

## Music as an Educational Practice Performed with Children

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### Abstract

*This is a master's dissertation's research which had, as general objective, to investigate the guiding principles of musical educational practice with children of 6 and 7 years, who participated in a social project of music education in Brasilia, Brazil's capital. Such research has as justification the use of music, which, in some educational settings, ignore children's musical development, as well as the lack of studies in this area. The methodological tool used was the observation of a social project at different times and the focus group with music educators and children. At the end of the research we found some principles that can guide an educational practice with music and, thus, may contribute to children's musical development.*

### 1. Introduction

According to Figueiredo [1], music has little space at the Brazilian educational context. Sobreira [2] agrees with this idea, stating that when there is space for music in school, a deviation of function happens, so music is used as (a) a subproduct to assist in the achievement of other types of knowledge, (b) therapy or (c) a product for school's festivities. Regarding early childhood education, Brito [3] clarifies that, in addition to the functions described by Sobreira, music is used to organize the school environment, establish routine and discipline children. These authors write about music in Primary School. This research, however, proposed to investigate music education in another context: a social project. Such choice was necessary because of the small amount of studies about teaching music to children at an educational area beyond school, and especially because of the desire to seek new educational possibilities.

The described actions, found by aforementioned authors, indicate an educational practice that does not have as its central aim and purpose the child's musical development, which does not contribute effectively to make it happen. Thus, the factors are reversed because the musical development becomes secondary. Thus, the intentional listening, the appropriation of the musical universe, the imagination, the exploration and the creation of new sounds, rhythms and melodies, which are important for the musical development of the child, are sometimes ignored [4].

The musical involvement provides experience for the child, and the further accumulation of experience, the more material it will have to imagine and create new sounds. These experiences generate the exercise of imagination and creativity, which result in new experiences [5]. This cycle creates conditions of possibility for the child's musical development. For all of this to happen, it is important that the child finds an atmosphere of freedom and confidence in its musical possibilities.

Currently, Brazil is transitioning because of the implementation of the Law No. 11.769, which makes the teaching of music in school mandatory. In addition, yielding to the law, we must reflect on this teaching. Music shouldn't only be present, it has to be experienced to create conditions of possibility for the musical development of the child, who should experience it as art.

Art is not mere pleasure, piece of knowledge or form [6]. Art is not a tool to preach morality [7]. "Art is the social within us" [6; p. 315] and being so, it handles the emotions and enables understanding of the world around us. Through music, children can get emotional and appropriate awareness of their feelings, and of the world in which they live.

### 2. Looking at the past to think the future

There are countless stories about Brazilian music. This research did an excerpt emphasizing merely on music's journey as an educational practice in Brazil in areas of school education, that is, environments governed by laws, documents, curriculum and pedagogical action. Importantly, even focusing on a social project, it was noticed the need to make a short history overview of Brazilian's school music education to show what different authors have already pointed out - the misuse of music in this context and, with this, the need to look for other areas and educational opportunities.

Music was present in some moments of Brazilian historical course. However, it is possible to identify some of the actions that did not contribute, indeed, to the musical development of children. Therefore, it is paramount to observe the past and reflect on these misguided actions to avoid similar deeds in the future.

When viewing the past, we face different educational practices regarding music. In 1549, the Jesuits began to use music to colonize and evangelize people who inhabited the Portuguese

colony. Back then, musical development was not an educational priority. The fact that the indigenous culture was disrespected exemplifies that interests and educational needs of the inhabitants were ignored [8]. The action of the Jesuits lasted little more than two centuries, as they were ousted from Brazil in 1759 by Marques de Pombal, who believed that they "represented an obstacle and a source of resistance to the attempts to implement the new Enlightenment philosophy that was spreading rapidly throughout Europe" [9; p. 469]. In reality, their expulsion meant the stagnation of Brazilian education for many years.

Only after the Brazilian Independence, in 1822, and the ratification of the Constitution, in 1824, there were discussions about the national education and several institutions were built, among them the Normal School, which would form the future teachers. The musical education offered in Normal had the function of disciplining, transmitting values and organizing the school's environment. In 1930, the Nationalist movement disseminated patriotism, Moral and Civic Education through music. In both situations, the musical development became secondary. Music was used to discipline children, organize the school environment and bring out patriotism.

