

Could different methods of teaching Music be thought of :

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INTRODUCTION & PREAMBLE

Sangita is the art wherein the ply of sounds please the ear. It is, in itself, a potent language which can convey the emotions of all animate beings. It is the most sublime of all the fine arts.

*Sishurvetti Pashurvetti Vettigana
rasam phani*

It is a Vidya; and hence, if practised on prescribed lines, it can lead the aspirant to salvation.

Music is not so much of an exact science as it is non-exact. The rules of exact science are inflexible and never change with the times. But as regards a non-exact science it is always progressive and its rules do change from time to time in order to suite the growing tastes of the people. Music is no doubt a science though it is also an art. Science helps us to know and the art helps us to do.

Lakshana Sangeetham may be taken to mean that type of music having all bearing on lakshana or rigid rules of grammar and may be treated or labelled as such while Lakshya Sangeetham signifying that type of music not in strict accordance with lakshana aspect.

The art of music in its practical aspect has of late been looked upon only as a pass time and entertainment.

Ancient Greeks educated their children in music so that they might grow kind and unselfish to their fellow-creatures. The Greek educationists advocated the introduction of games with music for boys and girls to develop their various good faculties

and also control their wild tendencies. The tone language should therefore be used as the principal medium of instruction in the early part of life. The nervous system will thereby be regulated and it will contribute to muscular development. So it is of the greatest value that music should be the first item of instruction in the educational curriculum of every country. The nature of the music introduced and the words set to it have to be such as to further the objects of education. The object of training in music should be to bring about an equalisation of the nerve and the will power or equalise the physical and the mental cultures.

An unmusical person is, as a member of society, a mechanical being. Musical training in his case tends to soften his feelings. Judicious musical instruction begun at a proper age does much to train the nerves and sow the seeds of sympathy into the very substance of his constitution. An unmusical person without education is worse than a beast. *Sangita sastra kala vihinaha sakshat pashuhu*. He is a danger to society. A musical person with a sound general education is an ornament to society. A musical person without education is generally a man without principles. Vice and virtue appear alike to him. He is propelled by instinct. The reason is at a discount. He may have many good qualities.

But every rule has an exception and the general statements made above do not apply to certain individuals. Capacity to like or learn music and appreciate the art depends upon several physical conditions. The

different physical agents concerned in the production of a musical effect must be healthy. A defect in any of these stages may vitiate all the statements made above.

By a proper combination of sounds, music can produce a grand effect upon the ear of the listener as magic but its influence on the external world is very feeble. The vibrations of musical notes are confined to the physical plane and can operate through only a few octaves. Through sound which is only a vehicle the mind can reach even such a high pitch as to produce fire or electricity. But training the mind by devotion it is possible even for man to rouse its vibrations so high to resonate in unison with the almighty, rise sympathetic resonance and become one with Him. It is the Anahata nada practised by our high minded souls for self emancipation. Our musical vibrations stop at very threshold though they point to the right path.

By means of proper education in music it is possible to enliven the human frame in a way that it may respond to the outside or external influence in a beneficial manner. The word 'Education' is derived from Latin, E=out; Duc=lead. Its object is to lead out one's innate abilities and improve upon one's natural aptitude. The definition cannot hold good in all cases, for every man is not born with the same qualities. The method of education must and should vary with individuals. It must be positive as well as well as negative. There are musicians and educators. Educators need not be musicians but musicians must be educators.

Generally, musicians, in their teachings, are far from being governed by true educational principles, *Facts*.

The educational method of foundational instruction in teaching music adheres strictly to educational principles and it provides special means for the practical carrying out

of such principles, and too, it advocates the adoption of a teaching plan that may be termed the "Division of Labour" between the foundational and the artiste teacher, as a special means for the effective application generally of consistent educational principles in music study.

The music teacher who gives foundational instruction must, first of all teach his pupils how to apply thought to their work. He should drill them in the elementary exercises regularly and sufficiently so as to produce the satisfaction and pleasant feeling in their minds that effects their vocal power gradually improving in musical quality. Their voices or fingers under mental direction aided by the drill of their teachers, must acquire the skill to produce the musical effects, soul, mind, the voice, fingers and emotions now work together in perfect accord, a harmonious development of all the faculties and powers of mind and body naturally brought into action in the acquisition of the scientific knowledge and artistic skill demanded in singing or playing has been acquired.

The greatest help a teacher can give a pupil is helping him to help himself. This is done by teaching him how to think and definitely what to think about and how to act. This is right teaching. Whatever the teacher has got to teach, he should teach directly, plainly and one thing at a time.

