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Examination of Activities Using Musical Instruments in the Early Grades of Elementary School: From the Perspective of “Integration” Between Preschool and Elementary School

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Abstract

1. Theoretical background of the paper

A long time has passed since the need for equal partnership between early childhood education and elementary school education was mentioned. There have been various studies in Japan on connection between early childhood education and elementary education from the perspective of music. However, most of them are studies on teaching materials and educational methods that can be practiced commonly across all educational stages. It is also important to examine what kind of continuity exists between the everyday learning experience of early childhood education, and the learning experience of a typical class in elementary school. It may be necessary to understand the qualities and abilities that are common across developmental stages and curricula, by taking music education as a viewpoint, for considering the integration between preschool and elementary school.

2. Aim

To examine the continuity between learning experiences in early childhood education and elementary school education, through the case study of activities that use musical instruments in first grade elementary school.

3. Method

The subject of this study was 32 first graders and one music teacher at a national elementary school in Tokyo, as of 20xx. The case study used were classes which conducted activities that used musical instruments. One video camera was used to capture the entire class. The video transcriptions were transcribed into ELAN and used as data.

4. Summary of main ideas

At the stage of entering elementary school, most children are aware of how to play the instruments featured in class in general. Nonetheless, various experiences involving the instrument was introduced before the technical instruction was given. It can be said that children were unlearning the instrument before actually playing music, from the perspective of recognizing the relationship between the instrument, the sound, and themselves, as well as the relationship with others through the instrument.

5. Conclusions and implications for music education

In early childhood education, musical instruments have various meanings other than playing music. On the other hand, in elementary school, activities using musical instruments require playing music. However, some experiences had been provided as foundation to support these activities. These experiences are the essence of musical activities, and we can also point out

its importance as an essential perspective when looking at child education from the perspective of integration between preschool and elementary school.