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Creating Multicultural Music Opportunities in Teacher Education: Sharing diversity through Songs

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Abstract: This paper contributes to the knowledge base for preparing pre-service teachers (PSTs) for contemporary multicultural classrooms. To do so, we refer to our ongoing project “See, Listen and Share: Exploring intercultural music education in a transnational experience” across three Higher Education sites (Australia and Spain). Drawing on our narrative, and PSTs’ questionnaire data, using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis to analyze and code the PST data, we report on our initial experience and findings across the three sites and cultural contexts. Generalisations to other institutions cannot be made. We discuss what was taught and how it was taught in our three settings, highlighting some key highs in relation to enjoyment, and learning from culture bearers and some lows in relation to language and accompaniment. We contend that music education in teacher education courses may serve as an effective vehicle to explore cultural expressions, enabling positive attitudes towards cultural diversity.

Introduction

Higher education institutions across the globe are increasingly becoming more regulated on a number of fronts in relation to new forms of knowledge, pedagogies, assessment, learning engagement and quality assurance (Bahr, 2016). Hence, academics are challenged to strike the right balance between higher education governance, and curriculum and pedagogy matters regarding their teacher education courses (programs/degrees). Tertiary teacher educators are expected to consider the quality of their work in relation to contemporary classrooms practice intersecting with 21st century innovation and diverse student needs. In the mix, society and schools are becoming increasingly multicultural and multilingual as globalization contributes to our diverse classrooms. In Australia for example, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) providers ensure that teacher education program standards are met and relate to the Professional Standards for Teachers (Bahr, 2016). These standards include quality teaching for diverse multicultural classrooms. Therefore, as tertiary music educators we are called to prepare pre-service teachers (PSTs) to be culturally responsive through our music units (subjects) as they will face multicultural classrooms. The notion of multiculturalism and multicultural education is not a new phenomenon. Broadly, the term multiculturalism personifies respect for diversity and acceptance of difference (Henry & Kurzak, 2013; Hancocks, 2016). Almost two decades ago, Gay and Howard (2000) outlined the need for

professional preparation for multicultural teacher education and suggested approaches to better accomplish them which we still draw on today. Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to debate issues concerning multiculturalism, we concur with Banks and Banks (2002) that multiculturalism is an essential component of quality teacher education.

In the process of preparing quality teachers it is essential to provide quality education to PSTs where standards are met and maintained (Darling-Hammond, 2006). In a recent report for the Australian Council for Education Research, Ingvarson et al. (2014) pointed out that ITE has a central and crucial role to play in providing high quality teaching in classrooms. In this, teacher education institutions are the starting point for quality teachers (McArdle, 2010; Mayer et al., 2015;), and teacher educators play a major role in this process as experts in the transmission of knowledge, skills, values and attributes required for preparing good teachers (McArdle, 2010). An essential part of our remit as tertiary educators is preparing our pre-service teachers' (PSTs) for tomorrow's classrooms, raising awareness about diversity, discrimination and differences. Through education we have the capacity to raise awareness of difference and strengthen "the foundations of tolerance, reducing discrimination and violence, and learning to live together (UNESCO, 2017). We contend that music as a language and a cultural expression may contribute to interpersonal and social understanding (Urbain, 2008). Research in music education undertaken by the authors have shown that music contributes towards intercultural understanding in education settings (Joseph, 2012; Cabedo-Mas, 2015; Cabedo-Mas, Nethsinghe & Forrest, 2017). In addition a plethora of research has been undertaken globally that shows that music fosters a sense of community, celebrating diversity and positive coexistence. As tertiary educators, we see our role as agents of change through our discipline of music education, and we include multicultural music as an important aspect of teacher education in relation to curriculum development, its relevance and representation (Gay, 2004).

