

## Equity, diversity and inclusion reflected by early childhood teacher students from a creative listening task

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### ABSTRACT

The application of music at a virtual training program (60 ECTS) according to a professional qualification for a kindergarten teacher in Finland, in 2019-2020, created a ground for the current research. The students were complementing their prior social services qualification, to receive a qualification for an early childhood teacher, with 60 ECTS on early childhood education. This research focused on one of the asset-oriented courses at the curriculum, “Diversity and special nature of early childhood education” (10 ECTS), with the arrow set for a 3 ECTS subsection “Cultural diversity”. The goals of the whole course were set for the comprehension of a child’s individual needs in multi-professional networks, and for gaining the competences to work among early childhood education, with respect towards the strengths of different kinds of children, families, cultures and views of education. For the purposes of this research, a small music-integrated virtual task (0.5 ECTS) was being observed. The students’ tasks were analyzed as research data (N=53). Finally, a holistic view for music in early childhood teaching was created via a bridge to a prior research (Marjanen, 2016) according to the early childhood music teachers’ views on their work motivation and comprehension of music in a child’s life. A dialogue was created with “The Multisensory Musical Design”-model (MMD, Marjanen, 2021), to close the research. During this interactive task process, high interests towards music integration in early childhood education were shown, pointing out to the same comprehension with the early childhood music teachers.

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## 1 Introduction

During the prenatal phase and in early childhood, the grounds and starting attitudes for other people are created. The closest people at our surroundings have a strong impact for these, meaning firstly, the domestic influence, and immediately after that, the early childhood education environment, being built of the people within these surroundings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1995). The connection with higher education, and the teacher training programs becomes essential in this sense: a message from the degree programs is being transmitted with students and future teachers, to face the children and their families. In this paper, the focus is set for the early childhood teacher training, with these teachers to offer the first step for a child from domestic to the external world: it should be safe. Here, it is argued that safety in various performances can be musically supported, connected with the surrounding atmosphere. It is also expressed as a worrying argument, that music is, not necessarily or always being automatically inherent in higher education, or the design of the music course contents and targets may not find proper surfaces at the educational framework as possibilities to meet the requirements of the working life. It is a problem, as all teachers need musical skills, and without the compulsory courses, with music only as an option, the music courses may be mainly chosen by the ones already knowing a lot of music, which is, of course, considered positive, but creates a gap for the needs of other students.

At the Multisensory Musical Design (MMD, Marjanen, 2021), music was being described with emotional and mental qualities, and as a support in interaction and learning. On the basis of a wide theory, the experiences of music were explained in bodily, emotional and cognitive processes to leave an imprint in our holistic being. This can be also explained from the music education

point of view, with connections between the musical-linguistic elements (Brown, 200; Ludke & Weinmann, 2012; Patel, 2008), in integrative dialogues (Gruber, 2019), and our world of experiences, in the form of the three basic elements of the MMD: faces, spaces and timelines (Marjanen, 2021). Music can be defined as natural needs for each of us, and should be better benefitted in education and learning, in general.

The aim of this paper was to share an example of a virtual task at a virtual course on early childhood education, with one of the group performances (2019), to learn about the phenomena under [cultural] diversity, presumably connected with Tacit Knowledge (Polanyi, 1983) and Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). The task instruction created a learning dialogue for the students from about similar backgrounds, with further details collected from them. Their musical-artistic backgrounds varied, being mainly at a “general” level without any special expertise, and their prior core professional comprehension came from the practices of early childhood teaching.

## 2 The Multisensory Musical Design

### 2.1 Philosophical approaches for music and listening

Music is here being observed as sound-based, multisensory interaction and dialogue. Music as sounds connects us in life, with the nature, and other people. Musical processes cover the child’s development, with qualities for interaction, and as a support for the child’s abilities to structure life, due to “the tonal center”, and to get an experience of the surrounding linguistic and musical cultures, towards “the musical-linguistic fingerprint” (Krumhansl, 1990; Patel, 2008; Rosch, 1973, 1975). Ketovuori (2007) describes competent integrative knowledge as a core value for human consideration, transformation, understanding and appreciation, supported by the imaginative play in art, science mastery and ethics imitation. Cslovjecssek & Zulauf (2018) resulted in an idea of the processes of personal, cultural and disciplinary competences in developmental dialogues, to explain music integration.

According to Christensen (2012a), “music creates time” (p. 325). He talks about a musical timespace, especially as experiences through listening dimensions. The basic listening dimensions are grounded on the biological basis of listening, and in the five basic listening dimensions due to the five properties of sound: intensity, timbre, pitch, movement and pulse, which of intensity is being explored as a fundamental dimension in listening in his approach. For the identification of sounds, timbre is phenomenal, with a pitch as a property of musical sounds. The microtemporal musical appearances, intensity, timbre and pitch, are perceived instantly, and the macrotemporal dimensions, movement and pulse, evoke experience in time. The regularity of sounds is grounded on pitch and pulse, and the changes in sound are experienced in timbre and movement. (Christensen, 2012b, p.105.)

Besides the basic listening dimensions, it is also important to underline, that music connects in 1) states, events and transformations; 2) space, time, flow and memory; 3) time, space and the environment; 4) the microtemporal listening dimensions; 5) the macrotemporal listening dimensions; 6) density and color of the soundspace; and 7) the final model, a micromodulation of sound, meaning the interaction of pulsation and a timbral spectrum, with the five basic listening dimensions, and the four secondary listening dimensions – melody, rhythm, harmony and micromodulation. Music is a continuous flow to appear and disappear. (Christensen, 2012b, pp.105-107.) Marjanen (2021) describes the meanings of sound experiences at the Multisensory Musical Design. These kinds of musical qualities are being experienced already at the prenatal phase, despite of the culture in question. Sounds connect all people and offer us a capacity to foster our societies towards inclusion, and a comprehension of the human nature. Sounds also direct us towards the variety of ways of knowing, reflected in a deep-level experience of humanly oriented, “soft” values of life. They need to be inherent in learning and in education, starting from higher education, and to connect all levels of education, starting from early childhood education. (Marjanen, 2021.)

### 2.2 The interactive musical components from learning to teaching

Because of the beauty of music as a value itself, and via the added value gained from music, the elements of music support a child’s holistic learning processes to deal with social, emotional, cognitive and aesthetic development, and the comprehension of ethical and cultural laws (Marjanen, 2021). Shared musical and sound-based experiences start from the interaction between the mother and a child, strengthening the attachment being described by Bowlby in 1982 (Marjanen, 2009). Transversal learning results are being explored in the brain, and explored through cognitive, emotional and bodily processes at the limbic system of the brain (Hannaford, 2004, pp. 42-43). Learning deals with a flow experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008), and Tacit Knowledge

(Polanyi, 1983). Due to a power of music, creative performances and pedagogies can be developed, to support inclusion and equity, and help understand diversity, explored in unity and as a part of human societies (Marjanen, 2021).

For the qualities of teaching, abilities to respond to a child's/student's needs are needed. A teacher's knowledge is constructed of situational knowledge, didactic knowhow, common sense, asset information, and theoretical and pedagogical comprehension (Anttila, 2011, 2017; Varto, 2000, pp. 138–167) as well as the ability to respond and support the learners' multiple intelligences (Pöyhönen, 2011). At the societal-cultural levels, national curricula for teaching, and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF, European Commission, 2008) with the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills (ATC21S, 2009–2012, "21st Century Skills"; Binkley, Erstad, Herman, Raizen, Ripley, Miller-Ricci & Rumble, 2012; see also <http://www.battelleforkids.org/networks/p21>) provide us with a solid framework. These can be comprehended through music, and thus fostered musically.

