

Professional learning: Sharing intercultural perspectives through virtual connections

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Internationalising the curriculum in higher education offers cultural insights and exchanges to live and work in a changing and connected world. The authors are tertiary music educators working in three different countries (Australia, Spain, and the United States of America). Though geographically dispersed yet virtually connected, they delivered a series of five music professional learning workshops to Bachelor of Primary Education students at a university in Spain (March 2021-April 2021). They draw on narrative reflections and student voices to discuss intercultural perspectives of teaching and learning using the 5P model of professional development. The authors use thematic analysis to code and analyse the data discussing two overarching themes: collaborative professional learning and professional sharing. The authors contend that cultivating collaborative initiatives through virtual platforms can purposefully contribute to intercultural communication where ideas, knowledge, skills, and pedagogies are shared. While this paper focuses on one group of students, a limitation in itself, recommendations are offered that can be adapted and adopted across other learning areas. The implications indicate that further research is needed to assess whether intercultural teaching from cross-cultural and culture-specific perspectives stimulates sociocultural learning and growth for teachers and students for whom English is an additional language.

Introduction

Over the past three years educators have been thrown into uncharted territory as many adapted to remote teaching using blended modes of delivery when the pandemic disrupted livelihoods (Collie & Martin, 2020; Lierberman, 2020). Educators working in higher education institutions were confronted with mobility, accessibility, and delivery challenges. These experiences are well documented by educators and researchers across the globe during the pandemic (Hodges et al., 2020; Liyanage et al., 2021; Reimers & Schleicher, 2020; Shin & Hicky 2020; Wu, 2020). They include access to the Internet, sparse Internet connectivity, absence of devices, resources and facilities, and loss of international students, causing collateral damage including a halt on collaborative international projects. Higher education institutions were forced to deliver classes remotely combining technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) using different approaches such as flipped learning, distance education, online and blended modes of delivery (Shin & Hicky, 2020, Nethsinghe et al., 2023, Koehler & Mishra, 2009).

Recent research on the students' perspectives towards online learning during Covid-19 identified challenges about learning styles and culture, time management and pedagogical e-learning (Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Bestiantono et al., 2020; Simamora, 2020; Zhong 2020).

This paper builds on a previous study *See, listen and share: Exploring intercultural music education in a transnational experience* (see Joseph et al., 2018, 2020) and has received ethical approval University Jaume I of Castellón, Spain (CD/89/2022). We (authors) are tertiary music educators working with pre-service teachers (PSTs). Author One (Dawn) and Author Two (Rohan) are transnationals living and working in Australia. As migrants and minority groups they have settled into a different society promoting music from their places of birth. Author Three (Alberto) a Spanish national works in a multicultural region that is bi-lingual, characteristic for welcoming visitors and being adaptative to changes (Ariño-Vilarroya & García-Pilán, 2018). Author Four (Jennifer), a Fulbright scholar lives and works in a Western State of America, a largely white and Hispanic area. She visited Alberto at the time of undertaking the study in 2021. We share our experience about professional learning, drawing on our reflective narratives and include Bachelor of Primary Education PSTs voices from the Universitat Jaume I of Castellón (Spain). As travel bans were in place due to Covid-19 in 2021, online delivery made it plausible to provide an international perspective to teaching multicultural music.

The research question that drove this study asks: in what ways can internationalising the curriculum promote intercultural and pedagogical understanding for pre-service teachers in Spain? In our article the words professional development and professional learning are used interchangeably. We assert that information and communication technology (ICT) is a productive way to learn and engage culture bearers and international music educators to deliver professional learning workshops/sessions to PSTs. Undertaking this study meant we wanted to learn more from each other to improve our practice and widen our knowledge base. We argue for teacher education programs to include diverse professional learning opportunities using technology that may better prepare PSTs for placements and future classrooms through internationalising the curriculum.

