

2018

# Parents' Observations Of Their Young Children's Music Behaviors During Music Classes After Completing The Children's Music Behavior Inventory

Julia Beck

*University of South Carolina*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd>



Part of the [Music Education Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Beck, J. (2018). *Parents' Observations Of Their Young Children's Music Behaviors During Music Classes After Completing The Children's Music Behavior Inventory*. (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/4678>

This Open Access Thesis is brought to you by Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact [dillarda@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:dillarda@mailbox.sc.edu).

PARENTS' OBSERVATIONS OF THEIR YOUNG CHILDREN'S MUSIC BEHAVIORS  
DURING MUSIC CLASSES AFTER COMPLETING THE  
CHILDREN'S MUSIC BEHAVIOR INVENTORY

by

Julia Beck

Bachelor of Music Education  
Baldwin Wallace University, 2016

---

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Music Education in

Music Education

School of Music

University of South Carolina

2018

Accepted by:

Wendy Valerio, Director of Thesis

Gail Barnes, Reader

Gregory Springer, Reader

Cheryl L. Addy, Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

© Copyright by Julia Beck, 2018  
All Rights Reserved

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my appreciation to everyone who has supported and guided me throughout this process. I would like to thank Dr. Wendy Valerio for her expertise, support, and leadership during my time at the University of South Carolina. I am extremely grateful for her time, dedication, and efforts toward supervising my research and teaching. Because of her guidance, I am a better teacher and person. I also would like to thank my parents, husband, friends, and family for their ongoing support and encouragement. I am grateful for all of you.

## ABSTRACT

With the intent of understanding perceptions of early childhood music development, the purpose of this research was to examine parents' observations of their young children during music classes after completing the *Children's Music Behavior Inventory* (Valerio & Reynolds, 2015). My guiding research question was: How do knowledge of CMBI and viewing informal music class video recordings influence parents' perceptions and understanding of their three-year-old children's music behaviors and development during a two-month period?

Participants included five parents of three-year-old children in the 3B classroom at Bright Horizons, a preschool located in Columbia, South Carolina. During the data collection process, I used homogeneous intensity sampling, participant observation, multiple observers, and multiple data sources to investigate how parents observed and reported their child's music behaviors. The guiding prompts and data sources included *Children's Music Behavior Inventory* (Valerio & Reynolds, 2015), individual audio-recorded interviews regarding CMBI, video-recorded music engagements, individual audio-recorded think-aloud interviews, and parent participant exit questionnaires.

I transcribed and coded each data source and promoted internal validity and trustworthiness by using strategies discussed by Patton (2015), which include constant comparison, triangulation, member checks, and critical friend review. Emergent themes included the following: (a) parents first observed music behaviors and later, they

observed subtle music behaviors, (b) parents observed social behaviors during the music engagement, (c) parents observed non-music learning through music engagement, (d) parents reported positive feelings, and (e) parents appreciated learning from CMBI, viewing video-recordings of their children in music engagements, and talking with me about their child's music development.

Results of this study underscore the importance of parents' understanding and recognition of their child's music behaviors and music development. Parent participants shared valuable social and behavioral information that helped me understand their child's social behaviors, personality, and attitudes. The parents also reported that the completion of CMBI and the opportunity to watch video-recorded music engagement sessions increased their awareness and understandings of young children's music behaviors. As parents increase their ability to recognize music behaviors by using tools such as CMBI, by observing music engagement sessions, or by conversing with an early childhood music development specialist, they may be more likely to encourage and support those music behaviors. The more parents understand about young children's music behaviors, the more likely they may be to recognize and support those behaviors by developing techniques and seeking opportunities to understand and promote their young child's music behaviors and music development.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Related Research.....	8
Chapter 3: Method.....	23
Chapter 4: Taxonomy and Codebook Development.....	33
Chapter 5: Findings.....	38
Chapter 6: Summary, Discussion, and Recommendations.....	51
References.....	63
Appendix A: Parent Letter and Informed Consent Form.....	65
Appendix B: Parent Participant Exit Questionnaire.....	68
Appendix C: Final Codebook for Parents' Observations.....	69

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Parents reared in music-promoting homes share music with their own children, creating intergenerational links in family music making (Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2003; Mehr, 2014). Musical homes include families who listen to music, make music with instruments, sing, move to music, take music lessons, or spend time participating in other musical activities such as attending concerts or discussing music. Home music making and music sharing provide young children with early musical experiences. Parents play a crucial role in children's musical development, often acting as the first music teachers for their children (Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2003; Mehr, 2014; Valerio, Reynolds, Taggart, Bolton, and Gordon, 1998). Moreover, parents who encourage music in the home play a positive role in young children's music development and learning (Bond, 2011; Costa-Giomi & Ilari, 2014; Custodero, 2005; Custodero, 2006; Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2003; Mehr, 2014; Young, 2003).

Parental music encouragement occurs when parents recognize and support young children's musical behaviors. To support young children's musical behaviors, parents must have awareness and knowledge of young children's music development and learning to encourage music development and learning. Early childhood music development specialists have studied parents' observations of early childhood music development quantitatively (Kirby, 2007; McNair, 2010; Robert, 1992; Steever, 2015)



and qualitatively (Valerio, Reynolds, Morgan, & McNair, 2012; Valerio, Reynolds, Grego, Yap, & McNair, 2011). To date, no researchers have qualitatively examined parents' observations and perceptions of their young children's video recorded music engagement and behaviors using a questionnaire designed to document parents' observations of the children's music development. By continued examination of parents' observations and perceptions of young children's music engagement and behaviors, we may increase our understanding of early childhood music development, and we may learn how to help parents better understand their children's music development.

To learn more about parents' understandings of early childhood music development, Valerio, Reynolds, Grego, Yap, and McNair (2011) developed the *Children's Music-Related Behavior Questionnaire (CMRBQ)*, later renamed the *Children's Music Behavior Inventory (Valerio & Reynolds, 2015)*. CMBI is a parent-completed, Likert-type scale with seven subscales and a section regarding parent music behaviors. Parents respond to each item using one of the four response options: never, rarely, sometimes, and frequently. The questionnaire was designed for parents to document their child's music behaviors and their own music activities (Valerio & Reynolds, 2015; Valerio et al., 2011; Valerio et al., 2012). When completing CMBI parents provided responses regarding the frequency and type of music behaviors that they and their child demonstrate within a one-month period and quantitative data was collected.

After receiving feedback from a focus group of parents who completed the initial CMRBQ pilot study, the researchers revised the measurements, administered it to parents, and found it to be reliable (reliability estimates ranged from moderately high to

high). Valerio et al. (2011) found that parents who reported performing the most music-related activities with their children reported the most observed music-related behaviors in their children. In general, the older the children were, the more parents documented their music-related behavior. The younger the children were, the less often parents documented musical behaviors. According to Gordon's (2013) music learning theory, infants and toddlers often do not respond overtly and purposefully to music in their environment. Most of very young children's' music responses include attention, listening, eye contact, moving to sounds, and creating random responses to those sounds. Parents of very young children may not recognize those subtle music behaviors and may be less likely to document their children's music-related behaviors due to a misunderstanding of, or unawareness of, the subtle music-related behaviors as identified by Gordon (2013) and Valerio et al. (2011, 2012). Valerio et al. (2012) quantitatively examined parents' perceptions and understanding of those music-related behaviors using the same CMRBQ. The results of the survey may reveal relationships between how parents observe and document their children's music behaviors and music activities that they use with their children (Valerio, et al., 2012). Valerio and Reynolds (2015) have recently renamed CMRBQ and published it as *Children's Music Behavior Inventory* (CMBI). By examining parents' observations of their young children's music behaviors with regard to CMBI, we may gain insight into what parents know about early childhood music development.

Though Valerio et al., (2011, 2012) investigated parents' perceptions and observations of their young children's music behaviors quantitatively, Steever (2015) investigated parents' perceptions of their child's music development qualitatively. In a

small group case study, Steever investigated two parents' roles in their child's musical development. Using a qualitative ethnographic design, the researcher collected data of a mother, father, and their 18-month-old son enrolled in an early childhood music class. The child's parents indicated that they chose to participate in the early childhood music class to support their child's music development and to encourage non-musical skills such as communication, bonding, and daily family engagement. The parents engaged musically with their child through tonal, rhythmic, and movement interactions learned in previous and current early childhood music classes. They described their child's musical behaviors demonstrated in class but reported lacking confidence in their own vocabulary and understanding as they tried to describe their child's musical behaviors as accurately as possible (Steever, 2015). Steever suggested that parents' greater understanding of early childhood music development may influence their participation in and support of their child's music development.

Similarly, Steever (2015), Kirby (2007) studied music vocalizations of a two-year-old child and his parents as a qualitative case study. Kirby examined the characteristics of music making in the home and investigated the mother's perceptions and interpretations of the child's music behaviors and interactions. The child was from a highly "musically saturated home environment" (p. 32) that most likely influenced the child's musical interactions. The parents were musical persons who provided a musically rich environment for the child by musically engaging the child in singing, rhythm chanting, and listening to music. The parents also supported the child's musical behaviors by developing the child's musical creativity through musical conversation and engagement. Kirby collected data through video recording and journaling, categorized the

child's interactions, and found themes among the interactions. Kirby found that the child's musical interactions were grouped into two categories: environment interactions and support of musical behaviors. Kirby suggested that because the young child's parents provided a rich musical environment and participated in the child's music development, their child may have a high music aptitude. According to Gordon (2013), all children are born with music aptitude, the potential for music learning, that is developmental from birth to age nine. Ideally, parents support young children's music aptitude during early childhood, prior to age three, such as the parents in the Kirby (2007) study. Many children, however, do not experience support in their musical exploration and development (Gordon, 1999). Gordon (2013) purported that young children without nurturing musical experiences may not develop to their full musical potential.

In another qualitative study, Robert (1992) examined two infant's musical babble, noises made during an informal music class, to gain further understanding of children's music development. Robert recorded and compared music responses during an informal music class and individual home music making. Music engagements include singing, rhythm chanting, and movement and Robert collected data through video recordings and observer's field notes. Robert organized infants' responses during music engagements into four categories: random babble response, speaking response, tonal response, and miscellaneous response. Robert concluded that the majority of responses were speaking responses, although both infants performed tonal responses on occasion. Robert also stated that some infants performed a much greater number of vocal responses in the home music setting than in the classroom music setting. Robert suggested that "parents may greatly enhance the music development of their infants by creating a home music

environment that includes accurate tonal, vocal, music performances” (p. 59). Those results indicate the importance of the home as a music making environment. By examining parents’ observations of young children’s music engagement at home and in informal music classes, we may gain insight as to what parents know and understand about early childhood music development and engagement.

