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Rethinking pedagogic identities for Key Stage 3 general classroom music teacher education: an autoethnographic study

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Abstract

My role as a university-based, general classroom music teacher educator in England has become unclear, exacerbated by policies that have undermined the field of classroom music in schools and the role of universities in teacher education. Using self-critical inquiry enacted as critically reflexive autoethnography, I interrogated my professional practice to rethink my pedagogic identity. Theoretical perspectives, drawn from Bernstein and Bourdieu, were used to chart my shifting identity. This paper introduces a theorised model to illustrate a range of pedagogic identities for Key Stage 3 (KS3) general classroom music teacher education.

Keywords: Autoethnography; pedagogy; identity; classification; framing

Introduction

This paper is drawn from doctoral research which used critically reflexive autoethnography (CRA) to analyse my shifting position within the field of general classroom music (Odendaal et al., 2014; Larsson and Georgii-Hemming, 2019). I question the types of pedagogy I employed over the course of my career to deepen my understanding of general classroom music and to enhance the teacher education I offer beginning general classroom teachers who wish to enter the field. Axiologically, I sought to move beyond ‘limiting conversations [that] focus on educational outcomes that can be measured reliably and economically’ (Rosiek & Gleason, 2017, p.42) by researching my own practice. My CRA was ‘consciously built and explicitly based on identity work in teacher education’ (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017, p.188), and although my research was informed by a recognition that ‘teaching is an oral and storied culture’ (Smyth, 1999, p.73) I did not just tell my story, I placed narratives in historical and social contexts (Goodson et al., 2017) through critical inquiry to move away from a self-indulgent approach based purely on my perceptions. CRA sought to reveal the relationship between my micro-individual agency and the macro-social structures that frame my work so that I can better serve those who wish to enter the teaching profession as general classroom music teachers.

Through CRA I sought to reveal the complexities of pedagogic practice by identifying a social field, or ‘multidimensional space of positions and relationships in which the expert discourse and the serious and the authoritative way of thinking and acting is produced, reproduced and transformed’ (Simola, 1993, p.161). Bourdieu illustrates a field of practice as a ‘universe of discourse’ (UoD) (1977, p.168), using a minus sign (-) under heterodoxy and a plus sign (+) under orthodoxy to represent the negative and positive terminals of a battery, ‘an electro-mechanical metaphor’ (Söderman, 2015, p.6). Like the flow of electricity, the flow of ideas, opinions and

positions in a UoD are essential for a field to remain dynamic and responsive. Analysis revealed that, like my identity, my position in a UoD for general classroom music has shifted over time. This analysis provided a foundation from which to rethink pedagogic identities that are fluid rather than fixed.

I was a general classroom music teacher in various schools in England for 20 years. In 2004, I moved to work an inner-city university in central England as a general classroom music teacher educator. Initially, I was a Subject Lead for Music Education in the School of Primary and Early Years. Here, my general classroom music teacher education involved classroom-based subject sessions and classroom observations for general classroom teachers teaching children in the Early Years and Foundation Stage (children from birth to the age of 5 years) Key Stage 1 (children aged 5–7 years) and Key Stage 2 (children aged 7–11 years). In 2008, I took on the additional role of Subject Lead for Music Education in the School of Secondary Education where I taught music specialists who were preparing to teach general classroom music to young people aged 11–14 years, or Key Stage 3 (KS3). The CRA that underpins this paper was centred on rethinking pedagogic identities in KS3 general classroom music when preparing specialist musicians to become KS3 music teachers. I draw on my historical practice teaching music to pupils at KS3, but I also refer to beginning KS3 music teachers.

Methodological considerations

Wodak and Meyer (2016, p.7) indicate how '[r]esearchers . . . are not situated outside the societal hierarchy of power and status but subject to this structure'. As a critical researcher, I wanted to rethink my social practice as a teacher, to identify my 'own needs and interests' and to 'root out' any 'particular kind of delusion' (ibid, p.7). Sayer (2009, p.768) also indicates the importance of the 'reduction of illusion' in critical research, and CRA helped to enact a reduction of illusion to my own perceptions of practice.

