CHILDHOOD AND MUSIC MAKING

EXPLORING
COMMUNICATING
IMPROVISING

MERYC22 PROCEEDINGS

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MERYC22

CHILDHOOD AND MUSIC MAKING
EXPLORING – COMMUNICATING – IMPROVISING

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Introduction

Dear colleagues and friends of the international MERYC family,

The tenth EuNet MERYC International Conference on Early Childhood Music Education took place in February 2022. As chairperson, I am delighted now to present to you the proceedings of the conference. The theme was *Childhood and music making: exploring, communicating and improvising* and the proceedings are intended to provide a more in-depth look at the many exciting contributions and to bring back happy memories of the conference. Although held entirely online, enriching encounters and lively exchanges were nevertheless possible. I would like to thank the contributors for sharing their knowledge, and the attendees for taking part in the presentations, workshops, discussions, songs, folk music, dances, artistic performances and other encounters. I would also like to thank the MERYC board for their support, as well as the organicational team and the IT department of the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna for successfully recreating, in the virtual space, the charm which is so typical of Vienna.

It was the first time that the conference had been hosted by a German-speaking university. This provided an opportunity to bring more German speakers into the international community of theoreticians and practitioners and so, naturally, we wished to broaden our horizons by exchanging ideas with others, sharing our research findings and good practice, and making these accessible to all.

The conference was hosted jointly by the Department of Music Education Research, Music Didactics and Elementares Musizieren and the Department of Music and Movement Education (Rhythmics and Music Physiology). It was a great opportunity for the departments to cooperate and present in tandem their closely-related approaches and working methods as they relate to the conference theme. Exploring, communicating and improvising using voice, body and instruments play a central role in both of our curricula, as well as in Early Childhood music education more generally. For children and other beginners, stimuli taken from the world of everyday experience are eminently suitable for encouraging musical improvisation. An intuitive, body-centred, playful approach is another necessary component. The experiencing of creative situations can be a fruitful starting point for imaginative thought and the furthering of musical knowledge. Many of the proceedings contributions talk about this.

I would like to offer my grateful thanks to the keynote speakers and presenters for their enthusiasm and willingness to share their expertise, findings and insights in the proceedings. In an increasingly polarised world, it is more important than ever to listen to and treat each other with respect and appreciation. Sharing is caring, and this is a special characteristic of the international MERYC community. The abstracts have undergone blind review by three members of the review committee, consisting of experts in music education research and practice, the psychology of music and other relevant fields. We would like to thank them for giving of their precious time and for their attention to detail. Special thanks also go to Dr. Shan Parfitt, who carefully proofread all of the papers and abstracts, and to Werner Rohrer for designing the layout and standardising the citations.

To the readers I wish much enjoyment, many new insights and a vivid and happy memory of the Vienna Conference.

Veronika Kinsky

Part I - Keynotes

Young children and artistic behaviour. Theoretical considerations for exploration, communication, and improvisation, and practical implications

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Abstract

This keynote considers artistic behaviour in general and demonstrates young children's potential for engaging in artistic actions. In particular, perceptive and explorative behaviour, including the various forms of communication, may lead to artistry and can be supported by teachers and educators. Important options for artistic activities include the use of the imagination both during improvisation and when understanding songs and pieces of music. The behaviour begins with the events of everyday life and has the potential to culminate in various types of artistic practice.

Keywords

artistic behaviour, perception, exploration, imagination, reconstruction, communication, motivation, attitudes, methods

Introduction

The idea of viewing children as artists first emerged in the context of "reform pedagogy" in the visual arts. Following on from Conrado Ricci's book "L'arte dei bambini" (The Art of children) of 1886 (Ricci, 2007), the exhibition "Das Kind als Künstler" (The Child as Artist) by the *Lehrervereinigung für die Pflege der künstlerischen Bildung* (Teachers' Association for the Cultivation of Artistic Education) took place in 1898 in the Hamburg Kunsthalle, where children's freely-expressed drawings were presented. In 1921, the art historian Gustav Friedrich Hartlaub (1884–1963) organised an exhibition of children's art in Mannheim and called it "Der Genius im Kinde" (The Genius in the Child), which eventually became a slogan (Oelkers, 2000, 142). His publication of the same name appeared the following year (Hartlaub, 1922).

About ten years later, Carl Orff published his "Gedanken über Musik mit Kindern und Laien" ("Thoughts on Music with Children and Laypeople"), where he wrote: "The most important thing is to let the child play from within and to remove distractions" (Orff, 2002, 174, translation MD)[1]. In fact, one of his most important ideas is that it is not necessary for children to learn a great deal before they are able to make music, because the prerequisites for so doing are already present within them. However, Orff was thinking of what he called "elemental music" (German: *Elementare Musik*) rather than art *per se*. The question arises as to whether this early ability should be regarded as artistic. In order to be able to form a judgement, we first need to define what we understand by artistic behaviour.

Artistic behaviour

John Dewey's argues in "Art as Experience" (1934) that there is a continuity between art and everyday events (Dewey, 1980, 3). These events might be seen as the starting point for this continuity and thus for art. Art starts with everyday behaviour. But art works are "refined and intensified" in comparison with everyday behaviour (ibid.). This suggests that refinement is a characteristic of artistic behaviour. Dewey speaks of the expressiveness of art in terms of "a thorough and complete interpenetration of the materials of undergoing and of action" and "the complete fusion of what we undergo and what our activity of attentive perception brings into what we receive by means of the senses" (ibid., 103). He points out that two kinds of transformation take place when a person acts artistically: the

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1   „Das Wichtigste ist, das Kind aus sich selbst heraus spielen zu lassen und alles Störende fernzuhalten".

transformation of the physical materials and the transformation of the "inner" material including "images, observations, memories and emotions" (ibid., 74). For Dewey, "[t]he work is artistic in the degree in which the two functions of transformation are effected by a single operation" (ibid., 75). This suggests that this merging of functions should be viewed as another of the characteristics of artistic behaviour.

Based on this, four objectives of teaching artistic behaviour can be identified:
- Perceiving (the material);
- Trying out (the material);
- Fantasising (in an artistic context);
- Reconstructing (of an artistic context).

All four are important for artistic behaviour, because the perceiving of a material is a precondition for merging with it, trying out is a prerequisite for refinement, fantasising gives the impetus for refinement, and reconstructing allows for merging.

It is remarkable that all four objectives correspond with real-world children's learning strategies: perceiving with the senses is as crucial for learning as trying out and exploring are. Playing as one of children's main learning strategies could be seen as a form of fantasising. Imitating–another important learning strategy–is a form of reconstructing. Whenever children use these strategies, they are in a certain sense behaving artistically.

Perceiving and trying out are closely related to each other, because perceiving can be understood as sensory, inner exploration, whereas trying out means exploring through acting. As ways of encountering the world, both also involve a type of communication. During exploration, the individual enters into a dialogue with a material and waits for reactions from it. Conversely, communication is a form of exploration; in a sense, it is an exploring of how one's communication partner is reacting to one's impulses. All of this can be applied to the actions of a musician in combination with an instrument, as well as to their interactions with other musicians. An open, exploratory readiness for dialogue is crucial to the artistic process.

Fantasising is especially evident during improvisation. The latter represents a form of playing with sounds and inner impulses, just as every form of play can be seen as a kind of improvisation with materials, roles and rules. Allowing inner impulses to flow is fundamentally necessary for improvising, composing and the interpreting of musical

pieces. In addition, the playing of music involves reconstructing musical instructions, which in turn involves either playing from a score, or, in early childhood music education, imitating a model. Reconstruction may be understood as an act of enculturation and can refer to many things; for example, conventions of singing, playing, tonality, meter, verses, pieces, dances, moving to songs, interpretations and meanings of music.

The characteristics of artistic behaviour also correspond to specific aspects of motivation. Sensory perception satisfies the need for stimulation. Trying things out serves the urge to gain knowledge on the one hand and to gain ability on the other. Fantasising corresponds to the desire to actively create reality. Reconstruction and imitation address the motive of identification with the social environment. The last three motives represent the *competence, autonomy* and *relatedness* of Deci and Ryan's influential self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Teaching artistic behaviour

As already mentioned, the characteristics of artistic behaviour can serve as the basis for particular objectives in pedagogical work. The teacher wishes the child to perceive something in particular, to explore something, to fantasise within a specific context and to reconstruct something. All of this can then be linked to higher-level goals that affect the longer-term disposition of the child. Perceiving should lead to a growing sensitivity to sensory impressions. Trying out expands the spectrum of experience and behaviour. Fantasising can lead to an increase in originality, especially in an artistic context. Through reconstruction, the horizon is broadened. In the pursuit of these goals, artistic teaching has various dimensions which will here be termed the contemplative, the explorative, the expressive and the approximative dimension.

Certain types of content and thus attitude fit into each dimension. According to the German philosopher Martin Seel, an attitude is characterised by three elements: a behavioural rule, an assumption and a sentiment (Seel, 1997, 91-103). For example, a person's attitude towards factory farming could consist of the behavioural rule not to eat meat derived in this way, the assumption might be that animals suffer in this type of environment and the feeling might be one of pity or anger. In terms of artistic teaching, the attitude to contemplation in music lessons includes the behavioural rule that the student should concentrate on perceiving, the assumption is that there is something to discover or to enjoy, and the sentiment is of curiosity, eagerness and a readiness to enjoy. All this is

communicated to the children by the teacher. In the exploratory dimension, the behavioural rule is to stay in contact with the material, the assumption is that the trying out can lead to success, and the sentiment is one of playfulness and empathy. The teacher needs to encourage the child not to give up. The expressive dimension entails the rule that one should show something of one's inner self, the assumption is that this will be appreciated and the sentiment is one of being involved. When aiming to approximate a piece of music according to certain cultural expectations, the behavioural rule is one of striving to meet requirements, the assumption is that the requirements are worth achieving and the sentiment is one of respect, enthusiasm and appreciation. Again, what is crucial here is the attitude transmitted by the teacher (Dartsch, 2019, 94-98).

After all, it does not seem far-fetched to allocate appropriate methods to the different dimensions of teaching. For the contemplative dimension, the approach known as staging might be used. This involves designing situations involving silence, surprise, fascination, perception games, themes, materials, stories and imagination. All of this has the potential to facilitate a deeper perception and the appropriate attitude. Exploration can be flanked with pointers: teachers might point to opportunities to behave and perform, to what the child has done ("feedback"), to things that are necessary or desirable (this could be termed "feedforward") and to facts and connections. Teachers exert less control here when they are in the role of learning companion, because it is the child who needs to do the exploring. To foster fantasising, the teacher needs to show resonance. This can be done via self-revelation, expressions of interest, encouragement and empathy. The teacher is less in demand as a specialised expert than as a person who enters into a relationship with the child. Finally, in order to be able to reconstruct, the child needs a form of representation. The teacher can represent music visually by playing it or by adding notations. Another possibility is a somatosensory form of representation. This happens, for example, when the teacher gently taps a rhythm on the child's back. When the teacher plays the music, this is mainly a nonverbal auditory representation, whereas in its verbal form, the music is explained or talked about. Using these four methods – staging pointing to details, resonating and representing – teachers can help children achieve artistic behaviour (Dartsch, 2019, 137-155).

Opportunities for promoting artistic behaviour are not limited to the classroom. They also exist in everyday life. When educators set up listening stations and provide quiet rooms and times, they facilitate contemplation. To encourage exploration, they can simply provide

materials that make a sound and thereby give room for processes of trial and error. By offering instruments and providing a stage setting, they create opportunities for fantasising and personal expression. Even the approximation to given musical forms can be supported. Childcare workers and preschool teachers can establish musical rituals for this purpose and invite guests in to make music (Dartsch, 2019, 202-204). In all of this, it remains to be considered that children's behaviour in and of itself shows an astonishing resemblance to artistic behaviour. They explore their environment, communicate with people and things and create their own worlds through improvised play. This is how they learn and for this, they bring with them a natural motivation. Educators thus do not have to create artistic behaviour out of nothing, but can rather give impulses to enable the child to develop its own potential, such that this does not get lost but flourishes in a way specific to the individual.

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"The Sounds turn Somersaults and the Harmonica is Mourning…" The Healing Effects of Music Making

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Abstract

Children love making music – or, as we say in music therapy, they love playing with music. At the same time both joyful and sincere, they explore the sounds of the instruments and try out different tunes and rhythms as a way of expressing their feelings and interacting with others. Through play, they create inexhaustible, inventive musical scenarios which in turn enable them to develop a better understanding of their own personal circumstances and thereby to grow and set themselves free. This keynote will provide insights into the ways in which music therapy can assist personal growth by tapping into the child's ability to engage with music in a spontaneous and playful way.

Keywords

Child music therapy, early childhood music education, safe place, play, musical play, forms, therapeutic functions, symbolisation

Early Childhood Music Education and Child Music Therapy have common ground: they both rely on children's natural enthusiasm for exploring musical instruments, perceiving and discovering sounds, rhythms and melodies, developing musical stories, moving their bodies to music.

So it is not surprising to find that there are the two fields have pioneers in common, too; examples are Gertrud Orff, Mimi Scheiblauer, Karin Schumacher and Gerda Bächli.

Of course, there are also differences: the point of departure in child music therapy is a crisis situation, emotional suffering, a profound physical or mental illness or a behavioural disturbance. One of the roles of the music therapist is to support the child through these challenges. The therapeutic goals of music therapy relate to individual development, inner growth, emotional regulation and behavioural change, while music education focuses on the child's overall development, the providing of artistic experiences and in particular the acquisition of musical skills (Frohne-Hagemann & Pless-Adamczyk, 2005).

This article focuses mainly on the common element: musical play. First, some general aspects of play and its use in music therapy are highlighted. Then insights are given into the distinctive aspects and atmospheres of music therapy for children, in particular the different types of music play. Examples from music therapy practice illustrate the descriptions.

1. General Aspects of the Phenomenon of Play

Play is an essential part of human life, especially in childhood, and regardless of ethnicity, politics or religion. It is an innate phenomenon (Buytendijk, 1933/1997) and a fundamental element of any culture (Huizinga, 1938). Dialogue and interacting shape it (Mead, 1956/1997). Play can be cathartic (Spencer, 1895/1997), removing emotional and mental blocks and helping relieve anxiety and resolve conflict. This makes it important in overcoming the past (Freud, 1920/1997). It allows space for developing and practising social, emotional and cognitive skills (Groos, 1822/1997; Rousseau 1762/1997; Piaget, 1974) and is a joyful and relaxing activity (Heckhausen, 1978; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

All of these aspects are also to be found in music. Some elements of music occur very early in life, even going back to prenatal experiences. In the uterus, musical impressions surround the embryo: the rhythm and dynamics of the mother's heartbeat, her breathing, her movements and the sound of her voice. After birth, the baby's first vocalisations are of

a musical kind: it plays with the sound and the melody of its own voice and communicates (Nöcker-Ribaupierre, 2003). Music is used to create and transmit the characteristics of a culture. Music making consists of dialogue and interacting; it is communication in pure form. It desribes and evokes atmospheres, feelings, attitudes and views and allows these to be expressed or assuaged in various ways and with varying degrees of intensity even to the point of catharsis. Playing music improves sensorimotor skills, stimulates brain activity and promotes prosocial behaviour. Playing and listening to music releases tension and can induce „flow" (Lutz Hochreutener, 2009).

2. Characteristics of Play

Rolf Oerter (2011), a German developmental psychologist summarised the three main features of play as being *freedom from purpose*, *alteration of reality*, *repetition and ritual*. All three correspond to features also found in music play.

Freedom from purpose: Playing is purpose-free. Music making is no different: you play music just because you want to; there is no other specific aim. The motivation comes from within and is maintained through the music's constant variations of tension and release. It allows you enter a space in which you feel at perfect ease with what you are doing; it can create a state of flow (Lutz Hochreutener, 2009, p. 29ff).

Alteration of reality: Play allows children to feel as if they are grown-up, can do things that they are not able or allowed to do in reality: they can cook like their father; reign like a king; drive the car like their mother.
Music can evoke inner imagery, which also may alter feelings that would be different in reality; it can relieve stress, conflict and problems. It is a way improving one's quality of life and it is also a useful space for creating and practising new skills and abilities (ibid, p. 31f).

Repetition and ritual: In general, playing contains recurrent elements; these are clearly in games like "Hide and Seek" and "Bumpety Bump Rider", to name but a few. In music, there are also repetitive elements: rhythm and form, but also for example the repeating of a chorus.

Some games develop a ritualistic character due to their clear rules, which are followed every time they are played. The same goes for music; one obvious example is „Happy Birthday". (ibid, p. 32ff).

3. Definition and Functions of Play in Child Music Therapy

Playing in Child Music Therapy incorporates many diverse aspects, as the following examples demonstrate:

- listening to a lullaby and snuggling with a cuddly toy
- communicating in rhythmic nonsense language
- pretend cooking using singing bowls
- drumming like Native Americans
- building a hut out of musical instruments
- singing well-known songs and inventing new ones
- imagining to music
- adapting music to an invented story
- clapping, stamping, screaming, whispering to music

As these examples show, music is a medium for exploring, experimenting, acting, imagining and symbolising. The following definition is apposite here: "It encompasses, firstly, music in the narrow sense: the acoustic, resonance level; that which is heard. But it also means musical play: experimenting and creatively playing with music (the process of creating music), as well as all the activities of play that it triggers, intensifies or accompanies" (ibid, p. 28). The term 'music' in music therapy thus has a wide range of meanings. It corresponds with the original meaning of 'musike' which sums up music, speech, movement and scene setting (Glogau, 1998; Voigt & Plahl, 2007, p. 198f).

Playing music during music therapy has a variety of therapeutic functions (Lutz Hochreutener, 2009):

- *Processing conflict:* Playing music can have a cathartic effect, helping with the assimilation and integration of themes and issues present to the child.
- *Bridges between the inner and outer world:* Playing music is a creative process between the inner and outer world. It creates a "transitional room", as the famous child psychiatrist Donald Winnicott (1997) calls it.
- *Symbolisation:* The child symbolically expresses its feelings, problems, and inner dynamics by playing music. This helps it cope with fear and conflict;
- *Self-development:* S*elf-expression* deepens and widens the *perception* and *exploration of self* and allows for *self-realisation*;

- *Emotional, mental, social and sensorimotor growth:* playing music promotes the exploration, practice, and acquisition of new skills and abilities as well as new ways of behaving;
- *Development of identity:* Music play is an effective tool for helping the child construct its sense of identity.

4. Atmosphere in Music Therapy

In order to achieve these functions in music therapy, the atmosphere is an important element.

One way to describe music therapy is with the metaphor of a journey: for a period of time the music therapist joins the child on its developmental path. The point of departure is always the child's current mental and emotional state. The therapist does not prepare anything in advance; this is a major difference to the educational setting. He or she meets the child with open, mindful attention. The interventions evolve out of the present moment. The focus is on the process, the experience and the encounter with the child in the here and now; the base-line is the child's current internal resources and of course its therapeutic needs. Past influences and memories as well as the child's hopes, views of the future and immediate prospects all have their part to play.

As evidenced by previous research, the quality of the therapeutic alliance is of great importance to the success of the therapeutic process (Grawe, 2004; Wampold & Imel, 2015). It is only on this basis that specific music therapy methods and techniques can be effective.
The therapist encounters the child with openness, respect, appreciation and authenticity, and also with clarity, patience, calmness, flexibility and empathy for his/her therapeutic needs. It is important to create a "safe place" (Katz-Bernstein, 1996; Oaklander, 2016). Only in such an atmosphere can the child build trust and thus feel able to show both its 'good' and 'bad' sides. An important precondition is for its play to arise out of its own inner impulses. All emotions and personal qualities are allowed: joy, strength and interest, but also insecurity, jealousy, anger, hate, fear, guilt and shame.

There are moments of resonance between therapist and child (Gindl, 2002), and these should be reflected on carefully in order to enhance the quality of the therapeutic relationship. The music which develops out of the process touches and embraces both of

them. In the words of neuroscientist Joachim Bauer (2005), a mutual space of meaning, experience and creation arises.

Also important is the therapist's attitude towards the child's musical expression. Music therapists employ a broad definition of music: as an aural expression separate from notions of right and wrong. This includes vocal and instrumental improvisation with harmonious sounds, melodious tunes and clear rhythmic structures, but also chaotic rhythms and extremely dynamic, confusing and unpleasant sounds. Songs are also very important: well-known ones, newly created ones and ones which develop spontaneously in the moment. Silence, too, is key: contemplative moments of quiet, of hearing sounds fade away, of the pauses between the sessions.

5. Insight into Therapeutic Musical Play

The following parts will give insights into specific aspects of therapeutic musical play.

5.1 The symbolic meanings of the instruments

In music therapy, a wide variety of musical instruments are used (sound, rhythm, melody, harmony), plus some additional materials; for example, songbooks, puppets, painting materials, marbles and pieces of cloth. Also useful are materials geared towards bodywork, such as balls, a trampoline for catering to a child's need to move, or a hammock for rocking children with regressive needs.

The instruments are more than just materials for play with music; they often symbolise inner conflict or else deputise for figures in the child's life. Their most important quality is their ability to reply. The majority of toys and other playthings are mute; the musical instruments thus, distinct from these in that they make sounds and can thereby respond to a child's action.

The following case study demonstrates this (Lutz Hochreutener, 2013):
A mother comes to my practice with her three children. She has terminal cancer. Her husband had died suddenly a year previously. She wants to give the children space to ask questions because they are silent and shy away from having conversations. She also wants to share with them the empowering experiences she herself has had through music. The children are enthusiastic about the instruments. A variety of improvised performances unfold. On one particular day, they want to play the drums. "That would work well," says

the eleven-year-old girl, "there are enough djembes and congas for all of us." Her six-year-old brother replies that there aren't enough because they need to have one for their dad too. We agree to put the cymbal on a stand for him in the circle. Everyone starts drumming and singing with relish. As we reach a spectacular fortissimo conclusion, we hear the cymbal gently echoing in the silence that follows. It is as if Dad is sending a message. The boy crawls onto his mother's lap, crying. She rocks him back and forth and the girls also snuggle up to her. In the midst of the grief, a sense of consoling closeness is palpable. Afterwards, the children ask questions about their mother's illness, about their life after she is gone. When she says that she will always be with them, they need no further reassurance. Because of what they have just experienced, she at that moment represents certainty. The session ends with laughter as the children try again and again, with their drums, to make their "father" reverberate once more.

5.2 Forms of therapeutic music-making

Empathy should be used when undertaking the necessary task of adapting games to the specific child's developmental stage and therapeutic need. Very often, the games have symbolical significance, and the therapist has the challenging task of uncovering the deeper meaning behind them.
In the following, different game forms will be described and illustrated.

Sensorimotor games

Playing musical instruments stimulates all of the senses: this happens when exploring the instruments, moving, sensing the vibrations and listening to the sounds. The therapist can include action songs and nursery rhymes.
A calabash filled with corn (or beans) is particularly well suited to this. Children love scrabbling about in the corn. In addition to the sensorimotor stimulation, there is the possibility of symbolism emerging: searching for hidden (or inner) treasures; not getting lost in the overwhelming number of kernels. For example, one child was once heard to say: "They all are looking for their mother."

Exploration and information games

Musical instruments have a powerful appeal: They invite us to explore their mechanics, to find out how to produce sounds. Even insecure, introverted children are freed from their metaphorical shackles.

Symbolic games

There are many ways to stimulate the child's ability to symbolise as the following examples show:

- Making associations with the instruments: it sounds, looks, feels like…
- Inventing titles for improvised music
- Creating lyrics
- Inventing stories and setting them to music
- Listening to improvised or composed music and developing a story around it

Often, symbolising arises on its own; sometimes the therapist has to make suggestions. During an intervention involving the "setting of a story to music" the eleven year Andy, a boy who had a traumatic experience early in life leading to profound social anxiety and depression, created the following narrative.

Andi plays the trumpet – the first time in his life. I accompany him on the piano. It is not easy for him to make the instrument sound. However, he doesn't let up and finally succeeds. I have the impression that he outgrows himself. I try to give his playing a grounding and to make it lighter with little melodies. During the whole scene, I feel a great sadness. Nevertheless, after the end he beams at me.

One week later, he wanted to hear the audio recording. We listened to it and then he developed the following story: Once upon a time there was an elephant who was all alone. – long silence – But he still went through the jungle and played his music. He wanted to find lots of friends. One day he met a bird. He asked the bird, "Will you come with me on my way through the jungle?" The bird replied, "Yes!" They walked together among the ancient trees and made music together. It sounded like a piece of music. Lots of animals stopped and listened to them. They did not hear music like this in the jungle every day. The atmosphere was really special and some of them asked if they had practised it. They replied, "No, it just came out that way." "Can we play too?" The bird said, "Yes, of course." And the elephant said, "Now I have friends again."

During this session, Andi managed to symbolically express his intrapersonal Thoughts and concerns, in particular his deep loneliness, for the first time. He also vocalised the fact that through therapy, he was learning to express himself and to find friends. To speak

personally for a moment: I have found that even sad music can symbolise hope and joie de vivre.

Movement games

On the one hand, movement is required in order for an instrument to make sounds. On the other, music evokes movement; it makes you want to dance, whether the music be improvised or composed, live or recorded; there is also the singing of action songs, clapping and stamping. Physical movement induces inner movement, too.

Construction game

Children do not always use the instruments to create music. They also employ them out of context: for example, they might use them to build a cosy hut, like the five year old Benny did:

Recovering from a serious illness, he needs rest and relaxation. During many weeks, he builds huts from the drums and furnishes them cosily with furs, pillows and blankets. While he cuddles inside, I play music for him from outside, creating a holding and containing atmosphere.

Another popular construction game is to build marble runs that make sounds: for example, by attaching a howling tube to a drum and resting it on the bottom of a xylophone set at an angle. The marble is released at the top and at the bottom, it makes cheerful sounds as it rolls across the xylophone bars. Constructing a marble run promotes the ability to assess the gradient necessary to prevent the marbles from getting stuck in the grooves. In a deeper sense, it also promotes the ability to keep going, to release inner blocks. Observations in practice have shown that traumatised children in particular benefit from this game. Analogous to the rolling marble, which ultimately produces sounds, the child might finally be able to express itself and find words for what is bothering it.
A six years old boy with a refugee background expressed his relief as following: „When we make the marble run across the xylophone, the sounds do somersaults."

Rule game

In music therapy as well as in elementary music education, music improvisation requires a wide range of rules, either created by the child or offered by the therapist (or teacher).

The rules may apply to the music (e.g. from quiet to loud), to the relational dynamics (e.g. imitating; tutti – solo) or to specific issues (illustrating something through music e.g. natural phenomena, feelings and stories).

These games allow the child to learn and work with rules in a playful way, either following them or to taking on a challenge to break them; this of course depends on the underlying therapeutic goal. In group therapy especially, rules offer a variety of challenges and the potential for psychosocial growth.
It is fun to defy the rules and improvise, especially when there are no winners and losers.

Role play

Children love inventing and acting out stories. Taking on different roles allows them to widen their range of prosocial behaviours. Even if they are shy at first, there are specific interventions that can be used to support them regardless to their ability to express themselves.
It's also possible to imitate mental states such as 'sad', 'angry', 'happy' or 'exhausted' and as well as inner voices like 'You aren't good enough' or 'You can do this'.
Important too is the opportunity to act out family relationships: the child chooses instruments for each member of its family and places them around the room. By playing with different spatial constellations, characteristics of the relationships become apparent, and this can allow these to then be improved.

As a final example, the process that five-year-old Ronja went through during therapy will be presented (Lutz Hochreutener, 2009).

Ronja suffered of severe anxiety after losing her younger sister in an accident. Her parents told me, that before the loss she had been happy and creative. But since the accident, she had not wanted to leave her mother's side and refused to go to kindergarten or play with friends.
With her mother sitting at the back of the room, Ronja explored the instruments with great interest. She also invented stories and acted them out with the puppets. I often accompanied her role play with spontaneous singing or by commenting on what was happening.

For example, there was the song for a baby kangaroo:

Figure 1. Kangoroo.

I am the little kangaroo,
Dancing back and forth, yoo-hoo.
That's so lovely,
And now I'm going to sleep
In my mother's pouch.
That's so lovely,
So warm and nice.

Using the joey, she expressed her ambivalence: being happy and lively but also wanting security by being near her mother. By acting this out, she was able to comfort herself, and this was the first step towards more autonomy.

Figure 2. Cosy boat.

She created a tune for the little joey that she really loved. Sometimes I had to play it for up to twenty minutes at a time, again and again, while the baby was rocked in a cosy little boat made out of the water drums.

Subsequently, the little witch became important. We invented a tune for her and Ronja improvised the words:

Figure 3. Little witch.

I am the little witch,
I do very very cheeky things.
Sometimes I'm stealing things. Today it's the flute.
Quickly, quickly...
I told that woman, I don't know anything. Hehe…
I am a clever little witch and I am stealing everything from you.
… hehe…
And now what's up next?
Hej, it's the spider song –
I command: Sing it!

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The little witch symbolised her progress towards becoming more courageous and sometimes even cheeky. She had now become bold enough to give me instructions on what to play or sing.

The little witch finds a friend, the strong and friendly dog, Struppi. He joins her in lots of adventures – and of course, he too gets his own song. We create the tune together and she tells me what the words should be.

Figure 4. Struppi.

Wuff, wuff, wuff, wuff
I am the dog.
Wuff, wuff, wuff ,wuff
My name is Struppi.
I am strong,
and I am full of joy.
I find my way.

But then one day, the little witch dies in a very dangerous adventure.

Figure 5. Grave with a big stone.

Ronja lays her on a golden cloth and covers her up; the animals sit around her, mourning.
Ronja plays the harmonica for the little witch. I attend her silently.
A butterfly flies by, touches the little witch tenderly with its wing and carries the witch away.
Ronja creates a grave with a big stone and decorates it with the most beautiful crystals and snail shells she can find in my room.

After this scene, she tells me, that her sister too had died and that everybody is very sad about it. We talk about her ideas about death; she asks me many questions. After we have exchanged ideas for about ten minutes, Ronja surprises me by jumping up and sitting down in the calabash with a broad smile on her face. To me, it seems as if she has been born again.
How special it must have been for Ronja's mother to witness this role play.

This intense scene, symbolising death and transformation, was the start point of some major developmental steps: Ronja became able to separate from her mother and come to music therapy by herself. She also went back to kindergarten. Her parents were happy that she had regained her joie de vivre. Drumming, improvising on the piano and singing became the focus of the therapy all of which eventually meant that the therapy sessions could come to an end.

This was not easy, because she had become very attached to Struppi, who was her symbol of strength and confidence.

She told me that she could not live without him. It seemed to me important for her to find a way/learn to internalise the strength and confidence that she was currently projecting onto the toy. To support her in the process, I consulted her parents and then bought a little toy dog who, I told Ronja, was Struppi's puppy. In this way she gained a "transitional object", that would remind her of Struppi's qualities.

Figure 6. Little toy dogs.

She was delighted and immediately fell in love with the puppyAfter this scene, she tells me, that her sister too had died and that everybody is very sad about it. We talk about her ideas about death; she asks me many questions. After we have exchanged ideas for about ten minutes, Ronja surprises me by jumping up and sitting down in the calabash with a broad smile on her face. To me, it seems as if she has been born again.

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During Ronja's therapy sessions, music served a variety of therapeutic functions: the songs included story plots and placed a spotlight on the characters and feelings of the puppets. The joeys tune promoted deep relaxation; the little witch's tune enlivened. The mourning harmonica enabled Ronja to process her grief about the loss of her sister. Throughout the process, the music supported her and empowered her to return to normal life, one step at a time.

6. Conclusion

We have sought to demonstrate the many possibilities offered by musical play: games and acting that can be used in both music therapy and elementary music education. To conclude, we will here identify the main similarities and differences between the two domains of application, noting at the same time that the borders are permeable.

	Therapy	**Education**
Goals	Individual inner growth Emotions, behaviour	Acquisition and improvement of abilities Knowledge / skills
Procedure	Process Here and Now Retrospective and prospective	Process and product Here and Now Prospective
Attitude / Relation	Open space Accompanying Searching together Unlocking meaning together	Defined lessons Leading Challenging and promoting Structuring
Values / Rules	Relative	Defined

Table 1. Comparison of early childhood music therapy and music education (Lutz Hochreutener, 2018).

The forms and dynamics of play during music therapy are designed to support children who have emotional damage, developmental delays or impairments, and processing and cognitive integration problems. The individual's maturation and change are of foremost importance. The pedagogical goal is to promote and support musical development holistically. New abilities and skills are encouraged and practised.

