



Early Childhood Music Newsletter

Early Childhood Music Special Research Interest Group

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings to all, and thank you for a great session at MENC in Nashville! The first order of business is to welcome our two new Chairs-Elect—Martina Miranda and Elayne Achilles. I know that they have some great ideas for leadership of our group, and I am very excited to have them aboard. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Joyce Eastlund Gromko for being an outstanding chair, leader, and friend these past two years.

We had two stimulating presentations from Dale Farran and David Nelson, which prompted much spirited discussion among attendees. We are pleased to reprint David Nelson's complete presentation in this edition of the Newsletter, entitled "Beyond Autonomous Intelligences: A Proposal for Future Research in Early Childhood Music." In this article, Nelson challenges some of the ideas that have recently dominated early childhood research in music.

Also appearing in these pages is a reflection on teaching by Amanda Sprague Hanzlik, an early childhood music specialist working in New York, in which she addresses the joys and fears of transitioning from pre-service educator to full time practitioner. I think you will find her writing resonates with some of your own experiences.

Finally, this issue will be published electronically and will be available on-line at <http://www.uiowa.edu/~menc>. I urge all of you to visit this page, since we, along with many other SRIGs, are debating whether to publish our Newsletters exclusively on-line in the future. Your input will help us answer the question of whether on-line publishing is of better use to our members.

An enjoyable summer to all of you! Carlos Xavier Rodriguez



Articles

Beyond Autonomous Intelligences: A Proposal for Future Research in Early Childhood Music

David J. Nelson

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It is a pleasure to be able to present a brief paper today. For the past 15 years I have been embroiled in the world of music administration, both at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and at The University of Iowa where I am currently Director of Division of Performing Arts. My training is in string education with a special interest in music cognition as it relates to young children. I have to tell you that it feels quite liberating to be able to express some of my views on music education this morning rather than to play my role as an administrator.

I want to give you a very brief historical perspective on curriculum development and research in early childhood music education and then offer a few comments on, what I believe,

may be a relatively new way of approaching the study of music intelligence, or aptitude, or whatever we choose to use as a term for how children think musically. I have a suggestion for a unifying theme on how we might approach the subject. I want to recognize that my thoughts are a result of wonderful collaborations with Julia Koza and Anthony Barresi at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Janet Barret at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

Historically, there is a social theme related to early childhood education that recurs throughout the history of the movement. It continues to exert influence up to the present. In fact, as in the past, there seems to be a belief in our contemporary community, that we as educators, are somehow responmoral development in the absence of parental responsibility. This seems to be a social theme that has infused the early childhood movement and, in many cases, remains a motivation for philanthropic assistance from wealthy individuals, business, and/or governments on federal, state, and local levels.

Because music is so appealing to children, it is often used an instructional tool to reinforce social, moral, and religious goals. In fact, utilization of singing for the achievement of extra-musical aims is common. Music study for its own content did not fit the pragmatic aims of the new nation

nor was it, for many years, considered compatible with the social or educational agendas of early childhood educators. In most pre-school educational settings, music is still regarded as an effective vehicle for teaching extra-musical understandings. Perhaps this is not something we wish to accept, or even admit to. However, it has given music an assured presence in the educational scheme.

History informs us that Comenius, in the 17th century, described the benefits of singing on the religious and social development of children. One hundred and fifty years later Pestalozzi talked about music as one of the most effective aids of moral education. By the early 19th century Froebel felt the use of music was an essential component of his mother play concept, a tool for attaining unity in the young child's physical, mental, and moral development.

As we all know, Lowell Mason, and others, introduced music instruction into the school setting in a form that was learning-theory based. He was the first in a long line of music educators who would forge curricula and experience for music instruction in the schools and eventually music instruction for the pre-schooler. Mason's model became the basis of the early preparation of music educators that was rooted in the study and appreciation of the art form. In other words, these educators had insights, both cognitive and aesthetic, that led them,

as a profession, to value and advance music education that was based in the art.

Over the past fifty years, a number of formal methodologies have addressed music instruction from early childhood through all of the schooling years. Advocates of Orff, Kodaly, Suzuki, and Dalcroze methodologies have specifically addressed early childhood instruction by structuring aspects of their materials and activities toward the teaching of music understandings appropriate for pre-school and kindergarten children.

However, programs for preparation and certification of music specialists, specifically for early childhood settings, remain few in number and the employment of early childhood music specialists in these settings is not common practice. Preparatory curricula, where they exist, are intended for general teachers and often reflect the child developmental, extra-musical goals traditionally embraced by early childhood educators with minimal preparation in the philosophical underpinnings, personal musical skills or pedagogical understandings for education in music.

Not surprisingly, research in early childhood music education has a similar history. I want to give a very brief overview, covering very specific ground from Seashore, through Piaget, and then give you my perspective on one way research may go.

