Young Children’s Behaviors During Favorite-Music Repertoire And Other-Music Repertoire

Vanessa Caswell

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Young Children’s Behaviors During Favorite-Music Repertoire
And Other-Music Repertoire

by

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ABSTRACT

To gain understanding regarding early childhood music repertoire selection, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine young children’s music behaviors demonstrated in response to their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire performed in informal early childhood music classes. My guiding research questions were (a) what was the favorite-music repertoire of young children, and (b) what did parents, Alli (an early childhood music teacher), Kat (an early childhood music teacher), and I notice about behaviors young children demonstrated during performances of their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire during our informal music classes?

I purposefully sampled three young children and asked their parents, my co-teacher and another early childhood music teacher to participate as observers. I participated as a complete participant observer. My co-teacher and I facilitated 10 weeks of Music Play classes based on Gordon’s (2013) *Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children* and Valerio, Reynolds, Taggart, Bolton, & Gordon’s (1998) *Music Play*. I gathered data from parent questionnaires, video-recorded Music Play classes, written observations and reflections, audio-recorded individual think-aloud interviews. I transcribed all data for subsequent analysis. I coded that data and created a taxonomic analysis to organize cultural domains.

Three themes emerged. Young children repeatedly demonstrated specific patterns from their favorite-music repertoire. Young children demonstrated related behaviors during favorite music and other music. Young children demonstrated unrelated behaviors
during favorite music and other music. I provide preliminary definitions and thick, rich descriptions of the behaviors young children demonstrated during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. Though I may not make generalizations based on this study, childhood music teachers may consider selecting young children’s favorite-music repertoire to elicit young children’s rhythm pattern behaviors and tonal pattern behaviors that may provide the basis for increased young children’s rhythm pattern and tonal pattern vocabulary development and learning or to engage young children’s positive emotions during music classes.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

One Saturday morning, parents, their young children, my co-teacher, and I sat in a circle for our weekly informal early childhood Music Play class at the University of South Carolina School of Music. We finished one musical activity, and I began to transition into a song. I took a breath to begin the song, but I paused to listen as I heard a parent and young child talk to each other quietly. I asked the parent what the young child said in case it might have been a song request. I heard the parent say, “Baby Shark” (Pinkfong & KizCastle, 2017). I recognized “Baby Shark” as a popular song, but I was unfamiliar with the complete lyric. I nodded and agreed we could sing “Baby Shark,” but requested their help with the words. I tentatively began the song, hoping at least some parents would sing along. To my surprise, not long after I began performing the song, all the parents joyfully joined me, confidently singing all of the words, and all moving with the same hand gestures to “Baby Shark.” Obviously, this was a favorite song for the children and their parents. In those moments, I saw each parent smile and lock eyes with their young child. All the young children looked into the eyes of their parents, smiled, and watched, captivated, as their parents performed “Baby Shark” including all of the words, movements, and voice changes that accompany the verses in the song. I glanced around and noticed every person musically engaged with another. It was my first experience seeing all parents suddenly and overwhelmingly musically engaged with their young children in an informal early childhood music class.
During that activity I observed a palpable shift in the room once we began to perform “Baby Shark” (Pinkfong & KizCastle, 2017). All the parents happily engaged in the music and movements while every young child smiled and observed their parents. I also noticed “Baby Shark” was not included in our usual Music Play class repertoire, yet all the parents and young children appeared to recognize and enjoy the song. After observing the parents’ and young children’s musical behaviors, I wondered if the palpable shift occurred because “Baby Shark” was a favorite song of the young children. I also began to wonder what behaviors young children demonstrate during their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire, and I wondered if other researchers had document those behaviors.

Some researchers have documented how young children and parents respond with a variety of behaviors to music performed in their homes, cars, child-development centers, and informal music classes (Arrasmith, 2018; Beck, 2018; Custodero, 2006; Gerry, Faux & Trainor, 2010; Gordon, 2013; Hicks, 1993; Koops, 2014; McNair, 2010; Robert, 1999; Reynolds, 1995; Steever, 2015; Valerio, Reynolds, Taggart, Bolton, & Gordon, 1998; Young, 2005). Several researchers have documented that young children respond to music with behaviors including attention, listening, eye contact, movement, vocal exploration, approximation, imitation, and improvisation behaviors (Arrasmith, 2018; Beck, 2018; Custodero, 2006; de Vries, 2009; Gerry et al., 2010; Gordon, 2012, 2013; Hicks, 1993; Koops, 2014; McNair, 2010; Robert, 1999; Reynolds, 1995; Steever, 2015; Valerio et al., 1998; Young, 2005). Although researchers have documented the types of behaviors young children make when listening to music in their homes, cars, child-development centers, and informal music classes, they have not compared the
behaviors young children demonstrate when listening to their favorite-music repertoire and other repertoire performed in informal music class settings.

**Young Children’s Music Repertoire and Music Behaviors in the Home**


Custodero and a co-researcher (2006) made home visits to families with young children to document their singing practices, including the music behaviors of young children in those families. The researchers reported young children sang improvisations based on, “Jingle Bells,” “March and Sing,” “Do Wop Ditty Ditty,” and “Marching to Victoria.” The young children also incorporated popular music into their play by singing learned songs and adapting learned songs.

When examining young children’s musical practices in their homes, de Vries (2009) reported young children sang songs learned from their preschool at home. Kirby (2007) examined social music interactions and musical development of young children in early childhood music settings. Kirby found a young child recalled music learned in his informal music class when he was at home. After noticing his pet fish, the young child improvised a song he named “Little Bitty Fishy,” which he sang throughout the day. Kirby documented the young child attempting to read, write, and perform his own compositions related to “Little Bitty Fishy.”
Those researchers included the type of repertoire performed at preschool or in the home, but they did not specifically consider the young children’s favorite-music repertoire. Young children may, or may not perform, specific behaviors when hearing their favorite-music repertoire performed in informal, nor did they compare young children’s when listening to their favorite-music repertoire and other repertoire performed in informal music class settings.

**Young Children’s Music Repertoire and Music Behaviors in the Car**

Koops (2014) noted children’s repertoire contained songs from individual music lessons, improvisations or “little songs,” call and response songs or rhythm chants, changing words to familiar songs, “Patty Cake,” “Wheels on the Bus,” and a piece of unidentified recorded music. Koops recorded that the closer proximity of the vehicle equalized the older-to-younger sibling hierarchy with siblings while the seating arrangements created a sense of separation between adults and children. The reduced eye contact between parent and child possibly allowed greater security for the child’s melodic improvisations, also called “little songs” (p. 57). Young children were buckled in age-appropriate car seats, which restricted movements, yet they showed “arm waving, hand clapping, feet kicking, and head bobbing” (p. 57). They also engaged in listening, improvising, singing, and chanting.

**Young Children’s Music Repertoire and Music Behaviors in Child Development Centers**

Several researchers have documented children’s behaviors during music repertoire performed in child development centers. Arrasmith’s (2018) classroom repertoire included songs with and without words as well as several songs from Valerio et
Arrasmith found 2-year-old children looked, moved, played, sang tonal patterns, chanted rhythm patterns, and approximated rhythm chants. Similarly, Beck (2018) examined parents’ observations of their young children while using classroom repertoire that was also based on *Music Play* (Valerio et al., 1998). Beck found young children singing, dancing, “creating, listening to music, and requesting music” (p. 38).

McNair (2010) examined joint music attention between toddlers and the researcher, a early childhood music teacher, while utilizing songs, chants, and activities such as “The Sled” and “Stretch and Bounce” (Valerio et al., 1998), and a few songs not found in *Music Play*: “Round and Around” (Kirby, 2008), “Hello, Hello, Hello” (Valerio, 2009), and the traditional songs “Clap Your Hands,” “Walk and Stop,” and “Color Song.” McNair also delivered rhythm patterns to students in a child-development center; in return, young children approximated or imitated the pattern beginning a rhythmic dialogue. McNair found that young children and the researcher shared music focus, shared music interaction, shared music understanding, sang, chanted, and moved.

Young (2005) documented young children’s music behaviors when they were given crude, single-note wooden pipes to play outdoors with a parent at a nursery school. The children and their parents improvised short rhythm patterns on the instruments and participated in call and response by trading short patterns and adding variations to their rhythms. Young incorporated repertoire based on improvisations or pattern exchanges between young children and their parents. Young found that young children self-initiated musical play, verbally instructed parents on how to musically play, or lost interest in the musical instruments after the parents joined in musical play. Similar to the previously
mentioned researchers, Arrasmith (2018), Beck (2018), McNair (2010), Young (2005) did not examine the young children’s behaviors demonstrated during the young children’s favorite-music repertoire compared to other-music repertoire.

**Young Children’s Music Repertoire and Behaviors in Informal Music Classes**

Robert’s (1999) music class repertoire included three researcher-composed songs labeled “Criterion Song One,” “Criterion Song Two,” and “Criterion Song Three,” as well as songs from *Music Play* (Valerio, et al., 1998). Steever (2015) incorporated many traditional folk tunes and rhythm chants in the informal music class such as “Engine, Engine,” “A Ram Sam Sam,” and “O Sinner Man” in early childhood music classes. The researcher also utilized several songs like “The Wind,” “The Sled,” and “My Mommy is a Pilot,” (Valerio, et al., 1998). Steever’s informal music class repertoire also includes instrumental exploration and rhythmic improvisation.

Hicks’ (1993) informal music class repertoire included songs without words in a variety of tonalities and meters and rhythm chants without words in a variety of meters. The researcher examined young children’s responses to, or behaviors during, familiar and unfamiliar songs without words in a variety of tonalities and meters. Reynolds’ (1995) informal music class repertoire contained a majority of songs without words in a variety of tonalities and a majority of rhythm chants without words in a variety of meters. The researcher examined young children’s movement responses, or behaviors during, to triple meter and duple meter rhythm chants as well as the parents’ observations of the young children’s movement responses or behaviors. Reynolds (1995) and Hicks (1993) did not compare the young children’s responses to, or behaviors during, their favorite-music repertoire and other informal music class repertoire.
Gerry et al. (2010) observed an informal music program which included 236 songs and chants mostly in duple meter, while less than a third were in triple meter. None of the class repertoire was in a complex meter. Within the informal music class, young children demonstrated movement responses, rhythmic responses, and tonal responses (Arrasmith, 2018; Beck, 2018; Custodero, 2006; Gerry, et al., 2010; Gordon, 2013; Hicks, 1993; Koops, 2014; McNair, 2010; Robert, 1999; Reynolds, 1995; Steever, 2015; Valerio et al., 1998; Young, 2005). Similar to the previously mentioned researchers, Robert (1999), Steever (2015), Hicks (1993), Reynolds (1995), and Gerry et al. (2010) did not examine young children’s behaviors during their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire.

As a music development and learning specialist who leads informal music classes on a weekly basis for young children for 2-months to 5-years old, I have noticed that young children may respond in a variety of ways to their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. Perhaps early childhood music teachers should ask parents of young children to provide them with their children’s favorite-music repertoire.

Roulston (2006) investigated young children, ages 3-years-old to 5-years-old, and their musical preferences through interviewing both the parents and young children. Bowles (1998) distributed a questionnaire to 2, 251 elementary school students to learn their music classroom activity preferences. Roulston (2006) and Bowles (1998) each investigated music preferences by means of questionnaires and interviews, but they did not document very young children’s behaviors during their favorite-music repertoire compared to other-music repertoire.
**Purpose and Guiding Research Question**

To gain understanding regarding early childhood music repertoire selection, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine young children’s music behaviors demonstrated in response to their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire performed in informal early childhood music classes. Following were my guiding research questions.