In music therapy, the work is process-oriented. The focus is on the encounter in the 'here and now', whereby experiences from the past are integrated and thoughts about, and wishes for, the future are invoked. In early childhood music education, the focus is not just on the process, but also on the musical product. The experience in the here and now is just as important, but is resource-oriented and aimed at promoting future development.

While the music therapist offers the child a space, which it can fill and organise itself, the music educator prepares lessons. He or she proceeds in a more structured way, he challenges and encourages the child in order to stimulate and support its (musical) development. Music therapy, on the other hand, is about attending the child over the course of a joint discovery process aimed at resolving individual thoughts, concerns and challenges.

Rules and values are relative. Sometimes it is important to adhere to them for the benefit of all. In other times, they may be questioned, creatively altered or even explicitly broken, in order to create new, more coherent experiences. In music education, they are defined in broad terms. They need to be easy to understand and they should be adhered to as far as possible.

As experts from both disciplines will readily recognize, there is no clear dividing line between the two. Rather, they are tendencies that should be modified according to the specific child and the specific situation. Aspects of one can be included in the other and the two are in dialogue with each other.

The unifying, and single most important, factor is the joy of playing music, and playing *with* music, together; of exploring sounds, rhythms and melodies, of overcoming limitations and being creative in a safe space, in order to feel alive.

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The Aesthetics of Simplicity: An artistic approach to Childhood and Music Making

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Abstract

Something is considered simple (from Latin *simplex*, literally 'onefold') when it is not complex or demanding. Yet some philosophies challenge this view, emphasising the holistic and even divine nature of the number *one*. In music pedagogy, pursuing the elementary as a path to the nucleus of music takes the shape of a polyaesthetics or synaesthetics; it is physical and expresses itself through shared exploration, communication and improvisation. This article investigates the notion that this very aesthetics of simplicity – the basis of early childhood music instruction – is not only useful with regards to age-appropriate learning, but also makes it possible to recognise the very foundations of music and challenges us as an "open work" of art (Umberto Eco).

Keywords

Aesthetics, Simplicity, Art, Performance

1. Introduction

1.1 A fragment of a memory

A Music theory lesson at the famous University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, in the late 1990s[1]: the Austrian composer Herbert Lauermann (*1955) begins his lesson by playing a simple folk tune on the piano. Expecting much of this well-known artist, but not the playing of a simple folk melody, the students listen in amazement to the explanation that follows. It concerns the power of simplicity within a folk song's melody and harmony: "*You know, in this simplicity* (German *Schlichtheit*) *music touches us. This simple song is music. It includes everything.*" Wherein lies this simplicity and its relevance to music? Is a simple (German: *einfach*, *schlicht*) folk song the very essence of music?

1.2 Etymological excursus

The term *simplicity* includes both positive and negative dimensions which, as poles, generate a continuum of interpretation. In the arts we tend to use the term to classify performances with regard to their different levels: we play *easy*, *simple* pieces when beginning to learn an instrument, and we wish to develop in a straight line towards *virtuosity*. Hence, if something is simple to do, it must be for beginners or amateurs. In German, the term *schlicht* is often used as a synonym for *einfach* (*"simple"*), in other words, *plain* or *unostentatious*. But it also seems significant that *schlicht* can be traced back etymologically to the Central German *slicht*, meaning *bad*. Today the word *schlicht* can still connote a person who is somewhat uneducated and closed-minded. The German word *ein-fach* stems from *ein-fältig*, literally "folded once", and oscillates between the meanings of "simplicity" and "purity of spirit", when used positively, and "mental limitation" in its negative sense. Similar words in English which can have both a positive and negative sense are *unsophisticated*, *artless* and *homespun*. On the other hand, we can also find words with more positive connotations in this semantic field, such as *elementary* and *homely*. Indeed, we are dealing with a concept that is startling and dazzling in its ambiguities and rival value judgements. The paradoxical meanings of "simplicity" – *homespun* and *elementary* – have been often recognised by novelists and poets, especially in the 19th century. In his renowned novel *War and Peace* (1865–69), Leo Tolstoy (2008, p. 2020), who had been much influenced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and

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1   This introduction is based on the author's personal experience.

Romanticism, praises simplicity: "there is no greatness where there is no simplicity, goodness and truth." The British poet Philip J. Bailey, in his long poem *Festus* (1856, p. 458), calls simplicity "nature's first step, and the last of art." The idea "simple"/"simplicity" have also undergone vicissitudes, especially in terms of the fascist celebration of the notion of "rustic".

1.3 Two examples of the "simple" in cultural history

(1) *Simple numerical proportions and the fundamental principles of the universe:* Albert Einstein expressed a deep faith in simplicity (Howard & Giovanelli, 2019) in his "Oxford Lectures" of 1933, in which he called nature "the realisation of the simplest conceivable mathematical ideas." (Einstein, as cited in Holton, 1971, p. 57). He "…proclaimed that we could discover true laws of nature by seeking those with the simplest mathematical formulation" (Norton, 2000, p. 135). In recent years, the theoretical physicist Marcelo Gleiser has published a book on the meaning to be found in nature, entitled *The Simple Beauty of the Unexpected* (2016). Indeed, the idea that the universe is based upon simple proportions between numbers goes back to the Ancient Greek philosophers. In Harmonics research, an inter- and transdisciplinary field, it is shown how simple proportions have meaning in nature (including in human beings) and in music. The musical *nómos* denotes the archetype upon which music is based (Georgiades, 1985; Leonhardmair, 2014). The *Lambdoma*, a scheme that demonstrates proportions and their relations, makes evident that all proportions may be derived from the simplest proportion, 0/0. Some philosophers and musicians have claimed that this has theological meaning; that it is linked to the spiritual or divine origin (Schulze, 1978). The German Renaissance theologian Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) called this fundament, the divine origin – finally the *simple* proportion 0/0 – the *complicatio* (Germ. *Ein-faltung* vs. *Ent-faltung* versus *explicatio* in the world). Five hundred years later, the German philosopher and pedagogue Hugo Kükelhaus (1900-1984) repeatedly expressed, in his practical and theoretical works, in a manner that was close to the Harmonics approach, his reverence for the simplicity of the world. In *Urzahl und Gebärde* (1934, "*Primal Number and Gesture*") he searches for the *nómos*, the simple law in things. This knowledge of structural laws and archetypes is ancient human knowledge, to be found in the writings of Plato and Aristotle. To this day, to engage with this simplicity in the things around us is to change and expand our image of the world, for seeing suddenly becomes astonishment, and the everyday becomes a mystery.

(2) *The Fool: Simplicity changes society:* children, clowns, simpletons, artists, saints and miracle workers fall physically and/or psychologically outside the norm of *homo rationalis*. They do not conform to the conventional values of a society focussed on physicality, achievement, cleverness and "good" behaviour. If simplicity were to turn out to be "wisdom turned upside down" (Bakhtin, 1995, p. 302), our view of the world would have to be revised and previous hierarchies would be destabilised. The narrative of the simple fool characterises many fairy tales, myths, legends and rites. Numerous "Fool's Tales" symbolically transform a situation and turn circumstances around (Perrig, Mazenauer, 2007). This is exemplified by the Brothers Grimm who narrate the story "Of the Dummling", the youngest son of a king who "was thought to be simple-minded." In the chapter "The Three Feathers," this youngest son, in front of his "clever" brothers, fulfils the tasks set for them by their father and eventually receives the crown. The postscript that he has "long reigned in wisdom" seems to confirm what was foreshadowed: it is not so much that the fool is not really a fool, but that attention is drawn emblematically to the *lógos* in the simple-minded. The figure of the fool represents the contradictions that lurk in cultural types or personae more than any other: as much as it is associated with folly, the wisdom implicit in the essence of this persona has long been recognised. For in the mad and the simple-minded there is – in Michel Foucault's sense – another kind of knowledge (Leonhard, 2020).

2. Simplicity on stage? Performance Art and Eurythmics

Performance Art and *Eurhythmics* (along with other forms of elemental music and movement education) originated in the changes that took place during the exciting *fin de siècle* period and the decades that followed. Thinkers, artists and philosophers at this time have been said to have been driven by a longing for *The Original* (Eliade, 1976), for the *elementarius* (Latin for *belonging to the original ground*). For Carl Orff (1895-1982), the "Elemental" (in German, *das Elementare*) is an idea rather than a definition (Kugler, 2020). The artists and pedagogues of this era were looking for the "beginning", or origin, of human culture, and began to use terms such as *elementary* or *primitive*, which for Orff means a fundamental constituent of music that refers to the simultaneous "unity of musical and motional [bodily] expression" (Orff 1932, as cited in Weinbuch 2010, p. 62). At the start of the 20th century, many thinkers and artists wanted to dispense with the conventional, institutional determinants of art and the Aesthetic. Vanguard movements and new approaches to education instigated experiments across many genres and disciplines.

2.1 Simplicity in Performance Art

In "Tateshots" (2009), the Serbian performance artist Marina Abramovic talks self-confidently about the necessity of simplicity in her art:

> *My work (…) takes a long time, and very little things are happening, and that means you are dealing with almost nothing, that's the real point. Because everybody wanted to have this (…) kind of big concept, where many things are happening, but this happening of many things is just a false security through which you hide yourself between objects, between ideas (…). Actually, just being present as an artist in the space with full consciousness and the attitude of your body and telling the minimum by the minimum, that's what is most difficult. And with this my process always starts – with the very, very complicated, and then I strip it to just the bare (…) idea, and that's it.* (Abramovic, 2009, original subtitles, slightly modified)

Is simplicity something essential, as Abramovic claims here? Nobody would doubt that she is a genuine artist. To create and stage simplicity is fundamental to Performance Art (although Abramovic rises above the artistic crowd). Originating in the late 1960s, *Performance Art* was coined as an umbrella term for works that resisted standard artistic categories (Schechner 2002, Fischer-Lichte, 2004). It arose out of a collection of genres with a performative element. Within the visual arts, music, dance, performing arts and even literature, artists developed their own forms of Performance Art, emphasising a variety of media (Fischer-Lichte, 2004). Defining features of Performance Art are the body and its actions, and the interplay of a number of different media and senses. The action itself (in contrast to the result of an action), the iteration of (simple) actions and a focus on the moment are the main principles of Performance Art, along with the fundamental idea of uncertainty and indeterminacy. The simple actions of Performance Art do not create a fixed artefact, nor is a piece acted, as is the case in drama. Moreover, confusing situations are staged, situated somewhere between theatre and everyday life, and active audience participation is an important element of the show. The individual with his or her own experience and the effect on the individual's physical existence are fundamental to the oeuvre (Fischer-Lichte, 2004).

2.2 Three fragments

The following examples show how that which is simple can exist in the context of making music and dance involving amateurs: the simple in the context of the *elementary*. How do the participants shape the simple? How do they value the simple in the context of aesthetic education and the arts? What the following fragments have in common is that it is difficult to classify the performances, as is the norm in Performance Art. The main principles are space, differences between participants, performing as a team, expressing something using a variety of media, joy, and experiencing something new. In all of these performances, simplicity was both a "methodical means" and a "prerequisite", to use the terminology of Eurhythmics teacher Elfriede Feudel (1963, p. 90). Simplicity was also a requirement in terms of their existence as performances, in terms of their artistic identity.

(1) *"Building. Hope. Together", 2021:* The "Bach Choir Sibiu" and its children's choir, the "Compania Dis.Place" (inclusive contemporary dance), in addition to professional musicians, performed. A Eurhythmic Teacher directed and the music director of the protestant cathedral in Sibiu under special conditions in a video performance for the well-known *Sibiu International Theatre Festival* in the Lutheran Cathedral. In this site-specific performance, in a large, empty church, the emphasis was on simple movements, sounds and patterns. It was all about simple expressions related to "building", not least in terms of building relationships. A comment on YouTube says: "The light-heartedness of the children, the participation of the children, the singing, the acoustics, the music makers, singers, the setting (are) beautifully put together" (I. Vetro).[2] This demonstrates how simplicity on stage can be viewed by an audience as impressive rather than a deficit.

(2) "*Clousiana Orchestra", 2019:* around 70 participants developed a musical programme, coached by artistic instructors. These were students of the Liestal Secondary School, along with youngsters with disabilities from the "Boxitos Band" and singers of different ages from the "Inspiratione Choir". One performer described the participants as "different and new" (E3B) (Leonhard, 2021, p. 276), and a choir member recalled that making music with a "mixed audience" was "different, extraordinary" (E1C): "I was moved by the way music took hold of all of us (...) There were no more differences in age or individual abilities" (E3C) (ibid., p. 276). The elementary instruments, the fragmentary language and the fragile singing voices did not "disturb" and were not merely a means of integrating as

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2 Director: Teresa Leonhard, Brita Falch Leutert, URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25VgFphAyC4.

many people as possible, but also led to a unique, aesthetically interesting sound quality. This was acknowledged and passionately performed by the young people involved: the result was "real added value to the general mainstream" (E3P) (ibid., p. 280).

(3) *Demonstration of the "Dalcroze method", 1913:* Simple movements performed on a stage must have stimulated this early 20th century audience, in a period when demonstrations of music education still emphasised virtuosity. Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950) developed his method, known as "Eurythmics", in order to improve the bodily understanding of music. This physical approach to music, using simple movements, was demonstrated on stage and had an impact on the audience:

> To describe the exercises of those (…) girls who came on the stage of the King's Hall (...) would convey to any reader's mind the extraordinary effect of joyfulness produced by them on the audience, or explain the meaning of this new method of physical training (...) Mr. Jaques-Dalcroze himself (...) improvised many different rhythmic pieces on the piano, and after listening with a child-like attention, to the first few bars, the girls 'realised' it, and spontaneously, with a kind of awakened consciousness inspired by the instincts of their subconsciousness, danced (...). It was dancing, yet unlike any dancing that we have seen before. It was an ecstasy in rhythm. It seemed as spontaneous as when children jump for joy. It revealed in its highest form the mystery and the magic of rhythm. (*Literary Digest*, as cited in Mccormack Rogers, 1966, p. 28)

3. Proposing an aesthetics of simplicity[3]

A given artform is characterised by a given mode. This article proposes that we define *simplicity* as a mode; as a different approach to a very specific artform: elementary music and movement. The *simple* and the *elementary* are related in common usage like unloved siblings. While the concept of the elementary has already been widely studied, the simple is a principle that is often ignored, since it would appear to devalue our work and constitute a hierarchical difference between real music and dance and the amateurish early stages of learning how to perform. Simplicity is a phenomenon found in the elementary approach, in the "dynamic pedagogy" (Feudel, 1963) of an "artistic elementary education" (Thiel, 1973, p. 493). Like the fool, performers of this mode expose themselves to ridicule when

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3   The following reflections are based on Wolfgang Welsch's (1990) approach to aesthetics as a "theory of perception".

confronted by "great art", with its virtuosity and creative perfection. But it might instead be possible to integrate mistakes, deviations and imperfections as a key aspect of the very foundations of art. When analysing a piece of art, Erika Fischer-Lichte (2004) distinguishes between the "aesthetics of the performative" and traditional "hermeneutic" or "semiotic" aesthetics. The "aesthetics of the performative" defines anew the relationship between subject (spectator) and object (performer), as well as between corporeality or materiality and semiotic character. This approach shows that different modes of art require different approaches to their understanding and that aesthetic thinking requires a specific context, a classification. Alongside an "aesthetics of the performative" (Fischer-Lichte, 2004) or an "aesthetics of staging" (in German, *Inszenierung*) (Früchtl and Zimmermann, 2004), I would like to propose an "aesthetics of simplicity" as a way of understanding the artistic character of the work performed with children and amateurs in the fields of music and movement.

3.1 Simplicity as "alien"

According to Bernhard Waldenfels (*1934), the arts are not the sole property of art experts but also arise out of "a sphere of experience that art shares with other cultural activities" (Waldenfels, 2010, p.130). Hybrid combinations of artists and pedagogues straddle this divide by creating, staging and performing with simplicity in mind; in an atmosphere of aesthetic simplicity. This simplicity has always been something alien, something that seems to come from outside the artistic norms: "It may seem strange that so much emphasis is placed on simplicity here," Feudel (1963, p. 90) claims, referring to Eurhythmics' particular approach to music education. It is precisely this alien aspect of simplicity that challenges us. The "requirement to respond" in Waldenfels' meaning of the term "responsiveness", is relevant here: Simple actions, such as taking a step, making a simple gesture with the arms and head, keeping order, and breathing regularly, as a way of learning, understanding and feeling music, might seem strange to many people, even in the modern era. "Doubtless", Jaques-Dalcroze wrote, "all this appears very simple, and so I myself thought at the beginning of my experience" (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1910, as cited in Pope, 2010, p. 139). In a phenomenological Husserlian sense, this is a form of *epoché*: a sort of responsive reductionism, a halting of the gaze, a becoming sensitive to musical events and a being alert to the inconspicuous. This phenomenological approach is one proposed by Waldenfels, who refers to the aesthetic potential of simple, seemingly non-spectacular things, such as a field, a house façade or a stone. In the artistic yet simple

environment of a music and movement lesson, or of a performance with children, they are able to "look at things and listen in another way" (Waldenfels, 2010, p. 130). Eurhythmics and similar elementary approaches thus come very close to fulfilling Umberto Eco's idea of an "open work of art" (Eco, 1977). For in the aesthetic or creative process, the person who is performing is confronted by the greatly prompting character of elementary things, movements and musical patterns, as well as by the undetermined in equipment such as a ball, stick, hoop or rope, by a multitude of options for "redefinition" (Vogel-Steinmann, 1979). The aim is thus – in Eco's language – to "open". The simpler the form, the more open the process.

3.2 Simple movement

To foreground the body as fundamental to education is not new. In Ancient Greece, thinkers such as Plato (in the *Republic*) emphasised the pedagogical importance of the body. *Corporeality* (German *Leiblichkeit*) is also at the centre of the Eurythmics approach, even if we move not at all, or only slightly (i.e., people who cannot move but only a little). As in Performance Art, the focus on the body involves both experience (feeling and understanding music) and the material (making or expressing oneself through music). Bodily presence creates a resonance. Just as in the Christian liturgy, movements (body positions, simple gestures, movements in place and simple forms of locomotion) are termed "elementary signs" (Germ. *Elementargebärden*, Romano Guardini, 1957) and have resonance on account of their simplicity, so Jaques-Dalcroze finds presence and clarity in simple movement: in Eurhythmics, just walking across the room is an important first exercise. "Clarity of perception" (Jaques-Dalcroze, as cited in Rogers, 1966, p. 22) and order are needed in order to understand and develop the relationship between music and physical movement. In 1923, the Dalcroze Eurhythmics teacher Elsa Findlay (as cited in Pope, 2010, p. 139) touched on this topic in the *Journal of Education*: "M. Dalcroze has invented a system which turns children's dance into a serious study (…) by which music may enter the mind with lively but also ordered expression."

This simple movement is different from virtuosity in dance and sports. In 1923, A. L. Kelly, a lecturer at the Teachers' College in Sydney, described this approach to the body and to movement during the making and learning of music as differing from movement in other contexts:

> At once it will be seen that it is more than dancing, and it is more than gymnastics. It embraces both of these though not in the conventional sense, not for purposes of athletics, not the professional stage, not the stereotyped movements of the ballroom. (Kelly, as cited in Pope, 2010, p. 137)

Deeply connected to this non-stereotypical type of movement is the idea of natural expression and joy, as described in the *Literary Digest* account quoted earlier: "It seemed as spontaneous as when children jump for joy" (cited in Mccormack Rogers, 1966, p. 28). Humans begin by using rhythm and melody as a means of expressing themselves, without any sense of utility or necessity. In 1920, Robert M. Ogden (cited in Mccormack, 1966, p. 24) declared that "the aesthetic aspect of education, so pronounced already in the ancient Greek emphasis upon music and gymnastics, is today a lost art and a lost method of instruction." Ogden goes on to describe this "aesthetic manner" of education as something that re-emerges in Dalcroze's ideas as "less lost motion, more enjoyment."

3.3 Improvising with simple sounds and movements

In Eurhythmics, improvisation is essential to the child's natural style of movement (Alperson, 2007). Carl Orff judged improvisation with children to be the starting point for elementary music making (Orff, 1976). Improvisation using simple sounds, patterns, instruments and movements is the key to certain fundamental experiences within the musical matrix of space, time, dynamics and form. It is what leads to autonomous action. Just as simplicity allows for manifold improvisations, it is the essential that the individual performer focusses on. In 1923, the "English Dancing Times" concluded that "the physical trainer teaching rhythmic dance encourages the child to think with his muscles on dance ideas, rather than steps" (Einert, as cited in Pope, 2010, p. 137). In this autonomy and individuality, simplicity becomes the artistic bedrock for integrating each and every participant, and of the right of every individual to develop artistic skills without hindrance.

3.4 Staging the simple

Experiences in music and movement are made possible by using the simple matrix of space and time, form and dynamics. This matrix appears in every lesson, because every performance is at least connected with staging processes. "Staging" means to prepare a stage on which actions and people meet and interact. In the Performing Arts, it bears on processes of exploring, searching and discovering in order to make something "appear"

(Martin Seel), to translate and to interpret creatively. It is probably no coincidence that the Eurhythmics teacher prefers to work in a room that is as empty as possible. For Elfriede Feudel, the mediation of space, of the room we are working in, is the very first task (Feudel, 1963). This empty room for many people requires courage, because it is not possible to hide; they feel exposed. But this very void opens up the potential for pure creativity. In music and movement lessons, simple materials , such as a cloth, a rope or a ball, are preferred. Materials take on a special role alongside the music and movement in this haptic-visual-mobile existence in space, time, dynamics and form. The form and the measure (as order of things) give structure – to the space, to the inside, and to the shape of movements in the musical-aesthetic context. Measure and form are accompanied by a symbolic content that shapes the very essence of the object. In their symbolic character, the materials lead into deeper realms of life and are not merely carriers of a message, but rather speak through themselves.

4. Conclusion

Although the artistic in Eurhythmics has been studied many times, in this essay I have focussed on a somewhat neglected characteristic and value of music and movement lessons. The aim has been to defy the hierarchical idea that a certain standard of work denotes a certain degree of competence or a certain level of educational development. Rather, it has been shown that we can confidently speak of an aesthetic that gives shape not only to a method or a specific work, but also to a subject. This capacity is a benefit, not a disadvantage. Instead of separating music and movement lessons and performances on stage with amateurs, from so-called *professional* music and *professional* dance, we should recognise the artistic value of the *simple.* The aesthetics of simplicity is deeply connected with physical actions and the way in which they are perceived from the outside, as well with the creation of sounds and the act of listening. Technical virtuosity in the sense of speed, dexterity and dance-like figures has no relevance to this aesthetic approach. Virtuosity builds hierarchies. In reality, the artistic should be sought elsewhere. Other keys to this must certainly include the notions of experimentation and freedom. Simplicity helps maintain the distinction between familiarity and otherness that is particularly important in the arts: the "radical alien" (Waldenfels) that is art at its most challenging. In a similar way, we allow children to retain the indeterminate, the multiplicity of means, their own ways of creating and marvelling. What Feudel criticised several decades ago when discussing the educational landscape of her time is still valid today, perhaps even more so: that socio-

cultural conditions are "very detrimental to naive astonishment" (Feudel, 1963, p. 16). So music and movement with children - to once again cite Marina Abramovic's comment on her own particular Performance Art - can, or should, "take a long time" and should occur within a space where "very little things are happening"; that one is "dealing with almost nothing" and that one has no sense of safety because one cannot "hid[e] [one]self between objects, between ideas"; that one must "tell the minimum by the minimum" and that this "is the most difficult" thing of all to do (Abramovic, 2009).

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Part II - Research Papers

How Early Childhood Music practitioners met the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic

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Abstract

This spoken paper presents findings from a Master's dissertation qualitative research project, the focus of which was to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Early Childhood Music practitioners (ECMPs) in Great Britain. Respondents from diverse backgrounds and work settings shared the experiences and concerns of their practice through two phases of data collection: first, an online questionnaire (n=53) and second, a semi-structured interview (n=2). The practice-based data covered the first year and a half of the Covid pandemic (until June 2021). The study explored the ways in which ECMPs met challenges and developed strategies as they responded and adapted to an ever-changing situation.

The findings presented were centred around the challenge of online teaching and explored the different strategies applied. They also addressed ECMPs' concerns not only about the well-being of the children they were teaching, but also about their own well-being. For many, lockdowns provided an opportunity to experiment with a new work-life balance, as well as time for reflection, study and resource development.

Through online networking, many found a longed-for connection with, and support from, colleagues. The study aims to establish which of the effects of the pandemic are likely to continue to influence ECME practice and the role of the ECMP going forward.

Keywords

Covid-19 Pandemic, Early Childhood Music practitioners, challenges and strategies used in practice, well-being and self care

Introduction

The investigation was grounded within a praxeological worldview and aimed to gather practice-based, authentic, reliable data (Mukherji 2018:199). The particular situation examined offered

> *'a vital opportunity for early years researchers, educators and policy makers to consider how their methodologies, pedagogic philosophy, pedagogic approaches and policies might adapt and respond to children's particular needs for expression of voice and emotion at this time'* (Bertram & Pascal, A2021:3)

Information was triangulated across a literature review, an online questionnaire (n=53) and a semi-structured interview (n=2) with respondents from diverse backgrounds and work settings.

The majority of respondents had had extensive experience of ECM practice and had obtained multiple professional qualifications, 78% of these being ECME, PGCEs or Early Years Education; several additionally held Master's degrees. A wide range of institutions and organisations were represented, participants indicating their high levels of reflective practice. The pedagogical approaches attested to a variety of influences, with 44% mentioning Kodály. Other preferred pedagogies included Dalcroze, Colourstrings and Orff. Only one respondent had no formal qualifications.

The data evidenced a range of advantages and disadvantages resulting from the impact of the Covid-19 crisis. It quickly became clear that the multi-faceted impact of the pandemic might lead to fresh insights and outcomes. New, creative ways of working emerged, which affirmed the role of ECMPs, deepening the understanding of objectives for their practice. They became aware of the significant 'chance for a social experience'. These new aspects opened doors to something akin to 'a revolution' (Campos, 2021:18; Bertram & Pascal, 2021:8).

Barnett (2021:9) called on educators, including ECMPs, to rethink their roles and adapt them to the current conditions by 'supporting, promoting, creating and cultivating the self and the world around us' (Krueger, 2010:1).

The Literature Review showed that peer-reviewed research in this field is scarce, and it was necessary to draw information from a wider range of sources. Much of the available described research into the impact of the pandemic into the general ECE, but was arguably transferrable to the situation for ECMPS.

A number of articles written with reference to the first lockdown had pointed out that educators experienced 'gross inequalities, hierarchies of power and inequitable access to resources, whether they [were] financial, practical or knowledge based' (Campos, 2021:10; Reich, 2020:12).

It soon became clear that many less privileged families across the world, including Britain, were struggling to access appropriate digital equipment and internet connections for work and education. The existing patterns of vulnerability and under-achievement amongst underprivileged children continued and become more prominent (Pascal et al, 2021:2), widening gaps in attainment (EECERA Journal, 2021) which were previously of concern.

Despite the many threats posed by the pandemic to children's achievement and development, it is nevertheless important to point out that many enjoyed the increased parental and sibling presence in the home during lockdown. This positive experience is likely to have propelled their development forward (Pascal, 2020:1). Irrespective of socio-economic background, the degree of a child's 'privilege' was in part determined by the amount of quality time that adults were able to spend with them. Research from Japan, which focused on the impact on children of having to stay at home, described psychological and physical stresses experienced by children due to over-anxious parenting, neglect, domestic violence and abuse (Mochida, 2021:7).

One other noteworthy finding is pre-pandemic research by Kuhfeld (2020:550), indicating that in children under five, the average loss of educational performance during the summer holidays was minimal.

Discussion and interpretation of results

For some ECMPs the immediate impact in April 2020 and the months that followed was drastic: work was suspended or terminated, as they were unable to Zoom from home. One interviewee had worked at the same art institution for fifteen years, but during the first lockdown, she was initially furloughed for two months and then made redundant. This caused heartache and financial hardship and was described as 'shocking and

devastating.' It took several months before s/he was prepared to accept the perceived risk of offering online sessions.

For others, work continued throughout the different stages of the crisis in various forms. The few ECMPs still teaching face-to-face in schools had to adapt their practices in line with government restrictions and guidelines, which repeatedly changed. This caused a lot of confusion, especially for freelance educators.

> *'[I]t was a disaster for me'* (questionnaire respondent)

It was necessary for the majority of ECMPs to swiftly turn to online teaching. In an initial flurry of interactive, private, online sessions, 61% of ECMPs managed to secure continuity both for the children and for their own income, at least in part. Many had to purchase suitable equipment and experiment with different forms of delivery.

In Britain, most teachers, including ECMPs, had access to digital technology, but many lacked the skills to use it, at least initially (Bertram & Pascal, A2021:7). With the steep learning curve came new skills. Several of the teachers mentioned that colleagues and friends had helped them, sharing skills and overcoming technical problems.

Some attempted to create music studios in corners of their homes, from where they continued to reach families and children for the purposes of music making: a situation only too familiar to many readers. Fifty-one percent of ECMPs found ways to interact with children as time went on. One practitioner jokingly described the screen as a 'friend.' Innovative hide-and-seek games, props, sounds, songs, body percussion and rhythm games were invented and shared between colleagues, all adapted for teaching online.

Online sessions proved extremely popular, especially during the first lockdown of Spring 2020, and were in some cases accessed by large numbers of people, with a core of respondents from previous face-to-face sessions being joined by a wider online community, some from the other side of the world.

All the varying challenges of teaching continued, including face-to-face teaching, the wearing of masks, working out of doors, the starting and stopping of online sessions, and all of this gradually became the new reality. As the crisis progressed, with its constant changes to government guidelines, the wise strategy proved to be the flexible one, in which one adapted one's tactics and offered a combination of approaches, using for

example pre-recorded sessions and short videos with songs and stories. Several ECMPs found that demand for online interactive sessions decreased over the summer 2020; 31.5% of ECMPs switched to solely pre-recorded sessions.

Pre-recorded sessions

Over time, pre-recorded sessions proved to be popular with parents, as they could access them at any time and more than once. They became a prominent feature of ECME during the pandemic, providing a welcome outlet for ECMPs, where they could still use their skillset and secure at least some income.

> *There are four benefits of online learning: convenience, flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and time flexibility'* (Layne et al., 2013, cited by Yuliejantiningsih et al., 2020).

However, pre-recorded sessions were controversial amongst questionnaire respondents, often being described as 'hard to do.' Acting skills were needed. The ECMP as performer came to the fore, using instruments to play and sing to the children.

> *'I find online teaching easy and enjoyable; it works well for me. I have to be more of a performer than a teacher during online teaching'* (Questionnaire respondent)

Online networking within the ECME community

How were ECMPs personally impacted by the crisis? Anxieties about health, family safety, home schooling, lack of social contact and sometimes grief (Reich, 2020:3) weighed heavily. Overcoming adversities such as these put great demands on ECMPs' resilience and determination, and demanded confidence and a strong belief in the benefits of ECME work (Korthagen 2004).

The ECMPs' own internal resources, capacity for self-care and ability to find support were essential. A major encouragement was the increased online support amongst colleagues, through individual and group discussions on various online platforms. The ECME Facebook group was mentioned ten times as being useful for sharing not only resources and ideas, but also the joys and woes of online teaching. Several described it as 'a lifeline' during times of isolation.

> *'Knowing there were people out there supporting me when I hit creative walls made a huge difference and kept me going. I really needed those 'safe spaces'* (Questionnaire respondent).*

> *'Connection with other teachers, who experience the same was essential. Peer sharing has been invaluable, so rich'* (Questionnaire respondent).*

The losses

During this time full of 'sadness' (Reich 2020:9), losses were easy to perceive. ECMEs felt a sense of powerlessness and a loss of control. Some decided that, online, they were unable to meet the requirements of their job.

There were many adversities. When teaching via a screen, familiar teaching techniques, musical material and tactile resources were no longer easy to use and everything had to be adapted. Dealing with technology, finding appropriate work spaces and equipment, the fact that their and their students' homes were on show, all contributed to the stress experienced (Pascal, 2021:9; Soldatelli, 2020, cited by Campos, 2021).

When attempting to interact with young children via a screen, pedagogical thoughtfulness and sensitivity (van Manen, 1980) was required more than ever. But the usual sense of freedom experienced during the intimate, interactive process of music making was hindered by the screen. Having based their role as musicians and facilitators on relationships and interactions, they were now 'performers' to a relatively unknown audience.