Internationalising the curriculum

We agree with de Wit and Jones (2022, p. 5) that “internationalisation should no longer be considered in terms of a Westernised, largely Anglo-Saxon, and predominantly English-speaking paradigm”. Rather, we support arguments to decolonise the curriculum that transforms the world of higher education institutions in which cross border education and academic mobility are key elements of internationalisation (Knight, 2010). Whilst it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss decolonisation, we agree with Hess (2015, p. 336) that “Western music in music education acts as a colonizer”. In the case of our present study, we “engaged students with internationally informed research and cultural and linguistic diversity and purposefully develop[ed] their international and intercultural perspectives as global professionals and citizens” (Leask, 2009, p. 209). By “incorporating international, intercultural and global dimensions into the content of the curriculum” (Leask, 2015a, p. 9), we taught about music and culture from different lands (South Africa,

Sri Lanka, and the United States). Through mobilising a series of workshops using ICT to “a small number of students”, we endeavoured to “achieve desired international and intercultural learning outcomes” (Leask, 2015b, p. 61). Johnson and Mouthaan (2021) pointed out that teacher training offers a space to enable critical self-reflection about curriculum and colonial structures.

The notion of internationalising the curriculum in music education has been debated over the years (Addo, 2009; McCarthy, 2007). Addo (2009, p. 318) found by “facilitating bi-and multi-lateral connections towards creative expression and critical thinking”, PSTs “provide new insights into teaching practice when encouraged to critique and create within their own worlds”. This resonates with Gilley (2018, p. 101) who identified “creating significant learning experience[s]”, as is the case with our study as we present one way to internationalise the curriculum by incorporating “curriculum design, content, pedagogy, learning activities, and assessment”. We adopted an inter-institutional and transnational collaboration, one in which we learn from one each other across borders in teacher education practice (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman 2012; Schmidt & Abramo 2020; Westerlund et al., 2020).

We sought to internationalise the curriculum by using virtual platforms (*Zoom, Google Meet* and *Moodle*). These platforms, according to Welzer et al. (2018, p. 219), support “activities that we could not have expected not so long ago” identifying that educators need to think about “different (new) ways of teaching activities and communication”. In this way “internationalization does not equal Anglo-Americanization”, rather, “different cultures of music education are valued”, that foster intercultural connections (Kertz-Welzel, 2017, p. 117).

Intercultural connections and communications

While it is beyond the scope of this paper to debate about culture, it is commonly accepted that culture is as a set of customs, traditions and values, and beliefs held by ethnic groups, and nations (Hofstede, 2003; Spencer-Oatey, 2012). Thus, culture is not fixed, but constantly undergoing change (Welzer et al., 2018). It is difficult to define and is seen from different perspectives “as a dynamic concept” (Smakova & Paulsrud, 2020, p. 692). From one culture another grows in which “co- constructions, negotiations, questionings ... manipulations and instabilities” occur (Dervin & Machart, 2015, p. 3). Through such interaction, one is able to teach students from different cultures other than their own (Diller & Moule, 2005). By promoting a rich curriculum that is culturally inclusive and respectful of diverse cultural practices Johnson (2009) proposed students in teacher educator programs may be able to develop a pedagogy of respect. Having an attitude of respect and curiosity for all people is essential, “rather than focusing on the exotic and different representations of cultural expression” (Bröske, 2020, p. 96). This resonates with Arasaratnam (2009) who makes the point in order to have intercultural dialogue and exchanges, communicating with people effectively and appropriately that come from different cultures are important, it brokers tension that may exist. Therefore, recognising and respecting the values of different cultures allow people to interact and engage confidently with others (Arcagok & Yilmaz, 2020).

As intercultural connections and engagement are encountered in one's daily life, the individuals' cultural belonging and intercultural exchange must be considered to foster cross-cultural engagement that enhances a sense of interculturality (Marina, 2002; Schiller, 2021). Therefore, building "intercultural competence is increasingly necessary in a multicultural and globalised world" (Perry & Southwell, 2011, p. 453). Building a deep understanding and respect for all cultures is essential in developing cohesive communities where shared exchange of ideas and cultural norms and values can co-exist. In a recent study, Talukder (2021, p. 70) pointed out that in multicultural education "representation of minority geo-cultural identities" exist where "children of all cultures learn about the others". Unlike a multicultural society, it may be argued "in an intercultural society, no one is left unchanged because everyone learns from one another and grows together" (Schriefer, p. 2016). Therefore, developing intercultural perspectives are an important concept in social sciences promoting intercultural communication that focuses on the mutual exchange of ideas and cultural norms (Welzer et al., 2018). One effective way to professionally grow is by offering professional learning workshops to PSTs within their programs of study so that they will be able "to reflect, to think and process the newly obtained information in depth" to enhance their intercultural communicative competence (Batunan et al., 2023, p. 463).

