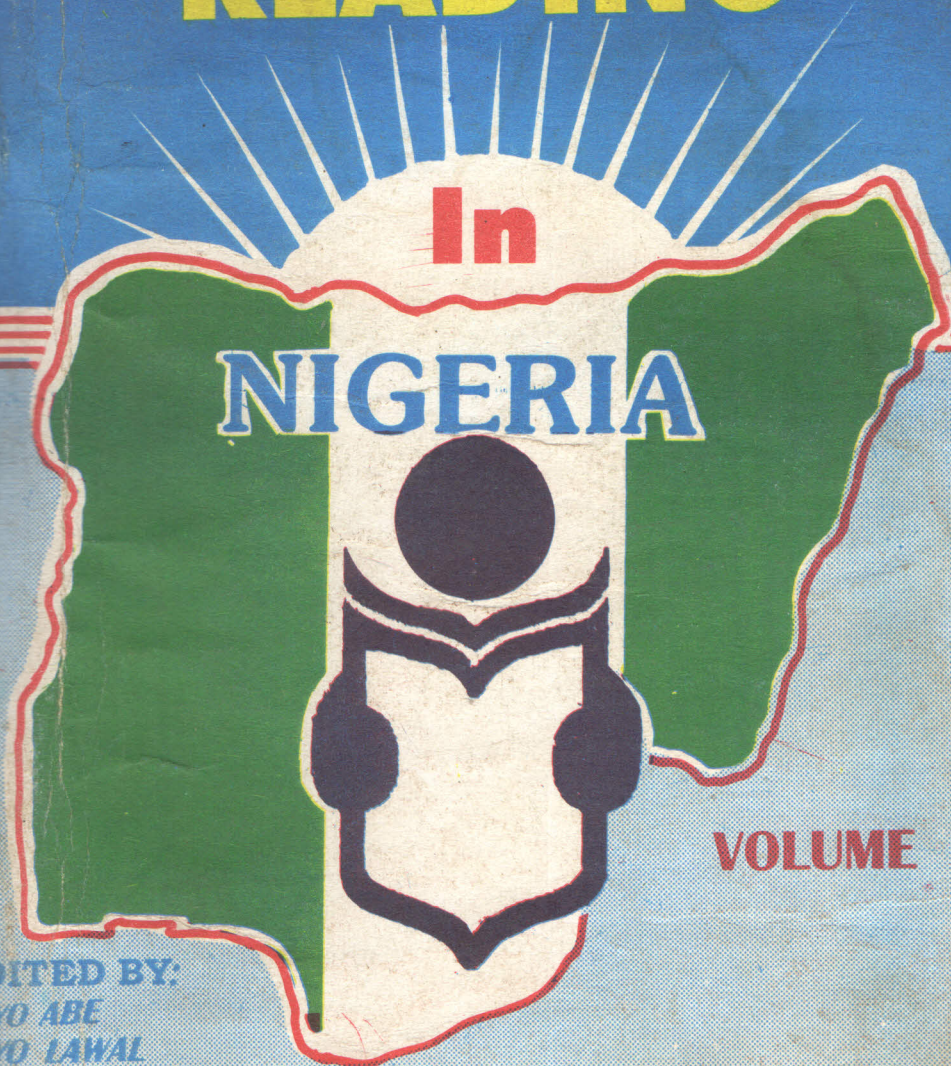


LITERACY AND READING



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FOREWORD

In spite of the political and economic crises which have engulfed our country since 1993, we are happy to report that the Reading Association of Nigeria(RAN) has continued to wax stronger and stronger. We salute the fortitude and resilience of the leadership and membership which made possible our 6th biennial conference in 1994. Postponed twice in 1993 and once in 1994, the conference was held during the shameful acute shortage of fuel which made movement from one part of the country to the other a nightmare. The fuel crises almost derailed the conference. This volume of **Literacy and Reading in Nigeria(LARN)** is the logical outcome of the courage and commitment of those who in spite of the crisis attended the conference.

RAN is convinced that unless our people are emancipated from poverty, ignorance, disease and gross mismanagement of our resources, our standard of living would continue to be awful and among the lowest in the world. RAN believes that literacy is a vital tool that can catalyse the effective and efficient development of our abundant human and natural resources. That is why RAN considered during our last biennial conference the role of literacy in catalysing the sound development of our enormous human and natural resources.