1. What was the favorite-music repertoire of young children?
2. What did parents, Alli (an early childhood music teacher), Kat (an early childhood music teacher), and I notice about behaviors young children demonstrated during performances of their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire during our informal music classes?
CHAPTER 2

RELATED RESEARCH

Singing Practices in 10 Families with Young Children

Custodero (2006)

Custodero perceived a lack of knowledge about the singing practices of families with their young children and engaged in a qualitative study to “capture the phenomenon of singing” (p. 40) in 10 families with young children. The researcher’s purpose was to identify music repertoires and settings of family singing practices. With the study, Custodero sought to document the hidden music repertoires and musical contexts of families.

Method

Participants and Setting

In 2000, Custodero administered the Parents’ Use of Music with Infants (PUMIS), a national telephone survey with 2250 respondents. Of those respondents, 138 indicated a willingness to be a part of another study. Of those 138 respondents, 10 family parents agreed to allow Custodero and a research team to investigate the singing practices in each of their homes. The parents’ ages ranged from 24 years to 48 years. Each parent had completed high school, over half had graduated from college, and three families included one parent with a postgraduate degree. Each family comprised two parents and one young child turning 3-years old during the study who served as study participants. Of the 10 young children, the parents identified seven girls and three boys. Six young
children had one sibling, and one young child had two siblings. Families identified as white, African-American, or Hispanic, and family incomes ranged from low to high.

**Data Collection, Procedures, and Analysis**

Custodero and a co-researcher visited each family’s home twice during the 3–4 week data collection period. The pair conducted parent interviews and observations of young children in each family’s home during the first 75-minute visit. One co-researcher met for a play session with each young child using the child’s personal toys and researcher-provided small percussion instruments. If the young child invited the researcher to play with him or her, the researcher documented the young child’s behaviors after the interaction. If the young child did not invite the researcher into the play, the researcher took notes during the interaction. Concurrently, the other co-researcher interviewed each young child’s parents, inquiring about the parents’ “childhood memories of family music-making, descriptions of current practices in their own homes, attitudes about musical traditions, and music-making outside the home” (p. 39). After the initial visit, each parent chose to maintain a journal or audio-recorded reflections describing the young children’s musical activities.

Custodero and a co-researcher conducted a second visit in each home 2–3 weeks later. The researchers clarified data collected from previous interviews, asked new, unidentified questions developed from initial analyses, and collected and discussed the parents’ journals. The co-researchers utilized Denzin’s (1989) “steps of interpretation” (p. 40) to deconstruct “the phenomenon of singing” (p. 40). The researchers coded and categorized the interview and journal data of the singing activity into themes.
Custodero ensured trustworthiness by member-checking the findings during the second interview. Three independent interpreters reviewed the researcher’s data; the independent interpreters offered possible re-interpretations. The co-researchers and the independent interpreters conversed until they reached an agreement regarding their interpretations.

**Findings and Discussion**

Custodero documented that families in this study used four varieties of music repertoire: (a) learned songs, (b) learned songs with improvised words, (c) improvised melodies, or (d) with recordings (p. 40). The researcher found the music repertoire occurred in three contexts, which are routines, traditions, and play. The researcher defined routines as a “sequence of a single day” or daily activities, traditions as “the formation and maintenance of family histories through musical conventions,” and play as “a focus on immediate experience” (p. 40).

**Routines**

Custodero noted music-making at certain daily activities such as piano time, music time, improvisation time, and bedtime. A parent and a young child made time for playing the piano. While at the piano, the young child requested a song and the parent accompanied the young child as he or she sang. The parent reported the young child’s favorite song requests were “Skip to My Lou,” but they also played “Kitty Watch-a-Keemie-O” and “Fiddle-I-Fee” (p. 42). Another parent sang choral music with a young child as a daily activity they referred to as “Sunbeam songs.” One parent improvised songs with a young child to match the activities such as driving and walking. Another
improvised the lyric, “Time for night-night, Yes it is, Yes it is,” to the tune of “Frere Jacques.”

**Traditions**

Custodero found parents maintained musical traditions with their young children by emulating their childhood experiences. One parent mirrored childhood experience by purchasing child-focused CDs for a young child. That same parent described the importance of forming a new tradition by designating a song from a children’s movie to share as a personal song with his/her child.

**Play**

Custodero documented families engaged in musical play with learned, adapted, and invented songs. A young child chanted a learned song from school “Three Little Donuts.” Another young child learned “Jingle Bells,” and his or her parent shared a recording of “Joy to the World” with the young child and a sibling. One parent reported young children listening to a recording of “Rawhide” while playing with trains. Another parent sang “Marching to Victoria” and other television show songs. One parent sang learned church music, “God Bless America,” “America the Beautiful,” “Edelweiss,” “Somewhere Over the Rainbow,” and “Molly Malone.” One parent performed “You Came from Love” for the researchers and two young children, and another parent sang “I’m a Little Teapot” and “Danny Boy,” with the latter being a frequent request by their young child.

A young child created a silly part of the bus and a silly sound to accompany it. The young child sang unidentified nursery rhymes while in the bath, then encored by changing to silly words. Other songs a young child adapted included “Twinkle, Twinkle
Little Star” on nonsense syllables and “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes.” A parent adapted children’s songs to match the interactions with toys and people like “This Old Man.” One family also adapted “Wheels on the Bus.”

A young child improvised a lengthy song and accompanied herself on the piano. The young child’s lyrics included sadness about rain. Another young child requested undisclosed folk songs and improvised a short song at the piano including lyrics while a parent played a basic accompaniment. Another parent improvised a melody for the researchers. One family reported music-making by improvising, playing piano and singing, singing with recordings, singing folk music, singing children’s songs, and listening to unidentified vocal recordings.

**Relevance to Current Study**

Custodero focused on the music repertoire performed in each home of 10 families. The researcher documented specific titles and times of day in which the families performed the music repertoire. Custodero sought to describe the different music repertoire families incorporated as well as when and how the families incorporated the music repertoire. I will also investigate parents’ and young children’s music repertoire. Unlike Custodero, I documented what parents, Alli, Kat, and I noticed about behaviors young children exhibited during performances of their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire during our informal music classes.
A Case Study on Parent Participation in Their Child’s Musical Development

Steever (2015)

Steever utilized a qualitative ethnographic case study design to investigate a family’s participation in a series of informal music classes. The researcher sought to answer the following guiding research questions:

1. Why does this family choose to participate in early childhood music classes with their child?

2. How do the parents engage in their child’s musicking during early childhood music classes?

3. What musical responses do the parents recognize in their child’s musicking during early childhood music classes? (p. 8).

Method

Participants and Setting

The family comprised a maternal parent in her mid-thirties, a paternal parent in his mid-thirties, and one 18-month old child. They participated in the previous two semesters and enrolled in the researcher’s fall informal music classes held weekly in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Steever purposefully chose the family due to its extensive shared experiences in the informal music classes.

Repertoire

Steever created a master list of all the informal music class repertoire for the semester. Steever’s repertoire included rhythmic improvisation, instrument exploration, songs from Valerio et al. (1998) Music Play, standard folk repertoire, and titles without a listed source. Steever’s list included “The Sled,” “The Wind,” “Swinging,” “Jump Over
the Ocean,” and “My Mommy is a Pilot” from Valerio et al. (1998) *Music Play*, traditional folk repertoire such as “Engine, Engine,” “Clapping and Tapping,” “A Ram Sam Sam,” and other uncited repertoire. With permission, the researcher recorded the informal music class repertoire and distributed CDs to enrolled families.

**Data Collection, Procedures, and Analysis**

Steever observed and collected data from the family during the 12-week semester. The researcher documented reflections immediately following the music class experiences, informal interactions before and after class, and all email correspondence with adult participants. The researcher collected data by video-recording the 4th, 8th, and 11th classes on iPads and transcribed the data. Steever finalized data collection by video-recording think-aloud interviews with both parents as they observed the recordings of the informal music classes. Steever transcribed the think-aloud interviews verbatim.

The researcher coded the music class video-recordings according to “musicking behavior codes” (p. 38). Steever categorized the engagements as tonal, movement, and rhythmic responses. Steever noted overlapping themes or observations between the video transcriptions and the researcher’s reflections.

Steever’s theoretical framework incorporated Vygotsky’s (1978) approach to social development, Blumer’s (1969) joint action, and Gordon’s (2013) music learning theory. Steever utilized Vygotsky’s approach to social development to analyze the social-musical interactions between parent and young child. Blumer’s joint action was defined as actions developed from a history of actions. The researcher used joint action to organize a group of people’s interactions. Gordon’s theory influenced Steever’s pedagogical decisions and music response categorization.
Two music education graduate students reviewed and coded the young child’s musical behaviors in the video data. A music education graduate student reviewed the video data to ensure trustworthiness and verify codes. That graduate student and Steever achieved a 99% code agreement. Steever achieved triangulation through the video-recordings, written observations and reflections, and a parent exit interview.

Findings and Discussion

Steever identified nine child-parent interaction themes: 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, f) father-child movement engagement, g) mother-child attempted engagements, h) father-child attempted engagement, and i) triad engagements.

Relevance to Current Study

Steever provided descriptions of one child’s responses and the parents’ responses during and after informal music classes. I, too, observed and documented the responses of young children during informal music classes, though I labeled those responses as behaviors. I also documented what parents, Alli, Kat, and I noticed about behaviors young children exhibited during performances of their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire during our informal music classes.

Songs from the Car Seat: Exploring the Early Childhood Music-Making Place of the Family Vehicle

Koops (2014)

Koops investigated the musical place of the family vehicle through a qualitative case study. The researcher described the “music [made by children in the family vehicle]
over the course of 9 weeks during which the children were enrolled in a researcher-led early childhood music course” (p. 54). Koops asked the following research questions

1. In what types of music making do children engage while in the car?
2. What qualities of the “carseat” environment are conducive to music making?
3. What types of activities introduced in an early childhood music class best lend themselves to increased improvisational or compositional music making in the vehicle?
4. How does an awareness of the family vehicle as a music-making place affect parent and teacher experience within an early childhood music course? (p. 54)

Method

Participants and Setting

Five families joined the study. Nine children between the ages of 10 months and 4.5 years participated. Each parent paid a discount rate for the informal music class to compensate for their time spent participating and the use of their personal vehicles as data collection sites.

The researcher conducted 45-minute informal music classes weekly for nine consecutive Mondays at a community music school near a midwestern research university in a large metropolitan area. Koops based the class structure on Valerio et al. (1998) *Music Play*. The researcher introduced an activity at the beginning of each class for the families to perform in their cars.
Data Collection, Procedures, and Analysis

Koops equipped each family with a recording device inside each family’s vehicle. A passenger, either another parent or young child, recorded the activities assigned that week, other songs, and “free music making at home” (p. 56). The parents participated with their young children in the activity assigned for the week and any other opportunities for music-making. Parents documented the musical experiences in handwritten journals.

Koops collected handwritten journals about the musical experiences from parents each week. The researcher recorded the informal music class as well as recorded field notes of the informal music class. Koops distributed an exit survey concerning parents’ perceptions of music-making in the vehicles toward the end of data collection. Koops transcribed and analyzed the journals, recordings, and emails of exit surveys. The researcher cross-checked materials with recordings of the class videos and field notes.