Professional learning

Professional learning can broadly be defined as ways in which in-service training and staff training "accommodates teachers as learners, recognises the long term nature of learning and utilises methods that are likely to lead teachers to improve their practice as professionals" (Gaible & Burns, 2005, p. 6). Villegas-Reimers (2003) asserted that it would seem logical that professional development should include structured and planned opportunities and experiences that intend to help teachers grow and develop within the profession. By undertaking professional development (PD) teachers learn how to transform their knowledge into practice (Avalos, 2011, p. 10). Providing PD means helping teachers learn new skills that expands their knowledge that develop innovative insights into their pedagogy and practice. PD programs vary widely in content and format, for example one-off sessions, and short-to-long term workshops. They are offered in a systematic way to bring about change classroom practice (Guskey, 2002). Joseph (2021) pointed out that few studies show professional learning with music PSTs online and face-to-face.

Providing PD in the online environment is content focused, coupled with active participation (Desimone, 2009). The effective use of online approaches to professional learning and intercultural exchange have been articulated by many researchers for more than a decade (Helm, 2016; McCalman, 2014; McCloskey, 2010). Hajisoteriou et al. (2018, p. 1) pointed out that "teachers are called to adopt teaching methodologies to cultivate intercultural competence" in the era of globalisation. Teachers attitudes, the values they hold and willingness to integrate intercultural competence impacts the role they play in society (Smakova & Paulsrud, 2020). Together with their students they can acquire knowledge about cultural diversity.

Traditional PD provided in face-to-face settings can be restrictive in terms of flexibility, versatility and accessibility to the provider/s (NRC, 2007). Some online short and long courses and experiences are not the preferred PD format for teachers, according to Bautista et al. (2018). Developing formal and informal PD with flexibility and rich environments can prove to be effective (Bragg et al., 2021). Offering responsive PD must align with teachers' motivations, needs and preferences (Caddle et al., 2016, Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995). The workshops need to balance the presenter's cultural beliefs and values and that of the attendees others as (Smakova & Paulsrud, 2020). The online facilitation of PD can be considered as an alternative approach to improve and promote intercultural knowledge of teachers. Hajisoteriou et al. (2018, p. 1) developed and implemented an online platform based on teachers' needs to support their intercultural PD to create "new knowledge regarding new pedagogical practices with respect to intercultural education" that fosters collaboration. Our PD collaboration resonates with Anderson's (2018) five Ps framework.

Five Ps framework

Working in higher education meant we positioned our study in relation to Richards (2015) interactive steps for teacher PD to find out the needs of both the institution and its teachers, we wanted to expand our understanding of teaching songs from different lands to PSTs in Spain who may not have had the opportunity. The on-site facilitator provided support as we also peer observed and documented our teaching to evaluate what has been learned.

Anderson (2018, pp. 5-7) proposed a five Ps framework (purpose, personalisation, prioritise, passion and professional learning communities) for effective PD for language teachers which can be adopted to any learning area. Firstly, any PD offered needs to have a very clear *purpose* "the idea of purpose is the idea that what we do matters to people other than ourselves" (Duckworth, 2016, p. 145). Anderson (2018) proposed a mission statement or an organisational statement, Secondly, the PD has to be interactive. In this way *personalisation* is highlighted by the way "we learn about self ... learn something new about the person we want to become" (Fink, 2013, p. 51). Anderson (2018) drew attention to PD from the perspective of an individual teacher's need for their own development so that better outcomes for students may result. Thirdly, with so much to teach or cover one has to *prioritise* what exactly to focus on in a limited timeframe. Hence the importance to succinctly select what PD to focus on, what aspects to teach or when to present is important. Fourthly, Anderson (2018) pointed out it is *passion* that drives teachers to achieve their goals. Students feed off teachers' motivation (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). Finally *professional learning communities* "(i.e., groups of teachers who meet regularly to plan, problem solve and learn together) can achieve positive outcomes" (Crandall & Finn Miller, 2014, p. 632). As educators engage and interact with each other as social beings, they collaborate to enhance their PD and are held accountable to develop a personal professional PD plan (Anderson, 2018).