Researchers have determined that parents are influential in young children’s music development and able to document children’s music behaviors reliably (Custodero, 2006; Custodero & Johnson-Greene, 2003; Kirby, 2007; Mehr 2014; Robert, 1992; Steever, 2015; Valerio et al., 2011; Valerio, et al., 2012). Gordon (2013) theorized that parents may naturally begin to guide their child’s music development; however, parents may not have an understanding of early childhood music development and therefore, may not have awareness of early music responses in young children (Valerio et al., 2011; Gordon, 2013; Valerio et al., 2012). If parents have awareness of and knowledge of music responses demonstrated by their very young child, they may be guided to understand how to encourage and foster their child’s music development and learning. By examining parents’ observations of their young children’s music behaviors in a video recorded informal music classes with regard to CMBI, we may develop a deeper knowledge of how parents observe, interpret, document, and support their young children’s early childhood music development and learning.

## **Purpose**

With the intent of understanding perceptions of early childhood music development, the purpose of this research is to examine parents’ observations regarding

their young children during music classes after completing the *Children's Music Behavior Inventory* (Valerio & Reynolds, 2015).

### **Research Question**

How do knowledge of CMBI and viewing informal music class video recordings influence parents' perceptions and understanding of their three-year-old children's music behaviors and development during a two-month period?

CHAPTER 2  
RELATED RESEARCH

**Vocal Responses of Two Infants to Three Criterion Songs**

**Robert (1992)**

Robert conducted a qualitative study to gain further understanding of the music babble responses of young children. With the intent to help parents, caregivers, and teachers understand early childhood music development, Robert studied the vocal music responses made by two infants to three criterion songs in an informal music class environment and in individual home music lesson environments. The two infants were exposed to the three criterion songs in addition to other songs and chants in various tonalities and meters. Robert made comparisons between the following characteristics.

1. The type and frequency of vocal responses performed by each infant to the three criterion songs in the classroom group music lesson environment.
2. The type and frequency of vocal responses performed by each infant to the three criterion songs in the home individual music lesson environment.

**Method**

**Participants and setting.** In a qualitative case study, Robert examined the responses of two 11-month-old children. Robert selected the participants based on the

following criteria: the infants were 11 months old, participating in their first semester of music classes, and were vocally responsive to music. Both infants were enrolled in music classes at the Children's Music Development Center (CMDC) at the University of South Carolina located in Columbia, South Carolina.

**Data collection, procedures, and analysis.** Over 10 weeks, the two participants attended one weekly half-hour, group preschool music class at CMDC each week. Typically, 12 children, ranging from birth to two years old, attended each weekly class accompanied by their caregiver but data were collected from only the two participants (Subject One and Subject Two). Acting as teacher and researcher, Robert composed three criterion songs to collect consistent vocal data. Each song was composed in major tonality, in the keyality of D, in usual duple meter, and had a different ending tone. Robert presented the criterion songs in a different order each week to compensate for a possible order bias of presentation and all songs were performed in the same tempo and style each week. The criterion songs were first presented and performed during Week 3 and in the following eight weeks, Robert sometimes performed each criterion song using a technique designed to elicit vocal responses from young children by singing and moving in continuous fluid movement but stopping prior to the last pitch of a song or during an appropriate moment in the song.. During the preschool music class, Robert performed a variety of songs and rhythm chants without words, in various tonalities and meters in addition to the three selected criterion songs. Robert also modeled continuous fluid movement and encouraged caregivers to move in the same way and to sing and chant when comfortable. The children were encouraged to use manipulatives including



scarves, egg shakers, tennis-balls, and parachutes. A trained camera operator video recorded each classroom music class using the built in video recording system at CMDC.

Robert also provided weekly individual music sessions in each participant's home that followed the same design as class music lessons. During the home music sessions, Robert moved, sang, chanted, and played with the infant using the same criterion songs presented during the classroom music session, as well as other songs and chants. Robert also used the same response techniques during home music sessions. Robert presented the criterion songs in a different order each week to compensate for a possible order bias of presentation and all songs were performed in the same tempo and style each week. Robert recorded each home music lesson.

The video recordings from the classroom music lesson and the home music sessions were edited to include only each criterion song performance and a 10-second infant response period. Robert also wrote observations of each child's responses made in each setting (classroom and home) using the video recordings. Two trained, independent observers viewed the edited video recordings and determined the type and frequency of vocal responses made by each infant during the 8-week data collection period (weeks three through ten). Robert then coded the response data determined by the observers. Robert made comparisons between the type and frequency of vocal responses performed by each child to the three criterion songs in each environment.

**Findings and discussion.** After coding all vocal responses, the following categories emerged: random babble responses (RB), such as unidentifiable speech; speaking responses (SR), such as identifiable speech; tonal responses (TR), such as a

response related to the tonality or keyality of the performed song; and miscellaneous responses (MR) such as laughing, grunting, and crying. When an infant babbled only one pitch, that pitch was identified as one of the following terms: tonic pitch, mediant pitch, and dominant pitch. When an infant's' response included more than one pitch, those pitches were identified using moveable-do tonal solfege. During the classroom music lessons, Subject One performed 11 vocal responses to the three criterion songs during the 8-week observation period and of those vocal responses, 1 was random babble, 7 were speaking response, and 3 were tonal response. Subject Two performed 19 vocal responses to the three criterion songs during the 8-week observation period and of those vocal responses, 1 was random babble, 16 were speaking response, 1 was tonal response, and 1 was miscellaneous. Both infants performed more speaking responses during classroom music lessons than any other type of response.

During the individual home music sessions, Subject One performed 88 vocal responses to the three criterion songs during the 8-week observation period and of those vocal responses, 40 were random babble, 19 were speaking response, 23 were tonal response, and 6 were miscellaneous. Subject Two performed 50 vocal responses to the three criterion songs during the 8-week observation period and of those vocal responses, 9 were random babble, 20 were speaking response, 17 were tonal response, and 4 were miscellaneous. Both infants performed more speaking responses during classroom music lessons than any other type of response. Both infants performed a much greater number of vocal responses in the home setting than the classroom setting.

On the basis of the results of the study, there may be a relationship between a child's tonal vocal responses made in a classroom group music setting and in a home

individual music setting. It may be assumed that the activities during the classroom group music lessons gave rise to the home music responses made by both infants. In this study, both infants vocally responded more frequently in a home music setting than a classroom setting. Parents may greatly enhance the music development of their infants by fostering a home environment that supports tonal, vocal, and musical performances and engagement. Further implications for this study may include examining the parents' and caregivers' observations of musical responses that occur in the home. By examining their perceptions and observations, Robert may gain a detailed representation of children's vocal responses.

**Relevance to Current Study.** Robert examined the vocal responses of young children in the informal music class as well as the home setting. Using songs and chants in a variety of tonalities and meters, Robert provided an environment that supported music engagement, response, development, and learning. By examining the frequency and type of vocal responses in each of those settings, Robert determined that there were more vocal responses in the home setting than the informal music class. That finding may be due to the role that parents play in recognizing, supporting, and scaffolding these music interactions. Robert also stated that implications of the study and further research may include examining parents' and caretakers' perceptions and observations of young children's musical responses. In my study, I will examine parents' observations of their young children's music behaviors using CMBI to examine vocal responses and music behaviors in the home setting instead of observing directly. CMBI will help me develop a better understanding of how parents observe and report music behaviors on their own.

## **A Phenomenological Case Study of Music Interactions**

### **Between a Mother and Her Child**

#### **Kirby (2007)**

Kirby conducted a phenomenological qualitative case study to gain further understanding of young children's music vocalizations. With the intent to help parents, caregivers, and teachers understand early childhood music development, Kirby examined the nature of vocalizations made by a two-year-old child and his primary caregiver. The researcher examined the ways in which a mother and child engaged in music interactions within their daily routines. The guided research questions included:

1. What are a mother's perceptions and interpretations of her child's music behaviors and music interactions with her?
2. What are the researcher's perceptions and interpretations of a child's music behaviors and music interactions with his mother?

#### **Method**

**Participants and setting.** Kirby selected the dyad of a mother, Sharon, and her firstborn and only child, Griffin. Kirby used pseudonyms for all participants in this study in order to protect confidentiality. Sharon was Griffin's primary caregiver and is a "musically knowledgeable adult" (p. 23). She received instruction in voice and violin for several years and was employed as a music teacher, instructed private violin lessons and lead a church music program's children's choir. Sharon's husband and Griffin's father, Zeke, was also a musically knowledgeable adult, though music was not his career. Zeke was a self-taught drummer who had taken only a few lessons in his youth. Both parents

were college graduates middle-class, Caucasian adults. Griffin was three-years-old during data collection. Kirby selected this family because they were intimately familiar with the research topic and willing to offer knowledge and time to participate in the study. Kirby also knew the family and its musical background.

**Data collection, procedures, and analysis.** Prior to any data collection, Kirby engaged in the process of phenomenological research methodology that includes setting aside all judgments and biases before the study begins. Kirby first interviewed Sharon to gain insight regarding her daily routines with her child, an understanding about Sharon's past music interactions with her parents, and her current music interactions with Griffin.

Kirby asked Sharon to video record music interactions between herself and Griffin over the course of six months. Sharon recorded daily activities such as playtime, meals, traveling, and other times when music interactions were likely to occur. Any length of time was acceptable for recorded sessions and the only criterion for recorded sessions was the presence of music interactions. Music interactions may have occurred at any time, during any structured or unstructured music sessions. Sharon created a journal to reflect on her observations of the video recordings after watching them. In those observations, Sharon included thoughts on her interpretations of interactions with her child and any comments about her child's vocalizations and actions. Kirby then watched the video recordings and read the mother's journal of her observations.

Kirby also video recorded Sharon and Griffin in early childhood music class to capture interactions between the mother and child. Together, Kirby and Sharon watched the video and discussed the interactions present and any other interactions that occurred

before or after class time. Following the discussion, Kirby asked Sharon a few follow-up questions and clarified answers given during the initial interview.

Kirby transcribed the interview at the beginning and end of the study and assembled Sharon's interview answers, perceptions, and interpretations. Using the interview and journal, Kirby constructed construct clusters, or themes, of the music interactions of Sharon and Griffin. From those themes, Kirby constructed an individual textural description of the interactions and observations as well as a composite description based on all previous data. Using recorded videos, interviews with the mother, and the mother's journal, Kirby created a portrait of the contexts in which musical interactions occurred. To assist in the validity of the study, Kirby allowed Sharon to examine the data and make any corrections or clarifications to the descriptions reported in the journal or statements during the interview. After Sharon reviewed the data, another unbiased auditor reviewed the data as well. Kirby utilized the suggestions given by Sharon and the auditor in the presentation of the data for this study.

