

## THE REFLECTION OF INTERACTIVE-EMPATHIC RELATIONSHIPS IN EDUCATION OF FLUTE

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**Abstract:** This paper focuses on the problem of empathic interaction in flute teaching and the reflection of effective and efficient teaching. Theoretical-empirical knowledge and experience speak to the importance and role of empathy in individual teaching and its impact on quality and success in individual teaching, to offer some recommendations for the dominance of empathic elements in the interaction in flute teaching.

**Key words:** empathy, quality, teaching, interaction.

### **A brief introduction**

Flute teaching, like any other type of teaching, is a mosaic of interactive relationships that have a strong reflection on the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the teaching itself. In fact, flute teaching is a specific type of teaching that is organized in music schools, at all levels of education, from primary to higher education. The teaching is individual, and the duration of the class is determined by the class. Although a certain age is recommended for initial steps in teaching such as 8+, the best age to start playing an instrument is determined by the individual child, its development and the instrument they want to learn. The best sign that a child is ready for music education is when he wants to attend formal classes and when he can concentrate during class. Great help in the initial stage of reading music is the child's ability to easily distinguish numbers and letters.

Most often, the first instrument and a good introduction to the process of creating music is the little flute. Children can start playing on the little flute the moment their fingers are big enough to cover the holes. We appreciate that playing the flute is a challenge not only for the learner but also for the instructor. Performing a musical work with a flute means not only producing clear and accurate tones related to the appropriate tone chords, but also a deep emotional expression of the messages contained in the musical work with the intention of provoking the same feelings and messages in the recipient or the listener. Flute teaching has its own specific characteristics. Namely, the flute is considered to be the earliest wind instrument. Its principles are probably discovered by men listening to the wind blowing through a broken reed, and re-conquering the sound when blowing through a similar reed or perhaps an empty bone.

Over the centuries, additional tones have been added either by combining flutes of different lengths, or by using your fingers on the holes. (Delaney, 1998, 1-3). However

producing the tone of the instrument is not the only subject of interest in flute instruction. Namely, teaching and learning in the flute teaching process is rich in its content and moves in several areas: breathing, position, tone production, articulation, use of fingers, intonation, vibrato as an addition to playing flute, adoption of practical and efficient techniques that are closely related to each other and mutually conditioned.

### **Interaction and empathy in flute teaching**

The teaching and learning of flute curriculum is expressed in interactive relationships as in any other type of instruction. What does the term interaction mean? The word interaction is a compound of inter (lat. inter-between, between) and action (lat. actio, action, activity). In its formal meaning, the term interaction focuses on the process of interdependence, the interaction between two or more quantities. Analogously, social interaction is the interaction of living beings, humans. N. Roth (1994, 15) defines interaction as "an active relationship between two or more individuals in which one individual influences the behaviour of other individuals." Interaction is a process in which there is a mutual relationship between two or more people, whose experience or behaviour is mutually conditioned and dependent. The interdependence is seen in the fact that the behaviour of one person or group is a reaction to the action of the other as its pointed out in, the Pedagogical Encyclopaedia (1989, 282). People's interaction, in which they take positions towards each other and determine each other's behaviour, is an interaction. (Bratanic, 1993,76). Interaction can be understood as a kind of relationship between people, in which their behaviour changes under their mutual influence (C. Мирасчиева, 2007, 19-20). The interaction is a reciprocal process, in which the ambiguity is clearly seen, typical of human relations, on the principle of giving and taking, mutual exchange of achievements on both sides. And such relationships are especially emphasized in the individuality of flute instruction. On the other hand, in the interactive relationship, the flute appears as a medium. Therefore, the interactive relationships in flute instruction includes three elements: the teacher, the student, and the flute instrument. Since the flute has a mediating role in the interaction, the subject of our interest in the paper is the social interaction between the teacher and the student. The social side of the interaction shows that the action between people takes place in a certain relationship. That is, in order for there to be action between people, they must be in some kind of relationship. In this regard, human action flows in two directions, which is a sufficient argument for the circular movement of influence between people. The interaction process, based on two-way relationship and mutual activity, results in changes in the behaviour of the participants in that relationship, the creation of certain attitudes. Thus, reciprocity becomes inherent in the interaction, in the direction of changing the positions of the participants, confrontation and dialogue. This knowledge, at all times and in all aspects, points to the connection between social interaction and humans. But one should not forget that each human being is an individual in whom "consciousness" and "unconsciousness" are an integral part of him, which influences the reaction to other people, without stepping on the threshold of consciousness. Social interaction is an interdependence that starts from knowing the expectations and motives of others and anticipating their actions. It includes the evaluation of motives and actions, and the consequences of their reactions. So, the essence is in the two-way active relationship, which leads to changes in behaviour. In the teaching process, interaction is a way of learning and teaching, communicating and changing student behaviour, under the influence of the teacher. Interaction is the base precondition for the realization of