Findings and Discussion

Koops found four results: (a) families included the children’s music from various locations of their lives in the car; (b) young children “sang, moved, listened to music, composed, and improvised” (p. 60); (c) families in the car experienced infrequent distractions, sibling interaction based on proximity, and parent and child reflection; (d) parents gained understanding about their young child’s musical development.

The young children included songs from their informal music classes. One child sang music repertoire from his instrumental music lesson and “Wheels on the Bus.” Koops observed students creating “little songs” (p. 57) which were defined as “a form of spontaneous vocalizations” (p. 57). Families frequently played undisclosed recorded
music with a great range of genres. Young children responded with waving, clapping, kicking, or swaying regardless of the restrictions from the car seat.

Koops found the families experienced a lack of distractions in the car. A parent recognized the lack of eye contact as a positive factor for her family. The children may have felt more secure in experimenting with sounds without the pressure of an audience. A few families found siblings benefited from the close proximity. Siblings interacted with each other more in the car than at home. Parents focused on their child for the duration of the ride dedicating their time and thoughts to the current setting.

In an exit questionnaire, parents shared positive responses regarding their experience in the study and they noted an increased understanding of their child’s musical development. Parents gained an appreciation for the music they shared with their young children by learning about their child’s musical development.

**Relevance to Current Study**

Koops’ explored a location where a young child can make music. The parents were heavily involved with the research by documenting their thoughts and feelings. The parents and the researcher observed responses that directly apply to my research. Unlike Koops, I sought to document what parents, Alli, Kat, and I documented behaviors young children exhibited during performances of their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire during our informal music classes.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Design

My Qualifications

I hold a bachelor’s degree in music education, and prior to this study, I completed the following professional development courses offered by the Gordon Institute of Music Learning (GIML): Elementary General Level 1, GIML Early Childhood Level 1, and GIML Early Childhood Level 2. At the time of this study I had completed 6 years of early childhood music teaching in university-based early childhood music programs and 3 years of elementary music teaching in two different Catholic schools. I identify as a music learning theory practitioner and base the music engagements I led on Gordon’s (2013) *Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children* and *Music Play* (Valerio et al., 1998). As an early childhood music teacher who uses Gordon’s music learning theory and *Music Play*, I also identify as an early childhood music teacher who leads informal music classes for young children and their parents. During informal music classes, I playfully provide a variety of songs, rhythm chants, and movements in a variety of tonality and meters, and I aim to co-construct music interactions with young children.

During the Fall, 2019 semester, as a lead teacher, I taught 10 weekly, 30-minute Music Play classes at the University of South Carolina School of Music, Children’s Music Development Center for three different age groups: a) birth–18 months, b) 18 months–3 years, and c) 4 years–5 years. Alli, a fellow graduate music education student,
served as my co-teacher. Class size was limited to 10 young children and their parents. During the first two weeks of the 10 weekly Music Play classes, I observed all young children and noticed their vocal and movement responses during classes.

**Sampling**

I utilized purposeful sampling in order to select those that “offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest; sampling, then, is aimed at insight about the phenomenon, not empirical generalization from a sample to a population” (Patton, 2015, p. 40). Glesne (2016) wrote that a researcher uses purposeful sampling with the intention to collect “information-rich cases” (p. 50) for in-depth research. To access information-rich cases for this study, I served as a complete participant observer. Other participants included three young children, their parents as moderate participant observers, my co-teacher, who was an active participant observer, a non-participant observer, and me, a complete participant observer. Following, I present the participants and descriptions of their roles.

**Complete Participant Observer**

I conducted the study as a complete participant observer (Glesne, 2016). Glesne defined complete participant observation as a role that involves the researcher interacting directly with the participants’ lives as well as serving as an observer. I directly interacted with the participants’ lives by leading Music Play classes with my co-teacher, Alli. By including myself in the observations, I maintained a “dual purpose” (p. 58) by observing myself and others while I participated. I exercised being “explicitly aware” (p. 58) of certain things that nonparticipant or passive participants may not observe.
**Young Child Participants**

Each young child purposefully selected as a participant was an information-rich case because he or she demonstrated frequent vocal and movement behaviors during the first two weekly Music Play classes held during Fall, 2019. During those classes, I identified the following three young children (pseudonyms) as information-rich cases: Armon (2-years-old), Em (1.5-years-old), and Henry (1.5-years-old).

**Parents as Moderate Participant Observers**

Each parent was selected as a moderate participant observer because his or her young child demonstrated frequent vocal and movement responses during the first two weeks of Music Play classes held during Fall, 2019. According to Spradley (1980), a moderate participant observer moves between participation and observation. Each parent participated in the Music Play classes and provided observations of their young child.

Prior to this study, each child-parent dyad had participated in Music Play classes. Armon and his parents attended two previous semesters. Em and her parents had attended two previous semesters. Henry and his parent had attended one previous semester. Each parent participated in each Music Play class. The parents documented their child’s behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire using the researcher-developed Favorite Music Repertoire - Parent Questionnaire presented in Appendix A. The parents also reported their child’s behaviors performed during Music Play class using the researcher-developed Follow-up Parent Questionnaire presented in Appendix B.

**Active Participant Observer.** My co-teacher, Alli was an active participant observer and expert reviewer who assisted me with Music Play classes. According to
Spradley (1980), an active participant observer is a participant who “seeks to do what other people are doing” (p. 60). Alli sought to do and participate in each Music Play class as a co-teacher. Alli also acted as an expert reviewer by reviewing all transcripts and video-data. I purposefully selected Alli based on her experience with young children’s music development. At the time of data collection, Alli was a Master’s of Music Education candidate at the University of South Carolina. She had completed 2 years of experience with facilitating early childhood music engagements and was teaching music to elementary students in Grade 1 and Grade 2. Alli had also completed a Gordon Institute of Music Learning (GIML) Elementary General Level 1 professional development teacher-education course.

Non-participant Observer. At the time of data collection and analysis, Kat was a doctoral candidate in music education at the University of South Carolina, School of Music. Kat is a music development and learning specialist who served as a non-participant observer and expert reviewer who enhanced the trustworthiness of this study through “peer review” (Glesne, 2016, p. 212). Kat holds a bachelor’s degree in music education and a master’s degree in music education. She had completed 6 years teaching K-6 general music, 10 years teaching 1-month- to 4-year-old children general music, and 2 years teaching music to undergraduate music and non-music majors at the collegiate level. Kat had also completed professional development courses in GIML Elementary General Music Level 1 and Early Childhood Music Levels 1 and 2, American Orff Schulwerk Association in Orff-Schulwerk Levels 1 and 2, and Feierabend Association for Music Education in First Steps in Music.
Setting

Physical Setting

The Children’s Music Development Center at the University of South Carolina School of Music utilized a 23’x33’ carpeted space. A covered upright piano sat against one wall. Metal cabinets lined another wall. One metal cabinet in another corner contained props for the Music Play classes. A whiteboard with a metal tray for dry erase markers covered the middle of the southern wall. Prior to each class, Alli and I lined the floor with interlocking foam mats. In the center of the room, we placed two, large gathering drums to begin each class which were later removed during the hello song. During each class, all participants sat, stood, and moved as they chose approximately 10 children and their caregivers, including Armon, Armon’s parents, Em, Em’s parents, Henry, and Henry’s parent.

We used props, instruments, and equipment before and during the Music Play classes. Our props included multiple sheer 12”x12” fabric scarves; 20 small, foam-stuffed, fabric-covered 4-inch cubes; 30 yellow tennis balls; two soprano ukuleles; two gatherings drums; and a stereo system for recorded music. At the beginning of each class, we placed the two gathering drums in the middle of the floor. We used the sheer fabric scarves, fabric-covered cubes, yellow tennis balls, soprano ukuleles, and stereo system during each Music Play class.

Music Setting

children’s favorite-music repertoire reported by the parents who completed the researcher-developed Favorite Music Repertoire - Parent Questionnaire presented in Appendix A to inform class content. As recommended by Gordon (2013) and Valerio et al. (1998), Alli and I limited our use of language and maximized our use of music during each Music Play class. Alli and I also performed a variety of purposeful silences to leave space to allow for audiation, prolonged musical context, or someone else to fill it with a musical idea (Hicks, 1993; Reynolds, 1995; Hornbach, 2005; & Willing, 2009). We also spontaneously engaged young children in tonal pattern activities and rhythm pattern activities appropriate for their musical development as specified by Valerio, et al. (1998) and Gordon (2013). Valerio et al. (1998) and Gordon (2013) recommended that those tonal pattern activities and rhythm pattern activities be related to, but not directly from songs and rhythm chants performed for children in informal music class settings.

**Data Sources**

*Initial Parent Questionnaire*

I distributed the researcher-developed Favorite Music Repertoire - Parent Questionnaire presented in Appendix A to each parent to learn each child’s favorite-music repertoire and behaviors performed during that repertoire. Parents documented what behaviors they had observed their young child perform when other-music repertoire was performed.
Video Recordings

During Fall 2019, I video-recorded each weekly, six 30-minute Music Play class in its entirety using one Apple iPad and one Sony HDR-CX240. All video data were stored on the password-protected Apple iPad and a password-protected Apple MacBook Pro. After each Music Play class, I reviewed and transcribed the video-recorded data. I selected 10-minutes of information-rich video-recorded data per child participant for subsequent, individual think-aloud interviews to be held with Alli and Kat (Glesne, 2016).

Written Observations and Reflections

I documented my written observations and reflections after each Music Play class using Google Docs. I used those written observations to document observations and thoughts to supplement the video-recorded data.

Think-aloud Interviews

Alli (active participant observer) and Kat (non-participant observer) individually reviewed and discussed selected video-recorded data while I recorded their observations during the think-aloud interview. I transcribed those recordings for subsequent analysis.

Follow-up Parent Questionnaire

I distributed the researcher-developed Follow-up Parent Questionnaire presented in Appendix B to each parent to learn more about each child’s experience during performances of favorite-music repertoire and behaviors performed during that repertoire. Using that questionnaire, parents documented what behaviors they had observed their young child perform when other-music repertoire was performed.
Data Analysis

Using the Favorite Music Repertoire - Parent Questionnaire responses, transcribed Music Play class recordings, transcribed video-recorded think-aloud interviews, and Follow-up Exit Questionnaire responses, I created a fieldwork notebook as recommended by Glesne (2016), coded the data, and developed a taxonomic analysis to “search for the parts of a culture, the relationships among the parts, and their relationships to the whole” (p. 116, Spradley, 1980). During taxonomic analysis, I determined operational definitions, patterns, categories, and themes within the data.

Data Interpretation

I positioned my data interpretation based on my experiences as an early childhood music teacher. My experiences with young children, parents, and my colleagues’ related works also influenced my perspective. Because of the experience as an early childhood music teacher, experiences with young children, parents, and related works, I interpreted the data with an informed perspective. I did not compare children’s behaviors.

