

IRSTE

International Research Symposium on Talent Education



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**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
15TH INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM
ON TALENT EDUCATION (IRSTE)**

2020 IRSTE Online Meeting
August 15 to 21, 2020

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Welcome to the 15th International Research Symposium on Talent Education (IRSTE). This year marks our 30th anniversary!

The IRSTE was founded in 1990 by Margery Aber and is now co-sponsored by American Suzuki Institute (ASI) and the Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA). In recent years, the Symposium has taken place in conjunction with the biennial SAA Conference. When both the 2020 SAA Conference and Symposium were cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic we decided to convert the 30th anniversary Symposium to an online event for the very first time in the hopes that attendees from across the Americas would be able to join us from home.

Since its founding 30 years ago, IRSTE's goal has always been to bring together a wide-ranging group of researchers, teachers, and members of our community who are interested in applying research evidence to the field of Suzuki teaching and learning. We strive to bridge disciplinary boundaries, to welcome contributors from a variety of backgrounds, and to build capacity within our Suzuki community. We see an online event as a new way of achieving that goal, and we are thrilled at the record-breaking number of attendees who will be joining us this summer!

However, we acknowledge that racism and other systemic barriers mean that Black, Indigenous, and other racialized people are marginalized and excluded from many arts and academic settings in 2020. As a result neither the research world nor the Suzuki community reflects the racial and socioeconomic diversity of our larger society. As we envision the next 30 years for IRSTE, we recommit to our values of inclusion and diversity. We will also strive to welcome new contributors, reach new audiences, and to examine our evidence through the lens of equity.

This summer attendees have the opportunity to hear from presenters across Canada and the United States. We are particularly excited to welcome back Dr. Beatriz Ilari for her keynote, *Does Participation in Formal Music Education Programs Enhance Children's Prosocial Skills?* Dr. Ilari will also highlight the implications of that research for day-to-day work in our studios. Our hope is that all will leave the day pondering new ideas, stimulated by new ways of thinking, and revitalized in your commitment to life-long learning. Welcome, and enjoy!



Pat D'Ercole, IRSTE Co-coordinator
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15TH INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM ON TALENT EDUCATION

DAY ONE: Saturday, Aug 15 @ 12:00–1:30pm EDT (90 min session)

Teens & Motivation: What We Can Learn About How to Nurture & Develop Their Life-Long Love of Music (*Christine Goodner & Rebekah Hansen*)

“Flipping” Suzuki Learning (*Caitlin R. Smith*)

Facilitating Trust in Preschool: A Case Study (*Karin S. Hendricks & Jessandra Kono*)

DAY TWO: Wednesday, Aug 19 @ 7:00–9:00pm EDT (120 min session)

Surveying Suzuki Parents: What They’ve Learned, What They Like, What They Wish They Knew (*Kathleen M. Einarson, Eun Cho, & Pat D’Ercole*)

Effects of Different Instrumental Accompaniment on the Intonation of High School and Collegiate Violinists, Violists, and Cellists (*John-Rine A. Zabanal*)

Does the Bow Fit? Anthropometric Measurements and Fractional-Size Violin Bows (*Zachary Ebin & MarieFaith Lane*)

Mindfulness for Musicians: Bringing sport psychology and mindfulness-based therapies to the practice room and the concert stage (*Lauretta M. Werner*)

DAY THREE: Friday, Aug. 21 @ 12:00–1:30pm EDT (90 min session)

KEYNOTE LECTURE: Does Participation in Formal Music Education Programs Enhance Children’s Prosocial Skills? (*Beatriz Ilari*)

Q & A period with Dr. Ilari, followed by breakout discussions on keynote/symposium topics and themes

NOTE: A copy of the proceedings, as well as materials from preceding symposia, articles, and the most recent Suzuki bibliography are available on our website at www.irste.org.

IRSTE 2020 Keynote Address:

**Does Participation in Formal Music Education Programs
Enhance Children's Prosocial Skills?**

Beatriz Ilari
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Helping and sharing are two types of prosocial behaviors or voluntary actions that are intended to benefit others. Considered to be staples of social competence, prosocial behaviors are important for the development of harmonious relationships in social groups. Prosocial behaviors emerge early in life and are shaped through children's everyday interactions with family members, peers, teachers, and other members of their communities.

