklore, folk music, style and national music as resultant of artistic creations of eminent personalities), apart from before mentioned systems (Kodaly's, Orff's, Dalcroze's or Mursell's) or pedagogical traditions worldwide (J. J. Rousseau, M. Montaigne, J. H. Pestalozzi, F. Froebel or later J. Dewey, E. Claparède and others.)

Criticism over the relevance of Polish concept of general musical education

Despite years the theoretical assumptions of the Polish concept of general musical education have not been modified and so far a new alternative concept has not been prepared. Therefore, it can be stated that both teaching music teachers and children and teenagers' musical education is conducted in accordance with the conceptual assumptions present in publications from 1980s. Pedagogical-musical educators in Poland run debates and discussions but so far have not prepared a joint attitude regarding the shape and the future of general musical education. What can be noticed among the criticism is the viewpoints totally negating the concept, viewpoints partially negating and critical-emancipation-postulative viewpoints. Among the arguments appearing in favour of updating the present concept within the **theoretical domain** the following ones were identified (partially published in: Kołodziejski 2008; Kołodziejski 2009; Kołodziejski 2011; Kołodziejski 2013a):

- ▶▶ lack of update on philosophical-pedagogical-musical concept of the representatives of American and west-European concept of aesthetic and musical pedagogy by K. Swanwick (Suświłło 220, pp.219-235,) A. Schwadron or D. Peters (Białkowski 2002, pp.143-148)

- ▶▶ emphasis only to aesthetic function in musical upbringing (especially theories by S. Szuman, B. Suchodolski or I. Wojnar)
- ▶▶ complete elimination of popular music educational-pedagogical use in preparing a young art lover for the reception of the highest values in music (Białkowski 2002, pp.143-148; Michalak 2011)
- ▶▶ lack of conformity with the reality of 21st century school being characterised with utopian vision of complete music-teaching of Polish society which was characteristic for totalitarian communistic regime until 1989 in Poland (Niziurski 1997; 2002),
- ▶▶ lack of framing of this concept in the reality of contemporary (ever-changing and evolving) culture (Białkowski 2000, pp.130-131),
- ▶▶ change of the concept model from transmission one into transmission-interactive with emphasis on national culture continuity and looking after musical identity whose notion is the activity of Polish composers, elimination of monologue form of remittance (Suświłło 2006, pp.128-133.)

In the practical domain:

- ▶▶ lack of updates of the concept as for the realisation of the postulates of pedagogy of expression among the teenage students (junior-high school and high school) (Suświłło 2001, pp.136-137),
- ▶▶ lack of the system of teachers training with consideration of the assumptions of the concept from 20th century where emphasis is placed on preparation of choir conductors and music groups within the studies of level I and II at universities, pedagogical academies and music academies,
- ▶▶ as for the realisation, what is charged against the performers and interpreters of Polish concept of general musical education is theorising during everyday education of children instead of real emphasis to musical development with the use of musical expression, especially among the youngest learners. The assumption put forward plurality of forms, contents and methods of musical education and upbringing, whereas in practice it gave the result as a complete lack of cohesion, freedom and subjectivism of realisation, lack of external control over proper realisation of musical education, children and teenagers' low musical competences as

well as decrease range of artistic subjects within the general compulsory school system,

- ▶▶ lack of control over the realisation of musical education within the phases of education. In other words, there is no certainty that a child completing pre-school education has realised a proper programme guaranteeing transfer to higher level of musical education and upbringing. Lack of particular musical experiences proportional to child's age, developmental possibilities and individual differences can bear the opposite, than assumed, results when the child's attitude to music is concerned (Kołodziejcki 2013a),
- ▶▶ lack of systematised modern knowledge on musical development and real, empirical musical effects of children who undertake musical education with the assumptions of Polish national and general concept of musical education,
- ▶▶ non-consideration of the theory of music learning by Edwin E. Gordon in the Polish system of general education, despite plenty of proof of its efficiency with relation to both small children as well as primary and modular education (Kołodziejcki, Trzos 2013; Bonna, Trzos, Kołodziejcki 2014).