**Findings and discussion.** Kirby determined that two themes emerged from the sources of data: environment and support of musical behaviors. Those themes were derived from extracting the comments from Sharon's two interviews and her observation journal. Griffin's environment was saturated with a variety of musical activities including violin lessons occurring in the home, listening to recorded music in the home, and participating in music behaviors in the home. As stated by Kirby, "In this musically rich environment, Griffin's music activities increase" (p. 28). Griffin often moved and sang, even when he did not realize it, his mother reported. He also absorbed sounds of violin lessons and has sung along with the scales that the violins play to warm up. Griffin

moved and sang along to music without any conscious effort or knowledge, as singing and moving had become regular activities in his daily life. Sharon also reported that Griffin often created music for himself when recorded music was not available, practicing independent musicianship. In video recordings, Griffin had also demonstrated his ability to improvise spoken language and melodies through reading and music activities. Because Griffin had observed his mother reading, writing, and performing music from notation, he attempted to perform some of those same tasks with sheet music. Griffin had shown his mother his “composition” and performed it for her as well. During this activity, Griffin demonstrated his understanding of the purpose of sheet music and the composition process.

Sharon and her family supported Griffin’s music behaviors by engaging him musically. When musical behaviors were supported, Griffin was more likely to repeat these behaviors and expand them into more complex musical interactions such as creating and improvising. The parents also supported Griffin in other interests through their music interactions, such as singing or rhythm chanting about things that Griffin enjoys. Griffin was very interested in bugs, so Sharon supported his interest in bugs through music engagement, reinforcing his love for music. Griffin often demonstrated his knowledge of music through play such as this. The parents recognized and supported that behavior. Griffin’s parents also sought programs to interact musically together, such as the Music Play classes at the University of South Carolina. Sharon reported that this was a positive environment and that Griffin was learning more independent music behaviors through these classes. The family reported performing the songs and chants learned in Music Play classes at home. Sharon also reported that Griffin resisted repeating a music activity more

than once. In some cases, many repetitions of an activity are required to achieve a desired response from a child, however; some children who possess a high music aptitude may be able to respond after only one performance. Griffin may have been exhibiting signs of high music aptitude.

Kirby suggested that further study should include music interactions between several families and their young children. The increase in number may provide a more comprehensive examination of the music behaviors of young children and how to support those music behaviors.

**Relevance to Current Study.** Kirby examined the perceptions and interpretations of the music interactions between the mother and child. Through interviews and journaling, Kirby collected a parent's reported observations and perceptions of their young child's musical behaviors. By examining the observations and perceptions, Kirby identified two supporting factors in young children's music development: environment and support. Kirby also stated that implications of the study and further research may include examining more parents' and caretakers' perceptions and observations of young children's musical responses, rather than a case study of a single family unit. In my study, I will examine parents' observations of their young children's music behaviors. Kirby acquired data on parent perceptions using journaling and interviews. In my study, I will also use interviews but will use a survey, CMBI, to acquire information on parent observations instead of a journal. This will allow for me to understand how parents observe and report music behaviors using a different form of data collection.



## **A Case Study on Parent Participation in Their Child's Musical Development**

**Steever (2015)**

Steever conducted a qualitative study to examine one family's role in their child's music development. To explore the ways parents participated in early childhood music classes and the ways they recognized their child's musical responses, Steever used an ethnographic case study design. With the intent of improving parent education in early childhood music, Steever studied the family's role in their young children's music development and learning. Steever used the following research questions to guide the study..

1. Why this family chose to participate in early childhood classes with this child?
2. How do the parents engage with their child during early childhood music classes?
3. What musical responses do the parents recognize in their child's musicking during early childhood music classes?

### **Method.**

**Participants and setting.** The participants in this study were a family enrolled in an early childhood music class of which Steever was the coordinator and teacher. Steever selected the family based on their previous enrollment in the early childhood music program, previous regular attendance, and interest. The mother was a practicing physician and the father was employed in the science department of a university, both in their mid-thirties. Both parents regularly attended the early childhood class each week with their 18-month-old son, the participants' only child, David.

**Data collection, procedures, and analysis.** Each week, parents attended an early childhood music class. The material for the class contained songs and chants (many without words) in a variety of tonalities and meters and many movement-driven activities. Steever carefully paired each song and chant with an activity containing a specific musical goal for each child. Steever often utilized scarves and other props with a few of the activities. Steever taught and video recorded each class on a weekly basis, taking mental notes while teaching and completing a journal entry following each class. In the journal, Steever documented responses and interactions of special interest with the child participating in the study as well as a reflection of the class as a whole. During the week, Steever watched the videos from the previous class and reflected on the video footage.

Data were collected through video recordings and a teacher-researcher journal as well as an interview at the end of 12 early childhood music classes. Steever selected six video clips for the parents to view and reflect on during the final interview. Steever viewed, coded, and analyzed the video clips prior to the interview. The video clips included David (a) imitating rhythm patterns on a neutral syllable, (b) singing the resting tone, (c) singing a melodic pattern, (d) moving with continuous fluid movement and beat related movement, (e) imitating vocal sirens, and (f) demonstrating audiation through movement. During the interview, parents viewed each clip and described what musical behaviors they noticed David demonstrating. Steever then transcribed the interview and compared the parents' description of the video clips to the previous coding and analysis.

After analyzing all collected data, Steever identified six music behaviors: (a) mother-child tonal engagement, (b) mother-child melodic rhythm engagement, (c)

mother-child movement engagement, (d) father-child tonal engagement, (e) father-child melodic rhythm engagement, and (f) father-child movement engagement. “Active musical engagement” (p. 40) occurred when the child was directly observing or included in the musical actions. “Rhythm engagement” (p. 41) occurred when the child engaged in vocal representation of chant or rhythm patterns. “Movement based engagement” (p. 41) occurred when the child or parents patted, clapped, moved a rhythm on their body. Steever compared and contrasted codes from all three sources of data, allowing convergence of data, identification of themes, and added validity. To ensure reliability of video codes, Steever asked a music education graduate student to view the video data for code verification, and the intercoder reliability was 99% agreement.

**Findings and discussion.** Due to Steever’s case study design, the conclusions of this study were not generalizable, and the findings directly apply to the family that participated in the study. Although the study is not generalizable, some findings may be transferable to other similar contexts. Steever found that the parents reported participating in the early childhood class due to their desire to participate in a family activity and also reported positive musical and nonmusical outcomes of participating in the early childhood music class. The parents shared that their child had developed socially as well, reporting improved focus and attention after participating in the early childhood music class. The parents also reported that their musical experiences in the early childhood music class became a part of their daily lives at home and that their child spontaneously sang during routine experiences and occasionally sang “bum” as a resting tone to segments of the song sung by the parents. Although the parents believed their child showed musical growth over the course of the early childhood music class, neither parent

claimed to have enough comprehensive understanding concerning typical music development in early childhood. That information suggests the need for greater parent education and understanding of parent perceptions of early childhood music education. Based on analysis, Steever determined that of the three types of music responses (tonal, rhythmic, and movement) both parents and their child demonstrated more movement responses than any other type of response, suggesting a level of comfort when participating physically within the early childhood music class. The parents' limited vocal engagement suggested that they may be less comfortable singing and rhythm chanting than moving in public. Steever found that the parents in this study did recognize several musical behaviors in their child despite profession training in early childhood music development. Although both parents were able to relay their understandings, they lacked specific vocabulary to describe their child's improvements accurately. Conclusions and implications of this study included educating parents, enhancing their role in their child's music development, and understanding parent observations and perceptions of music development.

**Relevance to Current Study.** Steever suggested that “parents and caregivers have the capability to influence the musical development of children and their potential to achieve musically throughout their lives” (p. 76). In order to help parents gain the skills to support their child's music development, we must first understand what parents know by examining their perceptions and observations of early childhood music development and learning. Steever's study allowed for understanding on why parents chose to enroll their child in an early childhood music class and the benefits and behaviors that occurred because of participation in the class. Steever also determined that the parents in the study

were able to report some music behaviors but not all due to lack of knowledge and understanding of early childhood music development. In my study, I will continue where Steever suggested and examine what parents know about early childhood music education and how they report their child's music behaviors.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD

In this qualitative case study, I used homogeneous intensity sampling “to create a group of cases that provide information-rich data-gathering and analysis possibilities” (Patton, 2015, p. 282) regarding parents’ perceptions and understanding of their three-year-old children’s music behaviors and development during an 8-week period. Following are detailed descriptions of the participants, setting, data sources, and analysis.

#### **Participants**

After obtaining University of South Carolina Institutional Review Board approval, I invited parents of three-year-old children enrolled in classroom 3B at Bright Horizons @ USC located at the University of South Carolina (Columbia, SC) to participate in this study. I chose classroom 3B because of the positive environment created by the classroom teachers. The 3B teachers are exceptionally supportive and positive toward music engagement sessions. I also chose the 3B classroom because I have had experience musically engaging in that classroom and am familiar with the children. Each of those children was a regular participant in classroom 3B, an intact class of three-year-old children for whom I led informal music classes for the 8-week data collection period for this study. Parents completed and submitted the consent form as shown in Appendix A. The five parents who agreed to participate came from diverse racial,

linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. I also assigned a pseudonym to parents to protect their identity. Following is a description of each participant.

**Kayla.** Kayla was the mother of a young male child in the 3B classroom at Bright Horizons @ USC. She considered herself Hispanic, and she and her family spoke primarily Spanish in their household. Her first-born and only child was in the 3B classroom. She held a master's degree or higher, and was 45 years old.

**May.** May was the mother of a young female child in the 3B classroom at Bright Horizons @ USC. She considered herself African, and her child in 3B was one of two children in the household. The child in 3B was the second-born child in the household. She held a bachelor's degree and was 36 years old.

**William.** William was the father of a young male child in the 3B classroom at Bright Horizons @ USC. He considered himself white and also considered himself and his wife to be musicians, though neither were professional musicians. His first-born and only child was in the 3B classroom. He held a bachelor's degree and was 46 years old.

**Brenda.** Brenda was the mother of a young male child in the 3B classroom at Bright Horizons @ USC. She considered herself white and her child in 3B was one of two children in the household. The child in 3B was the second born child in the household. She held a bachelor's degree and was 41 years old.

**Sharon.** Sharon was the mother of a young male child in the 3B classroom at Bright Horizons @ USC. She did not indicate a specific ethnicity. She was also an employee of Bright Horizons @ USC and was a teacher in another classroom there. Her

first-born and only child was in the 3B classroom. She held a bachelor's degree and was 32 years old.