> *'There was a loss of immediacy and spontaneity, but I had to just kind of run with it and imagine responses'* (Questionnaire respondent)

The 'shared experience', 'the encounter between human beings' through musicking together (Small, 1998:9) was very different online. Spontaneous responses to individual children became more difficult. EMCPs were unable to tune into the children's body language. Sound making was demanding because of delays and distortions. The loss of spontaneous person-to person contact, so essential to early childhood education (Formosinho, 2021), needed to be replaced with creative alternatives.

> *My teaching happens through and via relationship… being out of the person to person relationship with the children felt wrong and uncomfortable. (Questionnaire respondent)*

ECMPs shared how repertoire had to be adapted, as playful music making was difficult and singing together almost impossible.

> *'My musical skills became useless on an online platform' (Questionnaire respondent).*

Relevant to this study was the concern that, given the pressure of the situation, some educators would return to a more traditional model of teaching, described by Formosinho as 'schoolification' (2021:6). For ECME this would often imply adult-led teaching, with a large amount of verbal instruction and less actual music making (Greenhalgh 2016:17). Music education solely for the purposes of understanding and acquiring music skills, as a path to theoretical knowledge and technical know-how (Bowman, 2012:31), might entail the neglect of the child's intuitive, embodied musicality. This debate is ongoing.

The gains

Despite the many obstacles, there were some positive outcomes. Most ECMPs responded to the lockdowns not merely with the swift and resourceful use of digital devices, but also with dedication to their calling as music educators (Korthagen, 2004). Teaching aims were adapted. Flexibility and sensitivity to the situation of each child and family became paramount, even when the immediacy and responsiveness of the face-to-face interaction (Malloch and Trevarthen, 2018:2; Small, 1998:9) had to be imitated using a screen (Formosinho 2021:13; Barnett 2021:9). Once expectations had been adjusted, the process felt creative.

> *'Once I got over the initial concerns and challenges of moving online, I enjoyed tackling the new way of working. I had to find new topics and ways of delivery and I enjoyed the 'shake up' (Questionnaire respondent)*

As ECMPs became more used to teach online, they found solutions and made improvements. For example, asking participants to mute themselves during songs eliminated problems with time lag, but of course it also impaired the shared experience.

One ECMP changed her teaching completely, trying a more listening-based format, with improvisation and visually-inspired mindfulness activities.

Lockdowns allowed for an improved work-life balance, something which was repeatedly mentioned as being a very positive outcome. Korthagen's (2003) model describes the core values of a reflective educator as consisting of resourcefulness, determination, commitment and passion for one's work; these were all apparent in the ECMPs' lives. There was time for peaceful, studious reflection. There was a hunger for expanding their horizons and looking at new pedagogies which would allow for fresh insights. There were opportunities for reading about ECME research and attending the multitude of seminars and training courses which were being provided by a wide variety of experts.

Many ECMPs, initially hesitant and insecure about the use of digital technologies, became experts in the area. Having gained a useful set of competencies, they displayed confidence and a sense of self-efficacy(Mantovani, 2021:1).

Parents and families

> *'Parents were instrumental in facilitating the online situation to 'create some dynamic and energy' (Questionnaire respondent).*

For many ECMPs, one surprising outcome was the greater, and mostly positive, engagement of the parents in musicking with their children at home. Sessions involved whole families rather than just the child and often included several siblings, grandparents and even the dog (Vygotsky, 1998). Music making in the home became more normal, an outcome many ECMPs had hoped for and dreamt of. It became clear that the parents needed the social contact as much as their children did.

> *'Especially first-time mothers with 'pandemic babies' needed the attention as much as the children during these difficult times'(Interviewee).*

The dynamics of the relationships changed from intense focus by the ECMP on one child, to interactions between the child and parents, carers and siblings. The environment of the home provided a safe space for all of them to take musical risks, exploring sound and songs freely and with less inhibition. Finding props and using implements found around the home as instruments became a creative process with surprising results.

> *'I was supporting parent's interactions with their infants and babies and offering information about purpose and function'* (Questionnaire respondent).

Through this, parents gained a better understanding of ECME aims and outcomes, relationships were strengthened and feedback was encouraged. As one ECMP's comment testifies, a '*determination to keep parents as partners in the music journey of their children in the future'* has the potential to lead to a major shift in ECME.

The impact of Covid-19 on the future of ECME

In 2022, with the world still struggling with the impact of the Covid-19, the ECME landscape is having to cope with constant change and new regulations demanding endless adaptability. But the workforce is empowered and, it might be argued, strengthened by the experience of the pandemic. In April 2021, with a mixture of excitement, apprehension and exhaustion, 60% of ECMPs returned to face-to-face teaching. It would never be the same as before. None of them planned to continue solely with online teaching, but in order to reach a wider audience, most freelance ECMPs planned to offer both online and face-to-face teaching. Four ECMPs continued music sessions at a Forest School; others were hoping to continue their work using outdoor spaces in nurseries and infant departments. Plans for the future included training and research, mentoring, supporting and inspiring others, writing, and offering training courses.

The online networks which had been created with other colleagues and which had become 'a lifeline', provided encouragement and support. This new community is probably here to stay, and, it is hoped, will help with building post-pandemic networks of practice.

Many ECMPs showed an awareness that, on returning to in-person teaching, they would encounter children with a wide range of needs and demands. As a result of the lack of social, physical and cognitive development, many 'vulnerable and stressed children, and their parents, would need a lot of additional support' (Bertram &Pascal, 2021; Reich, 2020; Campos, 2021; Mantovani, 2021; Mochida, 2021; Pascal, 2021). ECMPs' awareness of the issues would be paramount in recognising that children's challenging behaviours might be caused by hidden anxieties, traumatic experiences, grief, social deprivation, inappropriate parenting styles (Mochida, 2020) or altered school hygiene routines. Children showing signs of distress or difficult behaviour would need to be treated with

empathy and understanding (Mochida, 2021:8; van Manen, 2008). This finds a strong echo in the ECME principles of pedagogical sensitivity, thoughtfulness and empathy (van Manen, 2008:41) and of careful learner-centred pedagogy (Huhtinen–Hildén & Pitt, 2018:9). Having worked for many years at the point of overlap between music therapy and music education, the author found that this resonated strongly with her own approach:

> *'to help children to relate to their inner worlds of feelings, ideas and lived experiences with the wider world and to see a connection between them'* (citing Froebel, 1887, 2021:4).

Arts-based pedagogies, such as music making and storytelling, would be well suited to enabling children to communicate their emotions and process them non-verbally. ECMPs proposed several strategies for future teaching, e.g., returning to familiar routines, allowing space for spontaneous, expressive movement, providing a safe, calm space, offering a playful, child-centred approach, and musical storytelling. Many respondents recommended that singing together was their priority.

ECMPs found themselves in the dual role of educator and therapist. *'The fight against the de-humanisation of human beings without the arts',* as one respondent put it*,* would include the provision of a safe environment, as well as respect for the sharing of emotions and experiences through musical interactions.

Going forward, ECMPs should be encouraged and inspired by the present dialogue between educators and academics in what Bertram & Pascal refer to as 'the surge for new opportunities and development of new strategies'(2021:8). ECME will need to find a united voice as a professional body if it is to have an effective role in these discussions and receive recognition and validation.

> *'They (ECMPs) can get involved in the discussion across the global, educational world and offer their unique role through the arts and music to address the many arising well-being and development needs of young children' (Krueger, 2010:1).*

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Family music as a facilitator of the process of familiarization of infants who attend Escola Bressol, and their families

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Abstract

The goal of this study is to explore the role of music that families use at home as a bonding resource in the classroom during the period of familiarization at school for infants aged 0-3. This is a case study that uses participant observation, an interview with the educator and the researcher's field diary as techniques for obtaining information. The results show that music is a resource that favours the familiarization process among infants, educators and families generating a stable and satisfactory transition from home to school.

Background

Music has an intrinsic role in different cultures where the interaction among individuals has contributed not only meaning to events, but also an emotional content that is still present to these days (Blacking, 2006). For some decades, research on music opened the way to a new perspective. From that moment, the focus was placed not only on musical abilities and capacities, but on understanding the uses and functions that music has in different contexts, where clearly It could be observed that it is a universal human behaviour (Nettl, 1956; Merriam, 1964: 2001; Blacking, 1973; Campbell, 2003 and 2013; Martí, 2009).

Trevarthen (2009) maintains that musical participation that appears in different cultures is an innate musicality present in humans. Dissanayake (2016) also adds that this innate musicality trait could be part of an adaptive process, which by human capacity itself, has contributed to its evolution. Through studies such as those presented by Malloch (1999) it is possible to observe that the *communicative musicality* begins by means of vocalizations between the mother and the new-born. This musical companionship (Ansdell & Pavlicevic, 2004) is full of sound qualities (pulse, quality, narrative and timbre) of a bodily synchronization and shared emotions between both mother and child (known as IMP), which prepares the new-born to learn about a culture (Trevarthen, 1999).

Susan Young (2008) exposes how during the upbringing and the first years of life, the process of musical enculturation is lived mostly within the family dynamics. Likewise, Ilari (2016) argues that during this period the home is enriched by behaviours, manifestations and affectivities, which are shared through these first musical Protoconversations or communicative musicality (Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009) and are present as a multimodal performance (corporal, sound, verbal, visual) within the family group. It should be mentioned that adults use this resource as an affective bond, and that they also use it as a regulator to be able to manage the behaviour of their children, such as crying, relief from separation and getting used to daily routines (Custero, Britto, Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Addessi, 2009).

When families decide that it is time for their children to enter the school context, Balaban (2000) points out that most of them experience a diversity of feelings related to separation. Currently, it is important working in a coordinated way since both contexts play a fundamental role for everyone, especially for the infant. According to Vila (2000), this

change in paradigm and approach is accompanied by a transformation in the social net: the decrease of large families, the incorporation of both adults into the labour market, and above all, current research in childhood issues (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth & Bell, 1970; Spitz ,1972; Bowlby & Ainsworth, 1979; Bronfenbrenner 1985; Malloch 1999; Malloch, Trevarthen 2009). This kind of research has accompanied this structural change, which evidences the importance that a suitable environment provides in the cognitive, emotional and physical development of the child.

According to the Educational Project of the *Escoles Bressol Municipals i Servei a la Petita Infància* [Municipal Nursery Schools and Early Childhood Service] in the city of Mataró (Spain), educational practices in early childhood centres[1] in Catalonia are aimed at promoting childhood development, clear educational objectives and a more collaborative family participation. This is why all 0-3 year-old educational centres must consider to carry out a familiarization period in their programming at the beginning of the school year, where three agents are contemplated at the time of organizing it: children, families and the teaching team. Cantero and López (2004) suggest that the school familiarization period is an interval of time that the child needs to understand and accept the changes that are generated when entering into a new environment. Thus, faced with this experience of change, each child assumes and manifests it in different ways. In this sense, educational centres develop different intervention programs to accompany this important transition stage between home and school.

Within the educational context, music education in early childhood centres has become more relevant in the global context. This impact is due to innovative, transdisciplinary and multimodal research (for example, Malagarriga, Valls, 2003; Malagarriga 2004; Capdevila, 2008; Pérez-Moreno, 2011) where the focal point is the infant and his environment. Consequently, the concern in developing tools and resources that can have a favourable impact on these ages is where our research question arises:

Can music listened at home be a resource to promote the familiarization process of children from 0-3 years old who attend the *Escola Bressol?*

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1   In Spain, according to the LOE (2006), early childhood education ranges are from 0 - 6 years. This stage in Catalonia is divided into two: *escola bressol* (0-3) and kindergarten (3-6)

Aims

Based on this research question, the following goal is pursued:

- To identify the behaviours and reactions of children when sharing music from their family context during the familiarization process at *Escola Bressol.*

Method

This case study is part of a larger investigation, which aims to assess music as a transitional resource in early childhood education classrooms during the period of familiarization. A selection of the participants was made from the field work carried out at the *Escola Bressol Municipal* ELNA, in Mataró, Barcelona. Juliana's case was chosen because it was the most representative case, helping to illustrate this first approach to the present exploratory study. The research design is described below, through the two phases of data collection:

A) <u>Preliminary phase:</u> participants and music preparation. It took place during the 2016-2017 school year at the *Escola Bressol Municipal*[2] ELNA. The sample was a group of 8 boys and 4 girls aged 1-2 years old, who entered the school context for the first time. A meeting was held with the families explaining the research and they were asked for their voluntary participation and authorization to use the data collected confidentially and anonymously. An open questionnaire was designed and implemented to collect the pieces of music used by the families in their daily routine. It was collected in different formats such as: YouTube links, audio notes and CD tracks. Music was stored in a USB and a paper list with the child's name and their song, to be used by the teacher.

B) <u>Main Phase:</u> The familiarization period began (September and October) and most of the audios were available to be used. A micro ethnography (Simons, 2011) was carried out due to the short duration of participant observation. Following the goal of the research (to accompany the infants with their pieces of music in this important transition) the educator introduced the songs into the classroom environment according to the needs of the group, that is to say, when someone was sad, crying

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2   In Spanish it is known as: infant education from 0 to 3 years old.

and also when s/he is happy. Also, during different moments of the daily routine such as the entrance and the exploratory games.

Finally, a total of 59 hours of audio-visual recordings were collected during 10 weeks. A field diary was filled by the researcher and an interview was carried out with the educator.

Results

To achieve the first approach to this exploratory study, an analysis instrument is created based on the idea of Susan Young (2003), where she states that the interrelationships with the environment of children aged one year are carried out primarily through vocalizations, facial gestures, and body movements.

As can be seen in Table 1, the emerging three categories are: Bodily, Facial and Sound Expression. They are exposed with their definition hereunder:

A.Bodily	Physical movements are considered both displacement and static.
B. Facial	Gesture reading is considered, wich is accompanied by the gaze, in wich the interaction of the face can be seen.
C. Sound Expression	All manifestations are considered by means of the voice. Expressions generated when listening to their music are taken into account, as well as the emotions that are generated by some vocal manifestation and how these emotions gradually disappear when listening to their audios.

Table 1. Category System.

As mentioned in the previous section, we proceed to describe Juliana´s participation: she is sixteen months old and presents four favourite songs: three songs of the group The Pinguins (*sol solet, la masovera and El lleó no em fa por*[3]), and *El Bequetero*, which is a piece linked to the main festival in the city of Mataró. Table 2 shows the three categories, with a list of reactions, the identifier code, and the frequency of each during the study.

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3   These three songs covered in the reggae style and are part of the traditional Catalan children's repertoire.

BODILY			FACIAL			SOUND EXPRESSIONS		
Code	Subcategory	Frequency	Code	Subcategory	Frequency	Code	Subcategory	Frequency
A22	sitting sways	8	B5	Seeks complicity with the adult´s gaze	6	C4	Sing her song	7
A4	shake her hands	7	B4	Looks for contact with the camera	4	C2	Retains crying momentarily	3
A5	Point her finger at the ear	7	B1	Smiles	2	C3	Hold back crying little by little	2
A15	Claps to the beat	6	B2	Looks for the sound sources	2	C6	Count the numbers from 1 to 15	2
A26	Stop swing	3	B3	Makes a surprised face	3	C1	Hold back crying	2
A29	Crouches down	2				C5	Express "La Juliana"	1
A28	jumps	2						
A14	Moves index fingers	2						
A6	Touch her head	2						
A10	Touch her back	2						
A11	Points to herself	2						
A37	Seeks contact with the adult	2						
A8	Send kisses	1						
A30	Lying down moves her feet	1						
A21	Claps at the end of the song	1						
A16	Pats her legs	1						
A23	Sitting bounces	1						
A12	Moves her hands up-down	1						
A27	Bends knees	1						
A9	Puts her hands on her chest	1						
A31	Moves by moving arms up-down	1						

Table 2. Juliana's results.

After the analysis instrument was applied to the observations made in Juliana's case, the first results were obtained, following the goal of identifying children's reactions and behaviours when sharing their home music in the school context. These results are presented below:

Juliana's bodily response is rich and includes variety, synchronization, and clarity in the movements when listening to her music. Each of the pieces has a specific choreography; she has internalized three of them -which are songs- according to the movements that lyrics suggest; the fourth is a p*asodoble*[4], which is composed of two different choreographic steps, where the second step has a complexity that is associated with the change of phrase (that is not very easy to discriminate), but which she has identified correctly, performing it in time and form. It is also possible to see Juliana enjoying her music in a different way, sometimes because she is entertained exploring classroom materials, eating, or sometimes sitting on the teacher's lap. Even lying down on the floor, it is possible to see how she always follows the rhythm, how she claps her hands on the ground, on the objects and on her body. In addition, sometimes she does not perform the choreography, but when she recognizes her music, she immediately brings her index finger to her ear as a sign of recognition, along with a big smile. Finally, it can be seen that, in sad moments, her body posture improves with the music, seeking to get up to be able to better hear her music.

In can be appreciated the pleasure that Juliana has for sharing her music with adults, to whom she smiles, inviting them to participate with her. This is sometimes reciprocated by the adult, singing or dancing, among others. Like most of the children taking part on this research, at the beginning of the familiarization period, her face of astonishment when listening to her music in the classroom was a constant, so she turned in surprise towards the sound source.

Since the first week that Juliana's music began to be heard, it was possible to observe the vast body repertoire that she brought. From the second week it was possible to appreciate various sections of the songs that she repeated. In some moments it was more babbling, and in others the words or even small phrases were perfectly understood. In the following weeks, it was observed that she had more crying episodes and the educator, when realizing about this situation, chose to put her songs a little bit more. When doing so, most

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4   It is a Spanish dance, with a binary rhythm.

of the time she used to stop crying gradually, remaining in small sighs and even sometimes, she used to hum her song. Also, we were able to appreciate how she went from only singing the songs, to sharing, socializing and interacting with others based on this sound material. When the first chords of the song were heard, she exclaimed *La Juliana!* indicating herself with the index finger and looking for the adult's gaze. Being also with her companions, she commented: 'It's mine, it's mine!'. Finally, as has been said on the instrumental song that she brought (the Bequetero piece), at the moment that she bends down -according to the official choreography-, while they are down, a count of 15 pulses is taken and when finished, everyone jumps with great joy to continue dancing. It is in this way that we could see Juliana, crouched down, and when counting to say aloud number 15, she jumped and continued with her musical swing.

Final remarks

This research confirms that music from home, as it enhances meaning that represents the family environment in the classroom, acts as a mean in which infants can find the calm, accompaniment, security and joy that their homes bring them. Thus, it can be said that music from home, when being in the classroom, adds a new meaning and acts as an object of immaterial attachment, which has a positive impact. It is also observed that, by favouring affective bonding and socialization among the educator, children and their families, also reinforce the sense of belonging and identity. Through this study, family experiences and shared environments at home are valued and made visible, serving as a link between the family and school context. In this way the child contributes to the generation of a space that appreciates musical diversity, but which mainly becomes an integrating agent for their own environment. We are talking mainly about an educational resource, which is outlined with a collaborative, respectful and unity perspective.

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Delivering music education training for non-specialist teachers through effective partnership: a Kodály-inspired intervention for improving young children's developmental outcomes

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Abstract

In the light of the recent publication of the Model Music Curriculum in England, there is a new imperative to provide foundations in music education for generalist primary teachers. This paper presents developments in the provision of continuing professional development for primary teachers in England, particularly in Early Years (0-5 years) and in Key Stage One (5-7 years). Drawn from the music intervention training developed during a study joint-funded by the Education Endowment Foundation and the Royal Society for the Arts, *First Thing Music* underwent considerable development during the challenges presented by Covid-19, and is emerging as a model with potential for delivery to scale, founded on partnerships between Music Services and freelance specialists, schools and the British Kodály Academy, with possibilities for use in initial teacher training.

Key words

music education, Kodály approach, initial teacher education, teacher professional development, partnership, music hubs, workplace mentoring, communities of practice, close-to-practice research

Background

The 2019 *Music Education: State of the Nation* report in England recommended that the "government should encourage all schools to embed a culture of singing via classroom teaching" (Daubney et al. p. 19). This has arguably been particularly important in recent times, given the need to mitigate the effects of isolation on young children resulting from the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The introduction of the National Curriculum and the 1988 Education Reform Act in the UK made it compulsory for music to be taught in schools. In England, however, there have been concerns that primary teachers do not necessarily have the skills to teach what is required of the current National Curriculum (Hennessy 2000). Hallam et al.'s (2009) survey of primary teacher trainees shows that only half said they were confident to teach music and suggested that more time should be devoted to preparing them for the music curriculum.

This concern is not unique to England or indeed to the UK. Similar concerns have been raised in Australia (Barrett et al. 2019), Indonesia (Julia et al. 2019), the USA, Namibia, Ireland and South Africa (Russell-Bowie 2009).

In more recent reviews, Digby (2020) emphasised the need for music training of teachers of young children, beginning with initial teacher education (p. 6). Welch (2020) suggested overcoming the lack of pedagogical experience in generalist teachers through effective, class-based mentoring by specialist music educators (p. 9). He also suggested partnerships between music specialists and early years colleagues in 'close-to-practice research' (Wyse et al, 2018) and the incorporation of the principles of effective music pedagogy (p. 10).

In March 2021, the Department for Education in England published the Model Music Curriculum (Department for Education DfE 2021a), a non-statutory guide to teaching music, in advance of the new statutory National Plan for Music Education due in 2022. The stated aim is to:

> "*ensure a universal provision of music education, for all pupils in all schools … [P]upils should receive a minimum of one hour of teaching a week; this may take the form of short sessions spread across the week.*" (p. 3)

There is an increasingly pressing need to find ways to train teachers to prepare them for the new curriculum so that they feel confident incorporating music into their core practice.

A development in the field: First Thing Music

In 2018/19, a large randomised controlled trial (RCT), funded by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and the Royal Society for the Arts (RSA), was conducted to evaluate the impact of *First Thing Music (FTM)*, a 15-minute daily, interactive, Kodály-inspired music intervention, on the development outcomes of children aged 5 to 6 in England. The trial found that children exposed to the FTM programme (n = 1,496) achieved an average of one month's additional reading progress compared with the control group (n=1500). The study also found that where the intervention had been delivered at least four times weekly, the reading advantage increased by up to three months (Education Endowment Foundation 2021). While the focus of the EEF/RSA trial was on pupil outcomes, a large part of the FTM intervention involved the training, mentoring and regular support of generalist teachers, now becoming a key priority in music education in England. Any improvement in children's outcomes can only come about if teachers have an adequate knowledge and understanding of music, the necessary pedagogical skills and the resulting confidence to deliver the music curriculum.

The 2018/19 trial developed a teacher training model in partnership with the British Kodály Academy (BKA), Tees Valley Music Service (TVMS) and Sheffield Music Hub[5]. The BKA developed and delivered the teaching modules and pedagogical approach to the training, while TVMS and Sheffield Music Hub provided the mentors, who were trained to support teachers in schools. The training in the FTM trial was conducted face to face, and teachers were taught a set of thirty simple songs and rhymes arranged progressively to take them and their classes through a pedagogical sequence over the year. For more details on the teacher training, see Ibbotson & See (2021).

Data from our 2018/19 trial showed positive shifts in teachers' music teaching competence (see Table 1). At the start of training, only 7 (13%) of the teachers said they had strong understanding of teaching music, but at the end of the training, 75% of the teachers (n =35) reported a better understanding of teaching music.

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5   A local Music Service is often the lead organisation for the Music Education Hub - a collective of strategic or delivery partners providing local music services, in line with the National Plan for Music Education.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total complete
Sep 2018	1	6	15	30	3	55
Jun 2019	10	25	9	1	2	47

*The figures in red highlight the dramatic changes in teachers' responses

Table 1. Shift in teacher competence between Sep 2018 and Jun 2019.

The insights arising from this trial, particularly regarding the introduction of music practice to non-specialist teachers, were as follows:

- '**Little and often'** was most effective (Ibbotson & See 2021. p.7); although the teachers had enjoyed the previous half-termly training sessions, it was not always easy to remember everything weeks later;
- The music sessions created a sense of **camaraderie** in the participants, which made the learning enjoyable;
- Resources alone were not enough; **regular support and practice were important for music skill development**.

Following on from that model, during 2020/21, the Covid-19 pandemic presented a new challenge but also an opportunity to adapt the training model to online use. This turned out to have some unexpected benefits. Below we outline the new online version of First Thing Music.

The new model: First Thing Music Online

The model used a new kind of workplace mentoring which took place in school, once a week. This took into account a request for support to be 'little and often' which had been made at the end of the previous trial; the in-classroom 10 to 15-minute daily session format was retained.

Participants included:

1. FTM Trainers (qualified in Kodály-based music teaching), who ran the on-line tutorials;
2. Music Specialist Mentors, typically working with a music service, who attended the tutorials and were in a position to provide further support;

3. Up to six teachers per tutor group.

In this model, 15 minutes were devoted to asynchronous preparation, followed by 30 minutes of live interactive tutorial, and a weekly practical assignment (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. An example of a tutorial plan from one module of training.

Five modules, based on the 2018/19 resources, were developed for the online training of teachers:

- Feeling the beat;
- Making beat conscious;
- Experiencing rhythm;
- The singing and the speaking voice: (is what we hear the same or different?);
- Pitch shape; melodic contour; introducing pitch.

Each of these modules was designed to run flexibly over half a term (each half a term being about 7-8 weeks long) and to use the Kodály-inspired pedagogical sequence: 'preparation, presentation and practice'. The aim was to lay the foundation of musical concepts such as beat, rhythm and pitch; initial preparation was through extended opportunities for playful experience (e.g., holding on to a piece of fabric being swayed to a

steady beat during a game), establishing it in many contexts, and then making the learning conscious (see Figure 2).
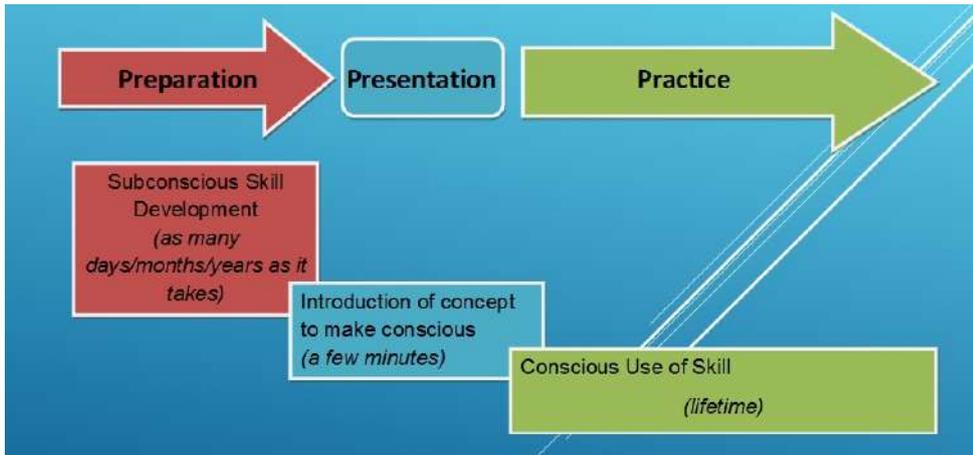
Figure 2. Preparation, Presentation, Practice.

Preliminary findings from the early implementation

Communities of practice

We found that with this training model, the barriers to learning, which had previously arisen because meetings only took place once every half a term, were lessened and teachers were able to transfer the practical learning straight into the classroom, often within 24 hours. The sense of camaraderie, highlighted before, remained, but was now more firmly located within a school 'community of practice' (Wenger 1998). Rather than having mentors support one member of staff at a time in the classroom, we were discovering the power of having an online trainer supporting several colleagues in a school, who would then support each other with common aims and activities on a daily basis, leading to what Wenger describes as 'mutual engagement, a joint enterprise and a shared repertoire', as well as a greater sense of camaraderie (First Thing Music 2021a).

However, the development of communities of practice was not restricted to those within participating schools. A similar development was observed between music specialists, (whether employed by the schools or coming in as external specialists from the Music Services), and the First Thing Music trainers. All were finding the opportunity to share and develop practice together in this context of partnership and collaboration to be a useful form of professional development. This in turn was feeding into more effective mentoring and support for teachers delivering the curriculum requirements for Early Years and Key Stage

One. There were weekly online meetings where experiences were shared and changes made as necessary.

These communities of practice also enhanced the relationship between schools and their local music services, moving from one of simple provision towards one where support and expertise played a bigger role. As schools observed the impact on child development, their recognition of the value of this music expertise increased beyond the obligatory 'box-ticking buy-in' that could easily pass as an adequate music education, into something with much richer partnership potential. (Similar observations of impact on child development had been recorded in a previous pilot study, (See & Ibbotson 2018), where it was noted that over two terms of a daily music intervention, progress in the Prime Areas of Learning, (such as confidence, self-regulation and gross/fine motor skill development) showed medium to high effect sizes, which, over two terms, also began to extend into the more Specific Areas of Learning such as literacy and numeracy.)

Skills development

The regular tutorials meant that there could be a focus on incremental skill development which was then put into effect, often within 24 hours of the tutorial, rather than weeks later. Becoming aware of underlying beat, differences between speaking and singing voice, actively practising leading a simple song, pitch matching, and learning about comfortable singing range for young voices were among the skills under development, as well as how to introduce the foundations of music progressively using play.

Furthermore, teachers and music specialists applied ideas from pedagogical research, for example: exploring methods not restricted to the teacher-directed modelling of music skills, testing the effects of arranging children in a circle and how this might augment the opportunities for social referencing, joint attention and action, and the development of social cognition (Ilari 2016; First Thing Music 2021b) .

Video became a central learning tool. After the weekly tutorials, assignments were set (Figure 1). Initially these included finding a puppet or a piece of tuned percussion, but gradually the teachers began to make short recordings of their sessions in the classroom. These were shared with the rest of the group during the following tutorial. It gave a unique chance to look at how the teaching was working, highlighting aspects that were working well or else finding alternative approaches. The music specialists could learn from the

teaching expertise of the class teachers, and the trainers could prevent any musical challenges from becoming long-term issues. This included addressing the concern that teachers might not have the confidence to sing, or that they might not have had enough opportunities to see good practice in action. Everything was shared, and support offered and found, within the group. It also gave the teachers autonomy in their own classroom and they had fun with the children and established this as part of their effective working relationship with the class.

Feedback from teacher trainees

We have been testing this experimental model of training with the help of Higher Education providers of initial teacher training at Reading and Durham universities in England. We offered weekly tutorials with practical assignments, along the lines of the CPD model described above, to the 2021/22 cohort of Primary PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate Of Education) students, in addition to the usual core provision. The models show promise.

The following benefits of the model were expressed by the teacher trainees:
- Accessible and practical introduction to music education; popular and effective online; with opportunities to practise teaching skills 'live' with companions, even when restricted during pandemic conditions;
- Evidence-based practice, both on benefits for children's development outcomes, and referring to current pedagogical research
- Of immediate use during teaching practice; incrementally engaging children, first in practising leading a song and playing games for a few minutes…
- …but eventually in planning full lessons; understanding the practical, progressive steps to the delivery of the curriculum, and how to extend/enrich that creatively; making music, as Kodály said, 'a joy and not a torture.'

In particular, the students liked the 'little and often' approach, which gives time for development of skills. The existing model of music education training currently offered in many schools provides only a few hours of training over the year, which makes it difficult to practise the necessary skills. This new model of teacher training appears to address the challenge.

The fruits of collaboration between in-service teachers and music specialists with respect to 'close-to-practice research (Wyse et al. 2018) are also narrowing the gap between

research and practice (Gluschankof 2007) and feeding back positively into pre-service training.

This approach aims to develop 'knowledge for use' in order to improve musical experience and learning (Young 2016), with trainers, specialists and teachers looking not only at the 'what' of teaching—such as the new Model Music Curriculum—but also the 'how' of teaching those skills (Bremmer 2015).

Perceived impact on children

The training that teachers received not only had an impact on their own performance, but also on the children.

Enhanced enjoyment of music

Teachers reported that the children enjoyed the music lessons. Below are some comments from the teachers:

> The children have been very enthusiastic about the sessions and they have enjoyed them.
>
> All adults and children are looking forward to the next steps!
>
> The children are absolutely loving it and are full of ideas and suggestions which they are happy to offer.
>
> Still having a wonderful time... I overheard some of the children chatting about our sessions saying that they had had so much fun!

Development of children's social skills, and peer learning

Teachers also reported a perceived development in children's social skills.

