

CREATIVE PRACTICES AND IMPROVISATION: PROPOSALS FOR TEACHER OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Práticas criativas e improvisação: propostas para formação de Professores de Música

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Abstract

This article is narrated of the experiences in a degree in music and in the process developed by the Degree in Music of UFRR (Brazil) in the construction of a critical teacher. The Course offers several disciplines, but there are absences of creative practices throughout the formation, with them there would be greater independence from teachers in their teaching-learning process, possibilities of increasing pedagogical repertoires and would escape the traditional teaching used. According to Bailey (1993), Berliner (1994), Swanwick (2008), Albino (2009), Lino and Dorneles (2019) creative practices can be tools in the development of the learner, expanding criticality and their imaginative intelligence during musical cognitive development, practices that would contribute significantly for a more qualified training of undergraduates. It is proposed to create disciplines that are based on musical improvisation with the aim of inserting content on the theme of creative practices and improvisation and thus supply some deficits in teacher training.

Resumo

Este artigo é um relato das experiências em uma licenciatura em música e no processo de desenvolvido pelo Curso de Licenciatura em Música da UFRR (Brasil) na construção de um professor crítico. O Curso oferta diversas disciplinas, mas há ausências de práticas criativas ao longo da formação, com elas haveria maior independência do licenciandos no seu processo de ensino-aprendizagem, possibilidades de aumento dos repertórios pedagógicos e escaparia do tradicional ensino utilizado. Segundo Bailey (1993), Berliner (1994), Swanwick (2008), Albino (2009), Lino e Dorneles (2019) as práticas criativas podem ser ferramentas no desenvolvimento do aprendiz, ampliando a criticidade e sua inteligência imaginativa durante o desenvolvimento cognitivo musical, práticas que presentes contribuiriam de maneira significativa para uma formação mais qualificada dos licenciandos. Propõe-se a criação de disciplinas que tenham como base a improvisação musical com o objetivo de inserir conteúdos sobre a temática das práticas criativas e da improvisação e assim suprir alguns déficits da formação docente.

Key-words: *Creative practice; Musical improvisation; Teacher formation; UFRR Music.*

Palavras-chave: *Prática criativa; Improvisação musical; Formação docente; Música UFRR.*

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THE CONCEPT OF IMPROVISATION

The starting point for this research emerges from the immense admiration and inspiration for musical improvisation, in addition to the consequent possibility of contributing to the training of future teachers who carry out studies in the Degree in Music at the Federal University of Roraima (UFRR), the only course of music offered in person in the state of Roraima. Musical improvisation is an art that involves the act of composing and performance simultaneously, that is, it is creating, “inventing on the fly”. According to the Grove Music Dictionary (1994, p. 450), musical improvisation is “defined as the creation of a musical work, or its final form, as it is being performed, which may mean the immediate composition of the work by the performers”, the elaboration or adjustments of details to an existing work, or anything within those limits”.

The word improvise comes from the Latin: *em* and *provisus*, from *providere*, which means to see in advance, previously, which refers to something not foreseen, not visualized, not programmed, “something that has not been seen in advance” (Alterhaug, 2004, p. 98). “The term improvisation may or may not be linked to musical practices and, even so, there may be different meanings within the same context” (Guerzoni, 2014, p. 24).

In Guerzoni (2014) we have some entries for improvisation, the *Dicionário Aurélio* (online version), improvising means something sudden, sudden or without preparation. The *Priberam dictionary* (online version) expands the meaning of terms such as pretending, lying or falsely quoting. In the Portuguese language dictionaries *Houaiss* and *Michaelis* (online versions) the word improvisation is linked to the idea of an emergency adaptation, a “quick fix”, a temporary solution, among other meanings, referring to an urgent moment, the now, and it demands an instant solution which, as far as it is concerned, requires intellectual and creative skill. As reported above, improvisation outside the musical context is predominantly related to something that is wrong and needs to be immediately repaired.

In the musical context, the word improvisation has a more positive meaning, being related to an ability of instantaneous musical creativity. The similarity between the term improvisation, in the context of the Portuguese language and in the musical context, lies in the urgency of making decisions at a specific moment that requires an immediate and creative solution. The difference between improvisation outside the musical context and within a musical context is in the intention of improvising. In everyday life, the unexpected is something that must be avoided and is commonly seen as something unpleasant. In turn, in musical practices, in most cases, improvisation does not occur unexpectedly or improvised. On the contrary, there is a systematization of performance based on constant training (Guerzoni, 2014, p. 25).