About the workshops

Through online and email collaboration we planned, prepared, and presented a series of five workshops to PSTs in Spain. Drawing on COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) (Western Sydney University, 2020) we engaged students in “a shared online multicultural and collaborative learning environment”. Each workshop lasted approximately 90 minutes online in English, Alberto translated into Spanish where necessary for his students. At the start of each workshop the presenter provided background information about the country in relation to people, history, culture, and music. We selected songs that were personal to each of us, something that we learnt growing up in our places of birth. Dawn taught a Zulu lullaby *Thula thu'* from South Africa, Rohan taught *Rosa male natuwe katu*, a Sinhalese lullaby from Sri Lanka and Jennifer taught a folk song from America called *This land is your land* (see Joseph et al., 2021, Mellizo et al., 2023, Nethsinghe et al., 2023 for pedagogical details). Once restrictions were lifted in Spain, a four-step flipped method of teaching and learning emerged which included asynchronous, synchronous, face to face, and follow up feedback with presenters (Nethsinghe et al., 2023).

Methods

Qualitative methodologies provide a useful lens when exploring the lived experience associated with teaching and learning (Atkins & Wallace, 2012). Qualitative studies allow participants to share a rich description of the phenomena being experienced (Bradbury et al., 2020; Merriam, 1998). It does not measure anything, rather the researcher becomes part of the research in which they interact (Dodgson, 2017). It is important when undertaking qualitative research that the researchers share details about themselves to overcome researcher bias and trustworthiness (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Dodgson, 2017).

Data collection

We used an autoethnographic lens to highlight our individual and collaborative reflections (Lapadat, 2017), sharing similar and different experiences (Stake, 1995). We collaborated mainly through *Zoom*, email, and telephone between February-June 2021. *Zoom* recordings and reflective journals provided a triangulation of the data (Oliver-Hoyo & Allen, 2006). As co-researchers, we were respectful of the learning process and students' engagement.

At the end of each workshop (online during weeks 1-3 and face to face in week 4), students formed small groups to participate in discussions. With their permission, student conversations were audio recorded, transcribed and translated into English by Alberto. In week 5 the workshop was video recorded with students' permission, including a whole class discussion. All PSTs have been allocated pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality.

Analyses

Our teacher notes were independently written and later shared amongst us. We individually read our notes, the de-identified student comments and viewed the video clips

to inform our findings. All data stored were password protected through our respective university websites in the cloud. Data were read and re-read many times individually, and collectively to gain an in-depth overall understanding before coding and discussion (Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

Thematic analysis served as a useful tool to identify patterns and common experiences (Waters, 2020). We drew on Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps by familiarising ourselves with the data, using margin notes before meeting and discussing on *Zoom*. We generated codes independently, then searched for themes. When undertaking thematic analysis, becoming acquainted with the data (spoken comments of students and presenter voices) is important in order to attach words or phrases to the descriptive coding (Saldana, 2016). Whilst this process was time consuming, we found it a productive way to gain familiarity with the data. Checking for themes also meant our coded data resonated with the research question, classroom practice, and other scholarly work in the field (Braun & Clark, 2014; Xu & Zammit, 2020). From our analyses, two overarching themes emerged: collaborative professional learning and professional sharing.

Findings

In this section we draw on our voices and student voices. Thirty PSTs participated in the study (18 male and 12 female). Of these 13 were able to play a music instrument (piano, guitar, violin, cello, oboe, or drums) and 17 said they last played on a classroom instrument either at the primary or secondary school level. Our findings are discussed in relation to Anderson's (2018) 5Ps of professional learning (purpose, personalisation, prioritise, passion, professional learning communities).

Purpose

We felt it a novel experience for us to offer workshops to Spanish speaking students during the pandemic. Preparing for the workshops meant careful collaboration regarding the purpose of the workshops. Planning and holding regular meetings for this to effectively take place meant commitment from each of us.

For Alberto, the idea of inviting three international music educators to teach and share music and culture was purposeful and intentional, as it "fitted with teaching about multicultural music (songs)". His university is committed to cultural transformation, principles of respect and diversity that embraces knowledge transfer that prepare students for a local and global outlook that is socially and culturally committed (Universitat Jaume I of Castellón, 2022). We strongly felt that music could serve as a useful platform to transmit these goals. Dawn in Melbourne faced the longest lockdown in the world she "was always excited to see mates from other institutions through *Zoom*." This was similar for Jennifer, who was away from her colleagues in the USA. She found "catching up on *Zoom* made me feel part of global experience though I was visiting Spain". In planning the workshops, we articulated a clear sense of purpose. Dawn felt "it matters for communities outside of South Africa to learn about the plight of people from the rainbow nation", Rohan wanted "to teach about people in Sri Lanka, and why they flee elsewhere" and

Jennifer wanted to talk about how a well-known American folk song “embraces all people to make them feel they are all included”. PST Mario discussed the impact of the workshop, stating, “this experience has helped to shape my perceptions, it has been very useful for our future, as we are not used to doing this type of workshop or hearing about this in music”. Another PST (Mariana), added, “the intercultural sessions have been a very enriching source of learning that has helped me to open my mind and learn new music”. Antonio (PST) found

... as future teachers, we believe that it is important to be culturally inclusive because it would be culturally enriching to know about different customs and cultures, and we have to educate students about values, and teach them about respect and equality (Antonio, PST).

