Folk Pedagogy of Preschool Music Education in Hong Kong

Comparative studies with Japan

by

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Statement of Originality

I, Chou Sin Yu, hereby declare that I am the sole author of the thesis and the material presented in this thesis is my original work except those indicated in the acknowledgement. I further declare that I have followed the University's policies and regulations on Academic Honesty, Copyright and Plagiarism in writing the thesis and no material in this thesis has been submitted for a degree in this or other universities.

Abstract

The aim of the study is to explore preschool teachers' folk pedagogy as reflected in music education in Hong Kong by examining how Hong Kong teachers act, think and interact with their students when teaching music, and their response when stimulated by Japanese preschool culture. To illuminate the concept of folk pedagogy, the study investigates the tacit norms, views and values of selected Hong Kong and Japanese music teachers. This research is a multi-case study with an ethnographic design for cultural observation. A meta-aspect of this study is to provide a venue for teachers' professional development, which consists of sharing videos from other countries, discussing their values and allowing these discussions to enlarge their sense of teachers. Through individual and group discussions and the teachers' beliefs construction one year later, the teachers' beliefs, teaching pedagogies and implicit behaviours are identified and analysed. The implications of the study will strengthen music teachers' evaluations of Hong Kong's folk pedagogy.

Keywords: preschool, early childhood education, music education, cultural psychology, folk pedagogy

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the Study

Hong Kong's culture is primarily a combination of Chinese and Western ideologies, which together influence Hong Kong teachers' pedagogies and beliefs. For example, during the 150-year period of British influence from 1841 to 1997, the music curricula of primary and secondary schools largely adopted the Oxford music course and sol-fa system. Western classical music formed the core of musical knowledge in schools, and singing and listening activities were The trend of adopting Western pedagogies, such as Orff, Kodály and Dalcroze, is largely accepted and emphasised in preschool music education (Chen, 2013 & 2016; Cheung, 2004; Ho, 2010; Wong, 2011).

After the handover of Hong Kong, Chinese ideologies were emphasised, at which time the government tried to introduce Chinese classical and folk music to cultivate students' cultural self-conceptions and civic education (Leung et al., 2010; Ho, 2002, 2010; Ho & Law 2012). This social transformation prompted further discussions on teachers' pedagogical beliefs. To understand the values of Hong Kong culture after historical changes, Ho and Law (2012) interviewed 40 teachers and principals about their beliefs regarding the cultural issue of incorporating Chinese music into a Western-oriented music curriculum. The teachers' perspectives varied: some teachers were not passionate about learning the national anthem songs, and their lessons only focused on teaching Western music. One teacher believed that a multicultural music style would bring more variety to music education, such as learning non-Western music history from China, India or Africa. These examples indicated that teachers' beliefs are implicitly shaped by several factors, such as knowledge, cultural background and teaching experiences. More importantly, teachers' beliefs are important factors that affect both their pedagogies and children's minds.

To understand the association between culture and pedagogies, Bruner (1996) defined folk pedagogies as people/teachers sharing implicit theories on teaching and pedagogy that have their roots in common folk practices and beliefs in a specific culture. His philosophy is derived from cultural psychology, whereby culture and the mind are interdependent, and culture is a meaning-making process through which people shape their minds and share their ideas in a cultural context (Bruner, 1996; Olson & Bruner, 1996). Bruner stated that every mother develops her own folk notions or implicit pedagogical principles about teaching children by observing their cognitive abilities (Bruner, 1996). People will naturally accept the social norms or practices from their local culture. However, Sang, Valcke, Tondeur, Zhu and Van Braak (2012) maintained that beliefs imply subjective thoughts and cultural traditions are shaped by culture. Children's interests and preferences may be eliminated or transformed by the teachers' folk values. Thus, teachers should be aware of their folk culture and the intersubjectivity of children's minds. The significance of folk pedagogy lies in its aim to increase teachers' cultural awareness via their students and the surrounding community.

In response to Hong Kong's culture, three issues of folk pedagogies are related to its music education.

First, referring back to Ho and Law's (2012) study, local music teachers from primary and secondary schools believed that the aims of music education are to provide music knowledge and training, stimulate students' musical interests and teach the cultural heritage, such as increasing the knowledge of Cantonese opera, children's folk songs and Chinese instruments. However, few researches have focussed on investigating preschool teachers' music backgrounds, beliefs and pedagogies (Chan, 2013; Ng, 2015; Vannatta-Hall, 2010). Therefore, exploring preschool music teachers' beliefs through descriptive discussions would help gain a better understanding of their perspective. Field observations would be beneficial for identifying preschool music teachers' cultural behaviours and their interactions with

children in the classroom. Furthermore, descriptive qualitative analysis would help us understand the folk culture of the local people.

Second, incorporating Western pedagogies in the local culture might not fully suit local students' needs. Rao et al. (2010) asserted that most of the 'famous' pedagogies were rooted in the Western views of their respective cultures, which may not fulfil the needs of other societies. Thibeault (2018) discussed how the Suzuki method was mediated by Japanese violin teacher Dr Shinichi Suzuki, whose philosophical ideas, pedagogic practices and cultural values helped Japanese pupils improve their violin playing. One of his refined approaches is to learn music using sound recordings. A series of graded violin books provide fixed performance techniques and encompass other core values such as *Gambaru* (effort), *kuro* (suffering) and *gaman* (persistence), terms that are widely used in Japanese spiritual learning (Rohlen, 1996). However, unlike their Japanese counterparts, some US teachers and students might not feel as comfortable using recorded models for direct imitation as a pedagogy. Many American teachers prefer developing pupils' individuality, inspiration and creativity in music learning. The 'good' pedagogies imported from one culture to another might be perceived differently. Along these lines, it may hinder the extent to which Hong Kong teachers deliver their 'borrowed' pedagogy to their classrooms (Pui-Wah, D., 2006). Although Hong Kong is an Asian society, their preschool education is mostly based on Western imports, such as the Montessori method, the project approach, the thematic approach, Reggio Emilia, etc. Through observations of Hong Kong classrooms, some researchers found that Western approaches, which were intended to be used for children-centred exploration, were revised and transformed into teacher-directed 'project work' (Chan, 2009; Ho, 2003; Rao et al., 2010). The discrepancy between local beliefs, i.e. core beliefs from parents or the social environment, such as the examination-oriented education system and expectations of academic achievement, might affect teaching outcomes (Chao, 1994;

Chen et al., 1998; Chen, 2015). A similar situation may also happen in music pedagogies; because Orff, Kodály and Dalcroze approaches were designed for Western people, the pedagogies require spacious classrooms that incorporate dance, body movements, folk songs and creative elements. Hence, some music teachers may need to modify the Western concepts to suit the actual local culture. Therefore, discussions with teachers and observations of their practices will illuminate how teachers immerse their pedagogies into their beliefs and actual school environment

Third, the implicit characteristics of a culture are the underlying values and norms of behaviour that guide people in determining which behaviours are considered appropriate or inappropriate. Coles and Bruner (1996) described culture as a fish in water; people fail to 'see culture because it is the medium within which we exist' (p. 8). In reference to this statement, Bruner (1996) explained that human beings are the fish and the humans' beliefs are the water. Fish live in the sea, and are, thus, unaware of the sky. This metaphor reflects that humans' beliefs are largely immersed in their culture. As people grow up in their own cultural environment, the formative role of culture is the main factor shaping their minds. For example, the consumption of pork is forbidden among Muslims; thus, if Muslims did not look at other cultures or societies, they would not know that other cultures do consume pork. Similarly, the teachers themselves might not be fully aware that their behaviours and beliefs are affected by their own culture until they observe other cultures and realise their differences. Inspired by the literature of comparative education, research across cultures is significant for its acknowledgement of different perspectives through various cultures (Mason, 2014, p. 192; Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1989; Tobin, Hsueh, & Karasawa, 2009). For example, Tobin visited China, the US and Japan to observe how teachers in the three countries educate their children differently according to their cultural backgrounds and traditional values. The greatest contribution of Tobin's research was to gather the three

cultures' teachers and experts to stimulate and exchange their views of teaching children in the preschool context. Hence, it would be helpful for Hong Kong preschool teachers to construct and review their beliefs and values for self-reflections and improvements that mirror other cultures' schools and systems.

In summary, teachers' beliefs, particularly among preschool music teachers, have been overlooked in previous studies. The outcomes of the abovementioned studies raised questions and issues about the folk pedagogies of Hong Kong teachers. For instance, historical trajectories, such as political changes or universal values, may affect a mix of various influences on their human beliefs. Regardless of whether they are Western and Chinese values or even global values, e.g. happy learning, this complexity would strongly affect teachers' teaching beliefs. This research does not aim to critically examine whether Hong Kong' teaching approaches affect children in a negative or positive way. The nature of the qualitative study could help the researcher and the participants to find out teachers' hidden values and teaching pedagogies. To stimulate cultural awareness and sensitivity, it would consider comparing some Asian countries to articulate Hong Kong's similarities and differences. To measure possible places, such as Taiwan, India, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea and Japan, the first criteria was to find similar historical backgrounds and family educational levels and beliefs. Although Singapore and Malaysia have similar historical backgrounds, being ruled by both Britain and China, the complexity of their multi-cultural beliefs, such as the mix of Indian, Chinese and Malaysian races, made it difficult to find even a small number of teachers that represented their folk beliefs. Although Taiwan and Korea have a strong Chinese Confucian background, its historical culture was primarily influenced by Japanese Asian culture, while Western influences had a relatively lesser effect. Moreover, India's religion and beliefs were largely contradictory to Hong Kong's culture; therefore, the researcher's final option was to choose Japan as the comparable case study. Finally, this study

employed the Japanese preschool culture as a stimulus to evoke the folk pedagogy in Hong Kong. Furthermore, Japan was selected as a counterpart country because both Hong Kong and Japan are in East Asia. They also share similar Western educational systems and traditional Confucian influences; however, Japanese music pedagogies possess folk culture features that are seldom seen in Hong Kong culture. Additionally, many studies have been conducted on Japanese preschool education and its cultural features (e.g. Asano, 2011; Chan, 2006; Izumi-Taylor & Scott, 2013; Shimahara, 1986; Tokita, 2014; Tobin et al., 1989, 2009; Zhou & Leydesdorff, 2006). These studies indicate that Japanese preschools are very good on many measures for inspiring Hong Kong informants and giving them ideas. One significant preschool education study was conducted by Tobin et al. (1989, 2009). They compared three preschools in three cultures—the US, Japan and China—in 1989 and 2009, respectively. The authors successfully stimulated the cultural insiders to evoke their own cultural behaviours and beliefs through other countries by video-cued, multi-vocal ethnography. Hence, based on field observations in Japan that support its history of education and folk values of teaching children, it would be useful for Hong Kong teachers to review their local educational systems and cultural beliefs in comparison to examples from Japanese schools. Before discussing the folk pedagogies, the background of early childhood education in Hong Kong is briefly described to provide a basic understanding.

Engaging in preschool education. Kindergarten education in kindergartens and kindergarten-cum-childcare centres (hereafter referred to as KG) registered with the Education Bureau provide services for children from 3 to 6 years old. At present, leaders of most kindergartens (KGs) operate on a half-day basis and offer upper KG, lower KG and nursery classes. Some KG leaders offer whole-day classes as well. The aim of KG education in Hong Kong is to nurture children to develop ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics; to develop good habits to prepare them for life; and to stimulate children's

interests in learning to cultivate positive learning attitudes and lay the foundation for their future learning.

All KGs in Hong Kong are privately run, and these can be categorised as non-profitmaking (NPM) KGs and private independent (PI) KGs, depending on their sponsoring organisations, which can be either voluntary agencies or private enterprises. All KGs are registered under the Education Ordinance. Inspectors from the Education Bureau visit KGs to give advice to principals and teachers on curricula, teaching approaches and school administration. The Education Bureau and the Social Welfare Department (2016) provides prospective school operators with the necessary information regarding statutory requirements and recommendations for the operation of KGs.

Learning areas in Hong Kong preschool education. With the influence of global early childhood educational trends as well as the momentum of the Hong Kong education system and curriculum reforms at the beginning of this century, the CDC of Hong Kong (2006 & 2017) published a revised *Guide to the Pre-Primary Curriculum*. The CDC of Hong Kong (2006) emphasised that early childhood education laid the foundation for life-long learning and whole person development. The core value of early childhood education lies in child-centredness (Education Commission, 1986; Wu, 2013 & Liu, Yuen & Rao, 2017). Pre-primary institution leaders should formulate their curricula according to the basic principles of children's development and learning, while considering children's interests, needs and abilities. The curriculum framework has four developmental objectives for young children: physical development, cognitive and language development, affective and social development, and aesthetic development. These objectives can be achieved through the following six learning areas: physical fitness and health, language, early mathematics, science and technology, self and society, and arts (Curriculum Development Council, 2017).

Children can use these learning skills to develop ethics, intellect, physique, social skills and aesthetics, which will prepare them for life and gain a foundation for future learning.

Music education plays more important role in early childhood education since the third time of Hong Kong preschool curriculum in 2017 (Education, Commission in 2017). In art education, music included art category that helps students to have joyful learning through play balanced development all the way. The common activities in music lessons that teachers sing songs with children during group time as part of the classroom routines. Sometimes move and dance to music with students (Chen, 1999, 2013 & 2016; Cheung, 2004 & Ho, 2010). Educators can create stimulating learning environments to facilitate children's development of multiple intelligences. Through life experiences, sensory encounters, exploration and interesting games, educators can foster children's holistic development. Most lessons can create stimulating learning environments to generate positive life experiences and interests in children by developing activity centres. For instance, KG leaders might establish reading corners, mathematics corners, nature corners, arts and crafts corners, music corners and home corners. These activity centres can include teaching aids to facilitate self-learning.

Teacher qualifications and statutory requirement. The minimum academic entry qualification for KG teachers is five passes, including both Chinese and English, in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE)/Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination. The test must be taken in no more than two sittings. Since September 2003, all newly appointed KG teachers must possess a Qualified Kindergarten Teacher (QKT) qualification or its equivalent. Starting with the 2003 to 2004 school year, all KGs must have attained a teacher-to-pupil ratio at 1:15 or lower. In addition, the implementation of the Pre-Primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS) in the 2007 to 2008 school year provided direct fee subsidies to parents, and in parallel, financial support for teachers' professional upgrading.

All new principals from the 2009 to 2010 school year should have a degree in ECE (Bed [ECE]), one year of post-qualification experience, and have completed a recognised certificate course on principalship before, or within the first year, of their appointments. Starting with the 2012 to 2013 school year, leaders of KGs under the PEVS must employ enough teachers who possess Certificate in Early Childhood Education (C[ECE]) qualifications based on the teacher-to-pupil ratio of 1:15.

Understanding teachers' beliefs in Hong Kong. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Sang et al. (2012) stated that beliefs are highly affected by teachers' cultural backgrounds, and some thoughts and perceptions are subjective. Hence, Bruner (1996) emphasised the concept of folk pedagogy, which requires teachers to be aware of their folk culture and the intersubjectivity of children's minds. Bruner (1996) defined folk pedagogy as people sharing implicit theories on teaching and pedagogy that they have in common. For example, Bruner (1996) stated that every mother developed her own folk notions or implicit pedagogical principles about teaching children by observing their cognitive abilities.

The significance of folk pedagogy lies in its aim to increase teachers' cultural awareness through their students and the surrounding community. In this way, both teachers and students can acquire shared knowledge and satisfaction in learning and teaching. Bruner's (1996) philosophy is derived from cultural psychology, whereby culture and the mind are interdependent, and culture is a meaning-making process through which people shape their minds and share their ideas in a cultural context (Olson & Bruner, 1996).

Teachers may not be fully aware of their implicit behaviours and beliefs within their own cultures. Cole (1996) described culture as a fish in water; people fail to 'see culture because it is the medium within which we exist' (p. 8). Inspired by the lens of comparative education, research across cultures is significant for its acknowledgement of different perspectives through various cultures (Mason, 2014; Tobin et al.,1989, 2009). To stimulate

cultural awareness, this study employs Japanese preschool culture as a stimulus to evoke the folk pedagogy in Hong Kong. Japan is chosen as a counterpart country because both Hong Kong and Japan are in East Asia. Both countries share similar Western education systems and traditional Confucian influences (Dore, 2012); however, Japanese music pedagogies possess folk culture features, which are seldom seen in Hong Kong culture. Additionally, researchers have studied Japanese preschool education and its cultural features (e.g., Asano, 2011; Chan, 2013; Izumi-Taylor & Scott, 2013; Shimahara, 1986; Hosoya & Talib, 2008; Tobin et al., 1989, 2009; Tokita, 2014; Zhou & Leydesdorff, 2006). Tobin et al. (1989, 2009) conducted a significant preschool education study and compared three preschools in three cultures—the US, Japan and China. The authors stimulated the cultural insiders to evoke their own cultural behaviours and beliefs though other countries by video-cued, multi-vocal ethnography.

In Hong Kong, few researchers have conducted comparative studies of preschool education between Hong Kong and Japan. Topics related to the folk pedagogy of Hong Kong preschool teachers are rare in the literature. This thesis will fill this research gap by investigating Hong Kong preschool music teachers' folk teaching cultures, using Bruner's (1996) folk pedagogy as the theoretical framework. Tobin et al.'s (1989, 2009) anthropological qualitative method will be adopted as a multi-case study with ethnography. Data will be collected in three local KGs in Japan and Hong Kong. In addition, semi-structured interviews and ethnographic field observations will be employed to collect data. This research is significant because of its potential to expand the cultural understanding of both teachers and researchers.

Research Questions

Based on a review of the relevant literature, the folk pedagogy of Hong Kong preschool teachers has been overlooked, and this research will fill this gap. Japan has been chosen as a point of comparison to provide insights for Hong Kong educators to evaluate

their folk culture and pedagogy. The following core question has been developed to investigate how Hong Kong preschool teachers have incorporated folk pedagogies and practices into their music teaching: Are there any hidden beliefs embedded in their teaching practices? To fully address this research question, three research questions have been developed for this proposed study:

1. In Hong Kong, what are teachers' teaching pedagogies about music in early childhood education?
2. How do Hong Kong teachers articulate their own practices in relation to their counterparts in Japan?
3. What are the beliefs that affect teachers' folk pedagogies as reviewed by Hong Kong teachers?

To elaborate on the first question, the issues to be identified may pertain to how the interviewees teaching in the field experience their situation. The first question concerns Hong Kong preschool teachers' perceptions of their music teaching activities. Furthermore, it explores how preschool music educators perceive their profession in their own countries and respective countries. The similarities and differences of the features of preschool music education in both countries can be further discussed and reviewed.

With regard to the second question, the interviewees gradually come to understand the folk pedagogy (Bruner, 1996) within their school context and the counterpart countries that reflect their belief systems and practices regarding their roles and teaching pedagogies. They also discuss and reflect how local contexts and cultural features promote or constrain music education, and how these factors affect music teachers' ways of conducting their class instruction.

The final research question explores the underlying assumption concerning the intercultural approach to Hong Kong and Japan preschool music education. It involves

observing educational meanings that are fundamental to preschool education in Hong Kong's culture, as a result of intercultural observation and learning. Having disclosed issues addressed in the previous two questions, hypotheses such as teachers' beliefs (including transforming beliefs or new perspectives) are gradually developed in the course of pursuing problems related to preschool music education.

Overview

Chapter 1 provides the study background by presenting issues observed in Hong Kong's significant culture of mixed Chinese and Western ideologies. The research questions are asked to explore folk teaching in music education in Hong Kong, particularly in preschool education, an area in which minimal research has been conducted thus far. Chapter 2 examines the fundamental concepts of culture, cultural psychology and folk pedagogy related to preschool music teachers. Related studies are reviewed to build a theoretical orientation to this study. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework for this study and describes how the research data are collected to address the research questions. A framework approach is adopted for data analysis. Chapter 4 discusses the theme of folk pedagogies of Hong Kong music teachers. The factors of time, place, participants and activities are examined to understand the cultural context, and how the observations of the teachers fosters their review of their cultural features and their development of folk pedagogies. Chapter 5 pinpoints the most significant difference between Japan's and Hong Kong's folk education. The content discusses the different perspectives of play teaching between Hong Kong and Japanese teachers. Their hidden beliefs are revealed by observing the teachers and discussing these with them. The class activities and themes in both Japan and Hong Kong are described and examined. The beliefs of *mimamoru (teaching by watching and waiting)*, *joso-kyokiu (sentimental) and kokoro (love)* only exist in the Japanese culture. The characteristics of Japanese children are analysed to determine how its pedagogy affects children's learning in early childhood education. The later section reveals

the features of Japanese and Hong Kong teachers' cultural behaviours in other non-music activities. Chapter 6 synthesises the findings from this study and discusses the significance of the study and its limitations. The discussion and transforming beliefs among Hong Kong teachers are summarised in the final section. Directions for future research are suggested, and implications for professional practice are drawn.

Chapter 2: Conceptualising Folk Pedagogy in Hong Kong and Japan

Understanding Culture

Bruner (1996) stated, 'Education must, be not only a transmission of culture but also a provider of alternative views of the world and a strengthener of the will to explore them' (p. 20). Society has defined culture in various contexts. In classical anthropology, researchers have perceived culture as a product. For example, a 19th-century anthropologist, Tylor (1924, as cited in Bruner, 1996), defined culture as a 'complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habit acquired by man as a member of society' (p. 6). Under this view, culture consists of both invisible products, e.g. values, attitude, assumptions and beliefs, and artefacts, e.g. language, arts, architecture and food, all of which exist in society.

Music is considered a product where the values of society manifest. In line with this thinking, Masemann (2013) and Matsumoto and Juang (2013) defined culture as people's ideas, the languages they spoke, and symbolic forms, such as written languages and arts. Culture can also be categorised as cultural nationalism (Anderson, 2006; Hutchinson, 2014; Woods & Debs, 2013), such as a common language (spoken or written), living styles, e.g. eating styles, values, etc., and social interactions, e.g. festivals and celebrations. Examples include the nap time habit after lunch in China (Lin, 2000) and the silent transportation etiquette in Japan (Mente, 2011); both situations reflect a unique set of behaviours for these nations. In summary, researchers have defined culture as a learned pattern of thoughts and behaviours that are passed from one generation to the next (Carter, 2000; Gu, 2014; Heine, 2012).

However, culture is not only perceived as products; some scholars also consider it a shared meaning-making process. Scribner and Cole (1981) defined culture as a shared knowledge and meaning-making process that generates a set of everyday practices. The

meaning-making process contains a certain degree of intersubjectivity (Olson & Bruner, 1996). Intersubjectivity refers to the sharing of subjective states by two or more individuals with shared emotions, shared attention and shared intentions (Olson & Bruner, 1996; Tomasello, Carpenter, Call, Behne, & Moll, 2005). This perspective is derived from cultural psychology, which is the process of meaning-making where people actively generate knowledge or thinking about the world around them (Bruner, 1996; Chen & Walsh, 2008; Schweder, 1991). Cultural psychologists have viewed culture, community and human minds as indistinguishable (Cole, 1996, 2005; Shweder, 1991). These three aspects are related to the process of meaning-making (Bruner, 1996; Cole, 1996; Shweder, 1991).

