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Journal of Education for Teaching
International research and pedagogy

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cjet20

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To cite this article: Luan Shaw (2023): Conservatoire students' perspectives on instrumental music teacher education: 'Developing Pedagogical Knowledge' (DPK) for the future music education workforce, Journal of Education for Teaching, DOI: 10.1080/02607476.2023.2228233

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2023.2228233

Published online: 25 Jun 2023.

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION FOR TEACHING
https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2023.2228233

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Conservatoire students' perspectives on instrumental music teacher education: 'Developing Pedagogical Knowledge' (DPK) for the future music education workforce

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ABSTRACT

Conservatoires train musicians to high levels of proficiency in performance and other 'principal study' disciplines, but often, teaching is perceived as a second-class profession, and little is known about how music students learn to facilitate music making in others. Yet, conservatoires have a responsibility to contribute to the development of the music education workforce. Building on Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge model (PCK), two new constructs are created from data gathered through textual narratives and semi-structured interviews from over 100 music undergraduates who reflect on their instrumental teacher education in a UK conservatoire. Transferable Content Knowledge (TCK) encapsulates the transferable skills that students develop in a conservatoire setting, enabling them to become confident communicators and collaborators. Values-Based Knowledge (VBK) nurtures a sense of social responsibility, raising students' awareness of the professional qualities and behaviours necessary to forge positive relationships and create stimulating learning environments. The emergent 'Developing Pedagogical Knowledge' (DPK) framework offers scope to explore the transition from student to teacher across other phases of education and in other disciplines.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 14 October 2022
Accepted 30 April 2023

KEYWORDS
conservatoire; instrumental teacher education; pedagogical content knowledge; Developing Pedagogical Knowledge

Introduction

Conservatoires train musicians to exceptionally high levels in 'principal study' disciplines including performance, but little research has been undertaken to ascertain how their students learn to facilitate music making in others, despite a recommendation over a decade ago that conservatoires should be contributing to 'a performance-led music education workforce of the future' (Henley 2011, 26). This is of concern, since music education in England finds itself in increasingly challenging times and growing numbers of schools are reducing or completely removing music from the curriculum. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) in 2011 is likely to have contributed to the continual decline of pupils studying arts subjects and sitting formal GCSE and A-level Music examinations in recent years (Burland 2020; Savage 2021). In the face of such

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deterioration, the receipt of and access to high-quality instrumental music tuition remains crucial for school-aged pupils, being one of the principal ways in which they are able to experience long-term music-making.

Instrumental teaching is often referred to as activity that forms part of a professional musician's portfolio career, and previous research has explored how music students learn to teach through experience, in informal contexts or via small-scale projects (Gonzalez 2012; Haddon 2009; Perkins, Aufegger, and Williamon 2015). However, research that leads to a greater understanding of how conservatoire students learn to teach through sustained undergraduate-level pedagogical training within internal and external Communities of Practice (Lave and Wenger 1991) remains scarce. Given the recent National Plan for Music Education in England (DDCMS 2022, 66) this is pertinent:

> To ensure they are best equipped to support children and young people, [. . .] teachers and practitioners should consider how they can build their skills and connect with each other, and the wider music education ecology.

Indeed, the Association of European Conservatoires (AEC 2010) challenges the notion (still present in some institutions) that 'teaching is something you do when you have failed as a performer' (7), claiming that conservatoires should 'help students integrate their musical and pedagogical knowledge, skills and understanding and develop what Shulman describes as pedagogical content knowledge' (14).

Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) model (Shulman 1986, 1987) combines Subject Content Knowledge/SCK (what content to teach) with General Pedagogic Knowledge/GPK (why, how and when to teach that content). Shulman claimed that the ability to pre-empt, reduce or eliminate misconceptions in learners is dependent on effective communication via 'the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations – in a word, the ways of representing and formulating the subject that makes it comprehensible to others' (Shulman 1986, 9). Other facets of Shulman's model include knowledge of teaching materials and resources necessary to formulate a curriculum; knowledge of how children develop with age, both socially and cognitively, and how to tailor learning to the needs of individuals or groups; knowledge of the contexts in which learning takes place, and finally, knowledge of the aims of learning, including the setting of short-medium and long-term goals for pupils. Indeed, in describing professional knowledge for classroom teaching, La Velle and Leask (2019) adapt Shulman's model to include 'Curriculum Knowledge', 'Knowledge of Learners and their Characteristics', 'Knowledge of Educational Contexts' and 'Knowledge of Educational Ends'. The PCK model is highly relevant for instrumental music teachers graduating from conservatoires, not least because, in addition to one-to-one and small group work in private practice and in schools, a high percentage of graduates will teach whole class instrumental lessons or deliver music workshops in classrooms (Shaw 2021).

