

This is a self-archived version of an original article. This version may differ from the original in pagination and typographic details.

Author(s): Honkonen, Jyrki

Title: Not Experts - But Music! : Remarks on Adolescents' Music Education in Finnish Waldorf Schools

Year: 2018

Version: Published version

Copyright: © Honkonen & Suomen musiikkitieteellinen seura, 2018.

Rights: In Copyright

Rights url: <http://rightsstatements.org/page/InC/1.0/?language=en>

Please cite the original version:

Honkonen, J. (2018). Not Experts - But Music! : Remarks on Adolescents' Music Education in Finnish Waldorf Schools. *Musiikki*, 48(1), 31-44. <https://musiikki.journal.fi/article/view/70982>

Not Experts – But Music! Remarks on Adolescents' Music Education in Finnish Waldorf Schools

Jyrki Honkonen



"Every human being is an artist" (Joseph Beuys)

Remarks on Finnish School Music Education

This article reports on a study of the effects of music on Finnish adolescents' experiences and perceptions on their psycho-physical wellbeing and development. Specifically, the research focuses on the impact of Finnish schools' music education on the social and psycho-physical development of Finnish young people during the vulnerable stage of adolescence.

When I started as a music teacher in a Finnish Waldorf school in the late 1980s, I did not give much thought to music teaching or its underlying principles. The question first arose in the context of everyday practice, which I observed when teaching upper secondary school pupils. The pupils were divided into categories according to their musical abilities. This was not official practice but was rather an accepted convention aimed at separating the more musically capable or talented pupils, who would then receive more guidance, leaving the less capable to find their own way with considerably less guidance. So far, public recognition of this tacit convention has been limited; instead, it has been asserted that music teachers encourage all pupils equally. This implies that pupils may participate in the lessons just as they are, and that they are not streamed according to their musical abilities (Muukkonen 2010, 33–38).

However, critical voices have been raised, and music teaching and its effects on pupils in Finnish schools have been the subject of many recent studies (see for example Juvonen, Lehtonen and Ruismäki 2008; Lindström 2011, 11–13; Numminen 2005, 8, 46–49, 57–58). Such research has mainly focused on the acceptance of an individual's musical ability. As Jaakko Erkkilä (1998, 10) points out: "So many teachers surely feel a certain temptation to sift out individuals with musical ability, and to invest primarily in them while trying to manage with the rest as best they can."¹ Listening to music, active involvement with music

¹ Niinpä monet opettajat varmasti tuntevat tiettyä kiusausta seuloa oppilasaineksesta musikaalisesti lahjakkaat/harrastuneet yksilöt, panostaa etupäässä heihin ja yrittää selviytyä loppuista parhaaksi katsomillaan tavoilla. (English translation by the author.)

and various forms of music therapy have been shown to have a clear association with and impact on both adolescents' psycho-physical and emotional growth and development and their physical and mental wellbeing (Saarikallio 2007, 12, 15–18; Saarikallio 2011). The findings indicate that the criteria for participation in music education in Finnish schools should be reassessed, not only with respect to the Finnish national curriculum, but also in practice.

Naturally, this means increased investment in teacher training resources. The basis and structure of Finnish music education are presented in the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014 (henceforth FNCCBE 2014), which lays the foundation of music education in grades seven and eight, when music is no longer a subject every pupil studies. This issue aside, one of the main challenges for Finnish music education is engaging pupils whose musical ability does not correspond to the results of musicality tests. These pupils are generally not encouraged to study music further, nor are there possibilities for them to do so (Juvonen, Lehtonen and Ruismäki 2008; Järvelä 2006; Ojala 2009).

In this article, I examine how Waldorf music education responds to these challenges. The Waldorf curriculum covers 12 years of education (the 13th year is the year of graduation). The pedagogical foundation of the curriculum is identical across all Waldorf schools worldwide (Rawson and Richter 2004, 6). The main feature of music education is the presence of music and musical activity from the first to the last grade for all pupils.² This offers music teachers a valuable opportunity to observe and develop their own work and reflect on its results throughout the primary and secondary stages of education (Stockmeyer 2001, 166–167). In the Finnish national school structure, this would not be possible, whereas it is standard practice in Waldorf schools.³

In Waldorf schools, music teaching follows the methods of periodical teaching, which is based on Rudolf Steiner's (1861–1925) division of children's development into three different stages (i.e. age groups 0–7, 7–14 and 14–21) (Riccio 2000, 60–66; see also Rawson and Richter 2004, 23–27). All pupils learn to play flute and to sing in a choir, and schools create class and school orchestras in which all pupils are involved. Music teaching and musical acting form an intensive unity based on social cooperation (Kalwa 1997, 110–113, 118–119). For Steiner, the idea of music teaching is self-evident: Every child has the right to participate in music education irrespective of musical tests, entrance examinations or teachers' evaluations. While all children may not immediately show an obvious musical ability, a skilled teacher can awaken musicality in such children (Stockmeyer 1976, 162–170; see also Wünsch 1995, 14–20).