The articles in this volume examine the various ways literacy can be used to emancipate our people from our horrible state of underdevelopment. We recommend them to all in the corridors of power, policy makers, curriculum planners and implementers, classroom teachers and literacy researchers. We are convinced that that if the suggestions in them are implemented diligently, the foundation for a new era in which our people would be actively involved in emancipating themselves from the ills that plague our country would have been laid.

PROFESSOR E. A. ABE

PRESIDENT, THE READING ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA

Abstract

Music education in traditional Nigerian societies is oral-based. Music lessons are given by word of mouth and through practical demonstration. As a result of the advent of western education and civilisation however, much of our traditional musical practices are fast losing their pride of place. This paper examines the need to integrate the teaching of music in Nigeria within the general scope of contemporary education system. It also examines the problems inherent in the training of musicians in Africa with particular reference to the Nigerian situation. It also focus on the need to transcribe and notate traditional musical compositions with a view to encouraging musical literacy. A high level of musical literacy is not only germane to a proper understanding of the structures and forms of traditional music, it also suggests ways in which the individual mind and the society

The Need For Musical Literacy In Nigeria

Introduction

Music making in Nigeria as in many other African countries is a way of life which the trend of events as a result of contact with the western civilisation has relegated to a position of non-relevancy. Today, the average Nigerian does not relate with ease to traditional music with any reasonable level of appreciation as with European influenced music. This is because emphasis has been placed on European music since contact with the Western world. The way music is taught in Nigeria schools has not helped the situation.

Taiye Shola Adeola

The musical tradition of a people to a great extent, the embodiment of all other traditional practices inherent in that society. This is because music is an important culture indicator, the extent to which the musical traditions are cherished and preserved often determines the continuity of such traditions. If our very rich musical traditions are to be upheld, a conscious attempt must be made to preserve the music and educate the society on the need for positive attitudes towards our traditional musical practices. The present oral tradition being used in music education in the traditional setting should be supported with the transcription and notation of traditional musical compositions by those who have formal training in the western education.

The aim of this paper is to discuss the traditional musical education in Nigeria and its limitation in the context of contemporary national culture. It suggests ways to take the knowledge about Nigerian traditional music beyond the traditional



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Introduction

Music making in Nigeria as in many other African countries is a way of life which the trend of events as a result of contact with the western civilisation has relegated to a position of non-relevancy. Today, the average Nigerian does not relate with ease to traditional music with any reasonable level of appreciation as with European influenced music. This is because emphasis has been placed on European music since contact with the Western world. The way music is taught in Nigeria schools has not helped the situation.

The musical tradition (traditional or modern) of a people is, to a great extent, the embodiment of all other traditional practices inherent in that society. This is because music is an important culture indicator, the extent to which the musical traditions are cherished and preserved often determines the continuity of such traditions. If our very rich musical traditions are to be upheld, a conscious attempt must be made to preserve the music and educate the society on the need for positive attitudes towards our traditional musical practices. The present oral tradition being used in music education in the traditional setting should be supported with the transcription and notation of traditional musical compositions by those who have formal training in the western education.

The aim of this paper is to discuss the traditional musical education in Nigeria and its limitation in the context of contemporary national culture. It suggests the need to take the knowledge about Nigerian traditional music beyond the traditional

(oral) setting. The teaching of music should be integrated within the general scope of contemporary educational system in Nigeria with emphasis on Nigerian traditional music which is more relevant to us. This paper also examines the problems of music education in Nigeria and suggests ways of educating the individuals mind and the society at large through the promotion of musical literacy.

Music Education In The Traditional Setting

Traditional setting here refers to areas in which traditional practices are still adhered to despite contact with the European culture, especially in the rural areas. With particular reference to music, traditional musical practices are still in existence even in some areas that have become urban and overwhelmed by Western civilization.

Musicians go through a process of training in order to attain mastery of whatever musical art they choose to be involved in. It may be singing or playing of a musical instrument. The training of a musician in the traditional setting is both formal and informal. Formal in the sense that there is a period of training and attachment of an apprentice to a teacher with certain terms for the training. It is informal because it is not a school as in the western conception, Learning is done by participation over a period of time. Exposure to musical situations and participation are emphasised more than formal teaching (Nketia, 1974). In Yoruba land, a child is right from his youth incorporated into the musical tradition of the land. As an ordinary citizen of the community, he takes part in various socio-musical activities which range from non-ritual events such as moonlight games and marriage ceremonies to rites of passage consisting of naming initiation, marriage and funeral ceremonies (Omojola, 1992:44). The process of music education in the traditional setting is illustrated using the training of a Dadakuada musician. Dadakuada is a traditional vocal music found among the people of Ilorin in Kwara State of Nigeria. It is a music for entertainment.