When advising trainee secondary school classroom teachers, Capel, Leask, and Younie (2019) state that knowing a significant amount about a given subject area does not automatically result in effective teaching and educators need to transform their SCK into tasks that lead to learning. Equally, in a conservatoire context, SCK, developed through intensive training in the principal study discipline and supporting/academic studies in music, is unlikely to equip conservatoire graduates to deliver content to learners in challenging circumstances or environments. Music students need opportunities to

develop GPK: strategies for 'managing the learning environment for effective learning', gaining pupils' interest, sustaining their motivation and differentiating learning to support or challenge pupils as appropriate (La Velle and Leask 2019, 20). The current study aims to capture aspects of students' developing pedagogical knowledge across a four-year undergraduate programme in Music at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC) in the UK.

Materials and methods

The research question explored in this paper is 'How do conservatoire students learn to teach and facilitate music-making in children and young people during their undergraduate training?' Therefore, particular attention was given to students' learning via modular provision and external placement activity in educational contexts. Thus, a case study methodology seemed apposite, since a 'case' may involve any phenomena including 'a college curriculum process' (Creswell 2012, 477). Furthermore, a case study is compatible with a mixed methods approach where 'the researcher seeks to develop an in-depth understanding [...] by collecting multiple forms of data' (465), in this instance via textual narratives and semi-structured interviews. At the same time, the methodological design needed to be sufficiently flexible to allow participants to shape the research 'from the ground up'. Indeed, according to Denscombe (2014, 109):

> The grounded theory approach expects the researcher to start research without any *fixed* ideas about the nature of the setting that is about to be investigated. The aim is to approach things with an open mind. An open mind, of course, is not a blank mind and it is inevitable that existing theories and personal experience will have some influence on what the researcher already knows about a topic. However, the crucial point is that pre-existing knowledge and concepts are to be treated as 'provisional' and open to question. They are simply a tentative starting point from which to launch the investigation.

At the time of the study (2019–21), RBC offered compulsory pedagogical training from Year 1 (Y1) to support 128 students in developing skills they might need in the future to facilitate music workshops and/or deliver interactive performances in educational and community settings. Classical and jazz performers, composers, and music technologists were taught in interdisciplinary workshop groups to engage in diverse activities including conducting, facilitating group singing, improvising, composing, and global musical traditions and styles, whilst learning how to use musical, verbal and non-verbal communication techniques to lead musical warm-ups and games. Subsequently, in Y2, 117 students focused on and developed skills relevant to the teaching of their principal study specialism through workshops organised within their specialist departments (keyboard, vocal, strings, woodwind, brass, percussion, composition, music technology and jazz). Here, students engaged with teaching resources and pedagogical principles through active learning, problem-solving and demonstration. All activity across these first two years of the course would take place within RBC, with input from internal and external/visiting practitioners. Subsequently, across Y3–4, 25 students elected to study further modules that included opportunities to develop their teaching skills in external educational and community settings, often under the supervision of one or more professional mentors, thus building on and consolidating their earlier core pedagogical studies. Consequently,

this paper focuses on the perspectives of two sets of participants transitioning through their course in parallel. Two data sets were generated from one cohort which studied the two core pedagogy modules across Y1–2, respectively (2019–21). The second cohort, which generated the third data set, comprised a small sample of newly graduated students who had engaged in a variety of external work placements in music education contexts via optional modules across Y3–4 (also 2019–21). Table 1 presents an overview of the three data sets:

In February 2020 and 2021, respectively, Y1–2 students were invited to submit reflective textual narratives about their learning experiences during the two core pedagogy modules, to include their independent research (engagement with pedagogical articles, videos, websites and other relevant tasks set by the module leader) and their interactions with peers and visiting practitioners within taught sessions. Prompts were provided, with the intention of enabling students to focus on areas of personal interest and significance, without being overly prescriptive:

> *Y1: Drawing on your independent research during the module and your personal experiences of music-making both during and before your time at RBC, what have you learned/in what ways have you developed as a musician as a result of participating in the module?*
>
> *Y2: Consider how all the different elements of your course (e.g., principal study lessons, workshops, ensembles, forums, masterclasses etc.) and non-principal study activities (e.g., aural, harmony, analysis, history, pedagogy) contribute to your ongoing development as a potential music educator (e.g., instrumental teacher, workshop leader, conductor, classroom teacher, adjudicator and examiner, chamber music coach etc.) In what ways do you think developing your skills and understanding of music education (in its various forms) contributes to your overall musical development?*

Ethical approval was granted by the Faculty Academic Ethics Committee to which RBC was affiliated, in accordance with principles outlined by BERA (2018). In the interests of inclusivity, the entire Y1 cohort was offered the opportunity to participate, and, in the knowledge that participation would be entirely voluntary and that their anonymity would be preserved throughout, 94 students gave informed consent for their reflective textual narratives to be used for research purposes. One year later, 41 students from the same cohort (then Y2 students) gave consent. However, the potential presence of the Hawthorne effect (Denscombe 2014), where participants may feel self-conscious due to their behaviour or opinions being placed under scrutiny, and act or respond differently from normal, was a risk acknowledged by the researcher.