Studies of creative practices, the stimulation of creativity together with theoretical and practical musical studies allow the learner to acquire a range of information and tools that will provide him with a path with fewer obstacles when making decisions and in the process of intentional improvisation. In music, improvisation stimulates the learner's creativity, regardless of the mistakes that will inevitably arise.

The musician who has the knowledge of improvisation is generally aware of and foresees his musical creation. It is true that accidents can and do happen along the way, even because, at the beginning of learning musical improvisation, the learner experiences more mistakes than successes, not only in relation to musical performance, but in relation to the methods that involve learning the skill. to improvise (Guerzoni, 2014, p. 26).

However, due to all this preparation, this stimulus, these methods that foster creativity, this learner is not intimidated to proceed, nor is he afraid to make decisions, as he feels safer for being aware that his creativity will help him. According to Berliner, "In musical improvisation, the "error" is part of the process. The very idea of error assumes another character, more identified with the curious search for the unknown. The error is, for improvisation, more of a doing under construction" (Albino, 2009, p. 60).

The art of creating and improvising has been happening in the music industry for many years, with the improvement of the musical notation system, these practices could be transcribed. As a result, improvisation quickly lost ground. Although, in the Baroque period, despite the notational system being consolidated, improvisation was still frequently used by musicians performing the basso continuo line, for example.

After a slightly forgotten period, improvisation came back to be widely used from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, due to the emergence of several musical genres that have as one of their main characteristics improvisation in its essence, among these styles, we can highlight Blues and North American Jazz, in addition to Brazilian Choro, currently, improvisation is constantly used in different musical genres around the world, whether with greater or lesser intensity.

In Brazil, the art of improvising musically has become increasingly popular with influences from Brazilian, Latin, Eastern and jazz rhythms, improvisation in the country has expanded and gained form and identity. In the beginning, without much theoretical basis, it was dependent on instinct, empirical knowledge, the purest feeling and certain musical skills of the performer, however, over time, this practice gained notoriety and lately began to appear in academies and be object of research among different musical

classes. According to Pereira Júnior (2018) in the process of evolution of this technique, the musician in Brazil faces some difficulties, such as the lack of an academic base for the study and teaching of improvisation. The author also comments that generally, in Brazilian universities, there are no disciplines with contents aimed at the development of musical improvisation.

Based on the cited authors, musical improvisation can be a very important practice for music students, as it encompasses in its characteristics aspects such as: musical perception, creativity, expressiveness, composition, technique, in addition to working on performance. musical. Therefore, the teaching/learning process of such a practice could be of great value for training in the degree course, for this reason, as the object of study, the Music Degree Course at UFRR was chosen to investigate the use of the tool "improvisation" as an element in the promotion of creative practices and in the teaching/learning process of training future music teachers.

CREATIVE PRACTICE AND MUSICAL IMPROVISATION IN TEACHER TRAINING

In 1979, Keith Swanwick developed the C(l)A(s)P model, which translated into Portuguese means: C: composition/composition, L: literature studies/study of musical literature, A: appreciation/ appreciation, S: Skill acquisition/musical technique and, P: performance/execution, which is a model that proposes 5 parameters of musical activities that should encompass music education for teaching excellence and consistency in the acquisition and development of musical language.

The model suggests that the teacher should work with the parameters in a balanced and integrated way. However, composition, appreciation and performance (CAP) activities play a key role in music education, as they constitute the fundamental possibilities of involvement with music. It is worth remembering that composition in this case, according to Swanwick, includes all forms of musical invention, so musical improvisation is also understood as "composition" in the model proposed by that author. The purpose of this study is that musical improvisation can be an excellent tool to work on some fundamental elements of music within music education, awakening in the learner, through this creative practice, the true "making of music".

According to Swanwick, improvisation in general can be divided into two parts: free and idiomatic improvisation, the latter is also known as restricted improvisation. Free improvisation is best known as a practice detached from ties or a structure, be it harmonic, melodic or rhythmic. Free improvisation goes against a defined system, that is, it is a musical practice that is not limited to a stylistic language. On the other hand, idiomatic improvisation would be that which is presented within a context, that is, in this type of improvisation certain musical elements are provided a priori, where the melody, harmony, rhythm and form are predetermined, leaving the musician to improvise in around this.

For Bailey (1993), free improvisation is based on lived experiences, in musical practice, in a real way and not on scientific knowledge. For the musician, there are two forms of improvisation: idiomatic and free. The first takes place within a context with a defined stylistic language, in a delimited social and cultural musical environment, as is the case of choro and jazz, for example. And free improvisation, despite also taking place within a predefined context, has the characteristic of overcoming such idioms, that is, in this environment several languages are mixed as the performance emerges.