² The position of Waldorf schools in the Finnish education system changed after 1999, when the specific legislation governing Waldorf schools was replaced with the Basic Education Act. The abovementioned situation is based on the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004 and Basic Education Act (628/1998).

³ I have worked as a music teacher in a Waldorf school from 1988 until 2015. During this period, I have had a chance to compare the impact and outcomes before and after the 1999 Act.

Educational Choice

I am interested in the phase of adolescent development during which the pupil is offered a variety of subjects. In Finnish comprehensive schools, music education is provided for all children in the early primary school level, and it becomes an optional subject at the latest in the eighth grade.⁴ At this point, pupils are classified mainly based on their areas of interest and musical ability (Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004; Kosonen 2009; Lehtonen and Juvonen 2009; Lindström 2011, 16–18). The most common choice that a pupil must make is between music and fine arts. To be able to choose properly between these options presupposes that students possess enough information about the target subject and the ability to evaluate its effect on one's possible future educational choices. This assessment depends on the one hand on one's decision and on the other on information provided by teachers. These two factors form the field of inner and outer motivation.

As a music teacher, I noticed early that young people often decided between optional subjects purely based on their existing social relations or certain perceived requirements stemming from group dynamics. At this age, rigid thinking in relation to the above issues can easily result in hasty decisions, especially if a choice is combined with the aim of avoiding learning content that, while uninteresting, might be necessary for later growth (Byman 2006, 115–126). This kind of decision does not seem to accord with the principles underlying either the Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2004 (henceforth FNCCBE 2004), which aimed at enabling a deepening of the learning process, or the FNCCBE 2014.⁵

Indeed, it could be argued that there may be a hidden educational agenda of reducing costs through the removal of certain subjects (e.g. fine arts and music) from the curriculum in the name of optionality. The goals of versatile, lifelong learning; the development of healthy self-esteem; general knowledge and the transfer of the cultural heritage from one generation to the next (FNCCBE 2004, 8–12); or the development of wide-ranging knowledge in all seven categories (NCCBE 2014, 19–24) do not seem to align with the level of resources available for the subjects offered or with the content of the music curriculum. Instead, the availability of resources has been underestimated in relation to the requirements of the curriculum. It is likely that current practice reflects policy administrators' lack of understanding of the reality of education.

⁴ The Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014 has added one obligatory lesson per week to the eighth grade, starting from August 1, 2017.

⁵ I refer to FNCCBE 2014 when necessary. The changes introduced and their impact on educational habits and practices need closer study of its own after the 2014 curriculum has settled in.

A Child with Indiscriminate Musical Ability

The notion of a child with *indiscriminate musical ability* (originally in Finnish *musiikillisesti valikoitumaton lapsi*) is used, inter alia, by Kimmo Lehtonen, Antti Juvonen and Heikki Ruismäki in their essay in the national daily newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* (2008), in which they refer to the pupils who have not shown proven musicality in tests or a strong relationship with music. In this essay, they draw especially on research on the experience of (and inspiration produced by) listening to ambient music, an area where the impact of music education on mental and physical development in adolescence has been extensively studied in recent years (see Saarikallio and Erkkilä 2007; Tervaniemi 2009).

In the history of music education in Finland, research has identified a kind of tragic legend that could be described as singing exhaustion; that is, singing a song in front of one's classmates as a test of musicality (Numminen 2005, 57–58). Informal discourse with various people and participants of my research indicate that the effect of this practice continues to be common. There is a clear need for further research on current music education practices and their impact on the growth and development of identity in pupils with so-called indiscriminate musical ability, especially among adolescents, who seem to be neglected. According to Erja Kosonen (2009, 161), the division into pupils who are active and inactive with music can already be observed in the fifth grade. Pupils who are not familiar with music training will not choose music as a subject in secondary school. This can be also a consequence of the mainstream focus on classical music and its special skills in music teachers' training. Other elements of music, such as community, emotion and expression, have therefore been more neglected (Lehtonen and Juvonen 2009, 97). Ava Numminen (2005, 260) suggests remedial teaching for pupils who have difficulties like staying in tune while singing. In my opinion, the idea could be broadened to concern other basic elements of music education, also.