Table 1. Overview of data sets.

Participants	Study details/academic year(s)	Date of data collection	Data collection method
94 Y1 undergraduates	Community engagement module 2019–20	Feb 2020	Reflective textual narratives
41 Y2 undergraduates (continuation of Y1 cohort)	Instrumental teaching module 2020–21	Jan 2021	Reflective textual narratives
6 new graduates	Range of external teaching placements across 2018–20 (Y3–4)	July 2020	Online interviews

Participant contributions were anonymised through the application of alphanumeric codes. The qualitative data were read multiple times for familiarisation purposes prior to being transferred into a spreadsheet to facilitate manual line-by-line thematic analysis, whereby codes were assigned to segments of text. Subsequently, it was necessary to group-related codes together and eliminate overlapping ones to allow overarching and sub-themes to emerge (Creswell 2012, 244).

Following this process, a total of 64 codes were generated from the Y1 cohort data. These were grouped subsequently into five categories (or sub-themes): 'developing skills', 'developing qualities', 'developing awareness', 'developing behaviours' and 'developing values', which alongside the frequently occurring words 'confidence', 'communication' and 'collaboration' were interpreted by the researcher as being indicative of students' developing pedagogical knowledge. A summary of the emerging overarching and sub-themes is shown in Table 2:

Codes emerging from the Y2 data were initially grouped into categories relating to one-to-one principal study instrumental lessons (21 codes); collaborative principal study activity, for example, departmental workshops, ensembles, performance classes and masterclasses (18 codes); pedagogical training (49 codes); and other academic study, for example, aural, harmony, analysis and music history (12 codes). The separate code

Table 2. Summary of themes – Y1 cohort.

Overarching themes	Sub-themes	
Developing skills	Collaboration	Composition
	Communication (verbal)	Playing by ear
	Communication (non-verbal)	Group teaching
	Organisation	Running multi-instrument sessions
	Problem solving	Differentiation
	Facilitating singing	Conducting
	Aural	Breaking down concepts
	Leadership	Preparation and planning
	Behaviour management	Giving feedback
	Improvisation	
Developing qualities	Resilience	Inspiration
	Adaptability	Clarity
	Reflexivity	Self-expression
Developing awareness	Links with principal study	Make a difference
	Increased quality of life	Learning by doing
	Equality	Peer learning
	Body language	Child development
	Audience as active participants	Musical development
	Inspired by former teachers	Policy context
	World music	National curriculum
	Connection	Transferable skills
	Culture	Disabilities
	Interdisciplinary	Reciprocal learning
Developing behaviours	Confidence	Spontaneity
	Overcoming anxiety	Professionalism
	Trust	Responsibility
Developing values	Selfish vs selfless	Inclusive
	Egocentricity vs altruism	Anti-elitist
	Importance of music education	Achievement
	Create foundations for future	Progress not perfection
	Continuous learning	Work outside comfort zone
	Desire to prioritise, pursue, dismiss	Process not outcome
	Concert platform hierarchy	Impact and aspiration
	Open-mindedness	

Table 3. Summary of themes – Y2 cohort.

Overarching themes	Sub-themes
Specificity	Develop specific instrument knowledge
	Become an informed performer
	Build confidence in performing
Transferability	History: broaden awareness of performance practice/interpretation
	Apply pedagogical training to practising my instrument
	Developing/correcting technique in own/others playing
	Pick up teaching methods from principal study teacher
	Learning to teach ourselves/solve problems in own playing
	Ensembles: people management/rehearsal strategies/conducting skills
	Links between instrumental teaching and workshop leading
	Analysis/aural contributes towards ability to teach theory
	Social, communication and collaborative skills through group work
	Building knowledge of repertoire
	Learning about a wide variety of instruments
	Observing what works for other learners
	Diagnosing errors
	Giving constructive feedback
	Organising rehearsals
	Emotional intelligence
Responsibility	Effective management of groups
	Support all ages and abilities
	Important to adapt to different pupils' needs/environments/situations
	Awareness of socio-economic factors
	Nurture positive teacher-pupil relationships
	Awareness of lack of diversity within curricula
	Knowledge of methods from around the world important
	Awareness of business and legal aspects of teaching
	Break down concepts for learners
	Structuring/planning lessons vs flexibility in teaching
	Recollections of first (inspirational) teacher
	Encouraging fun and enjoyment
	Important to have awareness of issues in music education
	Desire to teach in the future – preparing next generation of musicians

groups were then amalgamated and reconsidered in light of the specific musical knowledge, transferable skills and values students believed they had developed across the various curriculum areas. Consequently, three overarching themes emerged: 'specificity', 'transferability' and 'responsibility', offering yet further insights into students' developing pedagogical knowledge (see Table 3).

