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Creative Musical Instrument Teaching and Learning: Participatory Ethnographic Research in
Finland

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Private musical instrument education is common in many countries, including Finland. However, there are extremely high dropouts from the lessons and teachers often face challenges in motivating the children to continue learning. The main goal of this study was to find the most important factors in creative music teaching. In order to achieve the aims of this master's thesis, the following research questions have been used:

1. What can be taught and what creative methods should be used while teaching music to children with various music skills?
2. How to motivate and encourage children to learn playing musical instrument?
3. What influence do the teachers, parents, peers and other social factors have in the children's musical skills development?

The theoretical framework of this study provides the understanding about the creativity as a concept and musical skills development. Besides, it describes the education system, music and musical instrument teaching in Finland. This research gives attention to the ideas of Burnard, P. (2006), Hallam, S. (2009), McPherson, G. & Hallam, S. (2009), Robinson K. (2016) and many other authors.

A qualitative approach and participatory ethnography is used as the research method. Data was collected during the year of 2017 by a music teacher from twelve children, who were attending weekly private musical instrument lessons for at least one year. The main data consists of reflective journals, observations and conversations. As a starting point of data analysis, the colour coding was used in order to organize the data into themes and categories. A qualitative thematic data analysis was chosen as a final data analysis.

The findings revealed three main themes based on the data analysis: *Planning the lessons and performance*, *Creative musical instrument teaching and developing musical skills* and *Motivating and encouraging children to learn musical instrument*. The last theme was divided into 2 sub-themes: *teacher-child interactions* and *practicing at home and parental support*. As the result, there were seven main factors found for creative teaching and learning.

An objective research perspective is used in this study. However, this research cannot be generalized as it is done in a specific environment with the unique participants. Hopefully, this study will be useful for the music educators and parents.

Keywords: creativity, musical instrument lessons, teaching, learning, parent-teacher-child interaction, supporting musical skills development.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Music is all around us, even if we do not notice it – on the radio, television, phone, in the shops and restaurants. It can be described as vocal or instrumental sounds combined in such a way as to produce beauty of form, harmony, and expression of emotion (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2015). Music sounds lead us through our daily lives and it can affect our mood as it's an art form created with feelings. Many children are enrolled into music lessons as early as they show their interest. Private music education seems to be very popular in many countries, including Finland. However, there are also extremely high dropouts from instrumental lessons (McPherson et al., 2012). Creative and child-friendly music teachers should encourage learners to develop and improve their skills. According to Burnard (2013, p. 6-7), child's creative engagement and endeavours are highly dependent on the teacher's creativity. Besides, the other social factors, such as parental support and peer interactions seem to have a huge impact in child's musical development.

1.1 Research context

It is important to mention that this research is carried out in Oulu, Finland. Therefore, I will shortly portray the contextual background. Finland is one of the Nordic countries, which population is around 5,5 million people and there are two official languages: Finnish and Swedish. Notably, Finnish education system is recognized globally.



Figure 1. Finland on the Europe map (www.mapsland.com)

Furthermore, my research is carried in the central city of Finland – Oulu. It is the 4th biggest city in Finland with the population of 200,000. There are around 50 primary schools, over 10 music schools and many more private music teachers. My research is carried out with 12 primary school pupils from 3 different schools in Oulu.



Figure 2. Large map of Finland with cities (www.mapsland.com)

1.2 Research context and background

There is a personal motive to research in the field of private musical instrument education and it is important to acknowledge my own background. I studied music for about 10 years in Lithuania, starting with the piano, singing and theory lessons at the governmental Children’s Music School and continuing with guitar and band lessons at the private music school. I have been organizing private music lessons in Finland for more than 4 years and I have most of my teaching experience with 6-11 years old children. I am profoundly interested to deepen my knowledge about the Finnish music education and finding the most important factors in creative musical instrument teaching.

I have chosen participatory ethnography as a research methodology as I am a music teacher and a researcher at the same time. I have selected to study 12 children who were enrolled into private musical instrument lessons for a minimum one year. The main research data are the field notes with my observations from the teacher's perspective. In addition, the data are supported by visuals, recordings, conversations with and a short questionnaire for the parents. After the data analysis, I will draw the conclusions about creative teaching, children's musical skills development and the importance of teacher-parent collaboration. To help me achieve the research goal, I will rely on my personal teaching experience and the studies that have been made previously.

1.3 Research questions

Many authors (e.g. Saarilahti, Cramond and Sieppi, 1999) agree that fostering creativity in children is important in Finnish education. Kampylis (2011, p. 47) suggests that teachers could be divided into two main groups: those who implement creativity into classroom activities and those who think that creativity can be fostered only through extracurricular and after-school activities. My research question for master's thesis changed several times during the research process, but finally it was formed into being the following one:

What are the most important factors in creative music teaching?

This research focuses on 7-11 years old children and in order to find the answer to the main research question, the following sub-questions are asked:

1. What can be taught and what creative methods should be used while teaching music to children with various music skills?
2. How to motivate and encourage children to learn playing musical instrument?
3. What influence do the teachers, parents, peers and other social factors have in the children's musical skills development?

2 KEY CONCEPTS IN CREATIVE MUSIC EDUCATION

According to Hart (in Silverman, 2013, p. 342), a literature review should focus on the subject area and problem, explain the research topic, design and methodology. In this chapter I will start with discussion on the concept of creativity and explain its importance in education, especially in music teaching. After that, I will continue focusing on the important factors that might affect the learning process and outcomes while developing musical skills.

2.1 The concept of creativity

Creativity is a very common term, used in an instantly changing world. Before 1950, the creativity was neglected as a research topic and Guilford brought it up as a term important to study in order to understand. From 1975 creativity was discussed mainly in the journals related to psychology, but still not so common in research journals. In order to understand creativity, Stenberg (1999) discussed six different approaches:

1. Pragmatic – practical approach, developing creativity and understanding it. Mostly studied by De Bono in 1992;
2. Psychodynamic – theoretical approach, understanding creativity as tension between consciousness and unconsciousness. Studied by Freud;
3. Psychometric approach – studying the creativity in everyday subjects with paper-and-pencil tasks. Proposed by Guilford in 1950;
4. Cognitive approach – understanding creative thoughts through mental processes and representations. Researched by Finke, Ward and Smith in 1992;
5. Social-personality approaches – focusing on the sources of creativity, such as personality, motivation and socio-cultural environment. Studied by Amabile in 1983, Baron in 1968/1969, MacKinnon in 1965 and other researchers;

Confluence approaches are the most recent ones, agreeing that creativity is converged by multiple components. Researched by Csikszentmihalyi in 1988, Gardner in 1993, Weisberg in 1993 and other authors.

There are quite many approaches by researchers who tried to understand and explain the complexity of creativity for the last 8 decades. However, at present it still seems to be quite often misunderstood by many people. Although, the most common definition for creativity is used by referring to originality and usefulness of ideas and objects that people create (e.g. Sternberg

1999 & Mayer 1999 in Rikandi, 2010, p. 87-88). Does that mean that only innovative people can be creative? According to Mayer (in Rikandi, 2010, p. 89), people can be differentiated by those who are creative and those who are not. On the other hand, there are authors who suggest that everyone can be creative (e.g. Uusikylä 2002, Vygotsky 1998, in Rikandi, 2010, p. 90-91). For instance, solving certain problems can involve creativity on an individual level. Therefore, until today many people explain the term creativity in different ways.

To continue with, it seems to be very popular to use the term creativity in many organizations, businesses and education institutions. However, it often turns out that it is used just in theory rather than practice. In the field of education, Sir Kevin Robinson is one of the famous professors and speakers working for the change. He stands for creativity as a crucial skill in a rapidly changing world (Robinson & Azzam 2009). Moreover, this author believes that many schools and systems are educating the creativity out of children. Therefore, Robinson (2016) suggests that most of educational systems around the world should be completely changed and the whole curriculum should be supported by creativity as it exists in every field, including the arts, the sciences, mathematics and business.

According to Pachet (in Deliege & Wiggins, 2006, p. 350), the personal enjoyment, excitement and well-being are highly involved in creative process. There should be a teacher and pupil involved in finding the ways to think creatively. Referring to Muhonen (in Rikandi, 2010, p. 96), in order to teach creatively, educators should have a creative attitude towards teaching, be open to children's impulses and be aware of changes. To add, the educators should give their students the tools to experiment and innovate rather than the answers and solutions (Azzam & Robinson 2009, p. 26). Therefore, it is important for teachers to be creative in finding ways to make their lessons interesting that students would enjoy learning and creating processes.

In music and other arts, creativity is often seen as fundamental skill. However, music is not necessarily creative itself, but there can be creativity in every musical action (Muhonen 2010, in Rikandi, 2010, p. 95). The social context is very important in music learning in order to develop musical creativity (Burnard 2006). In Finnish curricula it is well understood that creativity in music should be taught, encouraged and fostered by participation in the creative activities (Burnard 2006; Uusikylä 2001 in Rikandi, 2010, p. 95). Nevertheless, many teachers agree that it is a challenging task to handle creativity in the music classroom with many students. Therefore, a student is often treated as a receiver while many teachers prefer taking the leader's role. Referring to Burnard (2013, p. 10), a creative teacher should:

- Support children in their own music learning as a co-creator, but not instructor;
- Find the ways to engage children’s imagination and invention;
- Support children in taking risks and trying new approaches;
- Encourage children to evaluate and assess their own and each other’s work.

Correspondingly, creativity in the classroom mainly depends on the educator’s role, used methods and tools in music teaching. In the next chapter, I will discuss about the musical skills development and the important factors that might have a huge impact for the learning process and outcomes.

2.2 Developing musical skills

Gaunt & Hallam suggest that musical engagement outcomes can be influenced by individual characteristics, such as cognitive and learning styles, personality, age, gender and psychological characteristics (in Hallam, et al., 2009, p. 274). Some people are learning better through visuals, while the others through aural, verbal, logical or physical activities. To add, girls seem to be more interested in playing classical music, dealing with notation and singing while boys are more successful in composition and improvisation. Moreover, age affects learning as well because of physical development, ability to focus and learn, motivation and certain musical taste. According to Coffman (2002, in Gaunt & Hallam, 2009, p. 276), different ages involve different learning strategies. Also, the learning process and instrumental choice can depend on individual temperament and if a person is an extrovert or an introvert. As we can see, individual characteristics play an important role in music skills development.

Music learning can be also influenced by the specific environment and cultural background. Children’s musical development often highly depends on the support from the family members and home environment. The young learner usually engages more fully with music, when parents believe that their child has musical ability, provide musical resources and reward musical activities (McPherson & Hallam, 2009, p. 256). However, some learners receive the encouragement from the people around them and some others patiently practice to play the instrument in the isolated environment, on their own (Hallam, et al., 2009, p. 278). Quite often children are actively or passively asking for parental support in practicing and understanding the tasks and parents feel that they are not be capable to help because they do not have certain musical skills or time for that. In contrast, family members might remind for child to practice playing certain songs while a child refuses to play because of he or she prefers doing something else or is not

in the mood to play a musical instrument. Therefore, the environment and people in it can be also affected by a music learner (Hallam, et al., 2009, p. 291).