The willingness of an individual to enter into the pupilage of musician is communicated to a master musician of his choice. This however, is not until after consultation with the Alphas on the intended career to be sure whether he is destined to be in that profession. This according to Alhaji Jaigbade Aremu is rooted in the Yoruba belief about destiny. There is no specific age limit as to who could enrol for apprenticeship. Whoever will be enrolled must however, be knowledgeable enough to understand what he will be taught and to communicate effectively with his master. The pupil is expected to get very close to the leader

because an apprentice in Dadakuada is not only expected to learn the musical art, he is also to acquire the ideas and philosophies of his master (Na Allah: 1988).

A new pupil starts merely as a follower and observer at performances. He is also discharged with the duty of helping his superior to carry one instrument or the other such as the Akuba, and Adamo drums. He stays with the chorus group for performance as soon as he is certified by the head of the chorus group to observe their activities and try to sing along during performances. He joins the chorus group to have understood the art of singing. As he masters the art, the pupil moves up the ladder in hierarchy until he attains the post of the head of chorus group which is next to the highest post a follower could attain. This is the post of the assistant group leader. The pupil is later released by the master musician to form his own band.

The process of educating a traditional musician as illustrated above cuts across the Nigerian musical training practices with slight variations. The training is done purely by observation and participation in the art. Instructions are given by words of mouth and the musical tradition over the years are passed on from one generation of musician to another through oral tradition. This over a period of time has made the music lose its originality because of the variations brought into it in the course of passing it from one generation to another, the understanding of such musical traditions and the principles guiding their performances also becomes vague because there is no proper documentation and there can not be documentation without musical literacy.

The Nigerian Secondary School Experience

The introduction of music as a subject in the curriculum of the Nigerian Secondary schools is a positive steps towards music literacy in Nigeria. However, it is observed that not all the Nigerian Secondary school teach music as a subject. For example in Ilorin, only about six Secondary schools offer music out of all the Secondary schools within Ilorin town.

It is also observed that schools where the subject is taught have very low manpower thus making the teaching ineffective. Also the teaching of African and indeed Nigerian music in these schools is western-oriented. Most of the schools have more of the Western musical instruments with little or no traditional instruments. Few schools where traditional instruments are found find it difficult to teach because there are no standardised methods and materials for instruction for purely academic purposes. The classical sonata, fugues and other

Europeanized musical works are mirrors through which the Nigerian traditional music and instruments are being examined. Thus the orientation and inclination of the students become more western than African.

The Cherubim and Seraphim College Ilorin (C&S) is one of the Schools where music is taught. The writer of this paper happens to be a product of that college. The formal teaching of music as a subject in C & S College started in 1980 with Miss Mary Okafor as the first music teacher. She was then a Youth Corper with a Diploma in music from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Prior to this time, musical activities which are western were encouraged by the school Principal Mr. D. O. Akintola who was trained in Britain.

Music was made compulsory for Forms One and Two with five arms each of about forty students in each arm. Miss Okafor being the only music teacher had to teach four hundred students. The syllabus was purely based on theory of western music such as lines and spaces; triads; scales and history of western music with no reference to anything traditional. Between 1980 and 1988, C & S College had no regular music teachers. The school depended only on Youth Corpers or instructors who cannot even read music to teach the subject. In 1989, a permanent music teacher Mr. Segun Abejide was employed and has since been working as both instructor and teacher. The Music Department has the following musical instruments:

- 5 Harmoniums,
- 3 Electric Guitars,
- 1 Accordion,
- 6 Recorders,
- 2 Trumpets,
- 2 Alto Saxophones,
- 2 Clarinets,
- 1 Set of Drums.

Drums for Dundun and Bata Ensemble.

The traditional ensemble is however not taught because the instructors are not available so we have more trumpeters, guitarists and organists.

The school does stage musical concerts which are purely western. In conception and realisation, the activities in C & S College illustrates the prominence given to the western-oriented musical training in the secondary schools.

Some Problems

The training of a musician in Nigeria is surrounded by a number of problems. One of such problems is a late contact with formal music education. Most people

have their first formal contact in the secondary school, where music personnel and facilities are not readily available. Thus there is a limit to what could be achieved.

The average Nigerian has been made to believe that anything western is superior. The Nigerian traditional music is thus viewed as inferior to the European's hence the preference and crave for the European music.