Some scholars have posited that cultural psychology consists of the relationships between cultural meaning, practice and human psychologies (Cole, 1996; Geertz, 1973; Kantor, 1982; Shweder, 1991). However, Shweder (1991) opined that traditional Western psychology could not fully explain the different cultural meanings in non-Western countries. He stressed culture as *experience-near* concepts, in the sense that cultural psychology focused on what a person *effortlessly* and *naturally* saw, felt and thought. Shweder (1991) defined culture as 'premised on human existential uncertainty (the search for meaning) and on an intentional conception of "constituted" worlds. An intentional world consists of human beliefs and meanings that cannot exist independently' (p. 20). Kantor (1982) noted that the Western cultural lens might not be applicable to other non-Western cultures. An example of this can include the contrasting responses of both a Hindu and a Christian looking at a cow. Both individuals respond to the cow, i.e. to its non-cultural and biological properties, but they have different cultural responses that correspond to their cultural meaning systems (Cole, 1996, p. 88). Speaking from an anthropologist's viewpoint, Geertz (1973) defined the meaning-making process as a complex web of significant meanings contracted through interactions with people and creating meanings and signs. He gave an example of one boy's

eye twitching involuntarily, while another boy's eye winks. The physical phenomena are the same, but a wink represents a special cultural expression, whereas a twitch does not. A wink may be understood differently based on cultural contexts. A review of the literature showed that cultural psychologists considered culture reflective of the meaning-making process in a specific cultural context. This lens provides a deeper understanding of individual beliefs in different cultures.

Psychologists have emphasised the relationship between beliefs and culture (Cole, 1996, 2010; Cole, Engestrom, & Vasquez, 1997). Wundt and Schaub (1916) mentioned that each culture had a distinctive *folk psychology* that referred to how the human mind worked and developed (Olson & Bruner, 1996). Markus and Kitayama (2010) explained how human beings responded to culture differently. Humans self-engage with their sociocultural contexts, and the human brain and body become attuned to various environments. Thus, the self is formed through experiences. The self will continually develop a sense of awareness and agency, and then the self leads the human's actions and shapes his or her beliefs. In short, the self incorporates the patterns of its diverse environment and, thus, confers culture-specific forms and functions to the psychological process it organises (Heine, 2012; Markus & Kitayama, 2010; Shweder, 1991).

Consequently, human beliefs are reflected by subjective thoughts and cultural traditions shaped by culture (Sang et al., 2012). Values that are also influenced include national identity and moral values, e.g. perseverance, responsibility, integrity or care for others, utilitarian values, e.g. target-orientated or interest–based-orientated, social values, e.g. people's expectations and profession guidelines, and aesthetic values, e.g. emotional response and appreciation of beauty or works of art (Leung, 2012). Thus, the psychological process of the development of an individual's beliefs and values are interlocked with culture.

Folk Pedagogy

Succeeding from Wundt and Schaub's (1916) folk psychology, Bruner (1996) discussed folk pedagogy, which incorporates the lens of cultural psychology and folk psychology to understand teachers' folk beliefs. Folk pedagogy refers to the intersubjective process of advancing the teacher's and the learner's knowledge in his/her culture (Bruner, 1996). Bruner (1996) defined educational practices in classrooms as 'premised on a set of folk beliefs about learner's minds, and the child development is influenced by culture, it is the way in which the teachers should understand children's minds and adjust their thinking accordingly' (p. 46).

The significance of folk pedagogy is that teachers stimulate themselves to discover the children's thinking and the action in which both students and teachers finally acquire a shared belief of the same culture (Bruner, 1996). Chen and Walsh (2008) attempted to stimulate teachers' folk pedagogy to express the traditional Chinese values of *mei* (beauty) in art teaching. Through their interactions with students, the art teachers promoted three cultural values: (a) connecting beauty and art learning, (b) enjoying an aesthetic feeling, and (c) cultivating character and the integration of art into daily life. Chen and Walsh concluded that the art teachers who participated shared the common views of care for Taiwan's culture and traditional Chinese aesthetic values. Another implication of the study was that teachers' folk pedagogies must be acknowledged before classroom practice begins.

Although few researchers have reviewed folk pedagogy in music education, some have discussed how beliefs are strongly related to music teachers' cultural backgrounds. Lo (2013) conducted a cross-cultural study to offer ways to reflect and express these teachers' beliefs and cultural differences. Lo implied that folk pedagogy (in contrast to cultural teaching pedagogy) had a significant impact on music educators within the cultural context. She conducted an intercultural study of selected aspects of educators' beliefs and practices in

the US and the United Kingdom (UK). Some practitioners experienced emotional conflict associated with accepting or rejecting the pedagogical ideas of the other culture. In comparison, Ng (2015) investigated Hong Kong preschool music teachers' beliefs, including current music education policies and the value of music for children. Her study was not conceptualised by folk pedagogy, but it reflected the features of Hong Kong folk pedagogy. Both Lo (2013) and Ng (2015) showed that teachers' beliefs were strongly related to their past cultural practices and experiences. The implication of both studies was that teachers' beliefs also influenced their teaching pedagogies (Lo, 2013; Ng, 2015). Apart from that, Nettl (1985) and Vannatta-Hall (2010) emphasised that teachers' beliefs and value systems impacted their music teaching (Campbell, 2016).

Former studies of Barrett's edited book, *A Cultural Psychology of Music Education*, (Barrett, 2011) explored the ways in which the discipline of cultural psychology can contribute to the understanding of how music developments occur in a range of cultural settings. They have attempted to understand culture though various music activities in different ways (Barrett, 2011; Dunbar-Hall, 2010; Hultberg, 2010; Wiggins, 2010). Music researchers have incorporated cultural psychology with social psychology, ethnomusicology, and multicultural education (Vygotsky, 1978). For example, Wiggins (2010) articulated the idea of Bruner's (1996) folk pedagogy, stating that teachers should scaffold music activities to develop children's social and cultural awareness. Wiggins (2010) studied teacher-supported collaborative song writing events to provide a context for the investigation of learner agency. During the learning process, children were self-motivated and excited about their created songs, which were inspired by their various cultural experiences of school, the media and their own backgrounds. Nevertheless, Wiggins considered the social process that occurred between the children but did not illuminate how the children's minds interacted with each other and were shaped by the culture.

Dunbar-Hall (2010) studied the teaching of music and dance to children in Bali through a cultural psychology lens with an ethnomusicological nature. The results indicated how children's music activities were important contributions to the life of Balinese communities and how community expectations mandated teaching strategies and learning styles. From an ethnomusicologist's view, Dunbar-Hall investigated music learning and teaching in a range of culturally specific settings and provided an understanding of how culture affected the context and structure of music experiences with a pedagogic outcome (p. 2). He defined the cultural context as a factor in the way people approached, considered, learned and taught music and its effect on their lives. However, during the study, Dunbar-Hall did not address the psychological process of the Balinese children's music learning.

In contrast to Dunbar-Hall (2010), Hultberg (2010) incorporated Vygotsky's (1978) cultural tools and cross-cultural research. Cultural tools functioning as mediators can strongly influence individuals' thoughts and actions (Bruner, 1993, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, Hultberg (2010) attempted to draw students' attention to the interplay of cultural tools in music learning within two different cultural pedagogies. Hultberg observed two teachers who drew on their knowledge as cultural bearers of music—Western classical music and Zimbabwean marimba ensemble; the pedagogical traditions within each worked through Suzuki piano instruction and aural-based group teaching. Using notated, aural and embodied presentations of the music, the teachers prompted students' thoughts and practical activities. During the lesson, the teachers used the students' performances as cultural tools for reflection and for the students' understanding of music learning. Even though Hultberg asserted that using two cultural music pedagogies stimulated students' understanding of cultural differences, the discussion about the relationship between the children's minds and culture was overlooked.

In summary, culture and individual beliefs are inseparable. A review of the relevant literature indicated that cultural factors influenced teachers' beliefs and teaching pedagogies. Therefore, folk pedagogy is an important concept for rediscovering implicit cultural values, beliefs and behaviours among students and teachers. However, few researchers of this subject have discussed how culture shapes the ways in which individual musical processes occur psychologically. Furthermore, the aforementioned literature contains no mention of a situation where multiple cultures meet (and conflict) in such a way as to highlight value differences. This research will fill this gap by exploring how culture shapes Hong Kong preschool teachers' beliefs and how Hong Kong teachers interact with their students through music teaching.

Music learning is the most common cultural activity where teachers and pupils as the agents of practice in a classroom construct an educational culture (Stich, 2015). Hopmann and Riquarts (1995) outlined cultures of teaching as characterised by different practices concerning the instruction, planning and execution of a lesson. These aspects together constitute teaching and differ from culture to culture. Within an interactional comparative study, this raises the issue of similarities and differences between classroom practices in different countries. Hopmann and Riquarts (1995) also described the school environments, social dynamics of classrooms and content to be learned as cross-cultural and cross-national elements that shape the practices of agents in classrooms (p. 311).

School leaders, government rules or the curriculum mostly determine teachers' practices in a classroom. The relationships between teachers and pupils appear asymmetrical (Luhmann, as cited in Lenzen, Dey, & Murray, 2002, p. 108). The role of a teacher is empowered by different nonverbal and verbal acts that allow him or her to judge the pupils and make decisions. From a pupil's viewpoint, the teacher decides how his or her time during the lesson is spent, as based on the teachers' beliefs in what is good for the pupils during that

lesson. Furthermore, the teacher assesses the pupils' actions, often decides the content of the lessons, and plans and executes the lessons. Certain teaching practices may lead to specific learning cultures for next generations. Preschool education is the beginning of cultural communication between teachers and students; therefore, the common practices in Hong Kong's and Japan's music education and teachers' beliefs will be discussed in the following sections.

The influence of Hong Kong folk values in education. Few studies have explored the impact of (folk) pedagogy on Hong Kong preschool music education. Therefore, this study will try to look at folk beliefs of teaching children and cultural features of Hong Kong society. Based on the related information, this study will search for evidence of this relationship in music teachers' folk beliefs.

Folk pedagogy of teaching children. To investigate folk teaching, Hong Kong folk family education must be understood. Nowadays, both the husband and the wife are full-time workers in the family structure in most cases. The traditional concept that the husband earns the living and the wife takes care of the family is on the decline in Hong Kong (Hong Kong Women's Commission, 2017). The survey findings revealed that over 80% of women and men agreed that 'both women and men should contribute to the household income', and the percentage of females showing agreement was 3.3% higher than their male counterparts (male: 80.4% and female: 83.7%; Hong Kong Women's Commission, 2010). As shown in the findings, it was generally agreed that both men and women should contribute to the household's finances and also deal with external affairs. At the same time, it showed that society had generally accepted the change in women's economic role.

The family structure has a significant impact on Hong Kong women, many of whom lead lives with dual identities as both mothers and career women. According to the figures provided by the Hong Kong government, the actual number and percentage of working women

in the entire working population in Hong Kong has continued to increase considerably, although the Hong Kong economy is stagnant. In the decade between 1999 and 2009, the working population of females jumped to 1,736,000 from 1,362,500. The average annual growth rate was 2.5%, much higher than the 1.1% of the entire working population. The ratio of females in the workplace increased from 49.2% to 53.5%. The government believes that the trend will continue, and the percentage will reach 55.4% in 2026 (Hong Kong Women's Commission, 2017).

The change in the family structure also affects the role of parents and teaching children. Reflecting the community concerns, both adults and children in Hong Kong are faced with a great deal of stress in housing, education and job satisfaction. The heavy burden of work and housework creates a work-family conflict for many couples (Chen et. al, 1998; Luk & Shaffer, 2005), which, in turn, affects their well-being (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Voydanoff, 2005a). For both men and women, long work hours are positively related to work-family conflicts, which have a substantial negative impact on family well-being (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Lee & Chao, 2001). According to Wong (2011), the survey showed that Hong Kong had the lowest score in the Happiness Index (6.83), followed by Seoul (7.01) and Osaka (7.41). Compared to Osaka and Seoul, Hong Kong had the lowest scores for satisfaction with the quality of life. In 2016, a survey found that Hong Kong parents' long working hours affect the amount of social time they have to spend with their children, which may affect children's psychological and physical development (Lau, 2016). The household labour plays a important role in shaping family well-being (Coltrane, 2000; Shelton & John, 1996).

The mentality of winning at the starting line. The mentality of winning at the starting line is the motto for many local parents, who deem it commonplace to load children up with training courses or tutorial classes from a very young age in order for them to achieve good grades (Watkin, 2010). A study by Chinese University of Hong Kong published in 2016 found

that one in three Hong Kong adults believed children should be trained to 'win at the starting line' from early childhood. Supporters believe that they can 'cultivate the interests of children as early as possible', followed by 'young people absorb learning faster and better', and they do not want children to lag behind their peers. Although some opponents still believe that children should not be allowed to compete too early, and that it would lead to them losing interest in learning. However, the ideal beliefs of happy learning and the reality of academic pressure and social competition cannot be compromised. Among the interviewees, 77% agreed that, nowadays, children do not have time to move freely and play games by themselves or with family member. In 2016, it was revealed that some Hong Kong school children were getting less time outside for physical exercise (Lau, 2016).

Confusion of cultural identity. In light of folk values, the influence of Hong Kong culture is largely related to teachers' beliefs. The deepest cultural conflict for Hong Kong people is vagueness about their identity. The 'part-Chinese/part-Western' thought creates an uncertain attitude towards Hong Kong folk teaching and music education.

Prior to 1997, Morris et al. (2003) described that the structure of Hong Kong's educational system reflected the British school model. Schools in Hong Kong's earlier period were taught in English. Meanwhile, a first generation of refugees had escaped from China to Hong Kong from 1945 to 1966. These refugees maintained traditional norms and Confucian values in Hong Kong society, such as parents' hierarchy. These influences had a significant effect on Hong Kong people's beliefs (Lam et al., 2002, Hue, 2005a, 2005b, 2008, Yuen et al, 2017). Cheng (2007) investigated Hong Kong's moral education, such as academic expectations that were still highly influenced by the family's education and shadowed by Confucian values. The second generation had a strong connection to the local identity in Hong Kong, who were impacted by their parents and the British educational system. The third generation were born in the 1980s onwards; their birthplace and early education were

highly influenced by global impacts, such as TV, the internet, social media and Western thoughts. Thus, the third generation's traditional Confucian values might not be strong as those of the previous generation. This created a mix of influential sources in the beliefs and values of ordinary people in the various generations.

Similarly, the impact of the labour market also accelerates Hong Kong folk educational values, such as achievement and academic aptitude (Biggs, 1996; Crystal et al., 1994; Chen et. al, 1998; Chan, 2000; Li, 2001). On the side of the Chinese influence, Hong Kong folk pedagogy places a high value on learning (Chao, 1994; Chen et. al., 1996; Chan et. al., 2009; Chan, 2000). This attitude was largely instilled by the long history of the Chinese imperial system, which was the civil service examinations in gentry society, and it is the only process of social mobility for a poorer Chinese student. For over a thousand years, the highest social status in Chinese society was determined by the qualification for officialdom, which was, in turn, determined by education and especially by examinations in the Chinese culture (Huang, 2005). This cultural concept would accelerate the importance of children equipping themselves with knowledge starting in preschool to excel in higher examinations. Wong and Rao (2015) also mentioned that a traditional Chinese education can be perceived as a means for upward social mobility. Various scholars observed that Chinese people develop more positive attitudes towards learning and have higher standards for achievement. Chinese children were taught the value of effort as a stable cause for learning and achievement (Hau & Salili, 1991; Salili & Mak, 1988). The inspiration to pass the civil service examination was more for the honour of the family than that of the individual (Yu & Yang, 1994). In other words, Chinese achievement motivation and learning are argued to be primarily social rather than individualistic (Yu & Yang, 1994).

Biggs (1992) and Watkins (2009) expressed that the importance placed on education and competition is further intensified by Confucian beliefs. For example, in terms of teaching

children, Lin and Fu (1990) mentioned that Chinese authoritarian parenting was rooted in Confucian concepts of a parental authority style. 'Guan' (管) means to govern the children; it is the action of showing love to the children in folk Confucian beliefs (Tobin et al., 1989). In fact, Confucian teaching is not only limited to knowledge and teaching children; it is also the study of a gentleman who has achieved a perfect personality. The real understanding of Confucian values gradually became ambiguous in Hong Kong society, although Confucian teaching originally encouraged students, showing them that they will not only learn the essential knowledge of aristocratic scholars but will also develop their own character, qualities and grand vision. Confucian teachings are based on a moral code for human relations, which emphasises the importance of traditions and rites. The Five Constants, 'humaneness, righteousness, proper rite, knowledge and integrity', form the key doctrine of Confucianism, and the *Four Books and Five Classics,* the 'Confucian bible', are being taught less and less in KG to secondary school (Chao, 1994; Carless, 2011).

Regarding other Western influences, British values have also implanted themselves in Hong Kong society, such as British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (Phillipson et al., 2007). However, the educational system in Hong Kong mainly provides a process for receiving or giving systematic instruction at the school or university level to fulfil the high demand for skilled labour and professionals. Although Hong Kong people have very strong beliefs about following British education and its administrative system, many Hong Kong parents expect their children to study at high-quality schools, and they believe that tertiary education offers better English instruction, which would better prepare students for higher education, professional training or additional study abroad. Rather, the core of Western education, such as independent thinking, cannot stimulate Hong Kong education since spoon-fed teaching is still considered the most effective approach in the Hong Kong context. Thus, the critical- and

creative-thinking approach of the Western learning style has not been emphasised (Chen et al., 1996; HO, 2009; Lu, 2001; CUHK, 2016).

Another Western influence is Christianity, which plays a remarkably important role in the cultural activities of Hong Kong preschool education. The mission of faith-based schools in Hong Kong tends to teach a curriculum founded on a biblical view that includes ethics and other issues associated with Christian beliefs (Dumbauld, 2012). On weekends, school facilities, such as school halls, classrooms, or even playgrounds, can become fully utilised as religious facilities for mass and worship to promote Christianity. Furthermore, in most Christian schools, not only were Bible studies mandatory, but students were also required to attend religious classes where they were taught to pray and follow the teachings of Christ. The clergy usually supervised school religious events and preferred hiring teachers and staff who were also Christian, in order to share the gospel with children. According to Kwong (2002), around 70% of secondary schools in the 1960s were operated by Christian churches. There are 897 Christian schools in Hong Kong, which is more than any other folk religion, such as Buddhist and Confucian schools. The long tradition of Christian schools was recognised as 'famous schools', because the elites or government officers who graduated from these schools did so with high English proficiency (Kwong et al., 1999). Their existence inside the schools further consolidated the influence of Christianity on Hong Kong society. In Hong Kong, Christian groups generally believe if the gospel of God is promoted successfully, mutual support and love will be established in society. Under the decolonisation driven by the communist state and the Hong Kong government, such shifts in Western influences in Hong Kong and the promotion of Chinese traditions and cultures may create conflicts for the next generation (Li & Rao., 2012).

Folk pedagogy in Hong Kong's preschool music education. Singing is the most important activity in early childhood education. In preschool education, Western and Cantonese

children's songs are taught in local preschools. Examples of these are the following: 'Open the Mosquito Net' (打開蚊帳), 'Bird Fall into Water' (有隻雀仔跌落水), 'Number Song' (數字歌 123), and 'Brush Your Teeth' (刷牙歌). The lyrics tend to reflect children's daily lives and celebrate meanings. For celebration songs, traditional Chinese New Year songs, such as 'Gong Xi Gong Xi', are well preserved. Most Hong Kong Chinese can sing these Western children's songs with Cantonese texts such as Mary had a little lamb, Twinkle Twinkle little stars, row a boat etc. Music teachers usually prepare choreographed dances with children songs; singing performances are typically associated with the children performing at school events and festivals. Apart from that, some old Cantonese folk songs are also no longer sung in the home, such as 'Yuet Guang' ('Moonlight'), a typical bedtime song. Children do not understand the lyrics culturally because the subject matter is irrelevant (Chen, 2013).

Another kind of traditional folk song, Cantonese opera, employed an oral tradition of apprenticeships and was popular in the early 20th century in Hong Kong and other Canton provinces (Leung, 2015). Cantonese operas include songs and singing techniques, and pedagogies are rarely found in preschool education (Ho, 2010). Cantonese opera requires four skills: singing, acting, speech delivery and gymnastic skills (Leung, 2015). According to Lui (2012), the music teaching of Cantonese opera is chiefly done with oral approaches rather than written formats. The songs are usually improvised and sung using various techniques. The oral traditions also represent folk cultural values, such as strict social and interpersonal relationships (Chen & Xu, 2008). Leung et al. (2010) mentioned that Cantonese opera, like other traditional Chinese cultural arts, was marginalised in the field of arts and culture in the Hong Kong community. Although Cantonese opera has been preserved in the Hong Kong culture and promoted among primary and secondary schools after British rule, preschool music teachers rarely teach children the knowledge of Cantonese opera and old Cantonese rhymes such as

Teapot songs, Take a bath etc (Chen, 2013). The knowledge of Cantonese opera in today's preschool classrooms was less taught. (Curriculum Development Institute, 1998).

Scholars have posited that Hong Kong teachers' folk values and beliefs are constructed according to the needs of school policies and sociocultural backgrounds, rather than an interest in preserving traditional Chinese culture (Chen, 2013; Chen & Xu, 2008; Ho, 2010; Ng, 2015). Still, few of the reviewed studies contained discussions of teachers' beliefs and preschool practices in Hong Kong (Chan, 2013; Ng, 2015; Vannatta-Hall, 2010). A few researchers have explored the impact of (folk) pedagogy on Hong Kong preschool music education. A question to be raised is how music teachers' folk pedagogy is constrained by Hong Kong's mixed culture.

Intercultural lens of different cultures. In practice, teachers may not observe their folk pedagogy by themselves. Some researchers have mentioned that teachers have unconsciously held values and beliefs about students, classrooms and teaching materials (e.g. Bruner, 1996; Kagan, 2010). Hence, this study will view comparative educational research across cultures because it is not only research about two or more cultures in the cross-cultural sense, but it is also intercultural in nature. Thus, the perspectives from the culture under study as well as this researcher's cultural perspectives will be presented (Jin & Wang, 2004).

Significantly, intercultural dialogue is a crucial issue that comprises an open and respectful exchange or interaction between two cultures. The main purpose is to increase participation and the freedom and ability to enhance the creative process (European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research Team, 2008). Tobin et al. (1989) used cultural outsiders in the world of Japanese preschools to provoke cultural insiders to become self-consciously aware of practices that otherwise would remain implicit, tacit and nonverbalised (Tobin & Hayashi, 2015). Another study related to pre-service teachers' intercultural competence was conducted in Japan and Finland (Talib & Hosoya, 2008). The findings revealed that even Japan and Finland had similar social stations and values in education, and that cultural diversity was the

key to affecting individual beliefs. The study also showed that teachers' concepts and values were influenced by culture (Hosoya & Talib, 2008). Therefore, the intercultural dialogues could stimulate the cultural awareness of teachers' cultures.

However, comparative studies on preschool topics and themes related to Hong Kong preschool music education are rarely mentioned. Some preschool topics include 'Quality Improvement in Early Years Settings in Hong Kong and England' (Ho et al., 2010), and 'Textbooks and Cultural Traditions: A Comparative Case Study of Berlin and Hong Kong' (Lui & Leung, 2012). Kantor (1982) defined Western culture and Asian culture as distinctive. Researchers have tended to compare Eastern and Western differences in education (Asano, 2011; Feinberg, 1993; Ho et al., 2010; Izumi-Taylor & Scott, 2013). Few studies have been conducted within Asian countries. To evoke the uniqueness of Hong Kong's folk pedagogy, this thesis will study the folk pedagogy of Hong Kong preschool teachers in conjunction with Japan.

