RESEARCH NOTES

The Project Music for Everybody in the Context of Continuous Education in Yakutia

El proyecto Música para todos en el contexto de la educación continua en Yakutia

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Summary

In 2013, President of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) Mikhail Nikolaev announced the launch of the republican project *Music for Everybody*. The organizers of this project — the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture and Spirituality of the republic — have set the goal to help all children learn one classical musical instrument by their graduation from general education school. For this purpose, the ministries signed an agreement on joint work in order to promulgate the project that was developed and organized by scientists, musicians, and teachers. In 2015, the Music Faculty of the Yakutsk Gogolev Pedagogical College was appointed as a project coordinator for providing methodological assistance during the implementation of this program. Against this backdrop, the present article discusses the main coordinating aspects and elements of the methodological support of *Music for Everybody*, which are aimed at consolidating the efforts of the music teachers of Yakutia. In this regard, modern musical computer technologies are increasingly playing a significant role in preparation of the key components of the educational process's methodological support within the context of project implementation. The application of such technologies facilitates the preservation of the cultural features and national colors of ethnic groups living in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), while also making it possible to broadcast the most salient elements of the multinational cultural traditions of the republic's indigenous ethnic groups.

Keywords: Project *Music for Everybody*; Music Teachers; Music Education; Music Pedagogy; Playing Music.

Resumen

En 2013, el presidente de la República de Sakha (Yakutia), Mikhail Nikolaev, anunció el lanzamiento del proyecto republicano *Música para todos*. Los organizadores de este proyecto, el Ministerio de Educación y el Ministerio de Cultura y Espiritualidad de la República, han establecido el objetivo de ayudar a todos los niños a aprender un instrumento musical clásico al graduarse de la escuela de educación general. Para este propósito, los ministerios firmaron un acuerdo sobre trabajo conjunto para promulgar el proyecto que fue desarrollado y organizado por científicos, músicos y maestros. En 2015, la Facultad de Música del Colegio Pedagógico Gogolev de Yakutsk fue nombrada coordinadora del proyecto para proporcionar asistencia metodológica durante la implementación de este programa. En este contexto, el presente artículo analiza los principales aspectos y elementos de coordinación del apoyo metodológico de *Música para todos*, que tienen como objetivo consolidar los esfuerzos de los profesores de música de Yakutia. En este sentido, las modernas tecnologías informáticas musicales desempeñan cada vez más un papel importante en la preparación de los componentes clave del apoyo metodológico del proceso educativo dentro del contexto de la implementación del proyecto. La aplicación de tales tecnologías facilita la preservación de las características culturales y los colores nacionales de los grupos étnicos que viven en la República de Sakha (Yakutia), al tiempo que permite transmitir los elementos más destacados de las tradiciones culturales multinacionales de los grupos étnicos indígenas de la república.

Palabras clave: El Proyecto *Música Para Todos*; Profesores de Música; Educación Musical; Pedagogía Musical; Música.

Introduction

On October 1st 2013, the President of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) Mikhail Nikolaev announced the launch of the republican project *Music for Everybody*. The organizers of this project — the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture and Spirituality of the republic — have set the goal to help all children learn one classical musical instrument by the end of high school. Therefore, the ministries signed an agreement on joint work to promulgate the project that

was developed and organized by scientists, musicians, and teachers with the participation of Eduard Abdullin.

In Yakutsk, the musical teachers from all Yakutia districts attended the special courses on the methodology of teaching musical instruments for elementary school teachers. District educational departments and parents of young children began to acquire musical instruments.

The commencement of the corresponding course in the Higher School of Music marked the next stage in the development of the project program. In 2015, the Music Faculty of the Yakutsk Gogolev Pedagogical College was appointed as a project coordinator for methodological assistance during the implementation of the program. The college was required to become the center coordinating the methodological component of the project *Music for Everybody* in all districts of Yakutia. The Association of Yakut Music Teachers also provided the support.

