

Dissertation's Abstract

This dissertation starts with the problem that the understanding of music through using language reaches the limitations of its possibilities quickly. This is especially valid for young people whose development of language and speech has not been completed. This means the control of basic technical terms concerning music and as well the expression of emotional effects. This dissertation attempts to give answers to this significant and important question of teaching music at school. It criticizes the less professional and largely not ambitious efforts towards "painting with music" that are threatened to be diminished to a form of occupational therapy. One can ascertain that on the one hand this is due to the composition of music itself. But on the other hand the understanding of the pupils is based upon inner processes that cannot be transformed into language without a loss of meaning.

To confront this problem, a didactic approach has been developed that uses the activity of musically-induced painting in a first methodical step. This is done in a way that ensures that the act of painting does not disturb the influence of music itself. "Bildgestaltendes Verstehen von Musik" (The understanding of music through the use of painting) is the method of employing a non-verbal access to music, which is able to improve the verbal expression of musical meaning and structure, as well as individually felt sensation after listening and painting. Therefore, detailed reasons will be given in a second step for the necessity of putting this individually visualized understanding into language. The results of this didactic approach are illustrated in a specifically developed model.

First the questionable justification of the visual transformations of music is dealt with, which seems to be contrary to the dichotomy of the fine arts of time (music, poetry) and space (painting, architecture, sculpture). It is possible to acknowledge a time and space embracing character of artistic expressions because of them being an essential part of human doctrine, as pointed out through psychological anthropology and philosophy. Examples of experiences with visual and auditory arts in time and space are shown through some concrete paintings and musical works.

In a further step the efficiency of using musically-induced "language of painting" is examined. To be examined are the possible links between auditory and visual stimuli, the combinations of colour and tone (hue and pitch for example), paintings and music. This includes psychological phenomena such as real synesthesia and pseudosynesthesia (in German "intermodale Analogie").

As the finally produced paintings of the pupils already contain messages, the next chapter will examine what the teacher may expect from the anticipated result and what he should do with it. Discussed will be how the single elements of paintings, colours (hue, lightness and saturation) and line drawing (including clusters of lines, structures and objects), can be utilized to improve the power of recollection, which meanings and parameters of the music they may assimilate respectively, as well as which visual responses are commonplace and shared by most people. For this purpose existing empirical studies are presented and commented upon.

Reasons are given to illustrate that there will never be only one correct understanding which is only right or wrong, but rather an understanding that differs individually in its completeness in accordance with the different dimensions of individual experiences.

As in the end, the purpose of this dissertation is to reduce the problems of verbalisation in music lessons, it is therefore necessary to explain and clarify why the selection of words and sentences and the communication between all concerned subjects is much easier to achieve when following this suggested approach. Psychological advantages are mentioned that are able to overcome the obstacles of communication and the factors related to the perceiving of verbal language. The using of metaphors and verbal synesthesia will be discussed in a special chapter.

Because of being a music teacher for many years, the author is able to impart some stimulating examples for the realization of certain aspects of teaching music in high-school lessons. The special requirements of teachers and pupils that are mentioned several times in this dissertation will become obvious in this last chapter.