Teaching is a form of action imbued with assumptions (Brookfield, 2017) and tacit knowing (Polanyi, 1966; Andersson & Östman, 2015). Revealing assumptions and turning tacit knowing into explicit or shared knowledge underpins my pedagogic practice as a KS3 music teacher educator. CRA revealed assumptions and tacit knowing and moved from the personal, tacit and biographic towards the social, explicit and ethnographic by employing theoretical concepts to help frame professional knowing.

Theoretical framing

Figure 1 provides a theorised visualisation of my perception of a field of KS3 general classroom music education. Bourdieu's positions of *orthodoxy* and *heterodoxy* have been switched in Figure 1 to emphasise a perception of time, the past being to the left (looking backwards) and the future looking to the right (looking forwards). This is not to suggest that one is more important than the other; both are important. As a learner of music, I focused on music from the past to help me construct my musical identities (Green, 2011). As a KS3 music teacher, I looked to the past helped me identify the musical knowledge that I thought needed to be taught. The orthodoxy of both traditional and vocational pedagogies were significant features of my teaching, but I was conscious that my teaching also needed to acknowledge music as a creative art form, orientated towards the future. In Deweyan terms:

The doctrine of the value of consequences leads us to take the future into consideration. And this taking into consideration of the future takes us to the conception of a universe whose evolution is not finished, of a universe which is still . . . 'in the making', 'in the process of becoming', of a universe up to a certain point still plastic (Dewey, 1931, p.33).

Pedagogies in the field of KS3 general classroom music education:

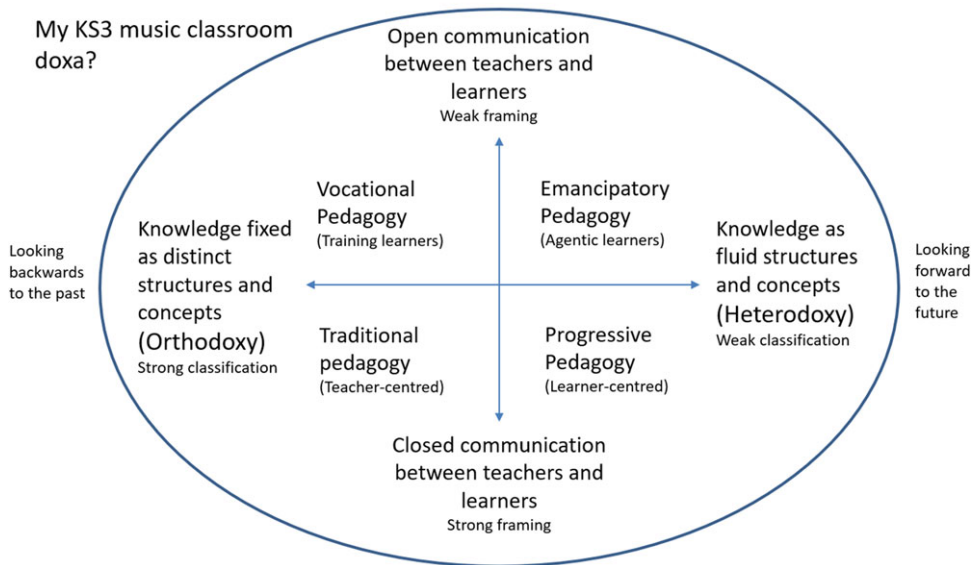


Figure 1. Pedagogies in the field of KS3 general classroom music education.

Bernstein's concepts of *classification* and *framing* were used to identify four types of pedagogy in Figure 1. Bernstein (2000, p.30) identified that 'dominant power relations establish boundaries' and that 'the concept to translate power at the level of the individual must deal with the relationships between boundaries and the category representations of these boundaries'. He uses *classification* as the concept to identify the strength or weakness of the boundaries established within the field. In Figure 1, it is the strong or weak classification of distinct types, styles or genres of music that influences the power relationships in the pedagogic discourse within the field of classroom music education. Bernstein (ibid, p.36) also uses the concept of *framing*: 'the form of control which regulates and legitimises communication in pedagogic relations'. Strong framing relates to where the teacher's 'voice' is predominant, and communication is 'closed'. Weak framing occurs where the 'voice' or perceptions of learners are recognised and valued as contributors to the pedagogic discourse, where the communication is 'open'. Framing identifies forms of *symbolic control* (ibid, p.24).