As mentioned in Chapter one, compared to various Asian countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, India, Korea and Japan, Japan provided sufficient preschool literatures (Asano, 2011; Izumi-Taylor & Scott, 2013; Hosoya & Talib, 2008; Hayashi & Tobin, 2015; Tobin et al., 1989, 2009; Zhou & Leydesdorff, 2006). Several comparative studies have examined the subject of early childhood education. For instance, Izumi-Taylor and Scott (2013) reviewed nurturing young children's moral development through literature in Japan and the US. Asano (2011) conducted a comparative study of education for sustainable development in early childhood in Sweden and Japan, while Zhou and Leydesdorff (2006) conducted a comparative study on Chinese and Japanese preschool teachers' awareness of inclusive education. Chan (2013) discussed the influence of preschool on children's gender behaviours, using a comparison between Hong Kong and Japan; however, few have compared the cultural values within Hong Kong and Japan.

Furthermore, Japan provides comparable geographic and cultural commonalities with Hong Kong. Both share a traditional Confucian cultural heritage (Dore, 2012; Yao & Zhu, 2008), as well as Western British and American educational systems. Although Japan's music education is bi-musical, interconnecting Western and Japanese cultures, its folk pedagogy has a global impact on music education (Tokita, 2014). The Japanese Yamaha Music School includes a systematic music education programme, which is popular worldwide, and its musical instruments are evidence that Japan has placed a strong emphasis on music education. Apart from that, the Suzuki music teaching method preserves Japanese cultural values, which emphasise aesthetic values such as harmony in family relationships, cultural etiquette (bowing), children's achievement and student obedience (Eubanks, 2014). Shimahara (1986) wrote that Suzuki's beliefs extended Japan's indigenous psychology. Suzuki believed that every child was capable of developing high abilities, a generally accepted Japanese cultural concept. The Suzuki method of music education and the Suzuki pedagogy were described as 'Japan's best overlooked cultural export' (Hotta, 2014, para. 1), and many countries have adopted a series method in music teaching. However, Thibeault (2018) suggested that Japanese Suzuki approaches might not be fully adopted in other countries due to cultural backgrounds. For example, some US teachers might find that set musical works and pedagogies might stifle students' music creativity, and Western students might have a greater aptitude for applying their own thoughts in their musical performances. Thus, pedagogies might need to be revised. Against this backdrop, this research will explore how culture shapes Hong Kong teachers' folk pedagogies through a comparative lens with the Japanese culture. The reasons for choosing Japan are explained in the next section.

Folk Pedagogy in Japanese Education

Kindergarten theory in Japan. Teaching methodologies and philosophies in KG are essential. To see how and why Japanese KGs employ folk pedagogy, the history of Japanese

KG teaching methodology and the philosophies that encourage using these methods were considered. Regarding Western influences, Friedrich Froebel (as cited in Manning, 2005) was a German education pioneer who established the first KG. His ideology focussed on the following three ideas.

1. The unity of creation, such as a spiritual belief in the links between God, nature and humankind;
2. Respect for children as individuals; by providing children with a curriculum of events and tools, teachers will allow children to express themselves and grow at their own pace; and
3. The importance of play in a child's education; Froebel held play in high regard and believed it was 'the most spiritual activity of man at this stage, and, at the same time, typical of human life as a whole' (as cited in Manning, 2005, p. 371).

Froebel's utilisation of play largely made use of the 'gifts', a set of architectural objects largely consisting of wooden blocks (Manning, 2005). Although a novelty back then, wooden blocks are one of the most common things used to teach young children now and are standard in most modern KG classrooms. Froebel emphasised the importance of dancing and singing, which again are more elements seen as standard in modern KG education (Provenzo, 2009). Froebel viewed the child as innocent and in need of care and protection to form him or her into a healthy adult, believing that bad behaviour in children stemmed from a disturbed relationship between the child and the environment (Hendry, 1986, p. 17). He also advocated for women to have an important role in teaching young children and for them to be educated as teachers, a novel idea at the time (Manning, 2005).

Froebel's belief in the pure child and that play was integral for a child to have a healthy upbringing seem to match the Japanese ideas that a young child is *masshiro* and needs to be nurtured properly to grow into a loving adult, as well as the custom of children leaving their

homes to join villages or neighbourhood groups of children to develop as individuals through play. Therefore, the first KG in Japan adopted Froebel's methods. Established in 1876 at Tokyo Women's University, now Ochanomizu University, the KG was built to provide female students at the university with a place to take their children while they attended school. The Froebelian methods of the school spread throughout Japan and became the standard for KG education in Japan (Hendry, 1986; Oda, 2004; Oda & Mori, 2006; Synodi, 2010).

The emphasis of free play. Froebel's ideas might seem free spirited, but there were still those in Japan who believed these ideas were too restrictive on children. Sozo Kurahashi (1882-1955) was a Japanese education academic (Hayashi & Tobin, 2015). He believed that the gifts and how these had instructions for use was too limiting for children; he dramatically took a set of the gifts and rearranged these, rendering them nothing but wooden blocks. Kurahashi called for KGs to use *free play* where children would play freely without teacher guidance or intervention in their activities (Hayashi & Tobin, 2015).

Kurahashi's ideas of KG education emphasised child development over acquiring knowledge or skills, which became the new standard for KGs in Japan (Hayashi & Tobin, 2015; Oda, 2004). Normal functions of KGs ceased during World War II; during that time, KGs were used as a tool to indoctrinate children with patriotic propaganda. After World War II, Helen Heffernan (1896–1987), an American education pioneer serving under General McArthur, helped redevelop the Japanese education system and was placed in charge of developing a new curriculum for Japanese KGs (Hendry, 1986; Oda, 2004; Synodi, 2010). Her curriculum detailed how a child's day at KG should occur, which resembled Kurahashi's free play style of KG, and was well received by Japanese teachers (Hendry, 1986; Oda, 2004; Synodi, 2010).

However, KG leaders started adopting more elementary, school-like, formal teaching practices. Initially, this move was due to the new curriculum establishing six subjects (health, social, nature, language, music/rhythm, and art/drawing/craft) and using authoritative language,

such as *make children do* or *have children understand* (Oda, 2004; Oda & Mori, 2006). This more structured approach to the KG curriculum and the use of words and phrases implying guidance and instruction led many KG teachers to adopt more teacher- and teaching-oriented methods (Oda et al., 1999).

In the 1980s, considering criticism about the direction of KGs, a committee examined the current state of the nation's KGs. The committee issued a report, stating, 'Some KGs provided inappropriate education that does not follow the original intent of Kindergarten education' (Oda, 2004, p. 81), including the teaching of letters and numbers, which was believed 'incompatible with the fundamental idea of kindergarten education' (Oda, 2004, p. 81). Considering the report, a new issue of the *Kindergarten Guidelines* was released in 1989, with the six subjects removed in favour of five areas of development (health, human relationships, environment, language and expression). The new guidelines were vague on the teacher's role, thereby resulting in some degree of misunderstanding. Thus, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2008) issued a revision in 1998, thereby giving a clearer idea of how teachers should achieve these goals (Oda et al., 1999).

Although these guidelines have strayed on occasion, these have mostly kept true to the philosophies of Froebel and Kurahashi developed before World War II (Hayashi & Tobin, 2015; Oda et al., 1999). As a tool to foster emotional and individual development, free play remains the key purpose of KG, with elementary school-like formal teaching of academic subjects being frowned upon by policymakers.

Culturally responsive music activities. In the cultural aspect, Japanese preschoolers mainly sing songs. The song singing is often accompanied by percussion instruments, dancing, gestures, marching, games, etc. (Manabe, 2013; Miyake, Fukunishi, & Yamamoto, 2004). Free play in the classroom or on the playground is a common activity, which is then followed by listening to a story, singing familiar songs, and learning new songs (Adachi, 2013). Among all

activities, singing plays an important role in preserving culture in Japanese early childhood education (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2008). The content of songs enculturates Western-style songs or traditional Japanese children's songs (*warabe-uta*), as invented by former generations of Japanese children (Adachi, 2013). Content is often related to seasonal events or traditional festivals (Adachi, 2013). Apart from that, Japanese songs, called *shoka* are the creation of a cultural hybrid (Matsunobu, 2009). Japanese educators have strong beliefs regarding the revitalisation of old values of Japanese traditional songs, e.g. *hogaku*. In primary and secondary schools, the music curriculum is emphasised to promote the introduction of Japanese-style singing and instrument playing into school education (Matsunobu, 2009). Matsunobu (2009) mentioned that teachers in Japan did not only use music for skills learning; music also played an important role in cultivating a moral education that espoused the values of reverence for one's own culture and nation.

The influence of Japanese folk values on teaching. Japanese preschool teachers emphasise self-monitoring beliefs in preschool education (Tobin et al., 1989; Walsh, 2003). This manner of control for misbehaviour in a group is typical behaviour in Japan society. Furthermore, different occasions call for a range of formal versions of bowing. For example, Japanese individuals will bow to greet each other and say *Itadakismasu* (the pre-meal greeting). These formal bows are culturally, structurally and contextually determined. Hayashi and Tobin (2015) analysed Japanese speech patterns and discovered that Japanese speakers had distinct speech registers as well as body language (p. 91).

Some scholars have stated that Japanese preschool education encourages children's emotional and social development (Walsh, 2003; Tobin, 2014; Tobin et al., 1989, 2009). Competencies are developed through play or activities with peers for the emotional stability of the group. Moreover, Japanese teachers hold beliefs to avoid overprotecting children; for example, children can wear fewer clothes to experience small and minor injuries (Tobin, 2014;

Tobin et al., 1989; Walsh, 2003; Yan, as cited in Abumiya, 2011). Teachers also seldom scold or punish mischievous behaviours (Tobin, 2014; Tobin et al., 1989, 2009). They let children play and settle their own conflicts, and the teacher's instruction is not provided in the form of orders; rather, suggestions and advice are given to foster the children's initiative. These kinds of behaviours and values are distinctive features in the Japanese culture. However, in Hong Kong, intellectual development in literacy and numeracy is valued more highly than social development. Hong Kong school guidelines do not mention the importance of independence, and the above cultural features are not commonly found in the Hong Kong culture.

In reference to preschool systems, both Hong Kong and Japan have two kinds of institutions: KG and day nurseries. KGs in Japan are publicly and privately funded, while KGs in Hong Kong are privately funded and sponsored by the government (Wong & Rao, 2015). Class sizes in Japan are similar to those in Hong Kong. The median class size for each grade level is 16 to 20 children for the younger students (*nenshou*) and 21 to 30 children for the older grades (*nenchuu* and *nenchou*; Adachi, 2013). Both countries have been influenced by foreign educational philosophies, including the Froebelian method, the Montessori, and the Reggio Emilia approach from Italy (Adachi, 2013; Chan, Lee, & Choy, 2009; Holloway & Yamamoto, 2003). Regarding the concept of Montessori and Reggio Emilia approaches, more kindergartens have adopted these methods in Hong Kong. The Montessori Method was founded by paediatrician and psychiatrist Maria Montessori in 1907. The pedagogies emphasise nature, creativity and hands-on learning with gentle guidance by the teachers. Children can explore other cultures, animals and plants in addition to reading, language and mathematical skills. The curriculum focuses on five areas, including practical life, sensory awareness education, language, arts, and mathematics, and cultural subjects, such as geography, zoology, history and music movement. Another approach, Reggio Emilia, was founded in the 1940s. Emilia encourages exploration and focuses on the importance of

community and self-expression. Teachers and students construct the curriculum, and teachers observe the children at work and play, ask the children questions and listen to their ideas. Children use language and many modes to learn, such as drawing, painting, music, dance, poetry and stories.

Regarding teachers' music education, neither Hong Kong's nor Japan's preschool music teachers require specialised qualifications. The music classrooms in Hong Kong and Japan have both music-related and non–music-related materials, such as music recordings, playback equipment, songbooks, pianos and castanets. Preschool teachers appear to use recorded music and musical instruments to lead children's singing, movement and rhythmic playing (Adachi, 2013). However, the Hong Kong education bureau sends their experts to evaluate the quality of music teaching in each school on an annual basis. Therefore, more schools are placing high demands on teachers to enhance their music teaching through professional development. Recently, more preschool teacher education programmes have been offering early childhood music teaching courses to both novice and experienced teachers. For example, some Hong Kong institutions, such as Baptist University of Hong Kong, Open University of Hong Kong and Education University of Hong Kong, offer novice and full-time teachers in local early childhood programmes the opportunity to learn several Western approaches.

In summary, after reviewing the above features and literatures, Japan's cultural context includes geographical, historical and educational factors. Even though Singapore is another good example that has been influenced by British authorities, similar to Hong Kong's backgrounds, Singapore's resident ethnic group comprises Chinese, Malaysian, Indian, Eurasian and Peranakan communities. The folk pedagogies and thinking would be complex, requiring a deeper investigation in terms of field observations and human resources. Thus, Japan is one of the most suitable countries to highlight along with Hong Kong's context.

Table 1 below shows the overall conceptual framework of the study, while the research methodology will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Table 1
Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework			
Problems (Chapter 1)	Unknown folk pedagogy in HK preschool music education	Less literature related to preschool music education	Insensitivities of cultural insiders
Research Questions (Chapter 1)	**Q1**: In Hong Kong, what are teachers' teaching pedagogies about music in early childhood education?	**Q2**: How do Hong Kong teachers articulate their own practices in relation to their counterparts in Japan?	**Q3**: What are the beliefs that affect teachers' folk pedagogies as reviewed by Hong Kong teachers?
Definition of Culture (Chapter 2)	Meanings: Product or Process	**Cultural psychology** Emphasis on the culture, mind and society	**Bruner's folk pedagogy** Intersubjectivity of shared meaning Cyclic psychological influences
Methodology (Chapter 3)	Insensitivities of cultural insiders	Choose Japan as counterpart country	Reasons for choosing Japan: Sufficient literature Both Asian countries Rich musical resources in preschools
Methods (Chapter 3)	Classroom Observations (seven schools) Video recordings with written records	Video ethnographic observation	Teachers' semi-structured interviews

Chapter 3: Methodology

This section discusses the methodology and methods employed in the study to help capture the characteristics of preschool music education in Hong Kong and Japan. In order to gain a deep understanding of the issues identified in this field, it is useful to investigate the research questions through a discussion of epistemological and methodological assumptions in relation to the framework of this research. An outline of the emergent research design, along with descriptions of specific methods such as sampling, interviewing, observations, teachers' debriefing, member checking, and the validation of information through triangulation, as well as a sketch of analysis procedures, are presented at the end of the section.

In the literature of educational research, the theoretical perspective of understanding culture is a process of human beliefs that influences human's behaviour (Bruner, 1996). In reviewing the methodological nature of understanding human behaviours, qualitative research revealed the development of a process to identify cultural patterns. In general, the different genres of qualitative inquiry, such as 'case study', 'ethnography', 'emergent research design', were all applicable to this study. Among the different types of qualitative research, ethnography involves a natural setting that may produce research that is closer to reality than quantitative data (Hammersley et al., 1995). Ethnography refers to one's ability to investigate a phenomenon within its real-life context and to focus on how individuals perceive their worlds (Creswell, 2014; Dharamsi & Charles, 2011). Hence, this approach will allow the researcher to go to the field and observe the culture while writing about lived experiences through observations.

Based on its interpretive nature, qualitative research allows for exploring multiple realities of a case to provide a deeper understanding (Herriott et al., 2010; Warren et al.,

2015). A case study involves in-depth inquiry into individual behaviours (Rolls, 2005; Szanton, 1981). It can also be descriptive by examining a specific phenomenon, such as a problem, an event, a person, a process, an institution or a social group (Merriam et al., 2010). The descriptive case study is used to develop a document that fully illuminates the intricacies of an experience, and it is important for understanding the uniqueness of individual cases and contexts (Stake, 1995). These intricacies are often used to present answers to a series of questions based on theoretical constructs (Yin, 2014).

Particularly, case study has been largely adopted in the field of educational psychology to gather relatively large amounts of data related to the topic. Stake (1995) classified multiple sources of data as collective case studies, which would involve an extensive study of several cases and allow for gaining a better understanding, insight or improved ability to theorise about a broad context. Yin (2014) argued that multiple cases might be selected to try to replicate insights found in individual cases or to represent contrasting situations. Yin (2014) indicated that multiple case studies were frequently 'considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as more robust' (p. 46). Thus, the evidence from multiple cases is regarded as stronger evidence (Herriott & Firestone, 1983).

Miyahara and Wafer (2004) evaluated the effectiveness of teaching strategies by studying seven pairs of teachers and students. The teaching strategies were intended to deal with a behavioural condition among the students, developmental coordination disorders, and each teacher–student pair was defined as a separate case. The researcher used a between-pair replication logic to determine the relationship between systematically alternating teaching strategies and a student's performance. In another example, Szanton (1981) selected a multiple case design, whereby he examined eight case studies to show how different university groups all failed to help city governments. He then provided five more case studies

of non-university groups who also failed, concluding that failure was not necessarily inherent in the academic enterprise. Although some case studies could be adopted post-facto (after the event), as opposed to examining ongoing issues or questions, case studies have endorsed a theory-before-research model, indicating that theory development prior to the collection of case study data can be important (Yin, 2014).

Emergent research design. Referring to the research question of exploring Bruner's (1996) folk pedagogy in Hong Kong society, four Hong Kong teachers in each school were selected as separate cases. The reason for choosing multi-case studies of Hong Kong teachers was to add validity to the translation of many variables. Each case study is presented as a descriptive approach (Merriam et al., 2010). The descriptive case study was chosen for this study for two main reasons. First, case study research can help develop an understanding of implicit folk teaching in Hong Kong society. The final purpose of this research was to encourage teachers to remain aware of implicit cultural factors highly related to their teaching. Second, the descriptive case study defines the folk pedagogy and intercultural framework to show four Hong Kong participants' teaching activities and their thinking, which were observed and are, herein, described in detail.

The decision to choose seven schools in Hong Kong and Japan was carefully considered. Observing culture requires an in-depth qualitative nature. In consideration of the objectivity of the Hong Kong culture, two or more cases are required to sufficiently replicate a general phenomenon and convince the reader (Yin, 2014). From this perspective, the areas that have been investigated are clearly articulated, thereby allowing the study to be replicated with a similar case to gain data validity. The careful selection of the cases will either allow for predicting similar results (a literal replication) or predicting contrasting results but for anticipatable reasons (a theoretical replication). To collect folk pedagogy in Japan, three

preschools were chosen in different prefectures of Tokyo, Nagoya and Hokkaido for sufficient replication and a better understanding, in general, of Japanese culture

This methodological framework is a revision of Tobin et al.'s (2009) multi-vocal ethnography model. The purpose of the multi-vocal ethnography model is to balance judgments as anthropological researchers; the participants are divided into groups of *cultural insiders* and *cultural outsiders*. In keeping with the natural setting in ethnography, Tobin et al. (2009) spent one day among teachers without intervening in their teaching lives. The purpose of video-cued, multi-vocal conversations is to provide visual stimulus for the cultural insiders. Tobin et al.'s (2009) participants included teachers whose classrooms were videotaped, directors and other teachers at these schools, focus groups of teachers and directors in the home country, and early childhood educators in China, Japan, and the US. Based on their participants' viewpoints, Tobin et al. (2009) explored how the effects of globalisation were related to the logical patterns of the cultures in the three different countries. Tobin et al.'s (1989, 2009) *Three Preschools in Three Cultures* and *Three Preschools in Three Cultures Revisited* influenced the field of comparative education in 2009 when the researchers used a unique form of ethnography to illuminate the effects of worldwide forces.

Tobin et al.'s research procedures had four levels of narrative. The 20-minute videotapes of the day-to-day school life of Chinese, American and Japanese KGs were filmed and broadcast to the four groups in the three cultures to discuss their pedagogies of early childhood education. The four narratives were divided into two groups, which were cultural insiders and outsiders. The first narrative of cultural insiders were the preschool teachers, and the second narrative of cultural insiders were other preschool teachers or related early childhood experts in the same country. To balance the judgement as an anthological researcher, the third narrative was divided into two groups of cultural outsiders who were

preschool teachers from other countries; the fourth narrative of cultural outsiders were early childhood experts from other countries. The research groups were across China, US and Japan, and each narrative discussed their perspectives and cultural differences through videotaped observations.

In light of Tobin's multi-video ethnography, the primary and secondary stages were modified for this research to discuss the hidden folk values among the Hong Kong teachers. The primary stage consisted of two visits: in the first visit, the researcher as the cultural insider entered the local culture to film the local participants. The four Hong Kong preschool teachers were also cultural insiders, whose lessons were recorded for self-reflection. Several questions were asked that were related to their teaching experiences and expectations. In the second visit, the researcher entered the Japanese preschools to observe and film their school activities. The videos of Japanese dialogues were later transcribed into Chinese commentaries for the Hong Kong teachers. Some Japanese teachers and principals were interviewed to provide supporting documentation for data analysis. After completing the primary stage, the Hong Kong participants converted to cultural outsiders to watch the Japanese films in the second stage. Their discussion and video-ethnographic observations from the two cultures would help them to rediscover their cultural identities and folk pedagogies (see Table 1).

Table 2
Revised Tobin Video Ethnography Model

	Cultural Insiders (Researcher only – field observation)	**(Researcher only – field observation)**
Primary	**First visit – Hong Kong** To film and visit Hong Kong preschools. Four Hong Kong participants commented on their own videos individually. (Researcher asked basic questions about teaching experiences and school activities)	**Second visit – Japan** To film three Japanese participants teaching their classes. Several Japanese teachers were interviewed about their school and cultural features.

Secondary	Cultural Outsiders (Hong Kong preschool teachers – Video ethnography)
	Four Hong Kong preschool teachers reviewed the video clips (all seven video clips) for self-reflection and group discussion. Teachers were asked several explicit cultural issues behind their practices seen in the videos.

Field Observation. The core of the study was to stimulate teachers' folk pedagogies; therefore, the researcher's role was as an overt nonparticipant through observation, which refers to the researcher being open to teachers' intentions in the field and ensuring that they know the purpose of observation (see Bernard, 1994; DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002; Podmore & Luff, 2012). The participants and the researcher negotiated the incorporation of the setting for the study interviews (see Warren & Karner, 2015). Incorporation refers to the way that people in a setting define the research and accord a status or social role in that setting. The process must not only concern the researcher's personal and social characteristics, but also the setting and its members as the process unfolds and changes over time.

Although the researcher entered the two cultures as an *insider* (see Papatheodorou, Luff, & Gill, 2011; Tobin et al., 2009), a neutral role was maintained during the process of classroom observation. The advantage of overt observation is that the researcher does not have to fit in with the group. Robson (2011) defined intersubjective agreement where objectivity occurs when multiple observers agree on a phenomenon involving people in social settings, in contrast to the subjective experience of a single individual. This perspective demands an involved rather than a detached researcher; therefore, participants' accounts of different roles were triangulated and combined with the researcher's observations to reach an agreed and negotiated case. Both experimental and naturalistic inquiries obtained objectivity in the sense of agreement from the values and assumptions of the researcher.

Field observations were combined with notes and pictures to report information about students' and teachers' various tasks and the actual environments of the schools. The researcher made written notes during the observations, noting the participants' and students' language, facial expressions and gestures. All sources of evidence were reviewed and analysed together. Various information increased the reliability of the observational evidence. However, the *Hawthorne effect* may occur, which is a term referring to the tendency of some people to work hard and perform better when they are participants or observers. To maintain the naturalistic behaviour of the observed participant, there should be a comfortable distance between the observers and participants. Another way to combat bias is to have participants' responses in an experiment remain completely confidential. To a large extent, this researcher acted in a non-participatory role to preserve the natural environment of the classroom for all teacher participants.

Video-ethnographic observation. The use of video recordings represents data to be used to understand the learning culture in classrooms, particularly when observing teachers' folk pedagogies in different cultures. Thus, the video data captured human's naturally occurring social interactions (Goldman, 2014; Jewitt, 2012; Kendon, 1990; Knoblauch et. al., 2006; Lemke, 2009). Video data can be used in interviews to stimulate reflection and provoke questioning of cultural assumptions (Tobin, 2014). Along this line, Tobin and Hsueh (2009) argued that educational videos were not only used for instructional and observational analyses; the final goal was to provoke self-reflection and cultural discoveries. An advantage of the shareable functions of video data is that participants are provided with video cameras to record aspects of their life practices, and they can use these to enhance their knowledge of experiences.