## **Setting**

**Physical setting.** Bright Horizons at USC was an early childhood development center on the University of South Carolina (USC) campus in Columbia, South Carolina. Bright Horizons teachers used an emergent, child-centered curriculum, called *The World at their Fingertips* ("Bright Horizons," 2017). Within an emergent curriculum, an adult planned lessons based upon the interests and developmental abilities of the children by observing, crafting lessons, and asking guided questions to increase the children's learning and development. The teachers created learning opportunities based on each child's interests, providing intentional guidance and rich experiences that build upon the child's individual strengths and talents ("Bright Horizons," 2017). The center provided services for children ages six weeks to four years. Bright Horizons at USC included approximately 180 children from a variety of ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The children were grouped into classes according to age: infants (6 weeks to 12 months), toddlers (13 months to 23 months), 2-year-olds, 3-year-olds, 4-year-olds, and PreK 4-year-olds. Though the children in any given class had similar ages and general developmental abilities, their music development abilities may have varied greatly.

**3B Classroom Setting.** The teachers of classroom 3B at Bright Horizons @ USC create a welcoming, nurturing, engaging environment in their classroom. The classroom contains open space for movement and large group activities, desks and chairs for



individual work such as art projects or writing activities, and play centers. The play centers are moveable areas containing toys and manipulatives such as blocks, dolls, a play kitchen, mats, scarves, and balls. In each classroom, there is a lead teacher and an assistant teacher who facilitate activities and oversee the children in the room.

**Music setting.** Children attending at Bright Horizons at USC participated in two music engagements per week during fall and spring semesters. Each week, graduate music education students facilitated one of those 20-minute music engagements as a part of their graduate assistantship duties. The graduate students, one of whom was myself, were certified music educators with Gordon's Institute for Music Learning Professional Development Certificates in Early Childhood Music - Level I. Undergraduate students, who represented early childhood education majors, elementary education majors, and music education majors, were enrolled in an undergraduate early childhood music development course and facilitated the other weekly music engagements during the academic year. The graduate students and the undergraduate students used Gordon's (2013) *Music Learning Theory for Young Children* and the *Music Play* (Valerio et al., 1998) curriculum to provide both unstructured and structured music guidance.

Unstructured music guidance occurs when an adult plans music activities to guide a child's exposure and experiences with music in a naturalistic environment. That guidance allows children to have opportunities to explore music in their environment. Structured music guidance occurs when the music teacher provides additional tonal pattern and rhythm pattern guidance in a naturalistic environment. In both unstructured music guidance and structured music guidance, the teacher maintains flexibility in instruction and responds musically based on the various responses of the children.

I led the informal music classes in the open, carpeted area in the classroom. Throughout each class, I engaged students in stationary and locomotor movement activities around the room. Occasionally, I engaged students in music activities using the manipulatives and toys from the various play centers around the room.

### **Guiding Prompts, Data Sources, and Data Collection Procedure**

To provide the opportunity for triangulation, I used multiple data sources as suggested by Patton (2015) because “the logic of triangulation is based on the premise that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival explanations” (p. 661). Following is a description of each guiding prompt and data source and how I collected data during an 8-week period.

#### **Guiding Prompts**

***Children’s Music Behavior Inventory (CMBI).*** During Week 1, Week 4, and Week 7 of the study, parents completed CMBI using SurveyMonkey. Though Valerio and Reynolds (2015) created CMBI, previously named CMRBQ, to be used as a quantitative measurement of parents’ observations of their children’s music behaviors, I only utilized and referenced CMBI as a tool to help parents recognize, report, and discuss observed music behaviors. Parents must have completed CMBI prior to attending each scheduled interview.

**Video-recorded music engagements.** A total of eight music engagements were video-recorded in classroom 3B at Bright Horizons @ USC. The music engagements were 20 minutes long and occurred once a week over the 8-week period of this study. The music engagements were video recorded by a research assistant familiar with the

students and teachers in classroom 3B and Bright Horizons @ USC. The research assistant recorded using a small handheld video camera. After each music engagement, I downloaded the videos to a computer for subsequent think-aloud interviews with parent participants.

## **Data Sources**

**Individual interviews regarding CMBI.** Within one week following each parent's completion of CMBI, I individually interviewed parents regarding their perceptions and observations of their children's music behaviors and development. I engaged parents in conversation regarding questions, concerns, and implications of CMBI as a tool to recognize music behaviors in their children. I audio-recorded each individual interview regarding CMBI and transcribed the data for subsequent analysis.

**Individual think-aloud interviews.** Directly after conversing individually with each parent during audio-recorded individual interviews, I used my computer to play a video segment of that parent's child participating in a music engagement. Each video segment was approximately seven minutes in length. In each think-aloud interview, each parent spoke freely and openly about the types of musical and nonmusical behaviors they observed their children perform during the music engagement. I also audio-recorded each think-aloud interview and transcribed the data for subsequent analysis.

**Exit Questionnaire.** After all interviews had been completed, I administered an exit questionnaire presented in Appendix A to parents via SurveyMonkey. I designed the exit questionnaire for parents to document their overall perceptions, understanding, and

knowledge of early childhood music development throughout the data collection period. The exit questionnaire is presented in Appendix B.

### **Data Collection Timeline**

To collect data, I carefully planned my tasks as researcher and music teacher and those tasks required of parent participants. In Table 3.1, I present a data collection timeline for this study. Researcher tasks included teaching and video-recording each weekly 20-minute informal music class, compiling video clips from the four previous classes, and conducting the two rounds of interviews. During the 8-week data collection process, parents completed CMBI three times, participated in two individual interviews regarding CMBI, participated in two individual think-aloud interviews, and completed the exit questionnaire.

### **Analysis**

I used qualitative case study analysis methods to organize the collected data. As stated by Patton (2015), “Case analysis involves organizing the data by specific cases for in-depth study and comparison” (p. 534). First, I reviewed all transcribed and raw data multiple times and organized the data into topics and files as I developed a coding system. I used the coding system to identify patterns and themes in the data. For all data collection and analysis, I practiced the perspective of epoche. Patton suggested that “in taking on the perspective of epoche, the researcher looks inside to become aware of personal bias” (p. 574). After identifying themes in the data, I elucidated each theme with rich, thick descriptions, interpreted those findings, suggested implications, and made recommendations for future research.

## **Credibility**

During data collection and analysis, I practiced the “analytical processes for enhancing credibility by systematically engaging and questioning the data” (Patton, 2015, p. 652). I described the methods, procedures, and decisions regarding this study to enhance credibility and provided detailed descriptions of all participants, the data collection process, and the data analysis process. I collected data in a systematic, in-depth manner to yield the highest quality data possible and achieve triangulation by collecting data from multiple sources: CMBI, individual interviews, think-aloud interviews, and an exit questionnaire. After transcribing and coding each of the video recordings and interviews, I employed participant review of transcriptions by sending the transcriptions to the corresponding participants to ensure accuracy of all included information. I also ensured complete participant review by asking follow-up questions that the participants answered regarding the content of the CMBI interviews and think-aloud interviews.

I employed critical friend review by providing conclusions and implications of my research to an experienced early childhood music development specialist. Patton states that a “critical friend can be defined as a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provide data to be examined through another lens, and offers critiques of a person’s work as a friend” (Patton, 2015, p. 668). The early childhood music development specialist reviewed a written draft of my results and conclusions to determine the credibility of my research. This ensures trustworthiness of my implications and results. As Patton states, one must “consider subjectivity within the context of the trustworthiness of findings” (p. 685). By having experts review my findings and implications, I increased the trustworthiness of my findings and considered my own

subjectivity within the findings. Regarding epoche, Patton (2015) suggested that “One barrier to credible qualitative findings stems from the suspicion that the analyst has shaped findings according to her or his predispositions and biases” (p. 700). Regarding my own training and experience in early childhood music development and education, I ensured that credibility of the inquirer was maintained through my presentation of self and perspective of epoche.

Table 3.1. *Researcher's tasks and parents' tasks for each week of the 8-week study.*

Week	Researcher's Tasks	Parents' Tasks
Week 1	Led and recorded 20-minute informal music class	Completed CMBI
Week 2	Led and recorded 20-minute informal music class	
Week 3	Led and recorded 20-minute informal music class	
Week 4	Led and recorded 20-minute informal music class Compiled video clips from Week 1-4	Completed CMBI Completed individual CMBI interview Completed think-aloud interview
Week 5	Led and recorded 20-minute informal music class	
Week 6	Led and recorded 20-minute informal music class	
Week 7	Led and recorded 20-minute informal music class	Completed CMBI
Week 8	Led and recorded 20-minute informal music class Compiled video clips from Weeks 5-8	Completed Individual CMBI interview Completed Think-aloud interview Completed Exit questionnaire

## CHAPTER 4

### TAXONOMY AND CODEBOOK DEVELOPMENT

#### **Data Transcription**

After transcribing data using HyperTranscribe (Version 1.6, 2014), I reviewed the transcribed data and then submitted each parent participants' interview transcript to him or her via email for review. I also submitted follow-up questions to each parent participant to gain further insight on statements made during their interviews. The follow-up questions were specific to each parent participant and their child. Parent participants were asked to return their reviewed interview transcripts with revisions as necessary and their answers to the follow-up questions via email within one week after receiving the initial email from me.

#### **Codebook Development**

I entered all collected data into HyperResearch (Version 3.7.5, 2015) for subsequent coding and analysis. I organized data into a series of codes relevant to parents' observations, identification, and descriptions of their children's music development and music behaviors (Patton, 2015; Spradley, 1980). For my codebook, I used codes directly from Steever's (2015) study. Steever's original codes included music behaviors such as imitating rhythm patterns, singing the resting tone, singing tonal



patterns, moving with continuous fluid movement and/or beat related movement, imitating vocal sirens, and demonstrating audiation through movement.

As I continued reviewing and coding my collected data, I determined that some of the parent's observations did not fit into the codes developed by Steever (2015); therefore, I added codes of my own and deleted those of Steever that did not fit my data. I referenced Steever's codebook providing a source for tested codes but did not exactly replicate Steever's codebook developed due to the unstructured, think-aloud nature of my interviews. Patton (2015) stated that when interviews are unstructured and interactive, such as the interviews conducted in my study, that "it is death to one's study to simplify one's insights, coding, and analyses so that another person may place the same piece of datum in the same category" (p. 667).