Credibility

With multiple sources, I achieved theoretical triangulation, increasing the trustworthiness of the study (Glesne, 2016). I confirmed my interpretations of the video-recorded data by referring to the parent participants’ written responses to the researcher-developed Favorite Music Repertoire - Parent Questionnaire, parent participants’ written responses to the researcher-developed Follow-up Exit Questionnaire. Alli and Kat each member-checked the transcripts of their think-aloud interviews (Glesne, 2016). They offered edits as they deemed appropriate. Moreover, Alli, my co-teacher and active participant observer, reviewed my code book and my fieldwork notebook (Glesne, 2016).
She reviewed the taxonomy as well as the potential themes. After observing samples of the video-recorded data that I selected, she offered feedback regarding my findings and added her observations. Kat, the non-participant observer, reviewed the taxonomy as well as the potential themes. After observing samples of the video-recorded data that I selected, she offered feedback to my findings and added her observations.

Confidentiality

The data are not anonymous, but they are confidential. All data sources were collected and stored in a password-protected iPad and a password-protected external hard drive.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Favorite Music Repertoire - Parent Questionnaire

Parents documented their child’s favorite-music repertoire using the researcher-developed Favorite Music Repertoire - Parent Questionnaire presented in Appendix A. Using that questionnaire, each parent also identified behaviors they had observed their young child perform when their child’s favorite music and other-music repertoire was performed in the questionnaire, respectively. After receiving the completed questionnaires, I developed an initial codebook of the parent’s responses utilizing In Vivo coding (Saldaña, 2013). Saldaña defined In Vivo coding as coding with the “actual language found in the qualitative data record” (p. 91).

I labeled the songs, rhythm chants, and music recordings the parent participants reported as favorite music. I identified the songs, rhythm chants, and music recordings not reported by the parents as other music. Then, I separated favorite music and other music into two different categories: Music Play class repertoire and Not-Music Play class repertoire. Music Play class repertoire included songs and rhythm chants from Gordon’s (2013) Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children and Valerio et al. (1998) Music Play. Not-Music Play class repertoire included songs, rhythm chants, and music recordings not from Gordon’s (2013) Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children and Valerio et al. (1998) Music Play. Following I present the young children’s favorite-music repertoire in Figure 4.1.
Figure 4.1. Music Repertoire. Note. The taxonomy includes categorization of all music repertoire selected and performed during Music Play classes.

Transcribed Video Data Codebook

I used HyperResearch (Version 3.7.5, 2015) to transcribe video-recorded Music Play classes 1–4. After determining HyperResearch to be cumbersome, I used Google Docs to transcribe video-recorded Music Play classes 5–10. I developed an initial codebook of the Music Play class video-recorded data utilizing In Vivo coding (Saldaña, 2013). As previously stated, Saldaña defined In Vivo coding as coding with the “actual language found in the qualitative data record” (p. 91). In order to maintain continuity in my analysis, I edited, removed, and condensed codes (Patton, 2015). I chose to engage in sub-coding for my second form of coding (Saldaña, 2013). “Subcoding assigns a second-order tag after a primary code to detail or enrich the entry” (p. 69). I present my video-data codebook in Appendix C.
Key Terms and Operational Definitions

After cross-referencing the parent-participants’ comments regarding children’s behaviors with my codebook from the Music Play class video-recorded data I created operational definitions for key terms. Those key terms include related behaviors, unrelated behaviors, performing behaviors, processing behaviors, and social/emotional behaviors.

Following are those key terms and their operational definitions.

- related behaviors: Children demonstrated related behaviors when they performed music and/or movement behaviors that corresponded to the music context.
- unrelated behaviors: Children demonstrated unrelated behaviors when they performed behaviors that did not correspond to music context.
- performing behaviors: Children demonstrated performing behaviors when they chanted rhythmically, sang, moved with flow, moved to macrobeats, moved to microbeats, and/or played instruments.
- processing behaviors: Children demonstrated processing behaviors when they appeared to hear and aurally collect sounds of music in the environment as suggested by Gordon (2013).
- social/emotional behaviors: Children demonstrated social/emotional behaviors when they performed positive reactions or negative reactions.

Cultural Domains and Taxonomic Analysis

As recommended by Spradley (1980), I identified two cultural domains regarding behaviors children performed during favorite music and other music: related behaviors and unrelated behaviors. “A cultural domain is a category of cultural meaning that includes other smaller categories” (Spradley, 1980, p. 88). Those cultural domains encompassed all the different types of behaviors the children demonstrated during data
collection. Within the cultural domains, I labeled subcategories. Subcategories included *processing behaviors, performance behaviors, and social/emotional behaviors*. Following I present the cultural domains, taxonomies, and subcategories in the following Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3.

*Figure 4.2. Young Children’s Behaviors Observed during Favorite-Music Repertoire. Note. The taxonomy includes all behaviors observed during favorite-music repertoire performed during Music Play classes.*
Figure 4.3. Young Children’s Behaviors Observed during Other-Music Repertoire. Note. The taxonomy includes all behaviors observed during other-music repertoire performed during Music Play classes.

**Emergent Themes**

Three themes emerged after comparing the young children’s behaviors performed during performances of their favorite-music repertoire and performances of other-music repertoire during informal early childhood music classes. Following I present those themes and their detailed descriptions.
Theme 1. Young children repeatedly demonstrated specific patterns from their favorite-music repertoire.

Alli, Kat, parents, and I noticed each young child demonstrated performing their specific rhythm pattern or tonal pattern during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. Alli noticed how Armon repeatedly performed the same rhythm pattern throughout the class, “He went back to his pattern” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). That rhythm pattern was from Armon’s favorite-music repertoire. Kat also remarked during a think-aloud interview that Armon and Em each repeatedly rhythm chanted a specific rhythm pattern from their favorite-music repertoire.

Though Armon and Em repeatedly performed specific rhythm patterns from their favorite-music repertoire, Henry repeatedly performed a specific tonal pattern from his favorite-music repertoire. Kat and Alli repeatedly verbally recognized Henry’s specific tonal pattern. Moreover, immediately after hearing Henry perform his specific tonal pattern from his favorite-music repertoire, Henry’s parent said, “Oh my gosh, I heard that.” Following, I present each young child’s specific rhythm pattern or tonal pattern in Figure 4.4.

![Figure 4.4](image)

Figure 4.4. Each Young Child’s Specific Rhythm Pattern or Tonal Pattern from His or Her Favorite Music Repertoire. Note. Each young child performed a specific tonal pattern or rhythm pattern which can be found directly in his or her favorite-music repertoire.
**Armon’s specific rhythm pattern.** Armon repeatedly performed a specific rhythm pattern from his favorite recorded repertoire, Stevens’s (2005) “Chicago” throughout Music Play class on November 9, 2019. He repeated the pattern $\frac{2}{4}$ in various music repertoire using two different sets of syllables. I recorded him performing the pattern for the first time during my improvised duple meter rhythm chant as presented in Figure 4.6. I performed the improvised duple meter rhythm chant, ended the improvised rhythm chant, and left a purposeful silence. Armon chanted Ba ba ba and I echoed. Armon repeated his rhythm pattern while he moved around the room, and I echoed him again. He hopped along the outside of the circle while chanting $\frac{2}{4}$ while saying “ba” each time his foot touched the ground.

Later in the class, Alli performed other-music repertoire, “Roll the Ball”, from Valerio et al. (1998) *Music Play* presented in Figure 4.7. After Alli’s performance of the song, Armon chanted his rhythm pattern Ba ba ba, and Alli echoed. Armon did not repeat Ba ba ba, but went directly into hopping along the outside of the circle while rhythm chanting “ba” every time his feet hit the ground similar to earlier in the class. Kat said “Maybe, favorite pattern. Yeah, pattern of the day” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020) as she watched Armon during that activity.
During the next activity, Alli established the music context with other-music repertoire, “Rolling”, from Valerio et al. (1998) *Music Play* in triple meter (Figure 4.8). She repeatedly performed the rhythm chant several times and then left a purposeful silence after completing the rhythm chant. Armon filled the purposeful silence with

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\text{Ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\end{array}
\]

followed by

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\text{Ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\end{array}
\]

During a think-aloud interview, Alli noted, “But it’s interesting. He’s staying in duple meter” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020) in reference to Armon chanting in duple while Alli established a triple meter context. Alli repeated “Rolling” followed by Armon, once again, filling the purposeful silence with

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\underline{\text{Ba}} \\
\underline{\text{ba}} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[\text{Figure 4.5. Rocketship, an unusual paired rhythm chant. Note. By Anonymous, n.d.}\]
Improvised Duple Meter Rhythm Chant

November 9

V. Caswell

\[ \frac{3}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{3}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{3}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{3}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{3}{4} \text{ Rest} \]

on a neutral syllable

Figure 4.6. Improvised Duple Meter Rhythm Chant. Note. Created by V. Caswell.

I also documented Armon performing the rhythm pattern, \text{Ba ba ba}, during that class while he was listening to a recording of his favorite-music repertoire, “Chicago” (Stevens, 2005). After the class danced to that recording, I reduced the volume to end the activity. The children indicated by turning their heads and staring at me that they wanted to continue listening. I increased the volume, and Armon immediately reacted by hopping from foot-to-foot to the macrobeat of the recording, and he shouted, “Yah,” one time.

\[ \frac{2}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{2}{4} \text{ Rest} \]

Then he hopped from foot-to-foot while chanting \text{ah Kay Kee Kah} twice to the recording, “Chicago.” The rhythm pattern Armon performed slightly varied from the pattern he chanted previously during the class. Kat noticed “Mhm, well, that’s similar to the, um,

\[ \frac{2}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{2}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{2}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{2}{4} \text{ Rest} \quad \frac{2}{4} \text{ Rest} \]

that favorite rhythm pattern that he was having before. That \text{Ba ba ba Ba ba ba}” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020).
I revisited the recording. The performers on the recording performed \( \frac{3}{4} \) many times throughout the song. When Armon performed \( \text{Ba ha ba} \) he did not perform the words with the performers on the recording. Instead, he chanted the syllables “kay kee kah” while listening to the recording, “Chicago.”

---

**Roll the Ball**

A. M. Reynolds

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Roll the ball like this.} & \quad \text{Roll the ball like that.} \\
\text{Roll the ball like this.} & \quad \text{Roll the ball like that.}
\end{align*}
\]


Em’s specific rhythm pattern. Em repeatedly performed a specific rhythm pattern from her favorite repertoire “Stretch and Bounce” found in Valerio et al. (1998) Music Play during class on November 16, 2019. She repeated the pattern \( \frac{4}{4} \) in various musical contexts. I recorded her performing \( \frac{4}{4} \) for the first time during other-music repertoire: another improvised a duple meter rhythm chant as presented in Figure 4.9. I left a purposeful silence after finishing my improvised a duple meter rhythm chant, and Em filled it with her pattern from her favorite-music repertoire “Stretch and Bounce” as presented in Figure 4.10. She performed \( \text{Ba ba} \), moved her hands up, and then, she left a purposeful silence. We followed her lead and finished the rhythm chant. Then, the adults performed the whole rhythm chant together. We left another purposeful silence after finishing the rhythm chant, and Em once again performed \( \text{Ba ba} \).
Toward the end of one Music Play class, Alli and I scattered approximately 20 foam-stuffed, fabric-covered 4-inch cubes around the room for the class to use. Alli performed Em’s favorite-music repertoire “Rolling” Valerio et al. (1998) *Music Play* several times as presented in Figure 4.8. Alli left a purposeful silence after the rhythm
\[
\frac{4}{4} \begin{array}{c}
\text{Ba} \\
\text{ba} \\
\end{array}
\gamma
\]
chant, and Em filled the silence with \begin{array}{c}
\text{Ba} \\
\text{ba} \\
\end{array}
while raising her hands up. Alli and the other adults recognized \begin{array}{c}
\text{Ba} \\
\text{ba} \\
\end{array}
as the beginning of “Stretch and Bounce” because we followed Em’s movements and finished the first phrase of the rhythm chant
\[
\frac{4}{4} \begin{array}{c}
\text{Ba} \\
\text{ba} \\
\end{array}
\gamma
\]
while we brought our hands down (Valerio et al., 1998). Em chanted her again and lifted her hands up. Again, the parents, Alli, and I finished the phrase and
\[
\frac{4}{4} \begin{array}{c}
\text{Ba} \\
\text{ba} \\
\end{array}
\gamma
\]
brought our hands down. Em chanted \begin{array}{c}
\text{Ba} \\
\text{ba} \\
\end{array} a third time. The adults performed the final phrase of the rhythm as we moved continuously with microbeat pulsations.

