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Music for All:
Promoting Inclusive Music Education in Portugal

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Introduction

In Portugal, inclusive education is considered fundamental as recommended by the Basic Law of the Educational System, Law Nº 46/86, Official Diary of the Republic of 14 October, and Decree-Laws Nº 344/1990 of 2 November and Nº 54/2018 and Nº 55/2018 both of 6 July. Despite this, in Arts Education Programmes, teachers don´t have adequate training to work with children with Special Needs. For this reason and in order to promote inclusion in the Arts Education Programmes of Music, in the year 2018 we started an action research project, entitled: Inclusion of children with special needs in Arts Education Programmes: From Research to Action.
We intend to find solutions for children with motor disabilities due to Cerebral Palsy who join Arts Education Programmes in the First Cycle of Basic Education, to develop their music potential and abilities with Digital Technologies. We adopted the Action Research Methodology (Fig.1).

Methodology

As you can see in Fig.1, the work plan of our study consists of three research cycles: a DIAGNOSTIC CYCLE, a PREPARATION and INTERVENTION CYCLE, and finally a practical development of the training and intervention programme. Each of these cycles considers planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation actions from an inclusive and change-oriented perspective.

The following actions from the Diagnosis Cycle have already been carried out:
(i) Approval with favourable opinion to carry out this study, by the Council of Ethics and Deontology and the General Data Protection Regulation, of the University of Aveiro; (ii) Characterisation of the child with cerebral palsy that gave rise to our study; (iii) Different literature reviews in different contexts in order to know what has been done by science so far; (iv) 18 interviews with parents of children with Cerebral Palsy and 18 interviews with professionals who work with children with Special Needs, in order to get to know the children's needs and Good Practices; (v) Different Short Training Workshop in different establishments in Portugal in order to raise awareness of inclusion in Music - music for all; (vi) a PhD internship at the Department of Computer Education of Music at the University of Milan, Italy, to learn about the different technologies they are working on, which can also be used to promote music learning for users with specific special needs (Fig.2).
At this moment we are ready to develop the Long-Term Training Programme and the INTERVENTION CYCLE in the Artistic School in which the child with Cerebral Palsy will join.
All the information compiled by this action research was organized and studied through content analysis supported by software on the webQDA platform (https://www.webqda.net), webQDA is a qualitative data analysis software, web-based, intended for all researchers and professionals who carry out qualitative research.

Fig.2 Child with Cerebral Palsy learning to use the musical instrument NetyChord

Discussion of results

The results obtained so far show that teachers are not yet prepared for the challenges posed by Inclusion in Arts Education Programmes. We highlight the need for specific training, focused on the use of Technologies (Fig.3 and Fig.4), involving the educational community in an active and collaborative way. Thus, it will be possible to stimulate the potential of children and adults to transform Music Education into an Inclusive Education for all.

Conclusions

To achieve this goal, we intend to sensitize participants to the use of Digital Technology, the development of inclusive dynamics and collaborative work, in the context of Music Teaching and Learning. We also intend to present different resources and technologies already developed, or under development, to promote Inclusive Music Teaching, in Arts Education Programmes.

The following topics will be highlighted:
- Music Teaching and/or Music Therapy, similarities and differences;
- Universal Design as pedagogical differentiation for learning;
- Strategies to enhance the active participation of all;
- Promoting opportunities for success;
- Curricular adaptations in Arts Education Programmes to achieve Inclusion;
- Use of Support Products/Technologies and Software for Music Teaching;
- Enhancing the development of Good Practices among all participants.

Fig.4 Children using digital technologies - augmentative communication

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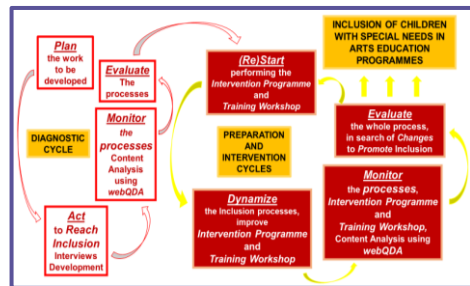
Fig.1 Action Research Cycles

Fig.3 Teachers and students using music technologies – Arcana Instrument

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