Personalisation

Offering personalisation meant we intentionally set out how the workshops used ICT as a conduit to foster opportunities for intercultural understandings through culturally responsive teaching (see Mellizo et al., 2023). Alberto believed “providing such opportunities opened up the door to team teach with each presenter via technology, particularly to peer coach with Jennifer when restrictions were lifted in the fourth workshop”. As this was a new experience for Jennifer, she felt “privileged to engage and learn from with Dawn and Rohan who came from two different countries” observing their online workshops. Working as a team served as professional learning for each of us, as the exchange of ideas through online meetings meant our small professional community fostered personal and professional growth as we encouraged students to become part of a wider community of practitioners.

We each personalised the learning experience by choosing a song from our homeland. For Dawn, teaching a Zulu lullaby *Thula thu* “made me think of home (South Africa) as I yearned for home, singing it was comforting during lockdown”. Rohan selected a well-known lullaby (*Rosa male natumè*) as “I was sung this song by my mother when I was young and when I become a parent I sang it to my child”. He emphasised most parents in Sri Lanka sing to their babies and children, thus demonstrating that people around the globe experience similar emotions, despite having different traditions and cultures. The song is not static, it evolves with the time whilst remaining cyclic in nature to the traditional practice of language and sentiment”. Mario (PST) found it was “a positive and beneficial aspect, to learn from a cultural mediator”. Jennifer taught an American folk song (*This land is your land*) that emphasises the importance of inclusion and equality (Lynskey, 2020). Although the song is patriotic in nature (some call it America’s “other” national anthem), it is not blindly patriotic. The song acknowledges historical complexities (e.g. the Great Depression and Manifest Destiny) and calls for reconciliation and the reclamation of an inclusive “American” identity. Santino (PST) noted that “Jennifer has used a very interesting way to teach the song. She has worked on both historical and musical concepts starting from a song”.

Prioritise

Alberto prioritised five workshops within his course for his students to work with international academics to explore and experience multicultural music. He acknowledged “I am not an expert of traditional music from South Africa, Sri Lanka or the United States, I had uncertainties about how to assist and help during the sessions”. Whilst we each worked through what we could do for the workshop we collectively agreed to focus on a few things given the 90 minute timeslot. Dawn focused on “introducing the students to Zulu culture and people followed by teaching section A of the song which was linguistically challenging though the tune and words were repetitive”. Nina (PST) enjoyed “the practical exercise of using objects (sounds) that we have at home or in the classroom to develop the creative thinking of the students”. Rohan focused on “teaching the melody through call and response”. Carina (PST) found it “very interesting to start with learning the base tune and adapt it to then sing different lyrics, it is a good way to work the melody inside the classroom and to encourage children’s creativity”. Jennifer highlighted a pedagogical approach called world music pedagogy, which uses repeated listening experiences to help students achieve deeper levels of understanding when learning songs from an unfamiliar music culture (Campbell, 2018). She introduced the song by playing one short excerpt from an audio recording multiple times, asking students to focus on a different musical characteristic during each repetition (e.g. instrumentation, vocal timbre, meaning of the lyrics, melody, harmony). According to Ricardo (PST) this workshop drew on “attentive listening, engaged listening, enactive listening, creating and integrating”.

Passion

Preparing music workshops means being passionate to accomplish what one sets out to do. Alberto observed that Dawn was passionate about where she came from, she loves South Africa, this was evident in “her body language and excitement when talking about South Africa”. Louisa (PST) said, “the way Dawn explained things transmitted a good energy, it was contagious as we got to learn of her culture in a deep way”. Teaching about music from one’s homeland is personal. This was no different to Rohan who felt passionate about recalling his mother singing the lullaby as a toddler in Sri Lanka. He said, “sharing the song with the Spanish students from a different culture means they will remember this experience and may use it in their future teaching about different cultures through songs”. Alberto observed the pedagogy employed saying “as a passionate teacher Rohan wanted the students to learn”. Ana (PST) found this useful, she found “having freedom is something very important and useful to develop creative thinking, since the lyrics and even the melody can be adapted to the group’s taste when recreating the song”. Alberto felt Jennifer was passionate about sharing the message of the song chosen. She wanted “PSTs to understand that values like inclusion, equality, and reconciliation are becoming even more important human tenets which can be taught through songs”. This sentiment Maria (PST) recognised as

... a reality, because as future teachers it is important to know how music is taught in other places to improve our classes and to make all students feel included (Maria, PST).