Referring to Gross (2005, in McPherson & Hallam, 2009, p. 255), systematic musical instrument practice and learning can improve intelligence, memory and language development. Therefore, practicing and training can lead to a great musical skills development. McPherson & Hallam (2009, p. 260) suggest 6 main skills, such as aural, cognitive, technical, musicianship, performance and learning, that are required for all or particular musical activities (see in Table 1). The cognitive skills seems to be involved into many musical instrument learning activities, including the understanding keys, harmony and the structure of music; reading the music; composing, etc. While learning skills allow to be able to learn, monitor and evaluate the progress individually. Therefore, there seem to be quite many skills involved into musical instrument learning process.

Table 1. The main skills needed for musical activities (adapted from McPherson & Hallam, 2009, p. 260)

Aural skills required for:	Developing rhythmic accuracy and a sense of pulse; Good intonation; The facility to know how music will sound without having to play it; Improvisational skills.
Cognitive skills required in the process off:	Reading music; Transposition; Understanding keys; Understanding harmony; Understanding the structure of music; The memorization of music; Composing; Understanding different musical styles and their cultural and historic contexts.
Technical skills required for developing:	Instrument specific skills; Technical agility; Articulation; Expressive tone quality.
Musicianship skills are concerned with:	Being able to play expressively; Being able to project sound; Developing control; Conveying meaning.

Performance skills include:	Being able to communicate with an audience; Communicating with other performers; Being able to coordinate a group; Presenting to an audience.
Learning skills are concerned with:	Being able to learn, monitor and evaluate progress independently.

It is quite difficult to tell why some children continue learning to play musical instrument for many years while others stop attending the lessons after a year or two. Referring to Hallam, some pupils might drop-out from instrumental lessons because of their poor ability to understand instructions, poor self-concept in reading music and lower socio-economic status (2009, p. 291). Hurley (1995, in McPherson & Hallam, 2009, p. 258) suggests that too challenging tasks might lead children to give up learning as they notice that the required efforts are too great. Csikszentmihalyi (1990, in Deliege & Wiggins, 2006, p. 350-351) created the theory of Flow that describes the balance between challenges and skills that creates certain emotional states (see in Figure 3). For instance, if a piano student has high skills and gets tasks with no challenges, he or she will be bored during the lessons. Consequently, if a child is given high challenge while having low skills, he or she might be feeling anxious. Pupils are often motivated by few, but not all musical activities (Hallam, et al., 2009, p. 291). As a result, it is important for teachers to know the interests and skills of their students before giving the tasks with certain level of challenges.

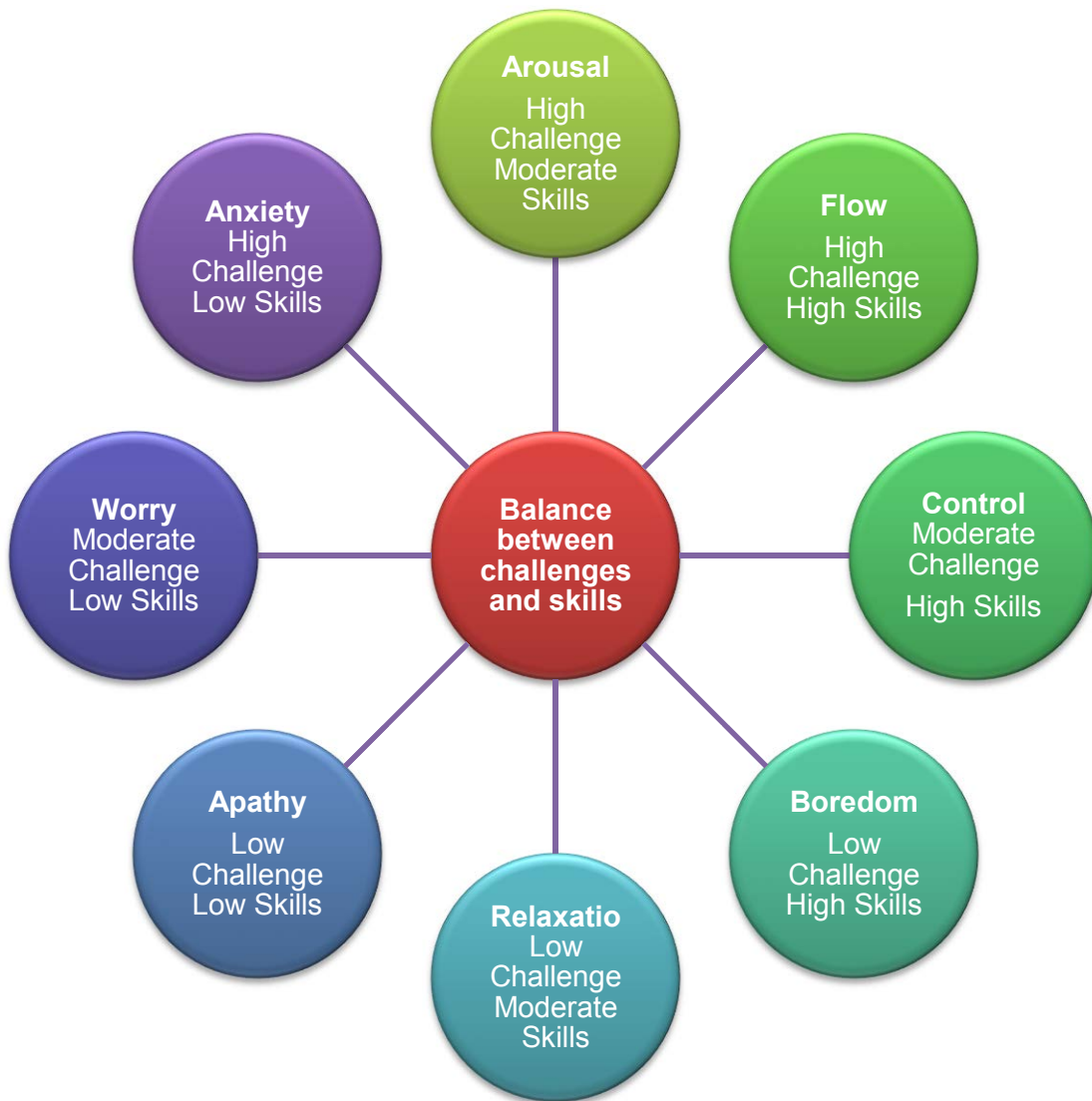


Figure 3. Flow diagram with emotional states according the balance between skills and challenges (adapted from Deliege & Wiggins, 2006, p. 352)

3 EDUCATION SYSTEM AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENT TEACHING IN FINLAND

In this chapter I will discuss about the Finnish education system in general. Furthermore, I will review the previous studies on the music education in primary schools, music schools and private musical instrument lessons. Finally, I will discuss about the importance of interactions between teacher-child-parent and performances in children's musical skills development.

3.1 Finnish education system

To begin with, Finnish education system is exemplary for many other countries, especially because of its steady progression. Since the early 1970s, there were four strategic principles created for improving learning of all students:

- Guarantee equal opportunities to good public education for all;
- Strengthen professionalism of and trust in teachers;
- Steer educational change by enriched information about the process and performance of teaching and schooling;
- Facilitate network-based school improvement.

The autonomy of choice in early 1990s has built the professional responsibilities for schools and teachers. The teaching and learning is the main focus of educators as there is no control, testing or ranking among the schools. (Sahlberg, 2010, p. 55-56)

The education and culture is recorded in the Finnish Constitution. The right to receive an education is provided for every resident in Finland. Consequently, the basic education is free of charge and compulsory until 16 years old according the Finnish law. The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for educational policies. The Finnish National Agency for Education is responsible for educational development and training, early childhood education and lifelong learning, and internationalization. Local administration makes the decisions on the funding distribution and local curricula. The schools in Finland have autonomy and the principals can make the final decisions on the school year plans and staff members. (Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture)

According to Allsup (2011, p. 50), public school students need motivated and talented educators for a great perspectives in the changing world. Teachers are required high quality education and

it is often chosen profession in Finland. A Master's degree is required in most educational tasks, including the field of music education. Teachers are given pedagogical autonomy and they can make decisions while choosing the teaching methods and materials. Educators are recognized as a key factor for the quality of education in Finland. Children should be treated as individuals and be able to proceed according to their own capabilities with the help of teachers. (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2018)

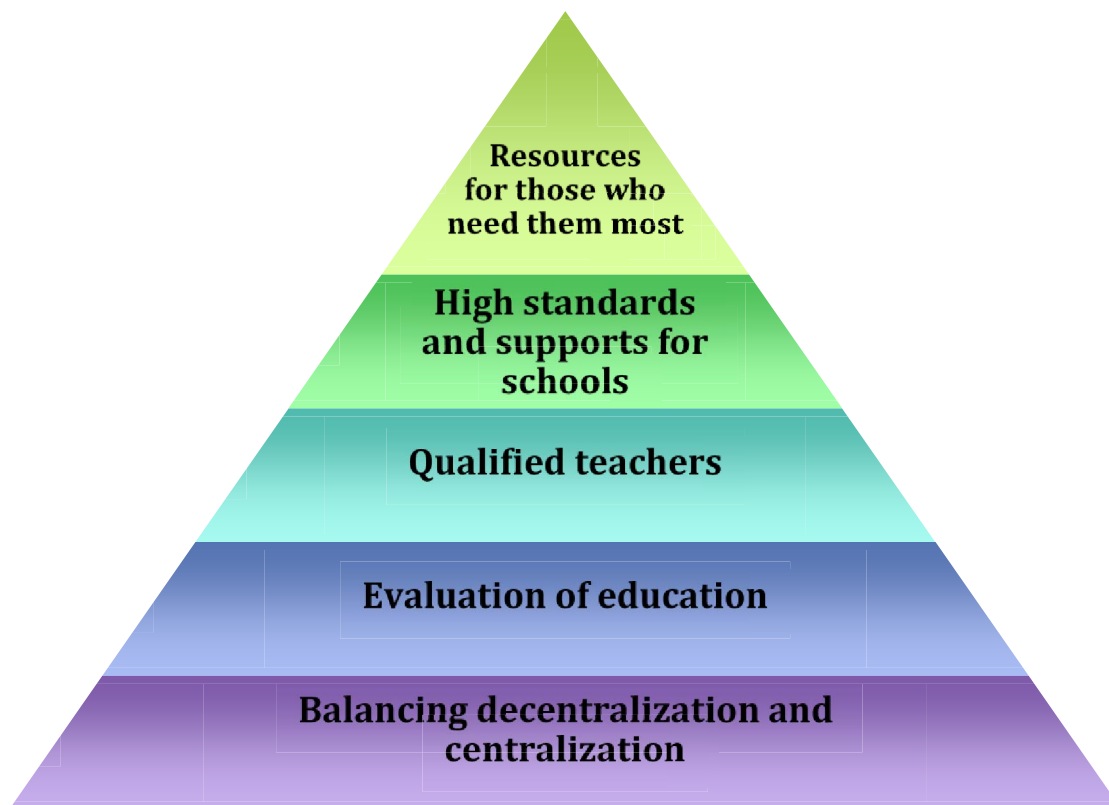


Figure 4. Finnish teaching and learning system (adapted from Laukkanen, 2008, in Darling-Hammond, 2009, p. 18)

Laukkanen (2008, in Darling-Hammond, 2009, p. 18) summarised the main principles of the Finnish education system that meets the needs of all students and seeks for equable outcomes (see in Figure 4). The system is changed from centralized to more localized and that builds more trusting community. Besides, there are big investments in teacher's education and financial support for schools in order to sustain high quality education. Most importantly, the equality is based on necessary resources for the ones in need. Now I will focus on formal and informal music education in Finland.