In July 2020, online interviews were conducted with six new graduates who had completed their undergraduate conservatoire training just one month prior. Since breadth of experience was required to increase the reliability of the research, theoretical sampling (Denscombe 2014) was necessary to identify those graduates who had completed not only the largest number of placements but also the widest variety, to include early years and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) settings, primary and secondary schools, workshops, ensembles, online lessons, and a conservatoire junior department. All six new graduates (anonymised as NG1–6) gave informed consent to participate in the research and for the interviews to be recorded for the purposes of transcription and analysis. Interviewees were asked questions around the following prompts:

- *Please provide a brief summary and timeline of your placement experiences.*
- *How did you develop as a practitioner in [given settings]?*

- *What/how did you learn from pupils/participants?*
- *What/how did you learn from professionals/mentors?*
- *Are there any experiences on these placements that stand out for you as being particularly beneficial to your ongoing development as a music educator?*

Since placement activity profiles varied, it was sometimes necessary to deviate from these prompts to maintain a conversational flow that demonstrated interest in and engagement with each graduate's particular experiences. The intention was to encourage participants to speak freely, generating a significant amount of data which were coded according to Creswell's (2012) recommendations above. Initially, this coding process generated 184 codes, which were reduced to 111 following the elimination of duplicated codes. The remaining codes were then organised into groups according to similarity, whereupon overarching and sub-themes emerged. Three overarching themes: 'prepare', 'engage' and 'support', were then grouped together to form a thematic cluster: 'promoting learning' – a third phase of developing pedagogical knowledge as illustrated by Table 4.

Results and discussion

Developing Pedagogical Knowledge (DPK)

In responding to the question, 'How do conservatoire students learn to teach and facilitate music-making in children and young people during their undergraduate

Table 4. Summary of themes – Y3–4 cohort.

Overarching themes		Sub-themes
Promoting learning	Prepare for learning	Lesson/workshop planning (overplanning)
		Not making assumptions about pupils' level of understanding
		Inclusion
		Curriculum/progression
		Organisation
		Students' cultural backgrounds
		Pupil motivation
	Engage learners	Initiating a desire to learn – enthusiasm and creativity
		Acting – teacher confidence/teacher personality and energy/positivity
		Inspiring role model
		Effective communication and delivery style
		Non-notation approaches, singing, composing, improvising, conducting
		Pupil enjoyment and response – pupil–teacher interaction
		Instil pride in pupils regarding their music making
	Support learners	Instilling a desire to progress/facilitating progress
		Breaking things down
		Building children's confidence
		Being adaptable/thinking on your feet
		Giving/giving feedback
		Developing technique (doing things 'properly')
		Inspiration vs perfection
		Not putting children off
		Keeping an open mind
		Building a rapport
		Online teaching
		Behaviour management
		Developing general musicianship
		Holistic learning
		Being caring

training?', it became increasingly apparent, as each data set was analysed, that some of the emerging themes related closely to Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) model (Shulman 1986, 1987) and La Velle and Leask's later adaptation (La Velle and Leask 2019). In the conservatoire sector, performing musicians are recruited to courses via competitive audition on the basis of their advanced performing ability: their Subject Content Knowledge, but SCK alone is unlikely to enable them to convey the complexities of playing their particular instrument to children and young people. However, as participants progressed through their course and the various pedagogy modules and placements, their reflections in the textual narratives and interviews strongly suggested that they had evidently benefited from opportunities to develop General Pedagogic Knowledge. Moreover, participants had developed transferable skills and values that were highly relevant to their development as music educators, thus offering an expansion and adaptation of existing PCK models. Thus, Developing Pedagogical Knowledge (DPK) emerged as both an overarching theme and original framework comprising four themes

(1) Skills, qualities, awareness, behaviours and values;
(2) Confidence, communication and collaboration;
(3) Specificity, transferability and responsibility;
(4) Promoting learning: prepare, engage, support;
(5) underpinned by a fifth sub-theme:
(6) Egocentricity versus altruism.

Skills, qualities, awareness, behaviours and values

Developing pedagogical skills, qualities, awareness, behaviours and values involves learning about learning or 'metacognitive awareness' (Shulman 1986, 13). Whilst most students appeared to focus on the impact of the module on their personal development, demonstrating their increasing self-awareness of their own learning processes, some students also evidenced developing insights about the learning of others. 'Other learners' included, firstly, Y1 peers, where it was perceived that participating in interdisciplinary groups had been beneficial to all concerned. In the second category, students attempted to understand how 'Other learners' in schools or community settings, and from backgrounds different to their own, might react to their teaching or workshop facilitation approaches and how they, as educators, could make the learning experience as positive as possible.

