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One Elementary General Music Teacher's Uses of and Experiences With Gordon's Music Learning Theory: A Case Study

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by

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ABSTRACT

With the intent of understanding one music teacher's uses of and experiences with Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theory, the purpose of this case study was to interview one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT about her study, interpretation, and implementation of Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theory in her teaching practice. The guiding research questions were (a) Why and how has one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT studied, interpreted, and implemented music learning theory in her music teaching practice? (b) Why and how has on GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT questioned and/or deviated from music learning theory in her music teaching practice?

I purposefully interviewed one elementary general music teacher, Monica, regarding her music education and music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) experiences. Monica teaches in a public school district in Massachusetts and is a GIML faculty member. I video-recorded and transcribed three interviews with Monica. Additional data sources include (a) a Google Form questionnaire, (b) Monica's "Copy of Overview by Grade Level K-5", (c) Monica's typed answers to my typed questions in a Google Doc, (d) researcher's written reflections, (e) researcher's voice memos, and (f) three class observations. I coded and analyzed the data to find patterns and themes.

Three themes emerged. Monica enjoys learning and interactively leading students through music development to music independence; Monica acquires personal music skills, music education skills, and knowledge to enhance pliable music interactions that lead her students to music development and music independence; Monica applies music

skills, music education skills, and knowledge of her students to lead pliable music interactions that lead her students to music development and music independence. I provide thick, rich descriptions regarding each theme. I discuss implications for future research, EGMTs, and myself.

Keywords: music learning theory, elementary general music, music development, music independence

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

". . . something really happened that changed you in some fundamental way. Then you

have a story. Then you have something people are going to

want to hear and connect to . . ."

- Matthew Dicks (2018)

Each person has a story. Maybe an event occurred during childhood that set a

person on a specific trajectory for the majority of her life. Or maybe an event occurred at

the age of 50 that changed a lifetime of habits. Those events contribute to a person's

individual story. Stories connect persons to one another and also seem to have a way of

helping individuals remember things. van Manen (1990) stated: "Through meditations,

conversations, day dreams, inspirations and other interpretive acts we assign meaning to

the phenomena of lived life" (p. 37). For those reasons, I share my personal story as an

introduction to this case study.

My experience in music education is different from the average person's

experience in the United States. Growing up, I was homeschooled. Being homeschooled

provided me with an unusual music education as I did not begin formal music education

until 5th grade. When I was approximately five years old, I began to teach myself how to

play piano with the help of age-appropriate method books. My dad plays piano so we

already had a piano in the house. We did not have enough money for me to take lessons.

Therefore, teaching myself with occasional assistance from my dad was the only way for

me to learn. There were times I avoided my schoolwork and played piano instead. When that occurred, my mom found me and told me to get back to my studies. My two older siblings learned how to play instruments before me in a local home school band. Being the youngest child, I felt the need to keep up with my older siblings and began to teach myself how to play the flute and the clarinet. My mom played the flute when she was in middle school and still had her old flute. We found a clarinet at a garage sale.

When it finally came time for me to begin formal music instruction in fifth grade, I chose to learn how to play the tenor saxophone in the band. The saxophone became my primary instrument. In 2012, South Carolina passed the "Equal Access to Interscholastic Activities Act" (2012) that permitted home school students to participate in interscholastic activities in the school district with which they are eligible. As my passion for music grew, my parents and I decided I would be better prepared for a music career if I participated in the public school band classes rather than only continuing participation in the home school band. In 2013, I joined the concert and jazz bands at a local high school as a junior. I joined the marching band in my senior year.

In the fall of my senior year of high school, I began taking lessons with Dr. Clifford Leaman, the saxophone professor at the University of South Carolina – Columbia (UofSC). The following spring, I auditioned for and was accepted to the School of Music as a music major with an emphasis in instrumental music education at the same university. When I began my college career, I aspired to be a saxophone professor; however, I quickly learned that I did not want to pursue that career path when I realized how much practice time was involved to be successful and how few jobs exist for that specific career. After considering my options, I settled on the career of band

director, thinking, "Yeah, I guess I could do that. That might be fun." I pursued that career path, nervously, at first. As I continued to study and took more classes at UofSC, I became increasingly excited about the prospect of being an exemplary female band director. During the next few semesters, I remained unsettled with that decision, but continued pursuing that career.

In the fall of my undergraduate senior year, the semester immediately preceding student teaching, I took a class titled "Music for Young Children" taught by Dr. Wendy Valerio. At UofSC, that class is a requirement for all music education majors who intend to become band directors. Initially I was not overly excited about taking the class, but I participated in class meetings with as much energy as I could muster. During the first class meeting, we engaged in a mindful movement activity that Dr. Valerio calls "blobbing" or "mindful melting" (Valerio, 2018, p. 60). As the activity was calming and peaceful, I expected that if Dr. Valerio used that type of activity to introduce the course to the class, I would enjoy many of the activities introduced throughout the semester. Over the course of the semester, we learned songs and rhythm chants to use with young children, participated in music engagements with young children (infants through age 5) at Bright Horizons Children's Center at UofSC, and learned various music and movement activities to use with elementary-aged students. Due to my experience in UofSC's "Music for Young Children," I found a new potential career which genuinely excited me. I began to dream of becoming an elementary general music teacher.

As eager as I was to pursue the new career direction, I felt as though I was not quite prepared to teach elementary music as a full-time music teacher. "Music for Young Children" was the only class in my undergraduate degree that specifically prepared me

for early childhood and elementary general music teaching. I began to converse with Dr. Valerio about my new enthusiasm for becoming an early childhood and elementary music teacher, as well as my uncertainties. She[1] informed me of a music education graduate assistantship available through the School of Music's Children's Music Development Center the following year. The assistantship would allow me to complete a Master of Music Education degree while teaching early childhood and elementary general music (PreK-Grade 6) through the Children's Music Development Center.

I decided to apply for the graduate school at UofSC to study general music in order to better prepare myself for an early childhood and elementary general music teaching career. Moreover, I was awarded the assistantship. Prior to beginning the assistantship duties in fall of 2019, Dr. Valerio encouraged me to attend a class led by the Gordon Institute for Music Learning (GIML). In July of 2019, I traveled to Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and completed a two-week, Elementary General Music Level I GIML Professional Development Levels Course (PDLC).

When I first met with Dr. Valerio to discuss options regarding how to proceed with my career, she recommended I study the Alliance for Active Music Making website (https://www.allianceamm.org/) to familiarize myself with different approaches commonly implemented in the United States. As I studied, I understood that Dr. Valerio's teaching strategies mostly aligned with Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theory. I met with her again to discuss what I learned from studying the website and to ask questions about the different approaches: Orff-Schulwerk, Kodály, Dalcroze-

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[1] Dr. Valerio's preferred pronouns are she/her/hers (personal communication, April 23, 2020).

eurhythmics, and Gordon's music learning theory. The music learning theory pedagogical approach resonated with me. For that reason, I decided to learn more about who Gordon was and how he developed music learning theory.

Gordon's Story: A Summary

While growing up in Stamford, Connecticut, Gordon worked for his[2] father's awning business, and he began to learn how to play the string bass (Gerhardstein, 2001; Gordon, 2006). Throughout his adolescence, music teachers told Gordon that he would never be a professional musician. Nonetheless, Gordon received private string bass lessons from a variety of professional musicians, including American jazz string bassist Sid Weiss, string bassist Milton Kestenbaum of the NBC Symphony under Toscanini, and professors at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York.

In the years 1945-1947, Gordon played tuba in the 302nd Army Band in Denver, Colorado (Gerhardstein, 2001; Gordon, 2006). Relieved of his military duties in 1947, Gordon attended Eastman to study string bass performance. After 2.5 years, he depleted his GI Bill and looked for work as a string bassist in New York City. Gene Krupa's band needed a string bassist at the time and hired Gordon to fill the need. Gordon spent six months touring the country in Krupa's band. Gordon (2006) attributed much of his musical learning to his time spent in that band.

Gordon returned to Eastman in 1951 and completed his bachelor's degree in string bass performance in 1952 (Gerhardstein, 2001; Gordon, 2006). He immediately began his master's degree at Eastman in string bass performance and music literature, graduating in 1953. After graduating, Gordon moved back to New York City to find a

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[2] Gerhardstein (2001) used the pronouns he/his/him in reference to Gordon.

professional string bass job. He performed various string bass gigs but never achieved the

symphony orchestra position for which he had hoped. During that time, he received

lessons from NBC Symphony's string bassist Philip Sklar.

Gordon's string bass teachers expressed to him that performing in a professional

symphony orchestra was not an attainable goal for him (Gerhardstein, 2001; Gordon,

2006). Sklar encouraged Gordon to attend Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, to pursue a

master's degree in professional education. Gordon listened to Sklar's advice and enrolled

in 1954. While attending Ohio University, Gordon met the university's director of music

education, Neal Glenn. Glenn introduced Gordon to the works of Carl Seashore[3]

(specifically, the *Seashore Measures of Musical Talent*, 1960) and James Mursell,[4]

prominent psychology of music researchers.

After completing his Master of Professional Education degree at Ohio University

in Athens, Ohio, in 1955, Gordon taught music in two public schools for one year in

Toledo, Ohio (Gerhardstein, 2001; Gordon, 2006). He quickly discovered he disliked the

job. In 1956, Glenn offered Gordon a fellowship at the University of Iowa in Iowa City,

Iowa, which Gordon accepted. In his 16 years at the University of Iowa, Gordon

completed his Ph.D., taught classes in music education, conducted research, and

developed his first music aptitude test, *Musical Aptitude Profile* (MAP) (Gordon, 1965).

As a student, Gordon also participated in an educational psychology class given by Albert

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[3] Lehman, P. R. (1969). A selected bibliography of works on music testing. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, *17*(4), 427–442. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3344172?seq=1
[4] Simutis, L. J. (1968). James L. Mursell: An annotated bibliography. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, *16*(3), 254–266. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3344081?seq=1

Hieronymus. The two became friends and often discussed the topics of assessment and music aptitude.

Gordon (2012) defined music aptitude in *Learning Sequences in Music: A Contemporary Music Learning Theory* as follows: "Music aptitude is a measure of one's potential to learn music . . . Music achievement is a measure of what has been learned in music" (p. 44). Gordon dedicated an entire chapter to defining music aptitude and music achievement, as they are different concepts. Music aptitude refers to a person's potential to learn music. Music achievement refers to what that person accomplishes in music.

In 1972, Gordon transitioned from working at the University of Iowa to becoming professor of music with tenure at the State University of New York at Buffalo (Gordon, 2006). During that time, he continued his research in music aptitude test development, developed a taxonomy of tonal patterns and rhythm patterns, created a rhythm solfege system, and coined the term *audiation*. "Audiation is the process of assimilating and comprehending (not simply rehearsing) music momentarily heard performed or heard sometime in the past" (Gordon, 2012, p. 3).