According to UNESCO (2010), one of the major roles for music and arts education is the need to "support and enhance the role of arts education [music] in the promotion of social responsibility, social cohesion, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue" (p. 10). Through music making, intercultural awareness can be celebrated as a positive way to promote cultural understandings of difference, equipping our PSTs for future multicultural classrooms. Music is a form of cultural expression (Clauss-Ehlers, 2010) and learning music with its cultural context from foreign countries may increase cultural understandings of learners (Chen-Hafteck, 2016). It is hoped that our PSTs may "become sensitive to other students from other cultures" as we live in an increasingly multicultural society where migration is common (Mohd Maasuma, et al., 2014, p. 101). Chen-Hafteck (2016, p. 247) recommends integrating music of diverse cultures in the curriculum as we prepare students to be "good citizens of the world who appreciate people from diverse cultures". By embracing a range of music and genres through song (Anderson & Campbell, 2010; Chen-Hafteck & Crawford, 2013; Kim & Yoon, 2015; Joseph, 2016; Lee, 2017), we have the possibility of crossing borders locally and internationally without a visa. In educational settings (schools, universities and communities), research has also shown the importance and need to engage culture bearers in the process of providing multicultural music education as an effective and authentic method of teaching multicultural music (Campbell, 2004; Boshkoff & Gault, 2010; Nethsinghe 2012; 2013; 2015; Joseph & Southcott, 2013; Joseph, 2014; Grant, 2014; Lum & Chua, 2016). In teacher education courses, music education may be used as a cultural practice that goes beyond the aesthetical dimensions of societies and includes multicultural and intercultural understandings for both teacher and student. From this stance, as authors from diverse cultural backgrounds, we attempted a collaborative project, engaging our PSTs and ourselves in a journey to create multicultural music opportunities by sharing diversity in our teacher education programs.

This paper focuses on our ongoing research project *See, Listen and Share: Exploring intercultural music education in a transnational experience*. The wider project investigates how music education can be seen as a means of cultural and social appreciation by undertaking multicultural musical experiences in the classroom. The aims of the wider study are to:

- explore national and international curricula in arts education to provide a reflection on how the music and the arts can be addressed as a tool to improve intercultural understanding within education.
- promote shared educational practices that include music teaching and learning with pre-service early childhood, primary and secondary teachers, to guarantee the acknowledgment of cultural positive experiences by engaging with music.
- promote the international share of ideas, values and beliefs about music as a cultural practice enabling the exchange of teaching and learning experiences of Australian students with international students.
- gather student feedback on how music enhances intercultural understanding that can be used in the classrooms.

In this paper, we focus on PSTs' perceptions of multicultural music teaching and learning with our generalist pre-service teachers in different geographical and cultural contexts across three universities in two countries (Australia and Spain). Using PST questionnaire data (2017) and our narratives as culture bearers teaching a Sri-Lankan, South African and Spanish song, we firmly believe that the act of 'seeing, listening and sharing', may help our PSTs plan, practice and present music lessons in their multicultural classrooms as generalist teachers. Our initial findings highlight 'what was taught' and 'how it was taught' in relation to the music workshops, which included a combination of face-to-face and online teaching via Skype.

Higher education institutions are creating a hybrid of teaching pedagogies that combine e-learning and traditional classroom methods. Increasingly, the use of technology has "fundamentally altered the practice of distance teaching and learning" (Anderson & Elloumi, 2004, p. ix), and although this debate is not the focus of this paper, we agree that common words used to describe the online teaching and learning environment include "e-learning, Internet learning, distributed learning, networked learning, tele-learning, virtual learning, computer-assisted learning, Web-based learning, and distance learning" (Anderson & Elloumi, 2004, p. 4). Research has shown that this approach uses 'blended learning' as an effective way to achieve better learning outcomes (Baldwin-Evans, 2006; Harris, Connolly & Feeney, 2009; Mitchell & Honore, 2007; Poon, 2013), it is also a cost-effective measure for higher institutions (Joseph, 2017). Progressively, blended teaching and learning in higher education is becoming the norm as more universities include face-to-face interactions and technologically mediated interaction such as Skype (Bliuc, Goodyear & Ellis, 2007). The current study used a blended delivery approach where the 'onsite' tertiary music educator facilitated the face-to face class whilst the 'online' music educator joined the class via Skype. This multilateral music education engagement with non-music PSTs occurred as a first between two countries.