### 2.3 The Structure of the Multisensory Musical Design

Diving into a musical experience may be needed to value the musical phenomena. The Multisensory Musical Design model is being described in 1) Faces, with musical encounters as holistic experiences; 2) Spaces, learning surrounded by sounds; and 3) Timelines, with learning processes regulated, and dealing with music in time. These are explained with references to musical elements, in a framework to connect prenatal multisensory sound experiences, the tonal center and musical-linguistic fingerprint, music and arts in learning, and the learning processes connected with body and brain, the mind and emotions, and the cognition and awareness. (Marjanen, 2021.) As a core phenomenon to explain these dialogical connections, the significance of expectation is being emphasized (Nussbaum, 2012), with strong connections to the experience of music in time, space and faces, to support musical communication and atmosphere for learning. The expertise in music needs to be disseminated and explored in other approaches for music, from the backgrounds with multiple scientific disciplines, to find music in building bridges and to connect. (Marjanen, 2021.) Music needs to be comprehended as a value and an innate capacity to support the learning and wellbeing, and the inclusion, equity and diverse sounds as explored from individual background, to connect. Please see Figure 1 to briefly describe the model:

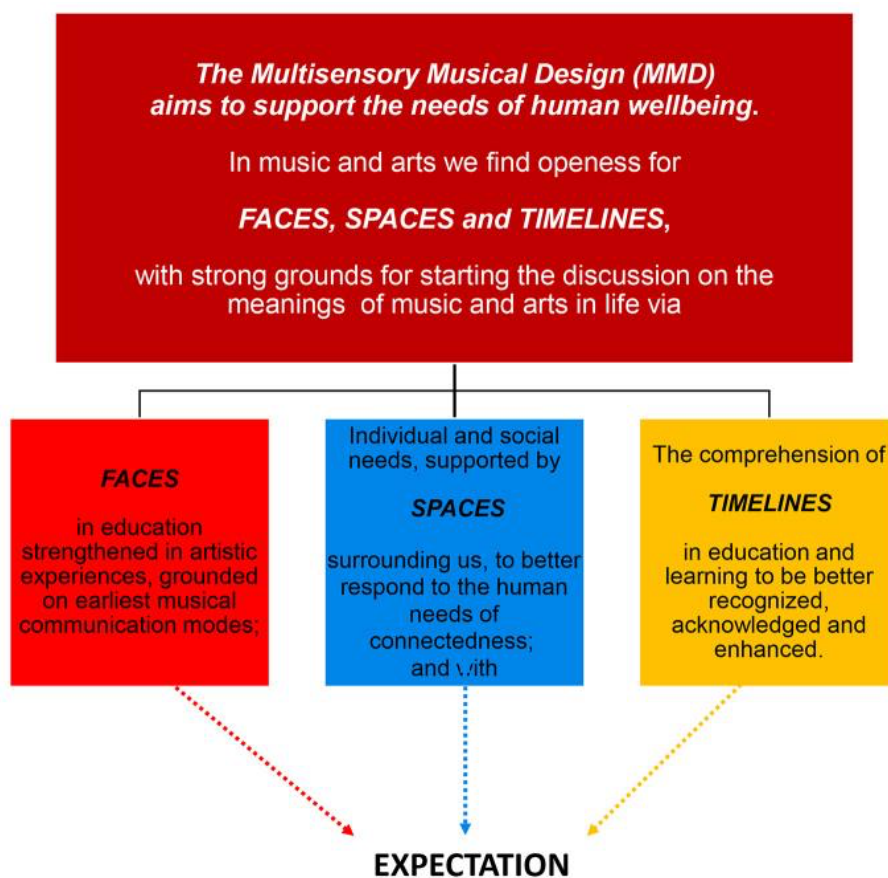


Figure 1. The elements of MMD in brief (Marjanen, 2021).

### 3 The European Quality Framework (EQF, 2008) through music

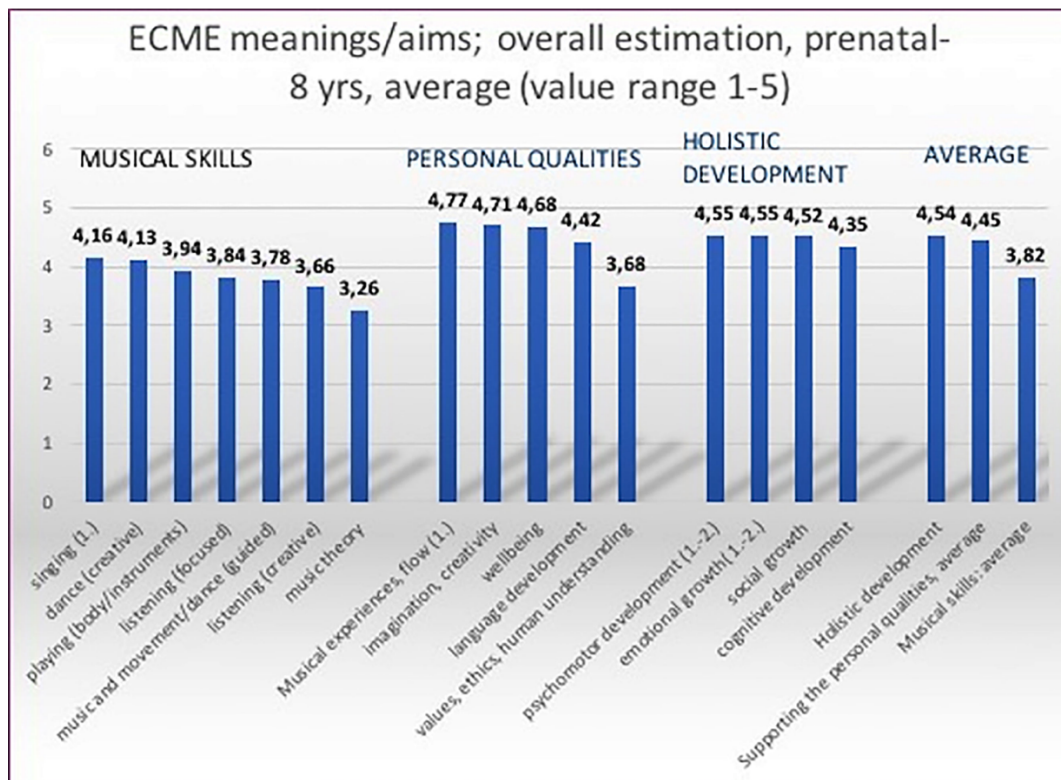
At the European Quality Framework (EQF, 2008), quality of higher education is set as a focus at the European level, with a shared understanding of the three basic requirements to create a space for higher education at various levels. The quality of education is comprehended to be guaranteed by the accessing and connecting higher education implementations with knowledge, skills and [professional] competence. From the grounds of music as a wide interactive element in life, music needs to be observed 1) as art, skill and experience (Dewey, 2008/1983), music as pedagogies and didactics (Dillon, 2006; Elliott et al., 2000; Gruber, 2012; 2019), 2) as philosophy, science, and way of knowing (Cslovjecsek & Zulauf, 2018; Elliott, 1995; Ketovuori, 2007; Honing et al., 2015; Huotilainen, 2017; Regelski, 2016), and 3) as a feature connecting with growth and development of professional identity (Hannaford, 2004; Hargreaves et al., 2012). Musical sounds would seem to be connecting greatly with a living music relationship, which might serve as a learning-oriented, interactive and dialogical element, and thus help the prospective teacher to better access the goals set (EQF, 2008) for education (Marjanen, 2021) at the European level.

### 4 Goal of the research

Music has been widely shown to connect learning and life (Costes-Onishi, 2019; Honing, ten Cate, Peretz, & Trehub, 2015; Huotilainen, 2004; Linnavalli, Putkinen, Lipsanen, Huotilainen, & Tervaniemi, 2018), and pass on tacit knowledge (Marjanen & Cslovjecsek, 2014). However, the modern education system tends to neglect intergenerational experience, by simultaneously weakening our possibilities to understand the ingredients of good life: truth, beauty and goodness (Ketovuori & Marjanen, 2020). Teaching music might be important in this regard, but it is often found challenging. How to better access the benefits of music, and the professional didactical-pedagogical comprehension to find courage in teaching music?

The majority of Finnish classroom teacher students were found out to not find themselves competent in teaching music – only 6% of 392 classroom teacher students felt qualified for music teaching. This can be explained from the cutting out of music courses and teaching hours at the degree programs for classroom teachers from 160 hours during the 1980s, to the current 40-80 hours as a whole, depending on the university in question. (Suomi, 2019.) At the daycare centers, arts teaching does not follow the book of the national curriculum for early childhood education. Music was found as strongest of the fields of arts education, with musical activities performed weekly (61%), daily (29%) or monthly or more rarely (10%), but however, only this 29% of the respondents reported of planned musical activities. Thin identity for music teaching, external services used for music education, and especially lack of support for the use of music with under 3-year-olds were found as orientations to require further support (Repo, Paananen, Eskelinen, Mattila, Lerkkanen, Gammelgård, Ulvinen, Marjanen, Kivistö & Hjelt, 2019, pp. 91, 94-95.)