> I have a little boy in EYFS [Early Years Foundation Stage], very fidgety and probably ASD [autism spectrum disorder], who loves the sessions, settles down and enjoys them. Wonderful.
>
> The children really enjoyed leading the song as we went on this week and some of them managed to get the beat independently too (when they acted as the leader).

> *Note the motivation of peer group learning.*
>
> The children have loved "Copycat" and we have had several volunteers leading the song, including some very shy children!
>
> Children are becoming much more confident and beginning to lead songs and actions. All children are now engaging, even those who were reluctant at first.
>
> More children starting to sing songs both from the programme and of their own invention throughout the school day this week.

One teacher also observed improvements in the focus of the children during the sessions. Another teacher said that they had seen more children starting to sing songs, both from the programme, and of their own invention.

Other general observations

One teacher observed that some children were finding it a struggle to keep to the beat and that these were often the same children who were also finding other areas of the school curriculum tricky.

Another teacher commented that having the sessions first thing in the morning worked well because it helped to settle children down as they came into class and that "*the children have easily adapted to the change in routine and it does seem to be paving the way for a successful morning.*"

Relevance to the curriculum

Another advantage of the training modules is that they fit well with the Early Years curriculum (DfE 2021b). When asked to highlight areas where they saw FTM training might fit in with the early learning goals (ELG) in the Early Years Foundation Stage profile[6], teachers described seeing positive benefits in all areas, whereas prior to this training they might typically have seen music as being only relevant to 'expressive arts and design'.

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6   The EYFS profile is an assessment of a child's development at the end of the EYFS. It is made up of an assessment of the child's outcomes in relation to the 17 early learning goal (ELG) descriptors.

Music hub partner observations

A visiting music hub practitioner (working on another project in one of the same schools) commented that the music intervention also had a positive effect on children's behaviour.

> All children, including those who displayed quite disruptive behaviour at the beginning of the project were by the end of the six weeks completely engaged and focussed on the tasks. They were relating our activities to those experienced in the morning during their 'First Thing Music' session, and they displayed a much better understanding of the elements of music covered in the project than I would normally expect.

They also reported increased engagement among the teachers in the training.

> The class teacher also took more interest in our activities than I am used to, taking note of the activities and adding them to her bank of knowledge.

Discussion

For decades there has been a tension between two opposing views:
- that music is innate: activity should be child-led, (e.g., Reggio Emilia);
- children must be inducted progressively into music (e.g., Kodály or Dalcroze approaches) (For a fuller discussion see Young 2018 pp.78 – 86).

Much of this is arguably a distant mystery for the generalist primary teacher, whose experience of music teaching in any form may be sparse.

Further research is needed to investigate more closely the mechanisms at work between music and learning in general, but what is becoming clear is that playful, musical interaction is of profound importance to child development and that anything to facilitate access to it should be considered.

The FTM approach described in this paper gives teachers the basic building blocks of music to play with. The musical practice they engage in in order to hone their skills, in their communities of practice (in the classroom), is play. FTM uses play that follows a particular, simple progression. This is what makes it so inclusive and accessible, even for those who have never seen themselves as musical.

The teacher observation above, that music 'first thing' does seem to "pave the way for a successful morning" may indicate a more important possibility: that music should be 'first' in terms of the foundations of the early years of education. There is no reason those with a fuller set of music skills should not follow a broader 'rhizomatic' template (Young 2018 p.86), but First Thing Music does offer a practical starting point.

Conclusion

A First Thing Music approach may offer current music education infrastructure increased potential to offer both pre-service and in-service teachers access to a simple methodology and underlying pedagogy for music, by means of partnership and by harnessing the power of online technology to develop communities of practice in the field.

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Singing, playing, dancing: Creativity viewed from the perspective of oscillation theory

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Abstract

The heart of Elemental Music and Dance Education is creativity: the central concern is imagination and the invention of aesthetic design, and using one's own body, the voice, instruments and other media in a lively, vital manner. This includes helping children express themselves, conveying the plurality of aesthetic worlds and learning about ways of navigating and communicating within these worlds. In Elemental Music and Dance Education we mostly favour activities like singing, playing instruments and dancing as ways of facilitating aesthetic and educational experiences. These activities are closely connected to creative thinking, especially when discovering original, innovative and divergent ideas during musical improvisation.
What characterises musical creativity and how can we foster creative thinking in its multiple forms and expressions? Research shows that creative processes are complex and non-linear, and this is also the case for teaching with, and for, creativity in music education. Based on the notion of oscillation, a new approach is developed here which characterises these special dynamics and reflects on the variety of interactions, exchange processes and reciprocal impulses that determine the genesis of musical creativity. Play is of particular importance, as it improves creative thinking and at the same time reveals the individual skills and abilities of the child. This paper will introduce and discuss this model and its potential to enrich creative music teaching, and teaching for musical creativity, when working with young children.

Keywords

Musical creativity, oscillating, playing, fostering creative thinking

Introduction

Creativity is the very heart of Elemental Music and Dance Education. It is essential for initiating aesthetic design processes and for encouraging people of all ages to express themselves through music, movement and language. As early as the 1930s, Carl Orff (1931, 1932), considered the founder of this concept, referred to themes such as imagination, improvisation and play in the context of musical learning. There is a need to examine more closely, against the background of current theory, the forms and qualities developed as a result of creative thinking in early childhood. In this paper, a multimodal approach based on the idea of oscillation is proposed. The specific dynamics that characterise creative processes will be presented, with a special focus on play. Based on this theoretical framework, the question of how we might enrich creative music teaching, and teaching for musical creativity, when working with young children in Music Education and in Elemental Music and Dance Education, will be discussed.

On the notion of creativity

Definitions of creativity usually include attributes such as novelty and originality (e.g., Runco, 2014; Kaufman & Sternberg, 2019). Codifications emphasise person, end product, process and environment (Sawyer, 2012) or refer to the differing degrees of reach of creative work, distinguishing for example between globally groundbreaking and individually significant innovations (Boden, 1994; Csikszentmihalyi 1996) and employ a variety of models in order to differentiate with regard to the development of creativity (Taylor, 1975; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009). Webster (2009) postulates that children are creative thinkers and emphasises that creative thinking manifests itself in music in different forms, ranging across improvisation, composition, interpretation, and mental representations of the music heard (Webster, 2002). Burnard (2012, 2017) also emphasises the wide variety of forms of creative expression in music and advocates taking this diversity into account when implementing policy and practice.

In general, it can be assumed that the development of creative potential goes hand in hand with other developmental and learning processes. Dreher argues that the creativity of three to six year old children is particularly fascinating because the expectations of adults are thwarted and the normal ways of doing things are overridden. The originality here lies in the particular developmental logic (Dreher, 2014). The connections between

professionalisation and creativity are sometimes controversial. Gruhn regards a broad repertoire of cognitive and pragmatic musical skills as a necessary prerequisite for musical creativity (Gruhn, 2010). In contrast, studies by Stadler Elmer (2000), Reitinger (2008) and Barrett (2012) show how innovative and diverse the creative achievements of young children are. Barrett observed children between 18 and 48 months of age and interpreted their musical inventions as being "[the] beginnings of an individual and personal style" (Barrett, 2012, p. 66). This implies that at this age, creative thinking and behaviour are merely not undergoing development, but are in fact already being utilised and performed. In these generative-performative activities, musical creativity is particularly clearly seen, but at the same time the interpretation of pieces and the act of listening to music (see e.g., Kratus, 2017) contain creative elements that require ideas to be developed both playfully and imaginatively. In order to encourage children to be creative, multi-perspective concepts would appear to be helpful. In the following, the focus is on the complexity of the developmental and creative processes. The metaphor of oscillation is used to describe creative musical dynamics in more detail and to derive impulses for promoting creativity.

Creativity as an oscillating process

The starting point for the framework theory presented here, which understands creativity as a phenomenon of oscillating processes (Kalcher, 2020), is the assumption that creative processes are complex, non-linear, and influenced by numerous interacting factors (Runco, 2014; Kounios & Beeman, 2015; Kaufman & Sternberg, 2019; Schiavio, Bashwiner & Jung, 2021). The dynamics are moreover viewed as *oscillating*, a term taken from physics and geology and involving swinging, swaying, or up-and-down, pendulum-like motion. When considering creativity and its development, oscillation is understood in the sense of a pendulum, i.e., traversing between two or more poles. In creative processes, there is often a back-and-forth movement between different thinking and action strategies, between moments which are floating and others which are goal-focussed, between the logical and the illogical, the constructive and the deconstructive, the centrifugal and the centripetal. In addition, the oscillation may be fluctuating and variable, for example with regard to motivation; the willingness to exert oneself; the time span over which creative processes occur. There are also fluctuations in the quality of creative products, in their originality, innovation and elaboration. What is ultimately recognised as a creative achievement is subject to changing fashions, which in turn causes further fluctuations. In acoustics, oscillation not only denotes vibrations, but also the entanglement of different

processes. This paper views this aspect as the interaction and co-operation of the sensory, cognitive, emotional and communicative, and of technical, domain-specific and cross-domain components, which, in their interweaving, influence creative thinking and action. Furthermore, the word "oscillation" refers to various resonance phenomena that go hand in hand with creativity. For example, being spoken to, or experiencing something intensely, can initiate a creative process. Resonance, in addition to the swinging or progressional aspects of inspiration, also plays a role in the communicating of original work: whether creative ideas – either among the performers themselves or in the surrounding environment – find acceptance and reinforcement determines the extent to which said ideas are elaborated with the necessary intensity (Kalcher, 2020, p. 55).

Where is oscillation visible in the music and dance creations of young children? In their creative activities, children often oscillate between spontaneous expressions and intentional ideas. Furthermore, there is an oscillation between imitating already learned sound motifs and manipulating and innovating in a more subjective way. Available knowledge and skills usually form the starting point for their imagination, but children independently add surprising new elements, which they are capable of combining innovatively. In their creations, there is often an interplay between musical, motor and linguistic expression; in addition, sensorimotor processes, and in particular affective and cognitive aspects, determine the special quality of their output. The extent to which the children themselves consider what they have produced to be valuable and meaningful, what resonance it has for educators, whether feedback is given and if so, what, influences the extent to which they continue joyfully with their creative work.

The aim of the framework theory of oscillation is to break down the complexity of creative dynamics and to draw artistic and pedagogical insights from them. The interaction of motivational, personal, social, aesthetic, cultural and educational processes is of central importance. Furthermore, two poles can be identified within which creative processes take place and are ultimately evaluated. Here, we use two pairs of terms, *tradition - innovation* and *conformity – distinctiveness,* to identify them. The terms were chosen to make it clear that creative phenomena have a flexible structure, something which is particularly evident when assessing creative achievements. The position of a piece of creative work within this field of tension in turn influences which learning processes favour the differentiation of creative thinking and acting (Kalcher, 2020, 2021).

Play as an engine of creativity and learning

Play is indispensable for creative thinking and acting (Russ & Doernberg, 2019), since it strengthens thought processes and at the same time showcases an individual's skills and abilities. With younger children, musical invention usually take place in the context of play activities and, depending on the culture and learning-specific stimuli, varies both between individuals and at different times within the same individual (Walter-Laager et al. 2019; Barrett, 2012; Stadler Elmer, 2015; Young, 2008; Reitinger, 2008). A variety of categories of play are observable during improvisation, such as functional and skill games, role playing and symbolic play, and games and construction play (Fröhlich, 2014).

Furthermore, creative play might be seen as an oscillation between tradition (instantiating and deepening the familiar) and innovation (imagining and creating something new).

Dreher (2014) argues that, from the perspective of developmental psychology, in play as well as in linguistic and visual design, children combine what they have learned with imaginative reinterpretations and continuations, and in her opinion, this is precisely where the "charm of childlike originality" lies (p. 54).

During music and dance, children also interact playfully with materials. They show joy in learning and trying to reproduce what they have learned, and at the same time they transform the aesthetic material and thus bring their own distinctive touch.

The playful, creative handling of musical elements is observable from early childhood; even the vocalisations of infants contain "all properties that are fundamental to music, namely pitch, volume, timbre, time structure" (Stadler Elmer, 2000, p. 35). However, the child shows creative behaviour not only in playful vocalisation and invention, but also in the learning of songs. Passages that the child cannot cope with are imaginatively changed, which is why singing songs can be described as "oscillating between [...] imitating and playing" (Stadler Elmer, 2015, p. 154). In other words, creative action takes place as an interaction between construction, deconstruction and reconstruction. Another aspect of oscillation may be identified in moments of spontaneity. Vasil (2014) found that kindergarten children demonstrate new ideas when creatively manipulating objects and ideas, using spontaneous rhythmic, melodic, spoken and exploratory responses.

Playful moments characterise both the start and target states of creative processes, insofar as they are determined by an effortless willingness to do something that is both serious and lighthearted. The qualities inherent in play, such as freedom, pleasure, risk and creativity mobilise a willingness to act and persevere. "Aha!" moments and a playful mastery of problems trigger flow states, which at the same time encourage a sustained preoccupation with creative topics. It can be assumed that "play skills", including the attitudes and strategies associated with them (Kalcher, 2020, p. 421), promote the development of creativity in a special way. Play and creative processes thus represent a vital set of conditions in which the dynamics of oscillation are often to be observed.

Weight is thereby added to Carl Orff's plea to view play as the starting point for music lessons (Orff, 1932), especially in view of the fact that several authors emphasise the idea that play is a catalyst for educational processes (e.g., Oerter, 2011). Stadler Elmer (2015), too, points out the importance of play: "Especially in play, children express the most creative side and the highest level of musical ability and understanding they have achieved" (p. 140).

Implications and Conclusions

For the development of creativity in music and dance, it is necessary to develop and expand a spectrum of competencies that includes aesthetic, artistic, social, communicative and play-specific skills, as well as creative thinking and action strategies. The argument is made in the literature that these stimulate each other in a dynamic way, and that certain aspects relevant to creativity, such as an openness to new things, flexibility, a tolerance of ambiguity and the willingness to take risks, act as multipliers of these competencies (Kalcher, 2020, p. 424). According to the oscillation concept described here, the development of creative potential is understood as an interplay between multiple educational approaches. Accordingly, exploratory and instructive, perturbing and stabilizing, and imaginative and reflective interventions are all to be viewed as educationally useful. An oscillation between free space and structure, and between planning and improvisation, would seem to be advantageous. It is thus important to initiate and maintain multiple, interlinked, mutually influencing processes (Kalcher, 2020, pp. 434–442).

The guiding of creative processes is a complex task and requires a high level of sensitivity (Mastnak, 2018) as well as diverse skills that encompass pedagogical and didactic areas

as well as domain and creativity-specific areas. The importance of simultaneously initiating creative search tasks, being a role model for creative thinking, and acting as a teacher, is asserted numerous times in the literature (e.g., Hickey, 2009; Kalcher, 2016). If teachers have the opportunity to experience creative approaches during their training, they are more likely to use creativity promoting learning opportunities in their subsequent teaching practice (Koutsoupidou, 2005). The comprehensive training of teachers in the processes of creativity therefore seems worthwhile. An open attitude that offers space for questions and a willingness to take risks, and which is characterised by humour, tolerance of error, and fascination, helps promote creativity (Urban, 2004). In particular, a playful attitude, one that initiates imaginative action using sounds and movements, has the potential to stimulate creative thinking and action. In addition, the appreciation by adults of the musical-dance creations that children display during free play would appear to be of benefit. The oscillation framework theory contributes to our understanding of the complexity of creative processes, and in this way, has the potential to enrich musical creativity.

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Music transformed moments at home with my baby

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Abstract

Drawing on communicative musicality theory and the notion that music as a cultural practice plays an important role in strengthening social and emotional bonds between parents and infants, this inquiry aimed to investigate the case of a Cypriot mother who employed musical activities in the everyday care of her baby. The mother participated in an online course, *Music during pregnancy and infancy,* over a period of four months. The course aimed to improve knowledge and teach a group of mothers the practical implications of using music and movement with infants.

Thematic analysis of qualitative data revealed that, even though the participant did not possess a musical background, she was able to employ a variety of musical activities with her infant that provided a powerful framework for coping with day to day routines, thereby improving the quality of motherhood for her. The participant stressed that music had become an essential parenting tool for her and her husband which accompanied everyday routines and bonded family members together. Further, she reported that she experienced a state of well-being which enhanced her confidence in her ability to cope with motherhood. The findings support previous research on the significance of musical interactions between mothers and infants. Because of the benefits gained, music educators should consider undertaking further studies to investigate the benefits of extending participation in such courses to more new mothers.

Keywords

experience of motherhood, infant daily care, music as a parenting tool, mother's well-being

Introduction

The potential to act musically is found in every human being from birth onwards (Hallam, 2006; Gordon, 1971). As identified by Trevarthen and Malloch (2017), infants show complex musical sensitivities and a willingness to share these at a very early age. Being social creatures, infants tend to share their stories of meaning with their parents as a means of engaging with them emotionally (Trevarthen & Malloch, 2017). Here, I used a communicative musicality framework in order to examine attempts to communicate and express oneself emotionally through musical interaction and vocalisation (Dissanayake, 2000; Trevarthen & Malloch, 2002; Trevarthen, 2012).

Communicative musicality is the interaction of arousal and attention between infants and mothers. Mothers sympathetically respond to the infant's vocalisations by imitating, exaggerating, and constructing pitch contours (Malloch, 1999-2000); these facilitate a state of attunement between them. This communication appears to be vital for enabling the infant to learn how to cope with emotions and to cultivate cultural skills (Barret, 2009; Trevarthen & Malloch, 2017). Further, this kind of musical interaction acts as a powerful driver of infant-caregiver bonding (Costa-Giomi & Benetti, 2017; Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2006; Gingras, 2013; Trevarthen, 2002), enhancing the mother's post-partum well-being (Fancourt & Perkins, 2017; Perkins, 2021; Wulff et al., 2021).

The present study investigated the experiences of a mother who incorporated musical activities into the day to day care of her infant. Over a period of four months, the mother participated in an online course, *Music during pregnancy and infancy*. The course aimed to improve knowledge and teach a group of mothers the practical implications of using music and movement with infants. The study investigated the ways in which musical activities were incorporated into the daily routine and examined the mother's perceptions and thoughts on the value of the experience, both for her and for her infant.

The research

A qualitative case study was conducted over a period of four months. Case studies offer the researcher the chance to gain insights into the case's unique circumstances (Yin, 2018) and to uncover new information and knowledge (Young & Ilari, 2019). The inquiry described aimed to reveal the "essence or structure of an experience" (Merriam, 1988, p.15), in this instance, of a mother participating in the *Music during pregnancy and infancy*

course, who experienced the incorporation of musical activities into the day to day care of her infant.

The mother was in her later thirties and at the point at which she enrolled on the course, was in the last few weeks of her pregnancy. She had no musical background. She had had two miscarriages and reported in the initial interview that her motivation was to learn how to incorporate music into the day to day care of her infant and provide the best possible environment for its development. She was eager to sing and to learn all the musical activities offered in the course and was enthusiastic about using the activities at home with her infant.

The content of the 4-month course, in which the participant and 7 other mothers participated, included practical ideas on the use of gestures and vocalisations, lullabies and play songs, chants and rhythmic patterns, and movement and dance. The sessions were delivered online every other week for four months.

Data was collected from the mother's journal, videos which she filmed in the home environment, researcher's field notes taken during the online course sessions, and semi-structured interviews that took place at the beginning, middle and end of the project. The data was analysed according to the steps described in Merriam (1998). Reliability strategies included member checks, triangulation and peer review of the data coding. As the in-depth data analysis is still in progress at the time of writing, this paper presents a selection only of the project's findings.

Findings and discussion

The data showed that musical activities were a regular part of the day and allowed for communication in musical form between mother and infant (Trevarthen & Malloch, 2002). In contrast to the descriptions in Custodero and Johnson-Green (2006) and Ilari (2005), who stated that mothers' limited musical background affects their use of music with their infants, the participant in the present studz, despite having no musical background, used music-making extensively and confidently with her baby. She paired a variety of musical activities with sleeping, bathing, feeding, diaper changing and entertaining.

The participant stressed that music had become so much a part of the daily routine that it now felt essential to include it. She mentioned that music transformed every action of caring for her infant into a meaningful activity for both of them. She said, "Music is

everywhere in the house. It makes every action meaningful and significant. It is different just to change a diaper, and different to change a diaper while singing or chanting…" (Participant Interview#2).

She used the activities she learned during the course and her song arrangements and included make-up melodies, chants and songs adjusted to her preferences and needs at any given moment, something which is also described in Custodero and Johnson-Green (2006). Babbling and singing songs were seen as primary activities in the musical interactions, as was also the case in Custodero (2006) and Gingras (2013). Furthermore, she used improvised vocal narratives (Trevarthen & Malloch, 2002) spontaneously throughout the day (Costa-Giomi & Benetti, 2017) as a way of being attuned to her infant's state, especially during feeding or before sleep. She noted that movement activities fostered interaction, such that she frequently employed movement gestures or dances while singing to her infant. She said, "Body movements synchronised to a song is something that works perfectly for my baby" (Participant Interview#1), alluding to the notion that match movements to space, time, and effort as required by the infant resulted in mutual involvement, synchronisation and kinesthetic bonding (Hatch & Maietta, 1991; Vlismas & Bowes, 1999).

The mother reported that musical activities helped to: create a rich environment for her infant, regulate the infant's emotional state and enhance her own well-being, as has also been shown in previous research (Byrn & Hourigan, 2010; Custodero et al., 2003; Taffuri, 2017; Schellenberg et al.,1997). Music on some occasions soothed and comforted the baby and, on others, aroused and woke it. Trehub et al. (1997) stress that lullabies and play songs, because of their distinctive musical and expressive features, serve to regulate emotion. For example, in her journal, she wrote, "Today I didn't use any playsongs. It was one of those difficult days that my baby hardly slept for ten minutes together. I was so exhausted, and the baby was nervous, and in pain, I guess. Lullabies and humming slow melodies were what suited our state today. I hope she [infant] feels better tomorrow; I missed our games, chants and dancing" (participant journal).

The participant experienced a range of feelings in her role as a mother. She was very excited about her new-born child but at the same time frustrated, and worried about whether she would be able to cope with the demanding task of taking care of it. The COVID-19 pandemic, which she also faced at that time, involved social distancing and thus isolation, and she perceived it as having a negative effect on her well-being. She

reported feeling depressed at times and insecure about looking after the baby, and she suffered from loneliness. Recent research has found that mothers who gave birth to their first child during COVID-19 felt very vulnerable (Steward, 2021) and that singing helped them. The present inquiry supports this finding: it was evident that musical activities helped with the bonding between mother and infant, shaped communication in a positive way and supported and comforted the mother, as also reported in Biringen et al. (2000) and Cozolino (2010). It is evident from the data that music acted as a medium through which all three family members bonded; they enjoyed the engagement with music and appreciated the opportunity which it afforded to be together. "We just love our music-making; we are so blessed to be able to live it all together" (participant journal). As with the findings of Gingras (2013) and Dosaiguas et al. (2021), the periods of music allowed the family members to connect with each other and share valuable moments which they cherished.

Most importantly, the mother highlighted that music had been an essential tool for helping her regulate her own well-being. That music acts as a tool for comforting the mother has also been highlighted in other research (Biringen et al., 2000; Cozolino, 2010; Wulff et al., 2021). The participant notes: "Especially singing, during the day, fostered my positive state and give me the courage to move on and smile. Even when there are times that I am feeling out of control and lonely, singing makes me company. When I feel distressed, I sing; it is therapeutic for me" (participant interview#3)

Conclusion

This study showed that music-making provided a powerful framework which the participant used to communicate with her infant; this is supported by previous research (e.g., Trevarthen & Malloch, 2017). The data supports the view that the mother's integration of diverse musical activities into everyday routines (Costa-Giomi & Benetti, 2017) transforms the demanding and stressful day to day care of the baby into a pleasurable experience. The mother emphasised that music had become an essential parenting tool for her and her husband and that she used it consistently across a variety of situations. Musical activities assisted and regulated the day to day care of the infant (Custodero et al., 2003), and at the same time enhanced the emotional bond between mother and child, as well as between all members of the family (Costa-Giomi & Benetti, 2017; Gingras, 2013). The participant stressed that incorporating musical activities in the day to day care of the infant

enhanced her own well-being (Biringen et al., 2000; Cozolino, 2010; Wulff et al., 2021). Music soothed and entertained her and her baby (Roberts, 2010), making her feel comfortable, confident and secure in her task as a mother.

Although the findings of this inquiry concern one case only and may not be generalisable, they align with previous research indicating that musical interaction between mothers and infants is important for both parties. Because of the benefits which accrue, it would be worthwhile to offer music programmes to new mothers more generally. The *Music during pregnancy and infancy* course was perceived by the participant as fundamental to empowering her, in the home environment, in using music in the care of her baby. By participating in the course, the participant developed basic skills for integrating music into her infant's day to day care.

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Baby Violin goes to nursery school: exploring Early Years musical and creative play through small violins

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This paper fulfils the final module dissertation requirements towards an MA in Early Years Music (BCU CREC). It also built on my earlier research into children's musical play and the implications of play as part of a developmentally appropriate approach to Early Years instrumental learning (Comberti, 2017).

Abstract

Background: In the world of stringed instrument tuition, one-to-one learning and formal educational approaches are seen as the principal teaching method of choice (Creech & Gaunt 2012, Comberti 2017). Violins, often viewed as fragile, are a popular choice for traditional and conservatoire beginner music programmes in the UK, starting with children as young as two and a half years. They are, however, seldom found in Early Years settings. This research, which took place in the nursery department of a state primary in southeast England, offered 25 children aged between 3 and 5 years the opportunity to play with and explore violins as part of their self-initiated, free-flow musical instrument play.

Aims: The research focussed on three questions: What happens when children are allowed to play with violins on their own? How does the relationship evolve between the children and the adult observer (a professional violinist and improviser)? What are the implications for teaching practice?

Method: This was a small-scale, qualitative autoethnographic case study of children's spontaneous play with violins, looked at through a socio-constructivist lens. As a professional violinist, teacher and improvisor, the role of the researcher was to observe, record, film and reflect on the children's musical behaviours.

Results: The results indicate that bowed string instruments add a richness that shines a light on the high level of exploration and creativity in children's musical play. The children also demonstrated a range of listening skills that highlighted their musical competencies and natural curiosity. Wordless communication, a frequent feature of their behaviour, was observed in the way in which they shared and communicated their ideas through gesture, the way in which they united through their sound making, and the quality of sound in their improvisations.

Conclusion: Using violins brought a deeper insight into the musical world of children, and a greater understanding of what children are capable of, and are interested in exploring. There are clear implications for teaching practice; these results point to a need for further research and a greater degree of dialogue between instrumental teachers.

Introduction

Children learn best when they are given time to play. Self-directed learning and freedom to pursue their own interests is accepted as the corner stone of a developmentally-appropriate learning environment for young children, underpinned by learning theories from authors such as Piaget and Vygotsky, and clearly demonstrated through the teaching principles of Froebel, Montessori and Steiner (Bruce, 2009).

Children often show great pleasure and interest when playing with hand-held percussion instruments, even more so when instruments offer a quality of sound (Harmer,2014) and when adults support the activity, either by joining in sensitively with the process, or by observing and showing they value the children's musical play (Niland, 2009; Tarnowski, 1999, Young, 1995 & 2008). When observing carefully and with an open mind, adults can show their respect for the children's musical ideas and in so doing, demonstrate that they value the children's imaginations (Davies, 2014). In such a musically-enabling environment, children will often explore for longer, collect and select different sounds and find different modes of play by exploring the affordances of the instrument. Inspired by their own creative ideas, children often appear focussed and in flow (Custodero, 2011; Littleton, 2015.) As they repeat musical gestures, they develop skills, master new techniques and deepen their understanding of the instrument.

Despite this, little evidence of children's play or informal practice is to be found in the teaching agendas and lesson plans of most Early Years beginner violin groups (McPherson, Davidson and Faulkner, 2012 pp. 27-28; Comberti, 2017). It was only as I reflected on my experience of running a conservatoire for Junior Trinity in Hampstead, London from 2011 to 2015, that I realised that glimpses of children's musical play were evident in the moments before rehearsals and lessons began, often while instruments were being tuned. And yet it is this playful approach that creates the foundations of improvisation, self-expression, musical curiosity, self-motivation and engagement in all of our musical interactions (Davidson, Pitts, & Correia, 2001). It was with this in mind I wanted to explore the potential of young children's musical play with violins for gaining a better understanding of how to support young children when learning the violin.

Although a popular choice in traditional Early Years beginner music programmes, the violin is seldom found in nurseries or infant schools. This research challenges the value of this

omission by offering violins to twenty-five children aged between three and five years, as part of their free-flow musical instrument play sessions. Viewed through a teaching lens, I was curious as to how the children would navigate the physical and postural challenges of playing a violin, how I would protect the instruments from breakage or damage and whether the children would be able to express themselves on the instrument through their playing, and if so, how might they play?

This study focusses on three questions:

- What happens when children are allowed to play with violins on their own?
- How does the relationship evolve between the children and the adult observer (a professional violinist and improviser)?
- What are the pedagogical implications for teaching practice?

Methodology

This was a small scale, qualitative, autoethnographic case study of children's spontaneous play with violins. The role of the researcher was in the first instance to observe, watching and waiting as children's ideas evolved, and in so doing offering them the freedom to do what they were interested in. Biesta (2017: p.98) describes this as a 'grown up lens' and one which respects the children's ideas and recognises the fact that they are children, in contrast to the more traditional teaching lens I had previously used and seen, which views children as young adults, ready to be shaped and to perform repertoire that has been selected for them as being suitable.

Data was collected on film and through an on-going process of journalling and reflection. As a professional violinist and improviser, I have a number of years' playing experience, and this has resulted in a knowledge of the sensation of play. The push and pull from left to right, the angles of the bridge and the weight of the bow: all these are second nature to me. Barrett (2010: p.4) describes this intuitive knowledge as 'the logic of practice' and as a state of 'being *in-the-game'* and it is this tacit understanding and knowledge of the affordances of the instrument that I used to help me reflect, from a teaching perspective, on my observations of the children and of the potential to be found in their engagement and interaction.

In the end, the impact of Covid-19 and a national lockdown restricted my access to the children to a single 40-minute session. Although initially disappointing, this led to a much

deeper analysis of the data that I had managed to collect and thus to the opportunity to explore and reflect more deeply, frame-by-frame, on the footage.

Results

Using bowed string instruments shone a light on the potential to be found in the rich exploration and creativity of children's musical play as they rapidly mastered the challenges of using the bow. Themes emerged in the range of responses, such as gestures and the different ways the bow and the subsequent articulation of it were picked up, adopted, extended and incorporated into different play moments. Non-verbal communication and self-regulation were also observed, in particular how the children musically connected to, and communicated with, each other during their improvisations, including across the room.

Through their play,the children also demonstrated a range of listening skills, highlighting their musical competencies and how musical curiosity might lead to the mastering of various techniques and to the deepening of their knowledge of the instrument. As examples, one child searched for a 'quality' sound and another used the bow in a careful, measured and purposeful way to play a song that he had in his head.

Children played with, and naturally explored, the musical elements, including timbre, tempo, dynamics, articulation and texture, all of which offered opportunities for extended reflection on my part. Towards the end of the session, a joyful duet emerged in the form of a 'violin race', where an accompanying song came together and built on a tacit understanding of a shared narrative (Trevarthon and Malloch, 2002).

When physically managing the instrument, children used the violin entirely on the floor, playing by looking down onto the strings and by using the bow with a stroking action. This led to an exploration on the gait of the bridge, and the possibility of making music with either one string or two. Particularly striking was the sense of pride and ownership that the children demonstrated, visible in the way they looked after the violins, often displaying self-restraint and self-regulatory behaviour, as they silently positioned themselves while waiting for their turn (Zachariou and Whitebread, 2015).

Conclusion

> *The pupils are no longer objects of our instruction, but active agents, whose research is their curriculum, whose experience is the syllabus; it is they who were are doing the research, into themselves, one another and the world around them* (Small, 1998: p.224).

In his article *Music Education at the Tipping Point*, Kratus (2007) states that change in the world of music education is a slow process, but that (in the words of Gladwell) little things can make a big difference. Although only a small step, by meeting children where they play, and offering real instruments, a learning environment was nevertheless created in the nursery on that particular day that allowed the children the opportunity to 'exist in a grown-up way as children' (Biesta 2017, p.15).