3.2 Music education and musical instrument teaching in Finland

The subjects such as physical education, music, arts and crafts are the core ones in Finnish comprehensive schools. In primary schools (grades 1-6), music is taught by the class teachers who had completed Music as their Minor in Master's degree program in education. However, the music classes can be given by a music teacher if the general class teacher does not meet the requirements. The content of music lessons shall include singing, listening, instrument playing, movement and composing. Referring to Korpela et al., the main objectives for music education at primary schools in Finland are:

1. Building a creative relationship with music and its expressive possibilities;
2. Being able to be a member of a music-making group;
3. Learning to evaluate and examine various sound environments;
4. Knowing various musical styles and genres;
5. Learning to understand the music elements (as discussed in Rikandi, 2010, p. 21).

From 1990-1991, school club activities became quite popular among pupil. The participation in club activities is free of charge and voluntary. Referring to Rajala R. (in Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010), the first most popular club activity is sports and the second – music. Cultural hobbies, especially instrumental lessons, are very popular among young people. Therefore, besides the basic schools, extracurricular activities are offered all over the country by various music institutes, conservatories and art schools, mostly maintained by local authorities, registered associations and private business (Rikandi, 2010, p. 25). Around two from five children have more than one creative hobby and around one in four has at least three hobbies in Finland. According to Ministry of Education and Culture (2010):

“The factors motivating young people to pursue cultural hobbies include a sense of joy, experiences and a sense of success, the opportunity for self-expression, for creation and for learning, and guidance and feedback. The encouragement of parents, especially the mother, is crucial.”

Many researchers and music teachers would most likely agree that parental support is crucial in children's musical learning. However, there are exceptional cases, when children become high-level musicians without any parental support. Creech A. (2009, p. 304) suggests that the positive learning results may be achieved when parents are:

- Clarifying what parental involvement their children need;
- Negotiating with their children over practicing issues, within teacher's parameters;

- Providing the environment for practice;
- Promoting good teacher-pupil relation;
- Communicating with the teacher regarding the child's progress;
- Remaining interested in child's learning and outcomes.

According to Lundström (in McPherson & Graham, 2012 Vol. 2, p. 653), music education is a field that involves various practices, depending on the specific aims. Some pupil can be learning music just for fun while others are willing to become professional or amateur musicians. Lundström also discusses some challenges for music education and gives few suggestions for the music teachers:

- Understanding the position of music education within other subjects. The changes in the learning contexts should be noticed by music teachers even outside the school.
- Considering the music education as complementary to other ways of learning. Teachers should support all the competences pupil bring with them to school.
- Developing various methods that children could learn together in a social context (in McPherson & Graham, 2012 Vol. 2, p. 655-656).

Music teachers and parents seem to take a very important part in children's' learning in most cases. Besides, for the best learning experience and outcomes, there should be an interaction between all three participants: parent-pupil-teacher, as shown in the Figure 5.

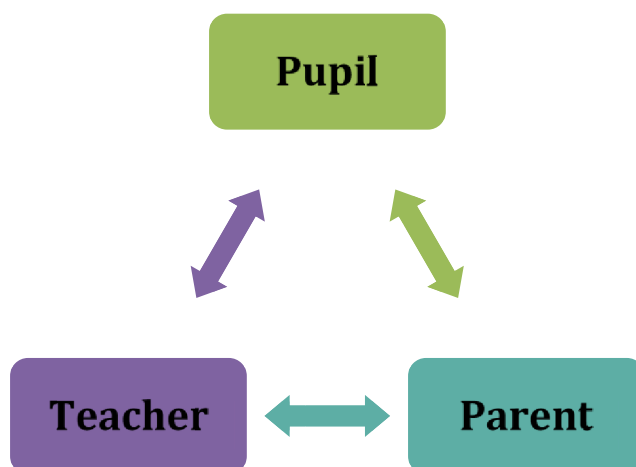


Figure 5. The main social factors in musical instrument learning (adapted from Baumrind & Birtchnell in Creech, 2009, p. 301)

To continue with, performing in public is seen as the main goal of musical instrument lessons in classical Western music (Hallam et al., 2009, p. 278). However, in Finland many educators

allow for children to choose if they want to perform or not. Finnish schools are based on democracy, participation and collaboration. Music performances are seen as rituals and there are at least two musical events per school year. In addition to the winter and spring performances, many schools celebrate other Finnish and International festivals, such as Independence Day, talent shows, Valentine's day. According to Small (in Rikandi, 2010, p. 49-50), musical performance can be seen as a sense of identity, taking part and modelling the relationships of an ideal society during the performance. Wulf states that community usually does its best to bring on the stage what is good and valuable (as referred in Rikandi, 2010, p. 57). Teachers have an increased responsibility while organizing the musical events. They are expected to encourage pupil taking an active and creative part in the events, not necessarily performing, but helping to create an event by taking speaker's part, making decorations, helping to arrange the venue for the event. Performances create a great learning environment that offers a possibility to build children's own identity through active participation and collaboration.

According to Scruton, Finnish child-centered education system brings down the most of talented pupil by drawing more attention to the slower ones (in Rikandi, 2010, p. 63). This author suggests bringing a competitive element into education by introducing pupil to the best cultural achievements as it would benefit the children who are able to receive it and culture. Besides, Scruton argues that expecting for all the children to be performing music is equal to appreciation of every child as being the best (2007, p. 30). From the other point of view, Nikkanen states that the possibility to perform often motivates pupil to work on better quality (in Rikandi, 2010, p. 63). Instead of asking pupil if they want to perform, it could be rather asked if there is something they want to do for a performance as some children might be interested in helping with decorations more than performing on a stage. Therefore, if children with various musical skills are performing, there should not be very high quality expectations as they might have different capabilities.

4 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN MUSICAL INSTRUMENT TEACHING

As many authors would agree, there could be more research conducted in the field of musical instrument teaching (Harris & Crozier, 2000; Gaunt, 2004; Golby, 2004). This type of study can be more challenging in comparison with the music education in general because the informal teaching can differ according to individual educator as it usually does not follow standardised models (Kannell, 2002). However, despite the challenges, there are few researchers made in the area of musical instrument teaching. For instance, teaching and learning in one-on-one and small-group settings (Daniel, 2006) and skill development while learning to play an instrument (McPherson, 2005).

In this chapter, I will discuss about my research. Firstly, this research is empirical because it includes the data analysis. I used the qualitative methodology and participatory ethnography as an approach in order to reach my research goals. My data is mainly drawn from the reflective journals, observations and conversations that cannot be generalized. I believe that grounded theory would be the most suitable for this study because it started with the research questions and qualitative data collection. Secondly, I will describe my research participants and the choosing criteria that I used in order to find the most important factors in creative musical instrument teaching. Thirdly, the process of data collection and analysis will be reviewed and explained in this chapter. I shall start with discussion about the research methodology.

4.1 Research methodology and grounded theory

This study is qualitative because it focuses on a small group of participants in the natural context in order to answer the research questions with a deeper understanding. Referring to Janesick (2010 in Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 244), a good qualitative research design should go over procedures that are open-ended and rigorous. The participatory ethnography was chosen as the methodological approach for this study because the data were based the reflective journals and my own role as a teacher and researcher. As Patton (2015) states, early anthropology is the origin of ethnography as a qualitative research approach. Referring to Walcott (2008), the “participant observation”, that describes the way of seeing, is the synonym for ethnographic study (in Patton, 2015).

Researchers should make sure that the theory closely fits to the certain area, where they want to investigate (Glaser & Strauss, 2017). Grounded theory is used in this study as I have started from the empirical research questions and data collection instead of focusing on theoretical framework. According to Morse (2007, p. 229), the structure of grounded theory is unique because researchers develop various forms of concepts in different research stages and phases. Moreover, the same author suggests that these concepts should be somehow related to each other. Therefore, I tried my best in connecting the research questions and main themes within the field of creative musical instrument teaching. In the next chapter I will discuss in details about the research participants.

4.2 Research participants

During the year of 2017, I organized instrumental lessons for around 30 children of various age groups. I sent a parental permission form (Appendix 4) for 25 parents to sign and 20 forms were returned. Even though I teach children from 2 to 15 years old, I decided to focus on twelve 1st-5th graders, 7-11 years old children because I have the most experience working with this age group. All 12 parents and children agreed that I could collect my research data from the lessons. Therefore, in the Table 2 the participants are listed according their birth year.

Table 2. Research participants according to their birth year

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1 participant	3 participants	5 participants	1 participant	2 participants

Therefore, the main research group consists of 6 boys and 6 girls were attending the lessons for minimum one year (from January to December). This study aims to find the creative music teaching factors after analysing 7-11 years old age group children with various musical skills rather than focusing on gender differences. I find it important to know the children for longer period of time as then they are more open while discussing various topics and answering my questions. Instead of carrying out the interviews with children, I have been observing them and filling the notes after the lessons because I could get a relevant information from the conversations with the pupils, their parents and my own observations. I have been asking various questions, for example, about the children's feelings, motivation, practicing, performing and what makes the lessons to be interesting.

Furthermore, the research participants are with various musical skills and cultural backgrounds. Six research participants are Finnish, two partly Finnish and partly other nationalities, four - other nationality. Six children are taking piano lessons, five children – guitar and one child learns to play both instruments. Ten participants are attending also in the monthly band lessons besides the instrument lessons, one participant attended just few band lessons and one participant did not enrol into band lessons at all. The children can be also divided according to the musical instrument lessons types as shown in the Figure 6.

