

Systemic Aspects of Music Education: Cultural Issues

M^a Cecilia Jorquera Jaramillo

Dept. Didáctica de la Expresión Musical y Plástica, University of Seville

Seville, Spain

mcjorquera@us.es

ABSTRACT

There are many aspects of school culture which influence how Music is taught. The present ethnographic study diagnoses how some of the meanings, expectations, and behaviours shared by the members of a secondary school and a music school considered as social groups affect classroom actions, showing thus the systemic nature of teaching. The study includes the researcher's participant observations written in her field diary, the analysis of documents to which the researcher had access, and interviews with key informants in each of the two settings. The texts were subjected to content analysis. The secondary school is seen to have an organizational culture that is common to many Spanish public schools, in which Music is relegated to the status of a Cinderella subject. The music school is seen to have a dysfunctional organization with a culture that primarily adheres to oral tradition, with the consequence that many problems arise in the organization, planning, and quality of the musical offer for its students. This music school's problem begins with its placement "outside" any formal system, with no social or institutional recognition. Including professional issues into the exchange among teachers would allow the music school to improve developing towards a better organization where teachers belong to a team.

In the secondary school, the task for the school's management and administration together with the music teachers should be to influence changes in culture in order to improve the status with which the subject is considered. In the music school, outside intervention would seem to be necessary to help both to improve the project, organization, planning, and musical offering for the students, as well as to promote its teachers' professional development.