In 1971 music ceased to exist in the official curriculum of basic education. It was replaced by Artistic Education, where all arts received a recreational character (mere pleasure and hobby) and a school festivities character (presentations of children to the school community), in which the focus was to use the different arts as a product, thus disregarding the educational process that involves this human activity.

Nowadays we are in a time of transition. After many years lacking music in the school curriculum, some musicians started, in 2006, an action supporting music education back to school. The movement gave rise to the Joint Parliamentary Group Pro-Music, which consisted of musicians and educators, among other representatives of civil society. Through this movement, on August 18, 2008, a law which made the teaching of music in Basic Education compulsory was enacted.

The law guaranteed a period of three years for education systems to adapt to the new requirements. That deadline has passed and little has changed regarding music as an educational practice in Brazil. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that "the law itself is not able to modify the scenario of school education" [4; p. 20], because there are many factors that influence this process. Moreover, the most important fact in the case of music as an educational practice is to consider how this teaching will be carried out, and, above all, to whom it is intended, since it is necessary to consider the interests, needs

and reality of life from the children who attend educational environments.

It is believed that an educational work with music should not be focused on the aforementioned actions, but it should rather be perceived as a liberating practice of expression, imagination, creation and interpretation of human activity. Furthermore, musical education has to consider the interests and needs of children, and should respect the cultural identity of each. About this, Freire [10] asserts the need to respect the culture of each nation, so that the educational activity is not alienating the child.

But music is art, and as such, has its peculiarities. That makes it necessary to think of educational activities that respects and contribute to the musical development of children, so it may lead to the exploration of the musical universe and the perception of the sounds in the natural and social environment. Also, it should lead to the imagination and creation of new sounds, rhythms and melodies. Plus, above all, it should allow the children to get emotional and thus understand and interpret its own feelings.

The passions, according to Vigotski [5; p. 28], and the destinies of "invented heroes, their joy and disturb, affect us, even though we are facing untrue events, inventions of fantasy. It happens because the emotions provoked by artistic images [...] are completely real and experienced by us in truth". Only art is able to cause real and deep feelings through the imagination and the creation of something unreal, enabling awareness of our own emotions.

Facing this scenario, we must think and discuss about this musical educational practice with children. How could it be? Which principles could guide such educational practice so it could indeed contribute to children's musical development? These are just a few questions, among several, that permeate the music teaching in Early Childhood Education, and these issues are the ones this research proposed to investigate.

### 3. Methodological procedure

This research's main objective was to investigate which would be the guiding principles for an educational practice of musical activity with children. For this, we used focus groups as research tool, as well as observation in a social project called Instituto Batucar, that works with music education through body percussion, in Brasilia, Brazil's capital.

According to Krueger [11], the focus group is an interview with a group of people selected by the researcher due to specific characteristics related to the research objectives. It consists of a small number of participants and was conducted by an interviewer. The discussion was not intended to reach a consensus, but rather allow each participant expose

their point of view on the discussed topic [12]. The focus group was held with music educators who work in the social project, and with children who attend the educational activities, amounting to 14 participants. The Institute serves people from 6 to 17 years, yet, as this research investigated the educational practice of musical activity developed with children, it focused only on children of 6 and 7 years old who participate in this social project. The moderator was the researcher, who formulated and launched the questions which were answered and discussed. The data was collected by footage. The conversations were transcribed, read several times and separated into categories, thus composing the search results.

According to Vianna [13], the researcher often faces participants who can not easily verbalize their thoughts, which corroborates the use of observation. In this research, we came across some similar situations, therefore the need of observation. To the author [13; p. 12], "observation is one of the most important sources of information on qualitative research in education", and to Oliveira [14; p. 23], "observation is the instrument that provides the most details to the researcher because it is description-based".

Thus, we conducted the observation in order to gather more information about the social project, on how it is organized, structured and how it develops educational practices of musical activity with the children. Different moments were observed such as planning and carrying out activities with children. Observing, we used notes, photographs and footage. The collected data was revised several times, selected and grouped into categories, thus compounding the search results.