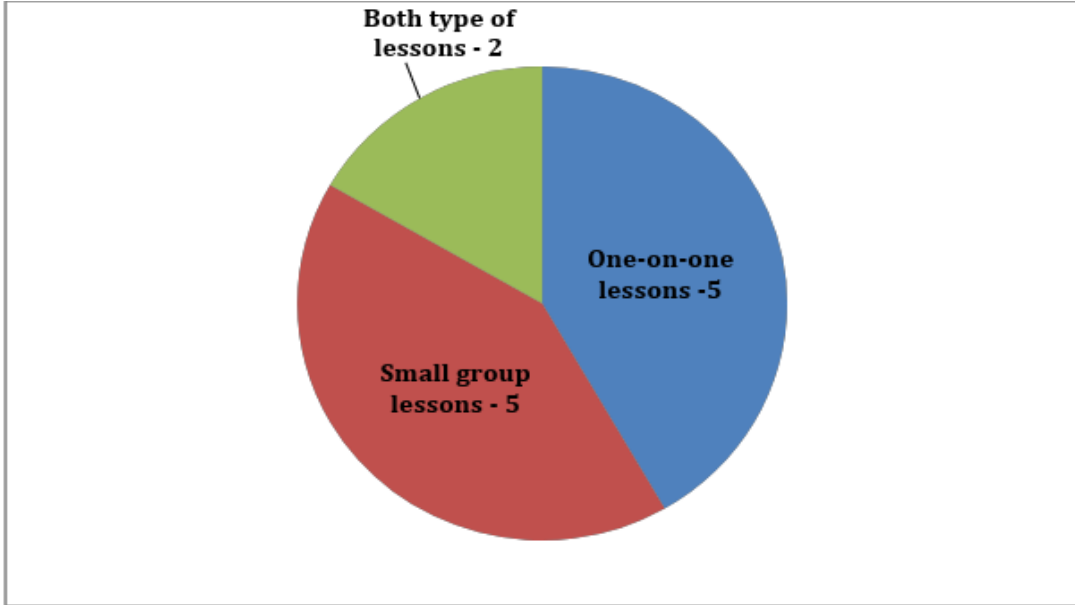


Figure 6. Research participants learning in small groups and one-on-one lessons

To add, I have a quite close relationship with all the parents and this will contribute to my research. I communicate by email or in person before/after the lessons with all the parents. Additionally, I sent a short questionnaire for the parents (see the questions in Appendix 5). However, I got just 6 answered out of 12. Therefore, I can use the information from the conversations and email messages with the parents. My own role in this study is a teacher and researcher.

4.3 Research process and data collection

I spent a lot of time creating one-on-one and group lessons’ plans as I teach 2-15 years old children with various musical skills. According my teaching experience, most of children really enjoy their private music lessons, where they can be themselves, express their feelings through music and have a teacher who is supportive and motivating. Consequently, most of the children

enjoy playing the music with/for others. Therefore, besides the usual instrumental lessons, most of my pupils join the band lessons that we have once a month (3 weeks instrumental lessons and 1 week of band lessons in a month) and concerts twice a year.

I have been writing a reflective journal during the year 2017 (see an example in Appendix 1). Besides the weekly lessons, in June I have organized 5 days lasting Music course for 7-10 years old children. I had a group of 4 and I made a plan for every day with various educational activities, related with music. I got permissions from all the parents to record their children, so I could record some moments from that week. I have also written the teacher's diary after every project's day. However, I feel that those 5 days were not enough for my data, so I decided to continue writing lessons plans and reflective journal after the weekly lessons in the following Autumn. Therefore, now I have one full year of teacher's diary, which consists of around 95 pages, written day by day, week by week.

4.4 Data analysis

In this research, the main data were the reflective journals, written after the musical instrument lessons. Besides the observations, the questionnaires for the parents, conversations, recordings and visuals were used as supplement for the observations in order to make this research reliable and as objective as possible.

The primary research plan I had, was to collect the data during the two weeks summer music course, but I could do that only for one week and it seemed to be not enough for carrying research for the Master's thesis. Therefore, I was lucky to start the reflective journal on musical instrument lessons from the beginning of 2017 and I decided to continue until the end of the year. Consequently, within 8 months I have collected a large amount of primary data and it seemed to be a little challenging to start organizing it.

As a starting point of the data analysis, I was re-reading my reflective journals and using colour coding in order to organize the data into themes and categories. It is important to mention, that my reflective journals included some primary analysis besides the observations, descriptions of the important events and situations in details. This helped me in doing the further analysis. Later, I have analysed the answers to my questions for the parents, even though only 6 from 12 have answered (see in Appendix 5). In addition, I reviewed all the recordings and visual data that was collected and can be useful for this research (see in Appendix 7).

Thematic analysis is commonly used in qualitative research (Buetow, 2010). The data, collected in this study, was analysed using qualitative thematic analysis, which aims to find the codes in order to answer the research questions. I have listed all the participants from 1 to 12 in a table and analysed them, using colour coding, according the main themes:

- Amount of hobbies,
- Teacher-child interaction,
- Motivating and encouraging factors,
- Practicing at home and parental support,
- Developing musical skills (see in Appendix 6).

At the last stage of data analysis, the main research themes were picked: *Planning the lessons and performance, Creative musical instrument teaching and developing musical skills and Motivating and encouraging children to learn musical instrument*. Additionally the last theme was divided into 2 sub-themes: *teacher-child interactions and practicing at home and parental support*. The next chapter will focus on research reliability, validity and ethical concerns.

4.5 Research reliability, validity and ethical concerns

The reliability of this study should be stated clearly as I take part as a teacher and researcher at the same time. Consequently, the main data analysis is done from my own observations and experiences as a teacher. From the very beginning of this research, I tried to be as objective as possible and reveal if any mistakes or errors occurred.

Qualitative research can be often neglected by ethics committees because of it is found a unscientific (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 244). Especially researchers working with children have to be very careful and meet all the requirements in order not to break children's rights. Before conducting the research, I have sent the parental permissions for the parents, asking to participate in this study (see in Appendix 4). Furthermore, all the research participants have agreed that I can record, take pictures, videos and use all the needed information in my research. Therefore, I had to make sure that all the data that I use for my research will be anonymous. For example, instead of writing children's names I use the coding: "Participant 1", "Participant 2", etc. The age gender and nationality of the children are mentioned only in a research group description instead of describing each of them in individually (see in chapter 3.4. research participants).

I must mention that the aim of this study is to explore and discuss the factors in creative musical instrument teaching. Consequently, it cannot be generalized as this research is carried out in a specific environment with the unique participants. Therefore, it would be hard to replace this research and results with other group of people. However, this research can be definitely supplemented with the further investigations, including different educators, teaching methods and students.

5 THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

I have chosen three main themes based on the data analysis: *Planning the lessons and performance, Creative musical instrument teaching and developing musical skills and Motivating and encouraging children to learn musical instrument*. The last theme was divided into 2 sub-themes: *teacher-child interactions and practicing at home and parental support*.

5.1 Planning the lessons and performances

I usually start long-term planning for the instrument lessons after the winter and summer holidays. As I teach in small groups and one-to-one lessons, every child gets his or her own personal plan, sheet music and tasks for developing musical skills. I always ask children if they like and want to learn particular songs, but often younger children do not know and I find and create various sheet music, theory tasks, games and other educational activities for instrumental the lessons myself. I have noticed that many children can already choose what kind of music they like and prefer to play after about a year of musical instrument lessons.

In addition to the long-term planning, I create the plans for weekly lessons a day or few days in advance. However, these short-term plans often change because I am always aware about children's feelings: they might not be in the mood to play certain song or too tired to learn something new. Therefore, I try to be as flexible as possible and willing to change my previous plans that children would enjoy learning to play the musical instrument. For example, if someone is not interested in learning songs from the sheet music, I might offer to play songs without the notes, improvise or create. If children come sad or tired to the lesson, I might play them some happy melodies or show few music videos that could make them feel better. The long-term and short-term plans can have many changes, when the teacher responds to children's feelings and interests.

To add, many 7-11 years old pupils who take piano or guitar lessons also enrol in the band lessons organized once a month in a group of 5-8 children. During these lessons they learn how to play musical instrument and sing in a group. Also, in the group lessons pupils learn to listen more carefully to the teacher and each other. Besides the instrument and band lessons, twice a year I organize performances, where my students can participate voluntarily and show their learning progress and results while playing for an audience (see in appendix 6). In the Spring concert 2017, there were 20 performers and Winter concert "Music from Around the World"

2017 there were 15 performers. Preparation for the concerts increases my, as a teacher's, responsibilities because I have to find and reserve the suitable place with the stage in advance, create posters, advertise the performance and send the reminders for the parents, regarding the rehearsals and concert (see in appendix 6). Therefore, I encourage children to collaborate and create the decorations, prepare the concert venue, take a part as the speakers or helpers during the performance. I have found that most of children seem to be very enthusiastic during all the preparation and they often put many efforts in learning to play the songs very well for the performance.

As the Figure 7 shows, most of the research participants are very excited about the possibility to perform or feel fine to participate in the concert. I also offer for the children to perform for each other during the group lessons and most of them are often willing to. I do my best to encourage pupils to perform, but they all can always decide if they want to. As McPherson & Hallam (2009), I believe that performing helps in building many important skills, such as presenting to an audience, coordinating a group, communication with the audience and other performers (see in Table 1). Besides, I would like to add, that performances build the self-confidence in children and teaches them collaboration.

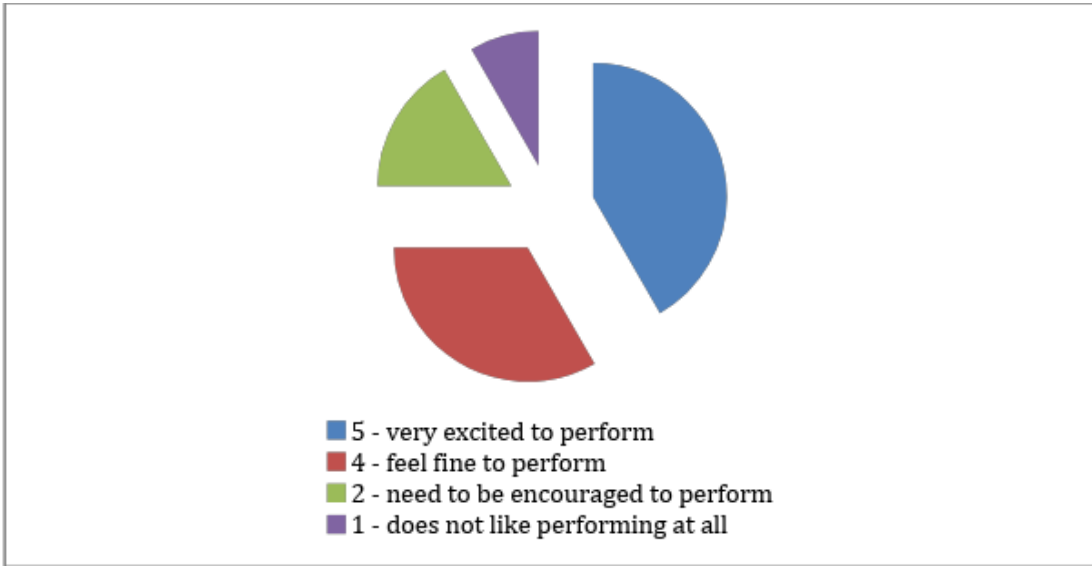


Figure 7. Children's willingness to perform for parents and friends.