Literature review

The first experimental work began in 1991 under the guidance of Doctor of Art History N.A. Bergaer, Gorbunova and Yatsentkovskaya, (2015) in the first Russian studio equipped with MIDI keys. The studio named *Music for Everybody* was affiliated with the St. Petersburg State Conservatory n.a. N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov. There, as part of the experiment, an 8-year course of solfeggio and harmony practical classes was developed for students of performing faculties, music scholars of the State Conservatory, and for students of piano and pedagogical faculty of the St. Petersburg State Institute of Culture. The purpose of the experiment was to identify the possibilities of the positive influence of playing a musical instrument on the formation of personal qualities and on the direct transition of music theory into musical practice (pedagogical and concert). As a result of this experimental work, the proprietary *Method of Teaching a Musical Instrument "Music for Everybody"* was patented as an invention (1997, inventor's certificate No. 2090938).

Another experimental work aimed at expanding general music education was carried out on the same basis; it involved classes for students of regular schools, corrective classes for people with hearing and vision impairments, seminars, and master classes for music teachers from various regions of Russia (Abdulin, Akhunov, Babiyak, *et al.* 2004a; 2004b).

A number of courses was developed and introduced into the educational process of the faculty of correctional pedagogy of the Herzen State Pedagogical University (2004-2012) based on the *Music for Everybody* method. New courses for universities, music, special, and regular schools included various programs, such as *Methods of Using the Elements of the Musical Language and Musical Writing in Correctional Work*. The developed system makes it possible for students to interact with music in a dialogue mode; its aim is to create the foundation of music education through the learning of music as a metalanguage, the proficiency of which allows you to listen, understand, and play music.

A number of provisions of the methodology *Music for Everybody* was included in the development of educational programs for the new educational concept *Musical Computer Technologies in Education* (MCT). This concept was created under the guidance of the facilitator and head of the homonymous Educational and Methodical Laboratory (EML), chairman of the Education Board of Herzen State Pedagogical University — I.B. Gorbunova. The developed educational programs are focused on the relevant tasks of modern music education, such us authorization and introduction of the Bachelor's program *Musical Computer Technologies* and Master's program *Musical Computer Technologies in Education*. These programs are available in various Russian music academies, conservatories, and pedagogical universities since 2004 and 2006 respectively. These areas of study are reflected in program documents [see, e.g., (Abdulin, Akhunov, Babiyak, *et al.* 2004a; 2004b)].

The following tasks in music education were performed as part of the educational concept *Musical Computer Technologies in Education*: development and introduction of such programs of professional retraining as *Teaching Music with the Use of Musical Computer Technologies*, *Teaching Electronic Keyboard Synthesizer, Information Technologies in Music and Music Education*, and others; organization of scientific and methodological support of the educational process; introduction of teaching aids, innovative teaching and methodological kits, digital and network educational resources; development and verification of new educational and methodological kits; implementation of full educational and methodological support for new courses, including multimedia aids and online support of the educational process (see, e.g., (Gorbunova & *Gorbunova*, 2016; Belov, Gorbunova & Gorelchenko, 2016)

A group of developers from the EML had initiated a scientific research in this area under the guidance of Gorbunova with the support of the National Training Foundation (NTF) and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. They have organized and conducted a large-scale assessment of the developed integrated innovative educational system *Musical Computer Technologies* in the pilot regions of Russia, as evidenced by open educational resources that are publicly available online. These resources include:

- Innovative educational methical complex *Music and Computer Sciences* (grades 1-4), Unified Collection of Educational Resources www.school-collection.edu.ru (tested and introduced in the educational process as part of the project *IT Penetration of the Educational System* with the support of NTF);

- Educational methical complex *Musical Computer (New Musical Instrument)* (grades 9-11) (tested and introduced in the educational process as part of the project *Creation of the Next Generation Educational Literature* with the support of NTF);

- Complex information sources and digital educational resources *Music in the Digital Space* (grades 5-9) and *Sound and Music in Multimedia Systems*, Unified Collection of Educational Resources www.school-collection.edu.ru (tested and introduced in the educational process as part of the project *IT Penetration of the Educational System* with the support of NTF);