Patton also suggested that code testing is necessary when everyone is asked the same question in the exact same way, but in the "more adaptive, personalized, individualized, and flexible approach of interview guides and conversational interview," it may not be as necessary (Patton, 2015, p. 666). For this reason, I used codes from a previous study and added my own codes to create my codebook. Due to the conversational and individual nature of my interviews, I did not test my codes in order to preserve the authenticity of the interviews. I also participated in what Patton (2015) calls constant comparison by developing a codebook, coding data, reviewing all coded data to account for potentially uncoded data, and making appropriate revisions to the original codebook (Patton, 2015). For all collected data, I used a total of 47 codes and registered 1,110 total coded data entries. My codebook is presented in Appendix C. I participated in two rounds of coding to ensure thorough review and reviewed my coded entries by

utilizing critical friend review. This critical friend, Kat, is a music development specialist who also facilitates early childhood music engagement sessions at Bright Horizons at USC. She holds a bachelor's degree in music education and is completing her master's degree in music education with early childhood and general music focus. She has nine years of early childhood music teaching experience and six years of elementary general music teaching experience. She has completed *Gordon Institute for Music Learning* (GIML) Early Childhood levels one and two, and GIML Elementary Level One. She has completed Orff Schulwerk levels one and two, and *Feierabend First Steps in Early Childhood*.

### **Cultural Domains and Taxonomy**

I performed thematic analysis of the coded data. Engaging in thematic analysis required complete processing and searching through the data to identify cultural domains, recurring terms, patterns, and emergent themes (Patton, 2015; Spradley, 1980). During that process, I identified four cultural domains: parents' observations of their child's music behaviors, parents' observations of their child's social behaviors, parents' observations of their child's non-music learning behaviors, and parent's attitudes toward their child's music learning and development. Within those four categories, I identified a taxonomy and general descriptions of parents' observations of their children's music.

After developing cultural domains, a taxonomy, and descriptions of parents' observations, Kat performed another critical friend review of the cultural domains, taxonomy, and descriptions, and assisted in the development of emergent themes (Patton, 2015). I present my cultural domains, taxonomy, and parent observation descriptions in

Figure 4.1. Those cultural domains, taxonomy, and descriptions were the basis for this study's emergent themes.

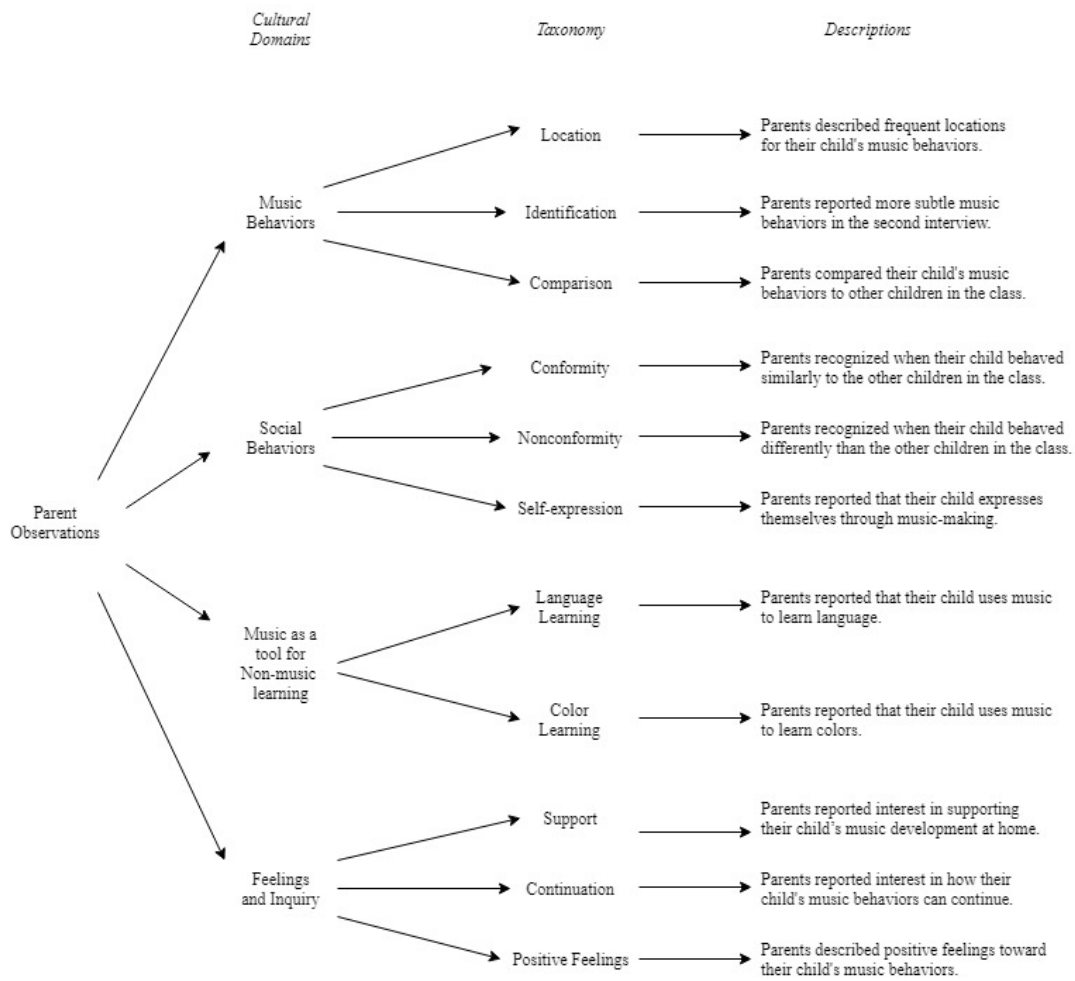


Figure 4.1. Parents' observations of their children's music behaviors: Cultural domains, taxonomy, and descriptions.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS

Five themes emerged regarding parents' observations of their young children's behaviors during music engagements. As parents gained knowledge of CMBI and viewed informal music class video recordings, this influenced parents' perceptions and understanding of their three-year-old children's music behaviors and development during a two-month period. Following, I present those emergent themes and a detailed description of each theme.

#### **Theme One - Parents first observed music behaviors and later, they observed subtle music behaviors.**

Parents initially reported their child's obvious music behaviors, then eventually reported more subtle music behaviors. Each parent participated in two rounds of CMBI completion and two think-aloud interviews regarding their child's music behaviors. In the first interview sessions, parents often remarked about their child's obvious singing and dancing. More subtle music behaviors such as creating, listening to music, and requesting music were reported less often than dancing and singing. During the second session of interviews, parents reported noticing more singing and dancing, as well as subtle music behaviors such as creating music, listening to music, and requesting music.

Many of the parents spoke about their expectations of their child's music behaviors. Some indicated that before taking CMBI, they were unsure of what music behaviors their child should demonstrate or not demonstrate. During the first think-aloud interviews, the parents and I engaged in conversation about their child's music behaviors. The parents watched short clips from the video-recorded music engagement sessions, and described the behaviors they observed. Most parents reported observing singing and dancing as their child's music behaviors. After the parents explained what they observed, I explained the behaviors that I observed. When asked about his child's music behaviors, William stated, "I don't, I guess I just don't [know]. This is my first kid so I don't know what a baseline [of knowledge] is." This may be why many parents reported the more easily observable music behaviors, such as singing and dancing, in the first interview. They understood that singing and dancing were appropriate types of music behaviors, and they confidently reported those behaviors because those behaviors are obvious and easily observed.

In the second session of CMBI and think-aloud interviews, parents reported observing many more types of music behaviors than in the first session of interviews. Parents reported observing their child creating music much more often than in the first interview as well. During the second interview, Kayla described how her child created new songs when he did not know the song being played. She said, "I think he babbles even if he doesn't know um, the song. Like, he's trying to make sense of what he's singing. Like he's creating his own words." During the second session of interviews, parents reported listening to recorded music more often than in the first interview. William noticed that his child actively listened and tried to sing along to music on the

radio, saying that “when he doesn't know the words, he'll sit there and listen and he's trying to catch up but he just doesn't know the words for it.” During the second session of interviews, parents reported noticing their child requesting music more often than in the first session of interviews. William also described that he “noticed [his child] likes *Down by the Station* which he'll sing spontaneously and I've heard him actually change pitch on that. Not just, he's not just reading words out, he's actually singing it.” He went on to describe how his child also requests different versions of *Down by the Station*. “Yeah. He's got, he's got preferred versions of that on Spotify. There are versions he likes more than others.” In general, parents reported more observed music behaviors during the second interview than during the first interview. They were also more likely to report subtle, nonperformance-based behaviors during the second interview than during the first interview.

Parents reported common locations for frequent music behaviors. When describing their child's music behaviors, parents often described where the music behaviors took place. Commonalities began to emerge regarding parent participants' reported locations of music behaviors. The participants each stated that they noticed music behaviors in the car. All participants reported listening and singing to music in the car with their child. Music-making in the car is supported by other research regarding the ways music is made in the family vehicle and how it relates to young children's musical development. Similarly, Koops (2014), collected data through observation, reflection forms, and video recordings, and suggested that the family vehicle serves as an appropriate and popular place for children's music making. Singing, moving, listening to music, composing and improvising were all types of reported music-making in the car.

Several parents reported that their child often demonstrated music behaviors before going to bed or upon waking. During the second session of interviews, Sharon reported that her mother often musically engaged with her child before bed. She said, “Um, every time she, she's with him in the evening and she's putting him to bed, she'll sing, like, different songs with him. But his favorite song is *Mary Did You Know?*”. She went on to explain that her child “memorized [the song] and can sing it back to her, but when she sings it, he's like, really relaxed and it helps him go to sleep.” Kayla reported that her child was frequently “asking for songs to be sung, asking for books to be read before bed.” Sharon reported that “usually when I catch him singing, he's usually alone in his bedroom.” Sole (2016) studied the music making in children while they were in cribs and collected data through audio recordings, reflection and observation forms, and interviews. Sole determined that toddlers sought out music spontaneously on their own before falling asleep and upon waking. Sole also suggested that young children use music to support their musical and social/emotional development.

The bath was another commonly reported location for music-making. With regard to her daughter, May reported, “Sometimes when she's taking a bath she likes to like, sing, dance, yeah.” William reported, “When I have my speaker and we listen to music it's in the bath or the car.” Sharon reported, “You know, he's singing in the bathtub, but I wasn't really paying attention.” Overall, the three most commonly reported locations for music-making and observing music behaviors were the car, the bedroom, and the bathtub.

