

Spoken Language Acquisition Analogy and Real Time Generated Music

«*Fyrst må ein apa, så kan ein skapa*» (Knut Buen)

«*First you have to ape, then you can create*» (Knut Buen)

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Imitation, Copying

- Simple, almost embarrassingly so, but effective, yet challenging
- Not well understood
- Not practiced very much in formal music training
- Why?
 - Too simple? (Banal?)
 - Prejudice? (Fear of loss of identity?)
 - Lack of competence? (Fear of insufficiency?)
 - Taken for granted? (Implicit knowledge ignored?)

The Method

- Learning music one wants to master from sounding sources of high quality at an appropriate level of challenge.
- Learning through singing and clapping and other body sounds along with the sounding music until it is mastered and the source may gradually be removed.
- Transferred to the instrument (when possible) primarily using one's own memory and imagination. BECOMING THE SOLE SOURCE OF THE MUSIC. Played along the recorded music for verification.
- Finally: The music is notated FROM MEMORY (if desired and/or possible).

Desired Outcomes

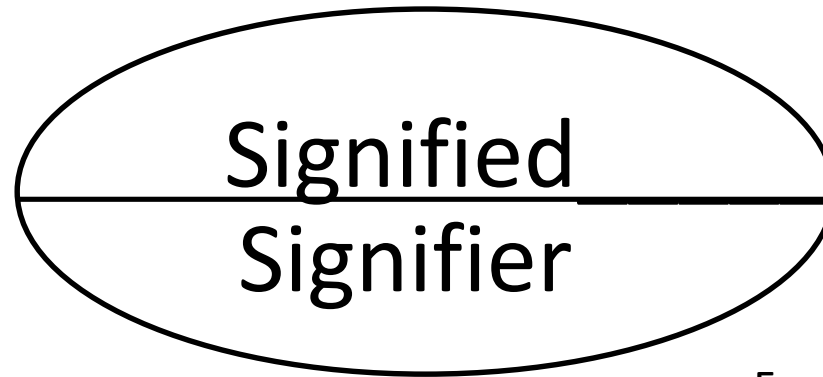
- Music language learning
- Strengthening musical imagination
- Strengthening the comprehension of musical unfolding
- Strengthening the aural capabilities
- Developing real time generative musical capabilities

The Spoken Language Acquisition Analogy

This analogy has proven useful in understanding the methodology.

- The way children learn their first language (or we best learn foreign languages)
- Strong motivation (desire) and thus focus, a prerequisite for good learning
- Imitation of sounding sources
 - Repetition
 - Playing with sounds and phrases
 - Syntax, grammar and rhetoric is acquired as unintended byproducts, not as theory
- We generate meaningful sentences without thinking about the language or where it takes us. **The language comes to our assistance.**

Where the language analogy fails



Ferdinand de Saussure

Lacking the signified, musical meaning is not created by pointing to external references but by internal cohesion, a kind of 'pure' language.

INI and RGM

- Standard pedagogy is geared more towards instrumental command than music learning.
- INI: Instrument, Notation, Interpretation
- RGM: Real Time Generated Music
- Being a good instrumentalist is meaningless if one does not have music to play.
- INI- og RGM-learning are complementary learning methods, not mutually excluding.

An idiomatic method? Yes

- You cannot learn music in the same way that you cannot learn language. You learn a language.
- The method is "by default" tied in with the copied material's language, but can be used on most musical languages.
- The first level of Meta Learning will largely be limited to the actual music language of the copied material.

Limitations?

- The method can be used on all traditional musical systems and create good generic knowledge and skills in these systems (and possibly beyond).
- It provides good specific, but less generic learning in constructed systems, and in particular free improvisational musical expressions (soundscapes, sound dramas)
- Still a very effective method in all music learning, and especially in basic training. (Basic training unfortunately often required in HME.)

An Epistemological Assertion

The role of theory

Primary Knowledge Base

Secondary Knowledge Base



Sounding Music

- Notation
- “Methods”
- Scales
- Analysis
- Theory
- History
- Etc.

Non-transferable knowledge base.
Can be learned but not taught.

Transferable knowledge base.
Can never replace the primary
Knowledge base.

BUT:

- Music is not Language, and not a Spoken Language
- Music may also be art ("artificial") (The Poetry Analogy?)
- Not a fundamentalist approach. Music Learning takes place in many shapes and forms, but the imitation method is often surprisingly disregarded.