Subsequent discussions centre on the four types of pedagogical categorisation identified in each of the quadrants in Figure 1. Drawing upon theoretical perspectives and perceptions of practice, I engage in a process of critical ethnography, centred upon 'discovering system relations' (Carspecken, 1996, p.41). These discussions provide justifications for each of the categorisations whilst concurrently engaging in critical analyses, charting my shifting pedagogic positions within the field over time. These shifting positions reveal my shifts in pedagogic identity from teacher to teacher trainer, and teacher trainer to teacher educator, always recognising that '[a] certain identity is never possible' (Schutz et al., 2018, p.10).

Traditional pedagogy

From my point of view as a KS3 music teacher, traditional pedagogy reduced decisions about what to teach. Propositional knowledge and contextual knowledge were defined using verbal and written language, usually from an external source like a published resource and/or an examination

syllabus. I was able to teach music as a separate, rational object, studied calmly and dispassionately. This common-sense view of education is what Taber (2012, p.42) would describe as the facsimile of information reproduction. Curriculum was regarded as content and education as transmission (Kelly, 2009, p.56); with a strong classification based on an external and impersonal selection of historical knowledge where 'knowledge is treated as largely given and established by tradition' (Young, et al., 2014, p.59). Bernstein classifies traditional pedagogy as 'retrospective', focusing on 'grand narratives from the past' (2000, p.86). When engaging in a traditional pedagogy I taught from the front, leading the classroom discourse. The perceptions of my pupils were less important, only as far as they related to the knowledge or content studied, so I engaged in strong framing. The transmission of knowledge was controlled by me, the teacher; a formal approach where I was the authority figure (Kitchen, 2014). Strong classification and framing through formal teaching can be helpful for beginning KS3 music teachers who need to establish themselves as a teacher within a music classroom over a short period of time.

Over time I found a traditional pedagogy, underpinned by objectified aesthetic distance (Regelski, 2014, p.16), became problematic. The objective distance, further emphasised by the Western tradition of commodifying music where performers are separated from listeners or consumers (Small, 1998, p.73), created tensions between the music chosen by me as the teacher, and the wide variety of musical preferences in my KS3 music classrooms. Over time, I realised that determining the 'best in the musical canon' (DfE, 2013b, p.1) could not be done by the teacher in a manner that appeared arbitrary to KS3 pupils or beginning KS3 music teachers. I could not sustain the hegemonic symbolic control, or the 'imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power' (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p.5) on people who had very strong opinions about music. Music linked to their sense of identity (MacDonald et al., 2017).

Elliott (1995, p.68) identifies a praxial approach towards music education with 'knowing anchored in the contexts and purposes of specific music practices' (ibid, p.68). My KS3 music teaching drew upon The National Curriculum Council Arts in Schools Project (NCC, 1990, pp. 55–56), where procedural skills were informed by propositional concepts and contextual information concurrently through the act of performing. A KS3 pupil's interest in music was enhanced when they engaged in some form of music practice. Through shared musicking (Small, 1998; Odendaal et al., 2014), I could incentivise KS3 pupils, even those pupils who had little experience of making music. Illeris (2009, p.8–11) identifies the interactive processes that are required to incentivise pupils to connect with content or knowledge. A praxial approach exemplifies this interactive process, a process enhanced when classroom musicking was recorded.

Embedding propositional concepts and contextual information through procedural skills was enhanced when my KS3 pupils listened to recordings of their musicking with guidance from me as their teacher and their peers. KS3 pupils could consider what they had achieved (a sense of achievement was important) and what they might do in the future. I found that the atmosphere in KS3 music changed when recordings were involved. They not only helped promote critical engagement (Fautley and Daubney, 2015: 7) through shared thinking, but recordings were also a powerful form of classroom management, promoting participation, engagement and access (Ellis & Tod, 2018). This perception was shared with beginning KS3 music teachers, and regular recording became a fundamental activity during my subsequent KS3 music teacher education workshops.

A praxial approach meant a greater range of pedagogical decisions needed to be made and acted upon. These decisions were revealed to beginning KS3 music teachers by asking them some key questions based on their experiences of real music classrooms. Which instruments are available and appropriate? Does the recording equipment work? What could be an appropriate repertoire? Could the class or classes access the chosen repertoire? I used my own KS3 teaching to exemplify and question my own perception of a praxial approach towards KS3 music. I made a conscious decision not to undermine the incentive of a praxial approach by trying to perform music that was too challenging. During the initial stages of musicking, I felt responsible for

ensuring that my KS3 pupils could experience fluency and flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002) through entrainment (Clayton et al., 2005). The aim was to enable pupils to feel like musicians as quickly as possible. To share these perceptions with beginning KS3 music teachers, musicking became an important starting point for critically examining situated and appropriate repertoire for KS3 music teaching. This critical examination revealed that praxial musicking was more akin to vocational pedagogy than traditional pedagogy.