Subsequently, Gordon moved to Philadelphia in 1979 and stayed for 18 years while he taught at Temple University and continued researching music aptitude and developing his music learning theory (Gordon, 2006). He advised many students as they researched and wrote their doctoral dissertations. He, along with some of his doctoral students, began to study how newborn and young children learn music through their research at the preschool music program at Temple University (Gerhardstein, 2001). Gordon also taught summer seminars at the Alfred Greenfield Sugarloaf Conference

Center of Temple University in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania. Persons traveled from various states to attend the Sugar Loaf conferences and learn about music learning theory.

As Gordon devoted much of his career to music aptitude research and music learning (Gerhardstein, 2001), he developed a taxonomy of tonal patterns and rhythm patterns and used them to create measures of music aptitude (Gordon, 1976). Those measures include the following: *Primary Measures of Music Audiation* (Gordon, 1979), *Intermediate Measures of Music Audiation* (Gordon, 1982), *Advanced Measures of Music Audiation* (Gordon, 1989), *Audie* (Gordon, 1989), *Harmonic Improvisation Readiness Record* (Gordon, 1998), and *Rhythm Improvisation Readiness Record* (Gordon, 1998). Gordon recommended that music teachers use each of those measures to provide individualized music instruction to each of her students (Gordon, 2012).

Gordon retired from Temple University in 1994 (Gerhardstein, 2001); however, he remained active in his profession. He continued to research, write, revise previous books, and travel to foreign countries to teach music learning theory. In 1997, he accepted a Distinguished Professor in Residence position at UofSC and another such position at Michigan State University in 2001. Gordon traveled throughout the world teaching others about music learning theory. Music teachers from Spain, Belgium, Italy, Portugal, and other countries now allow music learning theory to inform their music learning and teaching practices.

As a result of his research, Gordon also developed the music skill learning sequences presented in Table 1.1 to outline the two types of audiation skills necessary for optimal formal music achievement. For a detailed description of Gordon's (2012) music

skill learning sequence, please see *Learning Sequences in Music: A Contemporary Music Learning Theory*.

Table 1.1 Gordon's Music Skill Learning Sequence (Gordon, 2012)

Discrimination Learning	Inference Learning
Aural/Oral	Generalization (Aural/Oral – Verbal – Symbolic)
Verbal Association	Creativity/Improvisation (Aural/Oral – Symbolic)
Partial Synthesis	Theoretical Understanding (Aural/Oral – Verbal – Symbolic)
Symbolic Association (Reading – Writing)	
Composite Synthesis (Reading – Writing)	

For each music skill learning sequence level and sublevel, the music teacher guides the students sequentially (Gordon, 2012). *Aural/Oral* music learning occurs when the teacher sings or rhythm chants a neutral syllable, and the student echoes the teacher. *Verbal association* music skill learning occurs when solfege is applied to the pitches or rhythms. *Partial synthesis* occurs when the student audiates the contextual tonality or meter of two given sets of tonal patterns or sets of rhythm patterns, respectively. *Symbolic association* refers to reading and writing music notation. *Composite synthesis* occurs when the student audiates the contextual tonality or meter of the music she reads or writes. In each sublevel of *discrimination learning*, the teacher gives the answer to the student(s).

Inference learning requires students to infer answers (Gordon, 2012). During *generalization*, students infer differences between given patterns. *Creativity* occurs when a student creates a melody or chant without parameters. Students *improvise* when they compose a new melody or chant within parameters, such as tonality or meter. During *theoretical understanding,* the student explains music notation verbally, using music terms to enhance explanations.

Gordon (2013) also developed a music learning theory for newborn and young children. Rather than being able to audiate from birth, Gordon argues that persons sequentially proceed through types and stages of *preparatory audiation*. There are 3 types and 7 stages as described in Table 1.2.

Gordon (2013) argued that music learning progresses much like language learning. According to the Mayo Clinic, a fetus begins to hear around the eighteenth week of pregnancy (https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20046151). Consequently, Gordon recommended that children should be introduced to a variety of tonalities and meters from birth to be able to audiate nuances of music. Ideally, an adult performs music for the child rather than the child hearing recordings of music; however, Gordon also states: "To ensure children hear performances in consistent keyalities, tonalities, tempos, and meters, adults might make a recording of their performances for children to listen to" (p. 36).

In order to support the development of music learning theory and to assist music teachers in the practical application of music learning theory, Gordon and fellow researchers founded GIML (Gordon, 2006). The institute offers several professional

development education courses in early childhood music education, elementary general

music education, and instrumental music education.

Table 1.2 Types and Stages of Preparatory Audiation (Gordon, 2013, p. 32)

Types	Stages
1. ACCULTURATION: Birth to age 2–4: participates with little consciousness of environment.	1. ABSORPTION: hears and aurally collects sounds of music in the environment. 2. RANDOM RESPONSE: moves and babbles in response to, but without relation to, sounds of music in the environment. 3. PURPOSEFUL RESPONSE: tries to relate movement and babble to sounds of music in the environment.
2. IMITATION: Ages 2–4 to 3–5: participates with conscious thought focused primarily on environment.	1. SHEDDING EGOCENTRICITY: recognizes movement and babble do not match sounds of music in the environment. 2. BREAKING THE CODE: imitates with some precision sounds of music in the environment, specifically tonal patterns and rhythm patterns.
3. ASSIMILATION: Ages 3–5 to 4–6: participates with conscious thought focused on self.	1. INTROSPECTION: recognizes lack of coordination between singing, chanting, breathing, and movement. 2. COORDINATION: coordinates singing and chanting with breathing and movement.

Note. Although Gordon (2013) assigned age ranges to each preparatory audiation

type, the possibility remains for variations among children.

Music teachers travel from around the world for those two-week intensive courses to

learn from other teachers who have studied and practiced music learning theory in depth

with special attention to the texts listed below, respectively. After completing a level of GIML PDLC, GIML encourages teachers to return to their classrooms and implement what they learned during the PDLC and to return for a subsequent PDLC course.

In my ever-evolving music learning and teaching practice, I am influenced by Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theories. At the time of this study (2019-2021 school years), I taught music part-time at St. Peter's Catholic Elementary School, Columbia, South Carolina, and UofSC School of Music, Music Play in partial fulfillment of my Children's Music Development Center graduate assistantship requirements. In the 2019-2020 school year, I also taught music part-time at Bright Horizons Children's Center at UofSC and at another local early childhood center in Irmo, South Carolina. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I did not teach at Bright Horizons or the early childhood center in Irmo during the 2020-2021 school year. After implementing my interpretation of music learning theory in my own practice, I still have many questions regarding the implementation of music learning theory.

Gordon (2012) intended music learning theory to inform why and when teachers use the music activities they use with their students. What Gordon provided is a theory around which music educators may develop techniques and methods; therefore, his theory may have various implementations based on interpretation. Gordon himself stated, "Perhaps the last thing to enter my mind when I was developing Music Learning Theory, if I thought of it at all, was the actual application of the theory in the classroom." (Walter & Taggart, 1989, p. iii).

As I continue studying music learning theory and developing as a music teacher, I am curious about how other GIML PDLC-experienced elementary general music teachers

(EGMTs) study, interpret, and implement music learning theory in their classrooms. Gordon was primarily a researcher rather than an elementary general music teacher. Moreover, he had few opportunities to thoroughly implement his music learning theory in an elementary general music classroom. As a result, do GIML PDLC-experienced EGMTs believe that music learning theory effectively informs their teaching practice? How do they implement music learning theory in their classrooms? Do they implement purely music learning theory? Or, do they adopt an eclectic approach, using aspects of multiple approaches to teach their students music? How did they first learn about music learning theory? Those are a few of the questions I intend to ask a fellow GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT in this case study.

With the intent of understanding one music teacher's uses of and experiences with Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theory, the purpose of this case study was to interview one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT about her study, interpretation, and implementation of Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theory in her teaching practice. The case study was guided by the following questions:

1. Why and how has one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT studied, interpreted, and implemented music learning theory in her music teaching practice?

2. Why and how has one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT questioned and/or deviated from music learning theory in her music teaching practice?

CHAPTER 2

RELATED RESEARCH

One Elementary Music Teacher's Beliefs about Musical Ability: Connections to Teaching Practice and Classroom Culture, Shouldice, 2013

Shouldice conducted a case study on Deena Ridge[5] to "explore one elementary music teacher's beliefs about the nature of musical ability and the ways in which these beliefs relate to actions and lived experiences in the classroom" (p. 19). Shouldice's guiding questions were as follows:

1. What is the nature and extent of the beliefs about students' musical abilities and capabilities held by one elementary music teacher who believes all students have the capacity to be musical?

2. How do beliefs about musical abilities manifest themselves in this teacher's actions and decision-making in the classroom?

3. How do beliefs about musical abilities manifest themselves in this teacher's interactions with students and, more broadly, in the classroom culture she creates?

4. What is the relationship between this teacher's beliefs about musical ability and her beliefs about the purpose of music education, specifically of elementary general music? (pp. 19-20).

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[5] Pseudonym.

Method

Participants and Setting

Shouldice conducted a case study on one EGMT, Deena Ridge. Shouldice selected Ridge using intensity sampling. In her[6] tenth year of teaching music at the time of the case study, Ridge taught music to a diverse student body who represented over 60 languages among over 400 students in preschool through grade 5. Shouldice conducted all observations and interviews in Ridge's school.

Data Collection, Procedures, and Analysis

Data collection for Shouldice's case study includes: classroom observations documented through fieldnotes and video footage, audio-recorded semi-structured interviews, teacher journal entries, researcher memos, and teaching artifacts such as lesson plans and assessment tools. Shouldice observed Ridge's class twice weekly late October, 2012, through January, 2013. Throughout the observations, Shouldice's role ranged from full participant to observer, depending on the needs of the class at the time. Shouldice and Ridge engaged in informal discussion during those observations as well as additional meeting times for semi-structured interviews. During the audio-recorded semi-structured interviews, Shouldice asked Ridge questions, showed video footage recorded during the observations to explore Ridge's beliefs about students' musical abilities, and read Ridge "passages from several sources on perceptions of musical talent and the effects of those perceptions (Burnard, 2003; Demorest & Morrison, 2000; Koops, 2010; Ruddock & Leong, 2005) and asked her to respond to them" (p. 62). Shouldice presented Ridge with guiding questions for a reflective journal which Ridge completed. Shouldice

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[6] Pronoun used in Shouldice's study.

also collected "various artifacts or forms of documentation that were relevant to the study" (p. 63).

Throughout and after data collection, Shouldice analyzed the data by open coding all written data sources during the collection period, editing codes after the collection period ended, using axial coding to group codes Shouldice believed belonged together, and writing analytical memos. Two of Shouldice's colleagues "with experience in qualitative research in music education" peer reviewed the codes and emergent themes.