Setting the Scene: University Sites and Academics

This ongoing project takes place across two cities (Melbourne and Castelló de la Plana) with three academics (Alberto, Dawn and Rohan). Alberto is a Spanish national, hence familiar to his place of work, students and environment whereas Rohan and Dawn immigrated to Australia. As naturalized Australian citizens they continue to learn more of

their new place of stay and work. Dawn was born in South Africa, is fluent in English and Afrikaans, and dabbles with some of the African languages (Zulu and Tswana). Rohan was born in Sri-Lanka, is fluent in five languages (English, Tamil, Sinhalese, Russian, Ukrainian), and Alberto is fluent in both Spanish and Catalan, speaks English and can communicate in German.

Site 1

The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University was established in 1887 initially as a Working Men's College. RMIT is a dual sector (vocational and higher) education provider that has over 83,000 students currently enrolled in its courses (RMIT University, 2017). Only PSTs undertaking the Bachelor of Education (Primary and Early Childhood Education) participated in this research. The Bachelor of Education (B Ed) is offered across four years and includes 32 units. Two core Arts units are offered for first year and second year students where all five areas of the Arts (Music, Dance, Drama, Visual Arts and Media Arts) recommended for primary school teaching in the Australian curriculum are taught. This paper draws on data from the first-year PSTs undertaking *Introduction to Arts Education* during their second semester in 2016. In this unit, PSTs engaged in hands-on learning activities in the Arts and also engaged in inclusive and multicultural music teaching and learning that prepares them for primary school teaching as generalist teachers.

Site 2

Deakin University was established in 1974, and in 1991 the Burwood campus (Melbourne) was founded. The university has over 53,000 students domestic and 8000+ international students (Deakin University, 2017). The Bachelor of Education (Primary) (B.Ed [Prim]) is the flagship course in teacher education within the Faculty of Arts and Education. The B.Ed (Prim) is a 32 unit course across four years of study. Within the course, two units are core in regard to Arts Education. The first, *Primary Arts Education*, is undertaken in the second year of study and the second unit, *Primary Arts Education: Focused Study*, which is the focus of this paper, is undertaken in the fourth year of study. Weekly students engage in practical hands-on music teaching and learning that prepares them as generalist teachers for the primary classroom. The unit material focuses on Orff, Kodály, Dalcroze, creative music approaches to teaching and learning, and multicultural music.

Site 3

The University Jaume I was established in 1991 in the Mediterranean city of Castellón de la Plana, between the major Spanish cities of Valencia and Barcelona. The university has around 15,000 students and delivers 31 different undergraduate bachelor courses and over 60 master's courses (Universitat Jaume, 2017). The Bachelor of Early Childhood Education is a four-year course that includes two core units in Arts Education, one focused on Music Education and the other on Visual Arts Education. This research was conducted with PSTs in the Music Education unit (*Foundations and Didactics of the Musical Expression*) during their third year of study. In this unit, PSTs develop their musical expertise with a focus on performing, listening, creating and basic theory of music. In addition, they explore different approaches to music teaching and learning.

Methodology

We gained ethical clearance through our institutions' Human Ethics Committees to undertake the wider project *See, listen and share: Cultural practices in music teaching and learning* across three sites. The project is explanatory, exploratory and descriptive and employs case study methodology (Yin, 2003). We draw on three sites as multiple cases to enable us to explore differences and similarities between our collective cases (Yin, 2003; Stake, 1995). Case studies "enable the researcher to answer "how" and "why" type questions, while taking into consideration how a phenomenon is influenced by the context within which it is situated" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 556). We were interested in exploring non-music specialist PSTs' perceptions of multicultural teaching and learning. The online questionnaire/survey took place in 2017 where we gathered quantitative and qualitative data through Google Docs as our instrument. The survey was trialled to ensure the online system worked before our PSTs participated. The survey took approximately 10-15min to complete.