Especially at the level of professional music teaching, also the children's linguistic development has been found out being significantly enhanced (Linnavalli et al., 2018). Musically oriented classes encourage children towards happiness (Virtala, Torppa, Linnavalli, Huotilainen, & Tervaniemi, 2017), and music can be found as a core phenomenon to reflect in a confidential atmosphere (Marjanen, 2015). Finnish early childhood music educators were shown to understand the phenomenon of music at very deep levels. They comprehended music learning towards the musically set goals, with the learning of musical skills, to deal with well-being, the child's individual qualities and holistic development, which were pointed out as a motivation to teach music for small children. This is described in Figure 2 below, including also the aspect of language development (Marjanen, 2016.) What kind of qualifications are then needed to access the core of music as a support at the field of education, starting from the early childhood education performances?



**Figure 2.** The Finnish early childhood music educator motivation for work as a whole (Marjanen, 2016).

In the current research, the interests were set for the musical orientations and qualities in early childhood teacher training and being observed from a targeted example created from an individual, virtually performed, small task designed from the current, wide theoretical grounds (Marjanen, 2021; Marjanen et al 2020a; 2020b). The task was the smallest part (0,5 ECTS) of a section titled “Cultural diversity” (3 ECTS), under a course “Diversity and special nature of early childhood education” (10 ECTS). This course was a part of the qualification for an early childhood teacher (60 ECTS), designed as a Continuing Professional Development course setup virtually as a whole, and developed for the social service professionals with working life experience in Finland.

The research was directed from the set question: *How to foster students’ virtual learning processes towards equity, diversity and inclusion in the form of a creative listening task?* The research construction was supported with explorations from the theory, the course design and the methods created. Approaches were connected with the factors for:

- recreating abilities to encounter the other and reveal oneself (“Faces”);
- comprehension of cultural and individual spaces in experiences and in learning (“Spaces”); and
- understanding various timelines in learning to respond when teaching, or as dialogues created (“Timelines”).

At the MMDesign (Marjanen, 2021), connections from the musical-linguistic elements were created to support the musical communication and atmosphere, and access the significance of tones of sounds for imagination, comprehension of knowledge, sense of trust, motivation, self-confidence, wellbeing, social interaction abilities, flow and experiences, recognition abilities, ars-based skills, synchronization, listening and expressing, domestic-cultural awareness and human-oriented values” (p.33). These concepts can be observed as components or structures for equity, diversity and inclusion, created out of the musical-linguistic elements, and the examples given in the model might have been continuing to include the phenomena at the core of this research. The three MMD core phenomena were observed as elements to foster the students’ targets set for the comprehension of equity, diversity and inclusion, through music-integrated dialogical working processes, on the grounds of the task assignment instructions.

## 5 Method

The research was performed directly with an analysis for the data gained in the course design, with the returned tasks and an e-questionnaire to observe the experiences and results of learning, supported with the Multisensory Musical Design (Marjanen,

2021). The whole of the training program was performed virtually, and the support of the pedagogical documents worked as important data sources, with the performance of the early childhood education national curriculum (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2017, 2019), and other curricula modes connected, such as the arts education (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2018) and the music education curricula, with local implementations. The aim was also set for the needs of including experience-based tasks and comprehension as a part of the virtual learning processes, supported by the group discussion design. The teacher students' learning was also observed from the goals set at the European Quality Framework, education level 6, candidate exam, qualities (European Commission, 2008), reaching for 1) knowledge: advanced knowledge of work or study, with critical understanding of theories and principles; 2) skills: advanced skills, reflecting mastery and innovation, towards solving complex and unpredictable, specialized problems; and 3) [professional] competence: managing complex, technical or professional activities... responsibilities of decision making... and professional development of individuals and groups. From the experience of the course performance (Autumn 2019), it was shown, that these students were clearly different from the average at the current framework: they showed an exceptionally strong interest towards the arts experience for a child's learning and wellbeing. This caused a need to look for their backgrounds and their work values and motivation in detail. At the e-questionnaire, the aim was set to connect the students' background history, their prior competences and attitudes for music and music education, and their self-confidence and deep-level motivation towards the use of music in early childhood education, without a supposed pedagogical or artistic specialization for music or arts. At the questionnaire, these were clarified to interpret their conceptions.

## 5.1 The task performance to create research evidence

At the task instruction, the students were asked to 1) choose freely, by their own principles, five of the 50 given musical/sound-based samples to represent various cultures, timelines, and musical genres widely, and listen them as focused as possible, even supported by the use of headphones. 2) After a pause with individual regulation after this listening, they were asked to describe, express and interpret their comprehensions of the chosen musical samples, connected with culture, life, mankind, or other such dimension to connect with, to create something as a reflection of these five samples, one of each: a story, poem, painting, drawing, video, song, etc. 3) As the last step for the individual process, these students were asked to create a crystallization of these five performances, to bring out their comprehension of diversity as a result of this listening-integration, connected with their work as an early childhood teacher. These crystallizations, with the process parts 1-3, were then returned at a discussion area at Optima learning environment. At the final step (4), the students discussed about the questions according to the course targets, with the defined goals of this particular task for learning to describe, express and interpret the artistic messages of cultural diversity, as a strength in education and fostering, and for the abilities to process, reflect and understand Tacit Knowledge (Polanyi, 1983) in musical integration and as a part of experience-based processes (cf. Csikszentmihalyi, 2008). The task was closed in an e-lecture with the final conclusions, and information on the musical sounds, and music in teaching and learning, with the support of the MMD (Marjanen, 2021).

## 5.2 Data

The research data was constructed of the teacher students' (Autumn 2019: n=53) listening reflections as music-integrated and artistically processed tasks returned, towards the dialogues created at the "Optima" learning environment, virtually. It was supported by the e-questionnaire (N=23), which, in this paper is being observed as the main data. The task design, the course materials and the curricula, with the connections for the EQF 6-7, especially level 6 (European Commission, 2008), and the 21<sup>st</sup> learning environments (ATC21S, 2009–2012; European Commission, n.d.; European Commission, 2008, pp. 14–15; Griffin, McGaw, & Care, 2012) supported the goals of the current research, towards a bridge for the MMD theoretical design (Marjanen, 2021).

## 6 Results

The emphasis here was set for the description of the framework as a whole, to direct our comprehension towards the results, and to explain them. The research results were designed from the main structures of the MMD (faces, spaces and timelines), to answer the set question "*How to foster students' virtual learning processes towards equity, diversity and inclusion in the form*

*of a creative listening task?*” This was being explored from the whole of this philosophy, theory and pedagogy, as described in this paper. The results point out, on the grounds of the group’s expressions and ways of participating the task, and this research participation, as an optional choice, that we should raise our expectations towards significant learning experiences. The students’ course experiences towards a targeted motivation for a deep level comprehension and music integrated processes described within their tasks, created a condition for the virtual discussions performed. Their own course assignments did not always connect with their views for the child’s needs among early childhood education, pointing out for a need for more profound music-oriented courses as a part of their professional goals. Here, some details are presented, to describe their attitudes for music in early childhood education, to consider the course learning experiences as reflections for the prospective teachers’ future work orientations. The final results were explored in comparison to the prior research for early childhood music teachers (Marjanen, 2016).

## 6.1 Background information

The respondents (N=23) were from 26 to 55 years of age, with the majority of them being 41-50-year-olds (n=7), or 31-35-year-olds (n=6). Only one of the respondents was under 30 years old, and the others were 36-40, or 51-55-year-olds. Their educational background was from the applied sciences of universities, and a few had also studies for various fields of arts education (one music playschool teacher, one with ongoing studies for visual arts master’s degree). The educational background reflected a general interest and comprehension of the meanings of education, due to the continuum of studies or courses in their lives after the professional qualification for socionom gained.