Findings and Discussion

Shouldice uncovered four emergent themes in the case study of Deena Ridge: beliefs about musical ability, treating students as individuals, the power of the learning environment, and encouraging lifelong engagement with music. In this case study, Shouldice revealed that Ridge believed that every student "has the potential to develop musical skills and understanding" (p. 180), no matter their level of musical ability. Ridge also believed that "there are different ways of being musical and that students have different musical strengths" (p. 180). Shouldice discussed how Ridge treats her students as individuals. Because Ridge believed that each student is musical in her own way, she differentiates instruction based on the students' individual ability levels and provides a variety of activities with varying difficulty levels to provide opportunities for success for each student. Ridge also tried to foster a positive learning environment as she believed students are most successful when they feel encouraged in their musicianship and free to make mistakes. One of Ridge's overarching goals was to encourage lifelong engagement with music among her students. She did that by including activities her students enjoyed and giving them the opportunity to choose the activities. She also encouraged musical

independence by allowing the children to perform without her. The students relied on themselves and each other to perform music. Ridge believed that musical independence leads to lifelong engagement with music as students learn how to make musical decisions and claim ownership of their musicianship.

Relevance to Current Study

Ridge participated in Shouldice's case study in order for Shouldice to examine Ridge's beliefs about musical ability and how those beliefs influenced her teaching practice. Shouldice chose to include only one participant in her study in order to provide an in-depth examination of that participant's beliefs. In my study, I conducted a case study with one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT to examine ways she implements music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013), what she believes to be important aspects of her teaching practice, and why those aspects are important to her.

New York State Early-Career Teachers' Selection and Use of Pedagogical Approaches in Elementary General Music, Bugos, 2011

Bugos surveyed music teachers in New York and interviewed three teachers who participated in the survey. The intent of the study was "to investigate early-career elementary general music teachers' curricular decision-making and practice" (p. 38). Bugos hoped to better understand why teachers make the decisions they do regarding pedagogical approach and argued that the knowledge of why informs the processes that occur in the classroom and aid in the decision-making process for pre-service teachers when they decide which pedagogical approach to implement in their classrooms.

Method

Participants and Setting

Bugos created a website for the survey and advertised the survey on various social media platforms which generated 166 clicks. Bugos also emailed the survey to New York music educators' association presidents, the presidents or secretaries of state chapters of the professional organizations of each major pedagogical approach, and a few New York music education professors and asked each of these individuals to share the survey with other eligible teachers. Two districts gave approval for Bugos to email the survey directly to music educators in the respective districts. One hundred seventy seven responses were collected from the survey. After reviewing the results of the survey, Bugos interviewed three teachers, observed their classes, and reviewed their "lesson plans, worksheets, handouts, and available curriculum materials" (p. 83).

Data Collection, Procedures, and Analysis

"This study employed a mixed methods two-phase sequential explanatory design, with the addition of a concurrent embedded design element in the first phase." (p. 72) Bugos used the term, *Phase One,* to describe the online survey. The survey contained questions designed to yield quantitative data with some embedded qualitative data collection. Bugos used PASW Statistics 18 software to analyze quantitative data and qualitative coding and thematic analysis of open-ended comments from the survey.

Bugos used the term, *Phase Two*, to describe the qualitative case studies. In Phase Two, Bugos used case studies "to explain and enhance the results of the first phase" (p. 72). Initially, Bugos ascribed themes while analyzing each interview and observation independent of the other participants' interviews and observations. After all data were

collected and independently analyzed, Bugos cross-case analyzed the data from all interviews and observations.

Findings and Discussion

A majority of the respondents reported using an eclectic approach in their teaching practice. Many reported never making a conscious decision about which approach to use; however, the case studies aided understanding as to nuances potentially regarding those responses. Katie[7] and Jeremy,[8] two of the case studies, reported not making a conscious decision at the beginning of their career. Katie began her[9] career without a chosen approach but selected and implemented the music learning theory approach after attending workshops and discovering that approach fulfilled needs for greater musicianship. Jeremy also began his[10] career without choosing a specific approach. He learned about different approaches and decided that none of them fully suited him. He reported wanting to complete Orff or Kodály levels as a way to learn about the approaches more in-depth but believed he would still use an eclectic approach to best fulfill his needs.

Many respondents indicated that they did not use the same approach with which they started. Katie is one example of such responses. Jeremy and Megan[11] contradicted those responses. Megan reported beginning her[12] teaching career using the Kodály approach simply because that approach was taught in her college methods courses. She

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[7] Pseudonym.
[8] Pseudonym.
[9] Pronoun used in Bugos' study.
[10] Pronoun used in Bugos' study.
[11] Pseudonym.
[12] Pronoun used in Bugos' study.

liked the approach and believed it fulfilled her students' needs and, therefore, decided to continue using the approach.

Bugos found many influences on a teacher's choice of pedagogical approach. Influences included personal influences: match of approach and personality, agreement with personal philosophy, feeling prepared to use the approach, structure and sequence of material, and freedom for personalization. Influences also included professional influences: methods courses, special workshops and training, student-teaching experience/cooperating teacher, district policy or curriculum, and student needs. The case studies confirmed the respondents' answers.

With research question three, Bugos asked about the teachers' implementation of the chosen pedagogical approaches. After the surveys and case studies, Bugos found that teachers' implementation of the approaches varies. Bugos stated that the music teachers' implementation "is a complex matter that cannot be summarized by a simple statement that will apply in all situations. Rather, it is dependent on unique characteristics of individual teachers and the contexts in which they teach" (p. 210).

Relevance to Current Study

There are many paths music teachers take to choose the approach they deem most suitable for them and their students. Bugos found that many teachers do not strictly adhere to one approach. Additionally, if they started using one approach, they might change to a different approach later. While respondents reported using a specified approach, Bugos found that the implementation of the approaches varied. For example, Katie and other teachers in her district "likely would all characterize their teaching as based on Music Learning Theory, yet they used the approach in quite different ways . . ."

(p. 212). In my case study, I hope to illuminate some of the ways in which one elementary general music teacher interprets and implements the music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) approach.

Adulthood and Music Participation in a Community Band: A Collective Case Study of the Lived Experiences of Adult Community Band Members, Schultz, 2018

Schultz stated that the purpose of the study is "to examine the lived experiences of community band members in order to better understand how music making might serve various roles and hold differing meanings for adults across their lifespan" (p. 8). The study was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of selected adult community band members of southeast Nebraska?

2. How do these adults place playing in the community band within their adulthood roles?

3. What meanings do these adults derive from their participation in the community band?

4. By comparing the lived experiences of adults at differing stages of adulthood and with different roles in adult life, what might we better understand about how the meanings of music engagement might vary or change over time? (p. 9).

Method

Participants and Setting

Schultz selected seven individuals from one community band in southeast Nebraska to participate in the study. Schultz sent emails to leaders of three community bands in southeast Nebraska asking if they would be willing to participate in the study.

Guidelines for community band qualification included active rehearsal and performance schedule for the five years prior to the time of the study and active members from across the full range of the adult lifespan. The band director from one community band agreed to ask the members to participate in the study. Shultz attended one of the band's rehearsals to ask members to participate. Participant qualification included: active member of the community band, minimum of two years of active participation in the community band, and at least 24 years or older. Shultz grouped participants into four age ranges: 24—34 years old, 35—60 years old, 61—75 years old, and 76 and older. Two members from each age group were selected through a random sampling strategy with the exception of the 24—34 years old age bracket which contained only one potential participant. All seven selected members agreed to participate in the study.

Data Collection, Procedures, and Analysis

Shultz conducted semi-structured one-on-one interviews with each of the seven participants as a multiple case study. Shultz audio-recorded each interview in addition to taking field notes. After the interviews were completed, Schultz created verbatim transcripts of each interview using Transcribe transcription software. During the data collection period, Schultz read, reflected upon, and journaled about each interview transcript independently of the others, identifying themes as they emerged. Once all interviews were completed, Schultz cross-examined the themes, continuing the process of identifying and editing.

Findings and Discussion

Lived Experiences

All of the participants reported school music as being influential in their adult music making lives, though six participants did not continue music making activities after high school until middle or late adulthood. The seventh participant was in the community band in early adulthood before taking a six-year break. While two of the participants actively reflected on lived experiences in childhood band classes, the remaining five only referenced childhood band classes. When asked about joining the community band, all participants reported that they joined after encouragement from other members in the ensemble and included strong social connections within the band as a reason for continued involvement. Participants also commented on time management being a factor to consider in their decision to join the ensemble.

Community Band Placement Within Adulthood Roles

The participants varied in their placement of the community band within their adulthood roles. Family lives and careers were common topics. Some viewed the community band as a time away from their family to participate in something they enjoy. Others viewed the community band as an activity to fill their time during retirement. Still others viewed the community band as a way for them to care for others as they teach and nurture the younger generations.

Derived Meaning From Community Band Participation

All participants reported enjoying the community band as an organization as well as playing their instruments. Three of the participants particularly expressed that the community band adds meaning and value to their lives. The participants also positively

acknowledged that the community band deepened their understanding of music. Six participants reported the community band being an outlet to serve others. The seventh participant reported the community band served his musical needs.

Greater Understanding of Variations in Meanings of Music Engagement

Adulthood roles changed as age increased. Younger participants included family lives and careers in their responses while older participants included retirement in theirs. Participants' responses about enjoyment also reflected their age range due to "the context of issues related to family and careers, the influence of music on others, a desire to engage and learn more about music and the cumulative experiences of life" (p. 148).

Relevance to Current Study

Schultz interviewed seven members of a community band in southeast Nebraska to learn about their individual lived experiences in an adult community band and how they compared with each other. In my case study, I interviewed one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT to learn about her lived experiences with music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) and determine what, if any, themes may occur in her experiences.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

"We gather other people's experiences because they allow us to become more

experienced ourselves."

-Max van Manen (2016, p. 62)

Design

For this case study, I utilized a qualitative research design using a hermeneutic

phenomenological case study (Patton, 2015; van Manen, 2016). Hermeneutics pertain to

a person's or group of person's interpretation of a text (Patton, 2015). In this case study,

the participant, Monica[13], explained her[14] interpretations of Gordon's (2012, 2013) music

learning theory. Regarding phenomenology, van Manen (2016) stated: "Phenomenology

is the systematic attempt to uncover and describe the structures, the internal meaning

structures, of lived experience" (p. 10). By interviewing the participant using a

phenomenological lens, I attempted to "uncover and describe" (van Manen, 2016, p. 10)

one GIML PDLC-experienced elementary general music teacher's (EGMT's) history

with and implementation of music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013).