## 4. Results

Based on the research's goal and the analysis of the collected data by means of methodological tools, we found some categories, which were analyzed in the light of feasible guiding principles for the educational work of musical activity with children, as evidenced below.

### 4.1. Interest

Observing Instituto Batucar we noticed that people – children, teenagers or young adults – get together to share a common interest: musical activity through body percussion. This is the commonality among different people, turning them into a group. Illich [15] discusses in his studies that people can be grouped according to their interests in achieving their educational practices.

The interest, therefore, is the premise that brings together different people who seek to develop musically. It is not laws, decrees or documents,

spaces and times determined by the institution, pre-established curricular routines and contents that truly determine an educational practice, as at school, but rather a common interest that unites these people and helps them to develop the musical activity, as evidenced by the following statements:

*"I want to learn music" (Cláudio - Child).*

*"I want to learn music and drumming" (Carlos – Child).*

Vigotski [16] clarifies that educational practice cannot be organized over obligation, it is of great significance to originate from the child's interest. When it does not derive from interest, it becomes mechanical, alienating and meaningless. It is the interest that drives the child, that it generates the desire to participate in activities.

Therefore, it is necessary to heed children's interest in educational practice and thus create conditions of possibilities for their development, providing spaces and leisure time, allowing the grouping of children who share common interests.

### 4.2. Necessity

We observed that in Instituto Batucar the activities are organized so as to provoke the child the need to overcome and discovery, which boosts development in musical activity. As can be observed in the collected data below:

*All in pairs. Question and answer activity through body percussion. The music educator throws a question and each pair has to answer it. Different gestures and vocal sounds are alternated. Some challenges are thrown down because the gestures and sounds are becoming more difficult each time. Some children are confused, even so, the activity continues. Children become aware. Later, they try and manage to accomplish the activity.*

As it is noticeable, in the realization of body percussion, every activity brings new gestures, new sounds, new combinations, challenging the child. Problems arise before it and this whole situation boosts musical development, as it moves before the need that arose in the educational process. Nothing is forced. The challenges are launched and the child performs the activity, if desired, if it is from his or her interest, if it creates a necessity for achievement and discovery. Generally, the child throws itself on these challenges, because as already explained, such activities run in their interest to learn musical activity.

To Vigotski [5, 16], both interest and need are key factors need to be considered in an educational practice with the child. The author elucidates that it is the need that drives the thought and the activity to

be performed, that it enables consciousness. This happens, therefore, given the need that arises before a challenge because "where is no difficulty there is no need" [5; p. 85].

The author criticizes the educational practices that give everything ready for children, that do not believe in their ability to solve problems that arise in the educational process, that do not stimulate challenging situations, and thus do not contribute to the child's overshoot creation. Vygotsky [16] explains that necessity's existence is what puts the process of imagining and creating in motion. The activity of imagination and creation depends on somebody's accumulation of past experience. The more accumulated experience, more material one has to imagine, combine, and create rework.

### 4.3. The good side of "mistake"

Regarding the challenges to be launched, there is the possibility of conducting an educational practice with music in this perspective, from the "mistake" that may arise in relation to the role of the child in the proposed activities. That is, when an "error" appears, it is important to tell the child that something is "wrong". The "mistake" cannot go unnoticed. This information is important in this process because it contributes to the awareness that something is diverging the proposal, which contributes to provoke and challenge the child. In this regard, we faced with two situations in Instituto Batucar. In one, the teacher informs the child about his "mistake" and in the other, the child perceives alone and demonstrates awareness that had done something "wrong" in the proposed activity. As noted in the data below:

*Everyone in the circle performing body percussion activities. The music educator performs a sequence of gestures and the children repeat. Several different sequences are performed. During a sequence, the music educator realizes that something is different from the proposition. And he says: Let's fix one thing. And performs slowly the gestures, stating where the "mistake". More accurately, he emphasizes the chest beat and how the movement needs to be done with the body. After this, the children can perform the activity.*

It is noticed that the multiplier took a break to tell that something was different and it was necessary to revise it so the activity could flow smoothly. There "mistake" was a highlighted. There were no charges. The children were not constrained. There was only a quick stop to report something was different from the proposed. Realizing the "mistake" and ignoring it does not contribute to the child's musical development. This information contributes to the child's consciousness in relation to the different

existing sounds and the possibility to explore them musically.