During that episode, Em performed her specific rhythm pattern from her favorite-music repertoire with the neutral syllables we often used in the Music Play classes. She demonstrated the movements we often modeled in the Music Play classes, as well. She also chanted her specific rhythm pattern throughout the class, repeatedly.
Improvised Duple Meter Rhythm Chant 2

\[ \text{\textcopyright{} V. Caswell} \]

\[ \text{\textcopyright{} Created by V. Caswell.} \]


\[ \text{\textcopyright{} Henry’s specific tonal pattern. Henry repeatedly sang a specific tonal pattern from his favorite repertoire “Old MacDonald” during Music Play class on October 12, 2019 as presented in Figure 4.11. He repeated the pattern during his} \]

\[ \text{\textcopyright{} Figure 4.9. Improvised Duple Meter Rhythm Chant. Note. Created by V. Caswell.} \]


\[ \text{\textcopyright{} Henry’s specific tonal pattern. Henry repeatedly sang a specific tonal pattern from his favorite repertoire “Old MacDonald” during Music Play class on October 12, 2019 as presented in Figure 4.11. He repeated the pattern during his} \]
favorite-music repertoire. He sang the resting tone several times before singing the full pattern. I finished repeating the song “Old MacDonald” and left a purposeful silence. I then performed the following tonal patterns: a_____ and a_____. Henry sang ee_____ , which is the resting tone of “Old MacDonald,” three times, similar to the beginning of the song. Alli labeled Henry’s tonal pattern, “ee_____ That’s part of the song. bum bum bum bum bum bum” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). I echoed Henry, and he stood up from his parent’s lap and walked toward me. I left a purposeful silence before I performed the song again as the adults joined my singing. Henry waited to respond vocally again until the adults and I had performed a few repetitions of the song. Then, he sang ah one time while the adults I repeated the song. I left a purposeful silence at the end of my repetition. Then I repeated Henry’s ah. Henry made eye contact with me and sang ah again. Henry looked around at all the adults and sang uh. I echoed uh. He heard me copy him, turned, made eye contact with me, and repeated uh. I echoed uh.
again. He quickly followed with \( \text{uh} \), and I copied him. Henry continued his eye contact with me and sang \( \text{uh oh} \). In the moment, I did not recognize what Henry was doing, and so I performed the following tonal pattern but used Henry’s pattern with his syllables \( \text{uh uh} \). He held the outside of his parent’s hands, then pushed them together to clap his parent’s hands, and looked around the room. Alli said, “And he was clapping his mom’s hands too, which is interesting, but that is so fascinating” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). In retrospect, I realized that Henry was performing the beginning pitches of “Old MacDonald,” and I was echoing him. I explained my interpretation of our interaction to the adults, “So [Henry] was singing our tonic and our dominant. That’s a big part of that song. Which is really interesting.”

Old MacDonald

\[ \text{Old Mac-Don-ald had a farm } \text{ee-i-ee-i-o} \text{ And on that farm he had a } \text{ee-i-ee-i-o} \text{ with a } \_	ext{here and a } \_	ext{there.} \]

\[ \text{Here a } \_	ext{there a e-very-where a } \_	ext{Old Mac-Don-ald had a farm } \text{ee-i-ee-i-o} \]

*Figure 4.11. Old MacDonald, a major tonality song. Note. In the public domain.*
Then, I sang the tonal pattern again. Henry’s parent echoed me; then Henry sang which is the four-note, tonal pattern found at the beginning of “Old MacDonald.” Alli told me:

Yeah, I would consider that “Old MacDonald,” when he did those patterns that we didn’t catch onto the first time. But when we were watching the video, [we realized] that he outlined the melody. I would consider that [he was] performing his favorite [tonal pattern]—his like, he was performing his song. (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020)

After that class, I wrote “[Henry] sang the whole opening pattern on his and his mother’s favorite-music repertoire: “Old MacDonald.” It was so clear, his mother even heard it.” (V. Caswell, written observations and reflections, October 12, 2019). Alli reflected on watching Henry perform the tonal pattern, “Yeah, I remember this was the day he really led us in it [tonal exchanges]. [Be]cause wasn’t this the day he gave us the whole pattern of it [Old MacDonald]?” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). Although Alli and I sang the “Old MacDonald Had a Farm” lyric using accurate pitches and rhythms, Henry used the syllables “a”, “eh”, and “ee” as he performed his specific tonal pattern twice.

**Theme 2. Young children demonstrated related behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire.**

The young children demonstrated related behaviors throughout the Music Play semester during favorite music and other-music repertoire. I categorized related behaviors to be those that were related to the musical context being performed. The
young children demonstrated three types of related behaviors: related performing behaviors, related processing behaviors, and related social/emotional behaviors.

**Related Performing Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated related performing behaviors during favorite music and other music. I labeled children’s behaviors as related performing behaviors if they demonstrated or performed a musical action. Within this study, related performing behaviors included a child moving, chanting, singing, performing a vocal glissando, and performing on an instrument. When displaying related performing behaviors, children embodied the music in some way, shape, or form.

**Related Moving.** The young children demonstrated related moving behaviors during favorite music and other music. Parents, Alli, Kat, and I noticed the young children moved in multiple ways: dance, flow, toward an instrument, to microbeats, to macrobeats, with no recognizable tempo, and to the melodic rhythm of the musical context.

Armon imitated adults’ movements during one of our Music Play classes while hearing other-music repertoire “Rocketship” as presented in Figure 4.5. The young children, adults, and I were surrounded by movement scarves. I performed the rhythm chant, and the adults joined me. The adults and I demonstrated continuous fluid movement in our bodies and with scarves. Armon imitated the adults’ movements with his body as he moved his shoulders and spine with continuous fluid movement, and he moved the scarves in his hands in a fashion similar to the adults. Armon also

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{chanted:} & \quad \text{Wocket-ship Wocket-ship to the moon} \\
\text{Wo-oo-oo} & \quad \text{while the adults and I chanted the lyric.}
\end{align*}
\]
Typically, the adults and I throw our scarves into the air when chanting the word, “blastoff.” In a related moving behavior, Armon waited to throw his scarves in the air until hearing the word “blastoff.” That is, Armon purposefully related his moving with the occurring music context. Kat noticed “Ok, yeah so there was a lot of preparation and anticipation of that blastoff” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020).

**Related Rhythm Chanting.** The young children demonstrated related rhythm chanting behaviors during favorite music and other music. Parent participants, Alli, Kat, and I noticed the young children demonstrated rhythm chanting in multiple ways: approximate lyrics, rhythm patterns, and specific rhythm patterns from their favorite-music repertoire. Em demonstrated related rhythm chanting during the middle of a Music Play class. Alli and I distributed scarves to all the parents and young children. The parents, Alli, and I performed “Rocketship,” which is in Figure 4.5, and left a purposeful silence after measure four (Anonymous, n.d.). The parents tossed the scarves in the air, watched the scarves fall, and performed the usual vocal glissando on the syllable “woo.” Em mimicked the parents, threw a scarf onto the ground, and rhythm chanted . The rhythm pattern Em rhythm chanted was the same as the first macrobeat found in each measure of “Rocketship” except for the final measure.

**Related Singing.** The young children demonstrated related singing behaviors during favorite music and other music. Parents, Alli, Kat, and I noticed the young children sang in multiple ways including resting tones, dominant pitches, approximate
lyrics, tonal patterns, melody, and a specific tonal pattern from their favorite-music repertoire.

Em demonstrated related singing during the beginning of a Music Play class. I accompanied myself on the ukulele as I performed “Hello, Hello, Hello,” as seen in Figure 4.12 (Valerio, 2009). After my performance, I left a purposeful silence. Em crawled toward me and hit the ukulele with her hand. I mimicked her as I hit the ukulele with my hand. Em sang \( \text{eech} \), which is on the resting tone while she hit the ukulele.

I echoed \( \text{eech} \) and hit the ukulele. Em sang \( \text{eech} \) \( \text{eech} \). I echoed. Em sang \( \text{ah ah} \), and I echoed. Em sang the resting tone of the other-music repertoire “Hello, Hello, Hello” three times.

Hello, Hello, Hello

W. Valerio

Related Vocal Glissandos. The young children demonstrated related vocal glissandos during favorite music and other music. Armon demonstrated a related vocal glissando during our greeting song. I repeatedly performed the greeting song, “Hello, Hello, Hello,” shown in Figure 4.12. During a final repetition, I left a purposeful silence right before performing the final pitch of “Hello, Hello, Hello” (Valerio, 2009). Armon demonstrated a vocal glissando, in the purposeful silence I left. I echoed.

Related Purposeful Silence. The young children demonstrated related purposeful silences during favorite music and other music. Though other researchers have documented purposeful silences as performed by music teachers (Hornbach, 2005; Hicks, 1993; Reynolds, 1995; Willing, 2009), Em, a very young child, repeatedly performed a purposeful silence after rhythm chanting her specific rhythm pattern from “Stretch and Bounce” from Music Play, Valerio et al. (1998) as presented in Figure 4.10. During the beginning of a Music Play class, I improvised a duple meter rhythm chant based on a non-participant child’s response as presented in Figure 4.9. I finished the improvisation and began to speak about my observations, and Em interrupted my speaking with her rhythm pattern . She moved her hands up as she performed her rhythm pattern, similar to the way Alli and I often moved when performing that pattern of the rhythm chant. Then, she left a purposeful silence after chanting her rhythm pattern. Alli observed, “I was thinking, I’m going to wait and see if she would finish it [the next rhythm pattern “Stretch and Bounce”]. And, she wouldn’t necessarily vocally finish it [the next rhythm pattern “Stretch and Bounce”], but she would move her arms, and that’s when I took the cue [for me] to finish it [the next rhythm pattern “Stretch and Bounce”]
out vocally” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). Kat said, “But I can definitely see her starting [the first rhythm pattern of ‘Stretch and Bounce’], and you’ve got that [Em’s] recognition of, like, I know what “Stretch and Bounce” is. And she’s [purposefully] waiting [for someone to respond to her]” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020). From then on, each time Em performed \( \frac{4}{4} \) \( \text{Ta Ta Ta -} \), the adults followed her lead and performed the next rhythm pattern “Stretch and Bounce” and then finished the rhythm chant.

**Related Creating.** The young children demonstrated related creating behaviors during favorite music and other music. I noticed the young children often did not simply engage in the musical setting by simply following my or another adult’s example. During activities in each Music Play class, the young children created and spontaneously demonstrated moving, chanting, or singing that seemed to be related to the music context being performed. Gordon (2013) defined *creativity* as “Spontaneous audiation and performance of tonal patterns and rhythm patterns without restrictions” (p. 166). Unlike Gordon (2013), I included tonal, rhythm, and movement behaviors within related creating.