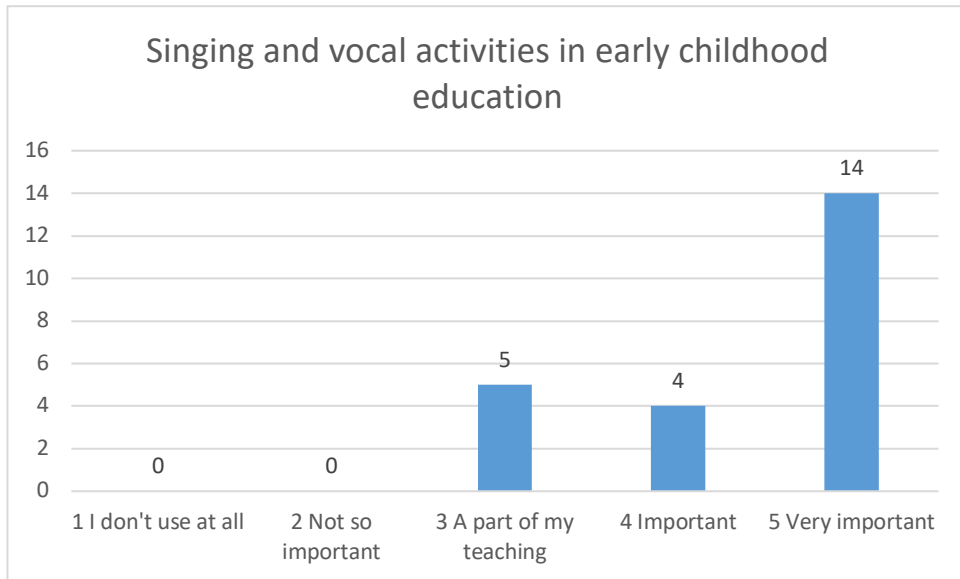
On the basis of the questionnaire, the students were interested in music as hobbies (singing or choir (n=9), dancing (n=4), piano or organ playing (n=4), drama (n=3), guitar playing (n=2), some other instrument (n=5), visual arts (n=5), handicraft (n=10), or group musicking (n=2). They considered their musical skills at the scale from not skilled to excellent skills being from not skilled to laudable, except for singing, which was estimated from a wider range, from not skilled to excellent, mostly satisfying. Besides singing, they were asked to estimate instrumental skills for various musical instruments.

The language skills of the students were strongest in Finnish, but it wasn’t the mother tongue for one student, coming from Estonia. The linguistic repertoire included skills for Swedish, English (being estimated as strongest of the foreign languages), German, French, Estonian, Bulgarian, Russian, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Czech language. Despite of this wide repertoire for languages, none was able to understand the Same language, which is, however the third of the official languages in Finland, besides Finnish and Swedish.

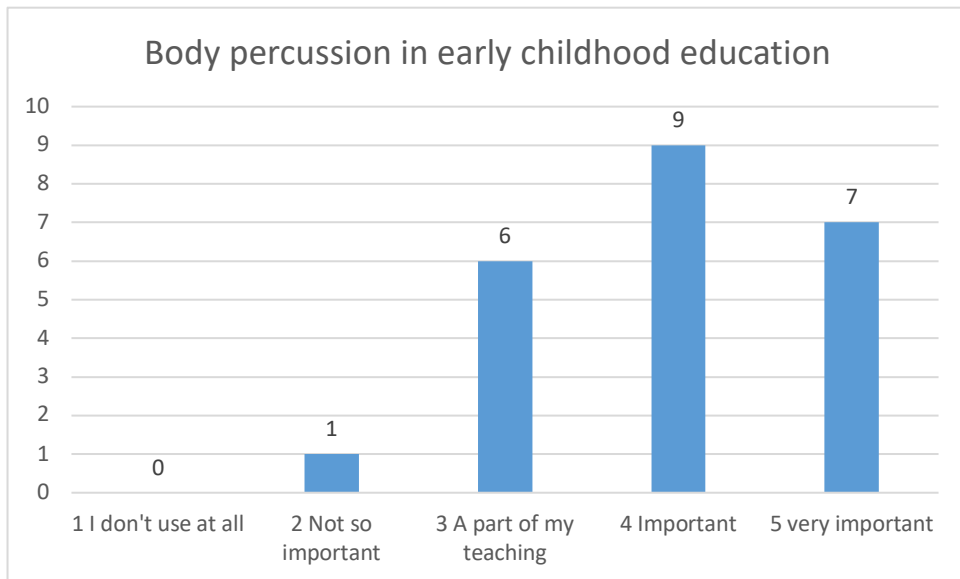
## 6.2 Musical activities and music integration in early childhood education

Students’ experiences of active musical functions in early childhood education were clarified in the e-questionnaire. On the basis of the questionnaire, singing and vocal activities were found important, besides the body percussion. Please see Tables 1 and 2 below. Opinions for Orff instruments, kantele and other folk instruments, piano and keyboards, or other instruments were divided, and some respondents also referred to the fact that there were no musical instruments available at the day care centers.

**Table 1.** Importance of singing and vocal activities in early childhood (N=23).



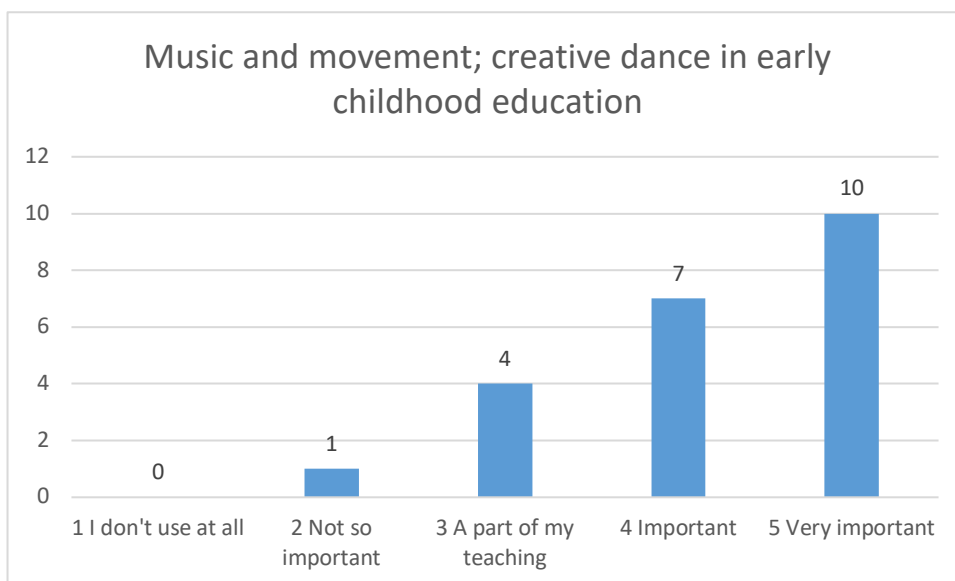
**Table 2.** Importance of body percussion in early childhood (N=23).



Moving to music and dance were found easily available, and creative dance was found supportive and important (see Table 3 below), whereas opinions for guided dance varied more: seven of the respondents found it not important or did not use it at all, when 13 respondents considered guided dance important or very important, and one considered it as a part of normal teaching.