In this research, video-ethnographic observation was applied to those Hong Kong participants who could not directly engage for personal, cultural or financial reasons. All

Hong Kong participants were able to observe the cultural interactions through the videos specifically and repeatedly. Video ethnography provided positive collaborative work between the participants and the researcher for participatory research, which could be used for reflection and discussion. As the participants watched the selected video clips, the researcher engaged them in discussion, for instance, by asking them in what ways the visual accounts succeeded in reflecting their own ways of teaching or cultural behaviours. It should be emphasised that the use of videotaping in this study served to create richer data. The visual data supplemented the analysis of the field notes, school booklets and songs.

Notably, the music pedagogies were the most crucial aspect of this study. The shots and scenes in the videos preserved continuity with good storytelling to provide the participants with a sense of concentration and events happening smoothly. In order to present actual teaching phenomenon, video recordings were made to capture the variety of music teaching practices and settings, and the processes of the class activities were not edited except for repeated songs and duplicated lesson activities. The rich descriptions included Japanese teachers' interviews and several video clips to present diverse forms of non-musical activities in Japan. Such data helped Hong Kong participants to acknowledge how the Japanese teachers incorporated music and cultural behaviours in their teaching.

Editing consideration. There were deviances in the age groups and school contexts in each school, which may affect the researcher's editing considerations. A couple of the Japanese and Hong Kong informants were specialised music teachers, who taught in various classes every day, whereas half of the other informants only taught in their home class. Therefore, when selecting Hong Kong video excerpts, five days of music lessons by the same teacher were linked together. Thus, the shots and the scenes created a sense of coherence of

the teachers' lesson plans. A good portion of each classroom's activity could generally be captured and viewed as one clip.

Compared to the classroom activities of their Hong Kong counterparts, the recordings of the Japanese preschool teachers' music and non-music activities tended to be much longer. For example, Japanese teachers spent less time on solely teaching music. Instead, music was usually integrated with different activities, such as dance, while singing times surrounded the children's preschool lives. Hence, each Japanese teacher's recordings were divided into two video clips that included music activities and non-music activities. All related music activities were collated in one clip, so that the viewers could see how Japanese teachers applied music in their teaching. The other non-music clips, such as gardening, cultural dance, sport activities, etc. were also used as valuable data to comprehensively convey Japanese education to the Hong Kong viewers.

Some criteria can be used to protect the validity of data. In the first stage, considerations of the video setting were important in the study. Some questions were asked before choosing an appropriate setting. For example, 'Where should I position the video camera?' 'Should I use a fixed or roaming mobile camera?' 'How many cameras should I use?' and 'When should I turn the camera on and off?' The viewing angles for common types of digital video cameras and mounting cameras were decided beforehand. For bigger spaces, multiple cameras were used to help the researcher code or analyse each camera in turn. However, the cameras needed to be synchronised and the footage combined into a single video. In addition, a tripod provided height adjustments and could point in any direction.

Sampling. With the knowledge that comparability across cultures can only be approximate at best, the primary aim here was to record comparable teaching situations, at comparable grade levels, and in comparable schools in two different cultures. The

preliminary selection of preschool teachers was conducted based on judgment sampling, which was based on the researcher's knowledge to choose the most suitable individuals to be a part of the sample. The selection criteria were as follows. 1) Teaching experience – a minimum of four years of music teaching experience at the preschool level; 2) Educational background – mainly educated in Hong Kong schools; 3) Institution – obtained early childhood teaching certificates; 4) Participation in intercultural dialogue –able and willing to exchange views concerning issues in preschool education both in Hong Kong and Japan; 5) Nationality – native Hong Kong citizen since birth, regardless of race; and 6) Agrees to having class activities recorded.

To begin with a description of my interviews with Hong Kong preschool music educators and observations of their music classes, the selection of research participants was based on their nationalities, educational backgrounds and geographical locations. Based on the school list in the Education Bureau and recommendations from students and teachers, the researcher contacted potential participants in this pool directly. In order to protect children's privacy, video recordings in class are prohibited in Hong Kong preschools; thus, many teachers were rejected due to the complicated process of obtaining video approval. Finally, two Hong Kong teachers were privately invited through other teachers' referrals. Another two teachers were invited by the researcher. All were students who studied in the certificate course of music education in Hong Kong's universities. Hence, the final selection of four Hong Kong music teachers constituted the main participants of the study. Their pseudonyms are as follows: Vera, Silvia, Queenie and Tong. The educators were informed that the research would consist of semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and video recordings. In order to obtain video permissions, the school principals were contacted to explain the aim of the research. Furthermore, parental and school consents were obtained to protect the children and ensure 'best safety' practices.

As for obtaining the contact information of Japanese preschool educators, factors concerning school size as well as demographic and socioeconomic levels of school districts were taken into account in a section of the cases to ensure comparability across the geographical locations in Japan's prefectures. To maintain the validity of the Japanese data, three preschools were chosen in different prefectures of Tokyo, Nagoya and Hokkaido. Two schools were invited through referrals from friends of the researcher. The researcher also invited another sole school, a Japanese collaborator. The researcher was also responsible for contacting those local Japanese schools. Similar to the Hong Kong cases, judgemental sampling was adopted and, finally, three Japanese teachers were selected, who were all educated in Japanese universities and teachers' colleges. Their pseudonyms are as follows: Miki, Kiki and Yuka. One Tokyo teacher had studied Western music training approaches in the US after graduating in Japan. The other two teachers graduated from local Japanese teachers' colleges. Secondary participants consisting of school principals were informally interviewed, following an emergent judgment sampling design, adding to the information gathered from the primary participants. The researcher explained to the preschool educators that informal interviews with the school principals about the Japanese preschools and music activities at the school would be valuable secondary data. In the interviews with the principals, notes were only made when the secondary participants contributed significant and relevant points related to the study. In this case, two secondary sources, i.e. two principals in total, one principal in each school, respectively, were interviewed in Japan. Table 2 below displays information about the seven visited schools.

Table 3
Participant Teachers and Visit Time Schedule

Participant Teacher	Observed Schools	Date of school visit	Teaching experiences
Vera (HK)	Yuen Long School	20–25/6/2017	7 years
Queenie (HK)	Tin Shi Wan School	18–22/6/2017	10 years
Tong (HK)	Ngau Tau Kok School	13–17/6/2017	3 years
Silvia (HK)	Tai Wai School	23–27/7/2017	10 years
Miki (JP)	Tokyo School	23–27/6/2017	20 years
Kiki (JP)	Nagoya School	11–16/6/2017	20 years
Yuka (JP)	Hokkaido School	1–5/6/2017	5 years

As two countries were included in this research, English was the medium language for communication. Two Japanese teachers and two vice principals spoke English for direct communication. Apart from that, if any Japanese teachers could not speak English, interpreters were asked for assistance. The Hong Kong informants, who watched the seven teachers' videos clips for comparison and evaluation, did not need to communicate directly with the Japanese teachers. However, the researcher was responsible for communicating the Japanese educators' viewpoints to the Hong Kong teachers, in order to provide them with the different schools' information. The final goal was to stimulate the Hong Kong teachers' cultural awareness about music teaching.

At this point in the discussion, it is crucial to explore the advantages and disadvantages of the strategies used to seek commonalities and differences in the selected samples, i.e. diverse teaching contexts or teaching experiences. For example, those participants with more teaching experience may have brought their cultural or lived experiences that may have influenced their teaching. With the commonality in the sample, i.e. all participants currently teaching preschool in Hong Kong or Japan, a heterogeneous sample was useful because distinctions in regard to their cultural and social influences could be explored. Differences in socialisation and cultural backgrounds provide comparative factors

that can be investigated to determine if they have any significant impact on preschool education.

Ethical consideration. In order to protect the interviewers and students both in Hong Kong and Japan, the purpose of the research was required to approval by my school's ethical team that my intention, procedures and methodology of the research were written in details before the field observation. Hong Kong and Japan teachers, schools and parents were requested to sign the consent agreement. The form included the agreement and information sheet that explained the introduction and the methodology of the research. The potential benefits and risks of the research were listed carefully for the teachers and schools. In short, seven participant's teachers (adults) accepted to participate this research. Because of observing the class lessons, therefore, preschool student's participants were involved during the teacher's observation. Their age were around 4-5 years old. Each class was around 15-20 children. None of students were required to ask any questions from the researcher. Although the research focused on teachers, some students' faces were inevitably recorded by camera because of interacting with their teacher. In Hong Kong policy, the students' privacy must approve by their parents. Besides, in order to prevent all teachers and students' ethical issues, all consent forms were signed and explained to all teachers and schools clearly before the observations were taken.

For the purpose of music teaching, the observation scenes mostly focused on any kinds of children music activities. The key issues of videotape include (frequency of children and teacher music activities); music lessons (the interaction between teachers and students); ways of teaching (e.g., instruction-based or interactive or interested- based teaching); intimacy (how close relationship between teachers and children (for example, a teacher comforting a crying child or slow progress child); teachers' facial expression and body gestures (for example, relax or serious , expressive or stein, proactive or inactive). Apart from

video recording, the written diary records provide a personal account of children's and adults experiences. In Japan, after discussed on Japanese teachers, their policy was relatively based on trustworthy to the researcher. As long as the researcher were used to education purpose. Japanese schools and teachers were agreed to the video recording and photos to the students' faces and other non-music class activities were allowed to record during the field observation.

Interviews. Semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to reveal the teachers' beliefs as they could express their views freely on particular issues (Kavle & Birkmann, 2009). The informal interviews were first conducted with the four Hong Kong teachers. These interviews were related to insiders 'explanations of and reactions to the current issues in Hong Kong preschool education. Then, one or more classes given by each primary participant were observed. A request was made to visit their music classes for four to five days, and times were set to observe their pedagogies and the lessons in the curriculum. The Hong Kong participants were also informed that the intention was to observe and videotape only their teaching, not the students. Thus, the video-recording equipment was positioned at the back of the classroom so that the students' faces were not shown on the videotape and were, thus, not identifiable. Informal discussions with each of the observed educators immediately followed the researcher's observations.

After the edited video clips were made, the Hong Kong participants provided the second level of dialogue. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted after they watched the other teachers' video clips. As mentioned above, all interview proceedings were audiotaped and observations of music classes were videotaped, with permission from the participants.

Second, in Japan, similar semi-structured interviews were conducted with the three Japanese teachers. In this case, the insiders' explanations and reactions were related to the

current issues in Japan education. Unlike the Hong Kong cases, two of the observed Japanese schools did not have fixed time slots for music lessons. Therefore, when the children participated in music activities, the scenes were captured. During the Japanese school visits, each school was visited from early morning until after lunchtime. In addition, other non-musical activities were captured for supplement information. Informal discussions of the teaching events ensued immediately afterwards. Following the first interview with each of the participants, the other two principals were also included in other interview sessions by stimulating discussions related to education systems and beliefs in Japan. As mentioned above, all interview proceedings were translated by the interpreters.

Third, upon completion of the analysis of the initial data collection, a group interview session was conducted with the Hong Kong participants. The inclusion of outsiders' views of their counterpart culture was intended to make this study richer and more objective, and provide a intercultural perspective. Due to the time lapse from the individual interview sessions, member checks in the form of warm-up activities were needed. For instance, a brief summary of previous conversations was offered by saying, 'Do you remember when we last met you mentioned about . . .' and 'do you remember the scene we discussed about . . ..' Those questions ensured that each teacher could remember their mind-sets in the previous interview. In the individual and group debriefings one year later, the Hong Kong participants were asked again about their reconstructing beliefs in music teaching. The questions were asked such as did you feel any difference after you told me that your new thoughts during the group interview? And 'do you feel any obstacles to try the new beliefs in your actual teaching?' The interviews were asked through text and phones depends on their time availability and preferences.

Teachers' debriefing. The limitation of interviews is that foreign cultures may have different norms for interactions with strangers concerning initiative, directness and modes of questioning. When conducting cross-cultural interviews, the researcher may struggle with grasping the multitude of cultural factors that could influence the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. In the foreign culture, this researcher needed time to become familiar with the new culture and learn some verbal and nonverbal factors that might occur in the interviews. Some specific factors that may be critical in cross-cultural interviewing include asking questions to obtain information and making direct, rather than circuitous replies (Keats, 2001). Additionally, the linguistic and social issues of translation are important. Thus, care was taken to select an interpreter who was culturally acceptable and proficient in the language. The role of the interpreter is to assist and not to take over the role of the interviewer or the interviewees.

As with the qualitative interviews, in order to elicit participants' views and to understand their accounts, it was necessary to encourage the Hong Kong participants to reveal their own values and beliefs, and to inspire them to stimulate the issues in the field. Phenomenological interviewing helped to conduct a series of three types of interview debriefing with each participant. Schuman (1982) designed a series of three interviews to characterise this approach, which allows interviewers and participants to explore experiences while placing these in context within the study. Each interview serves a purpose both by itself and within the series. The participants were shown the relationship of the research questions to the interview questions. Applying this notion to this research, the following served as three types of inquiries, based on the three initial research issues:

1) The first research question is: 'In Hong Kong, what are teachers' teaching pedagogies about music in early childhood education?' Adhering to the three-interview structure,

the Hong Kong participants were asked questions in a casual way, such as 'Can you tell me any expectations you have for your music students?' or 'Why do you prefer teaching this (English) song?' Such questions were more like introductions for the participants to construct their own meanings around the research issues. Occasionally, in the first interview, a participant would share an interesting story about his or her present work situation.

2) The second research question is: 'How do Hong Kong teachers articulate their own practices in relation to their counterparts in Japan?' To get the Hong Kong participants into deeper discussions, excerpts were selected from transcripts of interviews with the participants in Japan. Some examples of the questions asked are: 'Do you find any difference between Hong Kong and Japan teachers?" and 'Do you think your view (after watching the video) is typical of Japanese/Hong Kong teachers?' Some important excerpts were chosen based on the emerging themes and patterns derived from the participants' observations of issues. To give an example, an interview excerpt reflecting an issue, e.g. perspective of play, which was important to the Hong Kong participants, was shown to their Japanese counterparts to stimulate further cultural exchange and to improve its teaching approaches. However, the focus of the second interview included stories about the interviewees' teaching experiences and cultural perspectives. Because the information might be interesting, this researcher took the participant's lead and abandoned the structure of the interview.

3) The third research question is: **'**What are the beliefs that affect Hong Kong folk pedagogies as reviewed by Hong Kong teachers?' The participants were asked such questions as: 'Do you see any connection between cultural beliefs and teaching

pedagogy?' and 'Why do you think that your cultural background affects your teaching pedagogy?' This kind of interview questioning allowed participants to reconstruct their beliefs after giving them concrete and in-depth descriptions of implicit cultural themes.

Indeed, group discussion was necessary for interviewers to freely share their own meaning reconstructions with other participants. On the other hand, individual discussion provided each informant to talk more about their actual teaching in each case precisely. Member checks were adopted for the final interview session by giving the interviewer's reconstruction to the participants for accuracy standards. Furthermore, peer debriefing was crucial for identifying biases or absences in reconstruction during the data collection. In Japan, the interpreter helped the researcher to observe the same classroom scene, who also read the researcher's notes and initial meaning reconstructions to help clarify the impressions of meaning. In Hong Kong, the edited videos and written interview records were shown to all the participants to check the data.

The following year of the second individual debriefing. Teachers were individually debriefed about their current school teachings regarding any updated thoughts and beliefs after one year later. Due to time flexibility, all conversation was discussed on the phone. The topics were discussed on any changes on their teaching approach after reviewing their folk pedagogies and foreign pedagogies. For examples, some teachers had mentioned about they were eager to incorporate Japanese the pedagogy of *Mimamoru* in their music lessons. And some informants had mentioned about to provide more creative opportunities to the children in the music lessons. Such questions would be significantly important data for the researcher to analysis the methodological discussion surrounding transformational learning through intercultural video observation.

Data analysis. Data were analysed and coded based on the framework method (Srivastava & Thomson, 2009; Parkinson, 2016). The framework analysis assisted with discovering common features of Hong Kong folk pedagogy, as well as respond to Bruner's (1996) cultural psychology. The feature of this method is the matrix output: rows (cases), columns (codes) and cells of summarised data, providing a structure into which the researcher can systematically reduce the data to analyse it by case and code (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, & Redwood, 2013). All primary records, i.e. rich recordings, field journals, interview notes, observation notes, audio and video recordings, were analysed to highlight patterns and themes. Then, the data were categorised based on important themes, which were used to reveal the culture of Hong Kong preschool music education.

In alignment with semi-structured interviews and other relevant documentation, the participants were asked the following research question: 'How do Hong Kong music teachers culturally teach their students based on Bruner's (1996) folk pedagogy?' Based on semi-structured interview questions, the participants' responses were led by topics related to the music education and folk culture in Hong Kong. Thus, more deductive analysis was required from the four interviewers who discussed their cultural beliefs, teaching backgrounds and links to issues with their Hong Kong core values.

In the process of framework analysis, the data was divided into six steps to narrow down and interpret the main discussion, as follows: 1) Transcription data; 2) Familiarisation with the interviews; 3) Coding; 4) Developing a working analytical framework; 5) Applying the analytical framework; and 6) Interpreting the data

In the first step, the codes were categorised into five themes under the topics of social culture, children's reactions, school culture, teachers' pedagogy and Japanese teaching features. Coding was done in a more structured way by using the qualitative data analysis

software NVivo. NVivo was used to search across various types of data, i.e. audio, video and documents, or excerpts of text for specific coding or codes. The second and third steps required full immersion in the data by re-listening to all or parts of the audio recordings more than three times to ensure it had been accurately transcribed. The interviewees' transcriptions were categorised into related themes. The 32 nodes finally clustered into five theme categories. The process of refining, applying and re-refining the analytical framework was repeated until no new codes occurred. In steps 4 and 5, the tree diagram clearly defined the relationships between the themes. Questioning was used in the final step to map connections between categories and explore relationships and/or causalities. For instance, when the Hong Kong informants adopted Westernised music pedagogies, some example questions of the coding thinking process included: Why do they adopt these Westernised music pedagogies? How do Westernised music pedagogies affect cultural beliefs? What are the differences and commonalities between the Westernised pedagogies compared to teachers in Japan?

The results of the data analysis finally answered the three research questions. The first question asked about the general teaching approaches of Hong Kong teachers; based on the four video clips of Hong Kong teachers, some typical features of Hong Kong music education were summarised. Referring to the second question, Hong Kong music teachers mirrored the teaching pedagogies of the Japanese teachers' videos. The data from the videos revealed Hong Kong teachers' folk beliefs in music education. The third question answered the core of the study, which was understanding the folk beliefs influencing Hong Kong folk pedagogy in music education. The data analysis of the framework analysis indicated that cultural values and current affairs influence Hong Kong teachers' folk beliefs. All of the factors may intrinsically affect the common attitudes of Hong Kong teachers, as well as music teachers' folk pedagogies.

Triangulation was needed to examine multiple sources and gain various interpretations of the phenomena. To achieve research accuracy and valid explanations, as many data sources as possible were accessed in order to increase the credibility of qualitative data as well as its analysis and interpretation. It is true that many complex factors and issues might have affected teachers' beliefs. Due to the nature of music education in this study, the data surrounding the views of the participants embodied their behaviours, or more specifically, the sociocultural explanations of music teaching.

Delimitations

The delimitations of this study should be identified. The study was purely qualitative, a naturalistic inquiry rather than a quantitative methodology. Its aim was to gain a deep understanding of selected aspects of preschool music education practices and beliefs in Hong Kong and Japan. Hence, the nature of the study largely consisted of a description of music activities that occur within the realm of Hong Kong's and Japan's preschool education, with regard to their respective sociocultural contexts. The views of selected preschool educators with respect to their own cultural group and counterpart country, as well as an interpretation of the meaning of these for the culture of preschool education, were also considered.

In terms of sampling, unlike quantitative studies, the qualitative study required the sampling procedures employed in this study. In the interests of time, finances and the difficulty of sampling participants, this study mainly focussed on the attitudes and viewpoints of seven preschool music teachers in Hong Kong and Japan. The views of the participants and the observation results represented a generation of localised, context-specific knowledge. Therefore, emergent judgment sampling was applied so that the sampled participants were based on relevant cases rather than their representativeness. The data employed for interview selection was generated from the views of persons to interview, i.e. the individual, and

extended to the groups from which they come, i.e. group cases. In-depth analysis of the interviews would provide progressive procedures to summarise the purpose of this research.

An emergent research design is preferred to increase the range of data disclosed, with in-depth data analysis allowing for a fuller description of the folk pedagogies. To reconstruct both music lessons on video, different methods were combined to describe and portray the social discourse using thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973, p. 19). A researcher must remain aware of individuals' own implicit cultural knowledge to understand something, perceive a phenomenon, and use a certain word or expression to describe the moment. To preserve a naturalistic role, this researcher empathised with the field mostly through participative observation to understand social practices from an epic viewpoint (Breidenstein, Hirschauer, Kalthoff, & Nieswand, 2013; Tobin, 2014). This process guarantees the researcher's ability to comprehend and criticise the interpretation of a culturally bounded viewpoint, which encouraged the specific research strategy of this thesis.

Summary

In this chapter, the study's methodology and delimitations were presented. The minimal research in the area of preschool music education in Hong Kong was mentioned as an issue, and the possibilities of intercultural research to identify problems and potentialities in current educational practices were explored through an international perspective. The perspective of this research was that understanding the nature of music education from one's own culture alongside descriptions could help Hong Kong participants explore their own beliefs and further their inspiration.

It was indicated that the purpose of this study was to explore preschool educators' beliefs and practices in Hong Kong by engaging in cultural discussions over significant issues of music education. In choosing qualitative inquiry approaches as a methodology for the study, the case selection criteria and the compatibility of the cases were specifically discussed

in order to facilitate an in-depth, cross-cultural understanding of the intrinsic meanings of string education in each country. The data for this study was collected over a two-year period of time extending from 2017 to 2019. Four types of raw data were collected through field observations, ethnographic observations, semi-structured interviews and documents.

The possible contributions of intercultural dialogue in the field of music education were discussed and specifically pointed to the role of an international understanding of educational endeavours in today's global age. The following chapter introduces the views of preschool teachers in regard to their teaching and socio-cultural issues.

Chapter 4: Views of Music Educators in Hong Kong

The first part of this chapter presents an overview of the backgrounds and teaching settings of the Hong Kong participants. The descriptions of the Hong Kong preschool teachers are based on analyses of the interviews and video data gathered in 2017. Emerging themes that characterised their teaching identities, beliefs and pedagogical methods in the school context are discussed in relation to a) their use of lesson plans, b) teaching tools and music, c) pedagogical approaches, d) beliefs about play, e) beliefs about teacher identity, and d) teacher's body language.

The aim of this chapter is to evaluate the Hong Kong participants' reflections through discussions and the researcher's observations of insiders' and outsiders' perspectives to conclude the features of Hong Kong folk pedagogies. Thus, the primary purpose has two objectives: to contextualise the Hong Kong preschool folk pedagogies, and to create intercultural learning with a different culture. The dialogues of Hong Kong teachers take the main role, while the supporting dialogues of Japanese teachers provide strong evidence of the cultural reality.