In the situation described below, we realized that, at times, this awareness is so provoked, that the child signals the "mistake" and seeks ways to overcome it.

*Everyone in the circle performing body percussion activities. It is a question and answer activity. The music educator elaborates a question and each person in the wheel responds. He questions a child, who answers, however, the child signals that made the "wrong" gesture and sound. The activity continues. The child remains in the activity paying attention to gestures and sounds. The child rehearses alone the answer by making small gestures with the hands. The music educator questions the child again, who responds and now "get it".*

One realizes that the child itself is aware of doing a different gesture and sound. There is awareness of the "mistake" and the need of overcoming. The child observes and tries new possibilities to perform the activity. This becomes a challenge that excites the need for achievement and discovery. The child does not start from an external imposition, but from its own will. The child feels the need to continue in the activity, to find a solution and, thus, find ways to perform the activity.

### 4.4. Playing

In the focus group conducted with participants of the research, we realized that the activities performed in Instituto Batucar are driven by several games:

*"We drum and play all the time" (Camila – Child).*

*"For them it's a game [...]. This is kid stuff. Clap, snap. This is to experience the sound, right?" (Patrícia – Music Educator).*

One realizes that "playing" is a present activity in the institute and it is connected to child's interest, urging the desire to participate in the proposed activities. It creates conditions of possibility for children musical development through playing. In performing the games, they explore, imagine, creates and experiment with new sounds.

This sound experimentation is a process of sound and musicality awareness, which is provided through the activity in the cultural milieu. The child perceives the sounds that are around itself, notices the sounds that its body can produce, plays with them and re-elaborates. This constitutes an imagination and creation process from the child. In childhood, the process of creation happens through playing. It is during the game that a re-elaboration of the lived activities happen. It is playing that children rework what, somehow, they have experienced in the

culture. For Vygotsky [16] the creative activity already exists in early childhood.

It is noteworthy that, in playing, the child willingly subjects itself to the rules, without an adult's imposition. When part of that, the sense of activity is lost, the joke is uncharacterized, becoming something foreign to the interests and needs of the child, which does not contribute to its development.

#### 4.5. Development

By analyzing the activities performed at Instituto Batucar, we perceived, quite clearly, the importance of development to not get ahead, not drive the educational process, for it is not necessary to achieve pre-determined steps. There is no need to anticipate prior development of the child to educational practice take place, as Vygotsky [5] has already signaled. Note the survey data:

*Everyone in the circle. There are about twenty people. Boys and girls are together. Children, adolescents and young together. Different ages together in one space and time. All together at the same time performing the same activities.*

Every person who attend the institute gather and perform the same activities together. People who are at the institute since its inception mingle with those who have just entered. People who already have accumulated experiences of body percussion or play musical instruments join those who are starting this process. There is no division by age. There are no divisions according to level of development. The bottom line is the intention to promote exchange of experiences and the contribution that it may have to the musical development of children, adolescents and young people who share the same educational activities in this space.

#### 4.6. Decentralization

In many educational contexts, practice focuses on educator's actions and decisions. He or she is able to teach and disseminate the necessary knowledge, becoming thus the center of the educational process and often inhibiting the musical development of the child.

The educator, as the center of the process and as knowledge holder, causes a dependency on the child, who goes discrediting its possibilities, which limits and controls its development. In this relationship, the educator is not an collaborator, because the collaborative action must contribute so that development happens, projecting it forward [7].

Ranciè [17] explains that by this the teacher plays a role as explaining master, discrediting others' ability to progress in the educational process if they

do not receive an exact direction of the path to be taken.

Vigotski [7; p. 448] defends that the teacher is only the educational space organizer. Therefore, an educator's role is to promote collaborative action for children's development, creating situations that challenge new discoveries acquisition. One of the creators of Instituto Batucar highlights this context:

*"There is not a thinking head. I ordering and people doing. No. [...] As you came here and things were happening. [...] Everybody here learns and teaches" (Ricardo – Music Educator).*

In addition, we have realized such situation of sharing and experiences exchange at several moments of the activities, when music educators put children and teenagers to conduct activities, to create sounds and songs, or to be the conductor. In all these moments, there is the decentralization of the educator, but this does not imply that their presence is unnecessary. Their presence is needed in the organization of educational space and its intention is to promote moments of musical activities' sharing. The intentionality of contribution to children musical development.