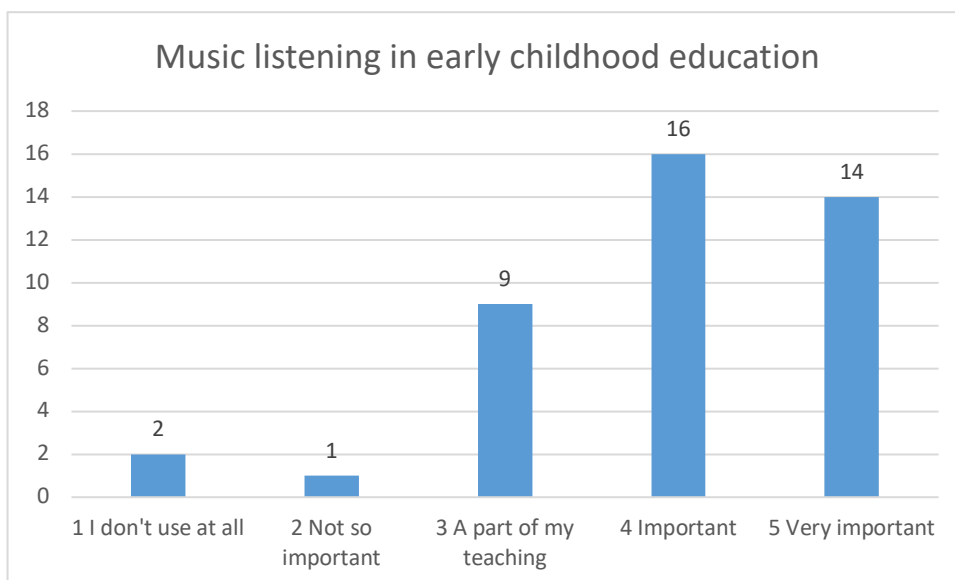


**Table 3.** Music and movement & creative dance as a part of early childhood education (N=23).



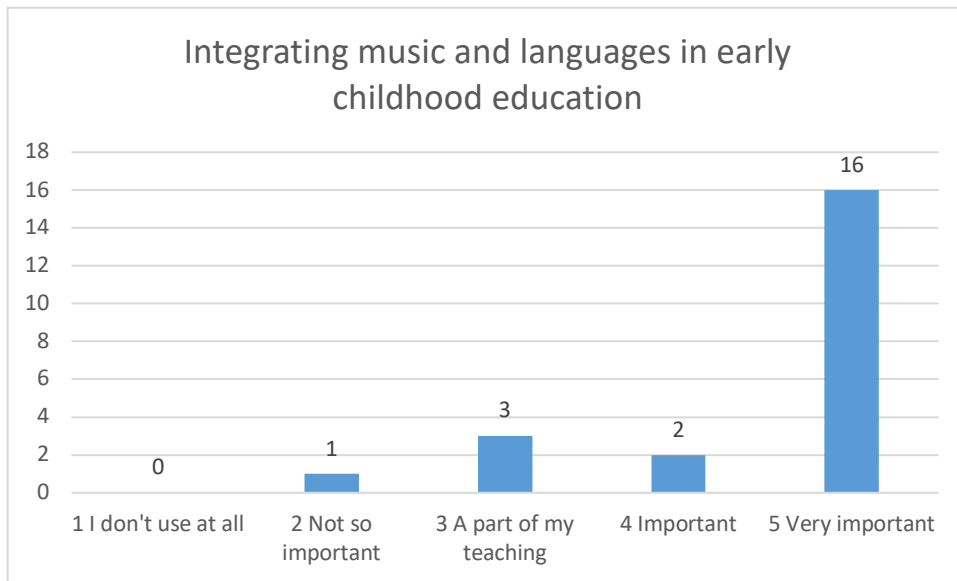
Listening as focused (n=18) or creative (n=21) was found important, with estimations varying between “a part of my teaching, important or very important. This is being described in Table 4 below.

**Table 4.** The importance of creative and focused music listening in early childhood education(N=23).



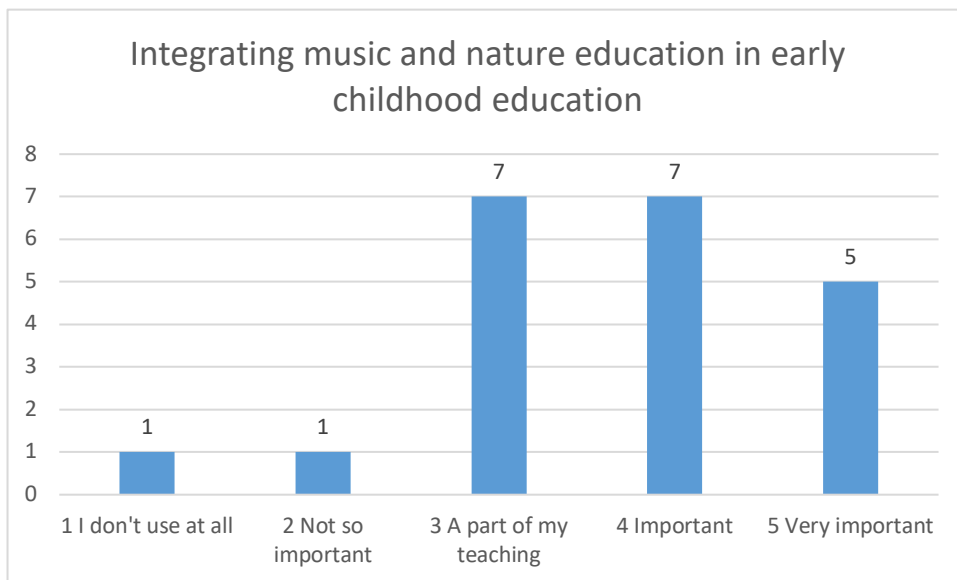
Opinions for integrating music and visual arts in early childhood education were divided, but mainly going towards the positive direction, being at the scale from 1-5 mainly estimated from 3-5 (n=16). The integration of music and languages, however, was found clearly important, as shown in Table 5 below. Also, music as stories (n=19) was found important (evaluations from 3-5), but opinions for music and drama integration varied: six respondents did not use it at all, and two didn't find it important.

**Table 5.** The importance of integrating music and languages in early childhood education (N=23).



Music and religious education were found the least important in in early childhood education: 13 of the respondents did not do it at all. On the contrary for this, integration of music and nature education was found important. Please see Table 6 below.

**Table 6.** Integrating music and nature education in early childhood education (N=23).



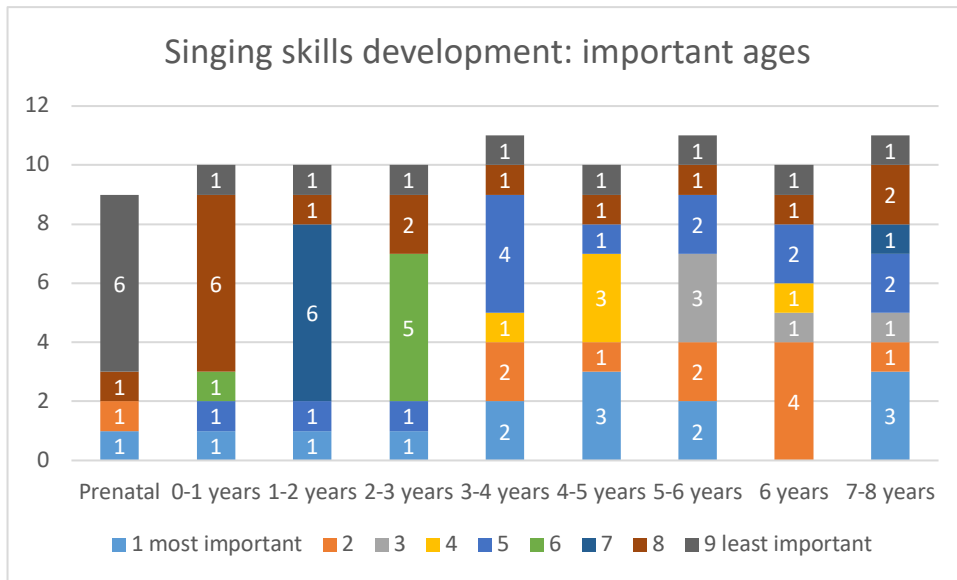
Music technology, composing or creative processing, directing of music of other ways of music were not shown as especially important on the basis of this questionnaire.

## 6.2 Musical development

Students' attitudes and motivation for the comprehension of a child's musical development was observed for the fields of singing skills and vocal development, for instrumental skills, for the learning of music theory, and from the background of musical experiences. Also, the parallel development of language and music, motor development in music, and cognitive, emotional, and social development were observed. Motor development, cognitive, emotional and social development were found equally important on the basis of this e-questionnaire.