Vocational pedagogy

When I entered the teaching profession in 1984, my initial assumption was that my pedagogy needed to be teacher-centric and traditional. A similar assumption occurred when I moved into higher education in 2004. These assumptions were made based on the impression that I needed to be the authority in the classroom. My musical habitus was centred on performing ritualised Western art music, often associated with traditional pedagogies, but I now realise that my musical learning was not separate and academic. Learning ‘*about* music’ (McPhail, 2013, p. 44) occurred concurrently whilst learning ‘*in* music’ (ibid, p. 44). It was practice-based or praxeological (Biesta, 2015), learning through action, informed by new and recurring knowledge-rich experiences, powerfully situated in engaging contexts like a concert hall or large church.

The vocational pedagogy identified in Figure 1 can be defined as ‘curriculum as product and education as instrumental’ (Kelly, 2009, p.67–82). Kelly uses ‘instrumental’ in the non-musical sense relating to ‘training or instruction’ (ibid, p.79), which has extrinsic goals, determined externally, often prioritising work-related activities. This was a default pedagogy or *doxa* (Bourdieu, 1977) (Figure 1) for my KS3 teaching, centred on acquiring procedural skills through praxial musicking. However, classification remained strong because opportunities to address a ‘selected past’ (Bernstein, 2000, p.87) were taken into consideration, features of a ‘prospective’ pedagogic identity (ibid, pp.87–88). Within my practice as a KS3 music teacher, musicking centred on the pupils and their learning, often starting from their own musical preferences based on the commercial and contemporary world of music practice, so the framing was weak. Prioritising pupils’ own preferences underpinned a pedagogy centred on informal learning (Green, 2008).

Even when KS3 pupils’ preferences were prioritised, strong classifications of knowledge underpinned their choices. KS3 pupils wanted to know how to play instruments related to particular types of music. Developing performing skills on instruments features significantly in classroom music education across the world (Fautley & Daubney, 2019). Perceptions of instrumental teaching have become more prominent in classroom music education in England via education policy discourse and through financial support from successive governments over the last 20 years (ibid). Of particular importance during my role as a KS3 music teacher educator was the first National Plan for Music Education (NPME) (DfE/DCMS, 2011), which promoted the creation of Music Hubs and the delivery of Whole Class Ensemble Teaching (WCET) in England.

The emphasis on instrumental teaching that underpinned my vocational pedagogy was important, but there was a danger that it provided a limited perspective of music education: “‘training music performers’ . . . does not perform the same function as music education as a way of knowing’ (Fautley et al., 2019, p.249). Within my KS3 music, instrumental skills centred on tuned and untuned percussion instruments, including the Drum Kit, a range of guitars and electronic keyboards. Pupils needed time to gain control of these instruments, but pupils accrued this control during a range of music activities. The focus was on KS3 general classroom music where ‘the mediating affordances of playing the instrument’ were considered, ‘but also going beyond it’ (ibid, p.248).

On reflection, the pedagogic intention behind teaching pupils how to use instruments in my KS3 teaching was to provide pre-generative scaffolds (Fautley, 2005) for composing. This

composing was also praxial, frame by making and appraising (NCC, 1990). The making process (also a form of musicking) centred on structured improvising leading to composing (Burnard, 2000; Larsson and Georgii-Hemming, 2019). Composing was central to my KS3 teaching, recognising that ‘composing is at the heart of music pedagogy’ (Winters, 2012: 21). Composing provided opportunities for KS3 pupils and beginning KS3 music teachers to experience ‘how artists think’ (Howard, 2012, p.259).

Despite seeking to provide freedom to choose through composing, the musical knowledge in my classrooms was tightly classified. Composing usually happened after the exploration of a particular type or types of music with a particular conceptual focus (Paynter, 1982; NCC 1990). The strong classification underpinning composing became more prominent when pupils opted for music as a school-based public examination. My KS3 classroom composing was underpinned by a vocational pedagogy. Composing was for a particular purpose, linked to assumptions about how composers work in the outside world. The priority was to produce something for assessment against predetermined assessment criteria. Bernstein identifies this type of pedagogy as a *performance model* which ‘places the emphasis upon a specific output of the acquirer [pupil]’ (2000, p.67).