However, the very concept of improvisation is a subject of debate, admitting different meanings to vary according to the context as explained in the first part of this work, but it can be argued that all musical practice involves improvisation to some extent, especially in what concerns respect to the creation of sound material.

Musical improvisation, regardless of type, whether free or idiomatic, can be worked on in basic education or in other contexts of music teaching, and bring countless benefits to the learner, facilitating the practice of “making music”.

[...] improvisation is this playful and creative practice that involves a fluid relationship with others (group and/or instrument). A know-how that teaches the body to expose itself. Improvisation starts from reality, inhabits the frontier between sound and music, creates connections between expressive needs and instrumental technique. In improvisation, the important thing is to resonate a playful fluidity, publicly exercising and acquiring the characteristic tools of the game in the poetic happening (Lino & Dornelles, 2019, p. 166).

Musical improvisation can be a melody, a harmony, a rhythm, etc. This musical manifestation can be worked only with rhythms, then only with melody, then work them simultaneously. Another idea is to work with the younger ones with free improvisation, as nothing is predefined and, later on, as the apprentice progresses, you can work with

idiomatic improvisation, presenting various languages, contexts and structures to the same. Improvisation can also be worked on as a form of composition, listing tonality, styles and genres. However, the important thing is that this musical manifestation is put into practice, it is to make the learner experience this sensation. The objective is to develop and enhance the student's creativity and imagination, where each way of improvising proposes exclusive values, unique experiences, making their learning related to the development of music making.

In improvisation, which takes place in real time, time and space are incorporated as fundamental elements of the environment and completely condition the performance. Improvisation also presents a relevant corporal and ludic dimension translated by the ideas of game and conversation. These elements are introduced as determinant lines of force in the practice of improvisation (Moraes, 2014, p. 35-36). Improvisation involves a conversation, without determined verbal tenses[...] John Cage reports that this conversation refers to a coexistence that changes from one context to another, having as an entry point to live the real and everyday time and place; always fragmented. By being interested in ways that could not be discussed, but experimented with, Cage invites us to touch silence and noise, as a possibility of listening (Cage, 2015, p. 12 referred to by Lino & Dornelles, 2019, p. 167).

However, this practice must always be supervised and have a meaning for the student. The idea is not to oppose recreational activities, but to clarify what is aggregate musical knowledge and what is mere fun. In this regard, Alonso warns: "Freedom is demanding and has its rules: we have to listen to the other, we have to feel it" (2008, p. 13 referred to by Lino & Dornelles, 2019, p. 172), "Improvising is not playing just anything" (Alonso, 2014, p. 29).

Violeta Gainza sees two important moments in improvisation. An expressive one, in which the interpreter, regardless of the result, strives to express and externalize what is internalized; and another introspective moment, which takes place through investigation, exploration, the exercise in which that performer manipulates sound and extra-sound objects with the intention of absorbing them in pure sound research (1983, p. 23-25).

There is nothing that the student can experience that provides him with such an experience as improvisation, as this musical practice encompasses creation, musical theory, perception and performance simultaneously (Campel, 2009 referred to by Fridman, 2011, p. 65).

In addition to all the positive points of working with improvisation in music education mentioned here, it is also noteworthy that such a practice is an activity that surprises the student at all times, which requires a lot of concentration on the part of the student. With this, it can help those students with concentration difficulties to always be attentive to the activities proposed by the teacher.

With little concentration and low commitment, who are superficial in their relationships with teaching-learning, they need to be encouraged to experiment with ways of apprehending the musical language, mixing styles and procedures, providing greater openness to dialogue and music making, combining experiences and experiences with the possibilities of encountering the new (Loureiro, 2008, p. 14).

In the example of jazz, one of the many situations, musical or not, in which this fascination exists – a case of learning, development and evaluation in music that can be perfectly reproduced by the teacher in the classroom. Thus, like the creative and virtuoso jazz musician, the creative teacher, in full control of the knowledge and skills necessary for his/her practice, produces identifications. Students identify themselves, not with the empirical entity or physical person, but with a position, a symbolic figure, who holds the knowledge they admire and encourages and invites the learner to occupy an equivalent place. Identification, therefore, is an affective process that produces profound educational effects (Neder, 2012, p. 119).

Corroborating with Neder and applying the relationship between the practice of the jazz community and musical teaching, future music teachers need to try to understand that theorizing about music and making music should complement each other, and from there make possible the dialogue between creation and execution, between practice and theory, between research and interest, between teacher and student, in an enrichment of interpersonal relationships that transcend the entire teaching/learning process.