Littleton (2015) reminds us that before we prescribe adult-directed instruction, we would benefit by pausing, observing and understanding more about children's innate musicality. This, she believes, enriches both the learning and teaching experiences; it has certainly been the case for me. In addition, I would suggest that there are further pedagogical implications, such as the role of the Early Years violin teacher becoming more that of a facilitator, acting as an interpreter of the children's musical ideas by drawing on their learning experiences and interests. By using a much slower pedagogy, a pedagogical patience emerges (Huhtinen-Hilden and Pitt, 2018) and this I believe has the potential to lead to new ways of thinking about how the youngest of children might learn the violin in a more developmentally-appropriate way.

This research has provided an opportunity for me to look at beginner violinists through a completely different lens, away from the traditional teaching methods of a conservatoire beginners programme, with its critical eye on posture, technique and music reading, towards the lens of a socio-constructivist model and child-centred learning. By placing violins in a nursery setting and letting children play, I have watched as they explore on their own terms, and this has offered me a rare opportunity to discover the potential, complexity, and unique nature of the musical world of children. I would suggest that further research is essential.

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What changes when Early Years Practitioners respond musically to young children's musical behaviours?

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Abstract

Background: Music is an important mode of **communication** for young children and is can be seen in their spontaneous babblings, movement, play and 'vocal doodlings' (Kartomi, 1991:55). Reynolds and Burton (2017) noted the low levels of interest in young children's musicking outside of adult-led learning and called for a shift in focus towards child-led musical activities.

Aims: Having witnessed the misunderstanding and shutting down of young children's spontaneous musicking, I was curious to investigate the effects of alternative musical responses.

My research question was: ***What might change when Early Years Practitioners respond musically to young children's musical behaviours on their daily walk?***

Method: This was a small-scale action research project set within a real-world paradigm. I acted as participant observer and adopted a flexible design strategy which included unstructured observations and semi-structured interviews. Twenty children up to age 3 and fourteen Early Years Practitioners (EYPs) participated in the study. I gathered data via a small hand-held video device and kept field notes and a reflective journal. From the data, I identified a number of musical events and, for each one, I considered the initiating child-led behaviour, the adults' responses and the effects of each response.

Results: Several of the children improved in confidence and/or enjoyed opportunities to exercise, and develop, their leadership skills. Musical interactions aided child-adult bonding and the adults' musical responses generated more music making. Musical engagement helped to regulate the children's emotions, which in turn enabled EYPs to better manage, engage and motivate both individuals and groups of children. It became evident that EYPs did not always recognise behaviours as musical. Sounds and gestures were often interpreted as attempts at spoken language and so spoken responses were given. The adults' instinctive and considered musical responses were sometimes perceived as silly by colleagues. This devalued them and resulted in a general reluctance to experiment. Additionally, the various demands on the EYPs' time resulted in musical behaviours' sometimes being missed.

Conclusions: Considerable benefits accrue to young children when adults respond musically to their musical behaviour. EYPs could benefit from training which allows them to understand the benefits of responding musically and of valuing such responses more, as well as from being afforded enough time to recognise the music in children's behaviour.

Keywords

spontaneous musicking, music making, musical responses, child-adult bonding, children's musical behaviours

Introduction

This research project, which was undertaken as part of my second year MA in Early Childhood at the Centre for Research in Early Childhood in Birmingham, UK, explored Early Years Practitioners' (EYPs) recognition of, and response to, children's spontaneous musical behaviours in everyday life. It asked what changes when adults respond musically to young children's musical behaviours.

An earlier study of musical elements in young children's behaviours (Neilson, 2018) prompted me both to interrogate my own understanding of music and also to respond more musically to children's musical behaviours. An observation of an EYP confiscating a cup from a baby left me wondering whether a more nurturing response might have resulted, had the baby's cup-tapping been identified as musical rather than disruptive.

As a result of these experiences, I became interested in helping EYPs notice the music in young children's behaviours and the possible effects of adults' musical responses.

Literature review

Literature drawn from the disciplines of Early Childhood Education, Music Therapy, Psychology and Music Education underpin this study.

Young children's musical behaviours

Described as "spontaneous, multi-modal concoctions of sound, movement and gesture" (Countryman et al., 2016:17), musical behaviours include gesture, play with objects, movement, listening and vocalisations (Young, 2003). The term "communicative musicality" (Trevarthen and Malloch, 2002:11) highlights interactive elements, but spontaneous musical behaviour also includes solitary moments (Young, 2006).

Vocalisations, described as "musical utterances" (Campbell, 2010:94) or "musical doodlings" (Kartomi, 1991:55) are sometimes complex (Pitt and Arculus, 2018), featuring elaboration, exaggeration, patterning, repetition and manipulation of expectations which are the aesthetic operations by which all humans "artify" (Dissanayake 2009:148).

The purpose of children's spontaneous music-making is threefold: learning, communication and as a "self-regulating mental strategy" (Knudsen, 2008:293). Knudsen

explores how musical communications convey messages about emotions, status, competition and power. Pitt and Arculus (2018) see musical communication as the foundation for language development and Trevarthen and Malloch (2002) describe how caregivers instinctively adopt the melodic patterns of motherese when communicating with young children. Musical activity is used for generating and maintaining moods (Knudsen, 2008:293) and, according to Young (2006), as a means of enhancing, intensifying and extending experiences.

Music

Western society's perception that being musical is a gift has been challenged by several researchers (Brandt et al., 2002; Small, 1998). Moog (1976) argues that music only exists when the listener's ear translates vibrations into music and therefore that the listener *creates* music by hearing it. Young proposed that "[sound is music] when whoever makes it and/or whoever listens decides that it is music" (Young, 2019).

Recognition of and responses to musical behaviour

EYPs' poor recognition of behaviour as musical (Young, 2006; Campbell, 2010; Reynolds and Burton, 2017) can be attributed to the numerous distracting, but essential, EYP duties, such as behaviour management strategies that encourage docility, an emphasis on language skills, a narrow view of music and a drive for progression (Young, 2006).

Brandt et al. (2002) suggest that children's musical abilities are frequently measured against *professional* adult performances when they are actually part of childhood culture (Knudsen, 2008). To improve recognition, adults require better musical knowledge and confidence (Reynolds and Burton, 2017) as well as time to practise *noticing* children's spontaneous musical play (Young, 2003).

Studies found that EYP responses to musical activity include stifling (Young, 2006), intuitive musicking (Pitt and Arculus, 2018) and turn-taking (Center on the Developing Child, 2016) and reveal a lack of conscious focus on *musical* interactions (Young 2006, Reese, 2013 Brandt et al., 2002). As yet I have been unable to find studies that determine whether EYP-infant musical interactions have similar impacts on attachment and brain development as mother-infant interactions (Creighton, 2011).

Research design and methodology

This action research project adopted a naturalistic, qualitative paradigm. I acted as a participant observer, something which Robson and McCarten (2016) endorse for small-scale, short-term studies such as this.

The setting was a small day nursery, predominantly serving children from white, middle-class, affluent families with English as their first language. A total of 11 girls and 9 boys (total N = 20) aged 0-3 years old took part alongside 14 members of staff (all female). The staff, who were from a more diverse socio-economic background than the children, were all of white British ethnic origin with English as their first language.

Ethical considerations

I adhered to the EECERA Ethical Code for Early Years Researchers (Bertram et al., 2015), making every effort to ensure that staff took part willingly with the option to withdraw at any point. Since the children were too young to give informed consent, I sought parental permission and exercised sensitivity to the children's gestures and mood to ensure ongoing consent.

I endeavoured to treat staff as equals, respecting their knowledge of the children and their expertise as EYPs and was mindful of any perceived power imbalances relating to my position as an MA student and musician. In addition, I exercised sensitivity towards any EYPs who felt self-conscious about singing or vocalising. To avoid creating additional, unpaid work for staff, meetings happened during afternoon nap time.

Measures were in place to maintain confidentiality and included the use of participant codes (staff codes EYP1-9; children codes C1-20). Consent and storage of data was ethically evaluated and passed by the Ethical Committee.

Data collection and analysis

On four occasions across ten weeks, I joined the setting's daily countryside walk, during which I made videos and took field notes. Video recording was invaluable, as note-taking would have been inadequate to accurately represent the complex musicking (Young, 2006) which occurred. By watching and re-watching video I was able to analyse the

musical content in detail. Field notes illuminated the context of the recordings and allowed me to note down immediate thoughts as well as EYPs' comments.

I engaged in frequent informal conversation with the staff and, after the final walk, I held semi-structured interviews with seven EYPs. I took notes at meetings and kept a reflective journal throughout. Together, the videos, notes and the input from the EYPs enabled me to triangulate the data and helped ensure the reliability of my findings.

From the data, I selected a number of musical events and, for each one, identified the child-initiated behaviour and adults' responses. I then examined the effects of the responses and highlighted key themes. I created storyboards (Booth et al., 2016) to assemble my arguments into a logical structure.

The investigation

With the aim of helping the EYPs to notice musical behaviours, I prepared an introductory information document. I kept the information to a minimum to avoid bias, to allow staff to develop their own ideas (McNiff, 2016) and to minimise power imbalances. However, once data collection began, it became obvious that I had not made the study aims clear enough and the EYPs were unsure. Their conscious understanding lay mainly within the adult-led world of EY music and the summary information I had given was not explicit or detailed enough to help them think outside of these constraints. Following the second walk, I met with a senior EYP to view and discuss vignettes of musical behaviour. She agreed to remind her colleagues that my focus was on *everyday* child-initiated musical behaviours, and I agreed to create additional literature in bullet-point form summarising ideas from the academic literature.

At first, observations centred on the children's behaviours but, as time elapsed, the focus shifted to the EYPs' musical interactions with the children. I engaged musically with the children whenever the opportunity arose, as a model for the staff. Initially the staff were quite self-conscious about being observed but this eased, and, by the end of the project, observer effect seemed minimal. The children, accustomed to being videoed daily, were comfortable with me throughout and seemed untroubled by the data collection.

Staff conversations during nap times and whilst walking were quite erratic due to the unpredictable nature of young children. Staff ratio requirements meant that the original plan for group meetings was not possible, and all meetings were one-to-one.

My intention of viewing the vignettes with the staff was not realised and unfortunately, possibly due to time pressures, the staff did not view the vignettes I sent them electronically.

At the end of the project, I invited seven EYPs who had been present throughout the study to take part in semi-structured interviews. I also met with one non-participating senior manager.

Barriers

My research question presupposed that adults would respond musically to the musical behaviours of the children. However, there were three barriers.

- **Interpretation of behaviours**

Experience of adult-led music education, a variety of definitions of music and an emphasis on spoken communication meant that staff sometimes disagreed with my musical interpretation of children's behaviours. At the end of the project a senior EYP, who had not participated in data collection, said that staff had "not got it" and that they linked behaviours to communication and language rather than music. She interpreted baby babbling as "instinctive (like a reflex)" and said, "Music is more sophisticated than that. It comes later when children are older." The final interviews revealed that there was, in fact, a range of views on this issue. Some EYPs said they now realised that many sounds were musical and that they could differentiate communication-related sounds from music making. Two EYPs agreed that *all* sounds, including speech, are in some way musical. We discussed whether the commonly-used term "use your words" might be an example of stifling musical behaviour (Young, 2006) but EYP7 felt this was only said when staff interpreted sounds as communication. Indeed, EYP3 and EYP6 confirmed that their responses are dependent on their interpretation of behaviours as either communication or music.

Staff had to rethink ECM ideas and acknowledge the music in young children's behaviours before they were in a position to think about the *effects* of their musical responses. As the study developed, the EYPs did begin to experiment with musical responses and to think more consciously about their existing instinctive musical responses.

- **Time and space for observations**

As identified by Young (2006), staff's daily duties distracted them from engaging musically with children. I observed EYP2 who, while handing out drinks, missed one child's interesting vocalisation. On another occasion, I had to stop engaging musically with C17 to alert staff about C19, who had put a stone in his mouth.

- **Musical responses - perceptions and judgements**

I became aware that adults' musical playfulness was not always valued. EYP1 and EYP6, who claimed to have "no inhibitions", were exuberant and playful with the children, who responded well to them. Both EYPs explained that, before the study, they had not recognised their play as *musical,* but both instinctively initiated and responded musically to activity by creating vocal sound effects for movement, animals, etc., singing song fragments and mimicking children's vocalisations. These EYPs did not have to consciously recognise behaviour *as musical* before responding musically. In the final interviews I asked if their musical playfulness was respected by others. One said, "I act like a twit[1] all day!" and the other told me that she had acquired a nickname that implied silliness. However, alongside these judgements lay a degree of admiration on the part of their colleagues. EYP4 praised EYP6 as "brilliant", admitted she herself was "not so bold" and said she felt inhibited about displaying exuberant musical behaviour. When prompted, EYP6 reflected on her own musical playfulness, saying it motivated activity, regulated moods and encouraged more musical behaviour. This was also true of my own less energetic, one-to-one experiences over the course of the study.

Discussion and interpretation of results

Despite the barriers, I gathered a good amount of data on adults' musical responses to children's musical behaviours. Three strong themes - bonding, leadership and musical development - emerged from the data.

In the following discussion, references to the following examples of musical interactions will be made (figures 3a, b, c, d, e, f, g).

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1 Paraphrased

Figure 3a Example of Interaction: KN and C14 Walk 1 - 20/3/19

Initiated behaviour

- C14 held my hand as we began the walk. She walked normally on dry earth but, as she moved through puddles, she sped up significantly. These changes happened three times as three puddles are encountered.

Response from KN

- I moved at her speed allowing her to lead me.
- Following the event, I recounted it to her. My primary aim was to record this retelling as I had missed capturing the event on video, I was unable to stop and write it down and I was afraid I might forget it. As I spoke about the different tempos, I sped up and slowed down my words to match the changes I was describing.

Effects of response

- C14 listened intently and turned around to look back at the three puddles and smiled.
- C14 formed a bond with me over the course of data collection which possibly happened in part because of this and other musical exchanges we enjoyed.
- I realised that using language to recount a child's musical actions is one way of acknowledging and responding to musical behaviours.

Figure 3b Example of Interaction: EYP1 and C8   Walk 1 - 20/3/19

Initiated behaviour

- C8 sat on "lizard log" and was told to stop pushing C17 and to use "kind hands". He stopped and looked at EYP1. He made four steady and rapid "a" sounds to the pitches b' a' b' a' * as he bounced on the log.

Response from EYP1

- EYP1 repeated four "a" sounds at the same tempo using the pitch of f#'

Effects of response

- C8 listened and then smiled.
- He made a new, more sustained and elaborate "a" vocalisation starting lower and rising in pitch over three notes and ending in laughter. He swung his arms and a look of delight appeared on his face.
- EYP1 responded again: "are you singing?"
- Together EYP1 and C8 turned a negative ("no pushing") into a positive and playful musical exchange.

Figure 3c Example of interaction: KN and C2   Walk 1 - 20/3/19

Initiated behaviour

- At the end of the walk, C2 was strapped into her buggy and was waiting as other children were being gathered together. I stood beside C2 and chatted to an EYP. C2 caught my attention by showing me her muddy hands and making a single sound "a" half spoken, half sung on the approximate pitch of c'

Response from KN

- I responded by making eye contact and copying her sound.

Effects of response

- C2 responded with a new sound "oh oh" which I copied and she led a series of vocal exchanges during which she alternated her glance between her hands and my face.
- I playfully asked her about her muddy hands and our exchange ended with a hand tickling stop and go game which she took great delight in controlling through movement and vocalisations..

Figure 3d Example of interaction: KN and C9   Walk 2 - 3/4/19

Initiated behaviour

- C9 sat, bored in his buggy in the drive way waiting for all the children to get ready for the walk.
- He dropped his comforter on the drive and made a vocalisation "uh oh" on a falling minor third interval.

Response from KN

- I responded by picking up the comforter and vocalised a rising slide as I returned it to him.

Effects of response

- He led our exchange by dropping his comforter and repeated "uh oh" several times. He smiled at my sliding response each time.
- I changed the game by not returning the comforter to him immediately.
- He began "conducting" my movements and indicated when I should wait and when I should move.
- The musical exchange made a potentially boring moment purposeful and engaging.

Response from EYP1

- EYP1 ran up and down the slope excitedly vocalising a rising and falling "woooo". She mimicked the ululation by using her throat. Her sound was louder and at a higher pitch than C17's sound.

Initiated behaviour

- Several children were playing on the dry earth slope following their snack and drink.
- C17 ran down the slope and quietly vocalised an "ah" sound. Her running caused her voice to ululate.

Effects of response

- C17 joined in more enthusiastically and other children joined her. Their whoops of delight and ululating vocalisations merged together.
- C20 stopped crying, began watching and enjoying the game as a spectator.
- EYP6 held hads with C15 and joined in. They ran down the slope. EYP6 vocalised a rapidly repeating "ga ga ga" pattern that rose and fell as they moved.

Figure 3e Example of interaction: EYP1, EYP6, C17 and other children   Walk 2 - 3/4/19

Response from KN

- I joined in at the time.
- Five minutes later we were crossing the cricket field and C15, who was still holding a stone, began to laugh and run in the wrong direction. I reminded him of his pattern by calling his name and saying "Where's your "baa baa bop" ?"

Initiated behaviour

- A group of older children, EYP2, EYP5 and I had walked a long way and had almost reached the cricket pavillion. C15 held a stick in one hand and a stone in the other. He created and repeated the pattern "baa baa bop" as he tapped the stone on the stick.

Effects of response

- C15 stopped, looked at me, then found a stick on the ground. He picked it up and re-created his pattern a few times. I engaged with him by repeating the pattern.
- C15 then spontaneously began and led a game of "ready steady go / stop" which he and I had played on walk 2.
- His decision to run in the wrong direction was forgotten and he maintained focus all the way to the cricket pavillion.

Figure 3f Example of interaction: KN and C15   Walk 3 - 15/5/19

Initiated behaviour
- EYP1 had brought C7 to the gate, given her a stick and asked her to do some tapping. C7 was distressed. I switched off the camera and sang her name gently to calm her down and she watched her friends tapping their sticks busily.
- Once calm, C7 initiated some gentle stick tapping with her left hand.

Response from KN
- I calmly said "that's a nice sound" and tapped my stick gently.

Effects of response
- C7 transferred her stick from her left to right hand. She held on to my stick (half way down) and **controlled** my stick tapping so that it syncronised perfectly with the tempo of her own stick pattern.
- Her approach was quite serious and she seemed **very satisfied** with her ability **to control** the sounds she and I were making which were very different from the exuberant efforts of the other children.

Figure 3g Example of interaction: KN and C7   Walk 7 - 22/5/19

4.   Bonding

The theme of adult-child bonding was clear: I made strong connections with several children. Whilst, as an ECM practitioner, connections are often energetic and bold, the connections made during this study were calmer and understated. C14 would quietly take my hand during the walks. C2 climbed onto my lap and sat with me calmly during meetings. Others made eye contact and smiled indicating an understanding between us. Staff expressed surprise that some of the shyest children connected with me in an unprecedented way. This was so noticeable that they assumed (incorrectly) that C2, C9 and C14 knew me prior to the project. Figures 3a, 3c and 3d detail early musical interactions I enjoyed with these children. On my last day, C14 calmly clung to me as ear drops were administered, contrasting sharply with her usual struggles. EYP2 commented again on the positive bond we had formed, which I attribute to our musical interactions.

5.   Leadership

EYP7, EYP2 and I agreed that several children displayed leadership qualities following our musical responses to their musical behaviour. C15 twice led his friends and me in a stop-and-go game (figure 3g). EYP2 noted that he had also led a group in a synchronised vocalisation/running game up and down the slope. He clearly enjoyed being a leader. Further examples of musical leadership were observed from C7 and C9, as detailed in

figures 3d and 3g. EYP2 commented that musical responses and interactions had improved children's confidence, particularly in the case of C16 and C12.

6.   Mood regulation

EYP2, EYP4, and EYP6 felt their responses had regulated moods and said that children focussed for longer and that the responses distracted them from exhaustion, mischief or upset. This correlates with my observations of C8, C15 and C20 (figures 3b, 3f and 3e).

Conclusions

This study set out to discover what changes when adults respond musically to the musical behaviours of young children. The primary findings show that several children experienced increased levels of confidence and/or enjoyed the opportunities afforded to exercise, and develop, their leadership skills. The evidence suggests that, as with mother-infant dyads (Creighton, 2011), musical interactions facilitate bonding and help to regulate children's emotions, enabling EYPs to better manage, engage and motivate children.

A number of interesting, potentially important, findings came out of the study. The dominance of adult-led ECME, together with perceptions of music as sophisticated and polished, resulted in poor recognition by adults of everyday behaviours as being music. Furthermore, since behaviours were often instead understood as language, responses were often spoken. Adults' musical responses were sometimes seen as silly, which devalued them and possibly made some EYPs reluctant to experiment. It was also clear that the demands of EYPs' job-related responsibilities resulted in musical behaviours' sometimes being missed.

Limitations

Since effective change in action research studies require time periods of two or more years (Robson and McCarten, 2016), the timeframe in this instance was arguably insufficient. The study did not set out to observe long-term benefits to children's creativity (Reynolds and Burton, 2017). The setting was chosen for pragmatic reasons and, consequently, the participant demographic was not representative of most UK settings, thereby limiting the study's transferability.

McNiff (2016) advises that conceptual frameworks should be carefully negotiated with others. For future research I would recommend that, prior to the start of data collection, a longer period be devoted to staff training and joint planning. Future studies might include the long-term follow-up of the musical experiences of children who, since infancy, have had their musical behaviours nurtured.

Pedagogical implications

From this study, it is clear that ECME in UK settings needs to broaden to include responses to, and engagement with, young children's spontaneous music making. Clearly, a daily countryside walk is unusual, but several of the EYPs in this study had experience of working in other settings, and felt that similar findings might emerge from regular outdoor play sessions.

The need for a new kind of training for EYPs seems clear. I suggest that training offer opportunities to observe and discuss children's musical behaviours and include discussions around the definition of music. ECM research should also be shared either during training sessions or via social/printed media, with the aim of making research findings accessible to those unused to academic conventions and language. It is my view that such training would foster greater respect for those who engage musically with children and encourage EYPs to overcome their inhibitions.

As a researcher, I enjoyed the luxury of focussing on children's musical behaviours without the distractions of day-to-day EYP responsibilities (Young, 2006). In future, I recommend that EYPs should sometimes be excused from normal duties and given the opportunity to engage, uninterrupted, with children's musical behaviours. This would heighten awareness and embed skills which could then be incorporated into practice alongside everyday duties.

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Integrated musical activities as a contribution to the development of preschool children's Social and Emotional Well-Being and Resilience

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Abstract

An integrated, holistic, artistic approach to music education has a particular contribution to make to our understanding of how music influences child development (Sarrazin, 2016). The child's need for multimodal, syncretic musical expression and communication (Pramling i Wallerstedt, 2009; Bačlija Sušić, 2013, 2019; Bačlija Sušić et al., 2020) calls for an interdisciplinary approach to music education which integrates findings from other disciplines (Cheng, 2015, Webster, 2016; Bačlija Sušić et al, 2020; Barret et al., 2021).

The currently-accepted multi-dimensional approach with its related concept of child well-being(Ben-Arieha et al, 2014) is a complex phenomenon that considers many aspects not only of well-being but also of „well-

becoming" (Tatalović Vorkapić, 2018).

The starting point for this study, which is part of an ongoing project at the University of Zagreb, was a recognition of the many benefits that arise when music forms part of a child's development, and of the important role of educators in furthering a child's socio-emotional competencies (Varner, 2019). It was conducted using a variety of integrated musical activities aimed at enabling children to meet their own needs and feel positive about themselves and others. The design was quasi-experimental and involved observation by the participants of four groups of pre-school children aged 4-6 years; the data was then assessed using the *Social Emotional Well-Being and Resilience Scale* (Mayr i Ulich, 2009), which is used in the Croatian pre-school education system (Tatalović Vorkapić and Lončarić, 2014).

The results obtained were analysing using a theoretical model of experiental education (Laevers, 1997; Laevers et al, 2012) and indicate that the integration of music into other activities contributes to a higher level of child involvement and socio-emotional wellbeing (Bačlija Sušić, 2021). The results will add to an understanding of how integrated music activities can serve to modulate children's socio-emotional competencies, and will be used as the basis for a novel music prevention programme. There are implications for pre-school educational theory and practice.

Keywords

Music and Health, Well-Being, Resilience

Introduction

The preschool years are a formative period in a child's development with manifold consequences for its future educational achievement (Barnett, 2011; Barnett and Masse, 2007; Heckman, 2006). In the Council of the European Union (2019) Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems (2019/C 189/02), such systems form the basis for lifelong learning, social integration, personal development and later employability (Van Laere and Vandenbroeck, 2017). Given that the social and emotional well-being of the child affects its overall development and learning (Funk and Ho, 2018), investing in the improvement and promotion of a population's mental health as a whole has the effect of contributing to children's and adolescents' educational outcomes (Secretary-General of the European Commission, 2021- COM 2021, 142 final).

Early-years education aimed at fostering child development and well-being should focus on the promotion of socio-emotional competencies (McClellan and Katz, 2001 and Bilmes, 2012) with educational goals and methodological approaches playing a secondary role (Saltalı et al., 2018). Ensuring socio-emotional well-being is one of the fundamental goals of the integrated preschool curriculum, and emphasises the importance of the healthy and successful functioning of the child and positive social relations within a quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) setting (National Curriculum for Early and Preschool Education, 2014). Socio-emotional well-being as well as the quality of the pedagogical journey should ingredients in the ongoing process of creating high-quality preschool institutions based on reflective practice and the continuing professional development of teachers (Cheng, 2015; Barblett & Maloney, 2010).

The authors point out certain failings in early and preschool education institutions and emphasise both the need for teachers to take part in ongoing professional development, and for curriculums to be developed which support the socio-emotional well-being and educational needs of children. In particular, play and contact with nature should be promoted, as well as music, art and physical activity (2019/C 189/02).

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed a number of challenges and limitations on children's participation in ECE, including an inability for them to exercise their right to participate in artistic and cultural activities crucial to their development and well-being (COM 2021, 142 final).

An integrated approach to music education

Given the importance of an integrated approach to learning, the experiential acquisition of knowledge and the present fragmentation of methodological learning (The National Curriculum of the Pre-school Education - NOK, 2014), a holistic, artistic, integrated approach to music education has the potential to make a particular contribution to our understanding of the connection between music and child development (Sarrazin, 2016). The child's preference for using a variety of media, within a setting involving holistic musical expression and interaction, points up the syncretic (Bačlija Sušić, 2013; 2019; Bačlija Sušić et al, 2020), multimodal nature of music education (Pramling i Wallerstedt, 2009, Bačlija Sušić, 2019) and signals the need for an integrated approach to music education which takes advantage of interdisciplinary professional relationships and applies up-to-date knowledge gleaned from other disciplines (Cheng, 2015, Webster, 2016).

The need for an integrated approach to music education (Barret et al., 2021), and for practitioners to be given additional training in the conducting of musical activities within educational settings, is confirmed by other research (Ehrlin and Tivenius 2018; Lee 2009; Nardo et al. 2006; Rajan, 2017; Barrett 2014; Kretchmer 2002; Lenzo 2014; Bačlija Sušić, 2018).

The concept child well-being

In addition to Brofenbrenner's ecological model (1979) and Bennet's of the child in society (2004), the concept of child well-being is based on that of the largely accepted multi-dimensional approach of Ben-Arieh et al, 2014. It is a complex model based on major changes in perspective as to how to understand and study children's well-being. Ben-Arieh and colleagues discuss this major shift the traditional paradigm, which is characterised by a focus on children's difficulties, survival factors and the process of well-becoming ; to the contemporary paradigm, which is based on children's individual strengths, quality of life factors and well-being (Tatalović Vorkapić, 2019a, b, c, 2020, 2021). The most frequently studied aspect of child mental health is that related to socio-emotional well-being (Tatalović & LoCasale-Crouch, 2021). It sits alongside cognitive and motor well-being; these together go to make up the child's overall well-being. It reflects optimal functioning and experience on the socio-emotional level and is influenced in important ways by intrapersonal factors on the one hand (i.e. characteristics of the child) and interpersonal factors on the other (i.e. relationships child has with all in his or her environment). Socio-emotional well-being

arises as a result of the child's socio-emotional development, i.e., the developmental process that results in a range of skills that the child acquires which allow it to succeed at pre-school, school and in adult life; these include the ability to recognise and understand other people's emotional states, regulate strong feelings and the expression of those emotions, develop empathy, and establish and maintain relationships. Socio-emotional competencies represent the outcome of socio-emotional development and well-being. According to CASEL (Cefai, Regester & Akoury Dirani, 2020), these five major elements of socio-emotional well-being include five similar categories of competency which we need to nurture in children so that they are able to develop healthy identities, . Today there are a large number of high-quality programs offering socio-emotional education (Cefai, Regester & Akoury Dirani, 2020; Tatalović Vorkapić & LoCasale-Crouch, 2021).

Children's socio-emotional well-being and resilience

One promising model of the socio-emotional well-being and resilience of the child is that of Mayr and Ulich's (2009). Their PERIK (Positive development and resilience in kindergarten) scale is underpinned by research analysing and examining a child's mental health, psychological resilience and readiness for school. The scale is designed to be used by preschool teachers when evaluating children's socio-emotional well-being and resilience, and consists of six dimensions: Making contact and social performance; Self-regulation and thoughtfulness; Self-assertiveness; Emotional stability and coping with stress; Task orientation; and Pleasure in exploration. The first element, social skills, is concerned with the child's ability to make positive contact with others; its ability to use appropriate means of engaging in play with other children; its ability and willingness to verbally communicate with other children; and its ability to initiate games that are attractive to other children. Self-regulation concerns its ability to regulate behaviour consciously and intentionally in a way that enables it to control instincts, maintain concentration, and take on tasks even though there are more desirable ones available; to inhibit its own actions; and to provide behaviour on demand by others. The third domain is assertiveness, i.e., the ability or willingness to verbally express and communicate one's feelings, needs and desires in a way that does not interfere with the feelings, needs and desires of others. The fourth element, emotional stability and coping with stress, reflects the child's ability to adapt its own emotional reactivity and quickly return to the initial emotional state. The fifth element, task-orientation, reflects the extent to which the child is committed to certain activities and has a sense of immersion in the learning process; in other words, when (s)he

plans and executes meaningfully with a high degree of independence. Finally, pleasure in exploration concerns the child's desire to be optimistic and curious rather than defensive in new situations; to show a constructive attitude towards challenges; to experience, seek, and identify new questions and problems, and to find answers and solutions (Mayr & Ulich, 2009). Based on teachers' experiences in previous studies, the PERIK scale has some useful psychometric properties and is of practical value in real-life situations. It has been adopted and validated in a Croatian cultural context (Tatalović Vorkapić & Lončarić, 2014) and represents an effective means of measuring socio-emotional well-being and resilience within an integrated approach to music education.

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Part III - Spoken Practice Papers

Playful musicianship in early childhood: Approaches to play pedagogy

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Abstract

Play is ever-present in early childhood, ubiquitous in all cultures (Albrecht & Tabone, 2017) and considered natural and necessary (Paley, 2004). Play opens up possibilities beyond the adult world (Rogers & Lapping, 2012) and has been seen as a place where the unthinkable can be considered (Bernstein, 1975, 2000). According to Elkind (2007), play is one of three natural drives (playing, loving and working) that energize thoughts and actions and is an ingredient in a happy, productive life. Opportunities to share and demonstrate play among peers are important (Deeg et al., 2020); play can teach and socialize through creativity and ownership. This paper describes a continuum of approaches to play pedagogy, from free play (Derrida, 1967/1978) to playful instruction (Deeg et al., 2020) as well as connections to learning and creativity. Literature is drawn from early childhood scholarship (e.g., Paley, 2004), music education (e.g., Koops, 2020; Marsh, 2008; Oseka, 2016) and play pedagogies (e.g., Elkind, 2007). I here aim to describe and demonstrate play pedagogy, while critically considering play-based approaches in early childhood. The main contribution of the paper is its critical consideration of play characteristics and behaviors as they relate to processes of learning and creativity, and its consideration of musical play specific to Elkind's four play types. Implications for practice include purposeful and varied enactments of play pedagogy aligned with learning objectives as determined by caregivers and children, including in emergent and experiential curricular approaches. For instance, caregivers can build on language interactions in parallel with musical interactions that integrate children's desires for story, contrast, imagery, rhythm, rhyme, surprise and humor (Elkind, 2007), along with musically contextualized conversational processes of initiation, imitation and negotiation (Tabone & Albrecht, 2002). A balance of freedoms and choices in playful approaches is recommended for building children's agency, creativity and expressivity. Further implications include the active construction of belief in artistry among not only young children but also caregivers, through continuous, experiential musical play, enhanced by learning, developed through play and bolstered by opportunities for creative output.