The Context of the Hong Kong Cases

During the observation periods of the two cultures, it was evident that both the Hong Kong teachers and Japanese teachers were passionate about teaching their students. Their pedagogical perspectives and beliefs reflected their cultural characteristics in terms of how they valued their lesson plans, their beliefs about pedagogical approaches and their perspectives on Hong Kong education and children's behaviours. All seven participants' classes varied in size, but within each country, the class sizes were similar. The Japanese classes had approximately 25-30 students each, while the Hong Kong classes had only 5–10 students. The two Hong Kong participants were specialised music teachers, and their teaching schedules included regular music lessons and some related music activities, such as worship

and graduation ceremonies. Thus, they were required to teach four to six classes a day with different class levels. The other two Hong Kong teachers were K.3 (year three) classroom teachers and were responsible for teaching all the subjects to their home class. All music activities were recorded during the observations; however, to protect the children's safety such as protecting children's faces do not expose to the public, the Hong Kong schools could not offer as much observation time as the Japanese schools. All Hong Kong KGs are prohibited from recording any activities unless they gain consent from both the parents and the school. Due to the restricted recording times, only music activities allowed to be recorded. Other non-music activities in the school were only written in the diary. Other teachers and students in the Hong Kong schools could not be recorded without first obtaining consent. Hence, more data was collected in the Japanese schools, where the researcher stayed for full school days. In addition, the researcher was permitted to record the general school environment and non-music activities in the Japanese schools.

At the time of interviews, the Hong Kong participants had preschool teaching experience ranging from 5 to 20 years. Four had obtained their teacher certificates at the undergraduate and/or graduate levels. One teacher held a music degree in Australia at the graduate level. All of the respondents had taken a diploma course in music education pedagogies. To identify the respondents in the detailed descriptions and the recorded data, the district name of each school was used and the participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their privacy, as follows: Yuen Long school (Vera), Ngau Tau Kok school (Tong), Tin Shi Wai school (Queenie) and Tai Wai school (Silvia). The schools in Japan were labelled Tokyo school (Miki), Nagoya (Kiki) and Hokkaido (Yuka).

Goal-Oriented Music Learning: The Design of Lesson Plans

Among the instructional materials used in the classroom, the Hong Kong teachers believed that the lesson plan was the most important tool to have an impact on the music

class. During the field observations of the Hong Kong teachers, the implications of the lesson plans reflected the teachers' beliefs. All participants designed their lessons systematically. In the lesson plans, the goals and objectives for each lesson were set, based on the government's preschool curriculum guide. The table below shows the teachers' lesson plans during the observation period. The teachers applied particular songs to achieve their teaching objectives. Each lesson time took around 20 minutes.

Table 4

Overviews of Four Music Teachers' Lesson Plans

	Content	**Lesson time**	**Songs used**	**Name of the songs**	
Vera	Ostinato (Orff method) Solfege	20 mins	Folk Cantonese song	There is a sheep nearby the water Monkey dances	Include greeting music
Queenie	ABACA form (Rondo) Rhythmic note reading Beat and ensemble skills	25 mins	Music only	Music appreciation Honeybee March Friendly Fingers	
Tong	Solfege Percussion Beat and movement Improvisation	20 mins	Cantonese songs Christian songs	Let Me shine	Greeting music and goodbye music
Silvia	Games with clapping beats 3/4 Time	20 mins	Cantonese songs	Go to the beach	Sing

It was observed that the Hong Kong teachers commonly followed the Herbartian pedagogical method, which is one of the earliest methods applied by teachers to implement complex processes and meet their teaching objectives. Propagated by J. F. Herbart (1776–1841), the Herbartian approach has six steps: 1) Introduction/motivation, 2) Presentation, 3) Comparison and association 4) Generalisation, 5) Application, and 6) Recapitulation (Fennell, 2013).

Table 5

Example of Vera's lesson plan

K3 (20 minutes)	**Week 21 (Jun 26–30)**		**Herbartian approach**
Aim: Orff verbal chanting exercise	Composed their ostinato beat	1) Music appreciation	
Flow	**Songs**		
1) **Introduction**	Good morning I am so happy to see		**Introduction**
2) **Movements**	Shimmy Shake	Encourage students to listen to music while doing body movements	
3) **Core activity 1**	There is a sheep nearby the river (ostinato)	1) Revision the theme songs and rhythms 2) Discussion with children, guide them to find related vocabularies, e.g. Different animals 3) Add with the rhythm (taught last week) 4) Create own ostinato	**Presentation** **Association, Generalisation** **Application**
4) **Core activity 2**	Harry Potter puppet & rhythm	Ostinato (let children understand the ensemble of the ostinato	**Recapitulation**
5) **Ending**	Goodbye songs		

To teach ostinato, Vera spread the concept over almost three lessons. In the previous lesson, the students were taught each phrase one-by-one until they could memorise the lyrics. Once memorised, the children sang the song five times with body movements. In this lesson, she introduced singing warm-up songs and doing body movements. In the example of her second lesson plan, Vera adopted a traditional Cantonese folk song with Orff teaching pedagogies. The song, 'There Is a Sheep Nearby the Water' (河邊有隻羊), is a traditional

Cantonese song, borrowed from the Western 'Jingle Bells' Christmas song from the 1950s. The song was rearranged into three parts, including rhythm, ostinato and melody. Vera first sang a good morning song with the students, which she had composed. Vera sang the song first, followed by the children: 'I am so happy to see (student's name)', along with clapping hands. When the student's name was sung, the student stood up and said his or her name:

I am so happy to see (name) [clap, clap]
I am so happy to see (name)
I am so happy to see (name)
Every morning is a music time.

The presentation step explained the topic after the introduction. The ultimate aim of the presentation was to make the students understand the ostinato concept (repeated rhythmic patterns). Vera tried to maintain the students' attention at this stage by continuously asking questions from time to time. The questions were related to associate the theme (ostinato) with the music activities. Vera then reviewed the ostinato terms from the previous week with the students. She asked questions to help the students remember the terms:

Vera: Children, do you know we can sing this song differently. Last week, I shared with you all the music elements, including melody, and what else?
Student A: Rhythm
Vera: Bingo, well done.
Vera: Yes . . . it is rhythm. But did you also remember that there is a rhythmic pattern that persistently repeats in the same voice? Did you remember the name?
Student B: I remember, is it ostinato?
Vera: Yes, you are right. Today, I am going to divide your group into different sections. One will sing the melody; one will clap the ostinato part, and the other students will clap another rhythmic pattern. Let's see what the song sounds like.

After rehearsing a few times, the students could follow Vera's guidance and finally clapped and sang through the songs in different parts. Vera and her students composed the different rhythmic patterns together.

Vera: Children, how do you feel after using the ensemble approach to sing this song?

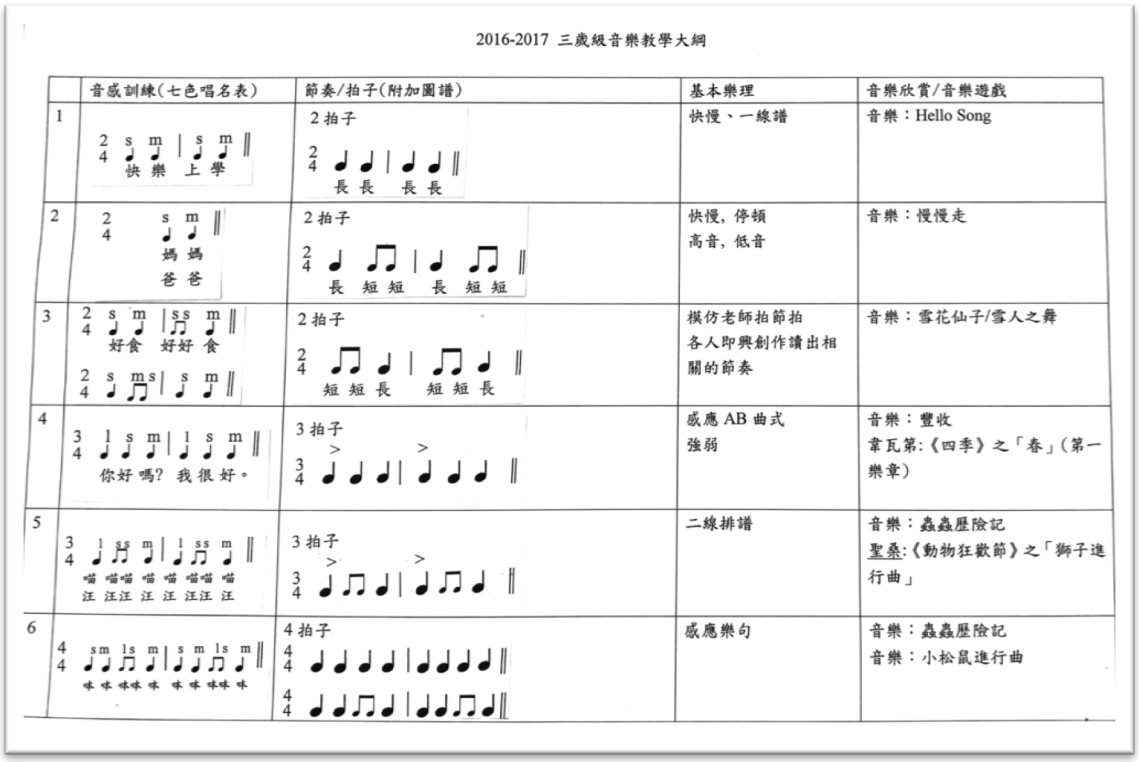
Children: It is very interesting that we can play different parts.
Vera: We will try again next time. It will be even more exciting because we can use our instruments to play the ostinato instead of using vocal chanting.
Vera: Please don't forget what we played today. We will compose another song next time.

The generalisation stage was concerned with the students arriving at a general conclusion based on their learning experience and the various information they had been taught (Rice, 1944). Vera showed her students how to use the vocabularies, such as animals' names, to fit into the rhythm. For the application stage, the teacher made the students use the understood knowledge of ostinato and then compose the rhythm together. The final recapitulation stage was intended for the teacher to know whether the students had grasped the new knowledge by reviewing the lesson. Vera showed an interesting video to the students of puppets singing different rhythmic patterns as an ensemble. The idea of showing the video was to let the students know that an ensemble could produce different rhythms.

During the 20-minute lesson, the children concentrated on playing their separate parts. Because this was their first experience with the Orff chanting exercise, the children did not move much in the lesson, but remained seated on their chairs. The teacher acted like a conductor, standing in the middle of the class and using her hands to lead each group of children. Because of time and space limitations, Vera did not ask the students to move around in the classroom. The children followed the teachers' instruction and were observed as being very well-behaved.

Two respondents, Vera and Queenie, were specialised music teachers in school. Their lesson plan content was more concerned with the quality of music teaching in terms of nurturing students' musicianship. The reason for this was that the school principals found that music education was relatively weak compared to other subjects. Some classroom teachers hardly taught music lessons because of insufficient music training. Hence, Vera and Queenie

were employed in the schools to assist the other classroom teachers and to design the schools' music programmes. Based on their lesson plans, music theory, music appreciation, solfege, beat and other elements were set into a structured plan to achieve the teachers' objectives. It was observed that Queenie's previous lesson plans also included K1 and K3 children. She had clearly written the objectives of each song. For example, the accent marks of the first beat, the quavers and crochets, and the solfege.



2016-2017 三歲級音樂教學大綱

	音感訓練(七色唱名表)	節奏/拍子(附加圖譜)	基本樂理	音樂欣賞/音樂遊戲
1	快樂上學	2拍子 長長 長長	快慢、一線譜	音樂：Hello Song
2	媽媽 爸爸	2拍子 長 短短 長 短短	快慢，停頓 高音，低音	音樂：慢慢走
3	好食 好好食 短短長 短短長	2拍子 短短長 短短長	模仿老師拍節拍 各人即興創作讀出相關的節奏	音樂：雪花仙子/雪人之舞
4	你好嗎? 我很好。	3拍子	感應AB曲式 強弱	音樂：豐收 韋瓦第:《四季》之「春」(第一樂章)
5	喵喵喵 喵喵喵喵喵 汪汪汪 汪汪汪汪汪	3拍子	二線排譜	音樂：蠢蠢歷險記 聖桑:《動物狂歡節》之「獅子進行曲」
6	味味味味味 味味味味味	4拍子	感應樂句	音樂：蠢蠢歷險記 音樂：小松鼠進行曲

Figure 1: Queenie's designed monthly music curriculum.

Even though Silvia and Tong were home class teachers, their lesson plans were similar to those of Vera and Queenie. Due to lesson times of 15 minutes or less, the Hong Kong participants broke the themes/topics into two or three progressive lessons. Each lesson was related to the previous lesson, including the songs or theme/topic. Silvia's example lesson plan indicated that she wanted to teach her students how to identify the strong and weak beats of the pulse. Therefore, the music activity was based on singing the lyrics to practice the pulse. She asked the students to clap the strong beats while singing the songs.

They were asked to sing the first beat of the word's syllable louder and stronger. The students were also asked to stamp the floor on the strong beat to help them associate the strong beat with a body movement. In the final part, the students were shown how to visualise the meaning of the beat through pictures and graphic scores.

Value and Functions of Lesson Plans

As noted earlier, a detailed lesson plan was laid out systematically by most Hong Kong preschool teachers to guide students through a progressive series of lessons, each building on the previous lessons. To summarise the four Hong Kong teachers' music lessons, all followed the procedure of introduction, teachers' presentation, student's application and revision. More importantly, in the teachers' presentation and the student's application parts, the Hong Kong teachers highly emphasised the music elements during the lesson. What are the functions of the lesson plans in the minds of the Hong Kong teachers? How do they perceive the role of the lesson plan? Based on their lesson plans, the participants reflected about their values behind the lesson plans.

> *Researcher: Did you learn any methods to write in the lesson plan?*
>
> *Queenie: Actually, I don't know what philosophies are behind the lesson plans. Our teacher taught us while we studied in the teachers college, and then we followed her instruction. I have watched all four of our Hong Kong teachers, and our lesson plan formats are very similar from the introduction, teachers' presentation, students' application to student's revision. This is our common teaching practice.*
>
> *Vera: We seem to have learned the Herbartian lesson plan approach. Actually, in our culture, we do not emphasise where an approach comes from; as long as the approach is workable, we use it.*

In discussing their teaching processes, Queenie and Vera said that the Herbartian approach was common folk teaching in their Hong Kong culture. From their perspective, they were not concerned about whether the pedagogies came from Western cultures or Asian. Their former teachers taught them to write the lesson plans, and they followed their teachers' practices and traditions.

One teacher, Tong, indicated that the lesson plan was a means of keeping track of her objectives and her students' progress, which included the pedagogies or skills they have covered and the stages to reach the outcome. For instance, she pointed out that lesson plans were very important to Hong Kong teachers as they were used for self-reflection, and when government officers came to the schools, they would distribute the lesson plans for teacher assessments.

> *Tong: We were trained to write lesson plans since we studied in the teacher's college. I have written hundreds of lesson plans from when I was a novice teacher until now. Writing the lesson plan and designing the lesson's activities has become a habit. It is much about control as I can make sure I am in the right track of the lesson. But sometimes I will revise the lesson plan if I see that my students did not focus. I will teach slower or faster, depending on the children's abilities.*

Tong preferably used a specific lesson plan so that she could monitor and evaluate the students' progress. She would plan for her class at different stages, including daily, monthly and year plans. She mentioned that Hong Kong children can sometimes be difficult to control; then, she would use different approaches from visual to audio to make sure the students enjoy the lesson. Thus, Tong considered lesson plans an essential part of her teaching, and she insisted that planning is part of teachers' responsibilities.

Another Hong Kong teacher, Silvia, shared a related view concerning of lesson plans. She explained that it is a traditional teaching practice for many local teachers.

> *I thought every teacher should write a lesson plan before they teach. We should set a clear plan and objective for the students. This is our duty. For us, I believe that the teacher SHOULD teach some things to the students. In Hong Kong, our culture is much concerned with how to teach the lesson effectively. The lesson plan is like a cookbook; we need to think about how to cook a meal with different foods. So, as teachers, we can prepare what we should teach, and based on the children's abilities, teach them the best lessons.*

Silvia had the folk belief that a good teacher or mentor must fulfil several qualities, such as being knowledgeable, helpful and sincere, and possess good pedagogical skills to

inspire their students. Her belief was influenced by her past schooling. When she studied in teacher's college, her role as a teacher gradually evolved. Hence, Silvia expressed that she was greatly responsible for writing lesson plans and teaching the students. Thus, she would spend her extra time designing how to teach music in an interesting fashion. In-depth analysis of Silvia's and Tong's interview data suggested that their music lessons must be taught systematically and meaningfully. From their perspectives, designing a good lesson plan should be part of a teacher's tasks. A valuable lesson plan incorporates a series of steps to build children' abilities. Well-structured lesson plans serve an important function in the classroom, in terms of the teacher's class management, space considerations and time management.

Compared to the Japanese teachers, the local teachers reflected that they treated music lessons differently. The Hong Kong participants observed that they were more structured and goal-oriented than Japanese teachers. This is a cultural difference in music education and teachers' expectations.

> *Silvia: One thing, I am quite surprised that I used to think every music lesson was similar, even in different cultures. But Japanese music education was more relaxed than our culture. The Japanese teachers are much more concerned with enjoying the music, as long as the children sing happily. I think we have different objectives. We emphasise the goal of learning musical knowledge more than the enjoyment of the lessons.*

> *Tong: I think both teachers want our students to learn music happily. But Hong Kong teachers also want their students to learn music elements from an earlier age, such as feeling beats, clarifying strong and soft sounds, singing in the correct pitch. All elements were very helpful to their further music learning. And our approach used to teach things systematically. On the other hand, I observed that Japanese teachers teach freely, depending on the children's reactions to adjust their approach. I think it is to their advantage.*

> *Vera: I agree. The expectation of Japanese preschool education relatively focuses on self-learning and self-exploration. Therefore, the teachers do not bear a large responsibility to teach 'things' to the students. The culture of Hong Kong education*

has high expectations of the teacher's role. We are responsible for teaching and educating the students. It is our folk culture.

They observed that the role of teachers reflects their teaching objectives. For example, local teachers used to have 'values' that teachers must teach 'knowledge' to the students; hence, they preferred to teach students in systematic and formal ways. The reason was that the school's policies and curriculum required local teachers to submit official lesson plans. Therefore, all these factors naturally influence the participants to plan their lessons. In addition, according to Carless (2011) & Hue (2008), the Hong Kong teacher role brought from cultural Confucian-heritage cultures of teaching often contains elements that are teacher-centred; it is the traditional authoritative teaching role, whereby the teacher is a source of knowledge and wisdom to assist the students.

Aligning with the Japanese culture, the Hong Kong respondents observed that their Japanese counterparts held different teacher beliefs from them. The Hong Kong participants discovered that Japanese teachers did not strongly identify with 'teaching' the students; they were more focussed on 'inspiring' children to learn on their own. Children were able to teach themselves by observing the teacher and the other students. Hence, their lesson plans and pedagogies could be more informal and adjusted according to the children' responses. This is the main difference between Hong Kong and Japanese teachers' teaching beliefs.

Queenie: I am observing gradual changes in the Hong Kong teaching. Through my observations, children in Hong Kong are changing as well. They are focussing less and concentrating less than previous graduated students. Teachers are required to have prompt and creative minds to educate the next generation. Traditional and formal lesson planning may not fulfil the young generation. Our lesson plans may need to change quickly; when you see children are not focussing, we need to be more flexible about teaching.

This year, I found that I was adhering to my lesson plan less, that too many unexpected events were happening because children' temperaments are unlike our old generation. They could not sit still, so I needed to adjust my lesson plans quickly and smartly. Otherwise, you cannot catch up with students' needs.

As Queenie reflected, teachers need to have flexibility to adjust their teaching plans 'quickly and smartly'. Their traditional folk teaching of relying on a structured lesson plan might not fulfil the new less-focussed generation; therefore, teachers should explore creative ways to foster students' concentration. Although well-planned and well-structured lesson plans may lead to more efficient educational results, the Japanese cases showed the Hong Kong teachers that flexible and inspiring teaching is equally important to cater to the next generation's children. Queenie remarked that in addition to having structured learning sequences, flexibility helps teachers to motivate their students, thereby strengthening their self-learning. Even though Queenie was very admired of their culture and pedagogies, she needed to consider thoughtfully because of deviance of two cultures. Giving children's freedom in Japan preschools related to its economic, cultural and beliefs. The environment of children's needs and progress might not fully suitable in Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong teachers were asked what they thought about teaching like Japanese teachers, as motivators instead of traditional teachers. Both teachers responded that it was still impossible because of the competitive culture, local parents' beliefs and social pressures. Hong Kong teachers both agreed that Hong Kong students require to develop and solve their problems independently by themselves. Japanese' pedagogies provide good example for children to learn independently, the video observation gave themselves to evaluate their teaching such as giving space for children' learning autonomy.

The perspective of space. In designing the lesson plan, the teachers also considered space was very significant. Since children needed to feel the music in a spacious area, including dynamic, long and short notes and time elements. Active music teaching was also an auditory experience of physical space and releasing emotions and personal expressions. Ayers (1993) declared that the classroom should function like a laboratory where children could make discoveries. For example, the students would bounce balls in response to high

and low sounds, clap their hands together while making lower leg movements in different metres, sing and move with their whole body, as well as partner each other in big or small groups. However, Tong and Vera were disappointed that Hong Kong classrooms did not provide enough space for the students. Vera and Tong wanted students to express their movements freely, walking, running, skipping or jumping to interweave notes of time, space and energy while listening to the music. Tong's music room was the smallest area compared to other observed schools, with only 60 to 70 feet for 15 children to make their basic movements, such as hand shaking and limited free walking. Her school also did not provide private outdoor physical play areas, so the teachers and students had to walk to the nearby public playground. To understand the conditions with limited space, the school's lobby was used as an open area for one hour. There, children could self-select activities in the different learning corners, which included music and art corners. Tong reflected that limited space affected children's imaginations and diminished their autonomy in the process of playing games. Furthermore, teachers are required to protect their children's safety; thus, children's emotional and physical expressions might be restricted in small spaces, particularly their body movements.

> *Tong: I don't have any preference of using a particular approach, but frankly, my classroom is pretty small. I cannot let them dance or do big body movement exercises. I am afraid some students would get hurt. Musical chair games and bouncing the balls are allowed, but we cannot play with the parachute and hula hoop . . . For example, when I play slow-paced music, I want them to have more private space to feel the music. But in reality, I am frustrated that children cannot feel the music in this space. The children need to acquire a sense of space and coordination.*

> *Vera: If children can stand up to clap and use their body movements, it seems better and more dynamic. However, this classroom is a bit small to allow the children to feel the music in this space. I think it is also important in active music making. Space and music are both important.*

Figure 2. Tong's music room.

Vera reflected that bigger spaces would allow children to walk freely without crashing into others. In reality, Vera found that the core of active music pedagogy might not be completely acted out as a genuine foreign pedagogy that promoted freely moving the body to the music. The space problem in Hong Kong classrooms has affected the teaching quality. Hence, Vera revised her pedagogies, such as using verbal chanting to help the students' rhythmic sense, and limiting body movements, such as stomping on the floor instead of skipping or running around the classroom.

Although Silvia's music room was relatively larger than Tong's music room, it was a multifunction room, with an office and the principal's room was at the back. When teaching a music lesson, other teachers, clerks or the principal would walk freely about the room, which easily distracted the children. The children also had to keep the sound down so as not to disturb the principal and other officers. Against these disadvantages in her music classroom, Silvia tried to revise the foreign approaches to suit the actual school environment. Some important tools in active music approaches, such as large xylophones, hula hoops and a parachute (a dome-shaped nylon fabric where children grasp the edges and move it up and down) were played in turns. Children were divided into two groups to play the games separately. Silvia also bought smaller hula hoops instead of using the larger size. Thus, she tried to overcome the limitations of the space.