Recent studies suggest that engagement in joint forms of music making may enhance prosocial skills in infants and young children. In this talk, I present data from three empirical studies conducted with young instrumentalists from an El Sistema-inspired program (study 1), preschoolers involved in a private early childhood music program (study 2), and kindergartners who were participating in a short-term, school-based music program (study 3). Findings from all three studies suggested that there might be a possible association between formal music education programs and the development of prosocial skills in childhood, and that such association could be a direct one (study 2), or indirect, through the development of mechanisms that have been associated with prosocial skills (studies 1 and 3). Findings from all three studies also point to culture and musical expertise as potentially important factors in the development of prosocial skills in children who participate in formal music programs. Following a discussion of findings, I offer implications of these findings for music teaching and learning.

Does the Bow Fit? Anthropometric Measurements and Fractional-Size Violin Bows

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This study evaluates the dimensions of fractional-size violin bows in relation to anthropometric measurements of children and adults. Various methods and devices have been put forward to measure children for violin size, but there is a lack of research regarding bow size. Preliminary findings indicate that, with the exception of length, fractional-size bows are designed with near identical dimensions to full-size bows. Full-size bow dimensions replicated on fractional-size bows affect the balance point of the bow, thereby affecting the bow's function. A review of anthropometry research affirms that child and adult limb-length proportions differ. The results of this study are indicative of the need for fractional-size bows designed with alternative dimensions than the current standard. The study's conclusion suggests experimental dimensions for fractional-size violin bows that will mimic the function of full-size bows and better suit a child's size.

Surveying Suzuki Parents: What They've Learned, What They Like, What They Wish They Knew

Kathleen M. Einarson, Eun Cho, & Patricia D'Ercole
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Parents are typically the driving force behind young children's participation in formal music lessons, given the sustained investment of time and financial resources such training requires. Adequate preparation and support has the potential to change parent behaviours, leading to improved student achievement and retention (Creech & Hallam, 2003). Many Suzuki teachers require parents of new students to engage in orientation sessions designed to teach parents how to work effectively with novice musicians (Mitchell et al., 2016) but there is no widely accepted curriculum or standard practice. To support parents as effectively as possible, there exists a need to investigate what parents value about their Suzuki parent education and orientation, how prepared they feel to act as a Suzuki home teacher, and what types of resources and materials they find most helpful.

As part of an ongoing multi-year research program, we investigate how teachers can deliberately and effectively support the *parents* of young children who are starting or continuing formal music training. A precursor survey of Suzuki teachers revealed high demand for parent-specific education materials (Einarson et al., 2016), and a desire to meet parent needs more effectively. Subsequent interviews with parents of six novice Suzuki students (Dakon et. al, 2018) and a survey of parents whose children studied with SAA teacher trainers (Einarson et al., 2018) provided useful preliminary data about parents' perceived strengths, weaknesses, and preferences.

The current project consisted of an online survey developed using data from the above studies. The survey was distributed by email to the parents of Suzuki instrumental students ($n = 255$) recruited from across Canada and the United States at two time points. Survey questions inquired about 1) family demographics and background information, 2) the structure and content of the parent-education program each family completed, 3) daily practicing and listening habits as well as challenges that parents encountered during lessons and practice, and finally 4) parents' reports about the methods of communication, types of materials, and topics they found most helpful and interesting. We provide an overview of demographic data and parent education experiences, as well as a description of parents' communication preferences and the resources they find most useful. We then explore the relationships between home practice, daily listening, self-reported confidence, and challenges that parents face in their role as 'home teacher'.

**Teens & Motivation:
What We Can Learn About How to Nurture & Develop Their Life-Long Love of Music**

Christine Goodner & Rebekah Hanson

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Keeping teen musicians motivated can feel like a challenge for both parents and teachers alike. How can we better understand what drives motivation in this age group and how to connect to those motivations as educators? Often teens are practicing their instruments independently, yet are significantly impacted by the parents and educators in their lives. Parents want to know the best way to keep their child interested in putting in practice time and making their instrument a priority when they are overscheduled and short on time. Teachers want to keep students engaged in lessons and ensembles and continuously working to improve their skills. Often the teens we work and live with can seem like a mystery. Using qualitative research from over 120 teens and college students, collected through Google surveys, this research will give a better understanding of the teen perspective on topics including: motivation, what makes playing their instrument hard, what teens love about playing, and what advice they would give their younger selves. Our research will help us better understand what really motivates the teens we work with and how to help them stay motivated to practice at home. It will help educators make more informed decisions about how they work with the teens in their programs to keep them motivated during the teen years. When we only focus on academic outcomes, performance quality, and what drives us as adults, we are missing a significant opportunity to encourage teens in a way that genuinely makes an impact on them and their interest in playing. The more we consider the teen experience and perspective the more we can work to nurture and build on the unique needs of this age group.