Keywords

play, pedagogy, early childhood, creativity, arts pedagogy

Introduction

Young children integrate music into their play. Play is natural, necessary and recognizable (Albrecht & Tabone, 2017; Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006; Paley, 2004). Although Henricks (2015) and Sutton-Smith (1997) noted that an exact definition is elusive, Albrecht and Tabone (2017) described play as time liberated from real life. Bernstein (1975, 2000) called play a place for the unthinkable. Albrecht and Tabone (2017) stated that "play motivates, involves, surrounds, and excites, providing skills, patterns of interaction, attitudes, assumptions, and ways of being in the world" (p. 96). Although young children independently engage in musical play, teachers and caretakers may fail to notice or prioritize it. I explore play pedagogy as related to music-making among young children. Literature is drawn from early childhood scholarship (e.g., Paley, 2004), music education (e.g., Koops, 2020; Marsh, 2008; Oseka, 2016) and play theory (e.g., Elkind, 2007; Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 2003). In this paper I describe and demonstrate certain tenants of play pedagogy, beginning with the characteristics of play, relationships between learning, play and creativity, and types of play. I relate them to opportunities for musical play in early childhood. The main contribution of this paper is to critically examine processes of play, proposing a conceptual framework for early childhood music settings.

Characteristics and Behaviors of Play

According to Elkind (2007), play is a desire to adapt the world to oneself in order to create new and challenging learning experiences. Play offers possibilities beyond the adult world (Rogers & Lapping, 2012). Johnson (2016) noted that play can spur innovation: It may "emerge from a different kind of space … of wonder and delight where the normal rules have been suspended, where people are free to explore the spontaneous, unpredictable, and immensely creative work of play" (p. 15). In play, children apply what they know and can do, such that play is not about new learning (Bruce, 2012); rather, it integrates and organizes prior learning. Here, I detail four characteristics and behaviors of play, loosely organized according to work by Garvey (1977): Voluntariness/Spontaneity, Pleasure/Enjoyment, Flexible Means and Ends, and Surprise.

Voluntariness/Spontaneity

Scholars agree that play must be voluntary (e.g., Albrecht & Tabone 2017; Elkind, 2007; Garvey, 1977). Froebel, founder of the kindergarten, noted a child cannot be forced to

play, but is intrinsically motivated to play, bringing out its inner being out while incorporating the outer world within (as cited in Bruce, 2012). Mainemelis and Ronson (2006) stated that when a child is under threat, play will simply not occur.

Pleasure/Enjoyment

Froebel noted that children can become deeply involved in the pleasure of play (as cited in Bruce, 2012). Play can thus produce a state of flow, which may involve loss of time (Mainemelis, 2001; for q further discussion of *flow*, see Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Schei and Eriksen Ødegaard (2020) noted that initial exploration that can evolve into a complete devotion to an activity. In a flow state, one becomes immersed "to the point that [one] collapse[s] the distinction between self and activity" (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006, p. 89). Elkind (2007) recommended providing children with substantial time and freedom to complete activities they deem meaningful. Time for play allows children opportunities to process what they have learned, organizing and prioritizing understanding and skills before attending to new experiences.

Flexible Means and Ends

It can be difficult to decipher the reasons for play. It is an unpredictable and personal process without objectives (Albrecht & Tabone, 2017; Garvey, 1977), yet according to Dansky (1999), at the same time, goals are not necessarily absent. Dansky argued that play treats ends flexibly. As Glynn (1994) says, play is inefficient and unreliable. Bruner (1972), in fact, argued that through play, ends may be altered to meet means. Given this characteristic of flexibility, play can be imagined anew each time, or revisited in whatever way feels most satisfying. Mainemelis and Ronson (2006) described both reasoned and reason-eluding play: play may elude rationale (e.g., twirling in circles), yet its goals can sometimes celebrate reason (e.g., chess).

Surprise

Surprise and novelty also are important indicators of play. According to Johnson (2016), the element of surprise garners attention. Games, choice and imagination allow room for the unknown. While children crave familiarity through routine and can sometimes be entertained by a single activity for extended periods, small changes in known activities generate surprise and novelty that sustain interest.

Elkind's Four Play Types

The four characteristics that can help to define play can occur in any combination, depending on the type of play in which a child is engaged. Elkind (2007) divided play into four types: mastery, innovative, kinship and therapeutic. Like play characteristics, play types can co-occur or merge freely into one another.

Mastery

Elkind (2007) describes mastery play as the construction of concepts and skills through the physical exploration of the world. For example, children might construct an understanding of object permanence by playing peekaboo, of gravity by dropping an object, of timbre by banging a spoon on various surfaces, of classification by grouping colored blocks and of physical skills by climbing up and downstairs. While examples of mastery play may focus on the acquisition of physical skills like hopscotch or piano, it can also be used to build emotional skills. For instance, through play, children can learn to manage strong emotions, such as overcoming the fear of trying something new, or of shyness around other children, or of bravely exploring an area away from caregivers.

Innovative/Risk

Innovative play involves testing boundaries related to a mastered skill. After mastering a skill, children innovate (Elkind, 2007). Children's use of language grows in creative ways, for instance, in the adaptation of riddles, jokes, poems and songs. Playful musical interactions built on melodies, movements or other representations are a form of conversation (Albecht & Tabone, 2017), and children are able to initiate and imitate these, developing habits and innovating over time. According to Pound and Miller (2011), children take emotional risks as they strive for independence, for example by assuming leadership responsibilities or vulnerably sharing a fear. However, Pound and Miller warned that opportunities are lacking for young children to embrace risks and uncertainties, particularly without caregiver surveillance or interference.

Kinship/Social

Kinship play involves playing socially or collaboratively with others. Elkind (2007) considers kinship play to be a distinct category, because it involves playing *with,* rather than *among*, others. It includes the organization of others, for instance through games,

rules and roles. This type of play becomes increasingly important as children develop skills in turn-taking and rule-following. Opportunities to share play among, and demonstrate play to, peers are important (Deeg et al., 2020). Children often engage in self-directed games without adult authority.

Therapeutic/Fantasy

Therapeutic/fantasy play involves imaginary worlds and alternative stories. Children learn to manipulate symbols and to reason abstractly, thinking beyond physical, literal representations of objects to what they might symbolize (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 2003). Words or sounds can be turned into mental imagery through vivid storytelling (Albrecht & Tabone, 2017). Although Garvey (1977) considers imagination to be a characteristic of *all* play, other authors refer to imagination as a particular type of play (c.f. Elkind, 2007; Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 2003). Imaginative play might happen through imitation (e.g., acting adult roles like vacuuming or singing to a doll), mimicry (e.g., whinnying like a horse) or pretending (e.g., playing at being a ship's captain on a daring adventure). Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff (2003) described three levels of such play: (a) *exploratory*, involving touch and observation; (b) *functional*, i.e., manipulating objects in unexpected ways; and (c) *symbolic*, i.e., using objects abstractly or symbolically (e.g., the chimes are used to symbolize transporting one back in time). Using objects symbolically is a precursor to language development and the synthesis of new ideas (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff, 2003). Imaginative children naturally create ideas and enact a variety of roles through such imitations (Gupta, 2009; Torrance, 1968). Albrecht and Tabone (2017) argue that pretending can further the ability to take on multiple perspectives.

Therapeutic/fantasy play can also help children handle stress and complex emotions (e.g., a child concerned about the consequences of bad behavior might blame an imaginary friend; see Bettelheim, as cited in Albrecht & Tabone, 2017, p. 7). Bruce (2012), building off Froebel's seminal writings on childhood development, developed a new conceptualization of play called free flow play. She identified features of this style of play, noting that children incorporate pre-existing knowledge and experiences into their play, and showing how they express emotions and ideas and find comfort within themselves. Children gain a sense of control through play, stopping and re-commencing play at any point, often in an episodic or recursive cycle. Children make their own rules and set up their own scenarios without reference to guidelines determined by adults. They reflect adult roles and explore the gamut of emotions such as frustration, concern and fright,

which allows them to dip in and out of sets of alternative possibilities which are at the same time controlled.

Relationships Among Learning, Creativity and Play

Play, learning and creativity can be described in relation to one another, although the terms are not interchangeable. While these processes are indeed be deeply integrated (inseparable, even), they represent different purposes and outcomes, and it is worthwhile to discuss each one individually before considering the ways in which they are intertwined in the lives of young children.

Learning

The relationships between learning and play are viewed differently by different authors. Although Froebel feels that play does not constitute new learning (as cited in Bruce, 2012), learning is often associated with play. Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff (2003), however, do regard play as equating to learning, suggesting that learning occurs *through* play and as a result of play. Froebel, however, views learning and play as separate. According to Froebel, integrated and organized play can *encourage* learning (as cited in Bruce, 2012) and that learning is therefore a precursor of, or accompaniment to, play. Elkind (2007) notes that children's brains grow rapidly, and it is the interconnections that occur during learning that determine the speed and depth of understanding. Instruction that is overly formal is inappropriate; children cannot learn complex new skills merely by watching or listening to caregivers. Children must have opportunities to filter, organize, and apply learning, because everything is new to them in ways that adults often take for granted (Elkind, 2007).

Froebel (as cited in Bruce, 2012) recommends that adults not interfere with children's play. Elkind (2007) asserts that when an adult interrupts a child's play, the child may feel that the adult does not value their actions. Elkind contends that adults may fail to see the purpose and significance of young children's learning. Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff (2003) maintain that playing *with* children, however, is important. They suggest that although adults may hesitate to be led by children, particularly when the outcome is not obvious, it is nevertheless important to let children take the lead, since this promotes advanced play.

Creativity

Many descriptions of play, such as Guilford's (1950) categories of fluency, flexibility and originality, involve divergent or creative thinking. Some authors view creativity, like learning, as being independent of, but related to, play (e.g., Amabile, 1996; Piaget, 1951/2001; Vygotsky, 1978). Mainemelis and Ronson (2006), in fact, refer to play as a "cradle of creativity" (p. 81). Play can facilitate, stimulate, rehearse and motivate creativity as well as social and emotional development, and contribute to the creative process (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006; Moore & Russ, 2008). Play and creativity, in fact, can become blended, indistinguishable processes. Wright and Diener (2012) point out that while cognitive aspects of creativity involve divergent thinking and problem solving, in play, it is emotional processes which tend to be deeply embedded. Lack et al. (2003) note that creativity in imaginative young children has implications which continue into adulthood.

A Play Concept

Play is an important part of early childhood development. The main contribution of this paper is its critical consideration of the abovementioned play characteristics and types as they relate to processes of learning and creativity in music. Play comprises all of these characteristics and integrates experiential and creative processes across the blurred boundaries of the four play types (see Figure 1). The adult role is to enact a spirit of playfulness and observe children's play with keen interest, recognizing the developmental value of play processes (Froebel, as cited in Bruce, 2012). Adults should give children space and time for free play with no expectations regarding outcome. Enabling environments that promote play, curiosity, fun, freedom, and risk will benefit both the learning and the creative processes.
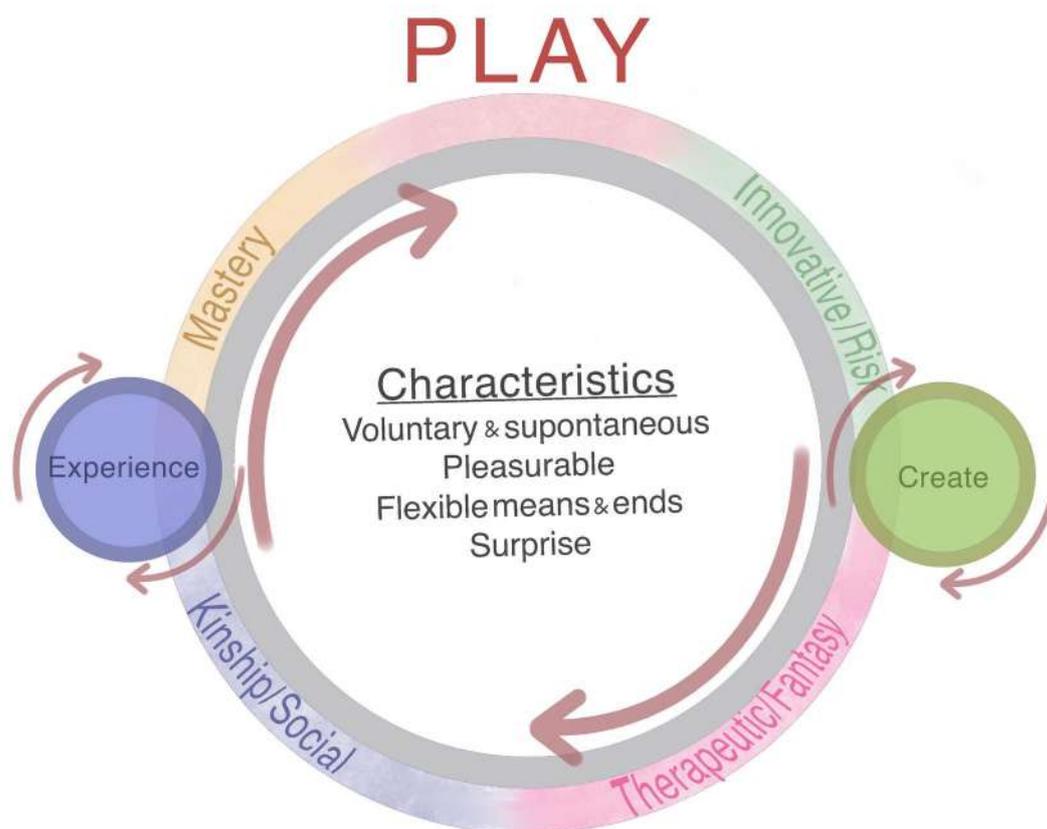
Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Play.

Playfulness and Play

Playfulness and play fall on a continuum. Playful approaches by caregivers, even when they reduce a child's autonomy, are nonetheless important and should be enacted when teaching, modeling, suggesting and organizing learning experiences that can later stimulate autonomous play. Learning can be modeled playfully, but free play should not be directed. The ways and extent to which learning informs play should be determined by those doing the playing, if when it occurs spontaneously, indecipherably or not at all. Playful instruction (Bucura, in press; Deeg et al., 2020) can inspire children by providing experiences and ideas, but should be balanced by opportunities for undirected free play. Caregivers should value their own personal playfulness as well, giving themselves permission to act with spontaneity and imagination.

Young children crave familiarity in their activities, and this might seem to compromise novelty; however, familiar elements do not preclude moments of surprise and delight. Teachers can vary the degree to which they direct and control, thereby allowing children to

make spontaneous decisions. Teaching implications include purposeful and varied enactments by caregivers of playful teaching and leadership. This can be determined collaboratively in exploration and inquiry.

Abundant Time and Space for Musical Play

Adults should give children space and time for free play without predetermined outcomes. Although children's musical play can be loud or chaotic, adults should trust the process of play as a productive time in which development occurs. Pound and Miller (2011) refer to *enabling environments*, emphasizing physical and emotional development that includes risk-taking without adult interference. Children might engage in mastery play with instruments, for instance. Caregivers should make instruments available (reachable, touchable) and should not require children to play quietly (Bucura, 2022). Children can then take risks by experimenting in the combining of sounds and exploring the instrument's capabilities and limits. As Bucura and Weissberg (2017) note, when children are allowed extremes, they tend to regulate processes themselves and identify where the boundaries might lie. Teachers and caregivers can help foster kinship play through group games, dances, collaborative composition and improvisation, and space to create and recreate. Fantasy play might involve, for example, stories, soundscapes or character themes.

Pound and Miller (2011) reference Wenger-Trayner's *landscape of practice* concept, encouraging learners to cross boundaries into unfamiliar territories. Familiarity can be confronted by encountering new ideas that challenge current practices. Caregivers might create enabling environments that include musical stations with unfamiliar recordings, instruments or sound-sources, decor aimed at inspiring stories and inquiry, and materials intended to surprise, confuse, intrigue or frustrate. Children should be allowed to make a (sound) mess, to deconstruct, construct, and reconstruct, and to fully explore themselves and their environment.

Free play is important (Derrida, 1967/1978) and should, as Bruce (2012) emphasizes, be voluntary. A caregiver can state that "It is now play time," but a child may not be ready at that moment to play. In learning contexts, pupils are often obliged to participate in playful activities. However, children are often not provided ample time to play *freely*, even in their own homes. If adults do not value, model or share in play, it may take time to foster an atmosphere of trust and freedom regarding play, particularly in the case of music, which can evoke a feeling vulnerability, particularly among older children (Bucura, 2019). Yet, in

early childhood, play can and should be the default mode of engaging with the world (Froebel, 1906). Children will play whenever they encounter a stimulating environment that allows them freedom (to move, to make sounds, to explore and to make decisions).

Observing Play

Adults should observe play with interest, recognizing play patterns and articulating the value of play. They should notice how children play, to what lengths they push themselves and in what ways. When children find meaning in an activity, they sometimes lose themselves in it. At times, it is important to let children's musical activities be meaningful until they decide themselves they are not, which may be a challenge in care environments. Immersive play also can represent encounters which are too advanced for a given individual. Those playing can then opt to focus only on what makes sense to them, disregarding other complexities as needed (e.g., swaying to a complex piece of music, humming along to a prominent melody or singing "la la la" while disregarding lyrics). According to Johnson (2016), children who are engaged in playful immersion encounter new ideas, challenges and experiences which they can use to generate creative solutions, although perhaps not until later. While play can further creativity, at times no tangible output emerges. Even in such cases, play is of great value.

Conclusion

While one often hears of *playing* music or *playing* an instrument, making music can often be anything but playful. We make music, but really we should play *at* music, explore and create *with* music and playfully engage with one another in musical ways. This process begins in infancy when children hear sounds for the first time, for example in the contours of child-directed speech. Adult-led learning environments, however can quickly set a tone of serious musical experience that is at the same time simplified for children, which may reduce the meaningfulness of a musical context. Adult-led learning can result in experiences through playfulness (Bucura, in press) but such learning should be considered a precursor or accompaniment to play. Play should occur in enabling environments where children have the freedom to make decisions and apply their understandings in whichever idiosyncratic ways they wish. Play should be fun, and the degree to which it is satisfying can only be determined by the individual(s) involved. As Mainemelis and Ronson (2006) argue, play

> *generates many ideas that are inapplicable [outside the play world]. These ideas may re-enter the play world for further refinement or they may stay in the play world forever. … Play is powerful precisely because in it people suspend disbelief and explore ideas that may seem at first unrealistic or improbable. The fact that many of them turn out to indeed be unrealistic or improbable should be viewed as a necessity, not a problem. While the cost of play is inefficiency, errors, or dead ends, the cost of not playing may actually be even more severe.* (p. 119)

Musical play may enhance learning, creativity, and social and emotional development, but playful activities should give way frequently to free play. If a fully musical life is important, then beyond adult-led and role-modeled music—even when these are playful—we must also allow children to play *at*, and *with*, music.

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Kla4 - „Elementares Musizieren" around the piano

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Abstract

Often, young pianists play and practise their instrument entirely on their own for many years, until they have the opportunity to meet other musicians and gain experience playing in a group setting. In elemental music education, improvisation is often of central importance and we include this element into our approach to Early Years piano teaching.

When learning the piano, collaborative music making exerts a strong influence on the comprehension on how the musical experience is understood and also improves the auditory development and musical interplay between children. In our particular setting, four children improvise and play together. Any previous experience with the piano is an advantage but not strictly necessary. Starting from a few notes and easy rhythms and scales, pieces are improvised and played in two, three and four children. Improvisations are mainly performed without sheet music, but notation and/or the writing down of a score may form a part of the teaching.

Right from the beginning, children learn to improvise, invent and compose on the piano in a playful way, expressing themselves through sounds, rhythms, metric and musical impulses and a variety of scales, making use of all eighty-eight piano keys plus the voice.

Attentive listening and collaborative reactions help train the auditory perception and this forms the basis of the classes. The learning of technical skills is embedded into the learning process in a playful fashion.

The class is known as ‚Kla4', a play on words: Klavier is German for ‚piano' and the syllable vier (which on its own can also mean ‚four') is replaced by the number 4 and represents the fact that there are four students in the class, all of them playing together on the piano. The four children, aged between six and eight, experience independent music making. Further instruments such as mallet percussion and other small percussive instruments are used to enrich the experience. The group setting provides a richer educational environment over and above one-to-one lessons. The children learn from the outset how to compose short musical pieces, how to play notes without having a score in front of them and to use these to create a collective musical experience.

The Kla4 concept goes back to Ruth Schneidewind, who worked not with four children around a piano, but instead with two parent-child pairs. (Schneidewind, 2006)

Keywords

Piano, Elementary Music Making, Children play the Piano, Improvisation

Playing Piano

Typically, young pianists start their musical journey by playing and practising their instrument alone. It can often be years before they have the opportunity to meet other musicians and gain experience playing in a group setting. In contrast, in the method we encourage, playing together from the very beginning and the experience of making music in a group are an integral part of musical education.

I have found that collaborative music making is of great benefit to how the child comprehends the musical experience and that it improves auditory development and musical interplay between children.

Right from the beginning, I teach children to improvise and compose on the piano in a playful way. They learn to express themselves using sounds and rhythm. To that end, we use metric and musical impulses, a variety of scales and all of the eighty-eight piano keys.

The basis of our method is attentive listening and collaborative reactions. This schools the auditory perception from the very beginning. While we use experimentation and improvisation as teaching tools, we also embed the learning of technical skills within the learning process.

The group setting that our method uses encourages children to compose and invent short musical pieces from the outside. They are encouraged to play tones and melodies without scores and to build these into a collective musical experience.

If student, teacher and parents see fit, we can choose to combine the collaborative education with one-on-one lessons if the child's individual needs require it.

It is important to plan Kla4 lessons well, both in terms of variety of actions and structure of the different forms of music making, as Anselm Ernst writes in his article on group lessons.

Group lessons require additional pedagogical skills which are different from those used in individual lessons. Anyone who has reflected on the use of this form of teaching in the classroom recognizes to what extent particular, precisely defined pedagogical skills are required. Qualified group instrumental lessons are only possible given a highly developed pedagogical professionalism. The lessons must have three characteristics:

1. It includes the most important aspects and dimensions of instruction.

2. It is clearly structured and logically structured, combining the individual aspects into a systematic whole.

3. It is binding and persuasive because, on the one hand, it was gained from practice for practice and, on the other hand, it combines practice-guiding insights from the various relevant scientific areas into a broad basis of action and knowledge. (Anselm, 1996)

Many different experiences await a child in a Kla4 lesson. First, we find out about the piano itself: learning about the arrangement of the black and white keys and discovering and memorizing the names of the individual keys and notes. Second, we can find out about the interior of the piano and use it to improvise. Next, we can teach about rhythm. This includes clapping, snapping fingers, stomping and playing rhythms. Rhythm also allows us to teach about musical notation: students can learn to recognize whole, half, quarter and eighth notes and to read rhythms. Then there is technique. This includes positioning the fingers comfortably on the instrument as well as fingering. Next up are intervals; these are paramount to musical structure. We can experience and experiment with different scales: playing pentatonic scales on the black keys, the C-scale, simplified blues scales, using only certain notes, and finding out about complementary sounds. Then, we want to invent short pieces of music by learning to play simple and then increasingly complex melodies; alternatively, we can learn to play simple accompanying themes. We introduce the children to different musical styles and epochs by listening to relevant piano pieces from each unique style. Another important skill is that of listening to each other and making music collaboratively. Exploring how to express emotions on the playing on the piano is also important. Lastly, we want to discover in a playful way how to move to music.

Play is anything but pointless: it can be an important, fun way of gaining knowledge. Skills required for group improvisation do not need to be taught over the course of a long series of practice sessions, but instead acquired through play. A set of rules rules suited to the activity provides the necessary space to have experiences which the game leader uses to address aspects of music and group dynamics; the players at the same time gain insights of their own. (Schwabe, 1999)

How can we learn to improvise on the piano without prior knowledge?

In elementary music education, we make the assumption that every music maker, whether beginner or professional, has an inborn, autonomous ability to make music using the tools available in the current moment. Our goal is to use these tools to make music together, either regardless of the extent of prior knowledge. This is what makes it possible for the participants of a Kla4 group to have different skill levels. The participants may also learn at different speeds, meaning that their skill levels diverge within a short period of time. This is not a problem. One child may find hand coordination easier while another may be better at interpretation and use this to bring valuable input to the course. Another child may have an excellent sense of rhythm and be good at playing or clapping in time. Yet another may be enthusiastic about translating the rhythm into motion and prefer to experience it with their body. It is my belief that the diversity of competences exhibited by the different group members is not a hindrance, but an opportunity which benefits all the children. It is therefore important to avoid making comparisons between the children.

In addition to these considerations, there is an additional element needed for the successful experience of making music together: voluntary participation. We all know that forced participation will result in the student playing without joy. In elementary musical education, independent imagination and invention are important components. This means that only I myself can know how the music that I create should sound. Only I can imagine this music and know whether it is authentic. This is why it is important to me for the children who participate in Kla4 to attend on a completely unforced basis. The major benefit of Kla4 is that the children experience an hour of music in the here and now and as a result, they identify with the music completely.

This is diametrically opposed to a style of musical education in which students are required to play a musical piece that they may not have chosen themselves, that they may not even like and may not identify with.

Structures of a typical Kla4 lesson

We always start with a welcoming song, used as a ritual at the beginning of every lesson. This gives the participants the opportunity to see that they are viewed as individuals. Sometimes we play the welcoming song on the piano. However, we often sing it sitting in a

circle and we practise different finger combinations and movements with each verse of the song. The children can accompany their own welcoming verse in whatever way they wish.

Next we introduce the lesson theme. We usually organize the lessons as a series of activities connected by a common theme. There is a wide variety of possible activities and we like to ‚mix it up' to keep the lessons interesting. For example, a lesson might use movement games accompanied by music, or rhythm exercises where the children tap the rhythm of a piano piece using their fingers. Another example would be a short poem used as a source of inspiration for improvisation. We might invent a game where piano keys are named or one which helps us memorize musical notation, or there might be a new song to learn. Sometimes the teacher improvises and the children accompany her. There are endless possibilities.

Then comes the heart of every Kla4 lesson: improvising and making music together on the piano. Sometimes we use mallets or other percussion instruments as well as the piano. It is important or at least desirable for everyone involved to really feel the music and improvise in combination with others but at their own ability level.

This phase of the lesson definitely requires planning and structure, with accompanying patterns, phrases, short melodies and ostinatos being learnt first and the sounds only then being combined into a composition in such a way that they complement each other. Children are usually free to choose what they want to do. The support of the teacher and other students is helpful.

Movement is an important part of the Kla4 lesson and offers, firstly, variety and improved focus and concentration, and, secondly, the space for every piece of music to develop freely in response. Some children like movement more than others.

We use graphic notation, abstract images and, from time to time, scores which we design ourselves in order to visualize the compositions and improvisations.

The end of the lesson offers the option to perform in front of any adults and friends present, another review of the lesson, a repetition of the highlights, another immersion in a musical sequence or simply a fond farewell.

Are there any goals in a Kla4 lesson?

For each lesson, we define one or more musical goals. These are learning targets that we want to achieve by the end of the class. Overall, the most important goal for every musical lesson is, that we improvise and make music on the piano, thereby getting to know the instrument bit by bit. At the beginning, one of the first goals is to become acquainted with the piano and orient ourselves on the keyboard. Getting to know each other is also a priority, such that both children and student teachers feel comfortable in the Kla4 setting.

After this, the children need to discover the twin and triplet black keys and use them for improvisation. The pentatonic scale is a wonderful tool in its simplicity and ease of making music that sounds good.

We spend a lot of time orienting ourselves on and getting to know the white keys: how to name the keys, how to find notes and how to improvise with them. Interwoven with these playful discoveries are movement exercises to help us loosen up between phases of concentration. In some songs, the children look for individual notes and keys; e.g. playing the song firstly with As, then Ds, and then Es. These we then use for collaborative improvisation.

Figure 1. Getting to know the white keys (Images by Agnes Haider).

In another lesson, the goal is to discover the interior of the piano, to experiment with the different sounds that it can make and to use these for improvisation. We use the sounds to design and play a piece together on the interior of the piano.

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Figure 2. Discovering te interior of the Piano (Images by Agnes Haider).

The children particularly enjoy being allowed to improvise alone with me while the other children are dancing while being accompanied by other student teachers on the piano.

As emotions is an important human characteristic, an entire lesson is devoted to it. Painted on cards are five bears showing different emotions: one is angry, one happy, one sad, one sleepy and the last one scared. The children are shown different bear faces and asked to play the role of the bear. They are asked to imagine what the bears would say to each other and which voices and sounds they would make. The children learne to improvise and make music using empty fifths and they assign different sounds to each bear.

Figure 3. Five bears showing different emotions (Design and images by Agnes Haider).

We always make sure to include the children's ideas to help them feel connected to the music and improvisations. For example, we ask the children at the beginning of the lesson how they think that the bears are feeling, what they are saying, whether their voices sound low or high, whether they are is loud or quiet. This process helps to sensitize the children to the subsequent playing on the piano later in the lesson. There is always

experimentation, the discovery of notes and keys, getting comfortable on the piano stool. During this stage, we can correct the position and looseness of the hand and ensure that the children learn the ideal sitting position and feel comfortable and at ease.

Then we can finally make music together, starting often with an improvisation which begins and ends with silence. It is particularly important for the children to listen to each other, so that each child becomes sensitive to their position in the room and in the music.

One particularly beautiful moment in the bear lesson was, when four of the bears had a conversation together. Every child had their selected bear card standing on the desk in front of them. The children needed over six minutes for this improvisation and they were so enthusiastic about their roles that they didn't want to stop.

During the bear lessen, in order to play more difficult scales and especially when trying to make a scare sound, for instance, like a blues scale, we used a game. We had some gummy bears that the children put at the back of the keys to show which keys belonged to a given scale. During improvisation, the keys needed to be played very carefully to ensure the bears stayed put. The bears could be eaten of course, but only once the improvisation was over!

We often use joint music making during which the children accompany me as I improvise. This provides the children with a beautiful, fulfilling sound experience while they are playing and enables them develop a feeling for meter and beat. It also allows them to introduce their own musical ideas as they see fit.

The most important components of Kla4 are as follows. It is joyful and voluntary, it takes place in a group setting, improvisation is included from the very beginning, and it is essential that the teacher be well-versed in keyboard improvisation. The goal is making music together on the piano.

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In-Between Spaces: Improvisation and the giving of temporal and physical space

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Abstract

In-Between Spaces, a Magic Acorns artistic residency, took place in an empty department store in Great Yarmouth, UK. Between Covid lockdowns, the ensemble of artists (music/sound, movement, lighting, video) responded to the empty shop to create a huge, immersive space and invited one family at a time into it. Drawing on aesthetic theory and practices including complicité and not-talking (Macrae & Arculus, 2020, Arculus, 2021), pedagogies of improvisation (Lines, 2017, Pitt, 2021), deep listening (Davis, 2014), ethics of care in funded arts practices (Belfiore, 2017), and music as loose parts (Fox, 2020), the project created an emergent, open-ended physical and temporal space for artists, parents and children. The empty shop, with its acoustic and spatial potentials was the starting point: a provocation for explorations and experiments in movement, voice play, aural feedback, sound and vision.

We worked with family support services to invite families with children under 3 to attend. Most of the children were pre-verbal, many having been born, or lived, mainly during lockdown. Disrupting notions of early childhood arts performances/activities that might foreground "doing to", this work focussed on "becoming-with", embracing silences and spaces and allowing for the *doing of hardly anything*. Within these spacious gaps, small, precious things (sounds, movements) became tangible, powerful and relational. The physical space emerged as a musical instrument that could be played. Sound, movement, light, shadow and play surfaced in each iteration. The group of artists developed complicité and sensitivity: tuning-in-to-the-moment, stepping-into-the-play or else stepping back. Each family visit manifested its own, unique version of In-Between Spaces.

Working with an ethics of care as a central tenet enabled profound relationships between the artists and musicians. This shared practice, together with experiential collaborative musicking, became transformative, enabling a deep listening which was shared with young children and their families. Improvisatory approaches across art forms highlight the effects and potentials of musical play spaces: resonances of awe and wonder, receptiveness to noticing small things, valuing and celebrating children's responses, without the pressure to do anything but pay attention to what happens *in between*.