Professional learning communities

Collaborating about the teaching and learning workshops formed a rich part of the social process of connecting with each other and the PSTs. As the world experienced Covid-19 restrictions, we were not different to many tertiary educators working remotely. Being part of a professional community and learning from each other meant we were connected to like-minded music educators. Having a sense of belonging positively contributed to wellbeing for all concerned. Rohan felt “privileged to be a part of this community of practice with other international experienced researchers and music educators, I feel I learnt from them teaching, research and writing skills”. Alberto worked with Jennifer when they returned to the classroom for workshops four and five, he found “it was effective to team teach and facilitate as we learnt from each other guiding the students to present better composition of the songs”. Jennifer felt “the face-to-face interaction in class contributed to the success of their song arrangements”.

Dawn, being the longest in academia, found her experience “helped focus the team as we built trust and capacity that created a culture of respect and collaboration”. Alberto felt by working with three international music educators helped “promote a positive environment during a very bleak time for him as the country experienced many deaths”. Through the workshops Esteban (PST) felt “networking can positively impact our learning as we stay connected and can talk and share ideas”. Rohan identified technology was an effective way to “communicate when planning, preparing and delivering the workshops as technological pedagogical content knowledge is a vital aspect to 21st century classrooms”. As the overall facilitator hosting the workshops, Alberto wanted his students to see “how belonging to a community of learning that focused on learning, collaboration, and outcomes can be modelled in future classrooms”. Whilst we each gave one-off professional learning sessions, Jennifer believed “short cultural immersion experiences could provide intercultural perspectives that builds student confidence”. Mateo (PST) summed-up the five week experience by saying

...we can motivate children to learn new things about different cultures that involve different classmates. In this way students will be able to understand each other better, change their attitudes, have new friends, and have empathy.

The fifth workshop provided useful feedback as a community of practitioners. Louisa (PST) felt “music in school contribute to students integral development as people” so it is important to “include different musical styles and approaches that incorporates their culture and the great variety of instruments” (Antonio, PST). Rosa (PST) commented that the idea to rearrange the song “was beneficial since it encourages creativity in children, generates interest among students, which promotes active listening”. This was similar to Carina (PST) who summed up the experience saying

... from the sessions, I learnt about another culture and how to develop students’ creative thinking as we did in class. They can learn to perform melodies with instrumental aspects and have free of choice and expression which was nice (Carina, (PST)

Discussion

In answering the research question the findings suggest that internationalising the curriculum through virtual platforms can promote intercultural and pedagogical understanding for pre-service teachers in Spain. By adopting an inter-institutional and transnational collaboration we discuss this under two overarching themes, collaborative professional learning and professional sharing. We found it was possible to learn from each other across borders in which intercultural dimensions to the learning experience through professional learning can be fostered (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012; Schmidt & Abramo, 2020; Westerlund et al., 2020).

Collaborative professional learning

In an education climate that has been significantly impacted by the pandemic, collaborative professional learning workshops were an effective way to prepare PSTs for future classrooms using technology. By engaging PSTs with cultural and linguistic diversity through songs we provided an intercultural perspective to teaching and learning which offered them a chance to reflect about being inclusive in the classroom as primary teachers (Johnson & Mouthaan, 2021; Knight, 2010; Leask, 2009). Whilst setting up the professional learning workshops took time, the experience was worthwhile for all concerned. Our purpose was to provide PSTs with new information and insights about multicultural music and intercultural understandings through online professional learning online workshops during lockdowns in our respective countries. Through collective efficacy based on professional trust and respect we personalised 'what', 'why' and 'how' to teach (Gibson & Manuel, 2003; Gilley, 2018). By prioritising each session as a way to internationalise the curriculum we aimed to develop a pedagogy of respect that values diverse music, cultures and genres.