At last, I find it important to plan the music lessons in advance, but also to be flexible and creative for making the changes. Therefore, the performance opportunities help for children to develop additional skills. The next theme is about creative musical instrument teaching and developing musical skills.

5.2 Creative musical instrument teaching and developing musical skills

I have attended 7 years music school myself, where my main instrument was piano. In order to get a certificate, I had to complete piano, music theory and music history lessons, yearly tests and the final exams. After that, I have learnt to play guitar in a private music studio and later I played in a band. Therefore, when I came to Finland and started studying about education, I have found that the system is so different here: the private music schools and teachers are very popular; most of the parents allow for their children to choose if they want to concentrate on one instrument or stop learning after some time and try out something new; children can start learning to play the musical instrument just for fun, without any future goals; pupils can also choose to perform or not. Trying out something new and finding yourself is very important during the childhood. However, when parents allow for children to choose every time, they might be giving up on all the hobbies they try after some time and still would not know what they really want.

Often children come without any or little experience in playing the musical instrument and I start teaching them from the very basics. During the very first lessons, I introduce easy and fun songs to play that pupils would enjoy playing an instrument and would want to learn more. Later, I start teaching notation, music theory and history in addition to the musical instrument playing skills. For some children colouring the notes works, others prefer writing down the notes in letters or making up and remembering the phrases for the space and line notes works better. I try to find out what are the best methods for each child to learn.

Most of the children seem to enjoy playing an instrument very much. However, each pupil might have different learning preferences and during one year of study, I was able to recognize them in children. Most of the research participants seem to have at least 2 learning preferences and some of them have 1 or 3. The physical learning preference could be recognized only in 2 children, while verbal in 3, visual in 6 and aural in 8 (see in figure 8).

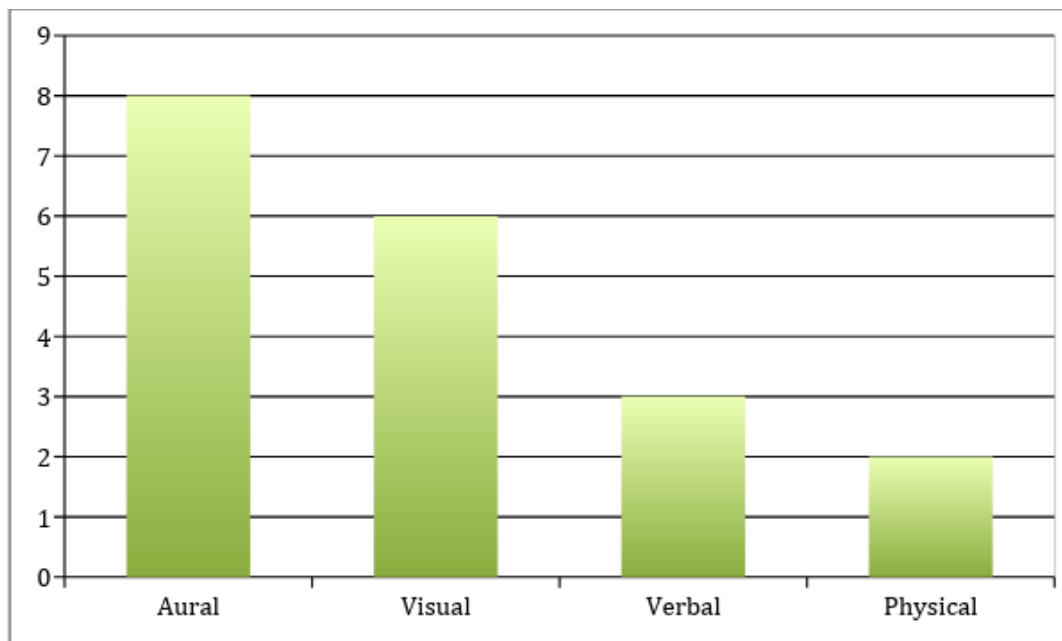


Figure 8. Children's learning preferences according their skills.

By getting to know the learning preferences, I am able to choose the best teaching methods that are suitable for each child. For example, if the student has good aural learning skills, I usually play the song before we start learning it. However, if child has good visual learning skills, I start teaching to recognize the notes, play them and only after that I show how the song sounds by playing it myself at the end of the lesson. Besides using children's strengths in learning, I also try to help them improving their weaker skills. For instance, if it seems difficult for pupil to recognize the song by hearing it, I try to give more listening tasks and if child has difficulties to remember the notation, I create various tasks and games with the music notes.

During the lessons with primary school students (1-6 graders) I mainly teach their chosen instrument, piano or guitar. However, during the lessons we also clap or tap various rhythms, play games in order to remember the notes or music theory. Also, when piano students learn the song very well, I often join playing the chords with guitar and other way around for guitar students.

Many of 7-11 years old children (11 out of 12 research participants), besides their instrument lessons attend the monthly band lessons (see in Appendix 6). For these lessons, I often write the sheet music or rhythms myself. I also teach body percussion and include other fun learning elements that children would enjoy playing in the group. Furthermore, during the band lessons pupils can try out different instruments, such as musical tubes, shakers, xylophones or drums. Learners can also perform for each other, learn to listen more carefully and play in a group

including various instruments. Finally, sometimes we watch music videos and play, sing or dance along, especially during the last lessons before the holidays. I have found that the band lessons and performances have a great implementation besides the usual musical instrument lessons.

Finally, I have observed that musically gifted children are often used to reach the best results without putting many efforts, but at the same time they get bored so easily during the lessons. Therefore, teacher always needs to make sure that children have enough tasks and balanced challenges. The next section will be focusing on motivating and encouraging children to learn musical instrument.

5.3 Motivating and encouraging children to learn musical instrument

I believe that teachers should be great motivators and encouragers for children. Furthermore, I have found that parental support and practicing at home has a great impact in children's music skills development. Finally, some primary school pupils have a great variety of hobbies, while some others just one or two, and it might affect their motivation on learning too. Therefore, this theme is combined of 2 sub-themes: teacher-student interactions and practicing at home and parental support.

5.3.1 Teacher-child interactions

During one-on-one piano lessons I always sit next to my student and in small group guitar lessons we are sitting in the circle. My opening words are: "how are you, how was your day/week?", I usually continue with "what did you play at home" and end with "high-five and have a nice day!" (see in Appendices 2 and 3). I have noticed that giving high-five is very important for most of boys that are learning in a group (5 out of 6) and they always remember it before leaving the classroom (see in Appendix 6).

I always try to do my best in organizing various activities for the pupils to learn musical instrument. In addition, I always interact with my students during the lessons and I keep in touch with their parents via email or in person before and after the lessons. I believe that close teacher-child-parent relations build trust between them. I have noticed that quite many children are very sincere and they tell me many personal things, especially if they are attending one-to-one music lessons. I am always trying to listen if child has something to tell, also before or after the lesson.

I have quite close relation with my students as I show that I care how they feel. Many children tell me their stories, their worries, happy events and sometimes they even cry during my lessons because of something that made them sad before. On the other hand, the behaviour and openness is different in the group lessons: 4 children tend to ask for more attention from the teacher, while another 4 children become shy to play or sing in front of others and 2 participants want to show up in front of other children and challenge the teacher in various ways (see in Appendix 6). Therefore, teaching one-on-one seems to be easier as children are more open and also more willing to listen to the teacher. While many children learning in group are asking for attention individually and it is more challenging for the teacher.

I have noticed that few children are very eager to learn new songs and they play an instrument very often. However, many children tend to give up if they start facing some challenges in learning new songs. From my previous teaching experience, few children have even quit the musical instrument lessons if learning seems too difficult for them. Therefore, I try to balance teaching and give the challenges for learners according to their musical skills (see figure 5).

The power of encouragement from the teacher and parents seems to be very strong in learning. Besides, once children notice that they can play something very well - they become more motivated to learn. New songs and performances seem to motivate most of the students. As we can see in figure below, some children need more encouraging words and some are motivated by other factors:

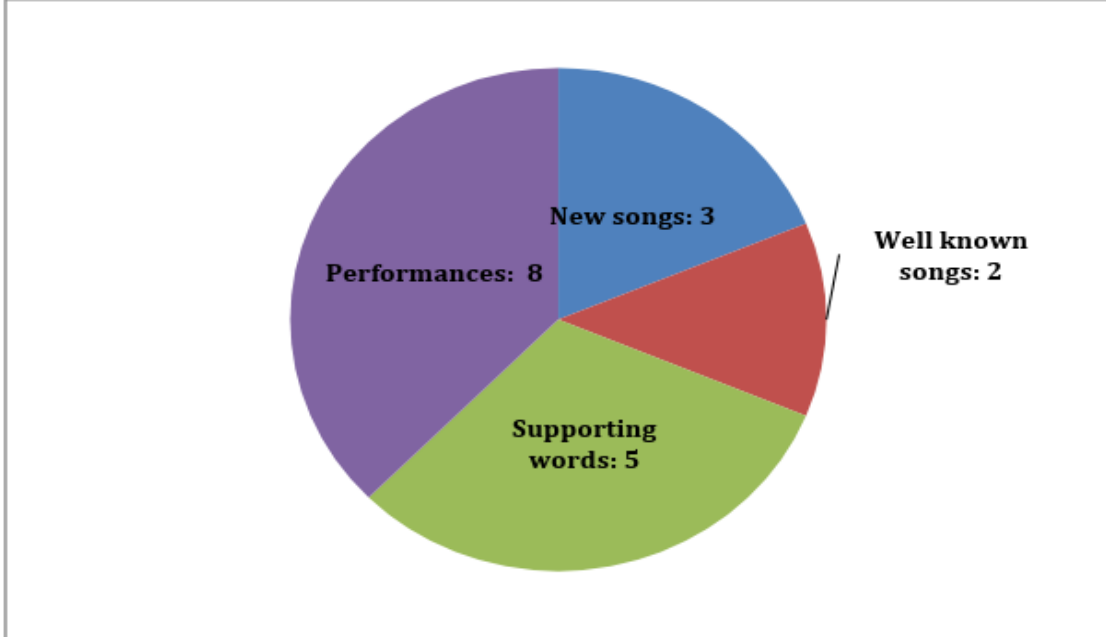


Figure 9. The factors motivating children to learn.

