

Shaping Time: Reclaiming preschool music education for art education

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Abstract

Often preschool music education practices are deeply rooted in music as a means for something other than music itself. Notably Young (2015) expressed a deep concern that current early childhood music education, notwithstanding the cultural differences of many practices, is generally constructed "in the image of developmental psychology". Biesta (2017) is worried that using art for other things than itself will take out the art of the arts: "the issue here is that instrumental justifications for the arts do not really care about art and are therefore quite vulnerable".

The aim of this theoretical investigation is to engage in dialogue about an inherent element of music: time. Music as an Art of Time. Through the extension of temporal representation to musical time, meaning through the very nature of music itself as a temporal art, (Stambaugh, 1964) and as such supporting the reclaiming of preschool music education for art education, thereby touching upon music pedagogical consequences for practice.

My major concern is the recognition of music in the preschool age as a valuable artistic endeavour. It prepares not only for later musical participation and appreciation but also provides artistic and aesthetic engagement in its own right in the present. An emerging idea is to "argue for greater attention to subjective [...] approaches to support [musical] growth that call for ontological orientations to pedagogy as a relationship [musical dialogue] rather than a response or an intervention" (Farquhar & White, 2014).

I will argue that it is of music pedagogical significance to denote musical time as an important artistic element, thereby deepening the role of movement as an inherent musical means - which can be regarded as equal to the shaping of musical or temporal elements - to engage into musical artistic dialogue. This way it is possible to allow artistic research related subjectivism and non-discursive methods into practice as music pedagogical elements. By acknowledging the role of the teacher who can bring important elements to the music educational scene (Biesta, 2017b), the shaping of musical time in preschool music education can become the encounter of the doing of musical art (Biesta, 2017).

Keywords preschool music education, temporal art, pedagogy, movement