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Potential of ‘Romantic Theory’ for Music Education in Contemporary Era: For Delivering Musical Knowledge and Enhancing Creativity and Wellbeing

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Abstract

Human beings have had an enduring relationship with music in almost all cultures on record. As a medium for stimulating ‘creativity’ and ‘wellbeing’ that have arisen as important themes in modern society, music also takes a prominent stance in the current era. On the other hand, contemporary music education has been increasingly squeezed out of the curriculum in many nations, owing to the pressures of time and its reportedly low relevance to employment.

The principal objective of this research was to investigate ways of fostering musical creativity and wellbeing in primary schools. Furthermore, it aimed at providing curriculum guidelines while ensuring the acquisition of necessary academic knowledge and skills. The chosen theoretical framework was the concept of ‘Romantic Irony’, a literary device that is ‘subjective in its capricious destruction of illusion and mood’. Romantic Irony is accomplished by manipulating musical components and using techniques in unconventional ways. I applied this concept to help devise an effective curriculum encompassing listening to music, singing, playing instruments, and composing.

Particularly, this research focused on Scottish music education. Scotland’s *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE) makes considerable claims for creativity, emphasising child-centredness and autonomy—proposing a process-based curriculum and interdisciplinary working. Secondly, CfE aims for an inclusive vision of education that places the commitment to wellbeing at the centre of its priorities.

The study consisted of two types of interventions. The first part of the research was allocated to investigating theories of creativity, wellbeing, and Romantic Irony alongside the educational practices. Secondly, for the empirical part, I conducted ‘Action Research’, approaching fields with the intention to enrich contributions to practice. The classroom interventions were divided into 3 Vignettes to stimulate pupils’ innate musicality, to deliver basic theoretical knowledge, and then to provide opportunities to apply skills in relation to specific topics. Thereafter, academic conversations with experts were conducted to examine professional views of the researcher’s approaches and to search for the directions that music education ought to follow.

The research confirmed that delivering music sessions with a relevant philosophical base and emphasising both theory and practice could strengthen the benefits of music education. Possible solutions for the challenges also emerged, such as providing additional sources and expanding collaborative work between schools and the community.

In conclusion, music education preserves a rich potential for promoting the experiences of creativity and wellbeing for children, which matter so much for attaining the good life in this protean 21st-century society.