The phrase, *'opened my eyes'* was used explicitly by 11 participants, alongside the notion of becoming *'a more open-minded musician'* (expressed by 55 participants). From what might be considered an egocentric perspective, one student, whose view aligned with the majority, reported having become more alert *'to the massive range of career opportunities that involve music within the community* (22C19)'. Conversely, a few students demonstrated an altruistic outlook, for example, participant 37V19 had become aware of *'the many ways in which [they could] make a positive impact on people, especially children, through music'*. Extending the metaphor further, several students' eyes were also opened to the extent that an instilled emphasis on perfection in their principal study discipline and/or in their former schooling had affected their overall outlook towards music-making:

> *I felt quite inhibited and self-conscious [. . .] and was initially very nervous in workshops where we were asked to improvise. This could probably be explained by an element of perfectionism I have accidentally cultivated throughout my academic education, which led to fear and shame associated with perceived failure or embarrassment in front of others.* (86CG19)

In focusing on progress as opposed to perfection, a percussionist felt strongly that young people

> *should be encouraged to progress musically, as well as [being] supported to progress in other ways (i.e., transferable skills, social skills). [Practitioners] should focus on all types of needs, interests and backgrounds [and] ensure everyone can find a pathway that is right for them.* (61PC19)

Confidence, collaboration, and communication

Three most frequently occurring themes that emerged from the Y1 textual narratives were 'confidence, collaboration, and communication'. Often, two or all three of these facets appeared to work simultaneously in developing students' skills, qualities, awareness, behaviours or values.

In the majority of cases, students reflected on the extent to which the module had engendered feelings of confidence in themselves, as opposed to considering the impact of musical engagement on the confidence of the learners they might teach in the future. Numerous examples of increased confidence were offered by students in relation to skills such as improvising, playing by ear, singing, composing, conducting and public speaking. However, one jazz guitarist's reflections were more outward-looking:

> *Music education from an early age can be a way of developing an individual's confidence and decision making along with other skills, instead of just developing proficiency on an instrument.* (11JG19)

Many Y1 students commented that the collaborative nature of the module had helped them, as newcomers at the start of an academic year, to integrate into the conservatoire environment, a view echoed especially by international students. However, collaboration was also acknowledged by a small number of respondents as being very important to young people. Indeed, a singer was clearly willing to work beyond their *'comfort zone'* (a term used by several participants) to develop their own skills, whilst also showing empathy for learners.

As with confidence, and collaboration, a large number of students appreciated the value of the verbal and non-verbal skills practised during workshop sessions. However, few students appeared to recognise communication as a two-way process between themselves as potential music educators and other learners, though participant 9VC19 stated, *'I have [. . .] learned a lot about body language and appearance and how that affects other people's perceptions of you and how they communicate with you'*. A composer concurred: through the module they had come to realise the impact that even '*the phrasing of a sentence, can have on a child's perception of a situation'* (26CP19). In another instance, it was clear that a trombonist had taken on board that '*for a [lesson] to be successful, you don't have to have every child performing higher level music than they were*

before; sometimes a child being able to communicate better socially or verbally is just as good a measure [of] success' (1TB19).

Participant 11JG19 suggested that the very act of role-playing workshop scenarios with peers had demonstrated '*the importance of being able to adapt teaching to best suit the way someone learns or works, as this may completely differ from the way I learn best*. In fact, being asked to *'put [them]selves in the [learner's] shoes'* appeared to have benefited many students, including a music technologist who *'ended up learning so much [more] about children'* than expected, including *'the way they act and think'* (35MT19). A pianist reported, *'I learned to be clear in the way I communicate and articulate, making myself more understandable to [those] I interact with. I also learnt how to differentiate the musical learning methods needed depending on the context and the people involved'* (17P19). Furthermore, *'learning how to break down the learning process into several stages'* had already impacted on this student's approach to practising the piano. Communication was also considered in relation to adapting teaching activities or strategies learned during the module for use in different situations as well as *'not being afraid'* to adapt activities during teaching or workshop delivery *'if a session is not going to plan'* (10DB19).

Specificity, transferability and responsibility

Several months after their transition into Y2, participating students acknowledged numerous connections between different aspects of the undergraduate curriculum that were pertinent to their development as music educators. The theme of 'specificity' reflects students' concerns about, for example, becoming *'a better performer'* (29O20). However, the Y2 textual narratives implied a gradual shifting whereby many students seemingly moved yet further away from an egocentric focus than had been the case in Y1. For instance, in reflecting on the collaborative aspects of principal study activity, discipline-specific concerns receded towards the background as students focused on the transferable characteristics of their musical training and its relevance for working in music education contexts, whilst at the same time, recognising the need to adopt a responsible attitude towards nurturing musical learners.