The authors each invited their PSTs to participate in the research project. All PSTs were initially emailed the Plain Language Statement and Consent Form (PLSCF) which outlined the project and included sample questions such as:

- Did you find it challenging to perform music from another culture?
- Would you consider teaching this song you learnt in a primary class? Give reasons.
- Do you think that learning music from other cultures may enhance intercultural understanding? Give reasons.
- Explain how did you engage with the activity?
- How can music be a vehicle for intercultural understanding and promoting positive coexistence in and beyond the classroom?

In addition, we also explained the project and process face-to-face with our PSTs, giving them the opportunity to ask questions if there were any concerns, before participating. The online survey clearly indicated at the start "By completing this questionnaire and submitting it, you will be consenting to participating in the research study". We used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to code and analyse the data which was also influenced by the theoretical frameworks of multiculturalism and reflection. IPA explored the lifeworlds and perceptions of our students (Smith & Osborn, 2003; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2013; Callary, Rathwell & Young, 2015). After reading and re-reading the survey data, we thematically grouped the findings into broad overarching themes (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Eatough & Smith 2006; Kirn, et al., 2017). We identified patterns that emerged which became categories for our analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). This also correlated with our debriefing after our teaching episodes (Levy, 2009). For this paper, we only report on two overarching themes of the research: what was taught in relation to multicultural music and how it was taught. We offer our voices as we interpret and reflect on our teaching and learning experience across the three universities sites. In keeping with IPA, we use direct quotations from the questionnaire data to illustrate what PSTs were saying (Tzanidaki & Reynolds, 2011; Dallos & Vetere, 2006). We acknowledge the limitation of this small sample; therefore, no statistical inferences nor generalisations can be made to other universities.

Findings

We did not use the same songs across the three sites as all three authors are still to teach the same song across our three institutions. Rather, we each taught a song from our land of birth as culture bearers. Table 1 outlines the number of participants, staff, and times of the music

workshops undertaken at each university site 2016 -2017. As gender was not the focus of the study, the majority of the PSTs across the three sites were female.

University	Number of enrolments	Number of respondents	Number of workshops/hours	Number of University staff teaching
Site 1: RMIT University	58	15	1 workshops (three hours)	2 (Rohan and Alberto)
Site 2: Deakin University	62	31	1 workshop (three hours)	3 (Dawn, Alberto, Deakin Sessional tutor)
Site 3: University Jaume I of Castellon	39	22	1 workshop (two hours)	2 (Alberto and Rohan)

Table 1: online questionnaire data collected at each site

At Site 1, two multicultural music classes took place on the day in September 2016; the first at 8.30-11.30 pm and the second from 12:30-3:30pm. Rohan facilitated both classes with Alberto teaching a Spanish song *Baila la jota* via Skype for an hour at each of his classes. Alberto started his section at both classes by providing an introduction to Spanish traditional music and dance including the Jota dance. For his song, the PSTs mainly played percussion instruments (such as shakers, castanets and cabasas) and some played chords on ukuleles to accompany their singing. Students undertaking *Introduction to Arts Education course* learn to play rhythmic instruments in their performing arts component of the course especially when studying ‘rhythms of the world’. Students were taught how to play the accompaniment of the song *Baila la jota* by Rohan. This was done using the PowerPoint slides that Alberto prepared, sent ahead of time. Alberto taught the Spanish pronunciation of the words and the song was sung after a number of rehearsals where PSTs sang and played accompaniments on their selected instruments.