Henry demonstrated related creating with movement during his favorite-music repertoire “Old MacDonald,” an American traditional tune as presented in Figure 4.11. The adults, young children, and I sat in a circle on the floor. I sang the song several times. During each repetition, I left a purposeful silence by leaving out the last pitch of measure three and waited for a response. During each purposeful silence, adults filled in my purposeful silence by speaking an animal name. We used those animal names in the rest of the repetition. During one repetition, I moved to the middle of the circle of adults and
young children. While the adults and I sang through that repetition, Henry walked to the middle of our circle. He began to stomp his foot to no recognizable tempo. I recognized his movement as related and immediately adopted it into my performance. The adults copied, and they each began to stomp a foot as we continued to perform the song. Henry stopped moving when he saw we mimicked his movement. He quickly began stomping again only to stop and watch another non-participant child try to stomp. Henry smiled, watching the child then returned to stomping, this time, to an approximate macrobeat. Kat observed Henry’s movements, “Mhm, it’s a complicated movement. So, for him to get that close [to an approximate macrobeat]…” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020). Alli also noticed Henry stopping and starting his foot-stomping movements, “[He] goes back to the stomping, not quite to the [macrobeat] beat, but close to it” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). Henry engaged and disengaged with the related creating foot-stomping movements as he saw others copying him.

Henry also demonstrated related creating with rhythm during our informal Music Play classes. During one Music Play class, Alli performed the traditional folk song “Down by the Station” found in Valerio et al. (1998) Music Play as I added a microbeat ostinato on the syllable “ch” as presented in Figure 4.13. Henry rhythmically chanted his own rhythm pattern \[\text{Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch}\] on the syllable “ch” after Alli and I finished performing “Down by the Station.” I noticed him performing it, made eye contact, and echoed him. Henry smiled. I addressed the adults to explain what I noticed, and Henry repeated his “ch” pattern. I then replaced my ostinato with his rhythm pattern while Alli sang the song again as presented in Figure 4.14.
Figure 4.13. Down by the Station, a major tonality song. Note. In the public domain.
Figure 4.14. *Down by the Station with Henry’s Ostinato*, a major tonality song with a duple meter ostinato. *Note.* In the public domain.
During a Music Play class, Armon demonstrated related creating by rhythm chanting \( \frac{2}{4} \) \( \text{Ba ba ba} \). Alli commented after observing Armon demonstrating a related creating behavior, “So he took—he gave us a [rhythm] pattern; then you gave him a [rhythm] pattern. Then, he repeated it [the rhythm pattern] again, I think. Then you repeated it [the rhythm pattern], and then he gave us something new [a new rhythm pattern]” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020).

Henry also demonstrated related creating with singing during our informal Music Play classes. Alli and I began each class with “Hello, Hello, Hello” as presented in Figure 4.12 (Valerio, 2009). Near the end of the data collection period, Alli and I left purposeful silences right before singing the last note of the song in hopes that a young child would respond vocally. We repeated the song several times, left purposeful silence, and after one of the repetitions, Henry performed as he crawled toward his mother.

**Related Playing on Instruments.** The young children demonstrated related playing on instruments during favorite music and other music. Alli and I placed gathering drums in the middle of the room before each Music Play class began, and sometimes we left the gathering drums in the middle of the room as we sang the hello song at the beginning of each class as presented in Figure 4.12. Armon repeatedly demonstrated related playing on the gathering drum during our hello song at the beginning Music Play classes. For example, as I sang the hello song while accompanying myself on the ukulele, Armon watched me, then began to dance around a gathering drum. He moved closer to
the gathering drum and then hit the gathering drum several times. Armon and I repeated our actions several times; Armon alternated playing the gathering drum and dancing while I sang the hello song while accompanying myself on the ukulele.

**Related Processing Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated related processing behaviors during favorite music and other music. I defined related processing behaviors as responses which reflected Gordon’s (2013) definition of absorption which is the “[listener] hears and aurally collects sounds of music in the environment” (p. 32). While exhibiting a related processing behavior the young “children simply listen to music” (p. 41). Within this study, related processing behaviors included young children listening intently as they observed or looked at a music sound source, performed an audiation stare, tensing hand, sucking on fingers, or abruptly stopping movements or crying. The young children did not produce music, nor embody, the music as they demonstrated related processing behaviors. For example, Arrasmith (2018) wrote that as children watched their peers and the music engagement leader, “they observed how we engaged in various pretend play scenarios and playful music activities and acculturated to the social and music aspects of the music engagement sessions” (p. 46). The young children demonstrated related processing behaviors as they observed or looked during favorite music and other music.

Em demonstrated related processing behaviors. Em began each Music Play class sitting in front of her parent facing the center of our circle of adults and young children where she was able to observe and watch the room. She spent the first few minutes of almost every class as an observer (Arrasmith, 2018). She watched the adults and other young children in the class while we performed our usual hello song “Hello, Hello,
“Hello” as presented in Figure 4.12. During the beginning of each class, she smiled and looked at the adults and other young children. Em did not overtly engage in the music for the first few repetitions, but then she began to move her body with continuous fluid movement, which is modeled by the adults. Kat described Em’s behavior, “Mk [Ok], [be]cause she’s still watching, but her demeanor is much more relaxed. Yeah, there’s less movement from her and more watching. And I think her mouth is open, isn’t it?” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020). Kat continued, “It’s almost like an—an audiation stare kind of thing” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020).

**Related Social/Emotional Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated related social/emotional behaviors during favorite music and other music. I labeled the observed related social/emotional behaviors based on the occurring social/emotional context, the young children’s facial expressions, and the reaction of the young child’s parents. Related social/emotional behaviors included positive emotions, negative emotions, playing, and speaking. When demonstrating related social/emotional behaviors, the young children did not produce music, nor did they embody the music.

**Related Positive Emotions.** The young children demonstrated related positive emotions during favorite music and other music when they laughed, squealed, smiled, shouted, or looked pleasantly surprised. Kat noticed Em showing positive emotions, “You can tell she’s watching everybody do this, and she’s got this big smile on her face of, like, this is the thing that I want” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020). Alli simply stated her observation of Henry during a performance of his favorite-music repertoire, “He smiled” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020).
Each parent-participant reported their child smiling while hearing his or her favorite-music repertoire.

Once, Henry demonstrated a related pleasant surprise when I performed his favorite-music repertoire “Old MacDonald” for the first time during that class as presented in Figure 4.11. Henry immediately began to watch me as I finished singing the song. I sang the tonal patterns who who who and oo-oo-oo. As Henry continued to observe me; he tensed one hand over his chest. I delivered ee-ee-ee to the room and left a purposeful silence. He sat up and faced me. Henry simply observed me. I wrote, “He demonstrated a little more reserved behavior” (V. Caswell, written observations and reflections, October 12, 2019). Henry’s parent reflected on Henry’s behavior while hearing his favorite-music repertoire in her exit questionnaire. “The first time [he heard you sing “Old MacDonald” during this class] he just smiled. There wasn’t a huge response. I think he was shocked.” Alli said “Ok, he’s just staring” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020) as she watched a video recording of Henry first hearing his favorite-music repertoire. She continued, “He is staring hard. Oh, there, he smiles and moves” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). Alli, Henry’s parent, and I noted Henry's demonstration of related pleasant surprise while he listened to his favorite-music repertoire.

Armon also demonstrated the related positive emotion of pleasant surprise near the end of a Music Play class. I explained that we would use recorded music in a class activity. I opened the sound system cabinet, plugged in my phone, and played Armon’s
favorite-music repertoire “Chicago” (Stevens, 2005). Armon heard the music recording and audibly gasped. He turned to his parent, to me, then to the sound system cabinet. Armon continued to stare at the sound system cabinet. I closed the sound system cabinet door. Similar to Henry, Armon did not engage or perform the first time I played the recording of his favorite-music repertoire. In the Follow-up Parent Questionnaire, Armon’s parent reflected in writing on Armon’s reaction while hearing his favorite-music repertoire, “Initially he would appear kind of surprised (also smile and look interested) that it [his favorite recording] was playing and then he would join in with singing and dancing later.” Kat observed Armon’s behavior while his favorite-music repertoire, Stevens’s (2005) “Chicago” played in class, “He’s watching more than like the—the, like, wild man jumping around from the hello song” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview, February 27, 2020). During Alli’s interview, she said

He’s like, he’s just standing. Oh, then he jumps. I wonder if—[be]cause he’s not as physically responsive as he has been for other things. Well, now he’s shaking his arms. But, like, we see him running around and jumping so much. I wonder if hearing this song in this room made it—oh there he goes—I wonder if the different context made it different for him. (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020)

Armon’s parent, Kat, Alli, and I noted Armon’s demonstration of related pleasant surprise while he listened to his favorite-music repertoire.

Henry’s and Armon’s parents reported favorite-music repertoire we do not regularly perform or have never performed during our Music Play classes. Only Henry
and Armon demonstrated related pleasant surprise while they observed their favorite-

music repertoire in the Music Play class.

**Related Negative Emotions.** The young children demonstrated related negative

emotions during favorite music and other music when they squealed, shouted, cried, or

whined to demonstrate displeasure. Armon demonstrated a related negative emotion
during his favorite-music repertoire “Chicago,” because I stopped playing that music

recording (Stevens, 2005). We had just finished dancing to that recording, and I turned

the volume down to turn it off, but then the children wanted to continue listening. Kat

noticed Armon’s negative emotion, “Yeah! He’s so sad!” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud

interview, February 27, 2020) referring to Armon. She continued to describe Armon’s

behavior, “Yeah, he just looks dejected right now” (K. Arrasmith, think-aloud interview,

February 27, 2020). Alli observed, “His head’s cocked like, what? It’s over?” (A.

Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020) in relation to observing the same

material as Kat observed. I noted the feeling in the room after I tried to turn off the

recording, “As soon as the music was turned off, not just [Armon], but all the children

asked for the music to be put back on the stereo. The parents even seemed disappointed

that the dancing was finished” (V. Caswell, written observations and reflections,

November 9, 2019). Kat, Alli, and I noticed Armon demonstrated a related negative

emotion during his favorite-music repertoire through facial expressions.

**Related Playing and Speaking.** The young children demonstrated related playing

and speaking behaviors during favorite music and other music when they engaged in

pretend play during musical activities. Armon demonstrated both playing and speaking
during other-music repertoire, O’Neill’s (personal communication, June 26, 2018) “Party
at the Zoo” as presented in Figure 4.15. As a class, we moved around on the floor as I performed the rhythm chant. The young children and adults suggested different animal names. We engaged in pretend play as pigs, lions, and tigers. We moved around the room and made sounds related to the animals. I finished another performance of “Party at the Zoo” and asked, “What else is at the zoo?” Armon responded, “A wyon, a wyon.” I interpreted his words to be “A lion, a lion,” and we pretended to be lions while I rhythm chanted the “Party at the Zoo” again.

Figure 4.15. Party at the Zoo, a duple meter rhythm chant. Note. By P. O’Neill (personal communication, June 26, 2018)

Theme 3. Young children demonstrated unrelated behaviors during favorite music and other music.