Researchers have also found a link between the arts, especially music, and the prevention and management of very serious behavioral and depressive episodes (see, for example Punkanen 2011, 52). In practice, too often, only musically talented or highly motivated pupils are given the opportunity to strengthen their musical identity through active work under the guidance of a specialist, according to Kosonen (2009, 157–161) and Lehtonen (2004, 18–19, 51–52). In music education, the focus seems to be young people who have a musical background or who have practiced music before (Juvonen, Lehtonen and Ruismäki 2016). Studies that have also involved children with indiscriminate musical ability have tended to focus on young people's consumption of music (see for example Lehtonen 1996; Saarikallio 2011). Children with indiscriminate musical ability should also be given the option to participate in music lessons in the later primary and secondary school stages without being afraid of being rejected in a musical sense. Ulla Hairo-Lax and Minna Muukkonen emphasize the possibilities of school music education to support pupils' wellbeing

(2013, 42–43). According Juvonen, Lehtonen and Ruismäki (2008), the challenge in music education is pupils regarded as unmusical or those who do not have a strong relationship with music. These notions have also been highlighted in research on the growth of young people's emotional and mental wellbeing (see Lehtonen and Juvonen 2009, 100–101; Saarikallio and Erkkilä 2007).

Research Process

My research is based on interviews with pupils aged 12–14 categorized as having indiscriminate musical ability in their relationship to music and music education. The main research question focuses on pupils who are not actively involved in music outside school. More precisely: 1) What effects does active participation in a group producing music have on the development and wellbeing of pupils with indiscriminate musical ability? 2) Does direct and intense engagement with music contribute to strengthening a pupil's positive self-esteem? 3) Does this lead to an increase in creative activity? Here, engagement excludes any expectations of performing ability or other similar pressures. My study explores the hypothesis that active, practical participation in music education benefits pupils' psycho-physical development.

Altogether, I interviewed 35 pupils from Waldorf schools in Lahti, Tampere and Helsinki (Finland); 13 informants answered the questions orally and 22 answered on paper. Participation in the study was voluntary. My aim was to recruit pupils with indiscriminate musical ability and exclude those who had music as a hobby, for example in the form of private or institutional music lessons. Previous musical activity was not an exclusion criterion, but none of the participants was learning to play a musical instrument at the time of the interview. None of the informants had practiced music since early childhood, so their musical history did not affect their participation in the study. Their musical activity had ended at a relatively early stage and had, in practice, barely started. My questions intended to help the informants establish their relationship to music and music education. The emphasis was on self-assessment of the informants' participation in music lessons and musical education as part of their schoolwork.

I collected the data between September 2011 and April 2012 using two different interview methods. First, in Lahti and Helsinki, I applied a semi-structured interview design due to its flexibility (for a more detailed description on this approach, see Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka, 2006). This interview method permits the expansion of responses and allows for an element of chance in addressing the topic area. In Tampere, I used a structured interview based on the data I had gathered in Lahti. My aim was to collect data in a situation in which the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee did not guide the direction of the responses in the same way as in mutual dialogue. The data was, naturally, collected anonymously.

However, when I discuss my data in the following, I apply abbreviations I1–I35 to my 35 interviewees. English translations of originally Finnish quotations are mine.

I sequenced the interviews based on the idea of obtaining first-flow information in the form of open dialogue. With the help of the already collected data, I was able not only to shape the questions more precisely but also to compare the answers with each other to find out if and how oral versus written questions provided similar or different information. I arranged the questions in advance into three main categories: the interviewee's musical identity, functional relationship to music lessons in school and emotional relationship to music lessons in school. A total of 16 questions were evenly distributed across the categories. The questions were unambiguous and easy to grasp at first hearing or reading.

In the first category, I observed the interviewees' musical identity and their relationship to music in general. The questions aimed at eliciting the meaning of music, possible previous musical activity and the pupil's relationship to it. I asked the interviewees to analyze how they express themselves through music and to describe the importance of music for them personally and in general. In the second category, I approached music teaching purely from a practical point of view to find out what the interviewees wanted to learn in their school music lessons. I intended to reveal their thoughts about the relevance and importance of music teaching while also trying to discern what opportunities they perceived for actively participating in music lessons. I included the questions on equal classroom treatment in music lessons and possible choices of music subjects in this section. In the third category, I focused on how music influences emotion in both individual and social contexts with the aim of investigating how individuals approach their emotional experience. The questions addressed experiences of success and failure and the general impact of music education in both the interviewees' own lives and in their daily school work. By means of the different categories behind the interview framework, I wanted to learn about the informants' relationship to music in general and to music education in school and how they participate in it. I also wished to discover how the interviewees experienced their ability with music and their willingness to work with music. Furthermore, I was interested in their views on music education as part of the curriculum.

I completed the interviews in April 2012 and began the analysis shortly thereafter. My data processing, analysis and interpretation of the results followed the basic tenets of Grounded Theory (for a detailed description of this method, see Charmaz, 2003). The theoretical framework builds on related research and the literature on Steiner and Waldorf School music education (see Kalwa, 1997; Riccio, 2000; Stockmeyer, 2001; Wünsch, 1995). Grounded Theory was a natural choice, given that that earlier research on music teaching in adolescence in Waldorf schools is quite limited. Inductive analysis encourages the application of reasoning and conceptualization, through which the research focus is frequently enhanced and expanded. However, my approach comes

closer to abductive analysis, which is based on hypotheses that typically direct the study (Paavola 2009).