At Site 2, PSTs undertaking the unit *Primary Arts Education: Focused Study* engage in eclectic music pedagogies and learn music from different lands. The multicultural workshop took place in April 2017 with two classes. Dawn and her sessional taught the 9am-12 noon class (face-to-face), and Alberto co-taught with Dawn and via skype the 1-4pm class which was facilitated by Dawn. At Site 2, a range of songs were taught from different lands: *Haida* (Israeli song round with dance), *Inanay* (Indigenous Australian ‘Yorta Yorta’ language with harmony), *Sing Song Saya* (Malay-Indonesian song with actions), *Janie Mama* (Jamaican calypso with movement), *Four White Horses* (song from the Virgin Islands with movement), *Ra Sila Mielie* (South African, Pedi language work song) and *Piñón, Piñón Piñón* (Spanish traditional children’s song with instruments). To assist students with the words, short songs were taught by rote, and some songs were displayed via the projector or hard copies were handed out. Alberto prepared PowerPoint slides to teach about Spanish music and culture and Dawn did the same for the South African song she taught. For the Spanish song *Piñón, Piñón Piñón*, non-melodic percussion and ukuleles were used whereas body percussion and movement were employed for the South African song *Ra Sila Mielie*.

At Site 3, multicultural songs are included throughout PSTs’ musical training, by singing and learning songs from different Spanish cultures (Catalan, Basque, Andalusian, Castilian, etc.), and other parts of the globe, along with discussion about lyrics, forms and cultural contexts associated to them. The PSTs in the unit *Foundations and Didactics of the*

Musical Expression experienced learning a Sri-Lankan lullaby taught by Rohan. Two multicultural classes took place in November 2016. The first from 4-6pm and the second from 6-8pm. Both two-hour workshops with Rohan via Skype were taught to two cohorts of PSTs (27 and 12), and was facilitated by Alberto. Prior to the class, PSTs were asked to research about Sri-Lanka, and they found it enlightening to listen to Rohan talk about some of the cultural features of the country. The song *Dhoi Amma* was learnt through repeating the lyrics; once learnt it was sung and performed with different instruments (ukulele, shakers, different drums), body percussion or various bodies transformed into musical instruments (tables, chairs). The educational approach consisted of repeating and 'learning by doing', and the use of occasional mnemonics to consolidate complicated rhythmic patterns allowed the students to collectively perform the piece with significant musical quality in a short space of time. Rohan prepared PowerPoint slides to reinforce the learning of lyrics, structures and rhythms. Little or no verbal instructions regarding how to play were given throughout the process.

Site 1: RMIT University

What did the PSTs say in relation to multicultural songs?

It is no surprise that all PSTs said that they enjoyed learning multicultural songs. They also stated that they "got to know interesting things about Spanish culture" as a result of learning the song and especially the jota dance. Expressing their opinions regarding this learning experience one PST aptly summed up the experience by saying:

it allowed us to access culturally diverse aspects of music, giving us a greater context for when we use music like this in our classroom. It gave us firsthand experience from someone from within the culture, something we wouldn't have been able to achieve without this opportunity

Another stated that "it's good to educate students about different cultures using music, the world is forever changing and our country is becoming more and more multicultural". A different perspective was offered by another PST who pointed out that "presenting a culturally diverse teaching plan helps us to create an inclusive and safe environment for all children in the class".

What did PSTs say in relation to how it was taught?

In relation to the Spanish song taught, Rohan rehearsed the chord work and the rhythmic accompaniment with the PSTs before Alberto connected on the day via Skype. This proved advantageous from feedback received during the workshop. The lyrics were displayed on the whiteboard and were guided and taught by Alberto. Although most PSTs struggled to pronounce the Spanish words properly, one in the first class and three in the second class spoke Spanish, which helped as they assisted some of their peers with the pronunciation of some words. Only a very few managed to learn and memorize the lyrics during the short interaction with Alberto. Most of them found it challenging to keep up with the tempo when they sang and played the instruments. Overall, they all highly enjoyed this experience and mentioned learning multicultural music "was very interesting" and they all "had fun". However, there were some technological issues such as interruptions with Skype and all PSTs suggested that we should have learnt the lyrics separately with Alberto at a different time. This was summed up by one PST who said "the most challenging part was getting the Spanish words right". In the main, the PSTs found learning the song an achievable activity,

one said “it was more enjoyable that we were in a fun and comfortable environment with patient teachers”. The PSTs recognized the 9-hour time difference between Spain and Australia and all appreciated that Alberto taught them online in the middle of his night which contributed to their multicultural music learning. One aptly summed up the experience by saying “It’s a breath of fresh air”.