Several students referred to the usefulness of analysing and reflecting on approaches to learning and progression in their principal study specialism to better understand how to support others:

> *It takes you back to the basics. [When] playing an instrument at conservatoire standard you don't think about the small things like how your instrument goes together, how to buzz through your mouthpiece or where the notes are [but] these things are fundamental – a lot of time needs to be dedicated for them to be fully understood.* (27TBT20)

> *Discussing how to develop these building block elements has really opened my eyes as to how many different processes and steps there are to learning. This has really helped my musical development as I have revisited even the simplest aspects of my playing.* (19VC20)

The importance of effective teacher–student relationships was noted across a wide range of activity. For example, participants reflected on how teachers adapted their approaches to suit conservatoire students' differing needs in a performance class. Students also claimed that participating in masterclasses, chamber music coaching and rehearsals had helped them to develop greater knowledge of instruments and

repertoire, whilst learning new techniques that could be relevant to coaching or conducting ensembles in the future. Importantly, exchanging feedback with peers improved their critical evaluation and communication skills, and this was noted as being transferable to teaching children in group instrumental lessons, where peer learning is an important part of the process. Similarly, an increased appreciation of the social benefits and inspiration that comes from working with others' was reported by a classical guitarist whose involvement in chamber music had contributed to 'a better understanding of how I might lead my own group [. . .] in a music education setting (86CG20). Transferable skills deemed relevant by this participant included organisation and management, arranging parts for musicians, as well as planning, structuring and directing rehearsals.

The majority of participants also recognised the potential for many aspects of their academic studies to contribute to their development as music educators. For example, participant 51VN20 noted that *'music history and harmony helps to develop an analytical approach that can greatly aid in making informed decisions about interpretation [and] equip us to quickly understand music that we have never heard before'*. Another student suggested that *'aural skills are some of the most important skills you can learn at a conservatoire'* (49C20). Participant 22C20 concurred, claiming that teachers with a well-developed ear have greater capacity to make music accessible to learners *'with limited notation knowledge or with special educational needs'* than those teachers whose aural skills are less developed. Such notions of accessibility and inclusivity, along with the acknowledgements above regarding the delivery of constructive feedback and the nurturing of positive student–teacher relationships, suggest that the Y2 pedagogy module not only enabled students to assimilate skills learned via pedagogical training in Y1 but also to continue developing personal qualities, awareness of self and others, appropriate professional behaviours, and values. Focusing on this sub-theme of responsibility, many Y2 students came to realise that being a good performer alone would not be sufficient to teach and facilitate children's learning in instrumental lessons, as participant 96P20 explained:

> *Musicians should aspire to improve constantly at being a music educator. Many attributes, such as how well we can effectively break down a problem; communicate our ideas to the student and understand their problems from their point of view; adapt our teaching method [for] different learners etc., directly corresponds to the student's ability to progress and enjoy music, and ultimately their passion for it.*

Through the Y1–2 pedagogy modules, students had begun to develop GPK, thus enhancing their specialist musical knowledge (the content) by combining it with pedagogy (why, how, and when to teach the content). Students were introduced to the principles of curriculum design and were able to experiment with devising lesson/workshop content amongst their peers. Many could imagine scenarios with potential learners and contexts through role play, demonstrating, for example, *'an awareness of the different needs of learners in different settings'* (1TB20), or an *'ability to be flexible'* (53V20) in preparation for when they would be given the opportunity to engage with real-life learners and contexts later in the course.

Promoting learning: prepare, engage, support

To build on Y1–2 participants' perspectives, six new graduates provided insights into how they developed further pedagogical knowledge through external placement activity, consolidating their learning from earlier pedagogy modules within external Communities of Practice (Lave and Wenger 1991) across Y3–4 (2019–2021).

Planning was emphasised by new graduates as a key element gained from external placements. It was suggested by NG1 that it was not possible to *'over plan'*, since thorough preparation would increase their self-confidence when leading a session. There was a sense that participants' progress with planning and preparation during placements had developed and that, as emerging practitioners, they had increased in confidence as a result. Participant NG6 explained, *'At first [. . .] even though I'd plan really carefully, I'd feel like I'd still be tripping over everything and I'd be nervous if things started going a different way'*, but they had become more flexible in their approach as a result of their placements. Participant NG1 agreed with this stance: *'Sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't but [the placement] really helped me to be able to adapt to situation[s] when I need[ed] to*' Indeed, most participants reported that they had learned new approaches to planning through trying things out in a safe environment where they could receive instant feedback from their mentor, who would guide them through various repetitions and adjustments of the material until they began to feel more confident.