Not surprisingly, research in early childhood music education has a similar history. I want to give a very brief overview, covering very specific ground from Seashore, through Piaget, and then give you my perspective on one way research may go.

Carl Seashore was one of the most influential figures in endeavors that we now refer to as music education research. Seashore, who died in 1949, assumed that an individual's ability with reference to what he considered, and as many others continue to consider, the pure elements of music (pitch, timbre, rhythm, etc.) could not be improved through instruction or maturation. In some ways similar to Piaget. Seashore felt ability was a constant, unaffected by teaching. Piaget also felt that understanding at a given age was largely unaffected by instruction. Clearly, the Seashore approach continues to have a great influence on how we think about an individual's abilities, and resulting understandings, in music.

I raise the historical significance of Seashore for another reason. I am from Iowa where Seashore served as the Dean of the Graduate College from 1909 through 1936 and again from 1942 through 1946. In fact, one of my predecessors in music administration at Iowa, Himie Voxman, who turns 90 this fall, was Seashore's Research Assistant in the 1930's. The stories Professor Voxman tells about the research process during that era

are remarkable. As it turns out, Seashore was a very humanistic individual, who established the first degrees in the performing, visual, and literary arts in the country, and fought an unsuccessful battle with faculty on my campus to allow Grant Wood to teach painting at Iowa. Clearly, history tells us that life is not always fair.

I have come to really appreciate the efforts of Seashore. In fact, I am not sure that his opinions about music perception and education were really that much different than Mursell's...but it has made a great story for the past fifty years or more.

Seashore and the great music education researchers through the 1930's, 40's, 50's and 60's continue to have a profound effect on our thinking. One need only reflect on the work of Robert Pezold at Wisconsin during the 1960's to understand how Seashore, and his contemporaries, developed some of the basic research premises that underpin our work today.

I have always felt that the enormously creative work by the Marilyn Pflederer Zimmerman at the University of Illinois during the 60's and 70's had a profound effect on how we think about music learning and helped us with our understanding of the future work of Howard Gardner. In many ways, our focus turned from the elements of music to the children we teach. We suddenly became aware of the need to focus on the learner and

the art form at the same time...a real dilemma...how do you do both?

I too took up the Piagetian theory, and continue to think the Piaget/Bruner connection is significant. Somehow, it merges the study of the child in relationship to the study of an understanding of the art form. Yet it is difficult. Anyone who has tried to teach the theories of Meyer, Langer and Reimer knows that at some point, the discussions of the special place of music in the world of aesthetics and understanding, that is, the unique symbolism inherent to the art form, is difficult to clarify. Who can understand it all? The same holds true for music cognition, especially with young children. What do we concentrate on? The child, the art form, the instructional process, extra-musical benefits?...very difficult indeed.

In the past I have attempted to use the Piagetian model with Suzuki students (1980, 1983), to investigate the cognitive-affective dualism as it relates to the very young (1983, 1985), and to outline contemporary views of the Piagetian model that address theories of information- processing or problem-solving (1987).

The theories of multiple intelligence proposed by Gardner have been helpful, giving me some frame of reference. Perhaps music learning is unique, I think to myself. At the same time, I have always worried, how can it be purely unique and still hold relevance in our contemporary

environment? Surely it has parallels in the human condition of learning. Yet somehow, I feel the urge to better understand both the unique nature of musical understanding and the relevance it has to the general life of the young child.

I have always been stumped. What do we mean by music learning in the young? How do we couple learning theory with traditional views on cognition? Why do we need to become extra-curricular and extra-musical in our quest? What is musical intelligence? We don't even have a clear understanding of what intelligence means.

In the past, my colleagues and I have presented research that has addressed musical analogical reasoning (1989, 1992, 2000b). These studies have assumed that the root of human intelligence, regardless of the specific content area (mathematics, music, linguistics, inter-personnel skills, etc.), has a common basis - a unified epistemology. These studies have assumed there is a common form of intelligence across domains and that there are common universal principles of intelligence. These studies assume the making of analogies does not grow out of human reasoning ability, but more fundamentally, stands at the very basis of thought that makes human reasoning possible. In some ways, these studies fly in the face of current theories of multiple intelligences and theories of mere perceptual acuity.

I wish I could lay claim to the rationale behind these assumptions. However, it has been Douglas Hofstadter at Indiana University who sums it up:

“One should not think of analogy-making as a special variety of reasoning (as in the dull and uninspiring phrase “analogical reasoning and problem-solving”, a long-standing cliché in the cognitive-science world), for that is to do analogy a terrible disservice. After all, reasoning and problem-solving have (at least I dearly hope!) been at long last recognized as lying far indeed from the core of human thought. If analogy were merely a special variety of something that in itself lies way out on the peripheries, then it would be but an itty-bitty blip in the broad blue sky of cognition. To me, however, analogy is anything but an itty-bitty blip - rather, it’s the very blue that fills the whole sky of cognition - analogy is every thing, or very nearly so, in my view” (Hofstadter, 2000, pp. 116-117).