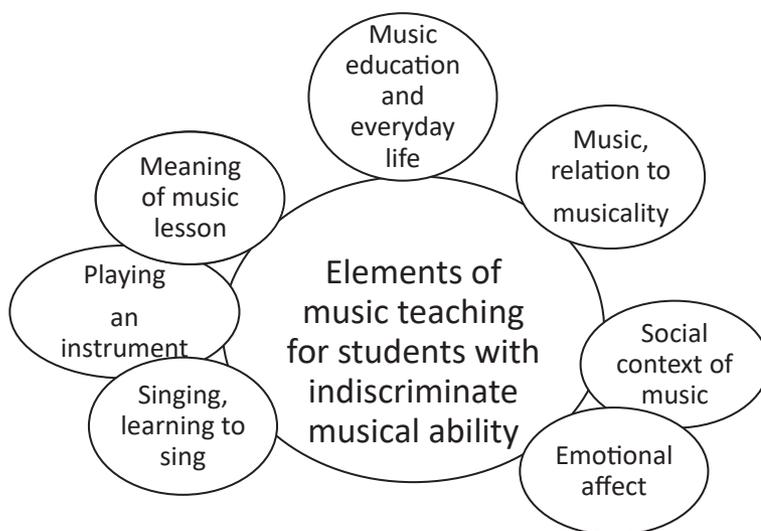
During my work as a music teacher, through frequent discussions with my pupils, I became aware of their desire and willingness to participate in music lessons. This guided me to pedagogical applications where I gave all pupils potentially more working space and instructions on how to proceed with different elements in music than are common. The result was that, soon, all the pupils were eager to work intensively in these lessons. Pupils who had more experience in music began to share their knowledge and skills with others and help them to progress. In discussions with my teacher colleagues, I confirmed the advantages of my pedagogical applications (i.e. letting pupils work in a free space, under my guidance but within less structured music sessions). For me personally, one of the most valuable features of abductive reasoning is that it provides a foundation on which to present, develop and test the tacit knowledge I have acquired during my professional career.

The Elements of Music Teaching for Pupils with Indiscriminate Musical Ability

This research suggests that school music education can be important for pupils with less musical ability and for musically restricted pupils.⁶ When analyzing the interview data, I divided the responses to seven main categories (Picture 1): 1) Playing an instrument, 2) the meaning of the music lesson, 3) the influence of music education on understanding music in everyday life, 4) the positive effect of music on one's life, 5) learning to sing, 6) the social context of music and 7) the relation of music to one's own musicality. These categories cover the conventions, actions and affects the interviewees commonly employed when they discussed music and music lessons and described their relation to them. I excluded comments that were directly related to the technical learning of an instrument and possible lessons in playing an instrument (e.g. lessons that included more instructions in instrumental technique). Condensing the data further yielded three categories: 1) Equality, 2) emotional affect and 3) the importance of music. These finally led to the core category, the elements of music teaching for pupils with indiscriminate musical ability.

In this context, equality refers both to pupils' chance to act freely in music lessons, regardless of their individual capability, and to the teacher treating everybody equally. According to my analysis, prior or present musical activity and experience secures pupils an advantage in the music lesson; it typically results in more active and successful participation. In my interviews, this manifested, for example, as the following remarks: "Well, maybe at the moment, I think, those who really can play will be picked -- they are given [more opportunities

⁶ With the term *musically restricted* I refer to a Finnish term *musiikkirajoitteinen* that has been applied by Juvonen, Lehtonen and Ruismäki (2016, 29). The translation of the term is my own.



Picture 1: The seven categories of responses, according to data analysis.

in the music lessons], or -- not especially practice but can play"⁷ (13), and, "Well, for those who practice or really can play an instrument, they are told that perhaps you would come to the front and show the others how this thing goes"⁸ (113).

An explicit negative association with equality was common among the musically non-active group of pupils. The reason why they are less active was clear. In the words of one informant (18), "[You cannot participate as much as the others or you're not quite equal of course when you're not allowed to try anything, since those who can already play anyway get the chance."⁹ Adolescent pupils are known to be sensitive to equality of treatment. Although some responses indicated that informants had concerns about inequality in teachers' methods, the atmosphere in the lessons was positive. However, the data suggest that equality in the treatment of pupils could be improved in many ways.