While the above discussion suggests that participants focused on the benefits of preparation for their own self-confidence, in general, new graduates displayed relative maturity, being much more preoccupied with the needs of the learners encountered within their placements. Many participants acknowledged that making assumptions about learners' needs and abilities was detrimental, and that instead, learning should be broken down into multiple steps, with differentiation built into planning to enable flexibility. One participant, who admitted to being presumptuous regarding the musical terminology that a group of learners might know, needed to change their lesson plan on the spot, having quickly found that learners' vocabulary was more limited than expected. From this experience, the student learned to *'start off simpl[y]. If you can make it more complicated, do, but don't just jump in'* (NG1). Another participant who had completed several placements in SEND settings concurred, whilst acknowledging the *'learning curve'* (NG5) they had experienced regarding the need to plan flexibly and develop an acute understanding of pupils' individual needs. All participants considered pacing and variety important, especially when planning learning activities for large groups of young children. According to participant NG3, *'We never [did] anything for longer than five or ten minutes, [otherwise] you'd absolutely lose them'*.

Most participants admitted that prior to their placements, they had not fully appreciated the value of planning for learning when teaching pupils individually, despite this having been discussed during lectures. NG5 had begun to adopt a more holistic approach to lesson planning and their pupils were more engaged as a result. For example, when introducing a new piece, interrelated components of the music (e.g. key, rhythm, and dynamics) would be explored away from notation through aural-based activities such as improvisation. Such increased awareness of the need to engage learners across a wide range of ages and abilities was deemed important in initiating children's desire to learn. Varied teaching

approaches were integral in the early stages of learning to play an instrument and in supporting student progress. Furthermore, all participants spoke with enthusiasm about key moments in their group-based placements, recalling teaching strategies that they believed were instantly transferable to their teaching in private practice, for example, '*The teacher sang along with the valves instead of using the instrument straight away [,] developing their aural skills as well as practising fingerings before [playing] the instrument*' (NG1).

Moreover, placement experiences had inspired many participants to appeal to their pupils' personalities and interests whilst taking into account how they might be feeling on any given lesson day. Participant NG6 offered an example of how their placements had informed their approach to their own private piano teaching practice:

> *I have to tread carefully [. . .] otherwise [pupil] doesn't want to do it. It's been a challenge to get him to work efficient[ly] but I [use] different techniques, like questioning [and] giving him freedom, for example, 'next week I want you do to do a little composition [using] the black notes [and] these dynamics and pick a mood or a theme'.*

An awareness of pupils' cultural backgrounds was deemed to be highly pertinent by one participant in particular when selecting appropriate repertoire to increase engagement and enable progression. For example, it was reported that, *'We [did] such a wide mix of things – a whole range from Baroque [. . .] to Billie Eilish* (NG3)'. Furthermore, when discussing another placement context, where lessons were taught via video conferencing to young people in South Africa, NG3 was perplexed:

> *The background of the kids is something we can't even imagine [. . .] I think it must be really difficult for them as young black people in Soweto to listen to music written by dead white men and this really got to me. So, in my lessons I talked about Kwela - their music.*

Another significant factor in engaging pupils and motivating them to continue and progress in their musical learning was teacher personality. In particular, NG4 had been fascinated by the way their mentor seemed to take on different personae, depending on the setting they were teaching in at any given time. In whole class settings of 30 children, their mentor had exaggerated their body language, and used a *'teaching voice'*, whereas when teaching small groups, *'a different person'* with *'more of a warm character'* emerged. NG3 had similarly taken on board the need to adapt their tone of voice when speaking to pupils, but also attended to their posture in terms of how and where they stood in the teaching space, describing this phenomenon as an *'aura [. . .] a kind of presence thing'*. Indeed, to return to an earlier sub-theme, all Y3–4 students recognised that teacher presence and personality are closely linked with portrayals of teacher confidence, which can have a detrimental impact on children's learning if not communicated successfully, as suggested by participant NG1:

> *If the pupils can see you're not confident, they're not going to respond to you [. . .]. When I had a chance to do a bit of teaching in my fourth-year placement, I think I was visibly nervous about it, so the pupils picked up on that [and] didn't engage with me fully.*

This participant went on to share details of a similar scenario in an ensemble setting where they had been given the opportunity to conduct, but had not been assertive enough:

> *I led the warm-up before one of the sectionals. That was really telling for me in terms of things I needed to work on. I remember conducting and [. . .] I kept changing my beat to fit them instead of keeping it steady so that was a learning curve for me.* (NG1)

Despite slightly unnerving experiences such as these, students believed that children's engagement and progress was increased by the presence of conservatoire students as role models in ensemble settings. Playing along in a 'side-by-side' capacity tended to build RBC students' confidence in relaying information to pupils in accessible ways, but more importantly, pupils also benefited from having someone not much older than themselves sitting close by, offering reassurance.