Parents compared their child’s music behaviors to other children’s music behaviors in the class. When watching their child participate in the video-recorded music engagements, each parent participant sometimes compared their child’s music behaviors



to the other children's music behaviors. Some parents noticed the absence of their child's music behaviors when compared to other children in the classroom. For example, when watching the video-recorded music engagements, Brenda said "[my child] is not doing a lot. That little boy is doing a lot." Kayla compared her child's music behaviors to the other children's behaviors, noticing that he was not doing what they were doing. "But I think uh, he's trying to do, he's trying to copy. Uh. It's hard for him just to catch what the other kids or what you are doing." Brenda also observed that she noticed her child responding to the music but not as much as the other children saying "less than those two kids but yes still. A reluctant participant."

While some parents noticed absence of their child's music behaviors when compared to other children, some parents reported noticing the presence of music behaviors compared to other children. Kayla noticed that her child was encouraging another child to participate in music. She said, "I notice that he, he was following you at the same time he was doing that [moving him along to the music] to another kid." Sharon noticed the presence of her child's music behavior compared to other children in the class saying, "I see the other kids doing it too but he was, he did awesome. He did, he did really good."

### **Theme Two - Parents observed social behaviors during the music engagement.**

Parents reported the social behavior of self-expression frequently and that their child expresses himself or herself through music-making. Music is an expressive art, and the

parents made that connection to their own child's participation in music. Kayla said that she believes her child is "finding his way to express and probably music can help him." Many parents reported that they believe their child is interested in music, enjoying music, and using music as a tool for self-expression. The parents reported that they believe their child find enjoyment in making music. Kayla also reported that "I love to see that he uh, I think he feels happy when he's uh, expressing himself." May stated that "now I feel like she expresses herself, like, she likes to sing." She also said, "I feel like it makes her, you know, to be herself, singing, you know." Some parents also reported that watching the music engagement sessions allows them to gain insight to how their child is expressing himself or herself. William reported that "I guess a lot of how he's been expressing himself makes a lot more sense now."

Parents compared their child's behaviors to the behaviors of other children in the class as conforming or nonconforming. While watching the video-recorded music engagements, parents observed how their child interacted in the classroom environment. Many parents showed an interest in whether or not their child was following directions given by me, the music development specialist. The parents reported that their child was not conforming to the rules of the classroom, even when I never explicitly stated the rules for our game or activity. They inferred the rules of the game based on how the other children were acting and pointed out when their child was acting in a way that was different than the other children. Brenda noticed that her child was doing something different than the rest of the class. She was also concerned that her child was not following the rules even though I never explicitly stated rules for the activity. In response to her child's nonconforming behavior, she said "I thought he wasn't following the

general directions.” In another instance, Sharon reported that she noticed her child “standing up and not doing what it was.”

When watching the video-recorded music engagement sessions, Kayla said, “I think [my child] is not following the rules, like everyone is.” She noticed the nonconforming behavior by comparing her child’s behavior to his classmates’ behavior. Kayla’s nonconforming child, however, was demonstrating a music behavior. Instead of recognizing the music behavior, Kayla was focused on her child’s nonconformity. When I explained to Kayla that even though her child was not doing what his classmates were doing, I noticed her child was performing an important music behavior, she shifted her attitude, and became supportive of her child’s nonconforming social behavior.

Some parents also reported noticing when their child behaved the same way as the other children in the class and myself. William observed and reported that his child was “looking around and I think he wants first to see what people is doing. Again, just to make sure that he can do it and imitate them. But again that he wants to fit.” Not only did each parent notice that their child conformed to the other children in the class, but they also noticed when their child conformed to the behaviors that I demonstrated. The parents reported observing when their child imitated my own musical behaviors such as singing, rhythm chanting, and moving.

### **Theme Three - Parents observed non-music learning through music engagement.**

Kayla was especially interested in how music could help her son learn English as a second language through music engagements. She stated that Spanish is the language

that is primarily spoken at home. While watching the video-recorded music engagement sessions, Kayla was intrigued by how well her son was using the language. She said, “It's not about language, it's about feelings. And, I like that, and I'm pretty sure he's using music use to speak the language.” During the second interview, Kayla said she noticed her son using English more and more. “And I think now what I notice that he, he likes to speak a little more in English and sometimes he's speaking by himself like, ‘Mom look at this,’ and I say, ‘Okay good,’ and he's singing also in English.”

She was also interested in learning how music can help those new to a culture accustomed to a different culture. When asking about the purposes for this research, Kayla showed interest in how music may help people from other cultures. She suggested that, “Next time you can do some research on how music is gonna help um, people from different countries to acculturate, and embrace the culture. I don't know, and learn the language.” Kayla has directly experienced and observed how music has helped her son grow accustomed to the English language and communicate using English more confidently than before.

May took interest in how I demonstrated using music to help teach color recognition. During the second session of interviews, May noticed that her child responded musically when learning about colors. May reported that I was, “Using colors and then, like, singing like, ‘Is this purple? Is this orange?’ And then they will call after and they sing their answer. And I feel like they really enjoy it.” She said she thinks using colors is a way for her child to relate to the music and her own learning. May observed that you can teach children music while using toys, props, and subjects such as colors, and stated, “You can use objects, you can use colors, you can use like the toys and then

like, the kids, they do relate much better than just teaching them how to sing.” Not only are the children learning music content, but they are participating in learning other subjects as well.

#### **Theme Four - Parents reported personal feelings.**

Parent participants mentioned during their interviews they wanted to continue to support their child’s music development at home and they want their child to grow up to be a musical person. As stated in her interview, Brenda said, “I mean, I would definitely want him to be musical. I mean, I’m totally fine with him, ... Yeah. No, I would be very supportive if they [my children] like music.” She also went on to describe her own enjoyment of music and how she hopes her children can learn to enjoy music and the arts as well. She said, “I love music, so I definitely want my kids to have a love for music ... But the arts, all the arts have always been, like my best [subjects].”

William explained his reasoning for exposing his child to music and musically engaging with his child. William identifies as a musician so his experiences have influenced how he and his child musically engage. During the second interview, William described his approach to exposing his child to music when he commented, “I’ve been trying to just keep music around him since he was born. Not because I want him to like a kind of music or because I want him to like a song or anything like that. I just want him to be able to recognize patterns and complex patterns and I feel like the more, the more around than the more you know. It won’t seem quite as, it won’t seem, well like again like a code he’s trying to crack.” Sharon said that she is interested in supporting her child’s music development at home because she believes music is something that interests her

child. Sharon said, “I would like to keep this going with him since it's something that it seems like he's interested in and it's something that he you know, obviously is good at.” May reported that even a little bit of music engagement at home can make a big difference. She said, “You go home and do a little bit of repetition. So I didn't know, you know, even with small kids, it has that impact.”

The parent participants expressed overwhelmingly positive feelings toward their child's music development, music engagement, and music enjoyment. The parent participants reported feeling excited and happy about how their child was developing musically. Parents were very appreciative for the opportunity to learn more about their child. Kayla portrayed this appreciation by saying “Honestly, I appreciate this because, um, I notice a lot of change in his behavior. [He's'] just trying to learn more.” Sharon expressed her happiness and appreciation by saying, “Wow. That's good. Aw. That is really good Miss J. Thank you so much for recording these.” She went on to say that she is, “glad that [her child] is enjoying it and that he's participating and doing such a great job with it.” Sharon expressed her amazement at her child's music development by saying, “I'm just amazed at how well he does. Like, I mean, like I said, he's been interested in music since he was like, a year old. But it's just a matter of getting to see how well he does and how well he interacts.”

William expressed appreciation and gratitude for the music engagement sessions his son receives at Bright Horizons. “I appreciate he's got these opportunities here [at Bright Horizons] during the day,” he said during the first interview. William continued, “I guess that's what I'm saying. So, there's actually something creative and developmental going on here.” He also expressed his enthusiasm for his child's musical development

saying, “Yeah, I'm excited about his musical development!” Regarding his child’s music development, William reported that he feels his child is “engaged at a level, probably I don't even understand, but it's probably very, very rich for him.”

In her interview, May was surprised by the music responses she saw performed by her child and the other children in the 3B class. “Wow! How do you get them to do all this [types of music behaviors]?”, she asked during her interview.

After observing her child in the video-recorded music engagement sessions, Brenda expressed her positive feelings toward her child’s music development by suggesting that he may one day be a musician. During the interview, Brenda said “Mhm. Mhm. Cool. Hopefully, I mean, maybe he'll be a musician!”. Brenda also expressed her appreciation for working with her child to develop his music behaviors. “I love you guys, you guys coming in! I'm glad they [University sponsors] continued that [weekly music classes provided by USC music education graduate students], ‘cause I was worried [that those classes might not continue]. So I'm like, I'm glad I'm seeing evidence. This is a good thing at the university that they do [support].”

**Theme Five - Parents appreciated learning from CMBI, viewing video-recordings of their children in music engagements, and talking with me about their child’s music development.**

Regarding CMBI, parents shared that the inventory helped them recognize their child’s music behaviors. Statements made during the interviews and responses to the exit questionnaire support that claim. During the interview, William explained that CMBI helped him understand what music behaviors he may see from his child. He explained

that before the completing the inventory he had a limited idea of what music behaviors to expect. William commented, “Well I don't think I've been paying attention to anything other than mimicry until I took the first survey I guess.” He also stated during his first interview, “I do think the survey gave me a good overview of what to expect at this age. Um like, it's all new, it's all new to me.”

Parent participants reported CMBI to be beneficial for understanding the variety of early child music behaviors. When asked if CMBI helped them to recognize their child's music behaviors, one parent participant reported that CMBI was helpful because, “I wouldn't of known things to look for [without having completed the inventory].” Another parent participant said that CMBI was helpful because, “There are behaviors I would not have noticed since I am not attuned to them [unless I had completed the inventory].”

Regarding the video-recorded music engagement sessions, parents shared that they helped them to recognize their child's music behaviors as well. One parent participant claimed that the videos were informative because they, “...allowed me to see how my child engages and interact during music instead just relying on [knowing] he enjoyed music class today!” Parents also reported the watching the video-recorded music engagement sessions support formed opinions on their child's music behaviors and music development. A parent participant reported that, “Videos validate my belief my child is musical[ly] oriented.” The parents also enjoyed getting a glimpse into what their children do during music engagement sessions and the music behaviors that they may not observe at home. One parent reported, “I saw things he did during a musical class that I would not



have seen otherwise. He will do things [music behaviors] for others that he won't do for me, as well.”