Pupils with indiscriminate musical ability typically only have the possibility to express themselves musically through singing in school music lessons: The majority of the informants reported that their music-making activity in music lessons had been channeled into singing. Some added that singing

⁷ No, ehkä tällä hetkellä mun mielestä ehkä pikkuisen liikaa otetaan noita -- näille jotka oikeesti osaa soittaa, niille annetaan, tai sitte -- niin, tai ei varsinaisesti harjoittele, mutta osaa soittaa.

⁸ No, ne ketkä harrastaa tai niinku silleen ihan osaa soittaa, niille sanotaan, että jos te tulette vaikka nyt tähän eteen ja näytätte, miten tämä menee noille.

⁹ Ei nyt ihan täysipainoisesti tietenkään, kun ei saa kokeilla tietenkään silleen mitään, kun niille muille kuitenkin annetaan mahdollisuus, ketkä osaa jo sitä.

was perceived in the classroom to be inferior to playing an instrument. The informants described this setting as follows: "Quite many are like, in our class as well, that those who can play [an instrument] get a chance to play"¹⁰ (I5); "Well, usually those who can [play] will play. Those who can't play are rarely given a chance"¹¹ (I12), and, "It should be that those who do not know how to play should then play, and those who can do better [should] just help or give advice"¹² (I24). It seems that pupils with indiscriminate musical ability are only partially able to express themselves musically during music lessons, if at all: "It's like if you can't play, then you start doing singing, and only those will be chosen to play who can already play. They [who can play] are given notes, and the rest, who can't play anything, sing"¹³ (I19).

Although listening to music plays is an important role in young people's relation to music, the data suggest that singing is the next most important musical activity: "Well, we have just some like Finnish songs, and it's like when you've been singing, you have a nice and agreeable feeling. Feeling kind of a bit chirpier that you have a possibility to join in, if you like it. I kind of like singing very much; it makes me feel good"¹⁴ (I32). However, it appears that, within the data I collected, singing was not seen as an activity that signified a special relation to music or that represented a particular musical skill.

Most of the informants mentioned the positive mood that music induces: Music gives "a cheerful mood," and it "brings joy." It also "rids you of bad feelings," "is an important [school] subject" and "has a positive effect on your studies." Some informants described the relation between music and emotions in more detail: "Well, it is like some songs stay in my head, [they] continue to ring -- those I'm singing then"¹⁵ (I4); "Well, it [music] cheers you up sometimes, and it's just something that's nice to listen to. And sometimes one just can't stand it at all,"¹⁶ (I15) and, "In short, it cheers you up"¹⁷ (I21).

¹⁰ Aika monet on silleen, meidänkin luokasta silleen, että ne ketkä osaa soittaa, niin ne soittaa.

¹¹ No, kyllä yleensä ne soittaa, jotka osaa soittaa siellä, että harvemmin sieltä otetaan niitä, ketkä ei osaa soittaa.

¹² Sen pitäisi olla silleen, että ne ketkä ei osaa soittaa, niitten pitäisi sitten soittaa ja ne ketkä sitten osaa paremmin, niin ni sitten auttaa tai neuvois vaan.

¹³ No, joo se on sillai niinku, että ei osaa niin sitten sitä aletaan laulamaan ja otetaan vaan ne, jotka soittaa, soittamaan sinne, niille katotaan nuotit ja loput laulaa sitten, jotka ei osaa tehdä mitään.

¹⁴ No, meillä on just jotain niinku ihan tämmösiä suomalaisia lauluja ja niinku ja se on silleen kun on laulanut sen niin ihan kiva ja reipas olo, semmoinen vähän pirteämpi, että saa olla niinkun mukana, jos tykkää. Kyllä mä silleen ihan hyvin tykkään laulaa tai tälleen, että kyllä siitä mukava olo tulee.

¹⁵ No, on se silleen, että jotkut laulut jää päähän, soimaan päässä -- niitä mä laulelen sitten.

¹⁶ No, se piristää joskus ja se, se on vaan asia, jota on joskus mukava kuunnella ja sitten joskus sitä ei jaksa ollenkaan

¹⁷ Se piristää, lyhyesti sanottuna.

In summary, it seems that producing music frequently generates positive moods. This supports the views that everyone should have an opportunity to participate more actively and receive guidance in every possible way in music lessons. When I asked my interviewees about the importance of music and music lessons in general, their reactions were very positive. One of them saw music as carrying global potential (I7): "If you think globally, there's no denying that music has an immense financial importance in the world -- people make more money with music than by producing food or groceries, for example, you see -- it just has an extraordinarily great importance. [...] One can do social good and social harm, if you think about it in that way."¹⁸ Another one was more careful about generalizing (I10): "I'm not sure, whether [music] connects people in a different way and bring people more together."¹⁹

Consequently, music education in schools was described as important and essential: "[a]nd I find music very nice -- and it's like interesting, you want to learn it -- well, especially some boys have [that], if they like, may not want to learn math. But music is like, at least to the boys in our class, it's more important, like for me too, it is more important than math"²⁰ (I17). Pupils also saw music education as beneficial more generally: "Well, maybe just that it develops all capabilities,"²¹ (I34) remarked one shortly, while another took a wider perspective: "Well, it kind of helps in all things and develops all skills. You kind of must, you kind of have to be able think much better and concentrate on things"²² (I11).