Learning how to handle energy levels in different groups was an aspect of the placements that certain participants found particularly valuable, especially in cases where pupils were less than enthusiastic about making music. Participant NG2 had not anticipated that they might encounter pupils who did not actually want to learn and claimed that the placement had been revealing in that regard: '*Maybe I was presumptuous to think everyone who plays an instrument wanted to play an instrument. But it's not always like that, you know?*' (NG2). However, NG2 had found it extremely helpful to observe and talk to their mentor about *'how to teach a student who doesn't necessarily want to be there, or groups of people who don't necessarily get along'*. Similarly, NG1 had benefited from *'using different activities to try and control that energy level and make it where you need it to be'*.

In discussing the importance of providing ongoing support for pupils, new graduates seemed to appreciate not only *'the things you can gain'* but also *'the things you can give'*. This view was corroborated by NG2 who described their experience as a trainee teacher on placement as experiencing learning from *'the opposite end'*:

> *You're the one giving, you're the one motivating, and that's exactly what I want to do. I want to be on that end rather than the other end [. . .]. You are inspiring these kids. You're their role model. You are who some of them want to be. It's motivating for me thinking 'you can give something back' and nothing will beat seeing the satisfaction and the smiles on their faces when they've learned something.*

Elsewhere, participant NG1 discussed 'giving' in the context of offering instruction and feedback: *'I've learned to become a lot [. . .] clearer. The way I speak is quite wordy and quick, so I've really learned to scale that back'*. Equally, NG4 focused on the use of praise: having learned not to offer *'compliments without reason'*, they had seen a notable difference in pupils' progress when specific, targeted feedback had been given. By contrast, NG6 had learned from a placement experience where the mentor had lacked patience with their pupils and the 'giving' element had been far less generous:

> *When you're the teacher, it's your responsibility to have so many different ways of explaining one thing and if the child doesn't get it, it's probably your fault, not theirs. I just think that actually, it puts so many children off learning because they're scared to make mistakes.* (NG6)

The above example resonates with Dewey (1938, 20), who claimed that some learning encounters may be 'mis-educative', having the capacity to distort or restrict the growth of further experience. Arguably, if guided appropriately, students can still gain from a negative learning experience on placement, if examples are problematised and alternative behaviours and strategies proposed.

Figure 1. Developing Pedagogical Knowledge model.

Conclusion

In summary, the emerging original theoretical framework 'Developing Pedagogical Knowledge' (DPK) (see Figure 1) introduces two new constructs that interact with SCK and GPK as music students progress through their undergraduate conservatoire training. DPK, an expansion of Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge model (Shulman 1986, 1987), offers an alternative adaptation to that proposed by La Velle and Leask (2019) and thus constitutes an important contribution to the field, highlighting Transferable Content Knowledge (TCK) and Values-Based Knowledge (VBK) as significant outcomes of pedagogical training within internal and external Communities of Practice over a sustained period.

DPK represents both a model ('developing' as part of a compound noun) and a process ('developing' as verb). Firstly, TCK encapsulates the wide range of transferable skills that students develop through principal study activity, academic study and pedagogical training in a conservatoire setting, enabling them to become confident communicators and collaborators. Secondly, VBK leads many conservatoire students to value their pedagogical training, raising their awareness of the professional qualities and behaviours necessary for engaging others effectively in music-making, and nurturing a sense of responsibility to create stimulating learning environments. Driven by a sense of responsibility, students employed their transferable skills to prepare for learning, and to engage and support the learners they encountered in a range of external scenarios, exercising 'flexibility'. This expansion of students' skillsets well beyond the specific focus of their principal study specialism represents the development of PCK which will be ongoing throughout their careers.

Whilst not part of the framework, it would appear that, in the process of developing TCK and VBK, many students became less focused on the impact of their pedagogical training for their own musical development (egocentric) and more interested in how they could utilise their DPK to influence positively the learning of the young people they taught, or would yet go on to teach in the future (altruistic). This is reminiscent of findings by Fautley and Savage (2008), who proposed that trainee teachers become less focused on their own teaching over time and more focused on how they will facilitate learning in others.

The proposed DPK framework has the potential to counteract hegemonic attitudes about teaching as a career pathway for musicians, and could be applied post-graduation and beyond, reflecting the notion that teachers never stop learning. Furthermore, the case study approach reported in this paper could be replicated or adapted across other subjects, phases of education (e.g. early years, SEND, primary, secondary and further education) and in other disciplines, as a means to enhance our understanding of the transition from student to professional educator.

Acknowledgements

With grateful thanks to my doctoral research supervisors and academic colleagues for their ongoing support, and to all who participated in the research.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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