Silvia: Although limited space does affect my teaching, I can still see that Hong Kong children enjoy their music lesson very much. I will do the best I can, such as asking my students to play circle games in turns. One group sits down to watch the other group; students can learn how to play through observation . . . As children like the parachute very much, I ask them to hold the parachute while walking gently. We cannot run with the parachute like the Japanese children do. Japanese music education provides sufficient space for children to stretch their bodies while running, skipping, jumping high and laugh loudly. It is a true release for the students, but we have done the best we can.

Vera: Children in Japan are relatively freer than our local students. They enjoy the music with no limitations. Teachers do not restrict their physical expression, so children can laugh and jump high without worrying about noise disturbance. Unfortunately, we sometimes restrict our students due to safety reasons.

Figure 3. Spacious environment for music lessons in Japan.

The local respondents longed for the Japanese music classroom size. The above photos were taken during observations of a Japanese music lesson for 5-year-old children. In one photo, they are singing songs while stepping into the hula loops. When the music stopped, the children stopped as well. These Japanese schools provided sufficient space for children to enjoy active music making. The other picture shows that the Japanese children were high-spirted when playing group free dance. The Hong Kong interviewees said that the approach to active music teaching in Japan was similar in Hong Kong, but Japanese children seemed happier than the local students. Walsh (2003) found that Japanese children were high spirited, running and climbing everywhere, as their space allowed them to experience and explore their knowledge actively. Japanese classrooms provide children with enough space to enjoy

their music time, along with jumping high and laughing loudly. Walsh (2003) asserted that unrestricted space gave children the 'joys of group life' to develop their autonomy. A review of the data from our Hong Kong respondents indicated that the limited space of the school environment directly affected teachers' and students' degree of enjoyment. Teachers had to be concerned with safety issues and the students' body movements were also implicitly restricted by the rules. Although teachers had complained about the classroom is small, the videos could be seen that children were encouraged to be high-spirited in teachers' instruction. The space is limited whereas the beliefs was uprising both teachers and students.

The View of Music Pedagogies

The pedagogy of music education for Hong Kong teachers' beliefs has four main issues. First, the Hong Kong participants likely used a foreign pedagogy of active music making as their folk teaching. Second, the beliefs shared by the music teachers highly emphasised the musical elements and concepts through musical training. Third, music education was gradually integrated with other disciplines, such as art and languages. Fourth, music education was perceived to help children develop connections and social emotional relationships.

Revised foreign pedagogies as folk pedagogy. During the observations of the four Hong Kong participants, they likely incorporated revised foreign active music pedagogies into their teaching. However, the three teaching approaches were still slightly different; they integrated Kodály, Orff and Dalcroze approaches depending on their children' needs and lesson plans. All informants studied these approaches through their teachers' colleges and self-development courses after schools, Hong Kong teachers found that adopted Dalcroze and Orff approaches helped them to teach music interestingly. The choice of approaches would be based on the songs, theme & the children's age. For younger children, then they would adopt Dalcroze 'walking around the class, stomping the feet on the floor with music. Based on the

theme or songs nature, they were adopted active teaching approaches progressively. Each lesson includes some music elements as key learning goal. Through body movement or play instruments, children can collaborate language or other disciplines etc. into music education.

Active music making is teaching music education that involves high student participation and various styles of interactive games and activities with peers and the teacher (Anderson, 2011; Gagne, 2011; Johnson, 1993; Rock, 2017 & Wong, 2011). The teachers' pedagogies involved different games and activities to stimulate the children's musical abilities; meanwhile, the participants also taught music elements that they considered very significant in music education. The pedagogy of active music making is recognised as dominant among the three foreign approaches founded by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, Zoltan Kodály and Carl Orff. For example, the Orff Schulwerk approach came from Germany, where Orff's philosophy emphasised that children, by their nature, prefer to play rather than study. His programme designated music, dance and speech as a form of music to let children play with music. The foundation of Orff teaching should include the following stages: imitation (echo the response of a given pattern), exploration (experiencing a concept with free movement), improvisation (expressing ideas) and composition (creating on one's own). For the curriculum based on the Orff approach, the teacher used many traditional German folk songs and singing games sequenced to the tone set, such as *sm, lsm, smd, mrd, smred*, etc. (Gagne, 2017). Based on the tone set, children were able to invent new melodies or rhythmic patterns from the folk songs. The Orff classroom design required an open and flexible space for students to gather in a large circle; percussion instruments were also available. Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a Swiss composer and educator, who developed his method of teaching rhythm through movement called eurhythmics. The Dalcroze method features interactive games and exercises to help students awaken, develop and refine their innate musicality through eurhythmics, ear training and improvisation. Students should

actively experience their body involved in the movement of time, space and energy (Anderson, 2011). The Kodály method was brought from Hungary, and its materials are drawn strictly from Hungarian folk music, which includes folk languages and pentatonic scales. Generally speaking, the emphases of all three pedagogies is student-oriented, with groups of students actively participating in listening, analysing and creating music (Johnson, 1993). Both methods incorporate singing, dancing and chanting during games and activities.

During the four school visits, all Hong Kong teachers used active music making approaches in their teaching. More importantly, three of the teachers considered that music education must be developed at the earliest stages of learning. Given the example of active music pedagogy, Queenie mainly taught her students rhythmic training, which included clapping and forming ensembles with different instruments. One of her classes were year two (K2) students, and the theme was music appreciation in the ABABA form. To encourage the children to listen, they were told to do different actions when they heard different moods of music. The children were very happy and excited to listen to the music with body movements. They were shaking their whole bodies rhythmically. Queenie did not restrict the children' body movements and allowed them to walk freely. Children were very engaged, waving their fists powerfully and shaking their bodies musically. When the music changed to another section, the children would change their body movement to reflect the mood of the music. The children were smiling and dancing with other classmates. After the body movement sections, the children were invited to sit down in a circle. Then, Queenie started to mark down A for the first section of the music; when the music turned to the second section, she wrote down B. Eventually, the children realised that the music had two sections that repeated several times. Meanwhile, Queenie explained to the children that the musical term for the structure of this music is the binary form (two-form music).

Figure 4. Free walking with music.

Replying to the question of borrowed foreign music pedagogy as Hong Kong music education, the teachers expressed their beliefs about the music pedagogies.

> *Vera: So far, I know, there are no Hong Kong music educators to invent any music pedagogies like Suzuki, Orff etc., so we must learn foreign music pedagogies. As a Chinese, if we talk about any kinds of Chinese music pedagogy, I think it must be related to traditional Chinese music. But it is less promoted in schools, so I don't know what Chinese music pedagogies are. I am sure there must be some valuable music pedagogies in Chinese music. If I knew, I would hope to learn it.*
>
> *Silvia: I agree with you. Hong Kong does not have famous music educators to invent any music pedagogies. So, I think borrowing foreign pedagogies is acceptable. As Hong Kong culture has become Westernised in its life and education, we have internalised Western aesthetic standards, artistic practices and practical experiences in music education. I think it is fine.*
>
> *Tong: Although most of my educational background is in Hong Kong, our schools at our teacher's college largely taught Western pedagogies such as Vygotsky, Piaget and Erikson. Therefore, our mentality is naturally brainwashed to this Western thinking, and we also teach it to our next generation. Even in music education, it is a very natural thing to teach students Western music with Western teaching methods. It is fair enough.*

Based on the teachers' perspectives, both expressed that the Hong Kong music culture had been westernised, and they believed that borrowed foreign pedagogies (both non-music

and music) might not affect their local culture. This is because many Hong Kong people do not feel strange about listening to Western music genres, such as Western pop songs, e.g. the Bee Gees, Michael Jackson, etc., and classical music, e.g. Beethoven, Mozart, etc. Additionally, the Hong Kong teachers' educational backgrounds were also highly influenced by Western culture from both pop songs and classical music, as were their teaching approaches. In contrast, the interviewees found that they were unacquainted with Chinese traditional folk songs and music, and that the values of Chinese pedagogies were less found and known. Yu (2013) mentioned that since the May Fourth Movement, Chinese music has been marginalised. The development of aesthetic awareness and self-expression through music was encouraged in colonial music education, and music education in Hong Kong was considered a 'colonial product' (Ho, 2009). According to Ho's explanation, the Cantonese had a very clear cultural orientation; in particular, many Hong Kongers' music listening habits favour Western genres, such as listening to pop songs and Western classical music. Furthermore, the interviewees' dialogue also reflected the fact that they had highly internalised Western pedagogies and music into their teachings.

However, Silvia reflected on her cultural conflicts as a Hong Kong teacher adopting foreign pedagogies.

> Silvia: *I observed that foreign music pedagogies are highly emphasised in dancing and creating, but Hong Kong is not a dance culture and we don't have a Cantonese folk dance. Even Hong Kongers seldom danced at home or celebrate festivals. Unlike other dance countries, I felt embarrassed about dancing up front when I learnt the Dalcroze method. So, when I teach my students, I tell myself to dance freely otherwise. Otherwise, the children could not feel that I am enjoying the music with body movement. Besides, I know creativity is good for children, but I am not a creative person (our past schooling tended to be traditional passive learning), so I also explore myself to be more creative in terms of thinking of inspiring games and composing music creatively. Otherwise, the children could not be creative.*

Silvia mentioned that one important issue from borrowing foreign pedagogies is that they are not fully suitable for our folk culture in terms of daily habits and personality. She asserted that dance and creativity were not emphasised in Cantonese education and culture. The four interviewees reflected that their personal characters and cultural practices tended to be introverted and passive. Therefore, they tried to express their body movements confidently and to create interesting games. These two elements must be established; otherwise, children might not understand the meaning of the music lesson.

Furthermore, the interviewees agreed that foreign pedagogies must be revised to suit the local environment. In terms of preferred pedagogies, Silvia studied early childhood music education before attempting to use active music approaches in her teaching. According to Silvia, she found that each music pedagogy has its own significant features. For example, Dalcroze's concept highly emphasises body movement, so dancing or body movement activities are the critical idea to develop children's coordination. Meanwhile, Orff's theory tends to stress the concept of group ensemble experiences. Using body percussion or percussive instruments improves children's social skills and rhythmic sense. In terms of solfège singing, Kodaly and two other approaches encourage children to sing folk songs and solfège for training correct pitch. In the Hong Kong context, Silvia found that the three pedagogies had similar commonalities for teaching young children. Thus, Silvia integrated all pedagogies into her own teaching approach, depending on the topic of the lesson. For many experiments and trials, she considered the children's ages, the topic and the music elements to adjust their pedagogies.

> *Silvia: Due to time constraints and the nature of the class, I would conceptualise all the methods, then integrate my own approach. I mostly spend my time thinking about how to teach music in an interesting way with active music pedagogies. For example, Orff education is more concerned with speech chanting, so the pedagogies would start from chanting, then develop into percussion and dancing. On the other hand, Dalcroze is concerned about dancing and feeling the music, so the activity usually commences from body movements. It is about the order of the activities. Finally, all the activities are*

interchangeable, including chanting, body movement, percussion instruments and singing. It really depends on the teacher's preferences and the nature of the activities.

Tong and Vera also found cultural differences in the spatial experience when playing handbells across the two cultures. When they watched the Tokyo teacher playing handbells with the students, they realised that they played the handbells differently.

Tong: The use of instruments is slightly different. We usually sit and play the wrist bells, and each student holds one wrist bell . . . in Japan, each child can hold a wrist bell in each hand and use whole body movements in different directions.

Vera: Yes. I agree. The pedagogies are similar, but the cultural perception of using the instruments is different. We perceive that our space is weaker than in the Japanese culture.

Tong pinpointed the distinction of using instruments between the two cultures. Using the example of handbell playing, Japanese students could hold handbells in each hand while shaking them with big whole-arm movements. However, her students usually sat and held one wrist bell, which they shook only from the wrist. The three interviewees also suddenly realised the hidden cultural value of spatial experience. They found that the Japanese were good at feeling the sense of space. Sloboda (1996) reflected that expressive abilities differ according to individuals' levels of expertise and their cultural preferences in coding an expressive identity. Through the Japanese video, the teachers identified that spatial perceptions reflected their cultural differences; meanwhile, they also agreed that they should pay attention to children's spatial perception, such as exploring more spatial exercises to foster children's senses musically and emotionally.

Value of Music Elements. It can be discerned that the Hong Kong respondents emphasised providing students with a well-rounded understanding of musical elements, such as pitch, pulse, rhythm, melody, harmony and form. The teachers combined these elements

through songs, gestures and movements, and rhythm games. Silvia shared her strong mission to educate children about music from an early age.

> *Silvia: I believe that music can be taught as early as possible to develop their inner musical potential. Elements are about the beat, rhythm, pitch, etc. Reflecting on my teaching experiences, children easily get out of tune and lose the beat. It is because they were not educated by teachers. I observed that once they were trained at a very young stage, their inner beat and singing pitch improved. That's why I really want to expend my effort on teaching early childhood music. I want my students to have stronger musicianship*

According to the Hong Kong respondents, it was important that music elements were at the core of music education. They were concerned with teaching music at a deeper level. If the children only sang songs, it would be wasteful to music learning. In Silvia's case, she suggested that music education should explore more complex and comprehensive musical ideas, such as feeling the beat, and knowing the rhythm or notes.

Tong explicitly stated that the Japanese respondents were much less concerned about the method. The Hong Kong respondents viewed the Japanese instruction as less systematic and, instead, emphasised the children' active participation.

The music elements were less taught, and their scope and sequence of teaching was based on the children's interests. In a meeting with the principal of Tokyo school, he reflected on Japanese preschool children and explained the view of Japanese music education. He highlighted that two important values of nurturing young children were self-learning and interest-based learning in the earliest stages.

> *We were influenced by the Western approach from the Second World War. Children must have positive and happy memories in their childhood, which is very important for their growth. Apart from play, we did not pay much attention to knowledge; we just let them learn things naturally. But children's self-discipline is highly emphasised; we want children to learn independently.*

> *Most important is teaching with joy. I hope children come to school feeling happy, that they enjoy studying here. I want children to learn things through exploration and discovery with their schoolmates and teachers, and from nature.*

> *Most important is that children can learn things through free play. For example, they will teach children about Ninja, so the children will explore their Japanese culture, and they will also act like a Ninja. They will explore all the Ninja things from everything. Teachers are just the helpers to stimulate their thinking. This is the reason that I hired the teacher, Makiko, almost seven to eight years ago. She is a specialist music teacher in the kindergarten. She is good at playing games and having fun with the students. The children love her very much.*

Happiness was a crucial value for the Japanese children learning in the KGs. The Tokyo school principal hoped the children were learning music freely and joyfully. In terms of music education, children's literal ability and learning about music elements were not the focus in preschool education. They considered young children's self-learning ability a fundamental element for their development. He said that even though self-learning was a very slow process, young children are able to explore and discover knowledge by themselves. He added that they learn things very quickly, and he perceived that his Japanese students would soon catch up with the primary curriculum.

> *Principal (Tokyo school): For me, I still remember that I had bad memories in my kindergarten. The music teacher was so bored, but I think that music class must be fun and interesting. 音楽 two words that actually include 音 (sound) 楽 (happiness). I wish that children could learn music with joy and from hearing the sound of music.*

In comparing the perspectives of the two cultures and observing them as both a cultural outsider and insider, both emphasised happy learning. However, the Hong Kong interviewees also focused on balancing the learning of music competencies and music interests. Conversely, Japanese education stressed self-discovery as the main goal of preschool education. Japanese children were not required to know the music elements. Hayashi & Tobin (2011) described Japanese preschool teachers as used 'to waiting' (Matsu), a positive word meaning that teachers believe 'in children' and 'trust' them to grow and learn by themselves. This was their folk pedagogy.

The Hong Kong participants, such as Tong and Queenie, unhesitatingly espoused the value of music education as sharing happiness with children and the Japanese spirit of self-discovery. They hoped that Hong Kong education would place greater emphasis on self-discovery. However, when discussing the possibility of imitating the Japanese model, they found that both places have deep-rooted learning models. For example, the pedagogy of waiting (Matsu) was difficult to adopt in Hong Kong society. The participants perceived that local people valued time efficiency and quick learning in education. Thus, without the government's involvement to change the whole educational system, following the Japanese model was unlikely. Yet, to a large extent, the interviewees believed that teachers have a desire to impart knowledge, i.e. music elements, in the lesson. Furthermore, Silvia and Vera preferred teaching music elements in their music lessons. They considered music elements a language that could not be overlooked if children were to be proactive in their music learning.

Music Learning as an Interdisciplinary Concept. All of the participants considered music learning an interdisciplinary concept, which would benefit children's overall well-being. For example, music activities could relate to mathematics, language and art domains. Children could learn multiple disciplines in music education, and tactile stimulation is important to help them grasp concepts. The respondents expressed that they were very eager and passionate about actively teaching children music, because they understood that children are naturally curious, creative, expressive and active. Music and play completely fulfil all children's needs and personalities, and music helps them to teach other disciplines, such as languages and social skills. Thus, music education was not only for participating in physical activities. It also covered all learning domains, including the psychomotor domain (the development of skills), the cognitive domain (the acquisition of knowledge) and the

emotional domain (the development of aesthetic and expressive values), including music appreciation and aural training (Lo, 2013).

Tong incorporated interdisciplinary concepts into her lesson, based on the lyrics from the song, 'Let Me Shine'. She introduced different types of bulbs used in their daily lives, and then she asked the children what other kinds of things can make the light, which prompted the children to guess light bulbs, candles and matches. Then, she employed quick and stop games from the Dalcroze method, in which the students walked when the music was playing and stopped when the music stopped. The children also clapped their hands while walking and the music was playing. The aim of this exercise is to develop children's concentration and musical reaction. Next, for their cognitive development, the teacher prepared some cards and placed them in a lucky draw bag. If the child picked a card with a light bulb on it, he or she would say 'light bulb, light bulb, shine every day, shine every night'. The song was chanted many times until the children had memorised. The song was sung first in short sentences, and gradually built up to long sentences, until the whole song was memorised. Then children started to learn solfege with hand signs, *do re mi*. The children sang the songs twice with body movements. Next, the children learnt do, re, mi hand signs. Then, the children were invited to compose songs with *do, re, mi*. Some children put 'rhythm note' (crochets, quavers, etc.) hats on their heads and stood up front, while the other children were invited to clap the rhythm note hats. The final lesson was graphic notation and improvisation. Some children were asked to compose different rhythmic combinations, and the other children were asked to clap it. Tong applied the music lessons in relation to other vocabularies and creative elements. Through the music education, the children were able to develop their memorisation skill.

Figure 5a. Children learning the names of light sources.

Figure 5b. Each student holds a rhythm card; it creates two bar rhythms for the other students to clap.

Figure 6. Teacher invites students to create different rhythmic patterns for clapping.

Tong: *For me, I also adopt Dalcroze' pedagogy in my teaching, such as free walking, stopping and quick reaction to listen to the music changes. Apart from the music elements, the children were learning vocabulary, social relationships with peers, and cognitive domains in counting and memorising. Music education can develop many aspects in students. The children also enjoyed the music lesson very much. Sometimes I used the same song, but I would change the lyrics to another topic. The children could catch up with the songs quickly.*

Queenie added:

Music helps me to connect with the children. I sometimes prefer drawing to music. I will ask the children to draw the happiest moment during their school days. The children draw pictures while listening to a happy tune. When the time is up, we share our stories.

Queenie invited K2 children to draw six pictures on paper; while the children drew, she played classical music. At the end of the lesson, some of the students were invited to share the stories in their drawings. One student raised her hand and walked to the centre to stand next to Queenie.

Queenie: Can you tell me about the stories in your drawings?
Girls: This first picture is a sunny day. The sun is very hot. The second picture is that I go to the garden and I see many beautiful flowers. The third picture, my parents are driving the car to take me to school. The fourth picture, I meet my best friend. We talk together. The final one is me having a great time with my best friend. I feel very happy today.

Queenie explained that sometimes children may find it hard to express themselves, but pictures were a good way to communicate with children. You could see their feelings through their drawings. Music also sets a pleasant mood, and the children enjoy this fun time. Music can be tools to establish children's' creativity and linguistic development.

I keep thinking about how to teach music interestingly and creatively. In my teaching concept, the music lesson should not only be about teaching students to sing and providing a joyful environment. I wonder if there are any kinds of music teaching pedagogies that can stimulate my teaching. After I studied more pedagogies in music teaching, I found that the teacher can also guide children to understand music, not just sing the songs. For example, I would like to let children compose their own lyrics based on the songs; children can listen to the music while drawing. Besides, music

> *elements include the importance of beat and dynamics that will help equip them for musicianship.*

Vera provided the following explanation of the notion of music education as an interdisciplinary concept:

> *Music teaching actually stimulates children's different domains (emotionally, cognitively and physically) through games and activities for the body and the mind. I incorporate art (free drawing), mathematics (number songs) and healthcare messages into my teaching. I try to teach music in various ways. Particularly, using songs to teach mathematics is very useful.*

The teachers understanding of music education as an interdisciplinary concept in preschool education drove their lesson plans and teaching objectives. As mentioned before, the year plan set the themes and topics for the upcoming school semester. Therefore, classroom teachers chose songs, activities and topics related to the themes in the different disciplines. This is in contrast to the observations in the Japanese schools, where music education tends to be informal that music lessons are not perceived as way to achieve learning outcomes. Hong Kong teachers integrated music and other disciplines to achieve good learning outcomes. Reviewed from the video data, the Hong Kong informants commonly integrated interdisciplinary concepts in their music teaching. They perceived that the music subject was not only for creating happy moments for children; knowledge from Mathematics, art and physical and language areas. Wu & Rao (2011) described that Hong Kong teachers appreciated the thematic approaches that linking the music curriculum with other subjects' activities. Children can expand a topic in depth to make mental connections and to map physical coordination (McDonel, 2013).

Values and Functions of Songs and Tools

Songs. The discussion of song preferences and children's songs portrayed the beliefs of the Hong Kong participants. In general, their song preferences were based on religion (Christianity), themes and students' backgrounds. Hong Kong teachers preferred to choose different types of children's songs, such as about festivals, the weather, animals or religious

functions. Some song topics were related to children's needs. Different languages, such as English, Cantonese and Mandarin, were sung. Many songs were taken from Western classical music, popular Cantonese Christian songs, and English or Cantonese folk songs. Significantly, three of observed teachers were Christian; therefore, the children learnt many English and Chinese Christian songs.

> *Silvia: It depends on the school themes and my preference. I usually prefer to choose simple and singable songs for my students, but sometimes, it is hard to choose songs because of mismatched Cantonese tone and lyrics, limited song resources and my ability. I have encountered some songs that are lovely; however, the tone and the text are mismatched. So, I finally give up on the song. Sometimes, I want to use that song, but I cannot find the music score, so I don't know how to transcribe the melody and harmonise the chords. Then, I give up again.*
>
> *Tong: I prefer to choose English songs; they are more singable than Chinese songs. I will choose Christian songs as well because we have worship, so we need to teach them.*
>
> *Vera: I prefer to teach the children English songs; the materials and songs are easy to sing. And the other reason I prefer to sing in English rather than in Cantonese is that Cantonese vowels and syllables are not easy to sing. Many old Cantonese songs' texts and melodies are not in tune; that is the reason I am not motivated to teach these to the students.*
>
> *Queenie: I think in the future, I should compose more children's songs or compose them with the students. It will make us have a greater sense of belonging. I hope we can do it.*

Silvia found that the resources of Hong Kong children's songs and folk songs were insufficient, and some of the songs were out of date. Some children's songs were eliminated due to untuneful melodies and missing music scores. Consequently, the teachers explored more English songs in their data sources. Queenie would like to compose more children's songs in the future, which would foster a greater sense of belonging between the teacher and the students by contributing the songs themselves. As noted, English children's songs were

popular in Hong Kong society. The respondents admitted that English songs were singable and resources, such as song books and CDs, were plentiful.