#### 4.7. Learning from the other

As already explained, collaborative action does not focus on an educator, but it is something that can be experienced in a group of people who share the same educational space, which also happens in relation to the musical activity in the educational practice.

The collective action promotes a collaborative action in which one learns from the other, creating a context of exchange of experiences and knowledge. Thus, the educational practice takes place in a horizontal line, in which everyone takes responsibility to contribute to the musical development of the other. Such posture can come from the educator or between pairs, from child to child. It can take place among everyone in the group. In the statements below, we can realize that such practice is part of the context of Instituto Batucar:

*"Soon everybody is helping one another, there. [...] They are exchanging. [...] It is through body percussion and making music together. With one another. Play along. The whole time together" (Ricardo – Music Educator).*

*"I think it's very important. [...] It's an exchange and this exchange is very good" (Marcela – Music Educator).*

Everyone reported these moments of exchanging experiences and knowledge, which contributed to the process of another's musical development, and his

became something important and true for each person. In addition to the speeches, we observed this reality:

*Everyone is in small circles sitting on chairs on the patio. They are with the guitar, learning a chord of a nursery rhyme. A child makes the chord and goes teach another child. At the small circles, one helps the other to play the guitar.*

Children show pride in contributing to the development of the other. Feel able. For them, it becomes a necessity and an opportunity to spread the knowledge among different people.

#### **4.8. Apprentice Master**

Rancièrè [17] addresses an unusual situation - to learn something from someone who does not know it yet. In Instituto Batucar, we realized that such a practice is something that happens routinely, according to the survey:

*Everyone sitting in a circle with the guitar. Suddenly, a child arrives with a violin and hand it to another child, who tunes it up. Other two children arrive and ask the same thing. The child adjusts them. They meet in a small group. One tries to teach others how to play the violin. The one who tuned up the instrument and the others are still learning to handle and play the violin.*

Children begin the process of musical activity and are already brought to share. They are challenged to exercise this practice, to exchange and thus help others. In this situation, both learn, all are driven to development, because it is a challenge that arises from necessity and desire. Rancièrè [17] addresses this issue and thus helps to free us of certain truths that determine who can or cannot guide someone to new discoveries. He contributes to free ourselves from this assumption that limits the possibilities for sharing knowledge. In this situation, everyone can, if there is interest and willingness.

#### **4.9. Music belongs to everyone**

We noticed through observation and focus group that the educational practice developed in Instituto Batucar does not have as goal to train musicians. Instead, it provides access to musical knowledge, believing that everyone can develop musically if they wish. The aim of educational practice is not the future, but what can be worked in the present with the children, what they can experiment and develop, assuming that music can be provided and shared among all people, that music belongs to everyone, that everyone is a capable and musical being. This is noticeable in the speech that follows:

*"We have never worked on that idea of training musicians. It is more like music is a form, a right. [...] So, like, for us it is a very meaning relationship of life itself. [...] So anyone can make music. [...] It's not just for the super talented and such. There is no such thing" (Ricardo – Music Educator).*

Music is a cultural activity and, accordingly, it is important to create conditions of possibilities for the contact with the music, not superficially, but so the child develops a careful and intentional listening, noticing the surrounding sound, thinks about existing sounds, imagines and creates new sounds, explores the sounds of the body and the different musical instruments, plays with these sounds, composes music, sings, touches and be touched by the numerous possibilities of developing the musicianship. In this sense, we have illustrated an observation context that has been enabling the practice of a variety of sound and musical possibilities.

*Everyone in the circle performing body percussion activities. Each child is invited to create a sound. The sound can be output using the mouth only or other body parts. Everyone performs their sound, which causes an assortment of colorful sounds. One imitates the sound of the other. They perform intensity exercises using these sounds. Each child is asked to conduct the others, gathering people, indicating the time that each one can perform the sound or be silence.*

Thus, we realize that having music experience, is not only coping, as something outside the person, but imagining, experimenting, creating, experiencing emotion, making associations and relaborating.