Among the suggested changes, it is worth considering the following (critical-thoughtful-empirical) author's ideas:

1. In the domain of **education and preparation** future teachers of music:
 - ▶▶ designing adequate for 21st century **plan of studies** with consideration of psychology of music, diagnosis of musical abilities and achievements, planning children's musical education and evaluation, optimal competence of implementation of at least one, best case – two musical-educational concepts (i.e. E. E. Gordon's and C. Orff's,) ability of cultural animation of school and after-school environment as well as creating the necessity of sharing one's own experience so that the educational processes can be optimised, using the achievements of neuro-didactics,
 - ▶▶ introducing so-called **professional pre-orientation** (professional advisory) at the level of secondary school in the way which makes it possible the review of selected professions considering the interests, predilections and preferences of high school students in such manner that there can be selected real candidates for teachers of music – devoted to music and musical education in multi-sided development of a human being,

▶▶ paying attention to the **role, function and possibilities of music and musical education in child's development** through gradual, process changes in the optic and perception of music at particular phases of education, especially during pre-school and early-school (developing musical abilities) and (primary) school and junior-high school (development of musical abilities, musical preferences, awareness of existing of many musical genres, forming musical tastes.) Understanding the fact that companionship with music during the processes of emotional experiencing of its contents is far more beneficial than the attributes (school effects) subjected to school grading,

▶▶ enabling the students to prepare for the profession of teacher of music the **participation in practice training at various kinds of kindergartens and schools** (of general education, with integrated teaching, special) in order to diagnose the specific character of work at particular phases of teaching and various kinds of schools and after-school institutions,

▶▶ guaranteeing and enabling students to specialise in **defined systems of musical education** (i.e. joining the sequence theory by Edwin E. Gordon with the creative system by C. Orff,)

▶▶ enabling students to go for **practice-professional departures to foreign universities** in order so that they broaden their knowledge considering their subject of studies and explore the local educational systems at particular phases of educating and upbringing,

▶▶ return to **colleague (social) co-learning** through organising demonstrative colleague lessons with proper motivation-evaluation so that there can be broadened methodological-organisational-workshop abilities and forming the skill of sharing the knowledge and experience,

▶▶ enabling the use of modern, specialistic, multi-media, music rooms (recording studios, computer software to write music, notes and recordings editing in real timing,)

▶▶ considering modern IT and distance learning (see: Fridman 2008; Fridman 2013,)

▶▶ preparing students to **organise and to direct instrumental-vocal bands** answering the needs and preferences of contemporary youth.

2. In the domain of **music teachers' betterment:**

▶▶ organising pedagogical-musical workshops, trainings, courses to present the most recent didactic

procedures considering musical upbringing, music teaching and learning,

▶▶ organising colleague lessons with the purpose of critical remarks regarding the purposes of education and upbringing, the manner of interpretation of educational and upbringing contents, learning processes, using the didactic means and helps as well as modern grading perceived as supporting the student,

▶▶ gradual change of the teachers' awareness that children and musical education is common national value which should be taken care of and constantly improved,

▶▶ gathering the teachers of music (in associations, groups, institutes) in order to take care of the interests of the whole group and to filter the actions of the law-makers as to improve the situation of the musical education.

3. In the domain of **school and teachers of music work evaluation:**

▶▶ planning programme actions and their evaluation,

▶▶ planning didactic innovations and experiments and their evaluation,

▶▶ implementation the cooperation with local environment and evaluation of such actions,

▶▶ cooperation with universities on implementation of educational-research programmes through running research during action (teacher and scientist.)