I conducted the case study as the interviewer. For the participant to trust me as the

interviewer, I established neutral rapport with the participant (Patton, 2015). Patton

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[13] Pseudonym.
[14] Monica's preferred pronouns are she/her/hers (personal communication, March 26, 2021).

(2015) explained, "Openness and trust flow from nonjudgmental rapport" (p. 457). It is

important that the participant trusts the interviewer in order to elicit honest and thorough

responses. During each interview and observation, I remained open-minded and

nonjudgmental.

Sampling and Participant

For this case study, I utilized purposeful, principles-focused sampling (Patton,

2015). Principles-focused sampling allows the researcher to choose participants that

"illuminate the nature, implementation, outcomes, and implications of the principles" (p.

270). Using email, I contacted Monica Dawkins, a GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT, to

check for her interest in participating in this case study. I present the subsequent

Invitation Letter in Appendix A. The participant is considered a case. Due to the non-

generalizable findings of this study, the Office of Research Compliance at the University

of South Carolina determined that studies such as this are not subject to the Protection of

Human Subject Regulations in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations 45 CFR

46 et. seq. (personal communication, September 17, 2020).

To allow for an information-rich case (Patton, 2015), Monica fulfilled the

following requirements: (a) teaches elementary general music at the time of the study; (b)

has prior completion of at least one levels course of GIML PDLC (e.g., Elementary

General Music, Early Childhood, etc.); (c) and has completed no fewer than five years of

music teaching prior to this study.

Monica is an elementary general music teacher in a public school district in

Massachusetts. She attained her bachelor's and master's degrees in music education.

Monica is a faculty member of GIML and regularly facilitates and presents at

professional development workshops and GIML PDLCs. She has been teaching music for 28 years.

Setting

I collected data for this case study electronically to accommodate Monica's schedule. Monica and I agreed on data collection deadlines that provided optimal comfort and ease for her.

Data Sources

Questionnaire

The participant completed the researcher-developed questionnaire presented in Appendix B. I developed the questionnaire using Google forms to gain demographic information about the participant. In the questionnaire, the participant was given the opportunity to provide links to any music teaching example videos she is willing and able to share.

Teaching Example Videos

In the Fall 2020 semester, I asked Monica if she was willing to share any music teaching example videos. She was willing but was unable due to her school district's policies.

Interview Matrix, Interviews, and Artifacts

I constructed an interview matrix as suggested by Patton (2015). The interview matrix aids the researcher in question development, generating 18 different questions about a given subject in relation to time. From the matrix, I created a series of questions that addressed the participant's lived experiences regarding her personal musical history,

introduction to and study of music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013), and implementation, or lack thereof, of music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013).

I conducted three interviews with Monica. The first was on November 17, 2020. The second was on January 20, 2021. The third was on March 2, 2021. During the first two interviews, Monica and I discussed her classroom activities, music education philosophy, music learning theory interpretations, and other music education influences. During the third interview, we discussed Monica's grade-level overview in detail. I video-recorded each interview in its entirety using the online Zoom application. I stored the videos on a password-protected Apple MacBook Air. During each interview, I took notes of the participant's responses.

After the first interview, I asked Monica to send me any lesson plans she felt comfortable sharing. In response, she emailed me a link to her "Copy of Overview by Grade Level K-5." After the second interview, I reviewed her Overview and realized I needed to ask Monica more questions about it. We met for a third interview to discuss the document's contents in detail. After the second interview, I typed a few final questions into a Google Doc and sent a link to Monica to answer in that manner.

Written Reflections and Transcriptions

Immediately following each interview, I reflected on the interview in my researcher's journal. I transcribed each video recording and performed member checking (Patton, 2015) by sending each transcript to Monica to check for accurate representation and information, allowing her to edit as she deemed appropriate. I also converted video recordings of the interviews to audio recordings to provide opportunities for me to listen to the interviews. As I listened, I paused the audio recording and recorded voice memos

when I needed to make note of a particular element of the interview. I also transcribed

my voice memos.

Class Observations

I observed two of Monica's Kindergarten classes and one of her Preschool

classes. I was not allowed to record or receive recordings of the classes due to Monica's

district policies limiting the sharing of videos including students. As I observed, I took

notes in a Microsoft Word document of Monica's procedures and students' responses.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Referencing Saldaña (2009), I determined structural coding to be optimal for this

case study. Saldaña quoted MacQueen, McLellan-Lemal, Bartholow, and Milstein (2008)

regarding structural coding stating, "Structural coding applies a content-based or

conceptual phrase representing a topic of inquiry to a segment of data that relates to a

specific research question used to frame the interview" (p. 124). I determined my codes

from the wording of my research questions. I printed the interview transcripts and wrote

the codes on the paper. I then created a table, inserted the codes across the top, and filled

in the boxes with data. I present an excerpt from that table in Appendix C. Then, I

determined the patterns presented in Figure 3.1 and present my thematic analysis in

Chapter 4.

Vanessa Kennedy, an external reviewer (Patton, 2015), and I examined,

discussed, and edited each of the emergent themes regarding my codebook. Vanessa is an

EGMT in Michigan with eight years of music education experience has completed three

GIML PDLCs including Early Childhood Levels 1 and 2 and Elementary General Music

Level 1 and a MME degree.

Being a GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT, I have personal interpretations and implementations of music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013). I interpreted all data with that informed perspective. My external reviewer was also a GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT and reviewed my data interpretation with a similarly informed perspective.

Credibility

I collected multiple forms of data through a researcher-designed questionnaire, researcher-designed interview questions, video-recordings of the interviews, transcripts of video-recordings, researcher interview notes, researcher written reflections, participant feedback regarding transcripts and findings, researcher observations of participant's music classes, and participant artifacts (Patton, 2015).
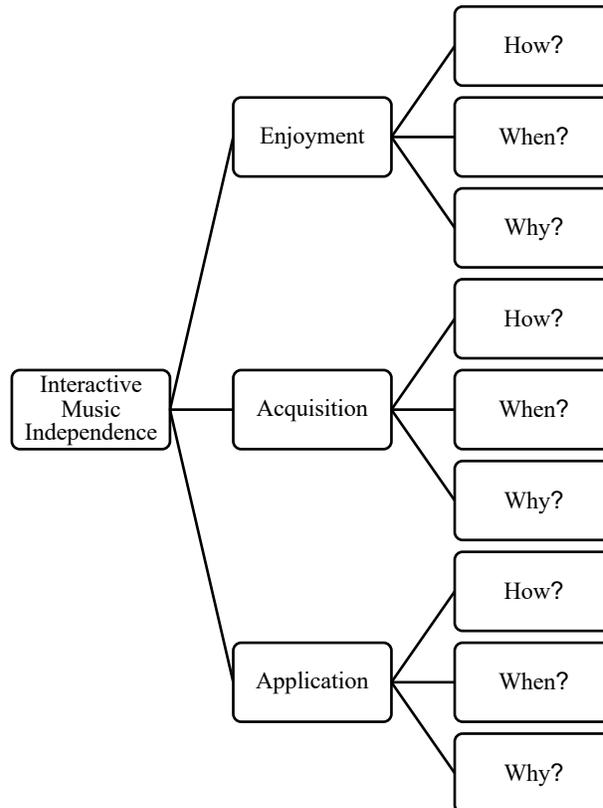
Figure 3.1 *Patterns*

The external reviewer, an expert secondary analyst, helped me refine my interpretations of the data. I sent my final interpretations of the findings to Monica to check for accurate representation. I incorporated Monica's responses to the findings before the final compilation of the findings (Patton, 2015).

Confidentiality

When asked if she preferred a pseudonym, Monica originally answered, "No." After further consideration, she decided she did, in fact, prefer a pseudonym. I collected and stored all video recordings in a password-protected Apple MacBook Air and a password-protected external hard drive. The external reviewer served as an additional analyst, thereby providing triangulating analysts to enhance trustworthiness of the case study (Patton, 2015).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Emergent Themes

Three themes emerged from my analysis. The interviews included discussions

regarding Monica's music learning theory education, interpretation, implementation,

deviation, and questions. Following are those themes and their detailed descriptions:

1. Monica enjoys learning and interactively leading students through music

   development to music independence.

2. Monica acquires personal music skills, music education skills, and knowledge to

   enhance pliable music interactions that lead her students to music development

   and music independence.

3. Monica applies music skills, music education skills, and knowledge of her

   students to lead pliable music interactions that lead her students to music

   development and music independence.

Theme One: Monica enjoys learning and interactively leading students through

music development to music independence.

Experiencing Joy

Monica answered each interview question with enthusiasm and care. Gordon's

(2012, 2013) music learning theory enlightened her to the possibilities of her own

musicianship. She described her experiences with music learning theory with fondness as

she explained she feels like "a plant sitting there in a pot with . . . tons of sunshine and

fertilizer . . . I just feel like I'm growing in lots of different ways . . . They're just always very fertile times." That describes many instances of Monica showing that she is continuing learning. Monica takes joy in continuing to develop her own musicianship through PDLCs and other music learning theory experiences.

Monica joyfully reminisced about the PDLCs in which she was a student. She shared a short anecdote regarding an experience in her Early Childhood Level 2 GIML PDLC.

> We would interact with other Level 2 people and just you know create things in partnership. You know . . . I always enjoyed that. I remember that pretty early on too with Level 2 Early Childhood. [We went] up to random Level 1 people and I and one of the other faculty members . . . were doing that together and we'd be like, 'Alright. Give us a tonality. Okay. Give us a meter. Alright.' And we would just improvise something for them . . . and make arrangements of our compositions and such.

Her early experiences with music learning theory helped unlock a "tool box" within her regarding her own musicianship. She realized she possessed more music potential than she previously believed. The experience she shared from her GIML Early Childhood Level 2 PDLC showed her exercising her own musicianship in ways that were challenging and fun for her.

Numerous times Monica mentioned that a task for or outcome from her students brings her joy, excitement, and fun. When she provides her students opportunities to create their own music, she finds it a fun experience to watch and listen to her students as

they create. She loves watching and listening to them as they use their audiation to determine what music they make sounds good to them.

Monica sees each student as capable musicians. She believes it is her job to put music inside of them that is valuable. Unleashing their potential and unlocking their own tool boxes is a challenge and a joy. She knows she cannot help students to fully realize their music potential; however, she helps them get as close as they can before moving on to the next school.

In a Blues unit, Monica acculturates her students to Blues scales by singing and playing recordings of Blues tunes while the students listen and move. After listening to several Blues tunes, her students perform a 12-bar Blues progression on pianos, ukuleles, and xylophones. She enjoys watching her students use their audiation to realize a chord they played does not fit into the progression yet pick right back up into the groove of the song with everyone else performing the correct chord. Monica expressed excitement about watching them use their audiation and grow in their music independence.

