



INCLUSIVE TEACHING: A PARADIGM THROUGH MUSIC

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Abstract:

In the framework of this paper, we develop indicatively a teaching example of children with special educational needs and difficulties in their social adjustment, the children with Williams syndrome. The aim of this article is to present a brief literature review of the influence of music education as a new challenge of lifelong special and inclusive education. We will focus on the Williams syndrome, in which the aim of smooth growth and inclusion is achieved more effectively through the influence of music. The cognitive contrasts, which the people with Williams syndrome present, worry scholars and educators. The result is the education of these people to often focus on their weaknesses, e.g. cognitive tests in problem solving and not on their talents e.g. communication, music. However, when these people are approached educationally and therapeutically through their abilities-and not through their any weaknesses, then another perspective of special education and training emerges, that of the development of talents. In this, the educational environment can play a major part and the aims which is called to serve. When an educational environment is a pleasing and interesting challenge, then it acts as a framework of creativity and activation of any auspices and talents of the people with Williams syndrome. In conclusion, the coupling of knowledge and experience emerges as the main methodological and pedagogical objective, as the student with special needs is facilitated towards a process of exploration of his behavioural drives and parallel learning of ways of behaviour and attitudes which do not rely only on knowledge. Thus, the goal of the inclusive education and teaching is realised more directly and effectively.

Keywords: special educational needs, inclusive teaching, music, Williams syndrome

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1. Introduction

It is common place that modern pedagogy is on the one hand focused on the field of communication and it is mainly interested in the pedagogical relation which constitute a relationship of mutual influence and interaction. On the other hand, the pedagogical relation and intervention aim at the learning and the social development and it is achieved through the educational activities with an emphasis placed on experience (Bakirtzis, 2002, 2005; Mutumburanzou, 2018). In this framework, strengthening and supporting the communication and the learning performance of children with and without learning difficulties, it is reasonable to take into consideration mainly the learning co-text (context), as a basic element of the learning reality, in which there are included elements of presence of the broader community as well as the direct psychological and social framework of the class. Inside the instructive co-text three basic elements of the teaching triangle: the teacher-the learner-the subject interact. Thus, the relation of teaching-learning, which is created, determines all the other relations in the class in connection with the aims, the content and the procedure of teaching-learning by itself (Matsaggouras, 2009).

All the above are highlighted as a determining factor for an effective learning and teaching under the philosophy of inclusive teaching, inside a wide range of individual differences in the class: physical, cognitive and differences on the level of behavior. Different systems of support from the family of the student until the health care professionals function to adapt the teaching to the needs of each student (Elliott et al., 2008).

2. Special educational needs and inclusion: new perspectives

According to Norwich (2008), it is a fact that inclusion becomes possible under the circumstances that the child with special needs and/or disabilities receives benefits and the care that is needed and that the inclusion of the child may be combined with the inclusion of the other children in the class, always in combination with the supportive role of the parental framework.

Towards this direction, the theme of the interdisciplinary communication and its dynamic in the educational system is an issue which is being examined by modern bibliography in the field of special educational needs (Harry, 1992; Adamek, Darrow, 2005; Coad et al., 2014). So, nowadays a framework of advisory intervention is emerging as well as of educational and therapeutic approaches in Special and Inclusive Education (Kartasidou, 2004; Kartasidou, Stamou, 2006). Moreover, the intra-professional communication is the key for an effective contact with the children with special educational needs but also with their families. A holistic and interdisciplinary approach of the problem and of the special educational needs, which arise, is necessary by the same health and education professionals (Ioannidi, Kalokairinou, 2010).

As Kerzamn & Smith point, the child with special needs and educational difficulties will have to be treated as a whole and as a continuously evolving person,

thus the communication is considered an essential element for its healthy growth. Furthermore, the parents of those children under the regime of stressful emotions demand and need detailed information (Fidler et al., 2000). Consequently, the notion of good and effective communication is meaningful through the cooperation between parents, health professionals, special educators and all those who are involved in the child's everyday life, but also through proper communication strategy. It is not accidental that the children with special educational needs often create their own symbol team, their own code of communication as well as they adjust and maximize their sensory abilities. Contemporary surveys direct the health care professionals to understand the complexity of human communication and on a next level to possess the ability to discriminate the notions *speech, language and communication*, building accordingly these abilities to students with special educational needs and learning problems.

3. A new challenge of inclusive teaching

With this research problem, the aim of this study is the influence of music education as a new challenge of special and inclusive teaching.

