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NON TONALITY THE SCHOOL OF INTERVALS

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most important and complex tasks in musical education is to develop the musical hearing.

Developing the musical hearing a teacher faces many general as well as specific problems in the solving of which, an important role is played by the teacher's approach. Any approach will bring the teacher to a specific method, which determines the way in which his/her task will be addressed.

There is a great variety of methods used to develop the musical hearing.

The main difference between them seems to be the way in which they address the pitch parameter of the sound in the learning process.

Thus, methods of developing musical hearing can be divided into two main categories:

- a. Development of skills measuring pitch relationships
- b. Development of skills expressing the language bound meaning of pitch relationships

The category of methods based on measuring pitch relationships gives priority to the expressivity value of the measured pitch structures themselves.

That means the student, while identifying or performing various pitch structures, must be aware first of all of the basic measured relation between pitches known as interval. Of course intervals have each their expression, and even though the student is guided to understand the musical context of intervals, the musical hearing is based primarily on defining the measured result in itself.

One of the most used methods of this type is the French one (Lavignac et al).

The other category of methods, based on expressing the language meaning of pitch relationships does not deny the value of measurement, but the ear education is centered on understanding the expressive significance of the sound structures as belonging to a certain given frame (musical language). This approach is well represented by the renowned Kodaly method.

THE FORGOTTEN DIMENSION: THE MEANING OF THE PITCH

During years of practice with students I worked out an original approach of developing the musical hearing .

The mentioned approach is based on:

- a. language type structural hearing concepts,
- b. using the interval of fifth for defining the musical expression in both tonal and non tonal music (in the tempered intonation system),
- c. the principles and techniques of concomitant inner hearing of pitch structures
- d. several principles and techniques related to other parameters of the sound needed in

developing the musical hearing on different levels.

Various questions and problems appear during musical activities. One of the most important basic questions is what is the meaning of the pitch structures we listen to or produce?

The answers given usually are in the range of theoretical-grammatical notions.

The main matter is not how a pitch structure is defined theoretically, but how the theoretical defined meaning is expressed in a given musical language.

Among many different activities, musicians perform, compose, research and/or listen to music. All these activities are related to producing or identifying sound structures created in the frame of a given musical language.

As an example let ask ourselves for example, what is the right intonation of a major second!

In order to give an appropriate answer, we must know what defines the tension expressed by the relation between the two pitches. The tension created between the two pitches of a major second are different in various musical languages, for instant in non- tonal musical language versus tonal musical language. That means the criteria defining theoretically and expressively the major second and its producing are different because of different meanings it has in various musical languages.

Beside years of practice, do we have any means which can assure us that the expressive meaning of the produced pitch structures suits the musical language we are in?

This question as well as other important matters related to the means of controlling and expressing the meaning of a pitch or a pitch structure in a musical given language, are answered in the presented here the musical hearing development method.

In the following the basic concepts and means of this method are presented concisely.

1. The concept: Music

1.1 A means of communication (language expressed through sound structures exposed in time and space)

1.2 The multilingual angle

2. The sound parameters

pitch, duration, loudness and timbre- defined by their source or level of perception :

-acoustic,

-physiologic,

-psycho-acoustic (the level of perception as musical language)

3.The meaning of the musical understanding

Coding-decoding of musical structures significance in relation with their expressiveness and specific musical grammar notions of a given language

4. Development of musical hearing

1. Goals

1. To develop the musical understanding (coding- decoding) of the notional and expressive meaning of sound structures and their relationships in the frame of a given musical language.
2. To develop the musical memory on the two levels of hearing:
 - 2.1 the *Reception* level (identifying sound structures and their relationships)
 - 2.2 the *Producing* level (creating sound structures and their relationships)

2. Principles defining the meaning of a pitch

1. In a musical language *any pitch belongs to a pitch structure* and must be identified and/or produced accordingly
2. In a musical language *a motion of pitches representing different structures is equivalent to a motion of whole structures*, i.e. a structural progression which expresses the relationships in the given language.

3. Means

Identifying and producing sound structures, while developing the inner simultaneous hearing of the pitch with the structure it belongs to, and the inner hearing of horizontal motion of structural vertical relationships using:

- 1.the study of theoretical and expressive meanings of the given structures through the fifth concept (defining the expressive tension in non tonal and tonal languages)
2. the technique of completion (completing in the inner hearing the structure a pitch belongs to)
3. the analytical and synthesized ways of hearing

4. Practice

is done using relevant musical materials from my workbooks and music literature. Sound structures, which are part of tonal or non-tonal musical languages, are studied accordingly to the language they express.

The concomitant hearing of a pitch- produced in effect- and the pitch structure it belongs to -created in the inner hearing- is the decisive factor for expressing the meaning of the pitch.

That means the main elements determining the significance of the pitch are not simply theoretical or grammatical definitions of sound structures, but their expressiveness related to their sense in a given musical language.

The actual method also uses a new approach to understanding, analyzing and performing the rhythm, based on rhythmic operations which create specific types of rhythmical units in metric frames.

Any rhythmical unit (duration relationship) in metric music can be thus easily defined from the point of view of its expressivity , recognized and performed in a given musical context.

The dynamic and timbre parameters are also addressed and practiced in the present method of musical hearing development.

A special subject, worked out extensively, is the skill of singing instrumental music.

The actual method of musical hearing development contains three workbooks, their annexes and a methodological book:

- NON TONALITY: THE SCHOOL OF INTERVALS (One workbook)

-TONALITY: THE SCHOOL OF FUNCTIONS (Two workbooks. The second workbook is in preparation)

-The methodological book, which presents the ways and tools of applying this method of musical hearing development is in preparation.

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