

Editorial – Special issue: Emerging perspectives on instrumental and vocal pedagogy

A deepened consciousness of their situation leads people to apprehend that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation. [...] Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging the process of inquiry is one of violence. (Freire 2020 85)

Inquiry and transformation—the powerful words emphasized in Paulo Freire’s seminal work cited above—have been widely discussed as two of the most important elements of critical pedagogies in any learning field. In music, inquiry should be seen as crucial for the revival, understanding, and preservation of music traditions, but also in the creation of new and artistically unique works that can provide audiences with an inspiring message that resonates with different momentums in their lives. Inquiry-based learning can help both music students and professionals engage in critical questioning of why they do things in certain ways and how they could do them differently (e.g., Costes-Onishi & Kwek, 2023), using the knowledge and skills they have gained across their learning trajectories. Furthermore, inquiry—in the Freirean sense of awakening human consciousness—should also be seen as a key process in confronting abusive, difficult, oppressive, and/or unequal behaviors, which, unfortunately, still occur all too often in the music studio (e.g., Bradley & Hess 2022; Bull, Scharff & Nooshin 2023).

Yet, how can we ensure that music students can innovate in their music making while still appreciating existing music repertoires and, at the same time, are able to resist the power hierarchies and inequalities surrounding them? Which pedagogies would allow for students to inquire (and know and understand) about whether they are sufficiently agentic in their learning and personal/professional/artistic decision-making, or not? And, would such pedagogies lead to a real transformation in the music studio at all levels and in all stakeholders? These questions urgently need answers, particularly knowing that studio teaching is often based on outdated and ineffective pedagogies that tend to prevent students from engaging in such inquiry processes. Furthermore, despite much empirical research highlighting the need for transformative, critical, or otherwise constructive pedagogies, the amount of instruction applied to the development of autonomous, metacognitive, self-regulated, and intrinsically motivated music students is not as common as one may wish for in music education (e.g., Pozo, Pérez Echeverría, López-Íñiguez & Torrado 2022).

It is in the spirit of answering these and other related questions, and confronting the current pessimistic reality of instrumental/vocal education internationally, that this special issue was conceived in the first place. I wanted contributions that not only explore the most recent relevant research to support instrumental/vocal teachers in delivering individualized/group instruction, but also those that would 1) prioritize the physical and psychological health of music students through the inclusion of specific contents and practices related to developing both cognitive and social-emotional skills within a more “humanly compatible” learning environment (concept as defined in Thurman, 2000; see also Musumeci 2005), as well as 2) challenge the overused power hierarchies in the music studio in favor of more constructive and student-centered pedagogies (e.g., López-Íñiguez, Pérez Echeverría, Pozo & Torrado, 2022). I am glad to acknowledge that these topics have now been

approached in this special issue from the perspective of various disciplines and research questions through the valuable insights and contributions of 12 authors from Estonia, Finland, Israel, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. This issue is comprised of 5 peer-reviewed research articles, as well as reports of a diverse nature on current issues, that answer the questions I posed above in a variety of ways.

The Articles section of this special issue responds to the call in two main ways, as it not only offers instructional support strategies for teachers and students but also plenty of food for thought for all music education stakeholders regarding different types of social justice. Thus, the first two peer-reviewed papers correspond to recent doctoral research projects (in progress and completed, respectively) that aim at supporting either instrumental group tuition in music schools or individualized instrumental learning at all levels of music education. On the other hand, the remaining three papers by researchers at different career stages report on critical discussions of trauma and abuse in music education settings, or on facilitating training in music education for women who belong to rather closed communities and deserve (and are completely worthy of) a more active role within them. All in all, a collection of new, insightful, and (I dare say) brave perspectives.

The Articles section opens with Ida Knutsson, who—taking the publicly funded Swedish Art and Music Schools as her study context—discusses the concerns and strategies of teachers who want to support their students' musical progress in group lessons; it seems to be that achieving success in doing so largely depends on the teachers' pedagogical competencies and philosophical standpoints, which can be strikingly different. Next, Pedro A. Rodríguez Cortés and Amalia Casas-Mas analyze the motivation of pre-professional viola students at a Spanish conservatoire to learn a piece of atonal music from the 20th century, concluding that their pedagogical intervention, meant to support their understanding of different musical interpretations of this repertoire, facilitated the self-regulation processes of these students. In the following article, and as part of her larger doctoral project on the topic, Anna Ramstedt explores sexual misconduct and emotional abuse as experienced in music education settings by Finnish professional women musicians, discussing that this unsolved situation responds to certain sociocultural conditions, traditions, and practices related to the gender hierarchy of heteronormativity. Next, Cristine MacKie, Elizabeth Francis Edwards, and Helen Pote present an in-depth analysis of the psychological wellbeing of senior international piano teachers engaged in one-to-one tuition in higher education, particularly attending to how their earlier experiences of trauma as former students transferred to their teaching; in the light of their study, the authors acknowledge that the field of instrumental pedagogy is well behind the research that advocates for such humanly-compatible and student-centered perspectives described above. Finally, in her (auto-) ethnographic research, Naomi Perl presents the implications of a first-of-its-kind teacher education program to train women instrumental teachers from Israel's Haredi, an ultra-Orthodox Jewish community—a teacher training initiative that can be well-considered a real transformative act of social justice for women who belong to a patriarchal, highly traditional, anti-individualist, and minority group in Israel.