Keywords

musical play, improvisation, sound play, musicking, play, multimodal, families

Context

In-Between Spaces was an artistic residency by Magic Acorns, an early years arts development organisation in the East of England. Magic Acorns' ethos is to encounter the world *with* children, learn *from* children what children can do, and learn what art and music can do by *listening* to children. Funded by Arts Council England, it took place in a huge empty department store in Great Yarmouth, UK which community arts organisation *originalprojects* had repurposed as artists' studios, a gallery and a community space.

The residency took place as the UK emerged from a Covid lockdown in Spring 2021. This context heightened an awareness of the need for an 'ethics of care' as a fundamental aspect of this publicly-funded project (Belfiore, 2021). This manifested as an attentiveness to the support needs of the artists, families and children, all of whom had faced, and continued to face, uncertainty. In addition, this notion of care also included an awareness of the process of creating open-ended work - art as play - and held in high regard the needs of the artists when allowing for the many forms of playfulness to enter the space. There was an imperative to tread lightly, so as not to create undue pressure on children and families.

In the context of Covid transmission and the backdrop of changing restrictions, we considered materials that could not be touched as a way to enable the residency to take place. We contemplated the potentialities of movement, sound, light and shadow. With this palette of materials, we could play with changing the aesthetics of the space dramatically whilst minimising touchable surfaces and embracing the affordances of the empty space itself.

Considering the material properties of light, shadow, movement and sound, we drew on loose parts play theory, viewing the materials in the space as variables that can be played around with to create new things and concepts without expecting fixed outcomes or specifying goals (Nicholson, 1972). A loose parts mindset included sounds, our voices and our bodies as our materials of play, we created a temporal space for improvisatory encounters with children, where artists could sensitively, fluidly and dynamically shift between the roles of spectator, performer and facilitator (Fox, 2020).

Within this collective of artists and researchers, these artistic and pedagogical approaches have been shaped by research exploring the praxis of complicité, not-talking and wordless

musicking (Arculus, 2021; Fox, 2020; Macrae & Arculus, 2020; Pitt & Arculus, 2018). Not-talking as a conscious act has afforded the potential to change the aesthetic sphere of everyday encounters (Fox, 2020), to 'artify' the moment and to 'make it special' (Dissanyake, 1995). These approaches to musical play were also given impetus by the SALTmusic research project findings, according to which adults 'not talking' was found to be an effective way to raise awareness of and foreground non-verbal forms of expression and communication (Pitt & Arculus, 2018).

Bronwyn Davis urges us to 'listen to children with all our senses': a form of deep listening (Davis, 2014). In order to do this we need to minimise adult talk, and be ready to put ourselves into the moving spaces that children inhabit. In pedagogies of improvisation, we need to think about how we move *with* children; how to join in with them in playful exchanges that mirror, imitate and extend their play, and to be open to possible new lines of enquiry, and welcome surprises and the unexpected (Lines, 2017, Pitt, 2021).

In-Between Spaces, in part, was the creation of an opening, where a gap or fissure came to be viewed as an opportunity or invitation (Bourriaud, 2002; Fox, 2020) in a challenging time and environment. It was a creation of both a physical and a temporal space, as a provocation for improvised play to emerge. Fostering a relational aesthetic in the moment between artists, participants, space and materials, that was voluntary and that had no fixed outcome, enabled the cultivation of agency, flow and spontaneity in a liminal space (Turner, 1969).

Participants and approach

In mid April 2021, the ensemble of artists gathered for two weeks in the empty shop. Responding to the huge space, the first week was for forming as a group and preparing the space. During the second week, the invited family bubbles visited one at a time and were given 45-minute windows for exploration.

The creative ensemble were four lead artists who were joined by four additional emerging artists who were invited to be part of the project's journey. The artist's specialisms included movement, dance, video art, lighting, sound/music and immersive spaces. The residency began with a day of open-ended play, experimenting with games and provocations around the particular elements of sound, light and movement that we were working with. In keeping with the aim of the project - 'to look after' each other - we carefully created a

relaxed sense of time and unhurried play, in order to engender a feeling of safety, fun and lightness for ourselves as a collective and, in the following week, for the families. Although there was limited time, the first day was an opportunity to coalesce as a group, enjoy a shared experience and play together without the pressure of a required outcome. Facilitated by the lead artists, we explored the following practices: deeply listening to tiny sounds (Oliveros, 1990, Payne, 2021), finding ways to move together, developing complicité as a group, using unspoken sensing, vocalising and objects to 'play' the space. The space took on the mantle of a giant immersive musical instrument and enabled a playing with sound, light and shadow. This play became the foundation of our residency: a sense of unrushed time enabling us to find ways of working that were both open-ended and rich in complicité. As our preparations continued during this first week, we kept the families that we would be working with at the centre of our play and planning.

The families that visited were invited through various community connections: local family and children's services and local early years groups. Sixteen families visited the free sessions over four days. The family bubbles were a mixture of mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, children under four years and babies. Some families were accompanied by family support workers.

Outcomes

Figure 1. Child running with paper plate, artist and shadows.

The following reflections are taken and adapted from blog posts written during the project by Dr Jessica Pitt (Pitt, 2021) and Charlotte Arculus (Arculus, 2021).

> *At the entrance to the space one artist was playing with paper plates, wafting the hanging diaphanous fabric. The toddler turned away when the interaction was too intense. There is slight hesitancy and uncertainty but already their voice is emerging and can be heard. The family group progress to the large expanse of wall with projected images gently shifting and moving and their shadows add to the bricolage scene. Mum points out the shadow and the toddler asks, 'What's that?' As they look at the slowly swirling shadow of a 6-legged object – 'spider' says mum.*
>
> *They stay engrossed in the projections on the screens until suddenly the toddler cries out: 'run'. The child and mum begin running in the expansive space whilst Grandma and the baby move to the large gathering drums. One artist joins them with pitter pattering on the drum. This draws the runners over to join the group. The toddler starts to play the drums, as he does, he begins to laugh, mum responds with ooh (rising gliss.) The baby is lying on the drum absorbing the pitter pattering, as vibrations through their body. (Pitt, 2021)*

Every session was different, every child and baby provoked radically different conversations and experiments with the artists and with the installation space. The position of *not knowing what will happen next* forced us to reside in the present moment, and the present moment unfolded into a deep space of connection and encounter (Arculus, 2021).

We had no way of knowing exactly what would happen during the In-Between Spaces sessions. To prepare, we developed complicité, we playfully imagined journeys, held possibilities lightly and trusted and hoped that everything would go off-piste as soon as the children arrived. Complicité is a term commonly used in theatre, including street theatre and ensemble improvisation; it means a dynamic, sensed and attuned force between players; a moving or murmurating. Complicité emerges through the present moment rather than as a result of a sense of clear direction or intention (Arculus, 2021; Macrae & Arculus, 2020).

Figure 2. Baby watching ping pong balls 'magically' bounce on a vibrating speaker.

> *The doing of hardly anything as an act of improvisation, the giving of space, physically and temporally to our family groups was absolutely critical. The doing of hardly anything became our expression of complicité. Sensing connections through present time and allowing space, stillness, attentive distance. Because there was no rush. Space to listen, stillness to move into. An outbreath, an expansion of present time. A ping pong ball in a vast space, rhythmic bursts of running feet, gently wafted plastic sheet. Out of hardly anything arose a rich polyphony of playful connection and experimentation.* (Arculus, 2021).

Figure 3. Child with small drum and big drum, mother, artist, movement, voice and shadows.

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> *The toddler takes a small drum walking all the way across the space back to the moment of drum improvisation. He begins a repetitive pattern of throwing a small round drum which the artists react to with movements. He loves this. There is so much speech: "Let me do a big one". Mum was part of this play game. The small drum seemed to lead the child around and through every inch of the floor space, seemingly retracing and revisiting the various elements and experiences, laughter, "we were funny", "you were really loud." "Ping pong balls, throwing ping balls", "running." The artists, as if in geese formation crossing the sky, with singing and movements, swept the family along towards the exit and a final farewell. (Pitt, 2021)*

Pitt (2021) suggests the separation that this 'other', 'in-between space' allowed for a different demarcation of time and space. Movements, sounds and actions were rituals that changed the quality of time; they constructed a cultural reality that was 'out of time'. In such a time and space, Turner (1969) suggests, we are liberated from societal obligations. Sutton-Smith (1997) would refer to this time and space as 'anti-structure', where the dissolution of normative social structures allows for playing, in an atmosphere that Turner (1969) called 'communitas': a flow state that transcends time and place.

The word symphony has its origins in the Greek word *symphonia*, meaning 'agreement or concord of sound', or consonance, and was used in mediaeval times as a name for instruments that play more than one sound at once. e.g., a hurdy gurdy; the instrument in effect 'plays together'. Eventually, the term came to be used to denote composed works for large numbers of instruments playing together.

Pitt suggests that this, and other family bubble visits, took on the mantle of a symphony. There was a tangible sense of concord, the participants playing together in a piece consisting of several 'movements' that had shade, light, dynamics and virtuosic improvisation and contained a climax, resolution and recapitulation before the final closing (Pitt, 2021).

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Developing Future Music Teachers' Skills in Facilitating Young Children's Creative Musicianship

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Abstract

Teachers can benefit from reflective practice and mentorship situated within a community of practice (e.g., Lave, 1991; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Future music teachers may also benefit from building a shared understanding within their learning community that includes authentic music teaching experiences with young children. Over a period of five years, the project described here involved approximately 20 undergraduate students and one university professor. Participants interacted musically with dozens of young children (aged 18 months through five years) at a learning center on a university campus. The primary aims of the project included identifying, through reflective practice, effective strategies for promoting future music teachers' skill and ease in facilitating young children's creative musical expression. The primary practical pedagogical strategies included: a) group collaboration; b) mentor and peer feedback; c) intentional self-reflection and examination of teaching practices; d) active engagement with young children via playful, flexible and creative musical activities; and e) examination of preconceived perceptions of teaching. Activities carried out by the future teachers included designing and teaching developmentally appropriate and engaging music activities. Activities carried out by the children included creative musical expressions through singing, moving, chanting and playing instruments. The university professor's activities included scaffolding and supporting the undergraduate students, and modeling strategies, including: a) allowing silence and space for children's responses; b) highlighting the abundance and types of young children's musical responses; and c) promoting an inclusive learning community. The outcomes of this program included positive changes in the undergraduate students' perceptions of young children's musical capabilities and a perceived improvement in their teaching skills. Implications include the identification of strategies for successfully facilitating improvements in future music teachers' ability to recognise and promote young children's creative musical expressions. Future teachers, their university mentors and young children all

benefit when reflective practices generate pedagogical strategies that support young children's creative

musicianship within their specific community of practice.

Keywords

Introduction

Teacher training degree programs that include fieldwork experiences of teaching music to children younger than five are uncommon in the United States. Although undergraduate students may have opportunities to interact musically with children aged five and up (such as in elementary school kindergarten classes), very few music education majors in the United States complete early childhood music education courses (Culp & Salvador, 2019; Salvador & Corbett, 2016). In addition, specialist early childhood music teachers are rare (Scott-Kassner, 1999). Experiences teaching the youngest musical learners are essential for developing skills in implementing developmentally appropriate practice through playful, flexible and responsive musical interactions. However, many graduates of music education degree programs lack experience in interacting with the youngest musical learners, particularly those younger than five years. Although it would be desirable to add a course to early childhood music education or embed these experiences into formal degree requirements, this is not always possible within pre-existing degrees due to state-level teacher certification requirements. This creates a void in future teachers' experiences, as they often lack opportunities to interact musically with the youngest learners. Even if a future teacher does not intend to teach early childhood music, they would potentially benefit from experiencing a broader range of human musical development.

Aim

Noting this lack of experience with young musical learners in the music education undergraduate degree at my university, I initiated musical interactions via an optional enrichment program at the early learning center on the university campus. I sought to offer opportunities for the undergraduate students to participate in, and eventually lead, music classes for young children. After obtaining permission to visit from the early learning center, I invited all music education majors to join me. At first, we visited only once per week for a 40-minute music class, with myself leading many of the activities. Eventually, over the course of five years, our visits expanded to three visits a week. By this time, there were at least three or four undergraduate students each year who were comfortable planning and leading the classes without supervision. The undergraduate students did not receive any type of credit toward their degree program. All participation was voluntary and based solely on the student's interest in participating. The children at the center could also choose whether or not they wanted to attend the music sessions or continue with other

activities in their classrooms. The groups in the "music class" frequently consisted of approximately 20 children ranging in age from 18 months to five years, along with three or four undergraduate students, myself, and two or three classroom assistants who attended the children.

Our collaborative exploration occurred within the context of active engagement with young children through playful, flexible and creative musical activities. These activities included singing, chanting, moving, improvising and playing instruments. After each visit, the undergraduate students and I met to discuss pedagogical approaches, repertoire and activity selection, and strategies for responsive interaction. We engaged in collaborative class planning, mentor and peer feedback, intentional self-reflection related to teaching practices, and an examination of our preconceived perceptions of teaching. We intentionally reflected on our pedagogical choices and sought to continuously refine and adapt our approach to better meet the needs of the children, and of the undergraduate students in terms of teacher skill development.

Group collaboration heavily influenced how we designed the activities. Initially I took on more of a leadership role, modeling songs, games and ways of interacting responsively to the children's musical expressions. Eventually the undergraduate students gained sufficient confidence to lead the sessions themselves, and the leadership locus shifted accordingly. After each class session, we analyzed, through discussion and written reflection, what worked and what we might change next time. Our collaboration also included the sharing of resources, such as an online database of repertoire and activities. This volunteer learning community was aimed at facilitating growth in all involved: the undergraduate students as new teachers, the children in terms of their musical development, and myself as mentor and program leader.

Outcome

The collaboration revealed that the undergraduate students valued both my mentoring and also the opportunity to try out ideas in an autonomous and flexible fashion. Initially I scaffolded instruction and supported the undergraduate students by modeling strategies such as providing silence and space for children's responses, and highlighting the abundance and types of young children's musical responses. Over time, I shifted from modeling these interactions to participating in, and observing, the interactions between undergraduate students and children.

How much support I should provide at any given time was something that I reflected on on an ongoing basis, and my personal growth as mentor and leader primarily centered on achieving an optimal level of support and structure while promoting autonomy and the freedom to explore playfully and without pressure or judgement. I frequently sought input regarding students' preferred level of support, and adjusted this continuously based on their feedback. This of course varied across students and also with reference to the children's responses and many other context-specific factors such as the atmosphere in the school and the mood of the participants. Viewed as a whole, what the students valued most were our collaborative, intentional reflections, and the fact that regular adjustments to the amount of support or freedom given contributed to a sense of facilitated autonomy that enhanced their skill development.

Particularly during the first year of the program, I noted a tendency in most of the students to adhere to a lesson plan at the expense of responding to children's musical expressions in the moment. I reflected on how I too had done this as an inexperienced teacher, and how a conscious shift towards prioritizing responsiveness over preplanned activities had enriched my own teaching and contributed to a perceived increase in young children's musical responses during our interactions. Interacting in a responsive way took time and experience for me to become comfortable with, and I delighted in observing this process in the students as they too gained experience. Several progressed from almost completely ignoring children's musical responses to noticing and valuing these and interacting, adapting and responding in the moment. As students graduated and new students joined, I noted that a culture had grown up within the community, whereby new students adopted responsive teaching strategies more quickly than previous students had done through learning from what their more experienced peers modeled.

The students all described that they perceived growth in themselves as teachers. This was most profoundly felt in their skill in teaching younger children than they had done previously; they were also able to transfer their knowledge to the teaching of older students. They described how they now prioritized space and time for children's responses, incorporated these into activities in the moment, and engaged as a reflective practitioner rather than adhering rigidly to a prepared lesson plan. They noted that they not only went on to apply these strategies to older students; they also planned to apply them in their other fieldwork experiences. Several students also described how they had previously

intended only to teach older children, but as a result of this experience they had become interested in early childhood music teaching.

The skills most valued by the undergraduate students related to their ability to respond to and interact with children's musical expressions in the moment. Initially, the undergraduate students viewed their teaching success primarily in terms of student engagement, and whether or not the children appeared to be having fun. Enjoyment is of course an important aspect of musical interactions, but the undergraduate students seemed to be primarily attuned to this rather than what the children were doing musically. But over time, they began to notice children's musical expressions more. At first, unless a child was clearly singing a song or moving in coordination with the music, the undergraduate students often missed what I recognized as musical expressions, such as babbling and responding with nonsense sounds. During our collaborative reflections and in my modeling of interactions, I highlighted these responses as also being musical, and the undergraduate students became more aware of them over time. I recognized that differences in the extent to which behaviors are perceived as musical directly impact a teacher's skill in supporting children's musical development (Falter, 2019). My prior experience as an early childhood music teacher contributed to my own ability to notice and respond to young children's musical behavior (Reese, 2013), and the undergraduate students too enhanced their skills in responding to musical behaviors as they gained experience. Although experience itself would have likely promoted teaching growth, the undergraduate students described how our intentional collaborative group reflections enhanced the process.

The students' perceived increase in their ability to notice and respond to children's musical expressions also changed their perception of what young children were capable of musically. They progressed from following their lesson plan without really responding in the moment, to inviting children's musical responses as a means of guiding the flow of interactions. The undergraduate students began to take more risks and to assume leadership roles, moving beyond imitating what I had modeled and towards autonomy as a teacher. Their focus shifted away from themselves and towards child-centered interactions. Their progress was not linear, nor was it without challenges. There were instances where I noted that I should have either provided more structure or support or backed off and provided more space for exploration. There were instances where a student attempted to lead a song that was not developmentally appropriate in terms of the

musical content or activity. We treated these missteps as opportunities for growth, and our collaboration assisted us all in navigating these challenges.

Conclusion

Supplementary opportunities for engaging musically with young children provided undergraduate students with experience in interacting musically within a context missing from their formal degree program. Ideally, all undergraduates in music education teacher certification programs would experience musical interactions with the youngest musical learners. But given that this is not always an option in a degree program, a supplementary module is an option for partially plugging the gap. The undergraduate students noticed an enhancement in their perception of young children's musical capabilities and experienced an improvement in their teaching skills.

Implications include intentionally creating reflective learning communities with the aim of identifying context-specific strategies for recognizing and promoting young children's creative musical expressions. Future teachers, their university mentors and young children all benefit when reflective practices generate pedagogical strategies that support young children's creative musicianship within their specific community of practice. If opportunities to interact with the youngest musical learners are not included in programs of study for music education, teacher educators can help by designing supplementary experiences which enable students to interact musically with young children.

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Eurhythmics and ear training are fun!

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Abstract

Theoretical background and content: Problems delivering aspects of the eurhythmics and ear training curriculum were the incentive for the author to create her own teaching tools. Here, the tools which were developed for children aged 6-8 years are presented.

Age and characteristics of participants: Fifty children aged 6-8 years (students from grades 1-3 of the a W. Lutoslawski State Music School in Starogard Gdanski) participated in the study, which was conducted over the last three years.

Aims of the project: The study examines two teaching methods: the codification of rhythmic notes values and rhythmic groups through a combination of movements and numbers, and the codification of scales using movements.

Method: The tools were employed twice a week during group lessons with students in grades 1-3 of a music primary school.

The activities: When teaching rhythmics and ear training, the method is used throughout the music curriculum for students in grades 1-3. Selected exercises will be presented in the form of video recordings, with a commentary alongside them.

The outcome: This combination of movement and numerical codification results in:

- achieving faster motor reactions in response to the rhythms heard,
- achieving greater precision when performing rhythmic values and groups.

The codification of scales using movements serves to improve:

- pitch visualization,
- the translation of melody into movement when compared to traditional methods.

Conclusion and implications for future work: The methods presented facilitated the teaching and delivery of the rhythmics and ear training curriculum, especially during the pandemic, when online classes were necessary. The use of movements to visualize rhythmic and aural phenomena leads to better and more sustained perception, learning, consolidation and memorization (through muscle memory). Future work will include the ongoing development and improvement of the methods, the ongoing evaluation of pupils being taught in this way, and ongoing cooperation with teachers from the other schools in Poland and possibly abroad.

Introducing very young children to the world of music is nothing if not beneficial. Awakening their sensitivity to music, sparking their imagination and encouraging their creative side: these all help to promote various skills and abilities. Of the many methods for teaching music which aid child development, Dalcroze's Eurhythmics occupies a prominent place as a comprehensive approach endorsed by and widely used in the Polish education system over recent decades.

Emil Jaques-Dalcroze, its creator, "discovered a new system of music education, rapidly turned into a versatile (miscellaneous) method for studying the rhythmic and dynamic possibilities of the human body. It related to the modernist tendency of viewing the education of movement as a tool for enabling the body to express itself and communicate the basic experience of emotional and intellectual development" (Franco, 2005, p.5).

Emil Jaques-Dalcroze defined Eurhythmics as:

> "…[a] method of education through music and for music (1926)" (Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2005)
>
> "…[a] preparation for the art (1924)" (Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2005)
>
> "…creating in the organism simple and fast communication between all of the centres
>
> of movement and thought (1909)" (Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2005).

It is when working with 1st grade pupils that Dalcroze's method is at its most effective and striking in terms of outcome.

In Poland, 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade pupils attend compulsory classes in Eurhythmics and Ear Training. Dalcroze states that "[t]he aim of Eurhythmics is to enable pupils, at the end of their course, to say, not *I know*," but *I have experienced*, and so to create in them the desire to express themselves; the deep impression of an emotion inspires a longing to communicate it, to the extent of one's powers, to others" (Jaques-Dalcroze, 2000, p. 63). In an earlier paper, the present author argues that "Eurhythmics relates to education by placing the emphasis on the co-ordination and development of the person through music and movement. During Eurhythmics and Ear Training classes pupils get familiar with the realm of music through fun-based tasks. As a result, a child finds complicated rhythm-metrical issues to be simple and clear. This happens thanks to clear and simple rules of Dalcroze's method (Time plus Space plus Energy, Theory follows practice, Joy – union of Body, Mind and Spirit, Listening – The basis of a music education, Positive self-expression

– the aim of Eurhythmics), which are key factors of its effectiveness" (Galikowska-Gajewska, 2018, p. 94-96), and that "[t]he primary goal of rhythmic education in the music school of 1st degree is the acquisition and ordering of knowledge of the theoretical music-related issues. Movement is the essential help and the most important cognitive tool in the implementation of difficult parts of curriculum in grades 1 – 3 "(ibid., p.95).

Movement as a fundamental cognitive tool in the experiencing and conscious understanding of music is of use in both Eurhythmics and Ear Training.

The author's experiences when working with 1st grade pupils, and her observation of the problems encountered by them when being taught Eurhythmics and Ear Training, led her to develop her own teaching methods.

1. Codification of note groups and rhythmic note values in the quarter-note and eighth-note metres

The main aim of the method is to enable pupils in grades 1 to 3 to understand the temporal relations between rhythmic note values and note groups, and is aimed at supporting the traditional teaching of rhythm and metre.

 The principal element of the author's program is a combination of movement and numerical codification, which together constitute a visualisation process. It encompasses basic rhythmic note values, whether longer or shorter than a quarter note, in the quarter-note metre. An integral part of the method is a form of notation that use Arabic numerals. The basis of the codification is as follows:
  • The use of chopsticks as percussion instruments; these are light, precise, fairly quiet, easy to hold and liked by pupils;
  • The use of movements (gestures) to reflect spatially-specific rhythmic note values and rhythmic groups.

  • **The codification of simple rhythmic note values and rhythmic groups:**

 – 1 cross chopsticks at chest level; tap once;

 – 2 - tap chopsticks once each to the left and right;

 – 4 – tap chopsticks 4 times at chest level;

♩ — no numeral, traditional notation (on one, tap chopsticks together; on two, move chopsticks outwards; a small circle is made in space),

♩. —as above; the circle is larger;

○ —as above; the circle is still larger.

- **Using the method in grades 1 - 3 of the primary school curriculum**

Taking into account the usual order in which rhythmic note values and note groups are introduced, the author involved the pupils in a variety of exercises in which they were asked to map the numerical notation onto the gestures and *vice versa*:

- Consolidation of rhythmic note values and rhythmic groups in the time signatures

$$\frac{2}{4}, \frac{3}{4}, \frac{4}{4}$$

$$\frac{5}{4}, \frac{6}{4};$$

- Numerical notation of rhythmic note values and rhythmic groups;
- Replacement of numerical notation with standard notation for rhythmic note values and rhythmic groups;
- Rhythmic dictation using numerical notation;
- Rhythmic dictation using traditional notation;
- Invention of rhythmic themes by pupils, performed according to the codification defined earlier;
- Performing of exercises by groups of pupils, e.g.:
  - one group performs the rhythmic theme; the other group writes down the theme using numerical notation;
  - *Conductor* exercise: the teacher and pupils conduct the orchestra, holding up their fingers to show the numerals representing the rhythmic groups and rhythmic values; the orchestra performs them either according to the specified codification or in some other way, e.g., using percussion instruments or voices;
- Rhythmic and gesture-based canons for two or three voices.

In the 1st grade, the rhythm and metre exercises described above teach the following:

♩ , ♫ , ♬ , ♩ , ♩. , ○ .

In the 2nd grade, the full range of rhythmic values and rhythmic groups are gradually introduced, as shown below.

- **The gestures and numerical codifications of the rhythmic groups are as follows:**

 – 3 – tap 3 times while making a small circle;

 – 12, tap 3 times in correct rhythm while moving the chopsticks upwards;

 – 21 - tap 3 times in correct rhythm; move chopsticks downwards for the first two notes and then upwards for the last one;

 – 12 – tap once to mark beginning of the rhythmic group, then move the hands sideways, then bring the hands together and tap once;

 21- the same as above but in reverse.

- **The gestures and numerical codifications of the long note values are as follows:**
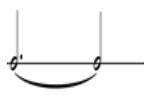
 – no numeral; traditional notation (on one, tap chopsticks, then make large circle);

 – as above, with still bigger hand movements.

The 3rd grade is the year in which the rhythmic values and rhythmic groups learnt in previous years are consolidated, syncopation is introduced (one of the most difficult theoretical concepts) and these are practised in more difficult exercises using the quarter-note metre. The 3rd grade pupils also learn a new metre, the eighth-note metre, and with this, a different pulse and way of grouping notes.

- **The gestures and numerical codifications for syncopated rhythms are as follows:**

2 1 2 – tap chopsticks in syncopated rhythm while moving one hand up and the other down.

Since the pupils were making progress in terms of speed, skill and the ease of recognition, notation and performance of rhythmic values and rhythmic groups in the quarter-note metre, the author decided to augment the method by introducing

the rhythmic values and rhythmic groups of the eighth-note metre.

- **The gestures and numerical codifications of basic rhythmic note values and rhythmic groups in the eighth-note metre:**

– 1 – tap chopsticks at chest level, then move hands slowly outwards;

– slowly move hands out and then in again;

– 13 –tap twice in correct rhythm, chopsticks crossed in front;

– 31 – as above, in reverse;

– 3 – tap 3 times while moving hands in a straight line, once to the right, once to the left.

The sixteenth-note groups:

– 6 – six rapid taps while moving hands in straight line, once to the right, once to the left;
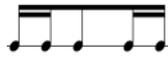
– 212 –five rapid taps in correct rhythm, performed as above;

– 122 –five rapid taps in correct rhythm, performed as above;

– 112 –four rapid taps in correct rhythm, performed as above;
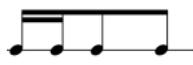
– 211 –four rapid taps in correct rhythm, performed as above.

The systematic application of this method over the last three years has allowed the author to draw the following conclusions about its benefits:

- the speeding-up of the auditory-motor response to the heard rhythmic flow, initially using homogeneous rhythms (made up of the same rhythmic note values) and eventually using diversified rhythms (made up of various rhythmic note values);
- greater precision when performing rhythmic values and rhythmic groups;
- using the numerical notation makes the writing down of music on paper or on the blackboard faster than when standard notation is used.
- improved ability to maintain a steady pulse, initially with the teacher's support, and later, independently;
- increased pupil creativity.

The pupils' movement-based experiences, underpinned here by the numerical notation, lead to a more deeply-embedded and enduring process of perception and knowledge acquisition, and the consolidation and memorization (via muscle memory) of rhythmic note values, rhythmic groups and the interrelations between them.

It isworth highlighting here that the innovative method introduces the rhythmic note value, rhythmic groups and metres in a series of steps of increasing difficulty, and that in so doing, it differs somewhat from the traditional method.

2. Movement-based codification using 'rhythmic elastics' and a trampoline

Another version of the method uses 'rhythmic elastics' and a trampoline. This allows for a larger range of movement. These activities are great favourites with the children, and generate enormous amounts of enthusiasm and a great feeling of involvement in the performance. The most important element here is the systematic use of fixed patterns of movement, adjusted to the motor abilities of the children. Examples are:

Trampoline

- ♩ - jump using both feet,

- ♫ - 2 hop on one foot,

- ♬ - 4 small hops, switching feet on each note.

The use of elastic and trampoline in a number of the exercises and metro-rhythmical tasks had a positive impact on skill development while at the same time allowing the pupils to experience a sense of freedom and leaving an unforgettable impression on them. Initially, the teacher accompanied them to help them keep the beat (particularly in the 1st grade). The systematic repetition of the tasks at different levels of difficulty resulted in the pupils (especially the 3rd graders) being able to perform various versions of the rhythmic themes both with and without accompaniment by the teacher. It should be noted that "during eurhythmics lessons the live music improvised by the teacher is the basis for the performance of all tasks. It is the live improvised music which inspires, motivates, stimulates and shapes the movements expressed by students during the exercises" (Petrović M., Milanković V., Ačić, G., Nedeljković M., Galikowska-Gajewska A., Konkol G.K., Kierzkowski M., 2018, p. 50).

3. Movement-based codification of notes, scales and triads

The idea of using the method to codify scales arose out of the author's personal experience, in particular when attending meetings devoted to Dalcroze's method both in Poland and abroad. Musical notes feel rather abstract to children and movement-based visualisations are helpful here. Thinking of notes in this way enables children to distinguish

more easily between them and differentiating between their pitches helps pupils to comprehend ideas related to Ear Training, significantly increasing the speed at which they learn. The process becomes easier and more accessible and appealing. The author is of the view that positioning notes in space (whether literally or figuratively) and assigning specific physical movements to them is a valuable learning tool.

The codification of pitch is based on C major, the first scale which pupils learn.
- All subsequent scales - G major, D major, F major and the different versions of A minor - are performed using the same movements.
- The key signature is represented by a modification to the movements. Each time the note is raised by a semitone, implying a modification, a slight upward movement is performed. Conversely, each time the note is lowered by a semitone, a slight downward movement is performed.

The sequence of movements for particular notes is presented below. The photos show Laura Górecka, a 3rd grade pupil at the W. Lutoslawski State Music School in Starogard Gdanski.

Photos:

1. note c ^{1}
2. note d ^{1}
3. note e ^{1}
4. note f ^{1}
5. note f♯ ^{1}
6. note g ^{1}
7. note a ^{1}
8. note b ^{1}
9. note b♭ ^{1}
10. note c ^{2}

Figure 1. Note c¹

Figure 2. Note d¹

Figure 3. Note e¹

Figure 4. Note f ¹

Fig. 5: sound fis ¹

Figure 6. Note g ¹

Figure 7. Note a¹　*Figure 8. Note b¹*　*Figure 9. Note b ♭ ¹*　*Figure 10. Note c²*

Implementing the method in grades 1 to 3 of the standard primary school Ear Training curriculum.

The described method is intended to support traditional Ear Training in grades 1-3, which consists of:

- introduction to notes;
- note recognition;
- writing down of notes on the stave;
- introduction to scales;
- introduction to three-chord harmony;
- structuring of melodies;
- singing of melodies;
- writing down of melodies on the stave;
- exercises and creative tasks on the above.

Visualizing pitch through a fixed movement-based codification, when systematically consolidated using exercises in the auditory and vocal domains, is a powerful tool which complements the standard method of teaching Ear Training in grades 1-3.

The use of the method by the author over the last three years has led to the following conclusions regarding the skills resulting from the movement-based codification of scales:

- improved pitch visualisation;

- improved ability to imagine a melody (the sequence of notes, their order and direction);
- greater precision when singing a melody using solmization and letter names;
- greater ease when transposing notes onto traditional musical notation during dictation;
- faster 'translation' of the language of notes onto the language of the body;
- improved acquisition of appropriate intonation;
- pupils more motivated and inspired to undertake creative activities.