The natural bent of the human mind is to take things just as easily as possible. The emotional way of teaching and learning music is the easy way and for the time it is more enjoyable than the educational way.

The music pupil, to become an effective performer must acquire a clear mental conception of tone, pitch and quality, must know the mechanical, technical cause of musical effects and must be able at will to control the condition and action of his

physical impulses. Thus is secured a harmonious development of the faculties and powers of mind and body naturally brought into action.

The foundation principles of the art of singing or playing is a schooling which comes through proper mental training rather than through emotional indulgence.

The study of musical education in India as a special subject dates from about the beginning of the last century, though Purandaradas is said to have laid the foundations of the science of musical pedagogies (or pedagogy) as early as the former half of the 16th century. But this systematic and well organised class-teaching of music that began to take shape from about the time of Subbarama Dikshitar and Patnam Subrahmanyayyer, remains more or less distinct from the traditional methods as individual teaching that have been the main means of transmitting technical knowledge and skill one generation to another. Within the last half century there has been a growing tendency to analyse these methods with reference to their scientific improvement.

Practical pedagogy of music is seen more and more to be vitally connected on the one hand with an accurate and systematic analysis of what it is proposed to teach (rudiments, vocal and instrumental technique, compositions, prosody, raga and tala, history etc.) and on the other with musical psychology (the mental processes involved in conceiving and producing music and the whole problem of music as an experience). The tendency of technical pedagogy has not always struck this balance justly or faithfully. But its advance in these directions is already noteworthy.

This may be illustrated with features relevant to teaching of music, a harmonious development of all the faculties and powers of mind and body naturally brought into

action is effected by first appealing to mind, the thinking power of the learner, and by excluding for the time every possible mind-distracting influence. Intelligent thinking, clear seeing, conscious physical feeling and mechanically correct practice are what determine the tonal quality of the tonal effects produced by the voice of the fingers. It is natural for music pupils, beginners even, at practice to be anxious to hear something that sounds like music. Pupils who are indulged in such mechanically wrong practices, are sure to run into wrong thinking habits which always throw the door open for the admission of wrong singing or playing habits of every description. Only the pupil whose mind is rightly directed, first by his teacher than by his own inner mental consciousness, is ever able to control the condition and action of the musical impulses.

The mind is the power in all learning-Music learning is no exception. When in music study the mind has done its legitimate work which only the mind and emotions, of their own free will work together in perfect accord. When this condition exists, a harmonious development of all the faculties and powers of mind and body, naturally brought into action has been secured.

Long years of observation and considerable experience in teaching music will convince the genuine inquirer that there is no subject of schooling in which there is greater necessity for making Truth, the first lesson to a child.

The study of music is a two-sided subject. The pupil who makes most rapid progress and who achieves the greatest artistic result, is the pupil who from the beginning, through right teaching, makes intelligently a right use of all his powers, with perfect unity of action between mind and emotions. If mind is made the governing and controlling power, and right teaching facilities are

employed, these two widely different subjects mind and emotions are in the beginning kept separate.

In a good music teacher the following three traits are sure to be discernible: sweetness of disposition, which will not allow itself to be swayed by any circumstance, adaptability, cheerfulness, attractiveness, inspiration, sense of humour, commanding tone, pleasing voice, neatness of appearance, precision, diligence, good judgement, self-confidence, punctuality, an inexhaustible fund of information and knowledge of music and musicology, an ever expanding repertoire, considerable ability to compose and to crown all these, a very great artistic skill in performance of classic standards. On no occasion should he allow himself to get excited or put on a serious look. He should talk and sing in a voice loud enough to be heard to a reasonable distance.

A fairly wide and varied repertoire of musical compositions, varied practical experience and thorough mastery of scientific principles governing the art of science of music, must form a predominant aspect of his erudition. There will be no use if he

simply adopts the devitalised reproduction of the songs he has learnt. The modern music teacher must closely understand his environment, carefully study the needs and interests of his students and try to adopt his teaching to their requirements. He should never content himself with the prescribed syllabus. A vast portion of the musical information and skill which he has to impart to his student lies hidden in his own practical experience which he should go incessantly augmenting by possibly attending every music concert and participating in every music conference and festival, besides repeating the syllabus matter indefinitely he must reconstruct the scientific garb and beautifying every song his student has learnt.

To the student the teacher must present himself as an embodiment of all music ideals and he should be able to secure their respect for him and his position. Above all, he should maintain a high standard of personal conduct. Of all teachers, the music teacher has the greatest power to mould the character of his students by his own example. For, after all the very purpose of music is, atleast in our country, to sing the praise of God. ●