As her students compose their own music, Monica gets excited about hearing the music that comes out of her students as a result of their listening to and audiation of various musics. She views those performances as opportunities to learn how to understand her students and what other music to which she needs to acculturate her students: "So I think that's one thing that makes it super exciting is knowing . . . what to look for and how to look to see what's going on in [their audiation] . . . and what to put in there."

Thinking about new activities for her students excited Monica. As the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, Monica thought about ways to include students in person and online

simultaneously. She was excited to think about what kinds of musical instruments students may have in their homes that they could play in music classes.

Monica finds it joyful to move with her body and sing and believes her students share in that joy. Due to restrictions necessitated by COVID-19, Monica currently puts a higher emphasis on movement than she did in previous years. Students in school must stay in one classroom throughout the day and at desks and in chairs that may or may not be the appropriate size for their bodies. Her students need to move their bodies more. Even online, Monica noticed some students needed extra encouragement to stand up and move their bodies. Some students reluctantly participated; however, by the end of the activity or lesson, the students smiled and appeared excited to be moving.

Student Music Independence

Monica believes that music independence for her students is important. When asked how music learning theory influences her music teaching philosophy, she said the following: "The notion or the idea, the fact that everyone's musical to some degree. Just like intelligence, in that we, as music learning theory practitioners, have access to a lot of information to guide our decisions." She believes students are more capable than most persons believe they are. She views her task as an EGMT is to unleash their music potential to guide them to music independence. She performs activities that cause her students to think at deeper levels regarding music.

Improvisation allows students to exercise music independence as they perform music and engage in music dialogues. Monica equates improvisation to speaking a native language asking:

What use is that to get them for 5 . . . or 7 years . . . and then have them go off and

not be able to have a musical dialogue with somebody else where they can

express their own thoughts?

Improvisation can be an affirming activity not only for Monica but her students as

well. When her students hear the music they produce from within themselves, they get

excited. They begin to see how possible it is for them to be musicians. She believes that

is an empowering moment when they reflect on their music creations and recognize their

own music abilities and potential. Due to her normalizing improvisation, Monica's

younger students improvise openly and easily.

Monica challenges her students as they determine various aspects of music on

their own. For example, Monica may perform a song that her students have only heard in

major and change it to be in a minor tonality. She does not tell her students she made that

change. Her students may not have the vocabulary to say that the song was switched from

major tonality to minor tonality; however, they usually recognize that it sounds different.

Later on, Monica provides them with the terminology to be able to explain the

differences between the songs. She performs the same activity with rhythm chants,

performing duple rhythm chants in triple or vice versa.

When her students begin to learn how to read music notation, Monica does not

always provide them all the answers. She provides two familiar tonal patterns and makes

them figure out the third tonal pattern using their knowledge of the first two. For

instance, familiar tonal patterns may contain pitches associated with the tonal solfege

"Do Mi Do" and "Re Ti Re." The students then have to determine how to read a pattern

that contains pitches associated with the tonal solfege "Mi Re Do." That process provides

her students a challenge that leads to music independence as they individually decipher how to read music notation.

Monica's students range in age from preschool to 5th grade. The music teacher at the 6th grade school informed Monica that her students are distinctive. Once they enter 6th grade, the students that attended Monica's school sing easily, have a broader singing vocabulary, and improvise comfortably compared to students who learned from other teachers.

Theme Two: Monica acquires personal music skills, music education skills, and knowledge to enhance pliable music interactions that lead her students to music development and music independence.

Monica attained a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Massachusetts – Lowell and a Master of Music degree from Temple University. During her undergraduate experience, she participated in an elementary music methods course. Within that course, she stated that she received an introduction to Kodály, a tiny bit of Dalcroze, and perhaps read one paragraph about Gordon's music learning theory. Her professor approached the class mostly from an Orff perspective.

When she attended a workshop presented by Gordon while working on her undergraduate degree, Monica remembered thinking that the content of his session "just made sense and clicked." Therefore, she attended workshops and attained certificates in GIML Early Childhood Music Levels 1 and 2 and GIML Elementary General Music Levels 1 and 2. Additionally, Monica holds a faculty position with GIML at the Early Childhood and Elementary levels which required extra training in music learning theory and its applications. Monica also attained certificates for Kodály Levels 1 and 2. Each of

those academic opportunities allowed her to acquire music and music education skills and knowledge that enhance her guidance of her students' music development and music independence.

During her first GIML PDLC in 1996, Monica recounted memories of having extra time for audiating on her drives to and from classes. The time for audiation provided her composition of various tunes. In one of her Level 2 GIML PDLCs, she recounted memories of making and creating music with fellow students in the course. They improvised and arranged compositions together. Those experiences allowed her opportunities to acquire music skills for herself.

Monica also studied with Phyllis Weikart (http://faculty-history.dc.umich.edu/faculty/phyllis-s-weikart/memoir) for two weeks during the same summer she attended her first GIML PDLC. According to Monica, Weikart's research provides information regarding development of beat competency, the ability to time one's movements to macrobeats and microbeats (Weikart, 1998). Weikart provided a sequence of movement that Monica compared to the structure of Gordon's music skill learning sequence stating, "Their work provides the sequencing of if a student can't do this, what is missing? What is the readiness that's missing?" Gordon (2012, 2013) emphasized the importance of movement to assist in rhythm skill development. Monica does not view Weikart's influences as deviation from her music learning theory application. Rather, Weikart's influences inform Monica about what movements her students may need to help them better understand movement and music and the potential connections between the two.

Monica remarked that attending GIML PDLCs gave her "a lot more direction and experience with . . . the LSAs." She also discussed that she continues to use many tunes she composed during her PDLCs. Monica continues to compose her own tunes in different tonalities and meters to guide her students to greater music development and music independence.

Gordon's (1979, 1982, 1989) music aptitude tests allow Monica to collect information about her students' music potential. Monica administers to her students Gordon's tonal and rhythm aptitude tests and uses the results to determine how she can best help each student individually, tonally and rhythmically.

Monica believes her students share valuable information about their music learning when they improvise. While improvising, Monica determines what music her students learned and what they still need to learn. Having her students improvise allows her to "find out really what has stuck inside of them." Based on their improvisations, she determines what next step they need to continue developing music independence.

"Kids have changed . . . I mean there are certain things that are the same. But there's certain things that are very, very different about today's kids than there were 20 years ago." By that statement, Monica showed that she observes and reflects on her students' behaviors. During her 28 years of music teaching, she acquires knowledge about not only her students' music skills but also their behaviors. She noted that children's "mastery over their bodies is decreased quite a bit."

Additionally, Monica mentioned numerous times that she is still learning about the best way to guide her students in attaining music independence. She is still learning about the best way to help her students learn how to read music notation. Because of her

district's goals, she introduces reading music notation sooner than she prefers (more detail on that process in the discussion for Theme 3). Regarding the sequencing of tonal LSAs, Monica sequences them based on the needs of her students which varies year to year. She experiments with different techniques to determine what is effective for each group of students.

Theme Three: Monica applies music skills, music education skills, and knowledge of her students to lead pliable music interactions that lead her students to music development and music independence.

Audiation

When asked how she defines audiation, Monica quickly and briefly answered, "thinking music." She often reminds students, "We're not just hearing the music in our head, but we're thinking it. It's more active." Monica models audiation for her students by showing them an audiation sign. The audiation sign involves pointing to her head with a finger from one hand while putting a finger from her other hand in front of her mouth as if saying "shh." That sign is a visual reminder to not vocalize music.

Monica encourages music independence by allowing time for students to think music by including purposeful silences similar to those described by Hicks (1993), Reynolds (1995), Valerio & Reynolds (2009), and Reardon (2015). After Monica sings a tune a few times, she leaves out sections of the tune to allow her students to practice thinking the music. For the same reason, she includes purposeful silences after an activity to allow the music to settle in their audiation. Monica also eliminates the resting tone of a familiar song. Additionally, she increases anticipation by waiting to sing the resting tone or by withholding it momentarily. By including those purposeful silences, students

progressively develop music independence by using their audiation to think music within those purposeful silences (Hicks, 1993; Hornbach, 2005; Reardon, 2015; Reynolds, 1995; Valerio & Reynolds, 2009).

Another audiation activity includes comparing tonal patterns or rhythm patterns. Monica sings or chants one tonal or rhythm pattern, pauses, and sings or chants another tonal or rhythm pattern. She allows her students to think for a moment before deciding if the patterns were the same or different. Regarding that activity, Monica said, "We're needing to audiate in the middle to compare those things." Students think the patterns and make decisions and share their answers with her regarding the sameness or difference of the two patterns.

While I provided specific examples of techniques Monica uses to begin promoting audiation, it is important to remember that each music skill and activity Monica uses involves audiation. Students audiate to determine differences between musics, to improvise and compose, and to make inferences regarding music elements. When students perform on instruments, the music does not come from the instruments. "The instrument is an extension of their audiation," as Monica told me. The music comes from within the student and out through the instrument, thus continuing the process of music independence through audiation.

Variety of Tonalities and Meters

When asked in what ways she acculturates her students to a variety of tonalities and meters, Monica responded that she composed a hello song in 5, or unusual paired meter, to use Gordon's (2012, 2013) term. She uses that song to welcome her students to music class and to get them moving. She also utilizes various tonalities and meters in her

41

classroom management songs. Monica specifically composed a song in minor that instructs students to get into a circle. Her students begin hearing that song in September in order to help them not associate minor tonality with only Halloween and Hanukkah. Monica also includes songs from different cultures to acculturate students to different tonalities and meters.

To acculturate students to new meters, Monica performs songs in tonalities that are familiar to her students while they listen and move. To acculturate students to new tonalities, Monica performs tunes in meters that are familiar to her students while they listen and move. Monica said that it may not be necessary to use a familiar tonality to introduce a new meter; however, it may help the students have something to grab onto, something familiar with the unfamiliar.

In class activities, Monica sometimes changes tunes. If she originally performed a tune in major tonality, she may change the tune and perform it in minor tonality, or vice versa. She performs similarly to provide rhythm challenges as well, changing the meter of a familiar rhythm chant. Her students do not always possess the vocabulary to describe why the tune or chant sounds different. Monica observes their responses during that process. She wants to see if they recognize the tune or chant is different. If they do recognize the tune or chant is different, she notices the students show confusion in their facial expressions. They begin to distinguish sounds which leads to music independence.

Aptitude Tests and Their Results

Each fall (except fall 2020, due to COVID-19 restrictions), Monica administers Gordon's tonal and rhythm aptitude tests (Gordon, 1979, 1982, 1989). Monica collects information to obtain awareness of which tonal and rhythm patterns students may learn

most easily. She marks in her gradebook students' aptitudes for each element. If she noticed a student who tested as having high aptitude is not singing, she believes it may not be an issue of hearing and comprehending, but perhaps an issue of connecting the action of singing with the comprehension of music. Also regarding students who test with high music aptitude, if the student performs but not on a high level, she encourages the student to put forth more effort, acknowledging that a student's lack of high performance "sometimes . . . is an issue of effort."