What I can lay claim to is a series of studies that have opened my eyes and the concept behind the studies is quite simple. We give children of various ages a battery of spatial analogy tasks. You know the formula, A:B::C:D (see Nelson, et. al., 1989, 1992). Without going into all the details, you can imagine the permutations, levels of difficulty, and the obvious results that children

improve on these tasks as they grow older. We have done the same with some unique, purely aural, musical analogy tasks. Once again, with very similar results. Finally, by way of comparison, we give the children standardized batteries of music aptitude tests.

What is intriguing, at least to me, is that spatial and musical analogy making is developed by children at approximately the same rate, there are similar age-related levels of spatial and musical analogy making, the spatial and musical analogy making processes seem, at least theoretically, to be the same (with the exception that one is visual and the other is aural), and the ability to form the analogies does not necessarily parallel standardized aptitude profiles currently in use. Clearly, we are not looking at the ability of children to perceive music concepts. I think we are getting at something far more fundamental. I think we are getting at the common ground of intelligence, that is, the intersection of a common human understanding that is at the root of how we come to understand the world, whether in the musical domain, the spatial domain, or, as Hofstadter leads me to believe, any domain.

Even more important, however, is my belief that this line of research helps to demonstrate how our teaching of music to children should be considered on equal footing with all teaching

in all subject areas. Music is not merely a mechanism for fostering a child's understanding in other subject areas since, at its very roots, musical intelligence is inseparable from all other intelligence.

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Reflections on Some First Teaching Experiences

Amanda Sprague Hanzlik

There I was. Fresh from the University of Iowa, armed with my K-12 Music Education degree, lesson plans, methods textbooks, folk songs and my guitar. I was prepared to take on the world of general music and present these children with the most musically meaningful experiences of their young lives.

Then, I entered the pre-k classroom for the first time.

I was not prepared for what I was about to encounter. I had assisted with early childhood music classes in college, but parents were always present. This was a different story. The physical, emotional and social needs of the children all color and shape the music classroom. I quickly learned that in order to be able to deal with non-musical issues, boundaries, trust, comfort level and safety must be established.

So, I did what I knew to do. I chose an opening routine of welcome songs and rhymes to prepare everyone for music class. After a few classes, the songs and activities became a comforting routine. Things were moving along very well. Boundaries were clear, behavior expectations were set by myself and their classroom teachers, and the students were enjoying themselves. But there was a missing piece to the puzzle.

It took me several months to absorb what the children really wanted and needed from the music class experience. After much trial and error and exploration, I believe I have found what makes the best experience for my pre-k students.

Over the past two years of teaching music in pre-school, I have discovered that structure is not always the answer. Chaos is where much of the magic lies. I was so entrenched in my lesson plans and organization of what skills they should be learning, that the joy of exploration, creation and aesthetic experience was being lost in all of my good intentions.

So, when the 4 year olds ask for a particular song, we sing it. When they want to dance to "Sir Duke," we dance. When they are given the opportunity to play instruments of their own choice during "music center time" they leave inhibitions behind. The first time I watched little Nikki walk across the room, choose a shaker egg, close her eyes and sway to the beat of an African drum recording, I realized that allowing such behavior to flourish was more important than my pre-conceived idea of how the lesson should go. When the magic takes over, there is no room for my agenda, no matter how important it might seem at the time.

My goal is to create a safe environment where the students experience both structured and free play musical experiences. I continue to learn from my students about the joy and freedom they find within the musical experiences I provide for them.



DIVISION NEWS

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Kyllikki Rantala, Lecturer of Music Education at the University of Tampere in Finland, presented *Hip Hoi, Musisoi! Early Childhood Music Education in Finland* at the University of Oregon.

Randall Moore presented a research poster, *Influence of Singing Games on Primary School Children's Attentiveness and Attitudes in Music Classes*, at the 2002 OMEA Conference in Eugene, Oregon.

Kathleen Jacobi-Karna presented a research poster, *Assessment Contexts for Evaluating Young Children's Singing*, at the 2002 OMEA Conference in Eugene, Oregon.

SOUTHWESTERN DIVISION

(Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas)

Warren Henry

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The New Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning

• John Flohr edited the section on Neuroscience, Medicine and Music and wrote the chapter on Music and Neuroscience.

• Joyce Jordaon-DeCarbo and Jo Ann Nelson wrote the chapter on Music and Early Childhood Education

Texas Music Educators Association State Conference

Research Presentations:

Ruth Brittin, University of the Pacific, "'Pick a Drum:' Children's Preferences for Authentic and Adapted Musical Instruments."