5.3.2 Practicing at home and parental support

As a teacher, I often ask children to play at least 1-3 times a week. Also, for many children I write how many times they should play a certain song before the next lesson. However, as can be seen from the collected data, practicing at home might highly depend on the parental support (see in Appendix 6). Most of research participants, 7 out of 12, get frequent parent reminders to practice. Mother's role seems to be important for 5 children and father's role for 4 children, while other 3 seem to learn playing the instrument without any parental reminders or support. Furthermore, the parents who are able to play piano or guitar, often help for children in learning. However, there are 4 parents out of 12, who can do that. The children who are encouraged by the teacher, but at the same time given total freedom in practicing at home, start putting more efforts in learning to play the songs well just few weeks before the performances (see in Appendix 6).

Parent-child relation with encouragement to practice is very important for children's musical skills development as well as motivating and encouraging teacher in most of the cases. Therefore, sometimes I discuss with children about the practicing at home. One child (participant 10), openly told me: "I am asked to play the guitar before playing games or watching cartoons." From that I have understood that this student has quite strict agreement with parents about practicing to play piano or guitar at home. However, I can always notice when the parents do not keep their agreement with child and then the student comes to the lessons without practicing at home at all. I was surprised that participant 7, who seems to be very motivated in learning to play piano and rarely forgets to do piano tasks at home, seems to be always reminded to practice: "My mum always tells me to go and do my piano homework when I am doing something fun." Participant 2 shared, that: "We have created a band with my dad and often we play music together". Besides, the parent answered my questionnaire (see in the appendix 5) and mentioned: "I try to make the learning fun at home". This child is always excited about the lessons, learns all the new songs quite fast and is always prepared for the lessons (see the table with final data analysis in Appendix 6). Therefore, I believe that learning in fun ways motivates children to continue and enjoy musical skills development more than strict agreements or reminders.

As earlier shown in Figure 9, eight of the research participants are motivated by possibility to perform. However, at the same time there are 3 pupils who start practicing just few weeks before the concert (participants 4, 8 and 12). Therefore, I think that 2 out of 3 children need much more

parental support and encouragement in order to continue developing their musical skills. I have also found that some of the pupils start feeling the pressure so easily, for example, when they are reminded to practice playing songs by the teacher or parents. These children can easily become unmotivated to learn and be willing to quit the musical instrumental lessons. Therefore, motivating and encouraging pupils to practice at home sometimes can be very challenging for both teachers and parents.

5.4 Summary of the findings

After analysing my data and answering the three sub-questions I was able to recognize the most important factors in creative musical instrument teaching:

- Making the lessons interesting by creating various tasks and games;
- Using various teaching methods according the children’s musical and learning skills;
- Giving little challenges for the children while teaching something new;
- Creating lessons plans and being flexible for changes;
- Finding the ways to motivate and encourage children to continue learning;
- Reflecting to children’s feelings and trying best in helping them to enjoy playing the instrument;
- Keeping an open teacher-child-parent relation.

The research results were also put into Figure 10, that the reader could have a clear picture of the important factors in creative musical instrument teaching:

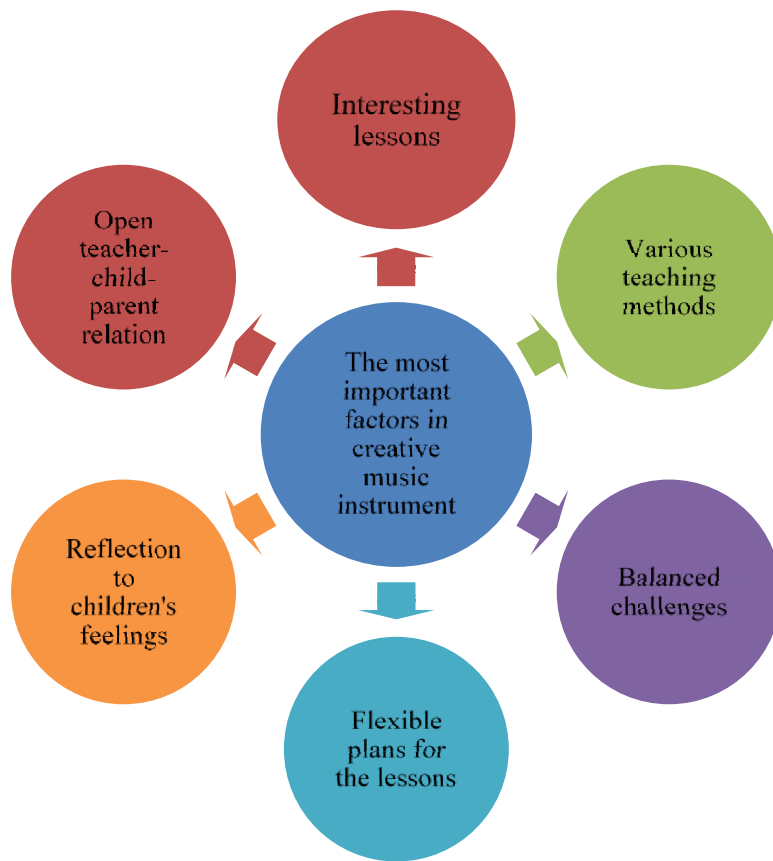


Figure 10. The most important factors in creative musical instrument teaching.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

After completing this study, I could evaluate myself as a music educator in order to improve my teaching skills. I find it very important that teachers should be able to teach and actively study at the same time in order to improve teaching and learning process and the results. Therefore, I believe that this research can be useful for musical instrument teachers and parents who are involved in 7-11 years old children's musical development. However, it cannot be generalized as it is done in specific environment with unique participants. The results might differ if similar study is implemented by other researcher.

The aim of this study was to find the most important factors in creative musical instrument teaching. Firstly, the creativity and musical skills development were studied in order to acknowledge the key concepts in creative music education. Secondly, the Finnish education system was described and musical instrument teaching in Finland were discussed in order to know more about the research context and similar studies that were done in the past. Thirdly, the qualitative research in musical instrument teaching was carried out, using the participant ethnography as a tool, in order to find the most important factors in creative musical instrument teaching.

Data was collected during the year of 2017 by a music teacher from twelve children, who were attending weekly private musical instrument lessons for at least one year. The main data consists of reflective journals, observations and conversations. As a starting point of the data analysis, the colour coding is used in order to organize the data into themes and categories. Later, the answers from the parents and reviewed as well as all the recordings and visual data that was collected and can be useful for this research. After the thematic data analysis, the three research sub-questions and the main question were answered.

The findings revealed three main themes based on the data analysis: *Planning the lessons and performance*, *Creative musical instrument teaching and developing musical skills* and *Motivating and encouraging children to learn musical instrument*. The last theme was divided into 2 sub-themes: *teacher-child interactions* and *practicing at home and parental support*. Some of the results were surprising to me. For example, the importance of teacher-parent and parent-pupil interactions in children's musical development.

As the result, there were seven main factors found for creative music teaching and learning. Therefore, it is important to create flexible lessons plans and make the lessons interesting by

creating various tasks and games that children would enjoy the learning process as well as the results. Creativity is a crucial skill for teachers and learners (Robinson & Azzam, 2009). Also, choosing various teaching methods according to the children's learning skills will help to develop musical skills. Children might give up learning if they find the required tasks too challenging (Hurley 1995, in McPherson & Hallam, 2009, p. 258). To add, music educators should motivate and encourage children to learn with supporting words, by giving songs that they like, organizing performances and many other ways, depending on children's needs. Consequently, it is important to keep an open teacher-child-parent relation and reflect to children's feelings because they have a great impact for teaching and learning.

I have to admit that being a teacher and researcher at the same time was quite a challenging task. However, it was definitely worth to do it as I could be as objective as possible and reach my research goal after one year of lessons observations, teaching experiences and analyses in reflective journals. I believe that by taking part as a teacher and researcher in this participatory ethnography, I have learned more than from teaching itself or following the lessons taught by another educator. Furthermore, I hope that there could be more research done in the field of musical instrument teaching because private lessons are very common in many countries, including Finland. In the further research I would focus on creative music teaching to different age groups, such as 0-6 years-old children, teenagers and adults. Finally, I would also like to study about teaching gifted children in Finland. The most of attention seems to be paid on equality and inclusion of children with special needs, but at the same time, children with excellent skills might feel ignored by the teachers and bored during the lessons.

This research can be definitely supplemented with the further investigations, including different educators, teaching methods and students. The further research could be done with different age groups or in different environment in order to supplement this study.

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Appendix 1. An example from teacher's diary

Monday, 05.06.2017. 2pm

The music course day supposed to start at 9am, but two from four pupils came earlier, around 8:15am because their parents had to be at work before 9am. I asked if kids want to go outside or play inside and they have chosen to stay inside and went straight away to the piano keyboards (I had two of them in the studio). Since children showed an interest to play music, I arranged for both of them comfortable place that they could play and try out new songs: "Etana" and "London Bridge". However, one learner did not look interested in "Etana" song and was playing other songs that she knows already. The other child was trying to find the notes for "London Bridge" and I gave some tips how to do it faster and easier as this kid was a very beginner at the piano. Later on, both kids came to the same piano keyboard tried out playing the "London Bridge" song.

Soon after children played piano, one of them went to the basket with musical tubes and started to play with them. I asked to put the musical notes/letters in order (A,B,C...). When the second child showed his/her interest in the musical tubes, I offered to play the "London Bridge" with them. Eventually, it was 9am and other two children came. They all went to play musical tubes and I was so surprised that even pupils did not know each other – they felt fine playing music together.

Then I started the morning circle with musical games, as I planned before this course. We all sat down in the circle and I gave instructions for the rhythm game, to tell name and clap, tap or snap a rhythm. Others had to repeat the name and rhythm and so go around the circle. After the names we continued with favourite songs, instruments, colours, animals, etc. During this game I noticed that two children were creating and repeating the rhythms very easily and for the other two it was a little bit more challenging task. I assume it is because 2 pupils were already learning to play a musical instrument for at least 1 year and 2 others were the very beginners who are willing to start.