The parents also learned from the conversations that occurred during the think-aloud interviews. The interviews were unstructured and personal, allowing for a reciprocal, conversational process. The parents gained insight from me regarding what behaviors I report but I also gained insight from the parents and their child's reported behaviors. The parents and I shared stories and information about music behaviors we notice and how we identify those behaviors. Our conversations were rich in detail and descriptions regarding their child's music behaviors and music development. The parents and I shared stories and information about music behaviors we notice and how we identify those behaviors.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Purpose and guiding research question**

With the intent of understanding perceptions of early childhood music development, the purpose of this research is to examine parents' observations regarding their young children during music classes after completing the *Children's Music Behavior Inventory* (Valerio & Reynolds, 2015). Following was the guiding research question: How do knowledge of CMBI and viewing informal music class video recordings influence parents' perceptions and understanding of their three-year-old children's music behaviors and development during a two-month period?

#### **Method**

In this qualitative case study, I used homogeneous intensity sampling, participant observation, multiple observers, and multiple data sources to investigate how parents observed and reported their child's music behaviors.

The guiding prompts included:

- *Children's Music Behavior Inventory* (CMBI) completion, and
- Video-recorded music engagements.

The data sources included:

- Audio-recorded individual interviews regarding CMBI,
- Audio-recorded individual think-aloud interviews, and
- Parent participant exit questionnaires.

I transcribed data sources as appropriate and coded each transcription using Steever's (2015) codes with my additional codes creating my codebook to organize the data. To promote internal validity and trustworthiness, I used strategies discussed by Patton (2015) including constant comparison, triangulation, member checks, and critical friend review.

## **Findings**

After coding the data, I organized the codes into cultural domains, taxonomy, and descriptions of parent observations. Within the established cultural domains, taxonomy, and descriptions, I engaged in a thematic analysis of the data. Five themes emerged from my coding and cultural domains. Those themes included:

1. Parents first observed music behaviors and later, they observed subtle music behaviors,
2. Parents observed social behaviors during the music engagement,
3. Parents observed non-music learning through music engagement,
4. Parents reported positive feelings, and
5. Parents appreciated learning from CMBI, viewing video-recordings of their children in music engagements, and talking with me about their child's music development.

The findings from the thematic analysis provided insight relating to my guiding research question. The parents reported that the completion of CMBI and viewing video-recordings of their child's music engagements provided insight to their child's music behaviors. Parents reported that CMBI illuminated potential music behaviors that they may have not considered to be important prior to completing the questionnaire. CMBI expanded parents' awareness of young children's developmentally appropriate music behaviors. Regarding the video-recorded music engagement sessions, parents shared that watching the videos helped them to recognize their child's music behaviors as well. Parents also reported the video-recorded music engagement sessions support formed opinions on their child's music behaviors and music development. The parents said that watching the video-recorded music engagements allowed them to witness behaviors that they had not seen their children at home. The parents also learned from talking with me regarding their child's music behaviors and music development. Our conversations were rich in detail and descriptions of music behaviors and provided a deeper understanding of early childhood music development.

Completing CMBI and the video-recorded music engagement sessions helped parents notice more subtle music behaviors than before the study. At the beginning of the study, parents reported mostly singing and dancing as their child's most common music behaviors but at the end of the study, parents reported more subtle music behaviors much more frequently. Those subtle music behaviors included creating music, listening to music, and requesting music. The parents shared similarities in the location of recognized music behaviors such as the car, the bath, and the child's bedroom. Recognizing the common places for music behaviors can increase parents' awareness and encourage them

to engage musically with their child. Parents also compared their own child's music behaviors to the other children's music behaviors. This comparison of music behaviors was both positive and negative; individual parents noticed when their child performed (sang, moved, chanted) and also when their child did not perform.

Parents also noticed their child's social behaviors by watching the video-recorded music engagement sessions. Parents described behaviors that were conforming such as behaving similarly to the rest of the class and nonconforming such as behaving differently than the rest of the class. Classroom rules and expectations were not established in the video-recorded music engagement sessions but parents reported instances when their child was following the rules or not following the rules. Parents reported social behaviors of self-expression through music, and they shared that they believe their children express themselves through music. The parents also reported observing the occurrence of non-music learning during the video-recorded music engagement sessions, and that their children learned skills such as language and color recognition by engaging in the music engagement sessions.

The parent participants in this study shared positive feelings toward their child's music development and observed music behaviors. After completing CMBI and watching the video-recorded music engagement sessions, that parents shared that they were pleased to see their child succeed in music and enjoy making music. The parents were impressed and surprised by the music development they observed during the video-recorded music engagement sessions.

## **Meanings and Understandings**

I do not claim generalizability of the findings; however, my findings are important for understanding how the parent participants in this study observed, reported, and gained understanding of their children's music behaviors. The study provided the opportunity for parents to gain insight to their child's music behaviors by completing CMBI and watching video-recorded music engagement sessions, but the parents also learned through their conversations with me. Through conversations regarding each child's music behaviors and music development, parents gained an understanding of their child's unique music behaviors and music development process. The parents developed an increasing understanding of the types of music behaviors children may perform, how to recognize those behaviors, and how to support those behaviors when recognized.

By participating in this study parents gained an enhanced view of their child's development. Parents claimed that they appreciated this study because they were able to view behaviors that they might have otherwise not noticed or seen. The parents explained that CMBI gave them an idea of what music behaviors may be expected from a young child and an awareness of how to look for those behaviors. The video-recorded music engagements allowed parents to witness those various behaviors in action. The completion of CMBI allowed the parents to see how those music behaviors were described, but watching the video-recorded music engagement sessions allowed the parents to see how those music behaviors were demonstrated. Both CMBI and the video-recorded music engagement sessions were essential to the parent participants' understanding of music behaviors.

## **Relevance and Importance of the study**

During early childhood music engagement sessions, trained specialists notice and scaffold young children's learning and experiences to help encourage music responses (Bond, 2011; Gordon, 2013; McNair, 2010; Mehr, 2014; Robert, 1992; Valerio, Reynolds, Taggart, Bolton, & Gordon, 1998). Young children respond to music through movement, tonal approximations, and/or rhythm approximations such as babbling and noise making. Those music responses may go unnoticed by parents, and therefore, may remain unsupported by parents and other adults. In this study, the examination of parents' perceptions of young children's music behaviors may allow for deeper understanding of their music making, a more thorough understanding of their music development, and ways to encourage this development at home.

Costa-Giomi and Ilari (2014), Mehr (2014), Custodero (2006), and Custodero & Johnson-Green (2003) have provided evidence that underscores the importance of early childhood music making, especially in the home and prior to formal instruction. Those researchers promoted the importance of early music exposure to develop musical understanding and skills. It is important for parents to understand those music behaviors to that they are able to support young children's music development. Based on my findings, I suggest that parents may have a limited awareness of the types of music behaviors young children may exhibit, and they may not be educated on how recognize and support those music behaviors. By participating in this study, completing CMBI, and watching the video-recorded music engagement sessions that featured their young children, parents recognized more music behaviors and were able to identify more subtle music behaviors than before participating in the study. In essence, the more exposure the

parents have to descriptions and demonstrations of young children's music behaviors, the more awareness and understanding they have of those behaviors.

By participating in this study, parents increased their awareness of music behaviors demonstrated by their child. Once parents can notice those music behaviors, they may then learn how to encourage and foster their child's music development more often and more confidently than without that knowledge. By participating in this study, parents developed an increased knowledge of early childhood music development and may become more empowered to assist their child's music development. Parents may learn to notice their child's music behaviors and assist them in supporting their musical skills and understanding. Optimally, to understand how parents can help encourage their child's music development, researchers must need to understand what parents know about young children's music development and how they observe and report those music behaviors. By examining parents' observations and perceptions of young children's music behaviors through CMBI and video-recorded music engagement sessions, we begin to understand what parents know and understand about early childhood music development. We begin to understand that parents notice musical behaviors, social behaviors, and music as a tool for non-music learning. We also begin to notice that parents are supportive and positive toward their child's music learning and that parents appreciated CMBI, video-recorded music engagement sessions, and talking with me to learn more about their child's music behaviors.



## **Critique of Findings and Suggestions for Future Inquiry**

Due to the qualitative nature and small sample size of my study, I do not claim generalizability of my results. For future inquiry, it may be beneficial to use a larger sample size to determine how more parents and other adults who care for young children observe and report young children's music behaviors while referencing CMBI and video-recorded music engagement sessions. A larger sample size may allow for more data and potential generalizability. Such studies may confirm and expand my findings in this study.

I chose to investigate perceptions of parents of three-year-old children because of the great variety of music behaviors that occur during this age. I also chose this age group because of the exceptional classroom dynamic created by the 3B teachers at Bright Horizons. It may be beneficial to replicate this study with parents of children from birth through age eight, the entire range of early childhood according to the *National Association for the Education of Young Children* ("NAEYC", 2018). Findings from a wide variety of parents of young children may allow researchers an enhanced understanding of parents' perceptions of young children's music behaviors throughout the early childhood years.

After personal reflection, I determined that my interviewing methods and skills were stronger in the second interview sessions than during the first interview sessions. This is due having formed a connection with the parents during the first interview sessions and experience with the previous interview structure. When replicating this study, I recommend conducting an informal meeting with parents so that we may become

acquainted with each other prior to interviews. I believe this informal meeting before the interview processes would establish relationships before the initial interview process, and might prevent any awkward conversation during interviews.

### **Implications for early childhood music development specialists**

This study emphasizes the importance of communication with parents regarding their child's music behaviors and music development. During this study, I—an early childhood music development specialist—learned valuable information from parents regarding their child's music behaviors at home and the behaviors that they observed while watching the video-recorded music engagement sessions. This information helped me better understand each parent's child as a person and a young musician. Parent participants shared valuable social and behavioral information that helped me understand their child's social behaviors, personality, and attitudes. The parent participants also shared valuable music behaviors that they observe that helped inform my future instruction with that child. Learning from the parents increased my awareness of my students' behaviors, both social and musical. The parents also learned valuable information from me regarding what music behaviors may be expected from their young children.

### **Implications for parents of young children**

The most meaningful implications from this study are how CMBI and watching video-recorded music engagement sessions increased parents' awareness and understandings of young children's music behaviors. Over time, parents noticed more music behaviors, especially subtle music behaviors such as listening to music, creating

music, and requesting music as the study progressed. The parents also reported that the completion of CMBI and the opportunity to watch video-recorded music engagement sessions increased their awareness and understandings of young children's music behaviors. As parents increase their ability to recognize music behaviors by using tools such as CMBI, by observing music engagement sessions, or by conversing with an early childhood music development specialist, they may be more likely to encourage and support those music behaviors. The more parents understand about young children's music behaviors, the more likely they may be to recognize and support those behaviors by developing techniques and seeking opportunities to understand and promote their young child's music behaviors and music development.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study was limited because I investigated parents' observations of their children's music behavior with five parent participants. Though this study was limited, the findings support the importance of parents' roles in their young child's music development. Because I did not examine the nature of parents' observations for young children of various ages, future research regarding parents' observations of their young children, infancy through age five, will increase the body of knowledge about parents' observation, recognition, understanding, and support of young children's music behaviors. Replicating this study with a larger group of parent participants may clarify understandings about young children's music behaviors and how parents observe and recognize those behaviors. Moreover, though I examined how both CMBI and video-recorded music engagements influenced parents' observations of their three-year-old children's music behaviors and development, I did not account for how our conversations

over time may have influenced their understandings as well. Future similar investigations should include the influence of parents' observations and conversations with music development specialists over time.