3.1. A paradigm of children with special educational needs: Williams syndrome and music

We will focus indicatively on the Williams syndrome, in which the aim of smooth growth and inclusion is achieved more effectively through the influence of music. In the framework of this problem, we develop indicatively a paradigm of children with special educational needs and difficulties in their social adjustment, the children with Williams syndrome (Gosch, 1994). Our theory has been based on the fact that children with Williams syndrome seem to be better performing the phonological ability when semantic aspects of the language are not involved (Volterra et al., 2013), a fact which makes their inclusion more effective. They are children and adults with special needs and that constitutes an additional challenge but also a reward for the teacher for their successful inclusion in the school and in the broader community (Stambaugh, 1996).

3.2 A short understanding of the nature of this challenge in relation to music

Contemporary statistic results examine the musical and linguistic abilities of children with Williams syndrome (Deruelle et al., 2005), where greater preference in music is expressed and a broader series of emotional answers in relation to music (Don et al., 1999; Koliadi-Tiliakou, 2000), as well as how the education through music contributes therapeutically to the better development of their personalities and their ability to be independent and autonomous.

Especially, as Koniari (2009) states, people with Williams syndrome develop a special relationship with music and even more with listening to music and creating. So, in this educational framework it is examined how this relation can play a crucial educational role in the social progress and evolvement of those people. Williams

syndrome is about a neurodevelopmental and neuro-diagnostic disorder (Bellugi, George, 2001), in which their mental and cognitive profile presents fluctuations and disorders in different levels of ability, like visual perceptual weaknesses, mathematical thinking, attention deficit disorder etc. At the same time, these people develop abilities in the use of language, in the acoustic memory, in music etc.

It is typical for people with Williams syndrome during their development the listening of music to cause intense feelings, positive or negative. People with Williams syndrome can improvise and can compose their own melodies and learn a music instrument easily. Generally, the abilities of people with Williams syndrome are related to a sensitivity to feel emotions through music and to improvise, when they play music. Moreover, they distinguish themselves for a more general relation they have with sounds. They are characterized by the ability they have as far as absolute hearing is concerned, meaning the ability someone to name the high tones only by hearing the tones. This is done without the possibility of comparison with the tonal height of another note as well as with the hyperacousia, which concerns a sensory specificity which is characterized by a particular sensitivity to the intensity of sounds.

The cognitive contrasts, which the people with Williams syndrome present, worry scholars and educators. The result is the education of these people to often focus on their weaknesses, e.g. cognitive tests in problem solving and not on their talents e.g. communication, music. However, when these people are approached educationally and therapeutically through their abilities-and not through their any weaknesses, then another perspective of special education and training emerges, that of the development of talents. In this, the educational environment can play a major part and the aims which is called to serve. In other words, when an educational environment is a pleasing and interesting challenge, then it acts as a framework of creativity and activation of any auspices and talents of the people with Williams syndrome. Consequently, the musical ability includes a strong commitment to music as a means of expression, game and maybe improvisation (Hopyan et al., 2001).

According to Koniari (2009), an educational programme for people with Williams syndrome included everyday choir lessons, lessons of musical instruments, movement, theatre and mathematics. It is essential that the students participate in all the lessons, but in a way which they would prefer better, e.g. through playing a musical instrument, through dramatization, through singing etc. The purpose of this programme was to use the already existing knowledge and preferences of students for their further development and autonomy. In this way, the use of musical and rhythmic concepts has helped the understanding of the notions of time, space, money subdivisions etc. Hence, the special pedagogical approach and especially the educational intervention through the therapeutic and therapeutical use of music, smoothed difficulties, it offered joy and activated the powerful points of the personalities of people with identified particularities like the Williams syndrome. The effectiveness of the educational procedure in non-musical functions was accomplished through the training in music.

In total, the appropriate and targeted use of musical notions and functions, familiar to people with Williams syndrome, contributes to the grasp of non-musical notions and functions, in which these people have cognitive difficulties and they serve the best personality development (Levitin, Bellugi, 1998). The goal of the inclusive education and teaching is realised more directly and effectively.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the coupling of knowledge and experience emerges as the main methodological and pedagogical objective, as the student is facilitated towards a process of exploration of his behavioural drives and parallel learning of ways of behaviour and attitudes which do not rely only on knowledge. Thus, the scientific support of the school and the education and health officials, as well as providing ongoing training and supervision by specialized services, is a major prerequisite for consolidating and institutionally supporting the educational role of the school (Kasapidou, 2007) and of course an Education for All.

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