When classification is strong, the teacher becomes a cultural amplifier (Kelly, 2009, p.62). Like traditional pedagogy, vocational pedagogy looks to the past, emphasising learning so it is ‘congruent with the requirements of the culture’ (Bruner & Haste, 1987, p.1). The type of vocational pedagogy I employed included ‘the stability of subject concepts ... and the activities involved in learning’ (Young et al., 2014, p.68). The stability of subject concepts relates to strong classification. Changes in content and a focus on the activities involved in learning relate to weaker framing. These changes in content did not just come from the specialist field. Pupils brought their own ideas and perceptions. This open communication or weaker framing (Figure 1) provided opportunities for teacher learning in addition to pupil learning. Pupils’ ideas enriched my own perceptions of music. Prioritising the voice of the learner is not always prominent when the classification of knowledge is strong. Including more open and creative approaches towards music education where music is treated as a creative art form provided opportunities to enact pedagogies that were future-orientated (Figure 1).

Progressive pedagogy

Progressive pedagogy moves away from symbolic control of traditional and vocational curricula, prioritising the phronesis or care (Regelski, 2014, p.19) that underpins child-centred approaches towards music education (Finney, 2011). Curriculum as process and education as development (Kelly, 2009, p.89–112) exemplifies this pedagogy. Cunningham (1988, p.1) identifies that progressive ideals include ‘individuality, freedom and growth’, putting children (pupils) and their future first, not restricting them to knowledge classified by other people but opening up new creative possibilities (hence, the weaker classification in Figure 1). Education was for its own sake, not as a servant to an examination system, emphasising ‘a concern with the nature of the child and with his or her development as a human being’ (Kelly, 2009, p.91). Bernstein identifies a progressive pedagogy as a *competence model* based on the idea that every child possesses ‘an in-built procedural democracy, an in-built creativity, an in-built virtuous self-regulation’ (Bernstein, 2000, p.66). Recognising children’s ‘natural resources of wonder, imagination and inventiveness’ (Mills & Paynter, 2008, p.1) seemed ethically sound, where KS3 pupils’ musical ideas could be fully valued and recognised.

Within the realities of the KS3 music classroom, I found that progressive approaches that had weak classification still required strong framing to manage the social complexities of the classroom. This also applied to beginning KS3 teachers. Bernstein identifies how progressive pedagogy and associated constructivism are too idealistic, focusing too heavily on the individual. He asserts that progressive pedagogy:

... is bought at a price; that is, the price of abstracting the individual from the analysis of distributions of power and principles of control which selectively specialise modes of acquisition and realisations (2000: 66).

There is a potential imbalance between broader structural systems, particularly surrounding the classification of knowledge within 'specialist modes' or discrete subjects, and the interactionism that takes place within particular contexts. This has led to critiques of progressive approaches that prioritise pupils' perceptions of knowledge (Peal, 2014). Within my own practice, this imbalance overemphasised the 'micro context' (Bernstein, 2000, p.66) through intense symbolic control or strong framing. This 'de-centred market' pedagogic identity (Bernstein, 2000, pp.88–89) emphasised the child as a consumer of education where 'education becomes a commodity' (Finney, 2011, p.3) rather than a liberating experience.

After a change in government in 2010, there appeared to be a return to the strong classification of knowledge in some subjects (DfE, 2013a), but this did not occur within general classroom music education. The current National Curriculum documents for music (DfE, 2013b) contain very few words (Fautley & Daubney, 2019, p.226; Savage, 2020, p.3). This had a knock-on effect of implying that music lacks value as a curriculum subject, and in some schools, it is disappearing as other forms of intense knowledge classification require more curriculum time (ISM et al., 2019). My challenge was to prepare beginning KS3 music teachers to teach general classroom music in a diverse range of music classrooms. The focus was on more open, creative and learner-centred approaches that aspired to engender agentic professionals who could enter the teaching profession with a sensitive awareness of the diverse range of pupils they have in their classrooms. The focus here is on an ethical approach towards the education of teachers, more akin to a 'de-centred therapeutic' (Bernstein, 2000, pp.89–90) or an emancipated pedagogic identity.