In the Waldorf schools, music education is provided throughout the pupil's school career. When I asked the informants if music as a subject could be left out, if this was an option they would choose, this caused astonishment: "Why would one do that, I surely would like to have it [music]"²³ (I5), and "I'd be shocked -- music is really nice -- so, I'd be really stunned if I was told that there was to be no music at all"²⁴ (I16).

¹⁸ Jos nyt ajatellaan tälleen globaalisti, niin onhan musiikilla valtava taloudellinen merkitys maailmassa, niinku. -- Musiikillahan tienataan enemmän rahaa kun ruualla tai esimerkiksi elintarvikkeilla niin että -- Kyllähän se on hirveen suuri merkitys [...] Sillä voi saada aikaan kaikkea yhteiskunnallista hyvää ja pahaakin aikaan, jos nyt niikseen tulee.

¹⁹ En mä tiedä yhdistääkö se niinku ihmisiä jotenkin eri tavalla ja saa niinku ihmisiä liittymään yhteen enemmän.

²⁰ [j]a musiikki on tosi kivaa -- Ja se vähän niinku kiinnostavaa, sitä haluaa oppia -- No, joillain pojilla varsinkin on, ellei ne haluu mitään matikkaa niinko opetella. Mutta musiikki on niinko ainakin pojilla, meidän luokkalaisilla pojilla varsinkin, se musiikki on tärkeämpi, niinku mullakin se on paljon tärkeämpi niinko matikka.

²¹ No, ehkä just se, että se kehittää kaikkia kykyjä.

²² No, se niinku tavallaan auttaa kaikissa asioissa ja kehittää niinku kaikkii kykyjä, niinku pitää, pystyy ajattelemaan paljon paremmin ja keskittymään johonkin asiaan.

²³ No, miksi ihmeessä, kyllä mä ainakin haluaisin että sitä olisi.

²⁴ Kyllä mä varmaan vähän shokissa olisi -- Ja musiikki on tosi kivaa -- että kyllä mä vähän oisin järkyttyny, jos sanottais ettei oo musiikkia.

The above comments suggest that music as a subject is experienced positively, and that it clearly should be part of the school curriculum. When I asked my interviewees to comment on the value of music, they frequently said that music generates delight, a happy mood. Eight informants out of 29 (six informants did not want to express their point of view) thought that music was not a necessary subject in school or argued that music has no effect on them personally, or that it could improve their school performance, for example. However, the majority could not imagine having no music at all.

Equality in Education

The challenge in primary and secondary school music education in Finland is to strengthen pupils' relationship to music, particularly among those who are assumed not to have enough musical talent or a strong prior relationship with music. Current music education in Finland tends to approach the pupil primarily as a listener and receiver. Practical participation during lessons falls mostly to pupils with pre-existing musical ability (Juvonen, Lehtonen and Ruismäki 2016). Joseph Beuys's quotation in the beginning of this article can be extended to include music and music education. A music teacher should guide all pupils equally and grant them a chance to accomplish creative, inspiring and practical work, regardless of their musical ability. The data I collected for this article suggest that making music generates a joyful and positive mood in pupils. This empirically supports the idea that everyone should have the opportunity to be engaged in music production in music lessons, preferably under professional guidance. This naturally requires some patience and long-term thinking from a teacher. These results also recall Rudolf Steiner's idea of children taking part in music lessons (Stockmeyer 2001, 163). It seems obvious that if pupils are given a chance to express themselves, if they feel motivated to use their own abilities, and if they are encouraged and left free to develop their skills, music education is more likely to be successful. This applies to both the teacher and the pupil. Music education, and practical music education in particular, is an important and necessary subject for the general development of all pupils during adolescence (Hairo-Lax and Muukkonen 2013, 40–42).

Psycho-physical development in adolescence is a complex process. Educators should therefore have a thorough knowledge of a young person's inner growth, both as an individual experience and as a set of socio-emotional processes. The goal set for comprehensive school education in the Finnish school reform of the early 1970s has not yet been achieved: It seems that both teaching methods and content that draw from school practices common in the first half of the 20th century continue to dominate. The lack of options within education may well be a determining element for the development of a young person, especially as he or she approaches adolescence, the most sensitive phase in a young person's emotional transition to early adulthood. This is precisely the phase in which

young people should be supported with the help of music teaching imbued with an attitude of respect. This view is supported in research by Hairo-Lax and Muukkonen (2013) and Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007). Typically, pupils at this age are asked to make choices between school subjects without deeper awareness of the consequences. This may lead to situations in which subjects that are of crucial importance for psycho-physical growth (e.g. music) are dropped (Juvonen, Lehtonen and Ruismäki 2016). The construction of the self and establishment of a rich emotional life demand both mental and physical support, and it is in this area that music can play a significant role (Hairo-Lax and Muukkonen 2013). It would be ideal if the selection of optional school subjects could be extended and granted to all schools and pupils in Finland. This would most likely have many positive consequences since music, currently one of the optional subjects, can respond well to young people's psycho-physical needs. This area merits further academic study.