Site 2: Deakin University

What did the PSTs say in relation to multicultural songs?

Overwhelmingly, all PSTs said that learning music from other cultures may enhance intercultural understanding. They gave reasons for this in relation to songs. One PST said “because there are stories behind songs that help us better understand the culture”, another said “like that of the African song, it opens up avenues for you to expand/broaden students’ understanding”. This was agreed to by another PTS who said “learning music from other cultures would enhance intercultural understanding”. It seemed that ‘song’ was an effective medium to promote intercultural understandings as one PST identified “songs can convey traditional story-telling and important cultural influences that children may not process in other ways”. When asked what did PSTs find easier when learning about multicultural music most said “singing”. Participations as a group seemed to impact on confidence as one remarked “being part of whole class singing and moving” made a difference. The group had attended four prior classes and were forming a group/class dynamic. Comments such as “singing in a group”, “doing movement”, “creating body percussion” and doing “rhythms with our bodies” suggest PSTs felt confident to explore and engage in a new language and culture ‘as a group’. Overall this was summed up by one PST who found the experience of singing music from other lands “easy to incorporate” into the primary classroom. In this way, PSTs also learnt about including “culture and diversity through music in the classroom”.

What did PSTs say in relation to how it was taught?

It was apparent that Dawn and Alberto had similar ways of teaching. They used their voices to teach line by line and through call and response. In addition, Dawn used the piano and Alberto used the ukulele to accompany the songs. One PST specifically found “going through each section of the lyrics first before singing it and having simple actions to go with it” made it easier to sing the African song. Another found “repeating words after the teacher has sung them” seemed to make a difference especially when the song was in another language as one remarked “trying to sing in Spanish, as I am NOT fluent” was challenging. Other said, for the African song “singing and moving at the same time was challenging”. The difficulty of the African and Spanish songs lies more in the pronunciation of the words than the melody itself. Handing out the words of the Spanish song ahead of time helped, although all PSTs found “pronouncing the words” and remembering how to sing the lyrics rather difficult. For the African song “initially singing without words” was difficult but learning it through call and response was easier as the words and melody were repetitive. One PST found “going through each section of the lyrics first before singing it and having simple actions to go with it” made it easy to learn. Overall most students felt that singing the songs in “the different languages were difficult but fun!”. Learning via Skype was a new experience. Alberto trying to sing along with us and we with him proved at times unsatisfactory because of the time lag. Although the words were not easy for the PSTs, the ukulele accompaniment was far easier. Overall, the experience was most rewarding for all concerned and they successfully performed the African and Spanish song with much gusto!

Site 3: University Jaume I of Castellon

What did the PSTs say in relation to multicultural songs?

It was evident from the responses that all PSTs value multicultural education as an important aspect of PSTs training. They acknowledged a strong awareness of the multicultural society they live in and therefore they will work in inherently multicultural schools with multicultural cohorts. Standing for the importance to avoid homogenization in teaching, one student stated that “it is important to leave segregation behind in our classroom and to encourage an education for all, celebrating the diversity”. Together with the Australian students, all the Spanish students reported agreement with the possibilities of music making to learn about and from different cultures. Some PSTs specified that “while learning things [musics] about other cultures we can understand better other people”, and also “it enhances your curiosity about these and other cultures”. One of the PSTs highlighted that she found the experience interesting to play a multicultural song as it enabled her to “improve the intercultural comprehension/understanding”. This was a different experience “because she did [it] by herself, this is, by practicing. It was not explained merely [it was] in a theoretical lesson”. Although there may have been a language barrier as the PSTs do not normally communicate in English and sometimes struggled to understand Rohan, they all reported they felt very comfortable with the whole experience, and enjoyed listening to and asking Rohan questions. They acknowledged a great increase in their knowledge of Sri-Lanka and meeting Rohan had shaped and enriched their pre-conceptions about Sri-Lankans. Most of them expressed they would definitely consider teaching *Dhoi Amma* in their future classrooms.