Formation of practices in the Degree in Music at UFRR

The UFRR Music Course was created in 2013, incorporated into the structure of the Center for Social Communication, Letters and Visual Arts, with classes preferably in the night shift, using its own space, Block VIII - Music/CCLA, for activities of teaching, research, extension and administrative, with a vast number of instruments for the practices of its students, the discourse used in the Pedagogical Political Project of the 2017 Course (PPC 2017) indicates that this Degree seeks to adapt to the changes that occurred in

teaching and invests in the formation of a professional who can detect, propose and overcome challenges, interacting in the scenario of perspectives of changes and innovations (Federal University of Roraima, 2017).

The main guiding questions for this study are: is there really an absence of this creative practice within the UFRR Music Course? Can such a practice be an effective tool in the musical development of the learner in music education? If yes, why is it not being optimized according to such importance? Can the theoretical-practical development of this musical manifestation in the Course contribute to a better qualification in the training of music graduates and their teaching practice? Without intending to exhaust this vast subject at the moment, the attempt to answer such questions will be addressed in the course of this work.

Analyzing the 2017 PPC and experiencing this reality closely, an absence of creative practices and teaching in the area of musical improvisation or that use these as tools within the Course was identified, since the theme is mentioned only in the syllabus of the discipline Melodic Instrument: Recorder II, offered in the second semester of the Course, figure 1, which may be insufficient with regard to the teaching/learning process of the Music Course. In addition, of course, to studies of studies on musical pedagogues such as Swanwick in music education disciplines, but these are seen superficially.

When looking at the curriculum of the UFRR Music Course, we did not find any discipline exclusive to musical improvisation, although in some disciplines there are explanations on the subject, which makes us aware of the importance of this creative practice in music education. The Arrangement and Creation discipline was foreseen in the PPC (2015), but with the changes made in 2017, the discipline is no longer offered.

The theme of improvisation only appears as a reference in the syllabus of the course Melodic Instrument: Recorder II, however, in the specific objectives and in the skills and abilities, improvisation is present in the text of the PPC (2017), in one of the items that must be to be reached by the students in the specific objectives, the following appears: improvise, create, arrange, perform and interpret music together and for soloist. Therefore, it is necessary to work on this practice more assiduously, so that all items related to the specific objectives proposed by the Course are achieved by the students, since it is notorious the absence of practices and teaching in the area of musical improvisation or that use this as a tool. pointed out then in the text of the PPC and absent in the syllabi of the disciplines.

Figure 1 - Melodic Instrument Menu: Recorder II.



**MINISTÉRIO DA EDUCAÇÃO
UNIVERSIDADE DE RORAIMA
PRÓ-REITORIA DE ENSINO E GRADUAÇÃO**



Centro / Instituto: Centro de Comunicação Social, Letras e Artes Visuais			
Curso: Licenciatura em Música			
Disciplina: Instrumento Melódico: Flauta Doce II			Código: MUS123
Categoria	(X) Obrigatória	() Eletiva	() Optativa livre
Modalidade	(X) Presencial	() Semipresencial	() A distância
Carga Horária			Pré-Requisito
Total	Teórica	Prática	MUS122
30h	-	30h	
Ementa			
Desenvolvimento dos aspectos básicos de teoria/técnica/interpretação musical do instrumento flauta doce soprano. Aplicação prática de técnicas de ensino do instrumento, aplicação prática de técnicas de execução musical em repertório.			
Programa			
Unidade I			
-Ergonomia aplicada ao instrumento;			
-Executar escalas maiores, menores naturais, respectivos acordes;			
- Domínio na execução de pequenas melodias;			
- Desenvolver a leitura musical.			
Unidade II			
- Improvisação e criação musical;			
- Escolha e adaptação de repertório.			

Fonte: Universidade Federal de Roraima (2017).

Being a Licentiate, his field of action is the school space, specifically basic education, non-formal teaching (specialized schools), as a soloist interpreter, vocal coach, as well as integrating various instrumental groups, expanding to other areas of performance of the formation of the human being. The course seeks train a professional who can articulate the knowledge required in their field of activity, while valuing the experiences brought by students, in addition to enabling them to appropriate reflective thinking, artistic sensitivity, the use of compositional techniques and instrumental execution, of aesthetic sensitivity through knowledge of styles, repertoires, works and other musical creations, with skills essential for professional performance in the artistic, cultural, social, scientific and technological dimensions inherent in the area (Federal University of Roraima, 2017).