Emancipatory pedagogy

Biesta highlights the 'emancipation of the child' (2015, p.15) as an important principle when thinking about education as a discrete discipline. This could be called child-centred education, strongly associated with progressive education and harshly critiqued by some because the focus is on the child rather than the knowledge that children need. Recent education policy orthodoxy in England places the focus firmly on the teacher and the declarative or propositional knowledge that 'needs' to be taught (DfE, 2010, DfE, 2013a, DfE, 2016), emphasising the strong classification that underpins traditional pedagogy. Within the context of my professional practice as a KS3 teacher educator, I wanted to aim for emancipation, but an emancipation informed by different forms of musical knowing, so beginning KS3 music teachers develop the confidence to become active agents in relation to their own pedagogic identities.

I perceived emancipation as underpinned by knowledge-rich environments where beginning KS3 music teachers can 'select from a relatively extensive range of alternatives' (Bernstein, 1971, p.77). They are cognisant of the existing field of music practice by looking backwards, but this is not tightly framed by *complying* with what has been done before. I wanted to avoid the implication that teachers should always rely on others to provide the knowledge frameworks or 'predicting the patterns' (ibid, p.77), but able to lead musical learning communities that contribute alternatives, informed by the pupils in their care. Emancipatory pedagogy draws upon the agency of the learners involved. This approach is particularly pertinent to creative arts, where pupils' own making should be a priority (NCC, 1990; Marsh et al., 2017). Recognising the distinct nature of emancipatory pedagogy would have been helpful for me as a KS3 music teacher. Having opportunities to recognise and employ a broader range of human, social and decisional capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) through active agency would have provided greater confidence when

working with large groups of pupils in professional isolation, which formed the greater part of my professional practice.

From a teacher's perspective, emancipatory pedagogy is challenging. Common sense would suggest a preference for highly structured, traditional environments that are teacher-centred. This view of education, based on objectivism (Giroux, 2011, p.31–43), leads to Freire's concept of *banking* in education where the teacher deposits knowledge and pupils 'receive, memorize and repeat' (1970, p.52). This makes sense from a macro-structuralist perspective, particularly if those in power want to control the discourse and the participants within it (Ball, 2007). It also makes sense for beginning KS3 music teachers. They are required to demonstrate how they establish control over the pupils in their classes (DfE, 2011, DfE, 2019). This is important and at times necessary, but inflexible practice can ignore the identities of the pupils, their contributions, their potentialities and the intersubjectivity that exists within complex classroom environments. There is a real danger that an unthinking application of traditional and objectivist perspectives of education become unethical (Giroux, 2011, p.35), building reliance and dependency or *downwards conflation* (Priestley et al., 2015, p.21) rather than promoting the independence that leads to active agency.

When preparing beginning KS3 music teachers to teach within schools, it was important that I was aware of the need to engage in 'the transformation of the individual into the existing order' (Alhadeff-Jones, 2016, p.143) as part of a training process, but my aspiration was that my KS3 music teacher *education* at the university should involve 'an orientation towards autonomy and freedom' (ibid, p.143). This perception of emancipatory pedagogy did not ignore the objectivity and realism of acquiring ways of knowing by accessing social knowledge and associated knowledgeable practices (Young & Muller, 2014, p.5): 'For we must turn to history in order to understand the traditions that have shaped our individual biographies and intersubjective relationships with other human beings' (Giroux, 2011, p.41). However, the intention was to demonstrate that the broader structures and theories that underpin social and shared perceptions of knowledge were not static and ahistorical but that they shift over time. Rather than receiving banking education, I wanted beginning KS3 music teachers 'to become active participants in the search for knowledge and meaning' (ibid, p.43) through their own critical enquiry, developing their understanding of *why* they might adopt a particular pedagogic approach. Despite emancipatory pedagogy suggesting relinquishing control with no distinct role for the teacher, potentially undermining their position within the complexities of a classroom environment (Kitchen, 2014, p.42), I aspired to apply an ethical pedagogic approach, where beginning KS3 music teachers engaged in 'freeing or liberating (oneself) from a state of dependency' (Alhadeff-Jones, 2016, p.142) by engaging in research into their own practice. I exemplified this research orientation by critically examining my own pedagogic approaches.