Facilitating Trust in Preschool: A Case Study

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Globalization and technological advancements in the 21st century have led to a rapid expansion of what it means to be a music educator, and even what it means to be ‘musical.’ In a world where students can access diverse musics, information, and even music-making tools at the touch of a button, the role of the music educator is in many contexts shifting from ‘dispenser’ and/or ‘controller’ of information to ‘facilitator’ and supportive partner in the music learning process. Furthermore, with student populations becoming increasingly diverse and students being exposed to immeasurably different genres of music, it is impossible for any teacher to be an expert in all of the potential array of musics that students might find interesting and motivational. Therefore, teachers who strive to expand their own musical repertoire to engage in culturally responsive teaching (see Abril, 2009; Lind & McKoy, 2016) will likely become co-learners along with their students.

This case study describes the experiences of Walter, a preschool sports teacher and classroom aide with no prior music training, who took it upon himself to learn the violin along with the preschool students in his care. We studied Walter over the course of two years as his duties at the preschool expanded from hallway monitor and classroom aide, to classroom teacher and developer of his own sports curriculum inspired by the principles of Suzuki violin pedagogy. Data sources included naturalistic observation of lessons and other interactions at the preschool; semi-structured interviews with Walter and other preschool teachers and administrators; review of Walter’s teaching journals; and study of preschool artifacts, including Walter’s sports curriculum.

We categorized the data according to a priori codes using the Hendricks (2018) ‘compassionate music teaching’ framework, which includes the following themes: (a) trust, (b) empathy, (c) patience, (d) inclusion, (e) community, and (f) authentic connection. Analysis of coded data involved researcher interpretation (Stake, 1995), with particular attention to which of the aforementioned themes were most prevalent in Walter’s case. This process led to further analysis of the first theme, trust, with further exploration of the ways in which Walter embodied seven facets of trust (i.e., vulnerability, confidence, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness; see Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000) to create environments of safety, collaboration, and engagement for both music and sports. This presentation will highlight some of the specific teaching approaches used by Walter as he developed both musically and pedagogically, and will further offer suggestions for how current curricula and teaching practices might be expanded, reshaped, and refined to meet the needs of 21st-century music students.

“Flipping” Suzuki Learning

Caitlin R. Smith

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The concept of “flipped learning” was born in 2007 when Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams, high-school teachers in Colorado, began recording their chemistry lectures for students who missed class. What began as a way to help absent students keep up with coursework turned into a revolutionary method of teaching. In the traditional learning model, students listen to the teacher lecture during class, then go home and practice what they learned. In the flipped learning model, students receive content outside the classroom (often in the form of online videos) then come to class to practice what they learned. In other words, flipped learning swaps in-class instruction and at-home practice.

According to Bergmann and Sams, “Students need teachers most when they are stuck on a difficult concept or problem that, in a traditional classroom, often happens at home, when the teacher is unavailable.” This plight is familiar to Suzuki parents. Dr. Suzuki’s proclamation that “Every Child Can!” does not hinge on parents’ musical ability; rather, success with the Suzuki Method requires parents willing to dedicate time to consistent practice. Flipped learning aligns neatly with Dr. Suzuki’s philosophy: “The greatest power in flipped learning is the ability to individualize the learning for each child.”

Flipped learning is becoming more widely used in schools, but the Suzuki Method has yet to see great involvement with flipped learning. Most Suzuki teachers use private lesson time to teach new concepts, then parents and children reinforce these concepts in their home practice. Teachers often hear reports at lessons that parents and children did their best to do the assigned practice and repetitions but could not remember how to do it correctly. This gap in retaining new information between lesson time and practice time is where flipped learning could greatly improve teaching and learning. In a flipped learning model of the Suzuki Method, kids could watch video lectures at home then come to private and group lessons for hands-on work and face-to-face interaction with their teacher and peers. This model frees the teacher to focus on specific students’ needs, help those who struggle, and challenge those who are moving along more quickly. Flipped learning results in a group space “transformed into a dynamic, interactive learning environment where the educator guides students as they apply concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter.” Perhaps most importantly, Bergmann and Sams note, “Flipped learning is not about how to use videos in lessons. It’s about how to best use in-class time with students.”