- Inclusive educational system: equal opportunities for music education and rehabilitation of children with disabilities. This methodological system is built on the basic human desire to be an active participant in musical activity, the ability and inclination to play, the basic properties of the nature of music, accumulating the unity of three discrete sensory systems (auditory, visual, and neuromuscular), and the possibilities of musical computer technologies that have no analogues in the past. Although, the absence of one of the sensory systems makes it difficult to play a musical instrument, the other two are able to compensate for it (for example, children with severe hearing loss are still able to play music), which makes it possible to use this methodological system in inclusive education. The following educational facilities have been successfully using this methodology for many years: St. Petersburg School No. 33 for Hearing-Impaired Children (N.A. Yatsentkovskaya), St. Petersburg Boarding School No.1 for Visually Impaired Children, St. Petersburg Social Rehabilitation Center for Disabled (A.M. Voronov), and music classes for hearing-impaired children of the Okhta Art Education Center in St. Petersburg (A.A. Govorova), and others (Gorbunova & Voronov, 2018; Gorbunova & Govorova, n.d.; Gorbunova, Govorova, & Voronov, 2019; Gorbunova & Govorova, 2018).

Methods and approaches

New information technologies are increasingly applied in modern musical practice and becoming a part of modern culture. Every day there are more and more varieties of electronic musical instruments (synthesizers, samplers, musical computers). The application of multimedia systems in music education makes it possible to use digital educational materials, such as musical

encyclopedias, books, guides, and various anthologies. Today, the tools of modern music education include innovative pedagogical technologies, computer technologies, and electronic musical instruments (Gorbunova, 2018b; 2018c); educational institutions develop and implement innovative educational programs on the base of the latest technologies and teaching methods aimed at further development and improvement of the educational system.

The teaching staff at the Gogolev Pedagogical College makes every effort to ensure that the education of their students corresponds to the level of knowledge and competencies of a modern (music) teacher. The college has its own recording studio with the isolated rooms, equipment, and professional software necessary for the work of a musician, sound engineer, performer, composer, orchestrator, or teacher to make or record music. The college also provides training on a number of subjects in the MCT area, including the course *Recording Studio*, a program developed by one of the authors of the article (O.A. Spiridonov).

One of the main tasks of the modern stage in the development of musical pedagogy and pedagogical research is revealing the didactic features of the use of MCT, the possibilities of their use in music education, and the education of the younger generation based on classical music and traditional approaches to methods of broadcasting centuries-old musical culture. It is important that enthusiasm for the new external and digital effects and opportunities not only contributes to gaining vivid and rich impressions due to the communication with the musical art, but also develops critical thinking and influences the intellectual and cultural growth of students.

It should be noted that the foundations for the implementation of the project *Music for Everybody* which were developed at the EML *Music Computer Technologies* of the Russian Herzen State Pedagogical University, have analogues in world practice (Gorbunova, 2012; Gorbunova & Govorova, 2015).

Results and discussion

In order to implement the project, the personnel issue should've been addressed first. For this purpose, it was necessary to train 1500 music teachers for music educational institutions. It was decided that two hours a week were allotted to extended education, and one hour a week was devoted to the state program. That way the students had three hours of musical classes a week, which was enough for the project implementation (Voronov & Gorbunova, 2011). New courses for teaching musical instruments for elementary school teachers in Yakutsk were attended by teachers from all Yakutia districts. District educational departments began to acquire new musical instruments as well as parents, who demonstrated their readiness to participate in the project.

The next step was the inclusion of the Higher School of Music in the project (Gorbunova & Hiner, 2011). This school gave an impetus to the development of music as an art in the republic. The students of this school ascended the musical Olympus of various international and Russian competitions about 700 times. The project *Music for Everybody*, which was developed by various scientists and teachers, was originally reviewed in August 2015 during the first international music congress dedicated to the twentieth anniversary of the Higher School of Music. The project was approved and given the necessary support. It was decided that in the context of the project the music would be used as an educational technology aimed at the development of children's perception, their consciousness, and skills, a way to promote a love for art, a means for easier perception of such school subjects as physics, chemistry, computer science, and languages. The project was intended for children from 4 to 17 years old. It was assumed that having mastered the basics of musical art, a child would easily master technical and social sciences and would become a good specialist in the future.