The child imagines, explores, experiences, creates and shares these sounds and, especially, plays with these sounds, because what matters at the moment is to experience the musicianship and not being prepared for the future. What is important is now and not tomorrow. The important thing is to experience the sounds, the songs, the music and perceive the self as a musical being.

#### **4.10. The core is to have music**

Some educational concepts in musical activity are driven in standardization and musical technique, distancing the self from musical practice itself. Vygotsky [18] states that the domain of technique is also important, but that comes later, if necessary.

The techniques were developed socially throughout the history of cultural man. Therefore, in the preparation process, it started from a need to share. Signs to enabled the sharing and understanding among those who came to dominate

them where created, perpetuating intergenerational songs. In the historical process itself, the sign and the performance modes emerged after the existence of the song, after the exploration and musical activity itself, hence some educational concepts perpetuate a practice that has in principle the knowledge of the standard theory and technique, leaving the musical experience in the background? Such attitude has contributed to the distancing of people from experiencing and from musical development. This happened in Instituto Batucar from the deployment of the orchestra, which caused a radical change in the organization, as you can see in the following quote:

*“We started with the orchestra and the boys were troubled with it. [...] Only when the instruments arrived, the violin came and such, the boys were marveled. Wow, they marveled. They loved it. Only that when they started and saw that they had to study, they had to play, they had to train, and this and that, they got scared. They were startled and there was a large number of dropouts” (Patricia – Music Educator).*

The speech shows the impact that the presence of the orchestra caused. Since 2001, the Institute works with body percussion and some guitar lessons. In this practice, children, adolescents and young people perform activities more freely, experiencing the sounds and exploring the many possibilities of sounds, movements and ways of playing. As of 2011, a new context emerged, also offering educational practices with other musical instruments and thus the intention to assemble an orchestra. This proposal came from a conductor. This person conducts the classes and has provided a large part of the instruments. At the time, the institute had 120 people participating in activities, after the implementation of the orchestra, the institute had the presence of only fifteen people. This situation provoked anxieties and questions. What they have done so far was to intensify the activities of body percussion and guitar, the orchestra concentrated only once a week - Friday - for those who are willing to face this musical reading structure, intensive training, correct posture, discipline and a pattern to be followed. People who go for the orchestra already know they will face this reality. In the body percussion and guitar lessons, the institute managed to distance these impositions, implementing an educational practice which allows a musical experience grounded in the activity itself, experimentation, exploration and discovery. Nothing is required. Nothing is forced. Children participate in activities within their means. Technique, proper posture, the right way to play arises when and if there is need, for the essential is the musical activity itself.

#### 4.11. Child

We realized that, in Instituto Batucar, the child, despite having less life experience and, in theory, less experience accumulation, relies more on its ability, which highlight the statements below.

*“We create an activity for the children [...]. You will see that they don't even care. They get there, do it, and don't care at all.” (Mauricio – Music Educator).*

Corroborating, we illustrate an observed context in the institute.

*It is proposed the division in pairs. Conducting a question and answer activity through body percussion. Someone is challenged to lead the activity. Children and teenagers are all together at the moment, they look at each other and no one accept the challenge. Within seconds, a child of six years accepts the challenge to lead the activity, elaborating sound questions and the others answer it. The child makes this for a few times. Then others accept to lead the activity. In the end, everyone was clapping.*

Among focus group and observation, we realize that the child risks more because it relies more on its possibilities, playing and performing the activities, moreover, imagining and creating different sounds and songs.

For Vygotsky [16] the accumulation of experiences is crucial to the development of imagination, which in turn, is critical to the creation. Imagination is not an idle amusement of the mind, but a vital and necessary role to man. Every work of imagination is constructed of elements taken from reality and from previous experiences. The author clarifies a misconception that exists in relation to the child's imagination. Some people claim that the child is more imaginative than adults, however, the second one, by having more years of life, has accumulated more experience and, thus, has more possibilities to process the imagination. The imagination of the adult tends to be richer because he has lived more and, theoretically, has more accumulated experience. It is noteworthy that this process of imagining and creating the child differs from the adult, for the interests and needs are different.