Concluding discussion

I now realise that the traditional pedagogy I used in schools and as a teacher trainer focused on propositional concepts and contextual information rather than on developing an understanding of music (Rogers/ISM, 2020) and knowing why music has value (Fautley & Daubney, 2019). When I first entered higher education in 2004, I was tasked with looking after early years and primary music education. I enjoyed going into Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) settings where there was a real sense that each child's perceptions were prioritised. Freedom and choice through play seemed to dominate what was happening. As I spent more time observing teaching in these EYFS settings, it became apparent that there was a relationship between the children's autonomy through play, and their dependence on the teacher to manage the rhythms of the day. Singing was used as a framing device to instil control and order, and carefully prepared spaces with a rich array of resources began the process of knowledge classification: 'classification constructs the nature of social space: stratifications, distributions and locations' (Bernstein, 2000, p.36).

The pedagogy employed by the EYFS teachers appeared emancipatory but included aspects of classification and framing that linked to other types of pedagogy. Within emancipatory education, Alhadeff-Jones (2016: 145) identifies that ‘autonomy and dependence appear as two intertwined qualities that cannot be separated from each other because they are inscribed simultaneously within complementary, antagonistic and contradictory relationships’. The pedagogies in Figure 1 are forms of embodied professional capital and, rather than seeing these pedagogies as separate and fixed, a more fluid relationship, employing different pedagogies at distinct times for specific purposes, seems more appropriate to reflect the complexities of the classroom environment.

Emancipatory pedagogy continues to be aspirational, shifting my pedagogic identity from a teacher trainer to a teacher educator. Teacher educators move from prioritising their own teaching towards prioritising the teaching of others. This became particularly important for me when I became Subject Lead for Music Education in 2008. My professional capital, evidenced through my active agency, shifted over time from teaching my own personal perceptions of creative music practices towards facilitating research-orientated heutagogy within beginning KS3 music teachers (Axtell et al., 2017). Fertile questions (Harpaz, 2014) promoted creative enquiry in communities of thinking. Informed creative activities provided spaces where personal knowings could be shared, critiqued and even transformed. Rather than prioritising data for normative summative assessments, performances became complex demonstrations of understanding (ibid, p.114).

My pedagogic identity was centred on a habitus of vocational pedagogy whilst a KS3 music teacher. Choices within composing activities moved beyond the strong classification of pastiche towards the weaker classification and framing associated with creativity as I sought to counter the impression that there was a ‘right way’ or a ‘right answer’. My vocational pedagogy was still framed, but the framing was weaker because there were spaces for knowings to be negotiated (Carpenter & Bryan, 2019, p.337). Vocational pedagogy became my KS3 music teaching doxa, but to avoid the same happening to beginning KS3 music teachers, I encouraged them to question its application. Experience suggests that learners respond positively to composing, but too many compositions in my KS3 classrooms were Western and commercial (usually through composing songs), reflecting a classification of knowledge that was too strong. Charting my shifting pedagogic identity has revealed my aspiration to apply an emancipatory pedagogy, particularly with beginning KS3 music teachers.

Looking forwards

Critically reflecting on my position within the field of KS3 classroom music teacher education, two aspects of quantity and quality become apparent. Traditional pedagogy firmly centres on quantity, particularly in terms of knowledge acquisition measured through regular testing, whereas emancipatory pedagogy emphasises the quality of social interactions, particularly in terms of how individual people are valued: ‘emancipation as an ongoing movement, built up through always evolving interactions’ (Alhadeff-Jones, 2016, p.146).

The ‘corporeity, discursivity and sociality’ (Alhadeff-Jones, 2016, p.146) that underpins emancipatory pedagogy are features of active agency that underpin identity negotiation and renegotiation (Schutz et al., 2018). Corporeity emphasises a focus on the individual, but discursivity and sociality suggest intersubjective discourses across a field of practice. The language of the ‘education with Es’ (Claxton, 2021, p.112), where corporeity, discursivity and sociality become ‘embodied ... embedded ... enactive’ (van der Schyff, 2018, p.5), merit further research in general classroom music teacher education. Supporting beginning KS3 music teachers to perceive music as a creative art form, I aspired to look forward to the future whilst also drawing inspiration from the past, creating the potential for including ‘extended approaches towards music creativity’ (ibid: 7).

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