In 2015, the Music Faculty of the Yakutsk Gogolev Pedagogical College was appointed as a project coordinator for methodological assistance during the implementation of the project program (Gorbunova & Kameris, 2019). It is the only educational institution in the republic that

has been training music teachers for schools and kindergartens for nearly 100 years. The Music Faculty of the college has been operating for 58 years, and more than 2 thousand specialists had graduated from it. The college had to become the center coordinating the methodological component of the project *Music for Everybody* in all Yakutia districts.

The implementation of any program is, first, organizational work, and qualitative changes in the teaching of music are possible only with a proper approach to the methodological component of the project. In this regard, Yakutsk Pedagogical College conducts advanced training courses for music teachers—*Music Education in the Context of the Project Music for Everybody*.

In general, the program was based on the music educational system of D.B. Kabalevskyi. During the work on the program certain difficulties were noted: first of all, the lack of pre-vocational training—many teachers in Yakutia did not receive training at children's music schools, while it is very important to start studying music at the age of 5-6 years old; secondly, there are no music departments in republican universities that would specifically train teachers, and this also significantly affects the professionalism of teachers; and thirdly, republic schools are not yet adequately provided with musical instruments.

Modern global experience indicates that the cultural potential of the region with rich musical culture of various ethnic groups can be used not only to educate and familiarize people with their spiritual heritage (Old.Sakha.Gov.Ru, 2019; Vschoolmus.ru, 2019), but can also act as a powerful resource able to break the cycle of crisis and give a new impetus to the intensive socio-economic development of the republic. Qualities that are developed by familiarizing oneself with culture and art are necessary for a person entering the world of creative economy.

Today we can note the positive changes in the music education for children in the republic. The necessary fundamental basis for all further interagency work was created at the first stage of the project implementation: the concept of the project *Music for Everybody* was approved at the governmental republican level, there are research guidance and supervisory councils, joint working group of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture and Spiritual Development of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), all of which are involved in the program. The project is recognized as innovative in the field of Russian music education.

It is known that the key to the success of any business is the professionalism of the team. Compared to 2014, the number of music teachers with special education increased by 13%, with higher education—by 35%. Up to this year more than 600 music educators had attended advanced training courses, including 280 music teachers, 77 additional education teachers, 137 music directors, and 120 teachers of music schools for children.

For the development of professional qualifications of personnel, cooperation has been established with many universities and conservatories of the country, including Herzen State Pedagogical University and St. Petersburg State Conservatory n.a. N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov. It is especially worth noting the scientific and methodological contribution and educational work carried out by the staff of the EML *Music Computer Technologies* of the Russian Herzen State Pedagogical University. Their invaluable experience in developing the basic principles of the project, the comprehensive scientific material, and methodological support using MCT (Alieva, Gorbunova, and Mezentseva, (2019a; 2019b) contributed to the intensive development of the main directions of the practical, educational, methodological, and scientific potential of this project (Gorbunova, 2019; Gorbunova & Kameris, 2019).

Understanding the significance of the project, curators and parents have contributed to the equipping of the music rooms. The largest number of musical creative associations operate in the central districts of Yakutia. More and more children in the republic are studying music every day. Music education is carried out from a preschool level, the first stage of general education. In kindergartens, all children try their hand as musicians, and this is 98% of children aged 5 and

older. Over the past academic year, about 7000 children took part in republican musical competitions organized by various government departments and cultural institutions; 2382 soloists took part in national competitions, 1713 becoming prize-winners.