Monica uses the collected information from the aptitude tests to determine student seating. She places students that test with high aptitude next to students that test with a lower aptitude. Regarding that decision, she said the following:

> If we have a performance coming up and I have a high aptitude kid and a kid that tested with low aptitude, I might pair them if they're going to play a part and not put two kids that tested with low aptitude on a rhythm part that's going to . . . either sink or swim us.

Monica does not allow the results of the tests to change her belief that each person is musical. Moreover, she does not share the results of the tests with the students or the students' parents. Regarding the test results, Monica stated, "[They are] really just for me to know." If students ask about their results, she responds by asking them which element, tonal or rhythm, they think is their strength. She either confirms or corrects their answer, saying which element is their strength, without sharing specific test results.

Music Skill Learning Sequence

Monica adheres to Gordon's (2012) music skill learning sequence as provided in Chapter 1, leading her students from one level to the next as they demonstrate proficiency

with each skill. Gordon allowed for bridging between discrimination and inference learning. For example, after students hear and perform patterns at the aural/oral and verbal association levels separately (discrimination), the teacher and students may bridge over to generalization (inference) before proceeding to the next level in discrimination. Monica bridges between discrimination and inference learning as she deems appropriate for her students' development toward music independence.

Monica's students sing in a variety of tonalities beginning in Kindergarten. Monica establishes tonal context by singing a tune in her desired tonality. Initially, students imitate tonal patterns on neutral syllables in major and minor tonalities as a group and then individually. They also sing resting tones of tunes on neutral syllables in major and minor tonalities. When Monica notices her students confidently imitate tonal patterns and resting tones, they create tonal patterns without solfege. Monica considers that activity creating as the students do not have parameters but she expects students to be in the same tonality and keyality in which she provided a context. Monica also displays standard music notation of patterns she performs to simply let the students be aware and become familiar with the concept of music notation. Monica's students begin singing bass line accompaniments on neutral syllables.

Monica's students learn solfege syllables by imitating patterns as a group and then individually. After becoming fluent with solfege syllables, they label pitches with solfege after Monica sings patterns on neutral syllables. They begin singing bass line accompaniments using solfege. Around the same time, they also begin to identify tonic and dominant tonal patterns in major and minor tonalities using solfege. That allows for the students to begin improvising. Monica gives them parameters regarding tonic and

dominant functions. As they develop familiarity and fluency with the tonal elements, Monica's students begin to identify major and minor tonalities when given a series of patterns on neutral syllables. They also develop an increasing understanding of standard music notation and its representations. Monica's students begin reading, writing, and composing tonic and melodic patterns using standard music notation as their fluency in major and minor tonal patterns increases.

In conjunction with those processes described above regarding major and minor tonalities, Monica includes class activities that allow her students to absorb additional tonalities. Monica provides activities that involve her students moving while they listen to her perform tunes in other tonalities. When they hear enough repetitions of a tune, they sing the tune. As they develop understanding of various tonalities, they begin to differentiate between tonalities.

The procedures described above help Monica's students develop tonal music independence. They learn to sing independently, create their own tonal music, discriminate between tonal patterns, differentiate between various tonalities, improvise tonally, and compose their own tunes. She follows similar procedures for rhythm development as described for tonal development.

Learning Sequence Activities (LSAs)

Monica performs the tonal LSAs but not the rhythm LSAs. Her students need the structure and consistency the tonal LSAs provide. She noted that she can perform the tonal LSAs quicker than the rhythm LSAs. The rhythm LSAs require a consistent tempo. If the tempo is too fast or inconsistent, the students may not learn the rhythm patterns. In tonal LSAs, the teacher performs the patterns without meter. The teacher performs the

patterns as quickly (or slowly) as he or she prefers. Therefore, Monica finds that the rhythm LSAs take too much class time for her and her students to complete.

By observing her students and subsequently deciding their next steps, Monica found that performing rhythm LSAs was not the most valuable use of her and her students' time. She believes that her students more easily attain rhythm skills than they do tonal skills. Monica follows Gordon's (2012) skill learning sequence as she performs rhythm skill learning activities outside rhythm LSAs. Regarding that decision, Monica disclosed, "I think my kids . . . get on board rhythmically where . . . they're able to improvise and have a dialogue even though we don't do the rhythm LSAs." Her students still attain Monica's desired level of music independence without performing rhythm LSAs.

Following I describe an example of a tonal LSA. Monica establishes a D major tonal context by singing the following tonal sequence on a neutral syllable without a specified rhythm: . Monica sings individual D major tonic and dominant tonal patterns for the class to repeat. She gestures to the class in order to make it clear to them that the entire class repeats the pattern. Monica then sings a pattern and gestures to one student to indicate for that student to repeat the pattern back independently. Gordon (1990) labeled patterns as easy, medium, and difficult. The results of the aptitude test determine which pattern provides an appropriate challenge for the student. Monica presents the easy pattern to everyone regardless of their aptitude test results. When the student accurately sings the easy pattern, she presents the medium pattern. When the student accurately sings the medium pattern, she presents the difficult

pattern. After each student individually performs tonal patterns, Monica transitions out of the LSA into the next class activity.

Regarding sequencing of tonal LSAs, Monica observes her students and determines what sequencing they need. She follows Gordon's sequence as long as it works for her students. Other colleagues' sequencing of the LSAs also influences Monica's sequencing.

Because she is a GIML faculty member, Monica believes it is important for her to continue performing LSAs. She knows she teaches other music teachers how to perform the LSAs and wants to thoroughly help them. If she herself does not perform any LSAs, she loses credibility from her students in the PDLCs. She also loses practice performing them which would make it more difficult to teach them. She continues to perform them not only for her elementary students' benefit, for her PDLC students' music education independence.

Transition Between LSAs and Subsequent Class Activities

One question I had after taking my first GIML PDLC pertained to transitions between class activities. How do I perform LSAs and smoothly transition to different activities? That topic arose organically in my interview with Monica. After tonal LSAs at the beginning of class, Monica leads her students through tonal and rhythmic activities that challenge them to develop music independence. The first activity generally pertains to the skill practiced in the LSAs for that class period. Rhythmically, Monica leads her students in rhythm activities at the appropriate level of the skill learning sequence each group requires.

One example of a transitionary class activity involves a resting tone activity. If the LSA for that lesson requires students to sing the resting tone of the tonality and keyality regardless of what the teacher sings, Monica provides an activity that reinforces that skill. She instructs the students to form a circle. Monica sings a song in the same tonality as that lesson's LSA and safely tosses a ball to students. Each time a student catches the ball, Monica pauses the song and the student independently sings the resting tone.

Improvisation, Creativity, and Exploration

Monica heavily emphasizes music improvisation in her teaching practice, enthusiastically stating, "Improvisation's huge! It's not just a little thing! Like you can't say you understand music learning theory if you're going to say that improvisation is a 'little thing.' It's huge!" Improvisation allows her to determine what music her students absorbed by hearing what music they produce. In order to determine what her students need from her musically, she listens to the music they improvise. Monica was glad she found ways to continue including a high amount of improvisation during online learning that occurred due to COVID-19.

Monica, similar to Gordon (2012), made distinctions between improvisation, creating, and exploration. Exploration occurs when students sing or chant without any music parameters. Vocally or with an instrument, students perform any music they choose. Monica's students sometimes compose through exploration. They may vocally or with an instrument explore different pitches and rhythms and decide they like what they produced and replicate those sounds.

Regarding creativity, Monica establishes a tonal and rhythmic context and instructs her students to perform and hopes they stay within the established context. The

students may not fully understand that Monica set them up in a specific context or even stay within that context. They produce whatever music they decide.

Regarding improvisation, Monica establishes tonal and rhythmic context and provides her students with parameters within which to make music. The parameters may include specifications for chord structure, which pitches or rhythms to use, or other skills Monica decides her students need to demonstrate to best display and develop their music independence.

Monica finds improvisation to be valuable for student reflection and gaining confidence and independence. Regarding improvisation, Monica believes, "It's their own experimenting with what they know that allows them to have to dig a bit deeper." Students learn what they know. When they perform music they create, they gain confidence and music independence. Monica thinks students feel empowered when they reflect on the music they performed, especially when they like the music they performed. The teacher at the 6th grade school that many of Monica's students attend after her elementary school tells Monica that Monica's students improvise comfortably. That speaks to the frequency and fluency with which Monica includes improvisation activities in her classes.

Improvisation begins in Monica's classroom with her youngest students. It is the best way Monica gauges on what level her students are. She likes "to see where they're at a lot" and needs to "find out where they are before I can know where to go." Monica sets up a context for the students and asks them if they have any patterns for the class to copy. Practicing improvisation skills at a young age helps establish that activity as a regular

activity. Therefore, her students learn that Monica expects them to contribute musically and create which makes units such as the Blues unit not as scary.

Since Monica shared the most detail about her Blues unit compared to other units and activities, I will use her Blues unit as the basis of discussion regarding specific examples of improvising and composing in her classroom. Monica executes her Blues unit with her oldest students. She performs many Blues tunes to allow her students to absorb the style and sounds of the Blues genre. Monica provides movement activities to accompany the tunes. The students also sing many Blues tunes after they listen to the tunes numerous times.

Before performing bass lines on instruments, Monica's students sing the bass lines. Monica also allows the students to explore on instruments such as xylophones, pianos, and ukuleles. For xylophones, Monica prepares the instruments with only bars of the Blues scale to ensure that whatever pitches the students play fit within the Blues scale. For pianos and ukuleles, students play chords. Students perform Blues tunes they already know on the instruments.

Monica also performs a call and response Blues tune with her students. Monica expects her students to audiate their own music within the response section. Later, students fill in that response section by performing their own music. As students become increasingly comfortable with the Blues style, they compose a couple Blues tunes as a class. They compose words and music. Students also compose a Blues tune individually including words and music. Often they compose their words first and then music; however, some students compose both simultaneously. Monica asks the students

questions about their compositions to guide them to create a composition that makes sense in the Blues context.

Symbolic Association

As Monica notices her students approaching the Symbolic Association skill level, the LSAs work for her students "up to a certain level." Monica's students learn to read and write music notation sooner than they get to symbolic association in the LSAs due to her district's expectations. She does not like that. She prefers for her students to have a wider vocabulary of tonal and rhythm patterns before expecting them to read music notation. Some examples of how she introduces reading and writing music notation are in the discussion that follows.

In Monica's classroom, reading and writing music comes after improvisation which coincides with Gordon's (2013) skill learning sequence. Monica stated, "If they're able to improvise then I know that they're ready to read and write." Monica introduces the concept of music notation with her kindergarten students. At that point, she does not expect her students to read music notation, but rather to simply be aware of its existence. She shows her students flash cards with patterns printed on them. Monica reads the printed patterns aloud and expects her students to repeat what she sang or chanted.