▶▶ Moreover Andrzej Białkowski and Violetta Łabanow (<http://www.muzykajest.pl/muzyka-w-edukacji/analizy-i-badania/viola-labanow-andrzej-bialkowski-powszechna-edukacja-muzyczna-krotka-diagnoza/>) form the diagnoses considering the general musical education in Poland in the following way (quoted by):

▶▶ the system resolution functioning in Poland considering the general musical education is not modern and inadequate to the needs, which can be seen in the lack of programme opening with consideration to pupils' musical interests and needs, not perceiving the technological and cultural changes which happened during the recent years in Poland, wrong displaying only one way of musical education for all the pupils, no concept of full educational cycle from kindergarten to university and lack of attractive offer for musically talented pupils who are not going to attend professional music schools for specialistic musical education.

Apart from above, the authors (Białkowski & Łabanow, online) see the following problems, also at places mentioned by the author of this work before:

- ▶▶ musical education of the youngest children has practically no musical activities developing the abilities at this - special for further musical way of child - age. The main problem is the unqualified teaching staff and the lessons of music are limited only to listening to music,
- ▶▶ the problem is 'distributing' the eligibility to teach music to other teachers who, in accordance with legal resolutions, gain the additional qualifications to teach another subject as a result of post-gradual studies, not being musicians themselves. What is really a nuisance is no adjustment to the needs of contemporary world the out of date concepts of educating teachers functioning constantly from 1970s,
- ▶▶ there is lack of organisational solutions and financial sources to enable the successful supporting and organisation of artistic education at a local level, since the cooperation of cultural institutions, including local centres of culture, with education needs proper legal changes,
- ▶▶ general musical education should at present be treated as whole-life process, which triggers the complimentary approach to its social and cultural conditioning. What should be taken into consideration here is problems of education of teachers of music, out of date methodology and unattractive forms of running musical lessons,
- ▶▶ the research indicates that due to very small number and unattractive form of music classes and related to that low effectiveness, the social interest of music as science has decreased. This is because Polish society fail to understand the necessity of general musical education existence, its roles, functions and results.

System of musical education in Poland (extensive and intensive³)

Polish tradition of musical upbringing dates back to 18th century but the works over the concepts of general music-teaching is related to the beginning of 20th century

³ I let myself for brief presentation of professional musical education due to significant differences in the intensiveness of interactions, rich staff and contents backup and the differences in number of hours devoted to education.

(Przychodzińska-Kaciczak 1987) To present the difference between the extensive musical education (general) and intensive (professional, specialistic) the professional musical education shall be outlined first. Formulating the purposes considering the artistic education within general education is the duty of the Ministry of National Education, whereas the purposes of artistic education for specialistic education are prepared by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (see: Dakowicz-Nawrocka 2008.) Musical education (<http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/pages/strona-glowna/uczniowie-i-studenci/system-ksztalcenia-artystycznego/ksztalcenie-muzyczne.php> of 13.11.2014) in Poland is of **three-stage structure**, from primary music-teaching, through professional education, to the master degree which can only be achieved at university and the whole is realised in the following types of schools:

- ▶▶ musical schools of degree I° (music-teaching),
- ▶▶ musical schools of degree II° (professional),
- ▶▶ musical academies (altogether 5-year cycle: I degree - bachelor studies and II degree - master studies).

Musical education at the **primary level** includes musical schools of degree I, which constitute c.70% of all artistic schools. Apart from preparing for the next phase of professional education, it plays imminent role in music-teaching, generally propedeutical and introductory. They also organise concerts and contest. At musical schools of degree I pupils are educated concerning playing a selected musical instrument (i.e. clarinet, piano, accordion.) Classes are individual (1 pupil - 1 teacher.) Initially, there are two classes of 30 minutes a week, then two classes of 45 minutes a week. Within the realised classes a pupil has individual rehearsals with an accompanist, playing in a chamber band, in orchestra or sings in a choir. Additionally, education at musical school of degree I includes theoretical classes realised as group work of the following subjects: rhythmicity and ear training at classes of younger pupils and musical auditions and ear training at classes of older pupils - on average 3-4 classes a week. In this type of schools only artistic education is realised in the cycle of 6 years or 4 years - depending of pupils' age - thus building the foundations of musical education. Musical schools of degree I admit candidates ranging from 6 to 16 years old who successfully have gone through the musical predispositions testing as an entrance exam. Such testing is generally used to check the musical abilities, physical and mental conditions as well as predispositions to learn to play a particular instrument. There are also **general (preparatory) musical schools of degree I** which basically differ from musical schools with the fact that apart from artistic education, the general education, corresponding to 6-year primary school, is