The child does not live fully inserted in the adult world, and tries to understand this reality, which leads to an interest and need. The child imagines and creates for it. It's the way to understand the roles and social rules. The child reworks the real world through imagination and creation - which often happens by games. Therefore, this characteristic is historically developed in the culture. However, the educational practice has the power to undermine this

confidence that the child has about the possibilities. Some educational conceptions, by uncharacterizing musical activity, making it meaningless to the child, sometimes create patterns that are not made by the the child, so it comes to disbelieve in its abilities and the confidence is shaken. Therefore, it is necessary to think in an educational practice that contributes to prevent this from happening, creating conditions of possibility so the confidence, imagination and creation keep being present in the educational activities offered to children.

#### 4.12. Process

In Instituto Batucar they organize musical performances for the local community, as well as in other contexts, but the educational practice target is not these events, as we have evidenced in the statements that follow:

*“Because, like, in reality, the kids get onstage e play nicely is one thing. Is this the main thing? No, it's not! It is not! [...] You know, nobody saw my best moments with music. Get it?” (Ricardo – Music Educator).*

Corroborating, we observed, in several moments, the joy, the satisfaction, the achievement on the proposed activities. At various times, the children applaud one another. They do this because the carried out activity was important to them.

The target is the process, the musical activity itself, the experience, the meeting of the group, the celebration in front of the performed activity, the shared experiences. That is important.

#### 4.13. Freedom

Upon entering the Instituto Batucar, we realize that it has time to open and close its doors, however, children do not have a predetermined time to arrive. On the first day of observation, we were faced with a peculiar situation:

*The institute starts its activities at 2 pm. Children arrive and already start to drum spread across the yard. Soon comes a musical educator, invites them to form a circle and begins the body percussion activities. The minutes pass and every time a new child arrives. Throughout the afternoon, children come and go. No child is called to attention in relation to the time of arrival or exit. The activity don't. Children arrive and enter the activities that are already happening. They come and stay a while at the circle with attention to what is happening, to then carry out the activity.*

Based on these data, we observed that there is no pre-set time for the children arrival. Nothing is asked

in relation to the time of arrival or departure. No one is late. No child is constrained. Freedom is already perceived in those moments.

There is no name calling to ensure the daily presence of children. Not a curriculum to be developed during the day. There are no standards, deadlines and no one is certified. There are only the provided moments of experience with music through educational activities.

Vigotski [16] addresses the importance of freedom in educational contexts. The author points out some criticisms of educational concepts that establish an organization and a rigid structure that limit choice and creation, which are distant from the real needs and interests of the child. One must consider the child's experiences and promote an environment free of pre-established parameters. It is necessary to provide freedom of choice, imagination, exploration, experimentation and creation through the experience of the child's musicality in a collaborative environment where one person can contribute to the musical development of the other.

#### 4.14. Every music is allowed

Another principle in Instituto Batucar is the lack of limitations on the musical styles. It is noticeable the respect for cultural diversity, different musical tastes, and the existence of intention to expand the musical repertoire. In the observations, we came across a diversity of musical styles, such as nursery rhymes, gospel songs, MPB, among others. Ahead, we have a speech that talks about it:

*“But then, in the context of the mainstream media, you have the music for the child kind of, kind of biased. That people talk about music for children. That song like this, it has to be that way... It doesn't have to be.. Children like music. Any music that you put. [...] For me, music is music. [...] There is no such thing as despising it and also labeling as positive or negative” (Ricardo – Music Educator).*

What determines a child's music? What determines what the child can or cannot hear? What determines if music is positive or negative for children's ears? These are conventions that the music market tends to impose in relation to the child's musical choices. A brief look at children's posture in terms of the songs they hear, will show that they truly love music. They listen and sing any song - the song that is part of their historical and cultural context. What the child hears and sings says a lot about the social group to which it belongs, says much of its history and establishes relationships with the environment around it. In an educational practice with music it is important to start from the principle of respect for different songs that the child already brings to the space and educational moment.

Another important factor to be considered is the need to provoke hearing, to expand the repertoire, to allow coexistence of musical diversity, thus avoiding denial or standardization of musical tastes.

