

SOME OF THE SPECIFICS OF MUSIC CREATIVITY DEVELOPMENT AT THE PRESCHOOL AGE

EudjenCINC, Ph.D

West University Timisoara – Faculty of Music and Theatre

eugencinci@gmail.com

Abstract: *General characteristics of creative action which are known in the professional literature would be: the ability to use acquired knowledge and skills in new situations, noticing new problems in already familiar situations, finding new functions and ways of using familiar objects, the ability to find new solutions and instruments for a successful planned outcome. Characteristics of creative action, from which we have mentioned just a few, manifest and best develop in non-standardized situations, with a high responsibility of the individual (family and other relevant adults), but also the educational institutions, which is discussed in the paper.*

Key words: *creativity; children; preschool age; adults;*

Introduction

Creativity according to Bruner's opinion can be expressed in relationships towards children, in certain areas, and affective relationships. Namely, according to him all living creatures are capable of being creative. The mentioned characteristic can be stimulated and developed, which does not mean that the creative person must have characteristics of a genius. In a similar way Ned Herrmann expresses his opinion on this topic by believing that creativity could be perfected. *From the moment an individual becomes aware of the power that he/she possesses, the road is directed towards the imaginative. Creativity is based on systematization.* In this sense Herrmann believes that people are divided into:

- the ones who are constantly creative;
- the ones who are sometimes creative, who in moments express creative intelligence;
- the ones who can be creative, but who still have not expressed their creative potential.

Contemporary psychology has defined several phases of the creative process:

- the phase of preparation, when information is collected, the problem is framed and a certain hypothesis is sketched or a general principle;
- the so called *incubation* which can last for a long time and refers to a period of successful and less successful tries;
- the moment in which the solution is found and the ability to comprehensively view the product of creation; here inspiration is expressed, the creator is aware of all of the components and details of his/her undertaking;
- check or a look back; represents the next phase of creating; it is necessary so that possible problems, to which the creator did not pay attention earlier, could be noticed (Činč, 2010b);

Professionals concluded that creativity is possible in preschool aged children. According to Pidcasisti, the results of children's creativity are subjective and have no *functional* value. Child creativity, however, is important as a form of active personality development. For the development of creativity various techniques can be used. One of them is brainstorming. It stresses the importance of imagination in all areas of life and is applicable in many spheres in the problem solving process. The aforementioned technique creates conditions for the appearance of ideas which are spontaneously accepted. Another technique for the development of creativity is synectics. It was promoted by W.J. Gordon and its goal is

directed towards creative problem solving. The starting point is contained in the idea that emotional moments are of greater importance than the ones which rely on the rational. The technique unfolds in two stages:

- the acceptance of everything which is foreign;
- conveying to another what has been accepted;

We can talk about efficient development of creativity only in the cases in which the process goes through the adequate stages:

- formative – presupposes the existence of new situations and the process of adapting to them. For a young pianist, for example, this phase would represent the familiarization with the piano keys.

- normative – when we talk about children, it refers to their socialization and integration, so that unwanted consequences could be avoided;

- the third phase begins when the child notices the difference between him/her and the others, the child strives to diverge from stereotypes and gains more and more self-confidence and faith in one's own actions;

- the final phase presupposes a transformation and a new, special way of living; for the child this phase can be critical because it means a definite separation from the standard and a continuation in an individual, special way.

By directing ourselves towards the research of creativity in the sphere of music, we can conclude that there exist five basic types of creativity. Namely, when we start from criteria based on different levels of creativity expression, we can talk about:

Expressive creativity which we encounter in almost every child. In music it is manifested through spontaneous music expression. Anyone who works with music, in their development acquires knowledge and skill, but they have to keep this basic type of creativity as an expression of their needs and urges.

The second form of creativity is *productive creativity* which is on a higher level and presupposes the possession of certain skills and techniques so that creation could be done with ease. It is a phase in which a lot is produced, and it is precisely this feature that the phase is named after. The entrance into this phase presupposes the existence of certain rules which implies the possibility for a negative influence on the further flow of creativity development. Unlike the completely spontaneous expressive creativity, productive creativity presupposes the participation of certain factors which include education. The responsibility of adults in this moment becomes obvious. The adequate action of the family, and especially the preschool teacher and elementary school teacher, can completely determine the road of creativity development. In the individual work with the child, which is the most common in professional music teaching, the professor must take such a stand that the acquisition of technical problems is always in correlation with free expression and the development of creative characteristics. Limiting the teacher to only overcoming obstacles is in no way connected with the meaning of any art sphere.

Innovative creativity is characterized by the usage of acquired knowledge; it is manifested through the combination of what has already been learned. Accumulated knowledge and experience, a keen eye and quick wit are characteristics of this type of creativity. It can be adequately developed through a careful selection of content. Whether for professional work with music or elementary music education, it is important for a teacher have the ability to adequately choose the content through which the child will be in the situation to manifest innovation. Musical games, melodic or rhythmic tasks, but also the selection of genres and compositions which enable innovation, are of paramount importance. Stereotypes and the lack of flexibility in music may definitely endanger creativity in this phase. The relation of the teacher must be such that he/she stimulates a certain form of music creativity, the so called *interpretative creativity*. It is characterized by the ability to insert something personal into

generally accepted principles and rules so that they are accepted but simultaneously unique and inimitable. It is the condition for surpassing the average, for the birth of attention worthy content. Real artistic values in the sphere of music gain meaning only in this way. Therefore, the right environment, family, and especially the educational institutions have an enormous responsibility and can influence adequate or inadequate flow of events (Lelea, 2010).