realised. Owing to this fact, the age criteria of candidates admitted at this school are different – only children aged 6 and 7 are admitted. **Musical education at secondary level** lasts 6 years depending on educational speciality and finishes with diploma examination enabling to get the professional title. In Poland there are far fewer schools of degree II than schools of degree I. At schools of degree II the education is conducted at a few faculties, thus enabling to get the education at the following specialities:

- ▶▶ musician-instrumentalist – after graduation from instrumental faculty,
- ▶▶ musician-vocalist – after graduation from vocal faculty (4-year),
- ▶▶ musician-teacher of music – after graduation from rhythmical faculty,
- ▶▶ musician-violin-maker – after graduation from violin-making faculty (there are a few of such schools in Poland).

According to the statutory regulations and current educational programme, secondary musical schools pupils have to give a lot of concerts. Not only do they perform as soloists but also in chamber bands, choir and orchestra. They take part in musical contests and auditions. The schools of degree II prepare for the performing the profession as a musician of particular speciality and enable to be admitted at musical university. School of degree II keep the number of hours of individual education considering playing a musical instrument or singing (that is 2 lessons of 45 minutes a week,) and in the last class it is increased to three lessons a week. In such schools the number of subjects and lessons of theory increases: musical literature, history of music, musical forms, harmony. It is pretty frequent that the schools of degree I and degree

II are joined into one group of musical schools, residing in the same building, run by the same head teacher and having the same teaching staff. Musical schools of degree II admit the candidates between the ages 10 and 21 based on successfully taken entrance examination.

The examinations take place every year in May or in June and include practical examination out of prepared pieces of music, ear training examination and additional examination regarding the course of education. There are also general preparatory musical schools of degree II which, apart from artistic education, realise secondary general education (junior high-school and high school.) Education at such school enables to achieve the professional title and the GCSE Certificate within the internal system of examinations. General preparatory musical schools of degree II admit candidates after entrance examinations and such ones who are not older than 14 years old and completed 6-year general preparatory musical school of degree I or 6-year primary school. These schools constitute the structure of musical schooling in Poland. Despite the relatively transparent structure and uncomplicated educational-artistic targets, this type education needs to be reformed, since at present too little emphasis is placed upon music-teaching of children, their preparation for participation in musical culture and encouragement to active music practising. What is the present direction nowadays is competition and contest-running which in the primary phase of musical education is bound to be a failure. What a child needs is support and motivation to engage in music actively. Development of intrinsic motivation and humanistic approach of a teacher becomes a chance for excellent and potential-concord musical and general development if a child.

The table below presents the system of musical education within **general education** in the recent century:

TABLE 1: System of musical education within general education in the recent century (Poland).

Approximate period (years)	Lesson/Subject	General information	Realisation
1920-1927	Singing	Creation of the first programme of singing, significant role of singing and music.	2h a week
1928-1931	Singing	Reformation of general education, decreasing the number of teaching hours of this subject to 1h a week, teaching of singing was superior target	1h a week
1934	Singing	After Minister Jędrzejewicz's reformation it was decided that singing to be compulsory only at general education with 2h a week, in junior high and high schools it was not compulsory	2h a week
Inter-war period (1918-1939)	Realisation of subject - singing	Slow clearing of concept of general musical education directed at music-teaching of children and shaping their musical sensitivity; however, there were problems with qualified staff	2h a week