What did PSTs say in relation to how it was taught?

The way the songs were taught generated feelings of “enjoyment” at both classes. In general, the PSTs liked how the song was taught in relation to “pronunciation of the words” “the tune” and “accompaniment”. They reported that they overcame their previous conceptions, finding the song much easier to play than they expected. Although pronouncing the Sri-Lankan language was tricky as there were no native speakers in the class, some PSTs expressed “learning the lyrics and singing as the easiest”. PSTs found combining the performance of certain rhythms they were not used to, with singing in a different language, as the most challenging. Although they were required to learn new chords on the ukulele and other percussion instruments that they had never used before, they did not note any difficulties in this regard. However, they noticed the fact that, in short time, they were able to learn and perform a new song they felt strongly differed from their own music which proved most satisfying and uplifting.

Discussion

The inclusion of multicultural music in our teaching through songs are twofold. Firstly, it is our intrinsic passion to share music and culture from the lands we come from with our PSTs and secondly as tertiary music educators, we do so in response to curriculum reform. In Spain for example, the 1990s-educational reform of the Organic Law of General Organization of the Education System’s illuminated new concepts in music education. This included musics that came mainly from traditional folk music of the Autonomous Communities (Ibarretxe & Díaz, 2008), and rapidly adapted Spanish music education to the then global trends in music education. A large aspect of this was acknowledging and including multicultural music education as a part of the curricula. However, music teachers

often lack the training to teach multicultural music when attempting to incorporate the musical and cultural realities of immigrant students into the music classroom (Ibarretxe, 2005). In Australia, we are now called to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, hence we also strongly feel the need to include multicultural music from ‘other lands’ in order to provide intercultural understandings (Australian Curriculum, 2017) as PSTs will teach predominantly multiracial cohorts. How we prepare PSTs as tertiary educators, as Milner (2010) points out, is critical to PSTs success in the classroom and in effect in our wider society. We believe that, through this small intervention across the three sites, we have opened up our PST’s minds eye and ear for them to move beyond the notion of cultural diversity in schools being merely “limited to eating food from different cultures” (Hancocks, 2016, p. 16), but rather recognizing that the inclusion of songs from different lands can be the bridge that strengthens social cohesion and diversity, “fostering identity, affirming multiple ways of knowing, and validating culture and heritage” (Walter, 2017, p. 4).

Creating the opportunity for multicultural songs and exploring aspects of diversity from our different lands with our PSTs was an uplifting experience through a practical and hands-on praxial approach (Regelski, 2005). As there was no cultural conflict or concern of power (Delpit, 1995), key themes that emerged from the IPA analysis of the data were “fun”, “enjoyable”, “enriching”, “challenging”, “authentic” and “refreshing”. Across the sites, the one-off workshops were seen as an introduction to the wide world of multicultural music. Although multicultural music education activities are ‘old hat’ in classrooms (Small, 1977, 1983; Elliott, 1989; Volk, 1998), introducing a wide range of musics in teaching is always a challenge for both teacher and student, as we have found in this study. Our PSTs recognized the value of the experience and realized through singing, children come to “understand music from different cultures” and they also “experience what it feels like to sing in another language”. The experience of singing in a foreign language places everyone on the same playing level field, although, from the three Sites, only four PSTs at Site 1 had Spanish language speaking abilities. Nevertheless, across the three Sites, PSTs managed with much laughter to initially get by the words and at the end sing confidently.