The Current Issues section includes a *Lectio Praecursoria* presenting a recent Sibelius Academy-based doctoral dissertation by a Finnish researcher, Tuula Jääskeläinen, whose dissertation, *Music students' experiences of workload, stress, and coping in higher education*, was successfully defended on April 15th, 2023 at the Helsinki Music Centre, and has produced multiple peer-reviewed articles of relevance for higher music education institutions. Jääskeläinen's work, which has been recognized in the form of various international awards, identified specific challenges associated with music students' coping with workload and stress, offering curriculum-oriented and policy-related recommendations to tackle the identified challenges at the university level. The *lectio* is naturally followed by the rich and thorough

statement on the dissertation by its opponent, Biranda Ford, who highlights the implications of the research for the entire music education community.

Finally, the Reports section offers an overview of the results of the Sweden-based doctoral dissertation of Carl Holmgren, *Dialogue lost? Teaching musical interpretation of western classical music in higher education*, which, framing his research within the Swedish higher education context, contributes to a better understanding of how dialogical interactions between students and teachers regarding the learning of musical interpretation should be strengthened to empower students in their artistic choices and professional endeavors. This is followed by Estonia-based doctoral candidate Kaisa J. Vähi from the Sibelius Academy's Mutri Doctoral School, who offers a comprehensive review of a recent Springer book for practitioners, *Learning and Teaching in the Music Studio—A Student-Centred Approach* (edited by J. I. Pozo, M. P. Pérez Echeverría, López-Íñiguez and Torrado), which, following a socio-cognitive constructivist framework, advocates for a radical change in the ways that music is taught and learned from infancy to adulthood, in individual and group situations, formally and informally, and with the aid of various repertoires and technologies.

To conclude my editorial comments on this special issue, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank the 16 external international reviewers who generously helped me with this issue; their excellent work in ensuring the quality of the articles that the Finnish Journal of Music Education (FJME hereinafter) publishes has been a determining factor in its success. Similarly, I thank the FJME editorial board and production team for the kind invitation to act as editor for this issue, and for a smooth publication process. Last, but not least, I sincerely hope that, considering the contents presented in this issue, the readers of FJME can gain new insights into both the current state and possible future of instrumental and vocal pedagogy. It is imperative that music students, teachers, and institutional leaders at all levels of music education not only acknowledge the need for the kind of (both smaller and larger) radical changes that are discussed in the pages that follow this editorial, but also embrace a critical spirit of inquiry (and action!) for a real, and much needed transformation in the music studio. ■

References

Bradley, D. & Hess, J. (eds.). 2022. Trauma and resilience in music education: Haunted melodies. Routledge.

Bull, A., Scharff, C. & Nooshin, L. (eds.). 2023. Voices for change in the classical music profession. Oxford University Press.

Costes-Onishi, P. & Kwek, D. 2023. Inquiry-based learning in music: Indicators and relationships between key pedagogical practices and the quality of critical thinking. *Research Studies in Music Education* 45, 2, 362–378.

Freire, P. 2020. Pedagogy of the oppressed, 30th anniversary edition. Continuum.

López-Íñiguez, G., Pérez-Echeverría, M. P., Pozo, J. I. & Torrado, J. A. 2022. Student-centred music education: principles for improving learning and teaching. In J. I. Pozo, M. P. Pérez-Echeverría, G. López-Íñiguez & J. A. Torrado (eds.), *Learning and teaching in the music studio. A student-centred approach. Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education*, vol 31. Springer, 369–385.

Musumeci, O. 2005. Hacia una educación auditiva humanamente compatible. ¿Sufriste mucho con mi dictado? [Towards a humanly compatible auditory education. Did you suffer a lot from my dictation? Actas de las Primeras Jornadas de Educación Auditiva [Proceedings of the First Conference on Hearing Education]. Universidad Nacional de La Plata, 1–26.

Pozo, J. I., Pérez-Echeverría, M. P., López-Iñiguez, G. & Torrado, J. A. (eds.) 2022. Learning and teaching in the music studio. A student-centred approach. Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education, vol 31. Springer.

Thurman, L. 2000. Human-compatible learning. In L. Thurman & G. Welch (eds.), *Bodymind and voice: Foundations of voice education*. The VoiceCare Network, 188–301.