After-war period (after 1945)	Singing	Special importance of the subject due to contents of education and upbringing in the spirit socialistic ideology. Popularising musical culture and sustaining the love to music was the most important role of musical education. Teaching programmes dated before 1939 were accepted with special role of singing. 2H of after-classes musical lessons compulsory.	2h a week
1949-1950	Singing	Dominant role of singing was sustained, theoretical contents were limited, exercises on perception and listening to music were added. Lesson of singing was reduced to 1h a week and present only in classes I-IV of primary school (in 11-class general preparatory school.) Primary school was 7-class.	1h a week
1962-1963	Musical education	The name of the subject was changed, 8-year school was organised. Musical education targets included start-singing, teaching songs, development of musical ear, voice and rhythm, teaching the pupils the basic knowledge concerning music, presenting the most eminent works of music and their composers, listening to artistic pieces of music and preparation to amateur playing of music. 1h a week was sustained and 2h of after-classes were added.	1h a week
Late 1970s and early 1980s	Musical education	Criticism over the school system increase, there are works on national concept of general musical education. The conceptual works are conducted under Maria Przychodzińska.	1h a week
1983	Music	New (school) subject is created: music. Based on psychological and pedagogical foundations, it is related to theory of upbringing and education, includes elements of the systems by Dalcroze, Orff, Kodály and Mursell. The aim of musical education is developing musical abilities, creating pupils' positive motivation to the subject, development of musicality, musical culture implementation, ability to have companionship with music of different cultures, development of cognitive functions. Musical upbringing forms emerge: singing and ear training, playing a musical instrument, motion with music, musical creativity of children and teenagers, listening to music teaching. 1h a week devoted to music.	1h a week
After 1989 (system changes, period of heterogeneity in pedagogy and education)	Music	Necessity to update the aims and contents of the school subject appeared. Works on changes in programme basis started.	1h a week (transitional period)
1996 (transitional period)	Music	Still compulsory vast targets of the subject related to pupils' intensive development in intellectual, emotional, physical and psycho-physical areas, developing musical abilities and achievements and interests.	1h a week
1996-1999	Music	Preparation to another reforming of education, vital changes in perceiving artistic education	1h a week at primary school, at high school (to choose from: visual arts or music – each 1h in 2 years)

1999	Arts	New (school) subject introduced: Arts. Music was combined with visual arts. Despite the free-market and democratic context, the introduced changes were not consulted with the educational environment allowing for reaching a consensus. Teachers began post-gradual studies of the other artistic component included in the subject which consisted of elements of contents considering music and visual arts. Elaborated in 2000, frame programme of qualifying teachers to subject 'Arts' corresponded to then compulsory programme basis of the subject 'Arts.'	1h a week at primary school, 1h at junior-high school
Around 2002	Arts (visual arts and music)	Slow withdrawal from the regulations of 1999 reform and again music existed as a separate subject within 'Arts.' Along with implementation of regulations of Ministry of National Education and Sport of 12 Feb, 2002 regarding framing plans of teaching at public schools (Journal of Laws, No15, p.142 with later amendments) realisation of 'Arts' as a separate subject was rejected. However, in the school curriculum it is allowed to combine educational classes into subject block during which there is run the integrated teaching of contents and skills of different domains in one (educational) class. With relevance to framing educational plan for primary school and junior-high school, music and visual arts can be taught jointly in one subject block 'Arts,' but these classes include teaching the programme contents of visual arts and music respectively.	1h a week at primary school, decreasing the number of hours for music realisation
Since 2009	Music	Music is a separate subject at II educational level. In early-school education there are 95h in 3 years of education within the integrated teaching. Apart from integrated education teachers, lessons of music can be run by specialists, teachers of music, all above with the head teacher's consent. The aim of musical education is to develop musical abilities and achievements, preparation to conscious reception of national and worldwide musical culture. In accordance with the current programme basis, musical lessons in primary schools are obligatory at level I (integrated education), level II (classes IV-VI) and level III. New programme basis introduced the subject: 'artistic class' at level III (compulsory classes) and level IV (classes are optional) and the form of realisation can be classes of music.	1h a week at primary school, junior-high 1h over 3 years + artistic lessons – non-compulsory, after-classes

Source: author's own, based on Rondonańska 2006, pp. 209-220; Białkowski 2011 and Ministerial regulations and own notes.