communication between the teacher and the students. From its breath and depth depends the action and the impact on the students, in terms of changes in their behaviour. The interactive relationship in communication in teaching is of a dialectical nature and is appropriate in which information and its subjectivity, feedback, and management and regulation processes have their own function. The interaction between the teacher and the student in flute teaching is realized on several levels such as: physical connection, action-reaction connection, empathic connection and interactive connection. The first level is the level of physical connection, which means the presence of two communication areas - a source of information and a recipient. Here, the teacher interacts with the students, based on his/her presence, as soon as he enters the classroom, he interacts in a certain way. His/her facial expression, body posture and look, provoke certain reactions in students. Physical proximity, ie distance, is an indicator of the degree of closeness and affection between teacher and students in communication. Thus, physical connection occurs on the basis of nonverbal communication with varying degrees of internal connection. The subjects in the act of communication are interconnected only by their physical presence. The action-reaction bond level consists of the initial information (action), as a reason for the response (reaction), which affects the information and has the role of feedback. At this level of interaction, communication between a teacher and a student flows through questions and answers and forms a chain of links of actions and reactions, which are not internally connected and exclude the student's emotional sphere. The empathic connection is based on the expectations of the interlocutor's reaction to the message, taking into account his character, attitudes and possible reactions. At this level, at least one of the subjects, the teacher, must empathetically communicate with the other, the student. By adjusting the communication to them, it also informs and influences the student. The fourth level is the highest level and is the level of interaction. It starts from the assumption that both subjects participate in the communication act equally, establishing a direct relationship. When the teacher empathetically communicates with the students, then he alternately changes the role as a source of information and a recipient, empathizes with the position of the other, respects the views and opinions, and sees the problem by from his point of view and from the point of view of the other. At this stage, the communication act is in the form of a dialogue, which produces mutual influence and success of the communication act itself. (С.Мирасчиева, 2007, 79). Why empathic colouring is needed in aninteraction with the student in flute teaching. If we define empathy as the ability to observe things around us from the perspective of another in order to understand his feelings, and to learn how to be a leader in our actions, it means that we should not compare or equate empathy with kindness or compassion. Empathy is actually a kind of knowledge and ability to understand the other's condition, empathy without identification, ability to cooperate and mutual help. Therefore, it is more than necessary for the interaction between teacher and student in flute teaching to be developed at the level of empathy. After all, if ability is learned and developed, then empathy is a process that flows and develops throughout life.

### **The reflection of the interactive-empathic relations in flute teaching**

Flute teaching with all the specifics, both in terms of content and in terms of relation, provides conditions for strong reflections of its quality. In that sense, when we talk about empathic-interactive relationships in flute teaching, the question arises as to how reflection is expressed and how it is recognized. The literature abounds with numerous definitions of the

term reflection, but we will list some that are more closely related to our subject of interest. Thus, reflection is defined as reflection, response, thinking and transfer of attention from the object of observation of the subject in the process of observation, perception, realization. The term reflection refers to the movement of one's own knowledge from the outer world to the inner, own world of the individual. Reflection is a process of self-analysis and self-knowledge, of one's own actions, values, rules, constructions. That is why the world of reflection is rich, diverse and individualized, specific to each individual. The purpose of reflective thinking is not to analyse the effectiveness and finished products, but to discover the cause-and-effect relationships and relationships in the process of creating individual products and to understand the laws of that process.