According to Dalcroze,"The teacher should […] regard it as his duty, in imposing on his pupils the learning of harmony and ear training without recourse to an instrument, to create in them a sense of musical pitch, and to develop their feeling for melody, key and harmony, by means of special exercises" (2000, p. 2). These tasks, which are not straightforward, call for the devising of novel teaching methods. The codification described is not typical of the Dalcroze method, where the main aim is to develop the skill of inner hearing, but it is worth noting that the tools developed facilitated communication with pupils during the COVID-19 pandemic, motivated the pupils to work harder and positively influenced their interest in Eurhythmics and Ear Training. Clear, simple rules, characteristic of both methods, were of great benefit to the pupils during this period.

Summary

The value in teaching Eurhythmics and Ear Training is the joy and satisfaction felt by the pupils as they learn and perform music.

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Part IV – Abstracts

Spoken Research Papers

Opening up a space for creativity: teaching improvisation in the music classroom

Rūta Girdzijauskienė, Presenting Author

Jonė Girdzijauskaite, Co-Author

Abstract

Improvisation is a key creative activity in music lessons. Despite numerous studies on improvisation in an educational context, there is still a lack of research as to how the teaching of improvisation takes place in the real-world setting of the ordinary music classroom (Larsson & Georgii-Hemming, 2019). The purpose of this study is to model the process of teaching improvisation in general music classes and to investigate how music teachers construct and organize improvisational activities in music lessons.
An ethnographic approach was employed; this aims to describe a person's behaviour with respect to the culture within which they live and work (Rapport, 2000) and to understand and explain their activities in everyday situations (Maggs-Rapport, 2000). The study participants were two experienced music teachers who teach first grade children (aged 6-7 years) in a normal school. We observed music lessons and captured film footage of teachers organizing improvisation activities. After each lesson, we watched the footage and asked the teacher(s) to explain what was happening. Our study lasted for 3 months. The study data comprised video excerpts from eight music lessons, lesson observation protocols, and interviews with teachers.
The analysis of the data allowed us to single out the following components of improvisation teaching: teacher attitude and teaching goals; task sequence; teaching and learning conditions; student-teacher interactions. The results were then analysed by comparing with related research (Burnard, 2002; Hickey, 2009; Saetre, 2011; Higgins & Mantie, 2013).

Keywords
Improvisation, creative activities, music classroom

Rhythmic infant movement responses to singing and their role in language development

Gabriela Markova, Presenting Author

Anja Lueger, Author. **Stefanie Höhl, Quynh Trinh Nguyen**, Co-Authors

Abstract

Background: The perception of rhythm while listening to music often involves spontaneous entrainment leading to movement in time with these periodicities, and as early as five months of age, babies have been shown to exhibit significantly more rhythmic movement in response to music as compared to speech (Zentner & Eerola, 2010). Interestingly, previous research has shown that motor skills, music perception and processing are all associated with language development (e.g., Corriveau & Goswami, 2009; Colling et al., 2017). To date however, these links have not been studied in the context of infant-directed singing (IDS).
Aims: The goal of the study was to investigate the connection between rhythmic movements of infants during IDS in a naturalistic setting and subsequent language development. We hypothesized that rhythmic movements in reponse to IDS at seven months would be related to vocabulary size at 20 months. We further expected that this relationship would vary between playsongs and lullabies.
Method: Thirty-three mother-infant dyads participated. When infants were 7 months (M = 7.48), mothers were instructed to sing a playsong and a lullaby to their infants in a randomized order, and videos were coded for infant rhythmic movements (defined as all body movements repeated at least three times in the same form at a ≤ 1s interval (Thelen, 1979). At 20 months (M = 20.11), children's language development was assessed using an online version of the Austrian Communicative Development Inventory (Marschik et al., 2007).
Results: A linear mixed effect model with rhythmic movement as the response variable, singing condition and vocabulary as fixed effects, and individual infants as random effects, showed no significant relationship between rhythmic movements and language (p = .76). However, there was a significant interaction between singing condition and vocabulary size, $x^2(1)$= 6.92, p = .008, indicating that vocabulary size was related to children's rhythmic movements during playsong, but inversely related to these when occurring during lullaby.
Conclusions These results suggest that infants who respond sensitively to song type by moving more rhythmically during a (stimulating) playsong and less rhythmically during a (soothing) lullaby, had larger vocabularies at 20 months of age. This study provides the first evidence of a positive influence of maternal singing on children's language development.

Inspiring early childhood practitioners to increased spontaneity through narrative play: Mission possible?

Emilija Sakadolskis, Presenting Author

Milda Brėdikytė, Presenting Co-author

Abstract

Background: Lithuanian preschools and kindergartens include arts in the curriculum, but activities are fairly traditional, focusing on the learning of repertoire and the preparing of performances. The authors team-teach a course entitled "Music and Developmental Drama" for pre-service and in-service Early Years educators, and strive to instill the notion that spontaneous singing, movement, puppetry, and improvised narrative play should take precedence over traditional instruction. We draw on the cultural-historical theory of development (often called cultural-historical activity theory—CHAT) stemming from Vygotsky (1971) and others who understood child development as cultural development. In this approach, improvised, imaginative play activities play a crucial role in the development of imagination.

Aims: Students write reflective journals about the application of the theories and practices that are presented in the course. We introduce narrative play (Hakkarainen & Bredikyte, 2011; Bredikyte, 2017) as a framework for student projects. For several years now we have noted changes in attitude and practice, as reflected in journals and mid-course and final projects. This research has striven to identify the specific qualities of this change as a means of optimising future learning.

Method: A qualitative content analysis of reflective journals and of video presentations of mid-course and final projects was undertaken. The content was coded for data: 1) changes to didactic assumptions, 2) the fostering of spontaneity and imagination during placement, 3) the children's spontaneous acts of artistry, and 4) statements of future intent to encourage improvisation.

Results: According to the participants, songs and stories with strong narratives were the main catalyst for focussing children's attention and involvement and encouraging creative experimentation. This included the spontaneous improvisation of melodic and rhythm patterns, and interpretive movement highlighting aspects of the characters in the narratives. The children imitated and then extended the musical material. Students expressed surprise not only at the creative attempts of their pupils, but also at their own desire to create.

Conclusions: Changes to early childhood provider attitudes and practices with respect to arts instruction are possible and can occur even over a relatively short timespan. The teaching of certain theories (CHAT, narrative play, etc.) and a requirement to apply these in a practical setting result in a paradigm shift away from traditional didactics.

Keywords

Teacher training, narrative play, preschool, music and drama

I never thought I would master it so quickly

Félice van der Sande, Presenting Author

Abstract

Educational staff in pre-school childcare who use the kalimba (a Central African musical instrument) in the classroom are highly successful and feel confident to play this musical instrument for children. This was the starting point for an investigation into the playing of musical instruments by pre-school children, and specifically, into what types of activities, when used in the pre-school childcare setting, led to successful outcomes. In this setup they play a musical instrument themselves, to enhance the experience of playing music and the involvement and pleasure of children in music, through the coaching of movement games, of singing and at other moments such as a listening moment. The problem is that currently this is hardly ever practiced in Dutch childcare, due to the view that you should be specially trained for this, that musicality is only for people who successfully play a musical instrument and underestimation of one's own skills.

In this case study an investigation has been made in literature of motivation, of processes when learning to play a musical instrument and of educational staff's learning processes. A questionnaire among 200 employees in childcare has yielded a picture of the current situation. Thirteen educators participated in the practical study, receiving coaching with a direct practical application in playing with children. Data was gathered through field notes, observation of videos shot at the end of the trajectory of the participants and a semi-structured interview with each of them.

The results show that the conviction of being able to learn to play a musical instrument rather than skills is the essence. The participants found the application on the group the most valuable: their strongest motivations are the significance of what they do for the children and the children's enjoyment. The threshold for starting is high, but as soon as doing it has yielded an experience of success, a growth mindset will develop regarding the playing of music. This will develop quicker if receptive skills and easily learnable skills are used starting from free expression, improvisation and the use of various ways of playing. Autonomous choice of musical instrument, learning pace and communication of realistic expectations make this possible. The feeling of competence increases as a result of success experiences, articulating learnt skills and one's control over them. One byproduct appears to be that singing while playing an musical instrument removes hesitancy.

Keywords

Teacher Training, pre-school childcare, activities with musical instruments, enjoyment

Pre-service generalist teachers using musical instruments during class singing

Annamaria Savona, Presenting Author

Abstract

This paper presents little-studied aspects of music education and contributes to an understanding of how children are introduced to the cultural practice of group singing, and familiarised with cultural goods such as musical instruments.

In nursery and primary schools, generalist teachers often use musical instruments when teaching songs and leading class singing. This study aims to answer the following questions: How, when and why do teachers use musical instruments during class singing? The study focusses on trainee teachers who are in the process of learning how to teach singing, as part of their three-year training programme. Fifteen trainees participated in the longitudinal study. Data was collected once a year during placements. For each trainee, three lessons were video-recorded and three lesson-based interviews were conducted. Each participant also completed a semi-structured questionnaire. The analysis of the case studies aimed to: 1) explore the overall skill development of trainee generalist teachers when leading class singing and 2) exploring the use musical instruments at these times. The interviews were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006) and questionnaires using techniques for formal structuring the content (Mayring, 2015). The video-recorded lessons were transcribed using the Lesson Activities Map (LAMap) method, and the times in which teachers used musical instruments were also selected for in-depth analysis. The thematic maps generated from an analysis of the interviews illustrate changes over time in the teachers' skill levels. The development of expertise in the use of musical instruments is underlined by the increasing familiarity with their music-didactic functions.

Keywords

Teacher Training, Pre-service generalist teachers, class singing, teaching songs

Family music classes for immigrant families with infants and toddlers

Helga Gudmundsdottir, Presenting Author

Adam Switala, Co-Author

Abstract

A Polish language version of *Tónagull*, a family music method developed in Iceland, was launched in the Fall of 2019 with the support of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Reykjavik, and cultural centres in Reykjavík and Hafnarfjörður. The purpose of the project was to build on a previously successful programme of family music classes, to adapt it to the language, culture and traditional musical material of the Polish minority population in Iceland, and to add to our understanding of the social integration and well-being of migrant families. The Polish minority is the largest immigrant population in Iceland; however, until recently, there were very few regular programmes for Polish families with pre-school children. The present study uses a mixed method, including questionnaires and interviews, investigates what motivates participants to join the Polish family music programme, and in what ways the workshops benefit immigrant families. Preliminary results indicate that family music classes support parents in their role as immigrant parents who want their children to succeed in the new home country while at the same time preserving their original language and culture. A relationship was observed between the attendance of the music classes and the children's daily use of their native language, as well as their ability to memorise traditional Polish songs and rhymes. The participating families continued to use the Tónagull activities in their daily routines over the course of the Covid pandemic when in-person classes could not be held, and perceived them as useful parenting tools. Also discussed are the differences between language-specific and non-language-specific music methods.

Spoken Practice Papers

Let's play sound bingo at school and at home!

Aura Vitali, Presenting Author

Laura Ferrari, Presenting Co-Author

Abstract

Background: Exploring the sounds present in different surroundings (e.g., school, home, workplace) are a good way of generating awareness in children of the sound environment in which they live. School, home, recreational centers and other places experienced by children are characterized by sounds which the teacher can use as inspiration for learning experiences (Frapat, 1994).**Aims:** We focus on the different teaching strategies proposed on the same musical content (exploration of sounds and the creation of a „sound bingo") in two different learning settings: classroom lessons and distance learning (because of COVID-19 restrictions).

Method: The two musical activities took place at a private primary school in the province of Bologna. The first teaching encounter consisted of six once-a-week lessons with five six year olds in the Fall of 2019. The children explored the sounds of their surroundings (streets, shops, church, etc.) audiorecorded the sounds, and then created a 'sound bingo'. The second teaching encounter took place in the Spring of 2021 and also involved six year olds. The teacher arranged for six once-a-week videos to record various sounds around the home and then used these to create a quiz. She also asked the children to compose a short musical sequence using voice and body.

Results: It was observed that classroom teaching offers certain advantages in terms of the ability to explore one's surroundings and the presence of peers, while the virtual classroom gives family members a central role in the learning process and the freedom for children to watch a video several times. Despite these differences, the methods produced similar results: a) the children perceived the activities as fun and participatory, b) children recognised the differences between the sounds and played with them musically, and c) the activities fostered listening skills in the children.

Conclusions: Similar musical activities in two different contexts were compared. It was found that the same musical content may be taught and learned both virtually (at home) and in school and, more specifically, it was shown that both contexts affected and extended the teacher's educational strategies. This evidence lends support to the work of Lucy Green, which denotes informal learning approaches to music as "the new classroom pedagogy".

Das RhythmikStudio - Institut für musisch-kreative Bildung Wien

Urd Anja Specht, Presenting Author

Gerald Specht, Presenting Co-Author

Abstract

The RhythmikStudio - Institute for Music-Creative Education in Vienna was presented and insights were given into the structure of the organization and its role in the community, as follows:

• objectives for age groups 2 to 8 years

• curriculum

• children's artistic work and rhythmic stage productions

• using rhythm in the virtual classroom during Covid: teaching experiences.

> *Brief information: "Nothing is in the mind that was not previously in the senses ..." (John Locke)*

This idea is the lifeblood of our organisation and informs how it approaches its work with people, artistically, educationally and cognitively. Rhythm speaks to the whole person and has music and movement as its foundations. When placed in a group of same-age peers, children find broad scope for independent action through artistry, including:

• experimenting with ways of solving increasingly difficult tasks,

• translating music into motion,

• designing using music and movement (choreography, improvisation, composition)

• performing on stage what has been created over the course of the year.

The developmentally-appropriate dialogical structure of our artistic pedagogy is based on extensive training at the University of Music & Performing Arts.

The RhythmikStudio - Institute for music-creative education is an organisation whose aim is the holistic development of the child's personality, through music and rhythm. It was founded in 1992 by Gerald and Urd Anja Specht as a space in which education through rhythm, music, movement, dance and play might be accessible to everyone. The **RhythmikStudio** is a unique privately-run institute that has been devoted to music and movement education for nearly thirty years. Its methods are based on the Gymnastique rhythmique by Emile Jaquez-Dalcroze, the work of Elfriede Feudel and the Viennese Rhythm of Rudolf Konrad. Its aims are the sensitization of the senses (hearing, feeling, perceiving), and the promotion of creative expressiveness, creative intelligence and social learning.

Keywords

Music and movement, Institute for Music-Creative Education

Furthering Joint Attention

Shirley Salmon, Presenting Author

Abstract

Joint Attention is a prerequisite for a number of learning processes, including the development of social skills, speech, cognition and learning in a pedagogical context (Carpenter et al., 1998, Kim et al., 2008, Mundy & Newell, 2007, Vaughan van Hecke et al., 2007). Joint attention can often be underdeveloped and makes participation in group activities difficult or impossible, creating stressful situations for all.The focus of the present study is an inclusive mixed-age teaching practice group at the Orff Institute of the Mozarteum University in Salzburg. It meets once a week for 45 minutes and consists of 8 – 10 children between the ages of 4 and 14 years with various abilities, interests and support needs (with and without disabilities). The group is taught by the mentor and two or three students.The goals of the group include the developing of sensory and physical awareness, music, dance and language skills, self-awareness, social learning and communication.

Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy (Orff-Schulwerk) is an approach that can be used to encourage and support the development of Joint Attention. Many activities are initially adult-led but often include tasks and activities for individuals, pairs and small groups. The approach demands flexibility on the part of the teacher and encourages contributions from pupils; independent thinking and customised teaching are important. Music, movement and language as well as play materials and objects are used within a variety of activities and social forms. A typical lesson includes the following phases: live music, greeting song and ritual, warmup, several theme-focussed activities, parting ritual.

Lessons were filmed on a regular basis in order to chart the development of Joint Attention in the children and to determine which activities and methods were most beneficial. This paper includes video excerpts illustrating the development of one particular child and the methods used.Joint Attention is an important aspect of education, and its underdevelopment needs to be responded to, with planned activities and ideas being adapted in order to include the actions and interests of the individual child. Learning is stimulated, such that the child is given the opportunity to experience joint playing and joint attention based on its own particular interests and abilities.

Keywords

Music and movement, Joint Attention, skill development, sensory and physical awareness, Elemental Music and Dance Pedagogy, Orff-Schulwerk

Demonstrations

Percussion in elementary schools

Birgit Ibelshäuser, Presenting Author

Abstract

Background: This demonstration presents an innovative cooperative project which began in 2009 as a pilot between the municipal music school and an elementary school in a socially deprived area in Saarbrücken, Germany. Children in grades 2-4 learn, in full class groups, to play a variety of percussion instruments as a means of developing their musical and rhythmic skills. The lessons are play-oriented and mix instrumental music-making with singing, movement and dance. New instruments are first explored experimentally before playing techniques are worked on, since this allows space for exploration, creativity and experimentation.

Aims: A variety of practical examples will be provided for those who would like to incorporate rhythm work in the classroom, or would like to explore the opportunities and potential offered by percussion playing and the teaching of instruments as they relate to the working methods and curriculum of elementary music pedagogy (EMP).

Activity description: The demonstration describes the project, its framework, working methods and outcome. Examples are used to illustrate the making of music using percussion instruments in group and class settings. A video is used to show lesson design and conveys a lively impression of the children making music and the results thereof.

Implications: To date, the project has given impetus to further projects elsewhere and may at some point achieve supra-regional significance, acting as a catalyst and linking up different music education disciplines. At elementary school level, foundational knowledge about the variety and handling of percussion instruments, and about the working methods and principles of EMP, can serve to offer new ideas for active lessons.

Value and meaning: The demonstration provides insights into a particular pedagogical concept which can be adapted to the teaching framework of the individual elementary school and of the competencies of teachers who are not trained in the concept. It provides a link between EMP, school, and instrumental music education. Making music in groups using percussion instruments is a virtually inexhaustible resource, providing access to many musical styles and cultures. Musical content can be varied according to group so as to facilitate musical expression and development in participants with varying levels of musical knowledge and ability.

Keywords

Music and education, elementary school, percussion instruments, rhythmic and musical skills, elementary music pedagogy (EMP)

Workshops

Move, Explore, Understand: Using the body to experience music

Maria Papazachariou-Christoforou, Presenting Author

Abstract

Numerous scholars have emphasized the critical role of movement in the Early Years music classroom when it comes to the understanding of music. Consistent kinesthetic experiences enable children to understand musical concepts (Achilles, 1991; Shiobara, 1994, Young, 1982), support rhythmic ability (Conway, 2003; Gordon, 2003) and promote creativity (Gilbert, 1992; Lloyd, 1998). Rudolf von Laban (1971) developed a movement framework which incorporated the elements of effort which he termed *time, space, weight* and *flow*. He proposed that by experiencing a combination of these elements, individuals internalize a movement vocabulary that fosters expressive music performance. The aim of this workshop is to explore some practical activities based on Laban's movement framework with the potential to enrich children's movement vocabulary, enhance musical understanding and to provide participants with new ideas for incorporating movement into music lessons. Props will be provided, and songs and rhythmic chants used as a framework.

Indicative activities

- *Imaginary scenarios, stories and songs* to facilitate engagement in playful activities which use the body in various ways, both individually and in groups.

- Participants are encouraged to find ways of *moving expressively* in order to communicate the musical style of the song; for example: moving in straight or curved lines (depending on the melodic contour), large or small steps (depending on note length), powerful or gentle movements (according to the expressive qualities of the music), and quick or slow movements (depending on the tempo).

- *Continuous flow movement* enables participants to better appreciate balance and coordination, thereby embodying the dimensions of time and space.

- Expressing the felt pulse of the music through the *movement* of various parts of the body and appreciating pulse in groups by means of props. Participants are encouraged to experience pulse by shifting their weight using swaying, bouncing, rocking, kicking and up-and-down motions.

- Participants improvise or create movement gestures (movement schemas) in order to represent rhythmic patterns, either on their own or in groups.

The purpose of the workshop is to demonstrate good practice and is aimed at educators considering using kinesthetic and creative gross motor activities when teaching children. Discussions and opportunities to reflect on the hands-on activities will allow participants to explore ideas that might prove meaningful and enjoyable to children.

Keywords

Music and movement, kinesthetic experiences, Laban, experience music through movement

Sound Explorers

Xenia Horne, Presenting Author

Abstract

Background: The creation of opportunities fostering a sense of belonging and connectedness, through the sounds which we discover in the environment around us, offers us a starting point for collaborative music making which needs no other resources. Building on a six-month project with five and six year olds, I have developed a workshop which provides space for listening, co-creation, improvisation and reflection, using the natural environment and green spaces.

Aims: Active listening lies at the heart of the workshop, helping us to tune in both to ourselves and to the sounds around us, in order to provide a palette from which we can create music together. The concepts of 'calm' parts and 'listening' parts help to develop focus and joint attention while also helping children to tune in to themselves and to the spaces around them; this fosters a deeper understanding of the self as music maker, and of sociable musicking.

Activities: Harp music at the beginning of the session will awaken the senses, leading into deep listening while we tune in to the environment around us. We will gather sounds as we explore the space and bring them together in a playful way to create music with our voices and bodies, creating sound-makers from found materials and objects. The session will conclude with an opportunity to learn how to relax our bodies with the aid of harp music, using our breathing to assist that experience. Finally we will spend time reflecting on our experiences during the workshop.

Implications: The aim of the workshop is to offer experiences of inward and outward listening, focusing on breath and breathing, working with voice in an accessible way, and employing these as the basis for a bank of resources.

Value & Meaning: Learner-centered approach which brings the focus inwards prior to exploring the environment, fostering a sense of belonging and connection, offering starting points for improvisation and musical collaboration, without the need for instruments or specialist training. Opportunities are built in for working collaboratively in order to develop a sense of oneself and of others. This is a democratic, accessible approach to composition and improvisation, where every voice can be heard and each person is valued.

Keywords

Exploring music and sound, deep listening, playful

Promoting Bonding and Attachment in Elemental Music Making Groups with Parents and Infants (aged 0–3 years)

Eva Phan Quoc, Presenting Author
Christina Kanitz-Pock, Presenting Author

Abstract

Background: Attachment Theory is one of the central concepts of modern developmental psychology. The experiences young children have with their parents or caregivers are of great relevance to their future development. It is crucial for caregivers to not only provide for the physiological needs of a child, but also to be present as a reliable, sensitive and emotionally available partner within the relationship. Looking at practical interventions in Elemental Music Making groups through the lens of Attachment Theory may offer an exciting and valuable additional perspective to our musical work with young children and their parents/caregivers.

Aims: In this workshop, an experienced music and dance teacher and a music therapist and researcher specialising in attachment, both experts in early childhood settings, will collaborate to focus on attachment and bonding questions. They will explore and discuss, from an attachment perspective, some of the participants' established routines with them, with the intention of promoting professional exchange and the sharing of practice experience with respect to this exciting issue.

Short description of the activities: The authors will present suggestions for the integration of core attachment theory concepts into practical Elemental Music Making. Central terms, such as *sensitivity, exploration, secure base/safe haven* and *stress signals* will be related back to the participants' individual practice experiences.

Implications: If we frame our activities as music group leaders sensitively, and act in an attuned way to the emotional needs of children and caregivers, we have the potential to become important role models for the latter. Elemental Music Making groups are easily accessible and could therefore act as a fund of preventive measures for even the most vulnerable families.

Specific value and meaning: Elemental Music Making in child-caregiver groups can open up a wonderful learning environment for musical creativity, self-efficacy and empowerment. It can also provide a structured space for caregivers to explore their relationships with their children in a safe setting. An understanding of Attachment Theory is of importance in Early Years music education.

Keywords

Elemental Music Making, music therapy, attachment theory, bonding, early childhood

„Incoro": A singing experience for learning basic musical elements

Laura Ferrari, Presenting Author

Aura Vitali, Presenting Co-Author

Abstract

Background: Prior work has underlined the importance of holistic experiences for child development. Embodied Cognition Theory posits that music is perceived across multiple channels: through listening, beating time and observing the gestures of others. The *Incoro* Project is based on three elements: 1) the central role of the child's voice when singing in a group, 2) the connection between body and voice, and 3) the building of a repertoire.

Aims: The project involves 5 to 10 year old children with no previous musical experience, and uses strategies from the methods of Dalcroze, Kodaly, Orff and Delalande. Voice and movement are foundational to the learning of the basic elements of music.

A short description of the activities: The workshop will mimic the type of lesson which we have undertaken with the children: a) a simple welcome song sung in a group (with body percussion), b) rhythmic games (e.g. imitating a storm using body percussion; repeating of simple rhythmic patterns invented by the children); c) intonation games: recognising whether a sound outside the door is a child's voice or an instrument; recognising different pitches using the "sacco pieno e sacco vuoto" game; performing some vocal exercises using single notes from a dynamic scale; using the bell game to learn "Ding dong merrily on high"; singing "Do-Re-Mi" from the "Sound of Music"; d) learning to sing, in chorus, various musical structures, such as the canon.

Implications: This approach, which combines aspects of different methods, has the potential to offer children, especially beginners, an international musical experience. The activities offered include a variety of aspects of music.

Specific value and meaning: We aimed to have a varied repertoire (blues, pop, sacred music,…), even though learning elements of music theory was the main project goal, rather than the learning of a repertoire *per se*. Pieces were selected for specific characteristics such as rhythm, melody or form, and the performance of the pieces acted as the final step in the project.

Keywords

Music and education, singing, holistic, embodied cognition theory

Drum of Wonder: From exploring to improvising - creative ways for families to make music together

Soili Perkiö, Presenting Author

Elisa Seppänen, Presenting Author

Abstract

Background: The "Drum of Wonder" workshop will present the collaboration of two experienced Early Years music educators. It is based on, and inspired by, the Finnish national curriculum, and aims to bring creative teaching models into the classroom. Our main interest lies in observing and reflecting on children's musical growth. We do this by studying their presence and making pedagogical choices which respond to this nurturingly and encouragingly. The lesson flow is thus prompted by its participants.In May 2015, we invited a group of parents-to-be to a weekend course entitled "Maternity music and movement". Following the birth of the 20 children, whom we termed "Little Wings", we continued to hold biannual workshops, creating a "Music Village" in which parents and children are constantly creating music together.

Aims: The workshop remodels Early Years music education in creative and inspirational new ways. It gives participants the opportunity to observe, via video, the musical development of some of the "Little Wings" children over a period of five years, and to take part, through collaborative teaching, in creative learning.

A short description of the activities: a) participants view three videos of the "Little Wings", as unborn babies, newborns and toddlers (15 minutes); b) participants are invited to take part in a creative musical exercise based on the activities of the Little Wings group (30 minutes); c) finally there is a period of guided reflection and discussion (15 minutes).

Implications: The workshop inspires participants to work collaboratively to create "Music Villages" in their own communities.

Specific value and meaning: It is our view that inclusive, creative music education is vital to embrace, celebrate, share, and lift. The workshop provides suggestions for creative, collaborative learning activites which may serve to act, in Early Years music education settings, as an essential means of building and nurturing communities.

Keywords

Music and creativity, early childhood, creative teaching models, process

An Early Years family music scheme

Helga Gudmundsdottir, Presenting Author

Abstract

This workshop is based on an ongoing infant and parent music education scheme in Iceland. It is called *Tonagull*, and is taught in Icelandic and Polish. The courses have been developed over a eriod of nearly two decades and aim to encourage parents to engage musically with their infants and toddlers in their daily lives. The scheme's authors have developed a set of course elements which help to guarantee the flow and quality of the lessons regardless of instructor. Lessons consist of ten elements implemented in a seamless sequence over a 45-minute period. The elements include singing, clapping, chanting, moving, drumming, jamming, dancing and winding down. For any given element, the teacher has a choice of activities, giving him or her a degree of autonomy and the ability to choose what is appropriate to a given group or situation. The content is informed on an ongoing basis by findings from infant and toddler musicality and development research. The underlying approach is to encourage families to engage musically in the course activities, rather than expecting the children to perform in a particular way.The workshop will include brief videos of the scheme in Icelandic and Polish. The rationale behind the lesson sequence will be described, and demonstrations given as to how the elements tap into the instinctive reactions of very young children. Attendees will then learn more about the key elements of the lesson sequence by means of singing, dancing and movement exercises. A new non-language-specific version of the method will also be introduced, along with the necessary resources.

Poster Presentations

Improvisation as a fundamental creative activity for composing music, encouraging creative problem-solving in instrumental music education

Irene Malizia, Presenting Author

Abstract

The integration of learning and playing an instrument with creative musical activities such as improvising and composing improves musical and instrumental skills in many ways. It leads children to a deeper musical and instrumental understanding (e.g. McPherson, 2007; Swanwick, Cavalieri, 1999; Rüdiger, 2018), encourages more autonomous learning processes (Barnes, 2001), fosters creative thinking (Barrett, 1998; Hickey, 2003) and promotes creative problem-solving (McPherson, 1998; Wiggins, 2003).

This research project aims to observe instrumental creative processes in both Early Years and advanced music education context; the poster considers children between 6 and 9 years of age. How do improvisation and composition enable active learning through instrumental exploration and creative problem solving? These two activites encompass a broad range of meanings and implications, following different creative processes as well as many evaluation parameters, especially in relation to the roles and purposes they assume within the creative process. In pedagogy, they are used mainly as a creative way of exploring the sounds of an instrument (Reitinger, 2018) and as way of deepening musical understanding (e.g. McPherson, 2007; Rüdiger, 2018; Swanwick, Cavalieri Franca, 1999). Improvisation involves "improvisatory exploration" (Barrett, 1998), whereby the learner can experiment freely in real time (Folkestad, 1998, p. 109) with sounds and playing techniques. Composing "can be defined as improvisation plus reflection" (Folkestad, 1998, p. 108), where the musical material that emerges during the act of improvisation forms the basis for "subsequent listening and evaluation, and decisions concerning what to reject, correct or accept" (Folkestad 1998, p. 108); i.e., ideas are repeatedly reviewed and modified (Barrett, 1998). By exploring on the instrument and composing music, children acquire the necessary skills that will make them ever more intentional and autonomous in their instrumental and musical approach. This is preferable to focusing simply on practice without thought, where the child is waiting for instructor feedback and receiving instructions as to the next step. Through composition, learners also have the opportunity to approach the instrument creatively by focussing on its various technical and musical aspects.

Topic

Composition

"Like a room without a roof": Children´s well-being as a teaching objective in musical interaction.

Silke Schmid, Presenting Author

Abstract

Background: "Because I'm happy… Clap along, if you feel like a room without a roof!" Could these lyrics from Pharrell Williams' hit be used with reference to Early Years music education? If it were up to Kevin (8 years old), it would do. In an empirical study of 285 primary school children, he noted that "[m]usic is there to make me happy" (Schmid, 2017, S. 7). This statement underlines the intrinsic connection between music-making and happiness. *Happiness* is a complex construct which includes both the hedonistic and eudaimonic aspects of well-being (e.g., Elliott & Silverman, 2014; Liddle & Carter, 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Education research is increasingly focussing on well-being, especially that of the child (Bartels, 2018; Krupp-Schleußner, 2016).

Aims: Against this background, how can the fostering of children´s well-being become the guiding principle in the design of improvisation-focussed music lessons? This poster explores the essential question of which frameworks offer the best practical basis for classroom teaching.

Method: A critical interpretive review (Booth et al., 2016) of English-language publications was carried out. In a multi-stage process, publications which appeared between 2017 and 2020 which considered children in Early Years education, and focussed on the connection between practical music education and well-being, were sampled. Studies which included theoretical frameworks for synthetic theorization underwent a full-text analysis.

Results: The findings uncovered a variety of underlying definitions of "well-being". Models such as the PERMA well-being model (Lee, 2017), the Enjoyment Cycle (Koops, 2017) and the Arts Integration Engagement Model (Robinson, 2019) may act as useful points of reference for future education practice. Developing a better understanding of the inherent domain-specific interplay between structure and freedom on the one hand, and community and individual on the other, would seem to be a promising starting point for promoting children´s well-being during musical interactions.

Conclusion:, This study departs from previous research in that it argues in favour of a more nuanced professional perspective on the psychosocial processes at play in the music classroom, and against implicit agendas. The findings have the potential to help clarify what are the best teaching objectives and strategies for fostering the well-being of the child in music education settings.

Topic
Children´s well-being

Author Index

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**CHILDHOOD AND MUSIC MAKING
EXPLORING – COMMUNICATING – IMPROVISING**

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