Appendix 2. Typical examples of interactions in *one-to-one* lessons

Time sequence	Examples of teacher statements/actions	Examples of student statements/actions
Before the lesson starts	<p>“Hello, how are you?”</p> <p>“How was your day?”</p>	<p>“I am fine or “I am a little tired today...”</p> <p>“It was great or “It was short/long”</p>
Beginning of the lesson	<p>“What songs did you play at home?”</p> <p>“Let’s start warming up the fingers with this scale/exercise/song.”</p>	<p>“I played this and that” or “I had a busy week and did not have time to play much/at all.”</p> <p>“OK” (Starts playing)</p>
Continuation of the lesson	<p>“I can hear that you have been practicing this song, well done (high-five)!”</p> <p>“I can hear that you did not play this song at home, so we have still to work on it in order to make it sound well”</p>	<p>(Smiling) (High-five)</p> <p>“Hmmm”</p>
The end of the lesson	<p>“Please remember to practice few times a week” (telling loud and writing down the numbers of practicing times)</p> <p>“Have a nice day/evening and see you next week!”</p>	<p>“OK” or “How many times?”</p> <p>“Thank you, goodbye.”</p>

Appendix 3 Typical examples of interactions in *small group* lessons

Time sequence	Examples of teacher statements/actions	Examples of student statements/actions
Before the lesson starts	<p>“Hello, how are you?”</p> <p>“How was your day?”</p>	<p>“I am fine or “I am tired today...”</p> <p>(going one after another)</p> <p>“It was great!” or “It was a long day”</p>
Beginning of the lesson	<p>“Please take your sheet music/guitars/pencils and get ready for the lesson”</p> <p>“What songs did you play at home?”</p> <p>“Let's start warming up the fingers with this scale/exercise/song.”</p>	<p>(Everyone is preparing)</p> <p>“I played <i>this song</i> and <i>that song</i> as well” or “I had a busy week and did not have time to play much/at all.”</p> <p>“Ok” (Starts playing)</p>
Continuation of the lesson	<p>“<i>Tomas</i>, I can hear that you have been practicing this song, well done!”</p> <p>“I can hear that you did not practice enough at home, so you will have to practice harder this week in order to catch up with others”</p>	<p>(Smiling) “Yes, I did - more than 10 times!”</p> <p>“Ok”</p>
The end of the lesson	<p>“Please remember to practice few times a week”</p> <p>(telling loud and asking to write down the number of practicing times)</p> <p>“Have a nice day/evening and see you next week!” (high-five)</p>	<p>“Ok” or “How many times?”</p> <p>“Thank you, goodbye.” (high-five)</p>

Appendix 4. Parental permission to access the data on children

Parental Permission

Dear Parent or Guardian:

I am Eva Gintare Genutyte from the University of Oulu. I am conducting a research project on creative music teaching. I am requesting permission to access the data/information on your child from the University of Oulu.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to allow your child to participate will not affect the services normally provided to your child by private music teacher. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential and will only be disclosed with your permission.

If you have any questions or need further information or clarification, I can be contacted via e-mail address egintar@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Eva Gintare Genutyte

I _____ **grant** permission for my child _____ Par-
ent/Guardian Name of Child

to participate in *this* activity to be undertaken by Eva Gintare Genutyte.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

I _____ **do not grant** permission for my child _____ Par-
ent/Guardian Name of Child

to participate in *this* activity to be undertaken by Eva Gintare Genutyte.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Appendix 5. A short questionnaire sent by email for parents

Hello,

Many famous people say that "practice makes the master." However, I believe that there is no perfect amount of practice, but it's very important that children can find a joy in playing the music. If you support your child with gentle reminders to play at least twice (for the better - three times and for the best - four/five times) a week or you decide not to remind at all and see if child can remember to practice himself/herself - both decisions are fine with me. I usually ask them to play what the songs they are learning during the lessons or to complete some tasks that we did not have time to finish. However, if children face any difficulties with the tasks they try to do at home, I am happy that at least they have tried. Therefore, I always encourage children to tell me about their challenges and if they do not understand something in particular.

Finally, I have few questions for you. If you could spend few minutes answering them, I would be very thankful:

1. Do you support your children in learning to play the piano/ukulele? If yes, how?
2. How many times/minutes does your child usually practice within one week?
3. What does motivate or could motivate your child to practice at home and attend the piano/ukulele lessons?
4. Do you ask how children feel before and/or after the piano/ukulele lessons? If yes, maybe you could share.
5. What do they find easy and challenging at the moment?

This could help me in planning the lessons and motivating children in the process of learning. Besides, with your agreement I would like to use this information for my research (anonymously).

Thanks for your time and collaboration!

Appendix 6. Table with the final data analysis

	Child's hobbies	Teacher-child interaction	Motivating and encouraging factors	Practicing at home and parental support	Developing musical skills
Participant 1	Individual piano lessons and band lessons; 1 other hobby	This student is very open: tells what is easy and what is challenging for the teacher. With encouragement and support this learner works on and overcomes all the challenges. When comes to the lesson very tired or sad, child finds happiness talking to a teacher and learning music.	New songs given by teacher are motivating to learn. Child enjoys playing when learns the song very well. Besides, seeing and listening to the performances are motivating as well. As mother told: "my child always gets inspiration to play the piano after the lessons and concerts".	Child practices piano every day without any reminders from parents. However, when there are no lessons (during the holidays), student becomes not so keen to play. Mother's support seems to play a very important role in this child's learning.	Excellent aural skills, very good technical and musicianship skills, good learning and performing skills. Developing reading and composing skills.
Participant 2	Group guitar and band lessons; 1 other hobby	This child is very active and hard-working in the group lessons. However, in a bigger group this learner needs more attention and more explanation in order to understand instructions. Before leaving the classroom, student always remembers to give "high-five" for the teacher.	Rock music seems to be the favourite music style and this child always learns these songs fast. Performances motivate to practice even harder and play perfectly. The child once shared: "We have created a band with my dad and often we play music together"	Father's support in learning seems to play a very important role in this child's musical instrument learning. As child's parent said: "I try to make the learning fun at home". However, this child seems to practice guitar without parental reminders.	Great learning and aural skills, very good musicianship skills, good reading skills. Developing technical skills, but avoiding performances.

<p>Participant 3</p>	<p>Individual piano lessons; 1 other hobby</p>	<p>At the beginning of the lessons child always tells about practicing at home. Learner often gives up on songs that are challenging. However, learner is willing to overcome the difficulties if teacher encourages by saying: “I am sure, you can do it. Just put a little bit more efforts.”</p>	<p>Child seems to have a low self-esteem and always needs teacher’s supporting words: “You can do it, just try more times and you will succeed!”. Student finds joy in playing an instrument, when learns to play the song very well.</p>	<p>This student seems to practice playing piano on his own. However, mother’s support seems to play a very important role in this child’s learning. Parents seem to encourage this learner to put more efforts and practice more often.</p>	<p>Very good learning and musicianship skills, good reading and aural skills. Developing technical and rhythmical skills.</p>
<p>Participant 4</p>	<p>Group guitar and band lessons; 4 other hobbies</p>	<p>When child is asked: “What did you play at home?”, many excuses are usually given: “I had no time”, “I forgot”, “I did not know”. However, learner is active and hardworking during the lessons. Before leaving the classroom, child always remembers to give “high-five”, to thank for the lesson and wish a nice evening for the teacher.</p>	<p>Performances are motivating to practice more and learn to play the songs well. Child enjoys playing, when manages to learn the song very well. Student’s motivation is going up and down all the time. Therefore, friends seem to have quite negative impact and sometimes child wants to quit the musical instrument lessons.</p>	<p>Child practices the guitar at home just sometimes as other hobbies seem to be more important. Parents seem to give child freedom in musical instrument learning: if you want you play, if you do not want, you do not. Learner practices hard just before the performances.</p>	<p>Great reading skills and good technical skills. Developing learning, aural, rhythmical and performing skills.</p>

<p>Participant 5</p>	<p>Individual piano lessons and sometimes band lessons</p>	<p>Quite often child comes to the lesson tired or sad and leaves the classroom smiling and jumping from happiness. Playing the piano seems to be like a positive emotional therapy for this child. A learner does not talk much, but sometimes tells about certain personal life events at home and school.</p>	<p>This child always learns fast, if the songs that are well known and quite easy. However, learner often skips practicing harder songs or playing with both hands and ends up learning to play just with the melody with right hand.</p>	<p>Instrumental practice at home seems to depend on student's mood and specific song. Sometimes father teaches some songs and play the piano with child. However, parents seem to give a freedom in musical instrument learning.</p>	<p>Great rhythmic skills and good aural skills. Developing learning, reading, technical and performing skills.</p>
<p>Participant 6</p>	<p>Individual piano and band lessons; 1 other hobby</p>	<p>The self-esteem of a child seems to be quite low as learner is very often giving up after facing challenges. During the group lessons student often does not play or sing while others do. Teacher is always trying to encourage and support musical instrument learning by asking to put a little bit more efforts in trying to succeed.</p>	<p>Very often, this child needs teacher's supporting words: "I am sure, you can do it. All you need is to put a little bit more efforts and try more". Student finds joy in playing an instrument, when learns to play the song very well. Opportunities to perform are very motivating to practice and learn songs better.</p>	<p>Sometimes student practices and sometimes does not between the weekly lessons. It seems that mother has an important impact in child's learning as she gives the reminders to play the piano, but not always. Practicing seems to depend on learner's mood, time and specific song.</p>	<p>Good reading and performing skills. Developing learning, aural, rhythmic, technical and performing skills.</p>