Focusing on social relationship and community building in the online environment was crucial to assure the best learning outcomes for students (Gillett-Swan, 2017). As Western classical music dominates the curriculum (Allsup, 2016), it was important to share how non-Western music from different lands can be included in music classrooms. The workshops offered PSTs ways to transform their new knowledge into practice. They experienced how to create new compositions from the original songs taught (Avalos, 2011). As the workshops were short term and despite a disconnect to the flow of the previous three workshops, Alberto and Jennifer found they positively contributed to PSTs working together collaboratively which improved their confidence to compose and perform their compositions. The collaborative professional learning workshops gave us time to reflect upon our practice as tertiary music educators and share openly about what worked or did not work (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Professional sharing

As authors working across different universities in different countries meant sharing professional experiences to grow professionally. As we each had different experiences and expertise, sharing knowledge, skills, and understanding provided opportunities to listen,

look and learn from each other and be respectful and receptive to alternative viewpoints. The findings suggest students encouraged each other to participate, though language was a barrier. Rohan specifically provided pre-recordings and printed material as a way for students to interactively engage in the learning experiences online. Despite delays when performing online, PSTs willingly integrated their new knowledge to create contemporary compositions with respect to intercultural understandings (Hajisoteriou et al., 2018).

The online professional learning workshops were an alternative approach that afforded us the time to critically reflect on our practice as a professional virtual music community. The online space provided us the space to have discussions about pedagogy and music curriculum within the Bachelor of Primary Education program. Though we collaborated to achieve our common objectives, at the same time we each decided on the content and delivery of the online workshops. The workshops offered us the chance to team teach, and peer coach (Goodrich et al., 2018). We felt we were able to share challenging and optimistic aspects of the workshops in a supportive virtual environment by actively listening, being open to feedback that increases mutual trust (Gibson & Manuel, 2003).

Conclusion

Offering professional learning workshops was a successful way to support pre-service teachers' understanding of different pedagogies, music, and culture. As tertiary educators if we want to better prepare our PSTs for classrooms of the 21st century we need to be inclusive in our music practice by including the music and culture of migrants and their descendants into our everyday practice. No longer can minority groups be seen "as consumers and producers of artistic goods ... who are too often reduced to statistics in current debates and policies" (Martiniello, 2022, p. 10). Rather, everyone can learn from one another and grow together through fostering a deep understanding and respect for all musics, genres and cultures. In order for this to happen it is important that "cultural awareness raising are included in curricula ... and seminars may be organised to increase cultural awareness among teachers" (Arcagok & Yilmaz, 2020, p.14). One effective way is for collaborative initiatives to take place through virtual platforms that foster intercultural dialogue. This may help pre-service teachers "form positive attitudes, such as curiosity and willingness to learn from other cultures" (Batunan et al., 2023, p. 464). Our findings illuminate the importance of collaborating with music educators and culture-bearers locally and internationally. It was evident from the study that the Spanish pre-service teachers gained more than they had expected, culminating in them taking ownership to create new versions of the songs learnt and wanting to 'give it a go' in their future classrooms.

The findings are not generalisable to other pre-service teacher programs or universities, thus a limitation in itself. However, this study can be adapted and adopted in any country and across different learning areas. Whilst the language of instruction posed a limitation to students, as English was not their first language, it was possible to deliver the workshops provided the facilitator (host lecturer) was able to translate and explain where needed. Teaching within 90 minute timeslots against the backdrop of Internet time lags, coupled

with a 10 hour time difference between Spain and Australia limited the presenters interactions. We all felt rushed, and in-depth scaffolding was not possible.

From our small scale study we recommend:

- follow up research to be undertaken to explore how pre-service teachers implemented the ideas learnt across the professional learning workshops into their classroom practice.
- a longitudinal study is needed to effectively illuminate cultural and pedagogical relations teachers and students make when internationalising the curriculum using songs from different lands.
- further research is needed to assess whether intercultural teaching from both cross-cultural and culture-specific perspectives stimulate sociocultural learning and growth for facilitators and students.
- useful resources be developed for facilitators to manage cross-cultural learning activities that assist learners for whom English is an additional language.
- new technologies be explored in the virtual environment that promote interactive collaborations.

As tertiary music educators, we encourage educators to include diverse professional learning opportunities locally, nationally, and internationally, using technology as a conduit that may better prepare pre-service teachers for placements and future classrooms. Working collaboratively with professional organisations, local communities, and culture bearers is one way to share intercultural perspectives and internationalise teacher education programs.

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