The joy of seeing faces light up and ‘giving it a go’ was a positive sign for this cultural exchange to occur. The “live engagement” arranged via Skype with a ‘culture bearer’ was different and new to our PSTs and ourselves as facilitators across the sites. Learning a Spanish song from a Spanish person sitting in Spain in real time made the experience even more ‘authentic’ and vice versa with Rohan a Sri-Lankan national teaching his song to Alberto’s Spanish PSTs. For Dawn, teaching the South African song face-to-face was different for the PSTs as this was the first time she had taught them, hence a new experience for them to see an Indian looking person teach an African song. Our exchange of teaching and learning authenticated the multicultural music learning activity (Green, 2005; Nettle, 2010). The “live engagement” of receiving teacher-directed instructions gave our PSTs the opportunity to also ask questions and receive instant feedback via Skype, or in person from the three facilitators. As tertiary music educators, we are called to prepare our PSTs for 21st century classrooms, hence the ICT (Skype) cultural exchange was explored and experienced first-hand ‘in-action’ with all its ‘ups and downs’ that we each experienced on the day!

Upon reflection, our experience focused on exploring pedagogical approaches that support the need to understand both musical and cultural practices when teaching songs. By creating a transnational approach in our wider project, this study enabled PSTs to learn about traditional music and culture from a local ‘culture bearer’, and it also opened up a new space for us as tertiary music educators’ to explore collaborative approaches to teaching music from different lands when using a blended approach. Although we had a limited amount of time to

engage our PSTs, we agree with Giráldez (1997) that teachers do not feel competent teaching unfamiliar musics that may not have been part of their initial and continuous training.

Across the sites, our PSTs recognized the value of the short immersion, and the significant impact they can have in their future classrooms. PSTs realized through singing, children come to “understand music from different cultures” and they also “experience what it feels like to sing in another language”. This places everyone on the same playing level field in relation to the difficulty of singing or speaking in a language that is not your mother tongue. Across the sites it was apparent that the lyrics were the hardest to learn for the Australian and Spanish PSTs, although the playing of instruments proved easier! Although the songs were short in length, they presented a challenge for all concerned due to the time constraint. In hindsight, this will be done differently for the next round of teaching across the sites. Further, we may consider another platform instead of Skype in future as there were time lags across the countries which proved a major hurdle. Nonetheless, being taught the song by a native speaker seemed to validate the experience despite linguistic or technical difficulties. The notion of ‘learning by doing’ also provided an authentic pedagogical way to teach the songs. The experience, although short and simple, allowed both PSTs and authors to travel to a new and different land through song.

Conclusion

We acknowledge that the teaching and learning experience across the three universities was a ‘one-off’ and experience therefore generalizations cannot be made to other universities or contexts. Although the small sample is a limitation in itself, the findings suggest that more time be spent in class on teaching about multicultural music where PSTs can have the opportunity to micro teach songs from other lands in-class with their peers. The one-off experience is not sufficient to promote intercultural understandings of “tolerance and acceptance” (Abril, 2006, p. 40). Further research needs to be undertaken where the PSTs have a chance to teach the songs learnt from the authors with ‘real children’ when on a placement. Furthermore, the ‘sense of community’ could be expanded by enabling Australian students to teach their songs to the Spanish and vice-versa. As tertiary music educators, we are challenged to prepare our PSTs teachers with the necessary skills, competencies, understandings, knowledge and experiences where multicultural music can be included in general classrooms. Thus, there is a need for sustained research in this area (Rohwer & Henry, 2004). We agree with Han & Singh (2007, p. 308) that there is a “substantial difference between actually walking the roads of... other languages, scripts, theories, philosophies and... legitimating the authentic voice—knowledge—of the other” and call for more tertiary teacher education courses to consider songs from different lands as an effective platform to explore diversity where creating multicultural music opportunities in teacher education strengthens and embraces diversity.

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