Apart from the English songs providing more options, three of the observed schools are Christian-based; therefore, the children learn many Christian English songs. Teachers also considered their Western Christian beliefs when deciding on songs to teach. The transcribed interviews show that teachers like to sing Christian songs in English. Vera said that sometimes when the children sang the Cantonese Christian hymn, 'God, I love you', it sometimes sounded like 'Pig, I love you', due to the song's tone. The issue is with the enunciation of Cantonese words; *God (zyu 2)* and *Pig (zyu1)* have the same pronunciation with different enunciations. If *Zyu* was sung in a higher pitch, it sounded like Pig (Zyu1). If *Zyu* was sung in a lower pitch, it sound like God (Zyu 2). Vera felt embarrassed when she heard the children singing the mismatched tone and pitch. Hence, she would not choose some Cantonese songs when she found such errors.

The interviewees perceived that Cantonese children's songs were hard to sing due to the Cantonese pronunciations. Chen (1999) identified that melodies in Cantonese songs may be tone-mismatched, where most of the tones in the text do not match the melodic contour. The teachers and the researcher analysed the relationship between the texts and the melodies in Cantonese songs.

> *Queenie: I like Japanese songs very much. The melodies are simple, short, repetitive, easy to sing. Most important is that the lyrics are practical and close to their environment. Japanese children can feel the natural environment and the animals around by them.*

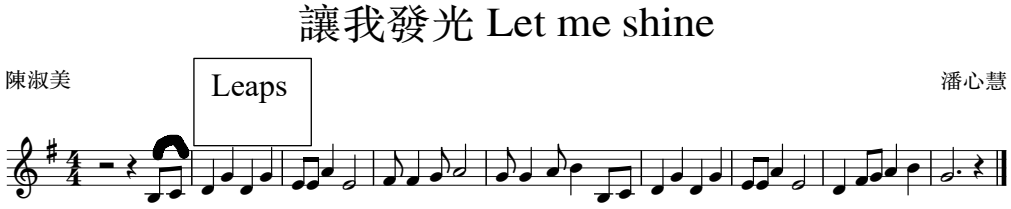


Figure 7. Song – Let Me Shine.

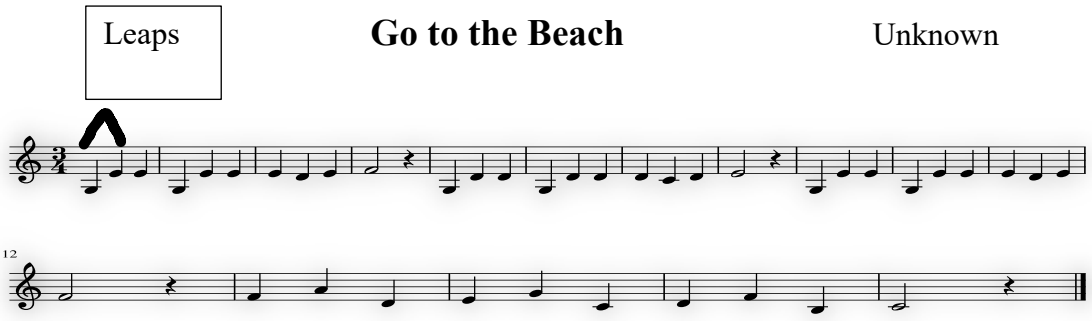


Figure 8. Song – Go to the Beach.

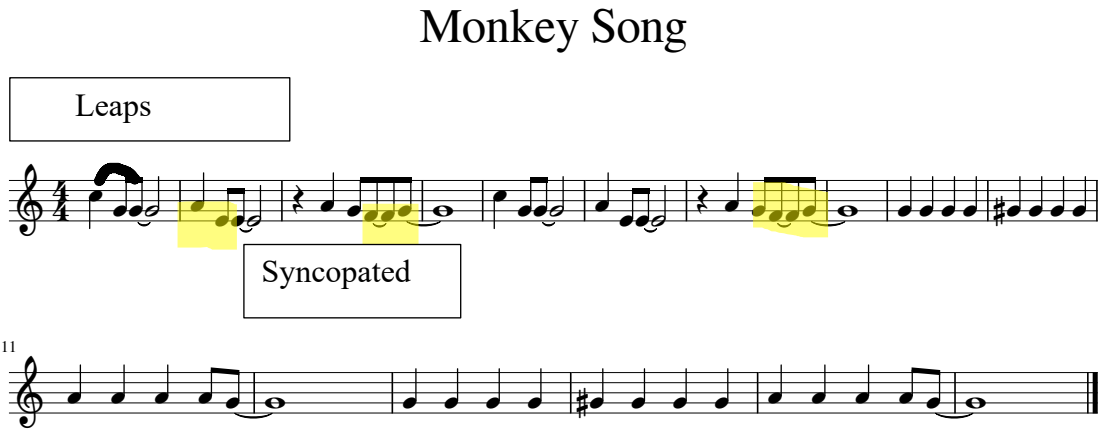


Figure 9. Song – Monkey Song.

The above three songs were selected by the Hong Kong teachers. First, they observed that children's songs were four bar phrases in a total of twelve bars. Both Cantonese and English lyrics were simple and easy to remember. In terms of singing pitch, the intervals were constructed by big leaps from perfect fourth to major sixth. Tong said that many Cantonese folk songs should have big leap intervals. She used the example of the song, 'Let Me Shine'; the word 'shine' (發 Faat3, 光 gwong1) must be sung in perfect fourth instead of other intervals. However, the pitch accuracy of Cantonese restricted the melodic contour; thus, the young children might not sing in tune. Another song, 'Go to the Beach', also appeared to

have big leaps of melodic contour both in an ascending and a descending direction; therefore, children would easily sing out of tune.

Apart from the melody, the rhythms of Cantonese songs were simple, but the English song, 'Monkey Song', was actually hardly singable as it included many syncopated rhythms (offbeat rhythms) and big leaps of intervals. Vera said that the rhythm was related to spoken English rhyming. For example, the lyric *play with me, sing along* could not be said in rhythms of equal length. Thus, the 'Monkey Song' rhythm was more complicated than a Cantonese song. The underlined words below represent singing the word longer, and the dots represent singing the word shorter. In regard to melodic contour, Vera did not notice the leap intervals when singing the song. She thought that singing English songs was more comfortable than singing Cantonese songs, especially when mismatched meanings of the words could be avoided.

Play with me (Long short Long)

Sing a-long (Long short Long)

Let's clap your hands (Long short short Long)

Compared to the Japanese songs, all four of the Hong Kong respondents thought that Cantonese songs were harder both in rhythm and pitch. The 'Lonely Frog' song was sung in Tokyo school. The 'Exercise Song' and the 'Paper Scissor Rock' song were sung in Nagoya and Hokkaido schools, respectively. Built by stepwise and thirds and occasionally some leaps, both melodies were singable. The topics of the song were mainly related to children's daily games and activities. The lengths of the songs were short and easy to sing. The rhythms also adopted syncopated and dotted note rhythms.

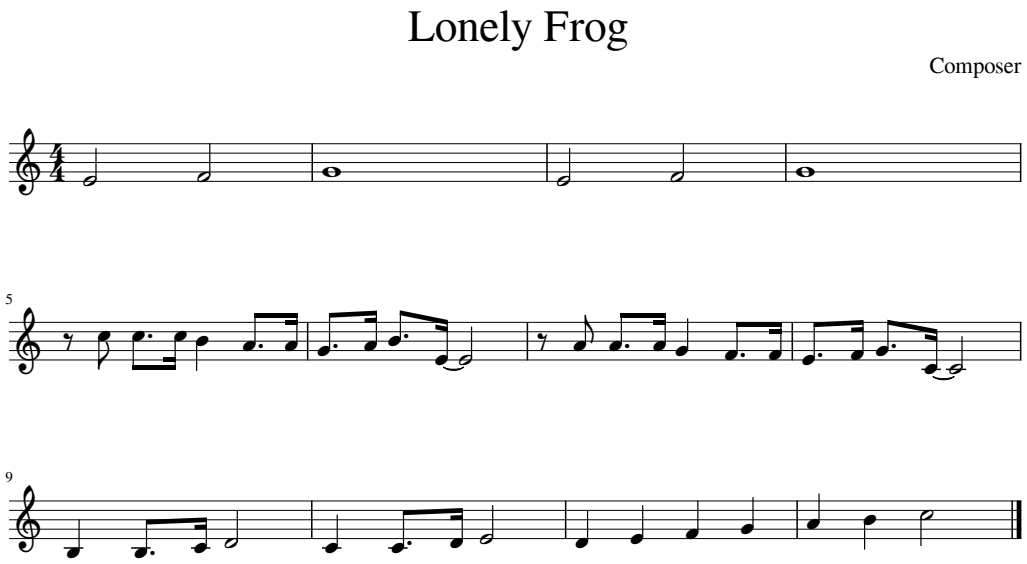
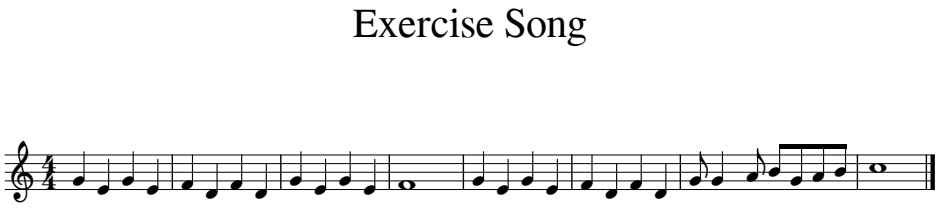


Figure 10. Japanese song – Lonely Frog.



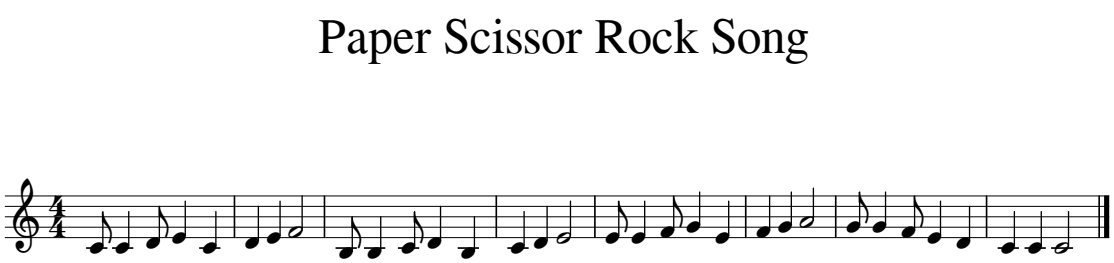


Figure 11. Short Japanese children's songs.

Silvia watched the Japanese video clips and pointed out that the Japanese provided many of their own folk tunes in preschool music education. Therefore, the teachers had a greater choice of native songs. In addition, Japanese songs are relatively singable compared to Cantonese songs. The melodies are simple, short and repetitive (Figures 15–16). Inspired by the Japanese teachers, Tong said that she would compose more Cantonese songs for her students, such as the Japanese 'Paper Scissor Rock' song.

> *Tong: We don't have a paper, scissor, rock game song. When the children sang after hearing the song, they could then play the paper scissor rock game with each other. It is really fun. I should compose some similar game songs.*

Tong found that Japanese songs were simple in terms of pitch and rhythm, and both teachers and students could grasp them effortlessly. The messages of the songs were based on daily life, which helped students to memorise them easily. When we discussed the content of the songs, Japanese children sang about the physical world around them, the world of games and national holidays, etc. Furthermore, during the observations, two schools were teaching cultural summer dance to the children. Overall, the Hong Kong respondents' perceptions of the Japanese songs were that they were simple and created a child-like atmosphere. Significantly, the 'Lonely Frog' song also reflected the Japanese folk culture of *omoiyari* (empathy). The song's lyrics conveyed that the frog was lonely, crying and looking at the sky. Hayashi (2009) explained that Japanese teachers taught empathy and expressions of loneliness in early childhood education. The Hong Kong participants discovered that the teaching of *omoiyari* did not exist in their folk pedagogy. Mildly sad or sentimental songs were sung in Hong Kong preschool education. In Hong Kong education, the observed participants were likely to choose positive messages (happy) and cheerful songs, instead of sentimental (sad) songs.

In terms of traditional Cantonese folk songs, Hong Kong Cantonese folk songs from the 1950s were vanishing. Some Cantonese folk songs, such as 'Banana Boat' and 'Hopscotch', were sung very little in music lessons nowadays (Law & Ho, 2006). Ho (2006) discussed that composing Yi Goh (children's songs) was not common before the 1970s; most of the children's folk songs were borrowed from Western folk songs, such as 'My Bonnie' and 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'. More pop Cantonese children's songs were composed by Joseph Koo (a famous composer in the 1950s) and Sunny Wong (a famous children's song composer in the 1970s). Their songs were broadcast on mass media, and the genre tended to

lean towards pop. More children's songs were influenced by Japanese cartoons, such as Doraemon. Some traditional children's songs were composed by Dr. Kwan Hung Chiu (early childhood music educator) and are still used in many kindergartens.

Teaching Tools. Apart from songs, teaching tools were another important resource for the Hong Kong teachers, of which two commonly featured in their lessons. Apart from typical musical instruments, such as drums, percussion instruments and pianos, whiteboards and handmade graphic scores were frequently used in music lessons. During the observations of Silvia and Tong, by the fourth and fifth days, the students were doing less body movements and were sitting down on the ground and listening to the teachers' instructions. Two teachers were similarly sitting in the centre; their whiteboards were next to them so that they could use their hands or fingers to point to the important items for the students. The children were expected to look at the graphics and diagrams. Queenie prepared different sizes of cats to represent the various rhythms on her whiteboard, as shown below.

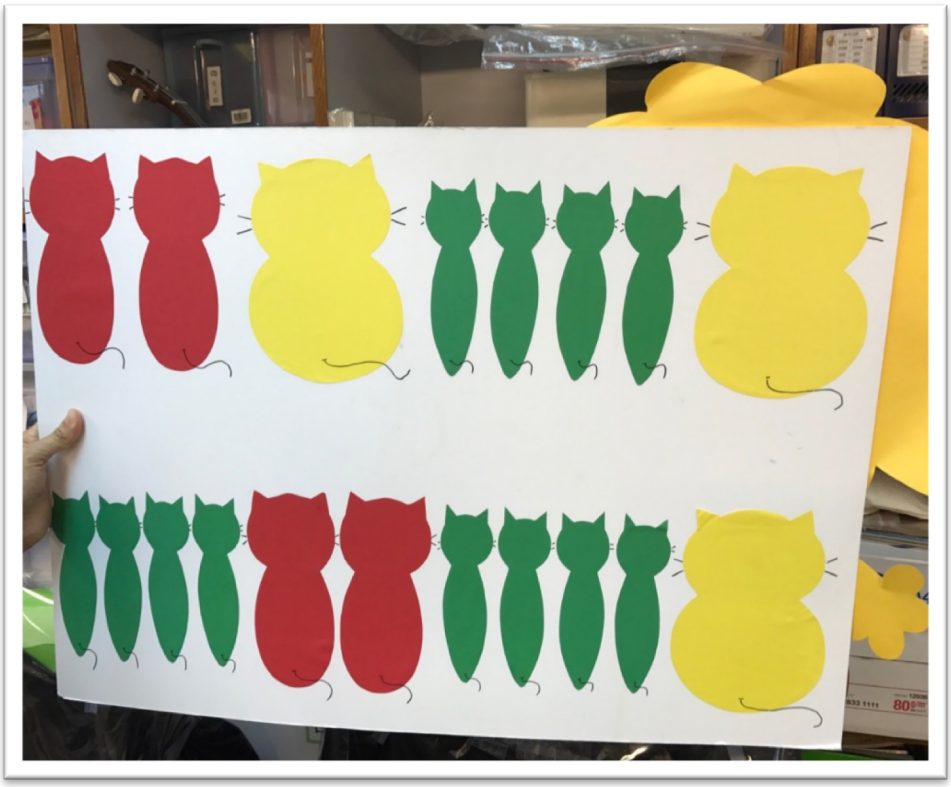


Figure 12. Cat picture score.

Red colour represents minim (2 beats)

Green colour represents crochets (1 beat)

Yellow colour represents semibreve (4 beats)

Figure 13. Animal music stave.

Researcher: Do you always prepare handmade graphic scores for the students?

Queenie: Yes. I always make them for my students. I want my students to visualise the rhythm with pictures, so that they will know the relationship of the rhythm through the size of the cats.
Children love the colourful pictures so that they concentrate on looking at my handmade picture score. I used to make teaching tools at my teachers' colleges. Although it really takes time to do extra work, it is worth it if they can gain knowledge through my handmade tools.

Similar to Queenie, the other three Hong Kong participants also adopted teaching tools in their music. They liked using pictures or interesting handmade diagrams or tools to help

the children remember the day's lesson. The children, in turn, would focus on the whiteboard. They usually used the whiteboards when there was an important message to convey.

> *Tong: Children love pictures and diagrams; therefore, I try to make beautiful and attractive pictures to attract my students' attention and get them to focus during the lessons. Somehow, the pen is so important to me to write some important points during the lesson. Besides, students are able to learn more vocabulary during the music lesson. Nowadays, as far as I know, more teachers are using YouTube to teach students music; it is the easiest way to attract students to follow movement and listen to the songs many times.*

> *Vera: Some teachers also like to write all the lyrics on the board, so that they can point out each lyric for the students to catch up. But I personally do not prefer to do this; adopting multimodal tools are good for students, but I think the essence of teaching music is letting children hear rather than read. The whiteboard or pen are usually used after listening to music or singing time.*

More importantly, the four Hong Kong teachers preferred using multimodal tools e.g. whiteboards, cardboards etc to teach students during the music lesson. In the discussion, the purpose of using these visual tools was to get children to remember the core message of the lesson. Every lesson had an important message for the students to learn. At the preschool level, the participants said that local preschool teachers usually like to draw interesting pictures or cartoons to stimulate children's learning interest.

> *Queenie: As I am teaching students to play as an ensemble, it is hard for them to do without looking at something. So, everyone can look at me as well as the board; without the whiteboard, I think students will be confused.*

> *Silvia: I think we traditionally used to prepare teaching tools while teaching young children, so that the music lesson was also included in our lesson plan. It is our practice in Hong Kong preschool teaching. I feel more secure when I have prepared more resources for the children. This is my responsibility.*

Queenie and Silvia shared the same view that designing visual aids was a part of their teaching practices. They created many visual tools when they studied in teachers' college. In addition, they felt more confident using the teaching pen and whiteboard to convey important messages.

> *We like to use music and teaching aids in music activities. Visual aids help students to consolidate their learning. Even if the teacher's musical ability is not too high, we can also use teaching aids to consolidate their learning.*

The Hong Kong respondents said that they valued every music lesson; thus, they did not want their students to forget the content of the message or topic. As mentioned earlier, the recapitulation part of the lesson helped students to remember what they learned in the lesson. Therefore, great effort went into designing visual tools to consolidate the students' learning through pictures and diagrams.

It is this line of thinking that helps us understand why it is essential for the Hong Kong teachers in this study to instil the values of interactive approaches and to use tools to achieve their teaching goals. They seemed to believe that music activities would help students stay on task and improve their musical and social behaviour. As Silvia pointed out, if the students could enjoy music and nurture their musicianship simultaneously, that was the best outcome for them.

Summary

This chapter provided a snapshot of aspects of Hong Kong preschool music education through observations and repeated interviews with selected teachers from Hong Kong preschools. The participants' backgrounds and teaching settings were characterised by small, structured and fixed music lessons. The interview data suggested that most of the teachers were inclined to a) employ a lesson plan with comprehensive coverage of music elements with a systematic teaching process, b) borrow Western pedagogies in favour of efficient teaching, c) divide the thematic-based curriculum into a series of lessons in favour of accountable progression, d) have a preference for singing English songs, e) emphasise musicianship as an important aspect of music education in preschool education, f) possess a strong cultural concept that a 'good teacher' transmitted knowledge to the students rather than setting them on a path of self-discovery, g) hold an interdisciplinary view of learning

music education, and h) have a strong desire for more spacious areas to teach music education. Their collective voices resonated with the abovementioned points.

The next chapter addresses the Japanese counterpart's views and perspectives of preschool music education. The issues to be discussed are grounded in the interview and observation data obtained in Japan, which differs from those identified in the Hong Kong context. The interview data with the Japanese participants shed light on their distinctive view of preschool education.

Chapter 5: Views in Preschool Education in Japan

In this chapter, the interview and video data provided by the Japanese informants illuminate their teaching context and beliefs regarding preschool music education. First, the background and teaching context of the Japanese informants is outlined. Next, emerging themes that characterise Japanese teachers' beliefs and practices of music education are discussed in relation to a) views of the method, b) perspectives on play, c) roles and values of spirited education, d) classroom discipline, and e) the hidden value of body gestures.

The Context of the Japanese Cases

Observations of the Japanese teachers' beginning music lessons and non-music lessons were carried out in 2017 in three preschools in three prefectures, located in Tokyo, Nagoya and Hokkaido. During the interviews, some written scripts were provided to introduce this researcher's background and expectations of the study. The teachers enthusiastically invited the researcher to participate in their music lessons, other classes such as sports and arts, and even during lunchtime. The researcher was free to go anywhere without any restrictions. Their sincere invitation helped the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the informants' accounts and their overall teaching contexts. Prior to the additional observations, the respective school principals and teachers allowed the researcher to visit with their signed approvals.

To introduce the nature of the three classrooms across the three different Japanese prefectures, the first school is a privately-owned KG in Tokyo. A principal and vice-principal couple have been running this KG for over 20 years. Their music teacher works part time and she is a composer in her spare time. Miki studied music education course in America after earning her degree in Japan. She had been working in this school for over seven years. The principal and Miki were strongly committed to making music lessons interactive and interesting. During lessons, two classroom teachers assisted Miki by looking after the

students. Among her responsibilities, Miki had to teach at least four to five music lessons to different classes every day.

The second school and the third school were located in Hokkaido and Nagoya prefectures, respectively. Yuka and Kiki were both classroom teachers. Yuko had been teaching at her school for over seven years, and Kiki had been working in her KG for over 15 years. They both held teacher certification at the undergraduate level. Furthermore, Kiki had a strong emphasis on piano performance in her previous schooling. To understand the school backgrounds and culture, the Nagoya principal and the Tokyo principals were invited to participate in the interviews. This researcher greatly appreciated that all of the Japanese teachers were willing to contribute their thoughts and time to answer the researcher's questions, and to help the Hong Kong teachers reflect on their hidden beliefs by observing the Japanese schools. In general, the typical class size in Japanese schools is approximately 30 students per teacher in each class. The curricula of school activities for children are commonly designed with a free play approach. The following section will discuss typical Japanese teaching methods and approaches.

The View of Method

The beliefs of free intervention teaching. A commonality among the three Japanese schools was that no music lessons were scheduled in specific timeslots, but many music activities were integrated into free play activities. The table below displays the day schedule of the three observed Japanese schools. It can be seen that the children enjoyed more than two hours of free play every day.

Table 6

Summarised Day Schedule of Three Observed Japanese Schools

8:30	**Bus or walking to the schools**
9:15	**Greeting the principal** **Free play (gymnastics, reading time, arts, music playground)**

10:00	Morning greetings, check attendance Toilet time
11:00	**Free play (singing, drawing, planting, special events, dancing)** **Lunch preparation (making rice sushi)**
13:15	Preparation, Summary storybook time, play time
13:30–14:00	Goodbye song (End of the schools)

In contrast, the Hong Kong timetables in the observed schools were based on a thematic-based curriculum, and music lessons were assigned individual timeslots. The table below shows the Hong Kong children's daily school activities. Free play and music sessions were mainly set at 20 minutes, while other activities comprised thematic topics and were usually set at approximately 30 minutes. The teachers would assign various activities, such as storytelling, artwork, and language, and the children were taught to write the associated vocabularies or particular knowledge related to the topic.