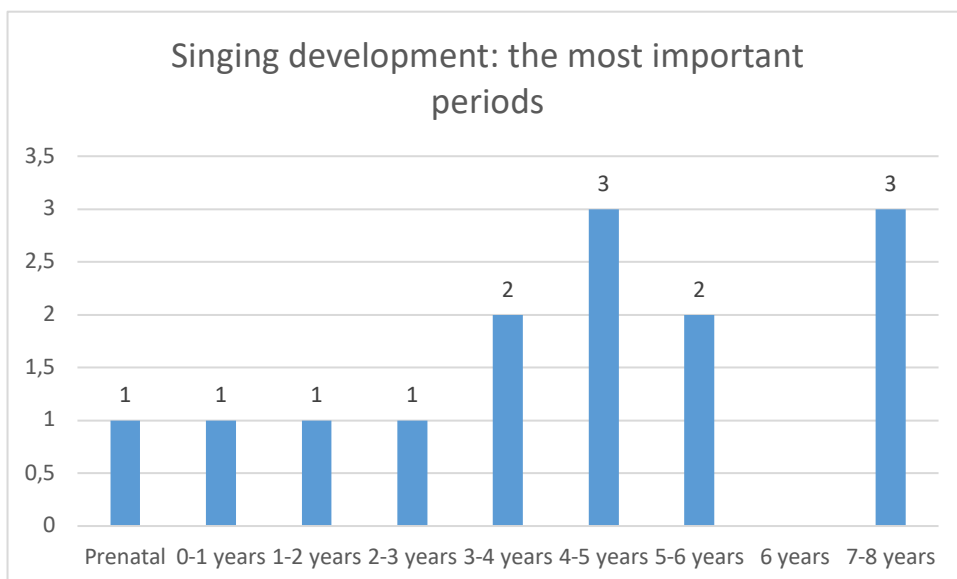
In Table 7, singing skills are being observed for various ages (please see below). It is surprising to see, that singing skills were not found as especially important among the youngest children, in the middle of the mother-tongue acquisition processes. It was also shown that the conceptions of singing skills were missing theoretical grounds to support the estimations: no clear peaks were shown in these responses. However, as musical activities, singing and vocal activities, integration of music and languages, and music listening were found very important. This raises questions.

**Table 7.** Development of singing skills with important ages.



The development of singing was estimated by age groups, as most important period, which also shows the differences in opinions. Please see further in Table 8 below. This also requires further input in education performances, and as questions to explore further, in wider frameworks. The theory of singing and language development should have been known by these students, but they were not able to connect it with the practices of the pedagogical responsibilities as instructed by the theory, with the most important language acquisition processes connected with music already starting at the earliest developmental phases (as shown in the references at Marjanen, 2009).

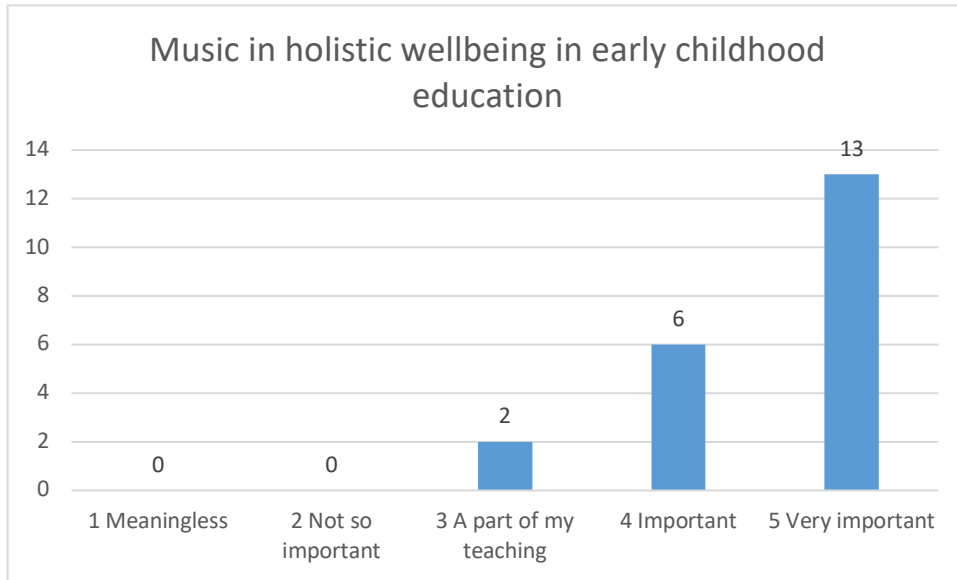
**Table 8.** Development of singing skills: the most important developmental periods.



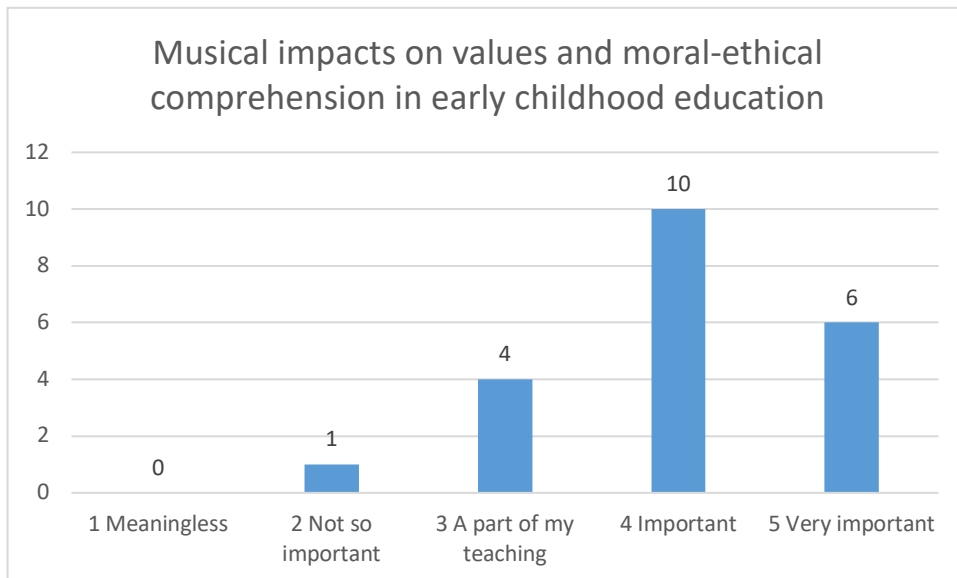
### 6.3 Holistic meanings of music

Musical experiences and flow and fostering imagination and creativity in early childhood education were found phenomenal: 17 respondents found these both very important (with estimation at the scale from 1 to 5, chosen for 5), and five respondents considered them important, or a part of their teaching. Music was found important for holistic wellbeing (at the given scale, between 3-5: n=21), and for values, and moral-ethical comprehension, between 3-5: n=20). These are described in Tables 9 and 10 below.