The establishment of music departments in schools have been western in conception because the music educators themselves have a western background. Western, rather than African traditional informed the conception of the first Nigerian University programme in music education (Omojola, 1992: 447).

Although the training of Nigerian music educators is predominantly western, our music educators should make a conscious effort to detach themselves from the western orientation and emphasise the understanding of our traditional music in the schools. People like Akin Euba have tried to capture the essence of our traditional music in some of their works by lifting it from the traditional setting into such that could be appreciated as a contemplative music. Such works include scenes from traditional life; Abiku. Akin Euba has through these works promoted an idea he called African pianism in which he makes the western piano behave like African drums. When the process of training a musician in Africa with particular reference to the Nigerian situation is compared to what obtains in the western world, one would observe that a major factor why the Europeans music dominate and is being emphasised even in African countries is because there has been a proper documentation by means of transcription and notation of their music. The scores of music by musicians who lived many centuries back in the European continent are available with us here in Nigeria today because they are transmissible as a valid document.

A proper documentation of the European music is what is responsible for our knowledge of various composers and musicians who lived at different periods of music history, hence the classification of their music works and the understanding of the structures of the music they wrote.

Conclusion

In the context of national and international musical cultures, one will discover that the musical traditions which are indigenous to Nigeria especially the traditional ones have not been documented enough for proper study and analysis of the structures of the music for onward transmission to other cultures outside Nigeria.

such that our traditional music will have on other national musical cultures the effect that the European music has on our own.

If folktales and stories in literature have been documented in form of prose drama and poetry and have become valid documents they could be done in music. This paper does not seek to say that the western music is not relevant at all to us. However the teaching of it must not be at the expense of our own traditional music one observes that the level of musical understanding in Nigeria especially relating to our traditional music is low because it is not written down. It is not written down because people are not musically literate. There is therefore the need to integrate the teaching of music in Nigeria within the general scope of contemporary educational systems at all levels.

Music should be introduced to the child right from the Nursery school to the university level with emphasis on understanding the forms and structures of our traditional music and notation of it. The media house should give our traditional music enough publicity. The radio and television houses should play it as often as possible to get the society informed. Newspapers should publish articles that discuss our traditional music and the elements that make it what it is.

Music educators and scholars should get to the rural areas where the music exists and make an effort towards its documentation. Public performances of the Nigerian traditional music should also be embarked upon in concert halls thus carrying the music beyond the original setting as a functional music into a contemplative one.

If we must understand the structures and forms of our music and preserve them such that they are not completely wiped out after a period of time then we must encourage music literacy.

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Abstract

This paper focuses on reading at the creative level. Fifty students from two selected Secondary Schools in Kwara State were randomly selected for the study. Two tests were administered to the subjects and their responses were in essay form. The subjects were scored based on a list of pre-determined aspects of creativity. Frequency counts were calculated and t-test statistics was used to determine significant differences in the patterns and creativity exhibited by the subjects. Findings from this study reveal low level of creativity demonstrated by the subjects generally. Pedagogical implications are discussed.

Developing Creative Thinking Through Selected Language Materials For Reading Comprehension

The process of reading, according to many experts, largely involves both physical and mental activities. The physical aspect involves the eyes, the brain, work in co-ordination for the reader to get meaning out of a given reading material. However, people differ in their ability to understand and the higher the level of comprehension required of the reader, the more the interplay of other factors that affect effective reading. Such factors include: the reader's motivation, background, previous experience and exposure on one hand, then the nature of the reading material on the other hand. The material could be easy or difficult to read, it could be familiar or unfamiliar. These factors often influence the way the reader comprehends and responds to the reading material.

Viewing this as a stimulus-response (S-Q-R) situation, the reading material is a stimulus which could spark off reactions (response) that are determined by the "O" factor of the reader. Reading at the creative level involves the highest level of comprehension, the lower levels being literal, inferential and critical levels in hierarchical order. Thus, creative reading requires not only the reader's ability to understand the author's message at the plain (literal and inferential) levels but also to generate ideas which are not explicitly stated or conveyed but relevant to the material in question.

Dr. (Mrs) Esther O. Lambo

Due to the complexity of reading, sometimes people do not see what you expect them to see even when a reading material is obviously clear. Smith (1990) explained that this situation demonstrates the fact that visual information is not as important or sufficient for reading as it is thought to be. In fact, it is argued that the more visual information that is available to the reader