As the students approach writing music notation, Monica introduces her students to the hand staff for tonal notation. She holds up one hand sideways with her palm facing her students and her fingers separated, representing a musical staff. She sings a tonal pattern as she points out each pitch on her hand with one finger from her other hand. Additionally, Monica listens to patterns her students individually sing and shows them

what those patterns look like. Sometimes they figure out how to write the students' patterns. Sometimes they do not figure out how to write the students' patterns.

Regarding rhythmic music notation, Monica begins with her 2nd grade students. Monica hears students' improvisations and writes them on a board. She shows them what their improvisations look like. As another example, Monica writes a series of rhythm patterns on a board labeling them with numbers. She chants one pattern and asks them to show with their fingers if it was rhythm pattern 1, 2, 3, or 4. She checks for student understanding by observing how many fingers they hold up.

When students begin learning how to play recorder in 4th grade, they use *Jump Right In: The Instrumental Series Soprano Recorder* (Grunow, Gordon, Azzara, 1999). The book contains patterns the students read and perform. Monica shared that she does not give her students all the answers regarding how to read each pattern. As the students become familiar with patterns such as "Do Mi Do" and "Re Ti Re," she forces them to decipher how to read "Mi Re Do."

Monica remains passionate about never taking tonal elements out of context. Monica does not speak or write solfege names. In front of her students, she always sings tonal solfege and chants rhythm solfege. She keeps tonal solfege associated with pitches and rhythm solfege associated with beats. She models that practice for her students hoping they will do the same. Her students still separate the elements from the solfege. She does not understand why, though she speculated that perhaps they feel social pressure from their peers. They may believe that singing everything is not cool. Regarding that practice with her students Monica recalled, "I really have to keep

reminding them, like, 'Oh I'm sorry but my clarinet can't play "Do [spoken]." It can play

Movement

Gordon (2012, 2013) believed that persons best achieve rhythm development by moving their bodies as they make music. Gordon utilized Rudolf von Laban's (1971) dance elements of flow, weight, space, and time in encouraging students to move continuously through music listening and performance. Each dance element contains its own contrasting set of elements as follows: flow – free vs. bound; weight – heavy vs. light; space – open vs. closed; and time – slow vs. fast.

Monica introduces the above terms to her youngest students. The students listen to "Carnival of the Animals" by Camille Saint-Saens and pretend to be animals. As they listen, they determine how they need to move. The visualization and imagination of animals help the students to relate to the movement elements. Additionally, when acculturating her students to new music, whether tonal or rhythmic, Monica instructs her students to move their bodies using specific elements that make sense with the music. She asks them questions about how their bodies are moving using Laban's (1971) terms discussed above.

Gordon (2012) also discussed instructing students to pulsate beats with their hands as they move with continuous fluid movement and say "tuh" with each pulsation. Monica includes that exercise. She also modifies that exercise to suit her students' needs. If the students walk around for an activity, Monica instructs the students to say "tip toe" as they step to the beat of the music.

As discussed previously, Monica also studied with Phyllis Weikart for two weeks during the same summer she attended her first GIML PDLC. According to Monica, Weikart conducted research around how beat competency affects executive functioning. A few things Monica learned from Weikart and continues to use include: (a) simplify tasks, (b) deliver instructions in the most efficient manner, and (c) instruct students to say their movements as they perform their movements.

Regarding efficient instruction delivery, Monica discussed that saying and modeling instructions at the same time may be overwhelming for students. Students who learn aurally may be distracted by watching her movements as she says them. Students who learn visually may be distracted by listening to her instructions as she demonstrates movement. Monica delivers verbal instruction then demonstrates the movement.

When Monica leads students through movement activities that require specific movements, she expects her students to verbally repeat the movements after she tells them the movements. Monica described an example:

> I'll say, "Listen to my movements and imagine . . . what that's going to look like . . . Forward two three four, backward two three four, in two three four, out two three four. Now you say that." And they say it without moving.

If Monica believes her students are ready to perform the movements after vocalizing the movements, that is their next step. If Monica believes the students are not ready to perform the movements after vocalizing the movements, she instructs the students to point in the direction of the movements before standing and performing the movements.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Overview of the Study

Purpose and Guiding Research Questions

With the intent of understanding one music teacher's uses of and experiences with Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theory, the purpose of this case study was to interview one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT about her study, interpretation, and implementation of Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theory in her teaching practice. The case study was guided by the following questions:

1. Why and how has one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT studied, interpreted, and implemented music learning theory in her music teaching practice?

2. Why and how has one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT questioned and/or deviated from music learning theory in her music teaching practice?

Method

For this qualitative case study, I utilized purposeful, principles-focused sampling to choose Monica Dawkins as the participant. I conducted three interviews with Monica as the main sources of data collection. Other data sources include:

- a Google Form questionnaire,

- Monica's "Copy of Overview by Grade Level K-5,"

- Monica's typed answers to my typed questions in a Google Doc,

- researcher's written reflections,

- researcher's voice memos,

- three class observations, and

- interview transcripts.

Findings

Patterns and Themes

I utilized structural coding as described by Saldaña (2009) to organize the data. After coding the data, I organized the codes into patterns (Patton, 2015). Those patterns related to Monica's acquisition and application of music skills, music education skills, and knowledge of her students. The following themes emerged from my analysis of those codes and patterns:

1. Monica enjoys learning and interactively leading students through music development to music independence.

2. Monica acquires personal music skills, music education skills, and knowledge to enhance pliable music interactions that lead her students to music development and music independence.

3. Monica applies music skills, music education skills, and knowledge of her students to lead pliable music interactions that lead her students to music development and music independence.

Monica experiences joy and excitement as she continues to learn about and lead her students in interactive music making activities. She continues to attend professional development workshops to enhance her music education skills. Observing her students as they interact musically excites Monica. She finds joy in watching her students gain music independence as evidenced by their responses to their own music performances.

Monica attained bachelor's and master's degrees in music education. She attended

numerous professional development courses related to Kodály

(https://www.oake.org/about-us/the-kodaly-concept/), Gordon's (2012, 2013) music

learning theory, and Weikart (http://faculty-history.dc.umich.edu/faculty/phyllis-s-

weikart/memoir). Monica remains pliable in her music and music education knowledge.

She learns from her students what they need from her. She utilizes improvisation

activities to determine what music her students know and applies the knowledge she

learned from them regarding future lessons.

Monica's goal is to guide her students' music development to lead to music

independence. She applies her vast knowledge regarding music skills, music education

skills, and her students to further her students' music development. Gordon's (2012,

2013) music learning theory influences Monica the most in her guidance of her students'

music development. Monica also utilizes her interpretations of some of Weikart's

research to inform her practices regarding movement and how movement and music

relate. Monica guides her students through activities such as creativity and improvisation

to help her students further their music development to music independence.

Summary of Findings as They Relate to the Research Questions

1. Why and how has one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT studied, interpreted, and

    implemented music learning theory in her music teaching practice?

To answer why she is influenced by Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning

theory, Monica stated, "I feel like nothing really gets into what the kids are doing and

processing and draws that out more than music learning theory." Monica believes that

music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) helps her and her students learn valuable music skills that lead to music independence.

2. Why and how has one GIML PDLC-experienced EGMT questioned and/or deviated from music learning theory in her music teaching practice?

In my interviews with Monica, the closest she came to admitting deviations from music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) was when she talked about Phyllis Weikart; however, Weikart's influences may not be considered a deviation. Monica blends her interpretations of Weikart's research in conjunction with Gordon's (2012, 2013) music learning theory to aid in her students' music development.

Much of what Monica discussed was music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) influences. If she is influenced by other methods or approaches, Monica did not mention them. It is possible that she may not have mentioned any other influences because she thought I wanted to only hear about music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013), though I let her know that I wanted to hear about deviations as well.

Regarding other influences after reading my compilation of the findings, Monica stated in an email, "I remember there being a shift in the conversation when I began thinking, 'that could be considered [a music learning theory] influence' even though it may have originally stemmed from another." Monica realized that some of her music education techniques may have begun as influences from other methods or persons and then transformed into ideas that fit into music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) or became filtered through a music learning theory lens.

Implications of the Findings

Implications for Future Research

The findings of this case study are not generalizable (Patton, 2015). I interviewed one EGMT regarding her personal experiences with music education and music learning theory; however, there are many EGMTs who use music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) to inform their music education practices. Examples include: Jennifer Bailey (https://singtokids.com/), Natasha Sigmund (https://natashasigmund.blogspot.com/, https://www.youtube.com/user/natashasigmund73), Anna Preston (https://hfsfriends.org/special-subject-areas/), Kimberly Kane and Jennifer Cerne, (https://www.youtube.com/channel/Ucln4TSQFsmWilziJl_QJCGA), and Amy Sierzega (http://www.singplayaudiate.com/). Future researchers may wish to investigate multiple EGMTs' music education and music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) experiences.

As I began my case study, I looked for other studies that investigated EGMTs implementations of elementary general music methods. I found few studies related to that topic. Studies, such as those performed by Arrasmith (2018), Caswell (2020), Hornbach (2005), McNair (2010), and Reardon (2015), provide examples of activities and implementations of Gordon's (2013) music learning theory for newborn and young children. Reese (2006) interviewed three EGMTs regarding their definitions of improvisation. Few studies have been performed regarding the implementation of Gordon's (2012) music learning theory beyond the early childhood age level.

More research regarding implementation of elementary general music education techniques influenced by music learning theory (Gordon, 2012, 2013) may enlighten us EGMTs to the thoroughness of Gordon's (2012) music skill learning sequence. Future

research may include addressing how music learning theory-influenced EGMTs lead their students in specific elements of the music skill learning sequence. What techniques do those EGMTs find valuable as they lead their students to achieve specific music skills as outlined in Gordon's (2012) music skill learning sequence?

Additional research regarding other EGMTs' music education approaches such as Orff, Kodály, and Dalcroze would contribute greatly to the lack of existing research regarding implementation of elementary general music education techniques. The Alliance for Active Music Making established a website (https://www.allianceamm.org/) to "promote active music making approaches in general music education." The Alliance encourages EGMTs to learn about different elementary music education approaches in order for them to include the most effective implementation strategies in their own practices.

Implications for Elementary General Music Teachers

Patton (2015) explained, "an extrapolation clearly connotes that one has gone beyond the narrow confines of the data to think about other applications of the findings" (p. 713). In this section, I provide extrapolations to discuss possible applications of this case study's findings for elementary general music teachers.