Parents' observations of social behaviors during music engagement sessions is a theme that was unexpected and should be researched further. The parents were quick to comment when their child demonstrated non-conforming behaviors. I perceived their attitudes when observing their child's non-conforming behaviors to be anxious and disapproving. During many instances, when children exhibited those non-conforming behaviors, I perceived the children to be exhibiting valuable music behaviors, even if the children were behaving differently than the other children in the class. When appropriate, I explained to the parents that even though their children were behaving differently than the other children in the class, I perceived their child to be demonstrating a meaningful, musical behavior. Following this clarification, parents' perceived anxiety regarding their children's non-conforming behaviors shifted to attitudes of approval and support. I believe that further research regarding the anxiety parents demonstrate when their children demonstrate non-conforming behaviors during music engagement sessions may provide valuable insight regarding how parents observe and understand early childhood music development.

## REFERENCES

- Bond, V. L. (2011). Before they walk in the door: Environmental influences on musical ability in early childhood and implications for nurturing the nurturers. *Contributions to Music Education, 38*(2), 73-89. <http://cme.webhop.org/>
- Bright Horizons' Child Care & Preschool Curriculum (2017). Retrieved from <http://www.brighthorizons.com/programs/care-school-curriculum>
- Costa-Giomi, E., & Ilari, B. (2014). Infants' preferential attention to sung and spoken stimuli. *Journal of Research in Music Education, 62*(2), 188-194. doi:10.1177/0022429414530564
- Custodero, L. A. (2005). Observable indicators of flow experience: A developmental perspective on musical engagement in young children from infancy to school age. *Music Education Research, 7*(2), 185-209. doi:10.1080/14613800500169431
- Custodero, L. A. (2006). Singing practices in 10 families with young Children. *Journal of Research in Music Education, 54*(1), 37-56. doi:10.1177/002242940605400104
- Custodero, L. A., & Johnson-Green, E. A. (2003). Passing the cultural torch: Musical experience and musical parenting of infants. *Journal of Research in Music Education, 51*(2), 102-114. doi:10.2307/3345844
- Gordon, E. E. (1999). All about audiation and music aptitudes. *Music Educators Journal, 86*(2), 41-44.
- Gordon, E. E. (2013). *Music learning theory for newborn and young children*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, Inc.
- HyperResearch [Computer software]. (2015) Retrieved from <http://www.researchware.com/products/hyperresearch.html>
- HyperResearch [Computer software]. (2014) Retrieved from <http://www.researchware.com/products/hypertranscribe.html>
- Kirby, K. F., (1996). A phenomenological case study of music interactions between a mother and her child. (Unpublished master's thesis). University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.
- Koops, L. H. (2014). Songs from the car seat: Exploring the early childhood music-making place of the family vehicle. *Journal of Research in Music Education, 62*(1), 52-65. doi:10.1177/0022429413520007

- McNair, A.A. (2010). *Joint music attention between toddlers and a music teacher*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Thesis Global @ University of South Carolina. (UMI No. 3433168)
- Mehr, S. A. (2014). Music in the home: New evidence for an intergenerational link. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 62(1), 78-88. doi:10.1177/0022429413520008
- NAEYC. *About Us*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.naeyc.org/about-us>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Reynolds, A. M., Long, S., & Valerio, W. H. (2007). Language acquisition and music acquisition: Possible parallels. In E. Smithrim & R. Uptis (Eds.), *Listen to their Voices, Research to Practice: A Biennial Series. Volume 3* (pp. 211-227). Canadian Music Educators Association: Waterloo, ON Canada.
- Robert, H.M. (1992). Vocal responses of two infants to three criterion songs. (Unpublished Master's thesis). University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina.
- Sole, M. (2016). Crib song: Insights into functions of toddlers' private spontaneous singing. *Psychology of Music*, 1-21. doi: 10.1177/0305735616650746
- Spradley, J.P. (1980). *Participant observation*. U.S.A.: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.
- Steever, E. M. (2015). *A case study on parent participation in their child's musical development* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global Database. (UMI No. 1728746113).
- Valerio, W. H. & Reynolds, A. M. (2015). Children' Music Behavior Inventory (CMBI).
- Valerio, W. H., Reynolds, A. M., Bolton, B. M., Taggart, C. C., & Gordon, E. E. (1998). *Music play: The early childhood music curriculum guide for parents, teachers, and caregivers*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, Inc.
- Valerio, W. H., Reynolds, A. M., Morgan, G., McNair, A. M. (2012). Construct validity of the parent-completed children's music-related behavior questionnaire. *Journal of Research in Music Education* 60(2), 186-200. doi: 10.1177/0022429412444450

## APPENDIX A:

### PARENT LETTER AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

September 25, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I am a graduate student working on my Masters in Music Education at the University of South Carolina, and I am the music teacher for the 3B class at Bright Horizons at the University of South Carolina. This is my second year teaching music at Bright Horizons at USC. I am currently conducting research for use in my thesis, *Parent's Observations of their Young Children's Music Behaviors*. With the intent of understanding perceptions of early childhood music development, the purpose of this research is to examine parents' observations of their young children's music behaviors. This research will provide information that may allow insight to parent's observations and help early childhood music development specialists provide young children with the best music experience as possible.

Data for this study will be collected in the 3B classroom from the week of October 2<sup>nd</sup> to December 13<sup>th</sup>. During that time, as your child's regular music teacher, I will facilitate and video record music engagement sessions in your child's classroom. The videos will not be published but will be used for think-aloud interview during the study and during my research presentations. During the data collection period, you will be asked to complete the online *Children's Music Behavior Inventory* (Valerio & Reynolds, 2016) three times regarding you and your child's music behaviors. I will also conduct interviews with you regarding CMBI and think-aloud interviews regarding your observations while watching the video recorded music engagement sessions. At the end of the study, you will complete a brief exit questionnaire. The data collection timeline for this study is attached to this letter.

Your participation and your child's participation in this study are completely voluntary. The information gained will be coded to ensure confidentiality. At any time during the study, you may discontinue participation without prejudice.

Should you have any questions about this research, please contact me at 330-206-6993. You may also contact Dr. Wendy Valerio, my thesis advisor, if you have questions about this research. Her office phone number is 803-777-5382. The School of Music at the University of South Carolina is eager to ensure that all research participants are treated in a fair and respectful manner. If you have any concerns or questions about your treatment as a subject in this project, contact Mr. Tommy Coggins, USC Office of Research (803) 777-4456.

Please return the attached form to the Bright Horizons Director, Ms. Andrea Rivers, by September 29, 2017

Sincerely,

Julia Beck, M.M.E. candidate

USC School of Music

juliach@email.sc.edu

Wendy Valerio, Ph.D.

Professor of Music

Director, Children's Music Development  
Center



**Please return this form to the**

**Director of Bright Horizons at University of South Carolina,**

**Ms. Andrea Rivers, by September 29, 2017.**

**Informed Consent Agreement - Parent of Child**

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to participate in the research study, *Parent's Observations of their Young Children's Music Behaviors* by completing CMBI three times, participating in interviews regarding CMBI, providing observations to video recorded music engagement sessions, and by completing the exit questionnaire. I agree for my child to be video recorded for this study. I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the information outlined in the accompanying letter of informed consent.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree to participate in the research study, *Parent's Observations of their Young Children's Music Behaviors*. I agree for my child to be video recorded for this study.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree to participate in the research study, *Parent's Observations of their Young Children's Music Behaviors* and I do not agree for my child to be video recorded for this study.

---

Name of Parent(s) or Guardian(s) participating in the study      Today's Date

---

Child's Name      Child's Birth Date

---

Signature of Parent(s) or Guardian(s)      Home Telephone

---

Work Telephone

---

Street or PO Address

---

City      State      Zip Code

APPENDIX B:  
PARENT PARTICIPANT EXIT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Throughout the 8-week study, what have you learned about your child's music behaviors?
2. Throughout the 8-week study, what have you learned about your own music behaviors?
3. Throughout the 8-week study, what have you learned about early childhood music development?
4. Throughout the 8-week study, during what daily activities did you notice your child demonstrating music behaviors the least?
5. Throughout the 8-week study, during what daily activities did you notice your child demonstrating music behaviors the most?
6. Do you believe CMBI helped as a tool to recognize your child's music behaviors? Why or why not?
7. Do you believe that watching the videos helped as a tool to recognize your child's music behaviors? Why or why not?

APPENDIX C:  
FINAL CODEBOOK FOR PARENTS' OBSERVATIONS

Culture

Demographic Information

Feeling\_confusion

Feeling\_negative

Feeling\_positive

Feeling\_surprise

Home Music Behaviors

MusicBehavior\_anticipation

MusicBehavior\_audiation

MusicBehavior\_chanting

MusicBehavior\_comparison

MusicBehavior\_coordination

MusicBehavior\_creating

MusicBehavior\_dancing

MusicBehavior\_doesnotdo

MusicBehavior\_expectation

MusicBehavior\_hesitation

MusicBehavior\_identify

MusicBehavior\_imitation

MusicBehavior\_instruments

MusicBehavior\_interestenjoyment

MusicBehavior\_leader

MusicBehavior\_listening  
MusicBehavior\_location  
MusicBehavior\_moving  
MusicBehavior\_parentencouragement  
MusicBehavior\_positive  
MusicBehavior\_recorded  
MusicBehavior\_requests  
MusicBehavior\_singing  
MusicBehavior\_toysprops  
MusicBehavior\_uncertain  
MusicBehavior\_vocabulary  
Nonmusiclearning  
Participant\_agree  
Participant\_disagree  
PersonalAnecdote\_feeling  
PersonalAnecdote\_memories  
PersonalAnecdote\_musicbehavior  
Researcher\_identfiedmusicbehavior  
Researcher\_instruction  
Self-Expression  
SocialBehavior\_attention  
SocialBehavior\_nonconforming  
SocialBehavior\_conforming  
SocialBehavior\_comparing  
SocialBehavior\_positive