This paper considers the many benefits of implementing flipped learning in the Suzuki Method, ways of innovative technology use in Suzuki teaching, and solutions to possible resulting challenges. Furthermore, this paper discusses how I am implementing flipped learning in my Suzuki violin studio and what results I see from these changes to content delivery and digestion.

Mindfulness for Musicians: Bringing sport psychology and mindfulness-based therapies to the practice room and the concert stage

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Due to the profession's competitive nature, time-consuming demands, and frequent evaluations, many musicians experience music performance anxiety, hypercritical thoughts, and avoidance of specific performance situations. To cope with these experiences, musicians can cultivate mindfulness by incorporating psychology and sport psychology mindfulness-based therapies into their practice sessions and performances. Mindfulness is defined as purposefully and non-judgmentally paying attention to the present moment, developing awareness of emotions, thoughts, and sensations, and acknowledging the reality of one's experience. "Mindfulness for Musicians" explores how psychology and sport psychology mindfulness-based therapies can help musicians cope with intense emotions, such as panic or fear, develop psychological flexibility, embrace acceptance, quiet their inner critics, soften perfectionism, and experience a desired state of flow during performances. Additionally, this presentation discusses how sleep, exercise, alcohol-use, and caffeine-use affects one's cultivation of mindfulness. "Mindfulness for Musicians" references materials from leading mindfulness experts, such as Jon Kabat-Zinn, Jeffrey Brantley, Frank Gardner, and Zella Moore, and peak performance experts, such as Don Greene and Noa Kageyama.

Effects of Different Instrumental Accompaniment on the Intonation of High School and Collegiate Violinists, Violists, and Cellists

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The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of different instrumental accompaniments on the intonation of violinists, violists, and cellists in a melodic context. The following questions guided this research: (1) Are there differences in tuning accuracy of melodic content between accompanied and unaccompanied conditions among string musicians? (2) Are there differences in intonation accuracy between string, oboe, and piano accompaniments? (3) Are there differences between the number of flat, sharp, and in-tune responses of participants? (4) Are there differences in string musician preferences between accompaniment types? (5) Are there differences between age and experience of participants in intonation accuracy with various accompaniment types?

Performances of Frère Jacques were recorded by a cellist, oboist, pianist, and a violinist to serve as accompaniment stimuli for the study. Additionally, a questionnaire was created to measure preferences for accompaniment, perceptions of tuning accuracy, and collect background information of participants. The participants (N = 103) were high school (n = 60) and collegiate (n = 43) violinists (n = 55), violists (n = 22), and cellists (n = 26). Participants performed an excerpt of Frère Jacques in Eb major in five conditions: with a cello accompaniment, oboe accompaniment, piano accompaniment, violin accompaniment, and as a solo. Absolute cent deviation from the tonic, mediant, subdominant, and dominant scale degrees were collected from each participant for analysis.

A significant main effect of intonation was found for accompaniment conditions. Participants performed more in tune with the cello, oboe, and violin accompaniments than with the solo. Additionally, they performed more in tune with the oboe accompaniment than with the piano accompaniment. The octave of accompaniment and instrument performed also did not appear to affect intonation. A significant main effect was found between high school and college participants. High school participants performed with less pitch acuity than college participants. An additional significant main effect was found between the deviations of analyzed notes. The Ab (subdominant) had significantly higher mean cent deviation than the Eb (tonic) and Bb (dominant). No differences were found between instruments performed and no interactions between variables were found.

Participants demonstrated a propensity to perform with sharp intonation. Sharp responses occurred more frequently than in-tune (defined as ± 6 cents) and flat responses with high school participants. Additionally, performances with the oboe accompaniment produced more in-tune responses than other conditions. In-tune responses occurred more frequently with collegiate

participants; however, sharp responses occurred more frequently than flat responses. Performances with the oboe accompaniment also produced the most frequent flat responses as well as the lowest number of sharp responses.

Questionnaire responses indicated that participants preferred to perform with the string accompaniments more than the non-string accompaniments. Participants least preferred to perform with the oboe accompaniment compared to the other accompaniments. A significant main effect was found in participants' rating of their perceived intonation accuracy between conditions. Although participants rated their intonation as highest with the cello, their performances did not reflect this perception. A significant main effect was also found between the levels of participants. High school participants rated their intonation lower than college participants. No significant main effect was found between instrumental groups and no significant interactions were found.