Reports on condition of musical education in Poland

So far a few expertises and analyses have been conducted in Poland regarding the efficiency of realisation of general musical education. Mainly, they are: (Kołodziejski 2011, p. 7):

1. expertise of Polish Music Council and The Fryderyk Chopin Musical University in Warsaw entitled: *Primary conditions of children and teenagers' access to musical culture* of 1984,
2. departmental research conducted as a result of initiated research programme of Ministry of

Culture and Art entitled *Musical Education in Poland* conducted in 1990,

3. research project of ordered by Scientific Research Committee considering the model of teachers of music education (1997),
4. the most recent research on the state of musical education in Poland (2007) supervised by Polish Music Council entitled *Musical Education in Poland, state-conditions-desired domains of change* conducted under the supervision of A. Białkowski (2011, pp. 288-308) which gave the following results:
 - » effectiveness of musical classes at Polish schools is generally low,

- » pupils manage better with the tasks requiring knowledge of music than with the tasks needing demanding musical skills,
- » tasks of remembering and replaying rhythm are solved only by 23% of pupils,
- » firming musical skills can only be achieved by teachers of the highest level of musical competences (workshop, methodological, instrumental and psychological),
- » pupils can not use the music notation, do not grasp the basic terms, do not know the eminent composers nor outstanding pieces of music,
- » pupils have very low perceptive skills,
- » with older pupils the knowledge of music is often a result of after-school experiences.

It is also worth mentioning that the scientific research conducted for the purpose of doctoral or habilitation theses on musical (vocal) competences of primary school pupils indicate that they are low and very low (Kamińska 1997; Wieloch 2000; Kołodziejski 2011; Bonna 2006; Waluga 2012).

Selection of recent research on musical education in Poland⁴

Research on musical education in Poland in the recent years deal generally with the following areas:

- » pedeutology,
- » musical education and upbringing at the pre-school, early-school, and school level (primary school and junior high school),
- » media competences of teachers of music,
- » musical competences of pupils,
- » musical abilities and achievements,
- » musical audiation.

Doing a subjective review of selected research projects, one has to pay attention to thesis generally prepared for

Ph.D. or Ph.D. habilit. degree. Among the doctoral thesis the following titles are worth noting down (see: www.nauka-polska.pl):

- » Marek J. Kuciapiński (2006), Education and popularising of musical culture in Piotrkow Trybunalski in years 1945-1989,
- » Anna Kalarus (2006), Possibilities of stimulation through music the process of learning by children of early-school age,
- » Jolanta Rybka, Polish patriotic choir song – analysis and interpretation of musical and verbal contents (2007),
- » Maciej Kołodziejski (2007), Application of Edwin E. Gordon's concept in developing musical abilities and achievements of primary school pupils,
- » Beata Michalak, „Schulwerk” by Carl Orff. Idea of elementary music and its reception,
- » Paweł A. Trzos (2008), Preferences of timbre and level of musical abilities versus achievements of pupils playing wind instruments in the light of theory of music learning by Edwin Elias Gordon,
- » Wojciech Strzelecki, Analysis of dependencies between musical preferences and healthy behaviours of secondary school pupils,
- » Martyna Szczotka (2009), Computer support of teaching music to children at pre-school age,
- » Rafał Lawendowski (2009), Personal conditions of musical preferences depending on age,
- » Alicja A. Delecka-Bury (2012), Sources of pedagogical success of musical culture animators. Cases study,
- » Piotr Soszyński (2013): IT competences of teachers of music, theory vs practice.

Habilitation thesis realised in Poland since 2004 deal with:

- » Violetta Przeremska (2010), Ideals of upbringing in musical education during the inter-war period in Poland,
- » Agnieszka Weiner (2011), Musical competences of children at early-school age. Determinants, dependencies, development perspectives,
- » Elżbieta Frołowicz (2014), Musical activity and developmental changes of a child.