The high the high musical achievements of Yakutia are partly down to the consolidation of the available resources. Many students have honorably represented their native republic at the Russian and international competitions. For example, pianist Aisen Fyodorov, second grade student at Yakutsk School No. 16, became a laureate of the first degree at the *Planet of Talents* International Competition; the Orchestra of Folk Instruments, from the Children's Creativity Center in Yakutsk, a multiple first-degree laureate of the All-Russian competition *Childhood Address—Russia*; Kirill Matveev, eleventh-grade student at the Kobyakonskaya School in Namsky District, won the Grand Prix at the *Unity of Russia* and the *Russian Treasures* competitions. The project authors are sure that new names will continue to emerge as testament to the Yakut music education system.

Republican music competitions and projects are an effective way to engage children, and every tenth student takes part in one of these every year. Examples include the singing competition for boys *Yllaa-tuoy, wol o5o!* (Yakut: Ыллаа-туой, уол о5о, If the Boys of the Whole Earth!); the integrated competition *Wal o5o – norouot keskile* (Yakut: Уол о5о – норуот кэскилэ, Boys are the Future of the Nation); competitions for vocal-instrumental ensembles, the patriotic song competition *The Song of the Motherland*; the children's original song and dance competition *Sir Bihik* (Yakut: Сир биһик, Earth, My Cradle); the children's folk festival *Circle Dance of Friendship*; the children's theatre ensembles *Blue Bird*; and many others.

In addition, the Ministry of Education of Yakutia is seeking to maximize the expansion of innovative approaches to and forms of education, as well as to expand the use of music educational technologies. In this context, Musical Summer Schools have been created—a program for teaching music in summer camps. This comprises 70 camps where 2,500 children are being taught music during summer holidays. As part of the project, additional methodological recommendations and educational programs for learning to play musical instruments have been developed. Famous musicians are also taking part in the program— over the years, the Yakutsk State Philharmonic Society has become a reliable partner of the project, helping to introduce children to classical music.

The influence of the project *Music for Everybody* on various aspects of the educational system (students' psychological state, their performance, talent development, as well as human and material resources, etc.) is being monitored with the aim of further spreading the accumulated experience to other areas of education in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), as well as in other regions of Russia.

In order to identify the level of satisfaction with music education, a survey was conducted among teachers, parents, and students, who had completed their first years of training under the *Music for Everybody* project program. According to the results, 69% of students believe that music has a positive effect on overall performance at school; more than 90% admit that music helps develop diligence, patience, and attentiveness. Every parent believes that every child needs music lessons, as these positively affect their emotional state. Each teacher believes that music lessons have a positive effect on the overall learning experience. They also think that music lessons teach students to manage time and contribute to the development of mathematical abilities, diligence, and patience.

The next stage of the project will be the development and implementation of a long-term plan, which should be ready before 2022, when the Yakut ASSR will celebrate its 100th anniversary—a remarkable date for the whole country. To this end, the project organizers are faced with the task of preparing the teaching staff and strengthening the material and technical

base of general education schools, music schools, and children's art schools throughout the republic.

Conclusion

Today, there is a high demand for expanding the network of municipal children's music schools. One of the ways to do that is to open their branches based on general education schools in districts, youth music centers, and studios. At the same time, it is necessary to create associations for children of different age, to cultivate love for classical and folk music among the population.

In the future, we see a collaboration with UNESCO associated schools, the expansion of international cooperation, and the preparation of a scientific evidence of the music education's positive influence on the intellectual, spiritual, moral, and social development of a child's personality. To implement the next stage of the project, the following tasks should be performed:

1. Development of a continuous music educational system, including the programs for general music education and early childhood education using electronic musical instruments and musical computer technologies.

2. Improvement of training and advanced training system for music teachers and music directors.

3. Organization of musical public education for residents of the republic by means of mass media.

4. Extension of the international cooperation in the field of music education with the aim of attracting UNESCO to project management.

It is difficult to overestimate the role of music in our life. A great teacher Sukhomlinskyi V.A. once said: "Music is a powerful source of thought. A healthy mental development is impossible without music education." Music unites people of various beliefs, ages and nationalities. The authors urge teachers and the public to disseminate the ideas of the project, as it aims to create special conditions for the musical development of children, so that they would grow to be spiritually rich, successful people.

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