From there, it can be freely said that the interactive-empathic relations in the flute teaching are reflected in many aspects such as:

- The quality of teaching expressed in effectiveness and efficiency,
- The success of the individual student in teaching as well as the formation of positive character traits,
- To encourage and develop emotional intelligence
- The development of creative abilities
- The system of values develops in each individual, and artistic evaluation is part of that system.
- Helps the student to develop a positive attitude and respect for all forms of art.
- The development of the ability for nonverbal expression of feelings and thoughts in interaction with other individuals.
- The development of the student's ability for symbolic communication. Thus the student learns and is able to read, write and interpret musical notation and music records through an appropriate system of symbols, such as mathematical or linguistic systems of symbols.
- Development of the ability to work in a team. Each individual wants to be part of a group. The theory of music and playing music, playing the flute instrument, goes in favour of developing teamwork competencies, especially in performances and recitals, which are the only opportunities for developing and expressing teamwork skills.

Success in flute teaching is not an isolated product of the individual engagement of one or another individual. On the contrary, the complete success is the result of joint work and effort of both the teacher and the student, in a teaching situation characterized by a positive socio-emotional climate, through relations of cooperation and partnership, non-directivity and two-way interaction in development.

In other words, the reflection of the interactive-empathic relations in the flute teaching points to the need for a reflective teacher-practitioner. When we talk about a reflective practitioner, we are primarily talking about a practicing teacher who is reflectively teaching, a teacher who is constantly rethinking his own practice, thinking about his own actions and their effects on student success and progress. Reflective learning is a process of simultaneous introspection / self-observation and self-evaluation. By collecting information about the course of the teaching process, analysis and evaluation of the same, the teacher monitors, analyses and evaluates his / her own practice that leads to changes and improvement of his / her own practice.

Hence the claim that reflective teaching is a kind of professional development of the teacher that begins in the classroom, in everyday teaching situations. This raises other issues that deserve special attention and relate to the ways and strategies for developing reflective practice, but we will not talk about them here because they are not the subject of interest in this paper.

### **Concluding remarks, suggestions and suggestions**

The theoretical-empirical analysis of the problem with the reflection of empathy in the interactive relations in flute teaching points to separate observations, from which some further proposals and suggestions arise. Namely, flute teaching as a form of individual teaching is actually a field of interaction between the teacher and the student with different colouring. One of those colourings is gained by the emphatic colouring in the teacher-student relationship. It is the empathy in the interaction between the teacher and the student in the flute teaching that leads to an increase in the quality of the teaching itself. The dominant mediator in that interaction, of course, is the flute itself. Practice, on the other hand, confirms the fact that there is no teacher who does not consider himself successful. Although empathy as a term has become quite prominent and imposed by educational experts in recent years, the question arises as to how many of us teachers think about our empathic attitude in teaching. Therefore, instead of concluding, I will list a few habits according to Krznarits, which characterize empathetic individuals, such as:

➤ *Talk to strangers.*

An individual with high empathy shows a keen curiosity about people he does not know (on the bus, for example) but not as an analyst but as a researcher. Curiosity expands empathy.

➤ *Overcoming prejudices and discovering similarities.*

The "labelling and categorization" of other people on various grounds is an obstacle to perceiving and valuing their individuality. Empathic people primarily seek similarities and not differences in others.

➤ *The life from the perspective of the other.*

Individuals with a highly empathetic ability gain direct experience from the lives of other individuals, which is in line with an old Indian saying, "Pass the love of another person's moccasins before you criticize it."

➤ *Careful listening and openness.*

To be an empathic interlocutor, it is necessary to have two characteristics: careful listening in order to "get into" the emotional state of the interlocutor and understand his needs. This, in turn, points to the second characteristic, openness, ie revealing one's feelings towards the other interlocutor. Empathy is actually a "two-way street" because in addition to mutual understanding, our experiences and beliefs are based on exchange.

➤ *Involvement in mass actions and social change.*

Empathy is not only expressed on an individual level, but can be a mass phenomenon that leads to radical social change. So it compares to a flower that can be grown collectively to teach young generations how to nurture it.

➤ *Develop a rich imagination.*

"Empathic" individuals have a habit of "dealing" with people who are not part of their immediate environment.

Therefore, my suggestion for everyone who reads the text is to judge by themselves how much the teacher cultivates empathy in his/hers own practice by recognizing the individual habits in himself.

Lastly, as Roman Krznaritz puts it, empathy, not apathy or self-centeredness, is at the heart of what we are.

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