Inventive creativity in a certain way represents the highlight of the developmental process. In this phase the person who deals with music is capable of inserting his/her experiences, of contributing through the inclusion of personal principles. This form of creativity, along with *emergent creativity*, usually is not a topic of discussion in the case of gifted children in the early years, but is rather evident in latter development. However, in extraordinary cases it can be manifested rather early (Činč, 2010b).

As we have already mentioned, music creativity in all forms recognizes factors which positively or negatively influence on its development. These factors, as we have seen, can be within or outside of music. The correct relationship of the teacher towards creativity is the most important, since other factors, which are related to influence through various musical content, depend on it. Because of this, contemporary educational institutions are asked not to be inclined to the use of facts only, but to leave enough room for expression and spontaneity.

It is known that abilities develop with time, but it is speculated that some types of creativity do not function in this way. In some areas, younger children under the age of ten are more successful than older children or even adults. It was confirmed, for example, that children in the first, second or third grade are more creative than children in the fourth and fifth grade. However, it has been found that latter creativity rises again in the seventh and eighth grade.

The development of creative abilities up until the sixth or seventh year is faster than the development of intelligence. Latter, memory and the acquisition of finished knowledge, because of the start of school, become central, which again stresses the importance of school and its influence on the development of creativity. At an early age, children are more spontaneous, for them everything is possible and prejudices do not exist. Hence, this explains the lack of stage fright during musical performance at an early age. In the process of maturing and learning this natural background is changes because the child changes his/her opinion towards the environment, values, certain solutions which are presented. The child will later be more and more ready to acquire the criteria of the environment, it becomes more and more sensitive and receptive to its relations and reactions. If the environment, however it may be called, is not ready to accept the child's creative output, if it mocks or undermines the child's creative manifestations, it will surely start to avoid it. The child stops playing, singing and following rhythmic impulses.

Just like in other areas, in music children's spontaneous play has a very important role. On the other hand, conveying the knowledge and experiences of the older generations is also extremely important. A question is posed: How do we keep the spontaneity and openness in the search for the new while we are acquiring new knowledge and experiences? The role of the preschool teacher in this process is crucial, since the contents used have a big capacity for the development of creativity.

According to the beliefs of psychologists, for the development of creativity, especially in the artistic field one more rule is important. Namely, that it is more quickly extinguished on concrete content and objects than in the abstract sphere. Through development children are slowly separated from their wishes. It is characterized by a larger connection to thought. This is when thought becomes the basis for creativeness, and finished solutions and stereotypes become virtually unavoidable. If a person cannot resist a large stream of finished solutions, it can happen that personal opinions in communication with people come into question. Freud, for example, believed that thought must not completely loose contact with the world of imagination which is a source of new and fresh ideas.

Since creativity had been considered as an exclusively hereditary factor, a discussion regarding special methods to improve it was impossible. Therefore, the attempts for a special organization of the educational process had more of a sporadic character. Today, there is more and more talk about a special approach, although there is a long road ahead to its practical application.

Hence, musical, and other forms of creativity output, are conditioned by numerous internal and external factors. The family and the preschool teacher (primary and secondary school teacher) can be considered as external factors although they directly influence the internal factors which concern the relationships and the demands made through practicing certain forms of music. The influence of the preschool, primary, secondary school teacher but also the family and the environment outside of school can sometimes be constricting although the wishes and intentions of the individuals might be the opposite. In such a situation the solution should be sought in the internal and external mechanisms of control in which the wish for positive action has a deciding role. The success of these mechanisms will again be evaluated through the creative results of each individual.

Creativity is conditioned by potentials which each individual possesses. This, however, does not mean that it cannot be developed, but on the contrary, one must work on the development from the earliest childhood.

Creativity can be defined through three components:

- structure of character or creative style;
- creative psychological activity and creative relationship;
- the creativity of the group in which interaction and communication lead to the creation of new ideas, i.e. the creation of creative effect (Lelea, 2010: 70).

Children in essence are creative; their creative output is a generator of new and always fresh ideas. The fact that they express themselves freely in childhood without restraints of any kind is *responsible* for creativity in children. Children are creative through games and play; they are always enriched with new ideas and contain constant creative energy.

The role of the preschool teacher, and later the primary school teacher, in the development of creativity in children is primarily to stimulate positive emotions, develop sensitivity and imagination, develop aesthetic norms. The activities of the preschool teacher should not hinder children's free expression, they should rather follow their creative needs which sometimes are not conventional, do not fit the system framework, but which can considerably contribute to the child's development and his/her further success.

Music improvisation have a significant role in the development of creativity. The ability for improvisation, of course, is not equally developed in all children. Improvisations can be directed towards melody or the rhythm, which is even more available in children.

The development of child creativity should be the constant task of preschool teachers and primary school teachers; it must not be suppressed by other posed goals. This is especially important in the work of preschool teachers because it often happens that through the insistence on the acquisition of elementary musical language, especially melody or rhythm, creativity is suppressed, and frequently due to the preschool teacher's inadequate reactions because they lack a creative approach in their work.

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