**Table 9.** Music and holistic wellbeing (N=23).

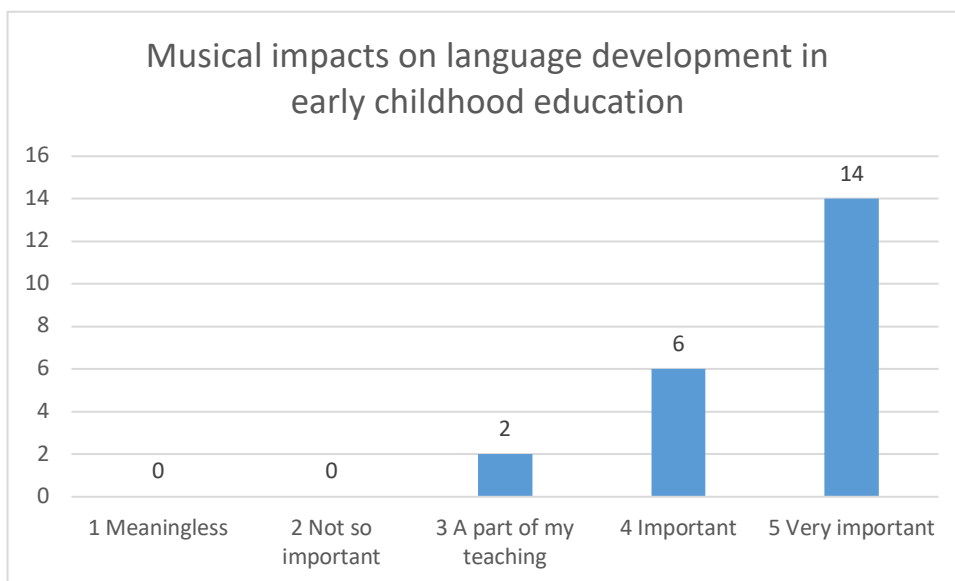


**Table 10.** Music with values and moral-ethical comprehension (N=23).



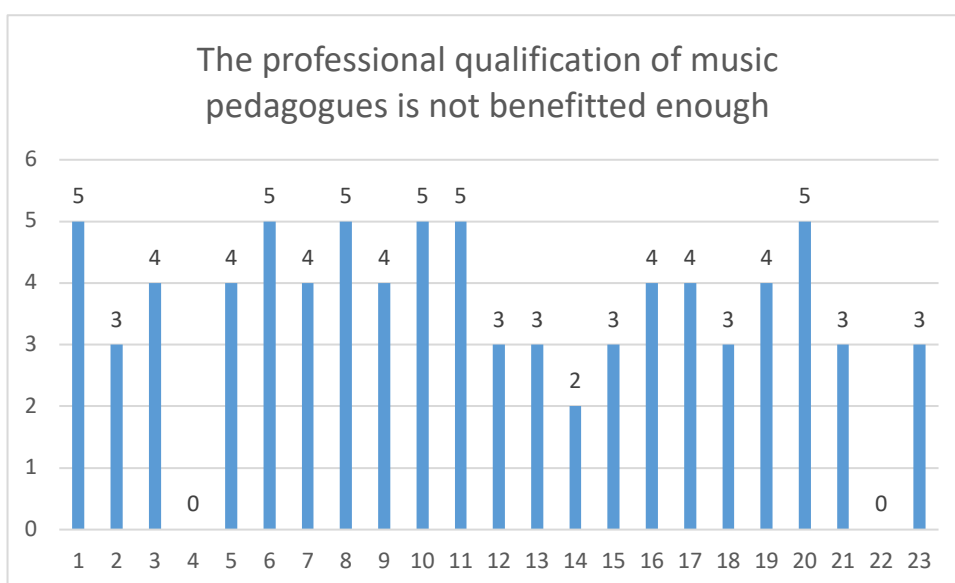
Musical impacts on language development were well recognized, however, even if the importance of singing was not always so clear. This is shown in Table 11.

**Table 11.** The dialogue of music and language in early childhood education (N=23).

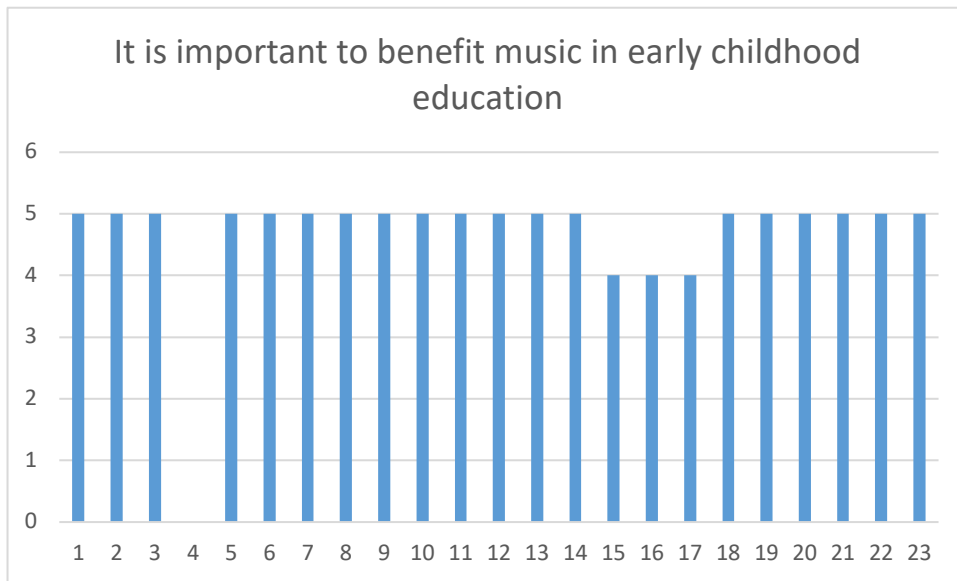


At the end, the respondents described their views for pedagogical planning for music education, and towards the meanings of music at the society. Habits of making teaching plans for music were varied, but however, these respondents owned multiple ways to plan their teaching. One of the respondents pointed out the meaning of musical education at the Sibelius-Academy for the understanding of setting goals, also for the long-term perspectives. When observing music as meanings for the society, opinions for each question varied a lot. In Table 12, the respondents were evaluating the profession of early childhood music teachers as a resource for early childhood education. Although there is a lot of theoretical evidence to gain from this expertise to better benefit in early childhood general education, it was not considered especially important for these respondents. However, reflecting the comprehension of the respondents was shown as positive towards arts and music education in many parts. Special meanings for teaching music in early childhood were clearly expressed, especially from the benefitting of music point of view, as described in Table 13 below. The use of musical expertise for the needs of general education would need a separate, wide, research-based clarification, and the expected development of a new music educator’s profession consequently. Only a hint of their attitudes for the needs of early childhood education can be explored here on the grounds of Marjanen (2016), bringing us slightly back to the questions presented in this paper.

**Table 12.** Benefiting of the professional qualification for early childhood music pedagogical in early childhood education (N=23).



**Table 13.** The importance of benefitting music in early childhood education: individual voices.



*“Music carries on for a long distance from the child’s life.”*

The respondents considered the possibility to use professional music teachers in early childhood education not realistic:

*“In early childhood education there are no such resources, and in addition to this, music needs to be involved in so many situations in day care, that it would be unreasonable to take music off from the early childhood teacher.”*

These kinds of opinions bring us back to the original argument of musical experience and the music relationship being too thin to be able to comprehend the deepest layers of musical significance in education. It always leads us back to the economic grounds, and the questions of resources. The use of resources connects with the work wellbeing experience, and the musical implementations as a part of education are shown in positive learning and wellbeing results, and in shown reflections for diminishing needs of corrective actions at the later stages of the children’s lives, which is now delimited out of the current framework, however.

#### 6.4 MMD: Faces, Spaces and Timelines towards the Results

The basic components of the Multisensory Musical Design (MMD, Marjanen, 2021), were observed here with references the virtual tasks performed, at the core of the course, and the whole of the students (N=53). When observing the learning processes during the virtual task process, with individual and interactive, dialogical subprocesses, it can be stated, that ways of processing the task reflected a strong, creative orientation. The choices for the musical samples were often made “by chance”, but for some, it was more cognitive. However, as a part of the task design, no information of the samples was given, to confirm the emotional-artistic orientation towards the task (the information for the musical samples was later shared with the students). Describing music and sounds with adjectives was easy, and the atmosphere of music was often described in stories, in poetry, in visual ways or even with dance videos. The capturing of the ideas from those, to create a synthesis according the task given, was rich and meaningful. Dialogues from those were vivid and capturing – students were very motivated. Even from the musical-arts-based task design, the students showed learning for the questions of equity, diversity and inclusion, at a deep level, connected with human values. For some, the task was also found challenging – and they described how this kind of a creative approach was found challenging, but this was a minor part of the group, a few students only.

Spaces and Timelines were clearly created for the Faces to encounter each other, despite of the virtual task design, from the comprehension of musical interaction. No thresholds for musical activities were confronted: the task instruction was found as

motivating and easy for the majority of the students, with positive learning results individually and socially, but in all cases the results were not yet strong enough to reach to the attitudes towards music in early childhood education and pedagogies. It points out to the needs of a stronger and longer learning pathway for music as a part of the teacher studies: students find motivation for music, supporting their own professional competences and human values, but the abilities to teach music cannot be accessed via virtual task designs and the actual face-to-face musical spaces and timelines, to access the learning of musical elements as a core for pedagogical qualification and identity.

*As an example: Music brought me to memories*

These samples were chosen by chance (please see information of the samples in Appendix 1).