The young children demonstrated unrelated behaviors throughout the Music Play semester during favorite music and other-music repertoire. I considered unrelated behaviors to be those that were not related to the musical context being performed. The
young children demonstrated two types of unrelated behaviors: unrelated performing behaviors and unrelated social/emotional behaviors.

**Unrelated Performing Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated unrelated performing behaviors during favorite music and other music when they demonstrated a non-musical action or performed something in a musical context different from the occurring musical context. When displaying unrelated performing behaviors, young children did not embody the occurring music context in some way, shape, or form. Within this study, unrelated performing behaviors included children’s moving behaviors and rhythm chanting behaviors.

**Unrelated Moving Behaviors.** Parent-participants, Alli, Kat, and I noticed the young children moved in multiple ways unrelated to music contexts being formed in Music Play classes. Those ways included moving toward the music engagement leader, moving toward his or her parent, and moving away from his or her parent without coordination to the microbeats, macrobeats, or melodic rhythm of the music context. Henry demonstrated unrelated moving behavior by lying down on the floor near the end of one Music Play class. Alli suggested that as Henry moved to lie down on the floor, he might have been thinking or indicating, “I’m ready to go home” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). In that moment, Henry demonstrated unrelated moving behavior to the occurring music context. Henry’s movement was unrelated to the microbeats, macrobeats, or melodic rhythm of the other-music repertoire Alli performed, “I Said Goodbye” as presented in Figure 4.16.

**Unrelated Rhythm Chanting Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated unrelated chanting behaviors during favorite music and other music when they chanted
rhythmically, but not in response to occurring music context. Parents, Alli, Kat, and I noticed the young children rhythm chanted in multiple ways including, approximate lyrics, approximate rhythm patterns, and specific rhythm patterns from favorite-music repertoire.

I Said Goodbye

Anonymous

![Sheet music image]

Figure 4.16. I Said Goodbye, a major tonality song. Note. By Anonymous, n.d.

Em demonstrated an unrelated chanting behavior when she performed

\[
\text{Ba ba} ~ \gamma
\]

during an improvised duple meter rhythm chant as presented in Figure 4.9. I left a purposeful silence, and Em filled it with her pattern from her favorite-music repertoire “Stretch and Bounce” (Valerio et al., 1998). I labeled this as unrelated chanting behavior because it was not in relation to the occurring music context. Em may have wanted to shift away from the current musical context. She rhythm chanted

\[
\text{Ba ba} ~ \gamma
\]

and paused for the adults to finish the phrase; in doing so, she changed
the musical context from the improvised duple meter rhythm chant to a rhythm pattern from her favorite-music repertoire “Stretch and Bounce” (Valerio et al., 1998).

Armon demonstrated an unrelated chanting behavior while Alli performed the song “Roll the Ball” from Valerio et al. (1998) Music Play. During Alli’s performance, she and I distributed tennis balls for the children to encourage musical play. Alli repeated the song a few times. Armon engaged in throwing the balls, rather than rolling, as suggested in the lyric. Armon’s parent tried to assist Armon in rolling, rather than throwing the balls. Armon threw another ball, and his parent directed Armon to sit in his parent’s lap. Rather than following his parent’s direction, Armon spun his arms and

![Rhythm Pattern](image)

hopped away while chanting Eh-weh-doo-ya Eh-weh-doo-ya. Armon’s parent rose from his seated position and walked over to Armon. There he proceeded to talk with Armon about safe behaviors that included not throwing the balls.

While Armon’s parent talked with Armon about safe behaviors, I observed Armon’s reaction to his parent. The rhythm pattern Armon performed,

![Rhythm Pattern](image)

Eh-weh-doo-ya Eh-weh-doo-ya, was in duple meter, not triple meter as found in “Rolling,” the music context established by Alli (Valerio et al., 1998). Armon used his own syllables while performing the pattern. He moved away from his parent, directly after his parent tried to address his behavior. It appeared that Armon demonstrated an unrelated chanting behavior as he pretended not to hear his parent talk about safe behaviors that included not throwing the balls. Armon performed unrelated rhythm chanting to the musical context.
**Unrelated Social/Emotional Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated unrelated social/emotional behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. When demonstrating unrelated social/emotional behaviors the young children did not produce music, nor did they embody the music as they demonstrated unrelated social/emotional behaviors. When demonstrating unrelated social/emotional behaviors, the young children played, spoke, or displayed negative emotions that were not related to the occurring music context. Armon exhibited each of those behaviors in one event.

Once, at the beginning of a Music Play class, I sang Valerio’s (2009) “Hello, Hello, Hello” a few times as presented in Figure 4.12. Armon moved around the room with enthusiasm during my performance of the song as he purposefully jumped and fell in various locations in the room. Alli commented on his movement, “Yeah, oh my gosh, he has so much energy” (A. Johnson, think-aloud interview, February 26, 2020). Armon moved around the room and playfully fell on his parents who were seated on the floor. He repeated those actions a few more times as I performed the song, seeming to make a game out of falling on the floor or on other persons in the class. Then, during one repetition of the song, as I performed measure nine, Armon stood up, squealed, and jumped on his friend. Armon’s parent walked over, picked him up, and removed him from his friend. Armon protested and began to speak in approximated language, “Hem ba, a neggy ga.” Armon’s parent sat down with Armon. Armon sat on his parent’s lap. I repeated the song again. Armon attempted to slide out of his parent’s lap, but the parent held onto him. As I ended the song, Armon escaped his parent’s grasp. He moved to one side of the room where the whiteboard and markers were, and he picked up the markers.
attempting to draw. Armon’s parent stood, addressed Armon’s behavior, and Armon demonstrated a negative emotion as he dropped to the floor upset.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Purpose and Guiding Research Question

To gain understanding regarding early childhood music repertoire selection, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine young children’s music behaviors demonstrated in response to their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire performed in informal early childhood music classes. Following were my guiding research questions.

1. What was the favorite-music repertoire of young children?

2. What did parents, Alli (an early childhood music teacher), Kat (an early childhood music teacher), and I notice about behaviors young children demonstrated during performances of their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire during our informal music classes?

Method

In this qualitative case study, I used purposeful sampling, complete participant observation, moderate participant observation, active participant observation, and multiple data sources to investigate young children’s behaviors during favorite and other music. The data sources included the following.

• Initial Parent Questionnaire

• Video-recorded Music Play classes
• Written observations and reflections,
• Audio-recorded individual think-aloud interviews.
• Follow-up Parent Questionnaire

I transcribed data sources as appropriate and coded each transcription using my researcher-developed codes to create my codebook and to organize the data within my fieldwork notebook (Glesne, 2016). To promote internal validity and trustworthiness, I used strategies including constant comparison, triangulation, participant responses, and expert reviews (Glesne, 2016; Patton, 2015).

Findings

After coding the data, I organized the codes into cultural domains and created a taxonomic analysis. Within the established cultural domains and taxonomic analysis, I engaged in a thematic analysis of the data. Three themes emerged from my coding and cultural domains. Following are those three themes and summaries of each theme.

1. Young children repeatedly demonstrated specific patterns from their favorite music repertoire.
2. Young children demonstrated related behaviors during favorite music and other music.
3. Young children demonstrated unrelated behaviors during favorite music and other music.

Each Young Child’s Specific Rhythm Pattern or Tonal Pattern. Each young child repeatedly performed a specific rhythm pattern or tonal pattern from his or her favorite-music repertoire. Alli, Kat, Parents, and I noticed each young child demonstrated performing their specific rhythm pattern or tonal pattern during favorite-music repertoire
and other-music repertoire. Armon repeatedly performed a specific rhythm pattern from his favorite recorded repertoire, Stevens’s (2005) “Chicago” throughout Music Play class on November 9, 2019. He repeated the pattern in various music repertoire. Em repeatedly performed a specific rhythm pattern from her favorite repertoire “Stretch and Bounce” found in Valerio et al. (1998) Music Play during class on November 16, 2019 as presented in Figure 4.9. She repeated the pattern in various musical contexts. Henry repeatedly sang a specific tonal pattern from his favorite repertoire “Old MacDonald” during Music Play class on October 12, 2019 as presented in Figure 4.10. He repeated the pattern during his favorite-music repertoire.

**Related Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated related behaviors throughout the Music Play semester during favorite music and other-music repertoire. I considered related behaviors to be those that were related to the musical context being performed. The young children demonstrated three types of related behaviors: related performing behaviors, related processing behaviors, and related social/emotional behaviors.

**Related Performing Behaviors.** I found the young children demonstrated related performing behaviors during favorite music and other music. I labeled children’s behaviors as related performing behaviors if they demonstrated or performed a musical action. Within this study, related performing behaviors included a child moving, chanting, singing, creating performing a vocal glissando, and performing on an instrument. When displaying related performing behaviors, children embodied the music in some way, shape, or form.
The young children demonstrated related moving behaviors during favorite music
and other music. Parents, Alli, Kat, and I noticed the young children moved in multiple
ways: dance, flow, toward an instrument, to microbeats, to macrobeats, with no
recognizable tempo, and to the melodic rhythm of the musical context.

The young children demonstrated related rhythm chanting behaviors during
favorite music and other music. Parent participants, Alli, Kat, and I noticed the young
children demonstrated rhythm chanting in multiple ways: approximate lyrics, rhythm
patterns, and specific rhythm patterns from their favorite-music repertoire.

Kat noticed that Armon and Em each repeatedly rhythm chanted a specific rhythm
pattern from their favorite-music repertoire, respectively. Henry sang the specific tonal
pattern \[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{C4-} \\
\text{D4-} \\
\text{E4-} \\
\text{F4} \\
\end{array} \] which contains the fourth pitches found at the beginning of his
favorite-music repertoire “Old MacDonald” as presented in Figure 4.10.

**Related Processing Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated related
processing behaviors during favorite music and other music. While exhibiting a related
processing behavior the “children simply listen to music” (Gordon, 2013, p. 41);
therefore, related processing behaviors are the manifestation of the children listening to
music. Within this study, related processing behaviors included a young child observing
or looking at a music sound source, performed an audiation stare, tensed a hand, sucked
on fingers, or abruptly stopped movements or crying. The young children did not produce
music, nor embody, the music as they demonstrated related processing behaviors.

**Related Social/Emotional Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated related
social/emotional behaviors during favorite music and other music. I labeled the observed
related social/emotional behaviors based on the occurring social/emotional context, the
young children’s facial expressions, and the reaction of the young child’s parents. Related social/emotional behaviors included positive emotions, negative emotions, playing, and speaking. The young children demonstrated related positive emotions during favorite music and other music when they laughed, squealed, smiled, shouted, or looked pleasantly surprised. The young children demonstrated related negative emotions during favorite music and other music when they squealed, shouted, cried, or whined to demonstrate displeasure. The young children demonstrated related playing and speaking behaviors during favorite music and other music when they engaged in pretend play during musical activities. When demonstrating related social/emotional behaviors, the young children did not produce music, nor did they embody the music.

**Unrelated Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated unrelated behaviors throughout the Music Play semester during favorite music and other-music repertoire. I considered unrelated behaviors to be those that were not related to the musical context being performed. The young children demonstrated two types of unrelated behaviors: unrelated performing behaviors and unrelated social/emotional behaviors. Parent participants, Alli, Kat, and I did not notice the young children demonstrate unrelated processing behaviors.