One potential challenge in music education is teachers' attitude towards pupils. Highly educated professional teachers may achieve exceptional results with pupils with indiscriminate musical abilities. Unfortunately, there may not yet be enough such teachers available. One might ask if school is the right place to educate pupils in musical skills, or whether school music education should focus on all pupils and attempt to engage them in musical activities. The standards set for pupils' progress in music in schools are currently rather ambitious, and pupils are primarily assessed on their skills (see Hairo-Lax and Muukkonen 2013). Erkkilä (1998) suggests that the application of social working methods, such as clinical improvisation, could potentially steer music education in a more creative direction. Improvisation, such as combining improvisation with composing, where the music acquires its structure and expression, or emerges out of chaos, may be key solutions in present and future music education, where there will be a strong need for music's social and therapeutic impact.

References

- Byman, Reijo. 2006. Onko opetus suostuttelemissa oppimaan? In *Suoraa puhetta: Kollegiaalisesti opetuksesta ja kasvatuksesta*, edited by Jukka Husu and Riitta Jyrhämä: 115–126. Jyväskylä: PS-kustannus.
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2003. "Grounded Theory." In *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*, edited by Jonathan A. Smith: 53–84. London: Sage.
- Erkkilä, Jaakko. 1998. "Musiikkikasvatuksen ja musiikkiterapian yhteisiä rajapintoja." *The Finnish Journal of Music Education* 3 (3): 7–23.
- Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education*. 2004. Helsinki: Finnish National Board of Education.
- Finnish National Core Curriculum for Basic Education*. 2014. Helsinki: Finnish National Board of Education.
- Hairo-Lax, Ulla and Muukkonen, Minna. 2013. "Yläkoulun musiikinopetus nuoren kasvun ja hyvinvoinnin tukena: Musiikkiterapeuttinen näkökulma." *The Finnish Journal of Music Education* 16 (1): 29–46.

- Hirsjärvi, Sirkka and Helena Hurme. 2008. *Tutkimushaastattelu: Teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö*. Helsinki: Gaudeamus.
- Järvelä, Irma. 2006. "Musikaalisuuden monet kasvot." *Duodecim* 122 (23): 2879–2884.
- Juvonen, Antti, Lehtonen, Kimmo and Heikki Ruismäki. 2008. "Milloin meillä oivalletaan musiikkikasvatuksen merkitys." *Helsingin Sanomat*, June 10.
- Juvonen, Antti, Lehtonen, Kimmo and Heikki Ruismäki. 2016. "Musiikkirajoitteisuus sukupolvien välisenä siirtotaakkana." *The Finnish Journal of Music Education* 19 (1): 29–42.
- Kalwa, Michael. 1997. *Begegnung mit Musik – Ein Überblick über den Lehrplan des Musikunterrichts an der Waldorfschule*. Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben.
- Kosonen, Erja. 2009. "Musiikki koulussa ja koulun jälkeen." In *Musiikkikasvatus: Näkökulmia kasvatukseen, opetukseen ja tutkimukseen*, edited by Jukka Louhivuori, Pirkko Paananen and Lauri Väkevä: 157–170. Vaasa: Suomen Musiikkikasvatusseura.
- Lehtonen, Kimmo. 2004. *Maan korvessa kulkevi...: Johdatus postmoderniin musiikkipedagogiikkaan*. Turku: Turun yliopiston kasvatustieteen laitos.
- Lehtonen, Kimmo and Antti Juvonen. 2009. "Edistääkö musiikkikasvatus hyvinvointia?" *The Finnish Journal of Music Education* 12 (1): 92–104.
- Lindström, Tuuli. 2011. *Pedagogisia merkityksiä koulun musiikkitunneilla perusopetuksen yläluokkien oppilaiden näkökulmasta*. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopisto.
- Muukkonen, Minna. 2010. "Monipuolisuuden eetos: Musiikin aineenopettajat artikkeloimassa työnsä käytäntöjä." In *Taito- ja taideaineiden oppimistulokset: Raportit ja selvitykset 2011* (11), edited by Sirkka Laitinen and Antti Hilmola: 33–38. Helsinki: Opetushallitus.
- Numminen, Ava. 2005. *Laulutaidottomasta kehittyväksi laulajaksi*. Helsinki: Sibelius Academy.
- Ojala, Juha. 2009. "Mitä musikaalisuus on?" *Duodecim* 125 (23): 2559–2564.
- Paavola, Sami. 2009. Abduktiivinen argumentaatio – hypoteesien hakemisen ja keksimisen välittyneet strategiat. In *Suomalainen argumentaation tutkimus -konferenssi 26. –27.11. 2009*. Turku: Turun yliopisto.
- Punkanen, Marko. 2011. *Improvisational Music Therapy and Perception of Emotions in Music by People with Depression*. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Rawson, Martyn and Tobias Richter. 2004. *Steinerkoulu kansainvälinen opetussuunnitelma*. Tampere: Steinerpedagogiikan seura ry.
- Riccio, Mark. 2000. "Rudolf Steiner's Impulse in Education: His Unique Organic Method of Thinking and the Waldorf School Ideal." In *Dissertation Abstracts International, Section A: The Humanities and Social Sciences (DAIA)*. University Microfilms International. Ann Arbor: Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company.
- Saaranen-Kauppinen, Anita, Puusniekka, Anna et al. 2006–2009. *KvaliMOTV – Menetelmäopetuksen tietovaranto*. Accessed May 1, 2018. <http://www.fsd.uta.fi/menetelmaopetus/>.
- Saarikallio, Suvi. 2007. *Music as Mood Regulation in Adolescence*. Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä.
- Saarikallio, Suvi. 2011. "Mitä musiikki nuorille merkitsee?" In *Taito- ja taideaineiden oppimistulokset: Asiantuntijoiden arviointia*, edited by Sirkka Laitinen and Antti Hilmola: 53–61, Helsinki: Opetushallitus.
- Saarikallio, Suvi and Erkkilä, Jaakko. 2007. "The Role of Music in Adolescents' Mood Regulation." *Psychology of Music* 35 (1): 88–105.
- Stockmeyer, Karl Ernst August. 2001. *Rudolf Steiner's Curriculum for Waldorf Schools*. Dornach: Steiner Waldorf School Fellowship.
- Tervaniemi, Mari. 2009. "Miksi musiikki liikuttaa." *Duodecim* 125 (23): 2579–2582.
- Wünsch, Wolfgang, 1995. *Menschenbildung durch Musik – Der Musikunterricht an der Waldorfschule*. Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben.