In other words, to provide an educational practice based on respect at the musics brought by the child, and on expansion of musical repertoire. Listen to music from other times, such as today. Listen to music from different countries. Listen to music from different parts of Brazil. And not only listen, but explore these songs, their sound, their structure. Playing with the songs in order to allow the reworking and thus broaden their musical experiences. We will develop more accurately at the last category of this research.

#### 4.15. Aesthetic Education

In a moment of the focus group, one of music educators brought up a question:

*“Then there is a dilemma that Ricardo always says: do you like what you listen to or do you listen to what you like?” (Maurício – Music Educator).*

Such reflection is necessary among people who work in a social project that has the educational musical activity as its focus. Although there is an opening at the Institute for the entry of all kinds of music - which is commendable as it demonstrates a concern and respect for the musical identity of the people who live and share musical experiences in this educational context. However, although the doors seem open to all types of music, educational practice is not limited to acception, there is also a reflection about these songs. "do I hear what I like or do I like what I hear?"

This reflection does not come to a conclusion as easily or simplistic, there are variables to be included in this huge cauldron of musical discussion, factors such as anthropological, historical, philosophical, among others. Even if a conclusion is not reached, this reflection is something that needs to be present in educational practices involving musical activities. Questions, reflections, dialogues, weights, must be part of an educational context, especially when the music, understood as art, is part of that context. Following the observed data, about the artistic work done with the songs that are sung by the children:

*The institute starts its activities at 2 pm. Children arrive and start drumming spread across the yard. A child comes singing a folk song, "Bambalalão". Soon enough comes one of the music educators and invites everyone to form a circle and to sing the song that the children sang. Everyone sings. He adds body percussion. Everybody keep singing the song and performing body percussion. The body percussion will have changed over the activity, with new*

*gestures and sounds, but the song remains the same. In a moment, there is a sequence of body percussion that some children cannot do. The educator calls attention to a few things such as attention and attentive listening. The activity continues.*

We noticed that the music that the child came in singing was used during all the activity, but it went through a reworking. The music went through a process of sound and rhythmic experimentation. There was an exploration of the gestures' timbres. There was concern with the work structure, the music's form. For Vygotsky [18] the art work begins where the art form begins. The author explains that there is the material and the shape of an artwork. The material is all that's ready and the artist uses, it already exists. In this case, the material of music is sound. The form is "the provision of such material by the laws of artistic construction in the exact sense of the term" [18; p. 177]. The form is the format that the sound gets in structuring music. Music as art does not come from working with the sound exactly as it already exists. The sound is artistically reworked. The sound is organized in a particular structure to turn into art. The choice of sounds and how to display them become artistic form that turns into music. All this is an act of imagination and creation.

Moreover, the artistic form messes with emotions. This is not an ordinary emotion, experienced in everyday situations, but a different emotion. This is an aesthetic emotion – a cultural emotion culturally provoked. Art is a human activity aimed to elicit emotions in people. Sounds are organized turning into music, and this artistic organization has in it the intention of provoking cultural emotions in people. Therefore, it is important to have a committed educational practice to the aesthetic education. The aesthetic education encompasses everything that we have been discussing throughout this research: the preoccupation with the art form, the reflection on the various songs that permeate the cultural life, the sound exploration, the imagination, the creation and the emotion. The aesthetic education is not limited to listen or watch a song, but also to experience the many songs that exist, experimenting, making associations, reworking and emoting.

## 5. Conclusion

As seen in the introduction, in several moments of school education in Brazil, the educational musical activity has not contributed to creating the conditions of possibility for the musical development of the child. In many situations, the educational practice exercises unrelated functions and the child becomes a mere spectator in this process, so their interests, needs and active participation are ignored. All this triggers a mechanical and standardized educational

process, making it meaningless to the child. The research at Instituto Batucar allowed us to see other possibilities for educational practice with music, based on guiding principles that can contribute to children musical development.

We emphasize that the guiding principles found do not end here. Probably, there are other principles that can guide an educational practice with music, which requires further research in this direction, in other educational contexts. The research focused in only one social project. There are so many others contexts that develop musical activities. Apart from other social projects, there are educational practices that permeate generations in different communities, which can be researched. It appears, therefore, that much remains to be investigated.

## 6. References

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