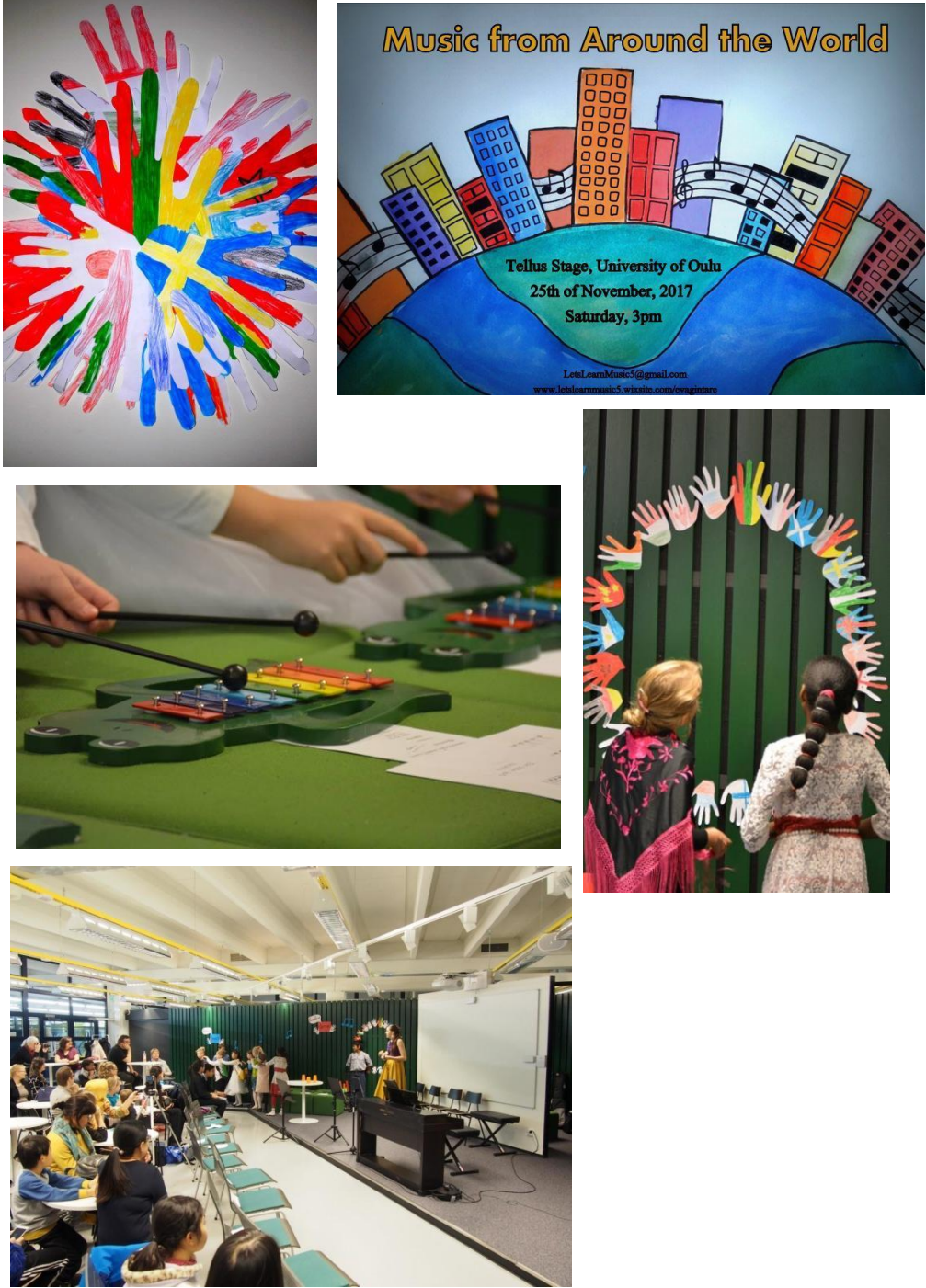
<p>Participant 7</p>	<p>Individual piano and group guitar lessons, band lessons; 1 other hobby</p>	<p>This learner is very open, responsible and hardworking during the lessons. This child always completes the tasks fast and express jealousy if others are getting more attention during the group lessons. Therefore, teachers needs to explain that not everyone can do it so fast and make sure that child has enough tasks and challenges.</p>	<p>This child always learns new songs fast and seems to enjoy well known songs. Learner is always ready for the lessons and very rarely forgets to play some song or complete the theory task. Performances are very motivating as well.</p>	<p>This learner practices and learns the new songs every week. Mother seems to be a very important factor in child's learning as she always gives reminders to practice. As student shared: "My mum always tells me to go and do my piano homework when I am doing something fun."</p>	<p>Excellent aural skills, very good reading and musician-ship skills, good learning and performing skills. Developing technical skills.</p>
<p>Participant 8</p>	<p>Group guitar and band lessons</p>	<p>A child always tells that practices at home, but it does not show during the lessons. During the group lessons student often stops playing, especially if teacher's attention is on other child. Teacher always tries to encourage and support musical instrument learning by asking to put more efforts in practicing.</p>	<p>Learner seems to enjoy the musical instrument lessons. However, child seems to want fast results without any efforts and teacher often gives reminders: "In order to learn the song well, you need to put more efforts and try harder". Performances seem to be motivating.</p>	<p>A student practices guitar at home just sometimes. Parents seem to give child freedom in musical instrument learning: if you want you play, if you do not want, you do not. Therefore, learner seems to practice harder only before the performances.</p>	<p>Great rhyth-mical skills and very good aural skills. Developing learning, reading, technical and performing skills.</p>

<p>Participant 9</p>	<p>Group piano and band lessons; 2 other hobbies</p>	<p>This learner is very responsible and hardworking during the lessons. However, in a bigger group child often finds friends to talk instead of playing. This student always completes the tasks fast. Therefore, teacher needs to prepare more tasks. Before leaving the classroom, student always remembers to give “high-five” for the teacher.</p>	<p>This child is fast learner, especially if the songs are liked or well known. Student prefers to have written the exact number of practicing times by a teacher and child always completes it before the next lesson. New songs and opportunities to perform seem to motivate.</p>	<p>This learner practices and learns the new songs every week. It seems that this child practices most of the time alone and sometimes plays the songs with parents. Parental support is needed from time to time.</p>	<p>Excellent aural skills, very good learning, reading and musicianship skills, good technical and performing skills. Developing rhythmical skills.</p>
<p>Participant 10</p>	<p>Group guitar and band lessons; 3 other hobbies</p>	<p>This learner often finds hard to sit in one place for longer time and always finds what to tell to a teacher or a friend. A child often does not hear instructions in a bigger group and needs more teacher’s attention and reminders to listen. Before leaving the classroom, student always remembers to give “high-five” for the teacher.</p>	<p>Child seems to enjoy playing alone and learning in a group during the lessons. Opportunities to perform for others are motivating to practice and learn to play the songs very well. This student enjoys playing the songs that become easy after practicing.</p>	<p>Parents seem to play a very important role in child’s learning. They seem to have quite strict agreement at home, as child said: “I have to play the guitar before playing games or watching cartoons. Sometimes, if parents do not give reminders, this child forgets to practice at home.</p>	<p>Good reading and performing skills. Developing learning, aural, rhythmical and technical skills.</p>

<p>Participant 11</p>	<p>Individual piano and band lessons; 2 other hobbies</p>	<p>When learner is asked: “What did you play at home?”, the excuses are usually given: “I had no time” or “I forgot”. During the lessons a child is very open and talkative: teacher often has to remind, that it’s the piano lesson and we can talk after it ends. However, this learner seems to have difficulties to focus on learning and teacher has often to remind that “in order to succeed, we need to put more efforts”.</p>	<p>Opportunity to perform is very motivating to practice and learn the songs very well. Student finds joy in playing an instrument, when learns to play the song very well. However, it takes a long time as this child always starts learning more seriously just around one month before the performance.</p>	<p>Parents seem to be very important factors in this child’s learning. Student practices only if mother reminds and sometimes mother is asked to sit nearby during the practicing time. This learner always needs parental support in musical development.</p>	<p>Great aural and performing skills. Developing learning, reading, technical and musicianship skills.</p>
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Appendix 7. Visual data from the activities while collecting the data

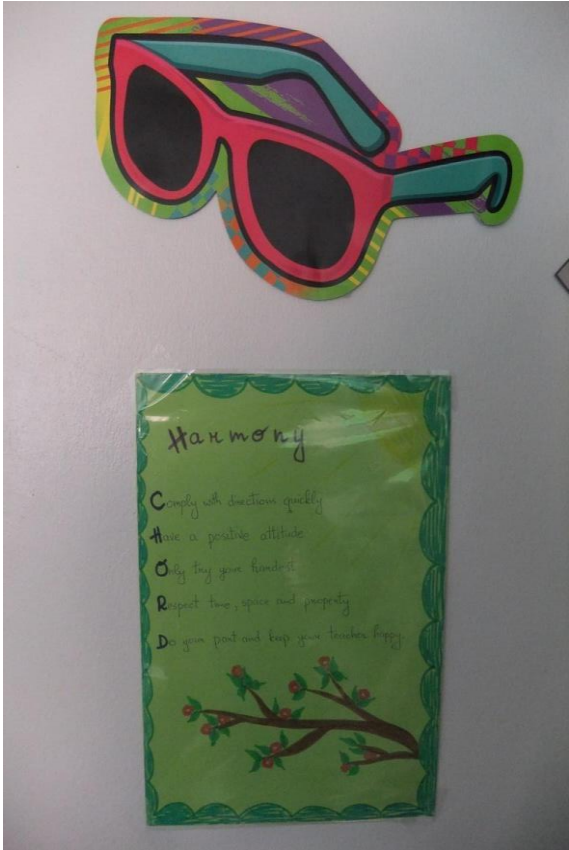
7.a Moments from concert “Music Around the World” on 25.11.2017.



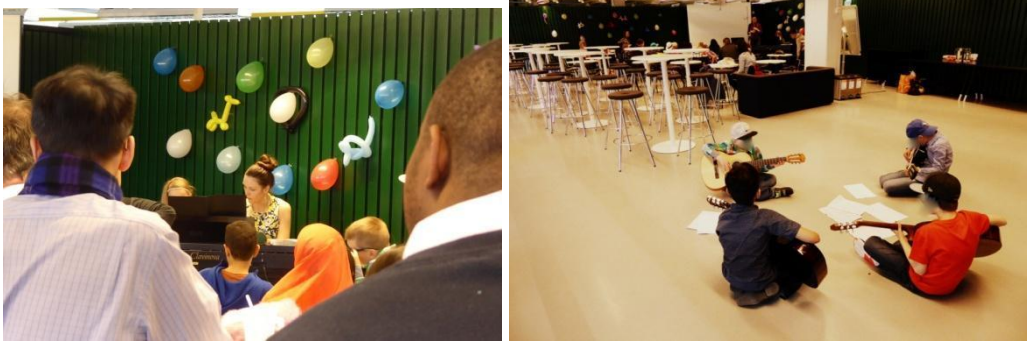
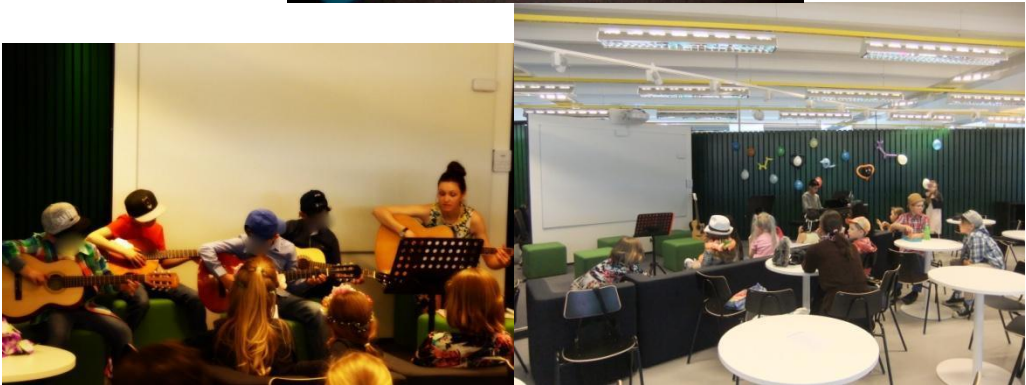
7.b Musical instruments and classrooms that I use for the lessons



7.c Summer music course in June 2017



7.d Moments from the rehearsals and the Spring Concert on 13th of May 2017



7.e Moments from the lessons



7.f Planning the lessons, music courses and concerts during the year 2017