Musiikin kuuntelemisella ja aktiivisella toiminnalla sen parissa sekä musiikkiteorian eri muodoilla on osoitettu olevan selvä yhteys ja vaikutus murrosikäisen nuoren kasvuun ja kehitykseen sekä fyysiseen ja psyykkiseen hyvinvointiin. Tarkastelen artikkelissani steinerkoulun musiikkikasvatusta ja tavoitteita suhteessa murrosikäisen oppilaan kehitykseen. Yhtenäiskoulurakenteensa mukaisesti (steinerkoulu on 12-vuotinen yhtenäiskoulu) kaikille yhteinen musiikin opetus jatkuu läpi perusopetus- ja lukiovaiheen. Tutkimukseni kohderyhmän muodostavat yläkouluikäiset, 13–15-vuotiaat nuoret, joiden kohdalla heitä ympäröivän musiikin ja sen tuottamien kokemusten ja elämysten, mutta myös musiikin opetuksen vaikutusta murrosiän psyykkiseen ja fyysiseen kehitykseen on tutkittu paljon viime vuosina.

Perusopetuksessa musiikin opetus on yhteistä kaikille alakouluvaiheessa. Tämän jälkeen musiikkia tarjotaan valinnaisena oppiaineena, johon oppilaat valikoituvat yleensä harrastuneisuuden perusteella. Kuitenkin musiikkikasvatusta, erityisesti toiminnallinen musiikkikasvatusta on nykyisen tutkimuksen valossa tärkeä ja tarpeellinen kaikille ikäkauden oppilaille heidän kokonaiskehityksensä kannalta. Musiikkikasvatuksen uutena haasteena on siten musiikillisesti valikoitumattomien oppilaiden musiikkisuhteen voimistaminen. Pyrin osoittamaan, miten kaikille oppilaille yhteisen musiikkikasvatuksen kautta koettu elämyksellisyys sekä sosiaalinen ja psyykinen toiminta ovat ensiarvoisia tämän herkan murrosiän kehitysvaiheen kannalta ja kuinka koulun musiikkikasvatuksen osallistumiskriteereitä tulisi mahdollisesti arvioida uudelleen näiden tavoitteiden saavuttamiseksi.

Jyrki Honkonen (jyhonkonen@gmail.com) is a musician and music teacher. He has worked in a Waldorf school since 1988. Since 2015 he has worked in a primary school. This article is a part of his forthcoming doctoral dissertation at the University of Jyväskylä.