Supposedly, there are many reasons why there are so few realised doctoral and habilitation theses on musical pedagogy, but what is included to them it is lowering the range of general musical education and thus, lack

⁴ It is worth reminding that the boom of research projects on musical education in Poland was in years 1987-2004. In the last decade there is a decrease in students' interests realised in their thesis concerning, understood broadly, musical pedagogy, especially in the area of general musical education. As I see it, it is caused by general, also mentioned in this article, problems of general education concerning teaching music, lowering the lesson of music value, shallowing (simplifying) the values of high musical culture and emphasising its commercial attributes.

of interests from scientists in musical education on the research and thesis level.

Educational projects in Poland

Fortunately, there are some institutions of culture, education and science which do not leave the fate of general musical education unattended. They, undoubtedly, include:

- ▶▶ Institute of Music and Dance (<http://imit.org.pl/>),
- ▶▶ Polish Society of Pedagogues and Animators KLANZA (<http://www.klanza.org.pl/>)
- ▶▶ Teachers of Music Association (<http://snmuzyki.pl/>),
- ▶▶ Polish Society of Edwin E. Gordon (<http://pteeg.org/>),
- ▶▶ Magazine 'Musical Upbringing' (<http://www.wychmuz.pl/>),
- ▶▶ Pedagogues and Rhythm Lovers Association (<http://www.spimr.pl/>),
- ▶▶ Creative Education Foundation (<http://www.fundajakreatywnejedukacji.org/>).

The activities of particular people in associations, companies, foundations or institutes bring defined positive results of popularising and propagating the knowledge on musical education. It is also worth mentioning the actions of popularising vocal musical culture in Poland. Such an action with the purpose of propagation among the children and teenagers in Poland was the action 'Poland Singing.' It is a national programme of school choirs development directed at children and teenagers so that through singing children can enjoy life, experience the music richness, derive satisfaction from shared music practising and open to the world of culture. The data suggest that each year the action 'Poland Singing' engages more than 300 schools. In 2010 there were 392 educational institutions from Poland and in 2011 the programme was joined by 319 school choirs.

The programme is generally aimed at school choirs with the idea of extra financing of the lessons and providing the methodological help to teachers-instructors of the school choirs. National Centre of Culture which runs the programme with the help of a partner, which is International Festival Wroslavia Cantas, serves the methodological and essential help thanks to the team of regional coordinators under the leading role of Grażyna Rogala-Szczerek – the national coordinator. The fixed forms of activities within

the programme include: additional singing lessons, monthly meetings of conductors, workshops for people managing choirs and yearly reviews/contests of school choirs. Programme realisation gives chances for:

- ▶▶ education of aware recipients of art,
 - ▶▶ meeting the valuable Polish and international musical repertoire by the youth,
 - ▶▶ upbringing children and teenagers through art to respect the values represented by art,
 - ▶▶ development of personality, sensitivity and imagination through choir education,
 - ▶▶ contact between choir-participants with artists-masters,
 - ▶▶ teachers-conductors professional betterment to work with children.
- ▶▶ It has to be added that the realisation of the above assumptions takes place along with the pedagogical staff of musical academies, universities educating teachers of music and conductors (<http://educ.nck.pl/kategorie/o-programie-muzyka.html> of 16th Nov, 2014.)

Final remarks

General musical education in Poland requires the changes in the way of thinking by the subjects deciding about its form and long-lasting process of qualitative changes considering the pedagogy of parents, teachers and institutions cooperating with the environment of teachers and university lecturers. We can not fail to notice the essential changes in the direction of re-building of its primary aims, building constructive criticism and raising the level of afterthoughts of the environments engaged in its (re)building. The level of intrinsic values being the art itself, in experiencing it and building competences of a human being, a conscious recipient and perhaps an art creator is becoming a milestone towards a new educational reality.

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