John W. Flohr, Texas Woman's University; Diane C. Persellin, Trinity University; Daniel C. Miller, Texas Woman's University; Harry Meeuwssen and Roger deBeus, University of Texas at El Paso: "Music Listening and Four-Year Old Children."

Diane C. Persellin, Trinity University; Linda Smith, Woodstone Elementary School; Martha Klein and Emily Taguiam, Wetmore Elementary School: "An Investigation of the

Effects of Vocal Modeling on the Development of Singing Ability in Kindergarten Children."

Donald M. Taylor, The University of Texas at Austin: "The Effect of Musical Preference and Attractiveness on Teacher Expectations of African-American Boys in Third Grade."

SOUTHERN DIVISION

(Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia)

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Important News for SRIG Members

MENC RESEARCH PROJECT

Request for Proposals

(deadline: JULY 15, 2002)

Overview and Purpose: MENC: The National Association for Music Education will support a research project for the 2002-03 academic year to study issues related to the question "To what extent are the Pre-K *Opportunity to Learn Standards* being applied in day care and preschool settings in the United States?"

Issues relating to this topic that are of interest include: staffing - their preparation and background; curriculum - goals and objectives, activities, assessment strategies; resources - instruments, recorded music, repertoire, physical environment; delivery of curriculum - time devoted to music instruction, music throughout the daily schedule. Other issues that relate to the main question are welcome.

Budget: A stipend of \$4,000 will be awarded to the recipient, to be used at his or her discretion, but solely in support of the project. An initial disbursement of \$3,000 will be made to the grant recipient. The remaining \$1,000 will be disbursed upon receipt of the final report.

Timeline: The project must be completed between September 2002 and May 2003. A report must be prepared and submitted to the

MERC Chair by June 1, 2003. A final report of the research will be published by MENC at its discretion in the fall of 2003.

Deadline for submission of proposals: July 15, 2002.

Proposal Format:

1. Cover Page (single page): Name of principal investigator
Names of co-investigators
Project title
Academic affiliations of principal investigator
Abstract of the project (not to exceed 50 words)

2. Proposal (not to exceed three pages):
Purpose of the project
Description of research procedures
Plan for data analysis
Timeline or schedule for completing the grant

3. Budget

4. Principal investigator's curriculum vitae, not to exceed three pages.

Decision Process: A review committee of 3 - 4 members of the Music Education Research Council, as selected by the MERC Chair and the Chair-Elect, plus the NEB liaison to MERC. Additional reviewers may be appointed if special expertise is required for adequate review of the project.

Notification Date: Applicants will be notified of the review committee's decision by August 15, 2002.

Submission procedure: Send five copies of the entire proposal to Dr. Alice-Ann Darrow; MEMT Department; 448 Murphy Hall; University of Kansas; Lawrence, Kansas 66045. Register your submission by sending an e-mail to aadarrow@ku.edu to receive correspondence electronically. If you do not wish to use electronic communication, submit two self-addressed stamped envelopes to receive information by mail.



FACULTY MEMBER
CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR
EARLY INTERVENTION/CHILD DEVELOPMENT - Competition #02-020

UCC seeks a Research Chair in Early Intervention/Child Development to coordinate and initiate multi-disciplinary projects centered on early intervention with preschool and school-aged children. In collaboration with educational institutions and First Nations communities, these projects would complement education and child development research currently being undertaken by UCC faculty. Projects would build on the expertise of the Chair but could include school-based academic achievement, preschool development, social development, socioeconomic factors, and health issues, as they relate to success in school.

Additional information is available at http://www.cariboo.bc.ca/hr/addinfo_ei_supplement.html, and for more information contact the Vice President, Academic, Dr. C. Neil Russell, (email nrussell@cariboo.bc.ca)

Closing Date for Application: Review of applications begins 17 May 2002.
Commencement Date: As soon as a suitable candidate is available.

The minimum qualifications are a Ph.D. in a field related to the proposed Research Chair. Teaching experience at the undergraduate and graduate levels would be an asset. We are seeking scholars who have established a strong record of nationally funded research and who are considered emerging scholars with the potential to achieve national recognition within their field.

Research Chair nominations must be approved by the federal government's Canada Research Chair Secretariat before an offer of employment can be made.

The Canada Research Chairs program is a federal initiative intended to allow Canadian universities to achieve research excellence and to become world-class research centres in the global, knowledge-based economy. More information about the Research Chairs program can be found at www.chairs.gc.ca

For application information, please consult our website at <http://www.cariboo.bc.ca/>

Peter Gouzouasis, Ph.D. Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum Studies Coordinator of the Music Education Program & FAME, Fine Arts and new Media in Education cohort in the one year Teacher Education Program at UBC.