As former members of the academic staff of the UFRR Music Course, we can indicate that musical improvisation has not been receiving an adequate look, even though it is a practice that can be of great value in basic education, the context in which music graduates will work in the future, as indicated by the various authors cited in the second part of this work, such as Gainza, Lino e Dorneles, Moraes, Swanwick, among others. However, this failure does not seem to be exclusive to the aforementioned Course, as texts by Alonso (2014), Fonterrada (2015) Júnior (2018) and Lino and Dorneles (2019)

have revealed that music higher education courses in Brazil reserve restricted space for this creative practice within these environments, which ends up generating a deficit in teacher training

For teaching reasons in the conservatism style present in undergraduate courses in Brazil or even for the lack of recognition of the importance that the subject itself has for the student and future music teacher, musical improvisation is not being developed, practiced, so that the student can experience and acquire sufficient theoretical-practical knowledge, not offering this practice in training is to curb creative music teaching and validate reproduction teaching.

We indicate that the study was made from the analysis of the PPC and its syllabus and was not deepened in the teaching plans of the disciplines, changed every semester and vary from teacher to teacher, in our experience if there is no clear indication of the content in the syllabus and discipline program, it would be very unlikely that the teacher of the discipline will devote time for the studies of creative practices and improvisation in the discipline. However, based on the PPC and on experiences lived by students of the course, we conclude that there are some hypotheses why this practice is not being developed in a more assiduous way within this environment. The first hypothesis is that teachers do not work musical improvisation within the contents, with the exception of the recorder, as it is already foreseen in the discipline menu. The second hypothesis would be that teachers somehow, but insufficiently, work musical improvisation, but the content is not foreseen in the teaching plan. The other hypotheses are in line with investigations such as that of the famous saxophonist Ademir Júnior who reports the following:

There is an effort by various segments, such as technical schools or universities, to establish this discipline, but still in a timid and not very comprehensive way, due to issues of conservatism or even the lack of recognition of the importance that the subject itself has to become a discipline or a specific course (Pereira Junior, 2018, p. 2)

There should be, in the teaching staff of the UFRR Music Course and on the part of the future graduate, a concern in knowing how to develop in students, musical aspects, such as: creativity, musical perception, composition and performance. In view of this, musical improvisation can be an excellent ally of the future teacher in this mission, since, according to Bailey (1993) improvisation is a practice that is present in almost all activities, so the proficiency to improvise should be a basic requirement for training the teacher. musician.

INITIAL REFLECTIONS

From the studies carried out and the experience in the academic body, we can affirm that in the Music Degree Course at UFRR there is an absence of disciplines or contents that are based on musical improvisation or that aim to do so, in this study, the teaching plans were not investigated. of the disciplines of the curricular matrix of the referred Course, therefore the research lacks more detailed information on the subject being indicated as initial on the thematic of the creative practice and improvisation in the Music Course of the UFRR. However, based on your PPC and on experiences, it is concluded that there are some hypotheses why this practice, which can be an effective tool in the development of musical skills, is not being used more assiduously within the Course.

The first verified hypothesis is that the teachers do not work with musical improvisation within the contents, with the exception of Melodic Instrument: Recorder II, as it is already foreseen in the discipline's syllabus. The second verified hypothesis is that teachers, in some way, work with musical improvisation, but the content is not foreseen within the teaching plan. As a result, creative practices are not being used satisfactorily in the Course or are being used timidly. Therefore, the creative pedagogical practices existing in that Course are unable to encourage such a practice in this environment, which can be harmful, since the future teacher, when entering the job market, will hardly adopt such a practice in their classes, precisely because they do not have experienced, not having sufficient knowledge about such a subject.

This initial research points to the urgency of taking an initiative, creating well-defined strategies so that creative practice and improvisation are more assiduous within the UFRR Music Course.

In this perspective, it is proposed the creation of disciplines that are based on musical improvisation or that the disciplines' syllabi be revised to insert content on the subject and thus make up for the lack of practices and teaching in this area.

However, the various studies on musical training point out that future teachers should be concerned with enhancing imagination and creativity in students, which can be combined with musical improvisation. Because this practice, in operation, can provide future teachers, in addition to improving various aspects, skills and musical abilities, an effective tool to help teach music in basic education, awakening in the learner the

“making of music”. Thus, enhancing such practices within the aforementioned course can lead, as a consequence, to a significant increase in this practice in basic education and in other music teaching contexts. For these future teachers will already be fully aware of the importance of this practice for the construction of music making, in addition to having acquired enough tools (experiences and theoretical knowledge) to adopt this practice in their work environment.

Taking these considerations into account, it is expected that new ideas will emerge for the development of musical improvisation within the UFRR Music Course, as a result of this study. A deeper investigation about the proposed theme is fundamental, so that new perspectives can be glimpsed regarding an effective pedagogical intervention on this musical manifestation, enabling the students of the Course to be qualified for this practice.

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