- Song number 4: relaxation, lightness, positive atmosphere and feeling good were the first words to come into my mind;
- Song number 8 surprised me soon because of the song. Concepts of communality, we are more together, let's do good for our home: that is the world, were my all-around thoughts;
- Song number 10 drew a smokey picture in my mind: dark, smokey, traditional and stable;
- When I started listening to song 30, the tone and mind were completely changed. Words "diligent, precise, gloomy, obedient and even threatening came into my mind; and
- Song number 35 was recognized: "Let it be". I went to an international children's camp back in my mind, with 11-year-old children from 12 various countries collected together for a month, to know each other, and to learn about each other's cultures, to break prejudices, and to construct a better and more peaceful future together.

In my mind, only words appeared, with no visual images... the musical samples expressed life, and how we all are similar by birth, at the deep levels. We all are equal, and we want to live a good life. Cultural traditions make us unique, and keep us together, creating inclusion and participatory possibilities, even if you are far from home.... I hope everyone of us would be able to look at oneself as unique, special.

As an early childhood educator, I would like to develop teaching materials and pedagogical designs from music, besides literature and dance, to help children share and understand.

The respondents' answers reflected

- Time (n=10): past, present, future; monthly, weekly & daily structures; shift work, rhythm of shifts & transformations, moments, mornings; in turns, everyday; seasons, working experiences; regular structures, life skills;
- Faces (n=13): children, teacher, the child's parents, me, the team, the adults of the group; and
- Spaces (n=7): cultural framework, a chance, for participation, as mind escapes; music presence, interests as a part of the work, goals for creating learning spaces.

These can be comprehended as connecting with the comprehension of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and defined as abilities for professional competence, to access with the support of music and arts integration, connecting with skills (arts-integrated musical activities) and knowledge (the course theory and closing of the task). Why then to connect with music teaching and musical skills, and the teacher students' comprehension of music?

## 7 Discussion & Conclusions

Music is inherent in our lives, starting from the prenatal stage (Marjanen, 2009). The ontology and epistemology of music, with the chosen methodology to design this research aimed to open the real-life musical connections to support the set goals. Music owns the qualities and capacities to connect, build bridges and foster the tools for life. Higher education can be found at the very core of the societal wellbeing, and due to the open possibilities of music, it should be valued and strengthened in higher education.

In this research project, the variety of pathways from music was shown, as expressed by the students of the course framework.

*I will continue this by my own, to close circle.*

Virtual education has become a part of our education models, and it can be comprehended as a challenge for music teaching. The hard values at the Western societies have already caused a negative process to result in the lack of resources for music and arts teaching in education, at all levels. It reflects in our behavior, attitudes, life skills and wellbeing experiences. As a ground for education, we need to understand the processes of learning, that connect us even with the history of mankind, and the fetuses' learning experiences in multisensory, holistic experiences: this is the way we learn, in social connections. Music lies at the core of it, and it needs to be comprehended with the multiple performances and attitudes in life, as described at the Multisensory Musical Design (Marjanen, 2021). We, music researchers and educators need to put all our effort in gaining back the value of music at the society with pedagogical development, to strengthen the culture, and to support wellbeing. It starts from higher education towards the needs of children and families, as performances in early childhood education, in a way, that the prospective children's teachers will be able to appreciate music teaching, to connect music with values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and competences – with an understanding of the musical relationship as a meaningful tool – and a shared awareness of music as a phenomenon to access as a result of a long process of hard work, with clear qualities at their work as a consequence.

Music in Faces, Spaces and Timelines may connect with music teaching with skills, competence and knowledge, to serve various needs – like equity, diversity and inclusion, which start from the understanding of the society, created most easily via music as a social component. It was shown to be shared by the professionals of early childhood music teaching, the early childhood music teachers, who found their work motivation also from the meanings of music learning towards a child's general life survival, communication and development, to feel good (Marjanen, 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://youtu.be/Pyyqg8dF\\_sY](https://youtu.be/Pyyqg8dF_sY)



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## Attachments

**Attachment 1.** List of musical samples.

## Attachment 1

The musical samples given for the music-integrated virtual task

- 1: Didgeridoo (Australian)
- 2: Kalevala (Finnish tradition)
- 3: W.A. Mozart: Requiem/Lacrimosa (Western classical)
- 4: K. Marjanen: Marraskuun kevät (Small piano piece from around 2010)
- 5: Harmony sisters: Sulle salaisuuden kertoa mä voisin (Finnish schlager from the 1930's)
- 6: NapoleonXIV\_They're Coming To Take Me Away (the world pop, street culture, musical hits)
- 7: Kanteleräppi (Finnish tradition as present children's musical culture)
- 8: P. Rasinkangas: Kun laulun laulaa äiti maa (Present Finnish children's musical culture)
- 9: Värttinä (Finnish tradition as present expressions)
- 10: Arabic modal improvisation
- 11: Coolio: Gangsta's Paradise (the world pop, street culture, musical hits)
- 12: Angelin tyttöt: Don Leat (Finnish/ Saame tradition as present expressions)
- 13: Beijing Opera
- 14: E. Grieg: Peace of the Woods (National romantic style)
- 15: Sound of Music: The hills are alive (Western musical tradition, also included typically in school music teaching)
- 16: Windy Forest (Sounds of the nature)
- 17: Kuula: Lampaanpolska (suomalaista kansallisromantiikan aikakautta)
- 18: Whitney Houston: I will always love you (world high-class pop entertainment)
- 19: K. Marjanen: Ritvan rytmit (Present way of Finnish early childhood music education culture)
- 20: B. Smetana: Moldau (National romantic style, a symphonic poem)
- 21: M. Syrjälä & M. Marjanen: Breath again (music by young Finnish musicians, 15- and 24-year-olds) 22: The lyre of classical antiquity (Greece)
- 23: K. Marjanen: Good for yourself (Finnish contemporary music culture by a Finnish middle-aged female)
- 24: Yy tyy testan tuu (Central-Finnish rhyme tradition)
- 25: Samba Brazil (Brazilian music culture with recognized extramusical features)
- 26: Paeon and professional (Greek Antique)
- 27: Audrey Assad: Good to me (Western pop ballad by a female artist)
- 28: J. Syrjälä: Mihinkä armas kuljenkaan (song by a male Finnish composer for a traditional well-known poem by K. Sarkia)
- 29: Mies ja vaimo pitkäsäärinen (Finnish tradition from the 1960's as present children's musical culture)
- 30: Lumikuningatar – The Snow Queen (musical expression for a ballet of a traditional children's fairy tale by a well-known Finnish composer, T. Kantelinen. The ballet was presented in 2012 at the Finnish National ballet)
- 31: Sting: Shape of my Heart (One of the most famous male pop artists.)
- 32: Wends: Supa Dupa Girl (A Finnish young male musicians' indie music band)
- 33: Hawaiian drum dance chant
- 34: Di Lasso: Eco (An Italian double choir musical work from the middle ages)
- 35: The Beatles: Let it be. (One of the most famous pop bands)
- 36: J. Sibelius: Valse triste (The Finnish national composer, national romantic period)
- 37: E. Grieg: Peer Gynt: Hall of the mountain king (National romantic style, well-used in school music teaching and early childhood teaching, following the story by H. Ibsen, Norway)
- 38: E. Rautavaara: Päivänsäde ja menninkäinen (A Finnish evergreen loved through the generations)
- 39: Pieni tytön tylleröinen (Finnish tradition from the 1960's as present children's musical culture)
- 40: Nälkämaan laulu (A provincial song from the area of Kainuu)
- 41: Viisi pientä ankkaa (A traditional children's play song)
- 42: Water-rippling-drain (Nature sounds)
- 43: Talking drum (African tradition)
- 44: L. Pyylampi – S. Kanala: Suuret seikkailijat (middle-age female musicians for children, with a boy choir)
- 45: P. Willberg: Aamu (A well-known pop-artist, male, with a long career, a hit from the 1970's)

- 46: P. Collins: In the air tonight (Famous world pop artists.)
- 47: Tango el choclo (An Argentinian tango)
- 48: Aa aa pullalasta (Children's musical tradition presented by mothers with their 1-year-olds)
- 49: Middle of the Road: Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep (A pop hit from the 1970's)
- 50: P.J. Hannikainen & Immi Hellén: Maan korvessa (Traditional Finnish children's religious hymn, and an evergreen through the generations)