**Unrelated Performing Behaviors.** I also found the young children demonstrated unrelated performing behaviors during favorite music and other music when they demonstrated a non-musical action or performed something in a musical context different from the occurring musical context. When displaying unrelated performing behaviors, young children did not embody the occurring music context in some way, shape, or form.
Within this study, unrelated performing behaviors included a children’s moving behaviors and rhythm chanting behaviors.

**Unrelated Social/Emotional Behaviors.** The young children demonstrated unrelated social/emotional behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. When demonstrating unrelated social/emotional behaviors the young children did not produce music, nor did they embody the music as they demonstrated unrelated social/emotional behaviors. When demonstrating unrelated social/emotional behaviors, the young children played, spoke, or displayed negative emotions that were not related to the occurring music context.

**Discussion and Implications**

I do not claim generalizability of the findings; however, my findings are important for understanding young children's behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. The study provided the opportunity to examine the various ways young children behave during Music Play classes based on tenets from Gordon’s (2013) *Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children* and Valerio et al. (1998) *Music Play*. For this study those classes included the children’s favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire.

**Considerations Regarding One Specific Pattern from Favorite Music Repertoire**

During this study, each child repeatedly performed one specific tonal pattern or rhythm pattern from his or her favorite-music repertoire. Gordon (2013) referred to tonal patterns and rhythm patterns in music as similar to words in language and recommended that adults perform tonal patterns and rhythm patterns contextually related to and in conjunction with songs and rhythm chants for young children. Gordon theorized that
young children’s music development is similar to their language development because young children organize musical sounds into tonal patterns and rhythm patterns.

The young children repeatedly performed specific tonal patterns or specific rhythm patterns from their favorite-music repertoire; however, they did not repeatedly perform tonal patterns or rhythm patterns Alli or I performed in conjunction with songs and rhythm chants during the Music Play classes as recommended by Gordon (2013). The young children repeatedly performed a rhythm pattern or tonal pattern that directly came from the music that their parents identified as their favorite-music repertoire, respectively.

Gordon (2013) theorized that young children’s music development is similar to their language development because young children organize musical sounds into tonal patterns and rhythm patterns similar to how they organize sounds into words. Gordon also theorized that music teachers and parents should perform tonal patterns and rhythm patterns related to, but not directly from, the music repertoire they perform for young children. According to Gordon, music teachers and parents should expect that young children listen to those patterns and eventually imitate those patterns, first inaccurately, and then accurately with precision and coordination. During this study, each child repeatedly performed one specific rhythm pattern or tonal pattern that the parents, Alli, and I did not perform for them or expect them to perform. Each young child participant spontaneously and repeatedly performed a rhythm pattern or tonal pattern directly from their favorite-music repertoire, respectively.

Koops (2014) noticed young children demonstrated performing behaviors such as singing, moving, creating, and improvising. Koops (2014) labeled the young child’s
melodic improvisations or melodic patterns as “little songs” (p. 57). Similarly, I found the young children participants performed a rhythm pattern or tonal pattern, but I did not find the young children participants repeatedly performed melodic patterns from their favorite-music repertoire. Koops did not connect the “little songs” (p. 57) to the young children’s favorite-music repertoire as did the observers in this study as Koops did not seek to compare young children’s musical behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. Alli, Kat, the parents, and I connected each child’s rhythm pattern or tonal pattern to the favorite-music repertoire because we knew their favorite-music repertoire.

Custodero (2006) categorized young children’s music repertoire into four groups: learned songs, learned songs with improvised words, improvised melodies, and recordings. Custodero did not categorize the young children’s music repertoire into favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire because Custodero sought to categorize the types of music repertoire in young children’s musical environments. I sought to document the observed musical behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire, not to categorize the types of music repertoire in young children’s musical environments.

Custodero (2006) found that two of the four types of young children’s music repertoire incorporated improvisation. The young children demonstrated performing behaviors by singing a learned song and creating new words. The young children also demonstrated a performing behavior by creating a new melody. I found the young children created with repeatedly performed specific rhythm patterns or specific tonal patterns from their favorite-music repertoire.
In this study, each young child repeatedly performed a rhythm pattern or tonal pattern from his or her favorite-music repertoire. If early childhood music teachers consider children’s rhythm pattern and tonal pattern performances and development to be essential to their early childhood music development and learning, perhaps early childhood music teachers should consider selecting and using children’s favorite-music repertoire in informal early childhood music classes. The early childhood music teachers may recognize rhythm patterns or tonal patterns from the young child’s favorite-music repertoire. Then, they may incorporate the rhythm patterns and tonal patterns they observe, demonstrated by each young child to his or her favorite-music repertoire, into each child’s music development and learning, respectively. Only by knowing the favorite-music repertoire can the early childhood music teachers recognize the rhythm patterns and tonal patterns from the favorite-music repertoire. By incorporating young children’s favorite-music repertoire into informal music classes, teachers may elicit young children’s rhythm pattern behaviors and tonal pattern behaviors that may provide the basis for increased young children’s rhythm pattern and tonal pattern vocabulary development and learning. Such rhythm pattern and tonal pattern vocabulary development and learning are essential for optimum musicianship according to Gordon (2013) and Valerio et al. (1998).

**Considerations Regarding Related Pleasant Surprise**

The young children demonstrated related positive emotions during performances of favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire when they laughed, squealed, smiled, shouted, or looked pleasantly surprised. Henry and Armon demonstrated related pleasant surprise while they observed their favorite-music repertoire performed or played
in Music Play classes. Moreover, Henry’s and Armon’s parents reported their favorite-

music repertoire was not repertoire that Alli and I did not regularly perform or play
during our Music Play classes. In this study, each parent played an important role in
identifying his or her young child’s favorite-music repertoire and confirming that his or
her young child’s related pleasant surprise behavior was made in response to the young
child’s favorite-music repertoire. Similarly, Steever (2015) recognized the value in parent
participation during young children’s informal music classes; although, Steever focused
on the interaction of parents with their young child.

If early childhood music teachers consider young children’s demonstration of
positive emotions during informal early childhood music classes to be important, they
may consider asking parents to provide information regarding their children’s favorite-
music repertoire at the beginning of each semester using a questionnaire similar to the
one I present in Appendix A. Then, early childhood music teachers may knowingly select
children’s favorite-music repertoire in order to engage young children’s positive
emotions during music classes.

**Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

When reflecting on the data collection process, I recognized that my questioning
process during the think-aloud interviews may have been too narrow to allow Alli and
Kat to verbalize their observations freely. Although, I believe that my interpretation of
the data represents the nature of the young children’s behaviors during favorite-music
repertoire and other-music repertoire for this study, I realize that the video-recorded
Music Play class data not used for this study may have contained additional information
that may have added even more depth and understanding to young children’s behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire.

This study was limited because I investigated three young children’s behaviors to favorite music and other music during Music Plays classes. The young children’s ages were 1.5-, 1.5-, and 2-years-old. Future researchers should examine the behaviors of children of various ages and developmental abilities during their favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. Research regarding repertoire with children infancy through age 8 will increase the body of knowledge regarding children’s behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire. During this study, all three young children performed a specific tonal pattern or rhythm pattern from his or her favorite-music repertoire. Researchers may find that children of different ages and backgrounds may display different behaviors during favorite-music repertoire and other-music repertoire.
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APPENDIX A

FAVORITE-MUSIC REPertoire – PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Child’s Name ______________________________________

1. Please name three songs or chants you consider to be your child’s favorites.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

2. What behaviors does your child exhibit when hearing these favorite songs or chants?
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

3. What behaviors does your child exhibit when hearing other songs or chants?
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

4. Please name three songs or chants from your child’s music repertoire you consider to be your favorites.
   a. 
   b. 
   c. 

5. How do you perform the songs or chants you have listed on this page? Use the back of this page, if necessary.
APPENDIX B

FOLLOW-UP PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How would you describe your child’s experience in our informal Music Play classes last semester?

2. How would you describe your child’s experience of hearing his or her favorite songs and rhythm chants in our previous Music Plays semester? Please include all responses, expressions, and feelings you noticed your child exhibiting.

3. How would you describe your child’s experience of hearing other songs and rhythm chants (not favorite in our previous Music Play semester? Please include all responses, expressions, and feelings you noticed your child exhibiting.

4. Is there anything else you would like to add that will help us understand your child’s behaviors to her/her favorite and other music repertoire performed in our informal Music Play classes?
APPENDIX C

VIDEO-DATA CODEBOOK

Processing Behaviors:
Ch looks/unrelated
Ch looks/related
Ch looks/related/at Parent
Ch looks/related/at Music Engagement Leader
Ch looks/related/at Music Engagement Leader Partner
Ch looks/related/at Ch
Ch looks/related/at Non-Participant
Ch stops moving/related
Ch sucks on fingers/related
Ch stops sucking on fingers/related
Ch stops emoting/related/negative
Ch opens mouth/related
Ch sticks out tongue/related
Ch tenses hand/related

Performance Behaviors:
Ch moves/related
Ch moves/related/to instrument
Ch moves/related/dances
Ch moves/related/like adults
Ch moves/related/flow
Ch moves/related/to approximate micros
Ch moves/related/to approximate macros
Ch moves/related/to accurate macros
Ch moves/related/to accurate micros
Ch moves/related/creates approximate body percussion
Ch moves/related/to approximate melodic rhythm
Ch moves/related/leads movement to Favorite Repertoire
Ch moves/unrelated
Ch moves/unrelated/from parent
Ch moves/unrelated/to parent
Ch moves/unrelated/to Music Engagement Leader
Ch moves/unrelated/to Favorite Repertoire’s accurate micros/instigating return
Ch sirens/unrelated
Ch chants/unrelated
Ch sirens/related/like adults
Ch chants/related
Ch chants/related/approximate lyrics
Ch chanting/related/approximate rhythm pattern/accurate duple
Ch chanting/related/imitates rhythm pattern/accurate duple
Ch chanting/related/creates no-recognizable-tempo rhythm pattern
Ch chanting/related/creates approximate rhythm pattern/duple
Ch chanting/related/creates approximate rhythm pattern/triple
Ch chanting/related/creates approximate rhythm pattern/duple in triple Ctxt
Ch chanting/related/creates accurate rhythm pattern/duple
Ch chanting/related/creates accurate rhythm pattern/triple
Ch chanting/related/leads Favorite Repertoire
Ch chanting/related/initiates Favorite Repertoire
Ch chanting/related/accurate percussion accompaniment
Ch sings/related
Ch sings/related/approximate resting tone
Ch sings/related/accurate resting tone
Ch sings/related/accurate dominant
Ch sings/related/imitates approximate tonal pattern
Ch sings/related/imitates accurate tonal pattern
Ch sings/related/Other Repertoire melody
Ch sings/related/creates approximate tonal pattern
Ch sings/related/creates accurate tonal pattern/major
Ch sings/related/initiates Favorite Repertoire
Ch sings/related/leads Favorite Repertoire
Ch sings/related/approximate lyrics

Social/Emotional Behaviors:
Ch emotional/related/positive
Ch emotional/related/positive/smiles
Ch emotional/related/negative
Ch emotional/related/surprise
Ch emotional/unrelated/positive
Ch emotional/unrelated/negative
Ch plays/related/like adults
Ch plays/related/with parent
Ch plays/related/on instrument/no-recognizable-tempo
Ch plays/related/on instrument/approximate
Ch plays/related/on instrument/accurate micros
Ch speaks/unrelated
Ch speaks/related