As I examined Monica's story and the techniques and strategies she implements in her elementary music classroom, I learned that EGMTs may wish to frame their own music teaching practice toward the goal of their students' music independence. We EGMTs may ask ourselves and others, "What methods and techniques most effectively assist students in their music development to music independence?" Monica utilizes sequential music exploration, creativity, and improvisation to help her students develop

music independence. Her younger students engage in tonal pattern and rhythm pattern creation and dialogues; her older students synthesize those skills and knowledge to engage in melodic dialogues and compose their own tunes. Such music fluency and music literacy allow Monica's students to exercise and enjoy music independence.

We EGMTs may consider attending professional development courses, workshops, and conferences to further our understanding of the applications and implementations of various music education techniques. Monica chose to obtain much knowledge and many skills by attending professional development courses and workshops. Her students, as a result of her learned music skills and music education skills, demonstrate their knowledge and skills that lead to music independence.

We may also consider learning from our students. Monica believes that her students provide immense, valuable feedback regarding her instruction and implementation of music education techniques. If students demonstrate skills and knowledge unanticipated by the EGMT, the EGMT should examine their own implementation of techniques to determine why students demonstrated unanticipated skills or knowledge. Sometimes students' understanding or misunderstanding of a concept or skill results from a teacher's inaccurate instruction or misrepresentation of a concept or skill.

Monica's music education techniques align closely with Vygotsky's (1978) theory (Berk & Winsler, 1995) regarding how children learn. Vygotsky believed that adults guide children in their learning. Adults provide scaffolding which allow the children to construct knowledge. Monica provides her students with music skills that allow them to construct music knowledge.

Vygotsky (1978) also believed that children accomplish certain tasks on their own, but accomplish more difficult tasks with others' assistance (Berk & Winsler, 1995). Teachers should assess their students individually and in a group to determine the extent of their capabilities. Monica accomplishes that task when she provides her students opportunities to compose on their own and to compose with others. As EGMTs, we can exercise our knowledge of Vygotsky's theories in a music context.

Implications for Elementary General Music Teachers in South Carolina

While Monica teaches in Massachusetts, Monica demonstrates numerous traits consistent with the South Carolina Teaching Standards (SCTS) 4.0 rubric (https://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/File/educators/teacher-evaluations/SC%204_0%20Rubric%20Printable%20FINAL.pdf). Monica requires her students to be creative and encourages their curiosity and exploration (SCTS 4.0, p.1). Her activities elicit a variety of thinking and provide time for student reflection (SCTS 4.0, p. 2). She asks her students purposeful and coherent questions (SCTS 4.0, p. 3). She consistently uses feedback from her students to monitor and adjust instruction (SCTS 4.0, p. 3). Monica exhibits teaching strategies that EGMTs from other states may utilize to address their state's teaching standards.

Monica's students also meet standards listed in the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for General Music Proficiency (https://ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards-learning/visual-and-performing-arts/standards/general-music-design-and-media-arts-standards/). They arrange and compose music (Anchor Standard 1). They improvise music (Anchor Standard 2). They sing alone and with others (Anchor Standard 3). They play instruments alone and with

others (Anchor Standard 4). They read and notate music (Anchor Standard 5). They analyze music (Anchor Standard 6). They evaluate music (Anchor Standard 7). They examine music from a variety of stylistic and historical periods and cultures (Anchor Standard 8). Monica's techniques can be used by EGMTs in other states to assist their students in meeting their state's standards.

Implications for Me

Because I started this case study with my personal story, I end this case study with implications for myself. As I listened to Monica and analyzed the data, I began questioning, "What is music independence? Why is music independence important? And how do I help my students achieve that?" I agree with Monica that every person has music potential. Not everyone realizes their music potential. Monica values her students' music performances. She provides activities for them to perform and showcase their music creations. They demonstrate their music independence in those activities.

Regardless of the age groups I teach, fostering music independence in my students may show them that they do not need to be dependent on others to make music. They may be free to make their own music in every context of their lives throughout childhood and adolescence into adulthood. They may also be free to make music with others throughout their lives. Gordon's (2012) music skill learning sequence provides a framework within which to help students develop music skills that assist in making music with others.

Monica's story inspires me to be a continuous, lifelong learner. Monica continues to attend professional development workshops and conferences. When I graduate and obtain my degrees, my learning is not complete. Learning is a skill I would like to

continue exercising. My degrees, as valuable as I believe they are, did not help me learn everything there is to learn about music education. They have limits. Participating in professional development courses, workshops, and conferences will help me remain pliable and continue to learn the best techniques to include in my music teaching practice.

Students also help us EGMTs learn. As mentioned previously, my degrees did not teach me everything I need to know regarding my teaching practice. I experience situations with my students that remind me I am still learning. I am still learning how to most effectively lead my students to music independence. My students inform me by their music performances when an activity is or is not effective in helping them learn music skills that lead to music independence. I believe it is my responsibility to learn from those experiences and adjust my teaching practices to most effectively lead my students to music independence.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT INVITATION LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF South Carolina

School of Music

October 1, 2020

Dear Heather:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in *One Elementary General Music Teacher's Music Education and Music Learning Theory Experiences: A Case Study*. In concluding this research study, I will complete partial fulfillment of my Master of Music Education degree at the University of South Carolina. With the intent of understanding one music teacher's uses of and experiences with Edwin Gordon's music learning theory, the purpose of this research is to interview and observe one elementary general music teacher who is experienced in music learning theory regarding her study, interpretation, and implementation of Gordon's music learning theory in her teaching practice. This study will inform other music educators about how you use music learning theory to inform your own teaching practice. I will interview and observe you, as an expert music teacher whose shared experiences may benefit others. (With this research, I am not studying students' music responses.)

Your participation in this study should take approximately a total of 3-3.5 hours. Please complete the short Google Form questionnaire located here by October 9, 2020. In the questionnaire you will be asked to provide demographic information and any video links to your teaching you are allowed to share. After you submit your Google Form questionnaire, I will contact you to schedule a time for the first interview to be conducted through Zoom. Following the first interview, I will transcribe the interview and email you the transcript for member checking. Then, we will schedule a follow-up interview and follow the same transcription process. Each interview will be approximately 45-50 minutes in length.

Prior to November 20, may I virtually observe one or two of your current music classes and collect field notes? I will email my field notes to you for member checking. Additionally, would it be possible for you to share a video-recording link of yourself teaching a current music class without me present? I will transcribe your role as music teacher within that recording and email that transcript to you for member checking.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you desire, the information gathered will be coded to ensure anonymity. You may decide to discontinue participation in this study at any time without prejudice. You also may decline to participate.

If you have any questions about this research, please email me or contact me at 803-341-2011. You may also contact Dr. Wendy Valerio, my thesis advisor, at 803-777-5382. The School of Music at the University of South Carolina is eager to ensure that all research participants are treated in a fair and respectful manner. If you have any concerns or questions about your treatment in this study, contact UofSC Office of Research 803-777-4456.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Allison Johnson, MME candidate
UofSC School of Music
aej1@email.sc.edu

Wendy H. Valerio, Ph.D.
Professor of Music
Director, Children's Music Development Center

GOOGLE FORM QUESTIONNAIRE

My Music Education and Music Learning Theory Experiences

A few short answer questions to help me prepare for the interviews. Thank you for your participation!

* Required

1. What is your name? *

2. What education and/or music degrees have you completed or have in progress? *

3. Where did you complete your degree(s)? If applicable, where do you have your degree(s) in progress? *

4. What other music teaching certifications or relevant trainings have you completed? *

5. Where do you currently teach music or music education courses? *

6. To what age groups do you currently teach music? *

7. Where have you previously taught music? *

_____

8. To what age groups have you previously taught music? *

_____

9. How long have you been teaching music? *

_____

10. When did you complete your first GIML Level? *

_____

11. How many GIML Levels have you completed? *

_____

12. Who were your GIML Level(s) teachers? *

_____

13. Are you willing to share any videos of you and your students during music classes? If so, please share links to those videos here.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. Is there anything else you want to share with me before we conduct an interview? *

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

EXCERPT FROM CODING TABLE

Table C.1 Excerpt From Coding Table

How studied	Why studied	How implement	Why question	How question	How interpret
Took PDLCs with him [Gordon] (p. 2, I1)	I was like, "this just clicks." It just made sense and clicked. (p. 4, I1)	I still use songs I composed during that course. (p. 6, I1)	I have questions um 'cause sometimes I see scores fluctuate so much and I'm like "really? Huh." (p. 18, I1)	I don't know if I would say he missed the mark on certain things as far as what I'm thinking is in the learning sequence activities for example like it's just I don't know how I could incorporate all of that and still do all the other stuff I like to do and that I think is valuable for them. (p. 20-21, I1)	It was just I had this like big new toolbox um like I guess I always had a toolbox I mean we all have one but it was bigger than I thought it was or I like unlocked a secret compartment in it just like found all this other great tools I could use. (pp. 6-7, I1)
Post-grad student (p.2, I1)	This clicked with my, just my, my own experience (p. 4, I1)	I...was a faculty member for Early Childhood (p. 8, I1)	Had a lot of questions 'cause I had a little bit of background (p. 6, I1)	I'm always experimenting to find out and it varies by group as well what's more effective with them (p. 25, I2)	because as we know [LSAs] can be sequenced a bazillion different ways (p/ 10, I1)

Why interpret	How deviate	Why deviate	Why implement	Other influences	Continued Learning
Like it's just- I- if- if our kids can't improvise then we might as well be saying that they can't speak their native language. Like what use is that to get 'em for 5 years or 7 years as the case may be for- for me, um, and then have them go off and not be able to have a musical dialogue with somebody else where they express their own thoughts. (p. 14, I1)	[she was talking about pre-covid times and remained in past tense here. In the next interview she elaborates on this] did rhythm sequencing activities kind of in my own way... influenced by how they would be but not the formal sit down. (p. 9, I1)	That's just really a choice I made because of, um, time that I have with the kids: once a week, 40-minute classes is most of my classes. (p. 9, I1)	[on incorporating a lot of improvisation] because I feel like that's when I find out really what has stuck inside of them (p. 10, I1)	In exploring, it's "here's this instrument and you ca- you know just explore. See what you come up with." Some kids may come up with something pretty tuneful or rhythmic. (p. 14, I2)	I'm still learning about [rhythm and tonal transfer] especially when I'm asking kids to improvise tonal patterns or create tonal patterns based on what they already know (p. 23, I2)
	Having [students], you know, get to creativity/improvisation way before I would get to them in the book. Um, especially at the aural/oral level. (p. 10, I1)	It does assist with audiation to have kids use their mouth a lot (p. 11, I1)	Independence is a big thing too. Like musical independence. (p. 16, I1)	I studied with Phyllis Weikart for two weeks. (p. 31, I2)	It's not ideal because they don't have as rich a speaking vocabulary with syllables in the tonal domain as they do in rhythm. (p. 25, I2)