Table 7

Summarised Day Schedule of Three Observed Hong Kong Schools

9:00	**Prayer time and singing children's songs**
9:15	Physical exercise
9:40	**Theme topics, e.g. story & language learning**
10:05	**Music activities**
10:30	Corner play/Tea time/Toilet time
11:50	Goodbye song
12:00	End of school

As a case in point, when relating the widespread popularity of the Orff, Dalcroze or Kodály approaches in Hong Kong education, these active music approaches tended to be much less regarded in Japan. The general impression of the Japanese schools was that they contained fewer formal lessons. One of the Japan participants, Yuka, emphasised that her school did not have routine music lessons, but children were surrounded by music activities

everywhere from morning to the end of the day. For instance, music activities appeared in their spring festival rehearsals and small group dance activities. During the five days of visits, Yuka told this researcher that only one music lesson was taught by another teacher. The observations revealed that the Japanese informants perceived music as a bridge that connected all the activities together smoothly. The children sang songs loudly and cheerfully. Another informant, Kiki, sometimes offered irregular music lessons to the students, but she still did not consider music an individual subject either. Music was considered important for linking different activities, such as lunch, morning greetings, gathering, story time or even prayer time, worship or game times.

Most of the time, the three Japanese informants taught music lessons informally and during less-structured play. They were also likely to use non-intervention approaches in the music lessons and other school activities. One explanation for the minimal instruction was that the Japanese informants did not necessarily see 'music elements or knowledge' as a main objective. This belief was influenced by Froebel's theory, which was not aimed at an 'academic' purpose. He suggested that children expressed their interests through a variety of materials and through themselves. Based on the folk concept of *Iiyuu asobi* (free play), enjoying music lessons was the first priority. Thus, the Japanese respondents did not restrict the children's will whether they wanted to participate or shout. Japanese children were highly encouraged to experience pleasure and joy through self-exploration. (Izumi-Taylor, Pramling Samuelsson, & Rogers, 2004, as cited in Synodi, 2010).

The Tokyo principal chiefly employed Miki to teach their music activities. When Miki was asked if the music activities contained any assigned content or objectives, she did not have any specific teaching objectives. Miki placed value on her music lessons being enjoyed and on sharing happiness with other people. One difference from other music teachers was that Miki liked composing songs for her students because the lyrics could fit into the

children's daily lives. She also used lots of drums, a parachute, a piano and an autoharp to assist her teaching. Miki also loved dancing and playing with the children in the music class. With her musical background, Miki could teach her students plenty of musical knowledge, but she thought that teaching musical notes or any rhythmic knowledge was not her main task. In her conception of teaching music, preschool students did not need to learn about music at a young age. Her top priority was to give them pleasant memories of music learning.

> *Miki: I would tell the children that the teacher is very happy to see you in music lesson. I want the children to know that music is a joyful time for them. They can sing or play with their friends during this relaxed time. That is my teaching belief.*

The figure below shows a picture of five-year-old children. One boy was not focused and was walking around during class. Miki did not warn him about his behaviour because he was not disturbing the class. Instead, she continued to teach her whole group of children. Some students looked at the boy, but most were very happy to sing songs and focus on the teacher. The boy's actions appeared to be very common in their classroom.

Figure 14. A boy walking around during class.

In a second scenario, Miki put a big drum in the centre of the classroom. She asked the students to say hello to the drum.

> *Miki: Kids, let's say good morning (ohayou) to the drum.*
> *Children: Ohayou (very loudly).*
> *Miki: Let's start.*

Miki and the children sang the morning song together. Once the music stopped, each student took a turn tapping the drum freely. Some children confidently ran and tapped the drum freely and excitingly, whereas other children were a bit timid about playing the drum. One shy girl felt uncomfortable playing the drum. The classroom teacher tried to support the girl and said to her, 'Let's do it together', but the girl still refused to play the drum. The teacher did not push the girl to do it, and she helped the girl to snap the drum instead. Based on the observations, the Japanese teacher attempted to gently encourage the children to tap the drum, but if they refused to do it, their free choice and decision was respected.

The above music activities indicate that Miki used the non-intervention approach in her music teaching. She ran some music games and activities with the students, but she also adopted the strategy of *mimamoru* (teaching by watching and waiting). The concept of non-intervention does not mean that teachers do not care about their children. Hayashi et al. (2015) explained that it is the art of Japanese teaching, whereby the teacher is watching without being present too little or too much. Such is the definition of traditional Japanese childcare, where children are watched over but trusted to figure out their own independence. Hayashi et al. (2015) interpreted that teachers' non-interventions in children's disputes or other issues did not mean never intervening. One segment of the video showed Japanese teachers giving children sufficient opportunities to solve problems by themselves; thus, the strategy of waiting was employed to allow the children's problem-solving abilities to emerge, instead of taking immediate action. In Japanese, this is called *machi no hoiku* (caring for children by waiting; Hayashi, 2009).

Figure 15a. A girl refuses to tap the drum; teacher invites her to do it together.

Figure 15b. A girl finally rejects the drum; the teacher plays the drum instead.

Based on the Japanese data, the Hong Kong interviewees discussed the concept of Japanese music learning with free play during the group meeting.

> *Queenie: I used to think in our cultural concept, a teacher must lead children in a proper way and with positive teaching. After watching the Japanese movie, I am inspired to let children learn music or other things in real free play, even though I would be afraid of the classroom management or parents' expectations. I really want to learn the pedagogy of mimamoru. Japanese teachers are very patient. They inspired in me a new vision about teaching students.*
>
> *Vera: Theoretically, we know what play is.* ***But culturally, we perceive play differently****. They are learning skills in themselves. The teacher is one of their playmates, a friend and a mother who supports children's needs.*

> *Tong: I think free play is a more acceptable approach for children to learn naturally and with no expectations of what they are to learn. For structural play, we still project our expectations on the children, hoping that they'll learn something . . . . When I looked at the Japanese teachers, they were helping children to learn and explore by themselves.*

The Hong Kong interviewees held various perspectives about Japanese education. Vera pointed out that Hong Kong teachers perceived play as consisting of playing and learning. In a sense, according to the interviewees, they would use play as an approach to teach music in an interesting fashion rather than letting children self-explore. However, Japanese teachers perceived play as a process to allow children to self-explore rather than a teaching pedagogy. The observations indicated that the Japanese interviewees did not directly teach music elements to their students. In terms of teaching, Rohlen (1976) asserted that Japanese teachers were not directly responsible for teaching students; rather, their main role was to draw out children's personal experiences and ideas. The Hong Kong interviewees all thought that free play with the pedagogy of *mimamoru* in Japan was good for students' independence. Vera was inspired by the pedagogy of *mimamoru,* which allowed children to solve their own problems, rather than pushing her students to achieve her standards.

However, Silvia reconsidered the issue of play between Hong Kong and Japanese teachers, and after one month, she replied with the following perspective.

> *Silvia: Yes. True. As Hong Kong teachers, we were conceptualised to be educated as good teachers who* ***teach more, prepare things more****. But is it good for the student? The video makes me rethink what the teacher's role of is again.*

> *But* ***. . . when I think about it again, we can provide free play for other lessons, but free play is hard with music. It still needs the teacher to guide them in how to listen****. It is like language; children learn languages by repeatedly listening and adjusting their pronunciation, according to their parents and teachers . . . So, they can learn language naturally and faster than adults. So, we should apply systematic music teaching approaches to children from the earliest age. So for me, I would prefer to teach our Hong Kong music lessons.*

Silvia rediscovered that she held strong goal-achievement beliefs in music teaching. She believed that the pedagogies of music education and language were similar. Young children could distinguish clauses by learning the melody of a language, such as varying pitches in voices and different patterns of loudness and softness. Similarly, music training could be nurtured in early childhood. Silvia shared her perspective that music teachers nurture children's hearing to identify changing sounds, moods or other characteristic of music. Silvia felt that her past schooling did not have interactive music training to stimulate her interest. As a KG teacher now, Silvia hoped that she could provide more music training to her students. For example, Silvia designed a musical game called 'Hop Like a Bunny', in which the children could hop any way they liked and had complete freedom to move as they wished. Then, once the music stopped, they stopped. Afterward, Silvia would tell a story about the bunny, and the children would try to imagine the bunny's actions, such as jumping, sleeping, digging a hole, etc. Later, Silvia started to instruct students to follow her body movements; for example, she would cue her students to stomp the floor with three beats—strong, weak and weak with music. The children were taught the beat and tempo changes in the music lesson, but they were unaware that they were learning about music while enjoying the rabbit role play.

Similarly, the other three informants agreed that they should explore more teaching ideas in music education, such as composing lyrics with children, engaging with the visual arts and creating instruments in the music lessons. This would allow children to enjoy a 'free' mind to create music with teachers' restrictions. The Hong Kong teachers' beliefs depicted that they attempted to assist students with the active skill of thinking musically to foster their creativity and learning interest. In their observation, their colleagues were likely trying to balance between child- and teacher-directed activities in the whole group situation.

In a third example in Nagoya school, Kiki applied a children-centred approach in the music lesson, whereby every child was given the opportunity to experience the hand chimes.

The students were shaking happily with body movements. Kiki used questions to guide the children to shake their favourite body part.

> *Kiki: What should we shake now?*
> *Child: Head . . .*
> *Kiki: Good suggestion . . . let's shake . . . Wow . . . You are right . . .It is cool to shake the head.*
> *Kiki: So, what should we shake next?*
> *Child: Ears . . .*
> *Kiki: Good suggestion. Let's shake our ears.*

The observations in this research indicated that the folk pedagogy of *mimamoru* was unique to Japan in their preschool culture, a concept that was aimed at helping children with their problem-solving skills and developing social relationships with their peers. The teachers' role was as a facilitator to provide the children with different activities and opportunities. Many decisions were based on the children' wills. The three Japanese participants did not set any goals or aims in their music lessons. Miki and her students exchanged ideas and shared happy moments during the music lesson.

> *Kiki: The nature of music is to let everyone enjoy and express their emotions. If we control people's emotions, the meaning of music would not reach their hearts. So, I hope that they can play music with pleasant childhood musical experiences*.

Regarding the notion of playing during music lessons, Kiki's principals shared similar views. Both the Tokyo and Nagoya principals strongly believed that the art of preschool education was to wait for children's growth through their self-exploration. The ultimate aim was to connect students with their cognitive, social and emotional abilities in order to overcome any potential future learning difficulties.

> *We (all teachers) wait for children to grow naturally. Play is the most useful activity for young children. Once young children are able to explore and discover their knowledge by themselves, they will learn things very quickly and also develop social relationships. So, I don't worry that Japanese children cannot catch up with the primary curriculum.*

Two principals did not regard Japanese preschool education as a stage for developing academic knowledge and suggested that the learning process might be slower in Japan than in Hong Kong. They stressed the importance of social skills development in KG, including *shuudan seikatu* (group living) and *shakai seikatsu* (social living). These group and social living skills were necessary for children to learn the virtue of cooperation and forming positive relationships with peers through everyday play situation. These skills are considered vital by Japanese society (Ishigaki & Lin, 1999; Izumi-Taylor et al., 2010). Once young children were equipped with a strong physical body and social skills, future academic learning would be grasped easily. Rohlen (1976) referred to the Japanese ideology of spiritualism (*Seishin*), meaning that children naturally play and learn to get along with others in school. Furthermore, the notions of self-perception, self-improvement ability and self-refection (*Hansei)* were gained from the social context through observation and imitation.

Beliefs about Discipline. To shed light on the free play concept, Japanese teachers seldom set rules for the students in music lessons, whereas the Hong Kong participants were relatively concerned about maintaining good behavior in music teaching. Silvia maintained that discipline helped students to be responsible, concentrate and listen when the teacher was talking. Classroom discipline and safety were the main elements that would deter her from adopting the free play pedagogy. Silvia felt that a structured, teacher-centred approach was more manageable for her. She lacked the confidence to handle children without a teacher-centred approach. It was important to her that all students were doing the same activities and following her instructions. Silvia's conception of education is that a good teacher is well-prepared and, thus, she expected students to learn new knowledge in every lesson. Further, it is the teacher's responsibility to set the foundation for learning and to teach children to focus, pay attention, take turns and follow instructions.

When Tong was asked about her expectations as regards to dealing with discipline, she said that a good classroom teacher was able to maintain classroom discipline. She stressed:

> *Discipline is very important. We need children to follow rules and learn to respect people. Our students are very smart; they would test your bottom line. If you're too weak, they will not listen your instructions, and finally, you cannot to teach.*
>
> *Vera: I remember how we used to behave and were well disciplined at home and in school. If we feel that children nowadays are impolite or have bad manners, we should educate them. Otherwise, they will not be good citizens. In music lessons, children can enjoy the music, but they still need to behave themselves.*

The vision of discipline that Tong and Vera propounded goes beyond behaviour; the focal point was learning to respect rules and people in the same classroom. When Tong observed a student not following the rules, she would give the student a warning, such as *'Please do not do that'*, or *'I am sorry, but if you do not behave, we cannot include you in this activity'*. If some students were still not well behaved, Tong would invite them to sit outside the group. Tong's experience was that children should observe the rules, which was a manner of respecting other people. Usually, children behave quickly once the teacher has warned them. Tong reflected that she would let children know the consequences and outcome if they did not follow the rules.

Generally, the four participants used firm and direct instructions that governed their student's participation and routines in the classroom. For example, Queenie tried to supervise students when exchanging or playing instruments. She knew that when children held the percussion instruments, they may not control themselves from making the sounds. Therefore, she would give clear instructions to the students regarding the procedure, such as, '*Children, first, please do this . . . Second, when you do this, please keep quiet, and third, this group of students, please put your instruments in the drawer',* and so on.

Queenie's interactive approach with her students was common folk pedagogy of Hong Kong's teacher-led approach. All the teachers had strong beliefs about appropriate classroom procedures and regularly attempted to enforce classroom discipline and instil good behaviour. Queenie's description above captures that good practices can foster children's good discipline.

As illustrated in Tong's and Queenie's vignettes above, the notion of discipline was behind several hidden values. First, as discussed in Chapter 4, the teachers worry about the children's safety in the small classrooms. Should a child have an accident, the teacher bears the responsibility, such as reporting it to the parents and the school. They reflected that teachers should always bear in mind that it is their responsibility to look after the children at all times. Second, when children were high-spirited or too excited, they would remind them to be mindful of their classmates, such as 'Please behave yourself'. Third, the Hong Kong informants believed in the existence of Chinese authoritarian values. Lin and Fu (1990) mentioned that Chinese authoritarian parenting was rooted in Confucian concepts of the parental authority style. *'Guan'* means to govern the children; it is a positive action to show love to the children in folk Confucian beliefs (Tobin et al., 1989). Chao (1994) explained that teachers and parents expressed their love and care by governing and controlling. They want to protect their children's safety and prevent any improper behaviour in the future. On a deeper level, this is a distinctive belief of Hong Kong folk pedagogies, which Japan may not share. In sum, Queenie's and the other teachers' idea of discipline included taking responsibility for the children's safety and teaching self-control, which also served to fulfil a common interest though music learning. It is in this line of thinking that Hong Kong teachers instil the values of traditional Chinese child-rearing beliefs through music teaching.

Values and Function of the Japanese spirit

***Genki* spirit in music education**. A common feature that was observed in the three Japanese schools was that the children were generally energetic, lively and healthy, as demonstrated by their voice projection and body movements in music lessons and various activities. The Japanese word for this is *Genki* (Walsh, 2003). Some important data emerged from the Japanese students and teachers, which would be unlikely in the Hong Kong environment.

On the first day of observations at Tokyo school, the camera and video stand were placed in the back of the classroom before the music lesson started. When Miki asked the children to play music activities, they jumped up and down with so much joy that the camera stands shook. Because the flooring was made of wooden boards, the children's jumping with joy caused a reverberation. It was obvious that the children enjoyed their singing sessions. The music kept repeating, short lyrics with a singable tune. When the teacher and students sang the lyric 'Let's skip!', the children all skipped or jumped high. The class sang the song five times, beginning with two people as a group to the whole class as one big group. The children were even more excited and happier after singing the song many times. They sang in a high-pitched tone and very loudly. The environment was full of the children's laughter, and Miki let the children express their emotions freely. When the Japanese children played with the parachute, they ran and laughed with high spirits. Walsh (2003) described that Japanese children were expected to be tough and strong through play activities:

> Children learnt Genki through free play outside on playgrounds with challenging equipment and a sense of unrestricted space allow children to push the limits of this equipment and of themselves. The kids did not consider their actions dangerous, nor did the teachers because the kids had been performing them in some form since they were toddlers . . . They were given the time and space to persist and practice. (Walsh, 2003 p. 112)

Figure 16. Children are jumping high together and laughing loudly.

It was also observed that Japanese expressed their Genki spirit through daily life training. One example was at Nagoya school, when the researcher joined a group walk before the start of school. All of the children were wearing their own backpack and swimming suit. They walked from the park to the school for approximately 20 minutes at 8:30 every morning. The children formed two lines and held hands with each other. During the journey, they crossed roads of traffic and walked down slopes. Every time they saw a pedestrian, they would greet them loudly, saying 'Good morning!' to them. Their polite manner and physical strength had surprised me as a cultural outsider. Regardless whether it was music or non-music activities, this Nagoya school aimed to nurture their students by integrating self-motivation, good morals and physical strength. Among all the observed Japanese and Hong Kong schools, this school was the most disciplined; however, the other two Japanese preschools also emphasised children's physical strength and discipline. Kiki expressed that the Genki spirit was necessary to train through the hardship of physical training. The children also showed their spirit through music lessons and times of worship; children sang songs very loudly to express their self-confidence in singing and playing with their classmates.

Outside the music classroom, vigorous play could be seen in the outdoor activities. The values of the outdoor environment and play are essential for children on a daily basis, such

as taking children on a one-hour walk each day. The pictures below show 4-year-old children practising their free play activities, such as wood crafting or blending flowers for colouring and sand play, etc. Young Japanese girls showed their physical strength and were not afraid of danger when carrying chairs and big lunch boxes down the long stairs. Yuka allowed the children to perform what seemed like 'dangerous' actions in the eyes of a cultural outsider. The children were permitted to explore anything freely.

Figure 17. Japanese children are learning to work on a 'dangerous' activity.

Regarding the dangerous children activities, Japanese teachers did not guide the children unless they ask the teacher for help. Yuka regularly walk around the outdoor activities without disturbing the children's activities:

> *Researcher: Do you think it is very dangerous to let the children drive nails into the wood?*
> *Yuka: I demonstrated it for them before, so they would be able to handle it by themselves.*
> *Researcher: I see . . . If this activity happened in Hong Kong, the parents might not allow it because it is dangerous.*
>
> *Yuka: Oh, really? It is a quite common activity here so that the children can develop strong physical abilities. We let them explore and learn from failure. It is the fastest way for them to learn by themselves. I will let them do it first; when they have a problem, they will ask me for help. Meanwhile, I will observe them for safety from a safe distance.*

When a student needed help, Yuka would go over and assist them. Even though a child could get hurt nailing wood, Yuka trusted the children's ability to learn through practice.

She also allowed the children to have their own social interactions with other children. Yuka believed that her students could learn successfully by themselves though many trials and experiences, and that self-exploration was the best rewards for the children. However, she observed from them from a distance to ensure their safety at all times.

> *Yuka: While experiencing various kinds of games, it is important to learn how to communicate with others and to learn by themselves in the future. Children can play in a free atmosphere. I am happy to see them playing every morning and afternoon. I don't want to push them to learn anything special. I think the most important thing is to play as a child.*

The viewpoint of Yuka resonated with the Hong Kong interviewees; they never imagined that the Japanese children were capable of doing adult work. All of the Hong Kong interviewees concluded that building children's character was crucial. They could see that Japanese children's vigorous development emanated from their families and schools. The parents and teachers together played an important role in fostering students' self-care abilities. As a mother and teacher, Queenie agreed that Japanese pedagogies can help Hong Kong children.

> *Queenie: We are too concerned about children's safety. We should trust their abilities. The Japanese kids are a good example that children can do many things. I am sure Hong Kong children can do it as well. It is just, how do we educate them?*

In the Hong Kong culture, Vera and Queenie worried that so many families relied on a foreign domestic helper to take care of the family. Children sometimes felt closer to the domestic helper than their own parents. From their experience, parents were more concerned about their children's academic ability than their inner-spirit, including self-care and perseverance. They also observed that many grandparents or childcare centres looked after the children of career women. They believed that the schools must take responsibility for developing children's inner spirit as in Japan, because Hong Kong children will not learn this at home.

> *Vera: Hong Kong children rely on domestic helpers or grandparents. Many mothers in Hong Kong are working women, so if the school does not teach the children helping hands and cooperative skills, they will not learn much at home.*
>
> *Queenie: For me, I am a mother. Hong Kong families are much more concerned about literal and performance abilities, such as knowledge (mathematics and language abilities) and competitions (anything where you can win a prize or certificate). On the other hand, social skills, self-care and physical abilities, such as planting, physical exercise, woodcraft, and interpersonal and cultural understanding, were seldom taught.*

Kwok (2010) also mentioned that Hong Kong society appeared to have more spoiled children, who lacked self-care abilities and had low adversity and emotional quotients due to being overprotected. The children of overprotective parents are unable to look after themselves and handle daily routines. From the Japanese cases, the Hong Kong participants were acutely aware of the need to raise awareness of instilling self-care abilities in children. Given the negative influences in the Hong Kong environment, the four informants stressed that children must be trained to develop brave and energetic spirits. Although music lessons were not aimed at teaching self-care abilities, children could still learn helping hands and compassion during the lessons when the teacher needed the children's assistance. For example, in the observations of the three Japanese schools, the children helped to tidy up their toys and tools after music lessons. In Miki's lesson, four or five students helped her clean up the balls after class.

To capture the different spiritedness between the two cultures, two photos were taken of the children raising their hands in their music lesson. Each shows a similar situation, in which the teacher is asking the students a question. Vera's class was the case in point; when she asked the question, only one child raised his hand to answer. The Hong Kong children seemed much shier and not very confident about expressing themselves, compared to their Japanese counterparts. However, the Hong Kong children sat with good posture and displayed more self-control in class. In contrast, the Japanese children frequently moved their

bodies, and many children raised their hands, some even raised both their hands to express their excitement and vigour. Thus, the photos clearly illustrate two very different teaching styles in two culturally distinct environments. Miki encouraged the children to express themselves in a lively with energetic fashion. The photo shows that Miki also raised her hands to support the children. Vera observed that the Hong Kong children's tone was relatively flatter than the Japanese children's, and their volume was not as loud as the Japanese children's, who spoke with confidence. Apart from the picture, the emphasis on energy (Genki) was reflected when the Japanese children answered roll call, sang, prayed and responded in unison. Japanese teachers value exuberant and positive behaviour (Peak, 1992, cited in Rohlen 2006).

Figure 18. Comparison of hands up in music lessons between two cultures.

The Hong Kong informants discussed the cultural value of these photos. Vera pointed out:

> *Children in Hong Kong are more concerned about their own performance. They are afraid to give the wrong answer; in general, Hong Kong children are relatively shy. But they are better than the older generation; we were even quieter than them. We sat in our chairs without making a sound. Music education has been helping children to build up their confidence.*
>
> *Silvia: In my understanding, it is about our cultural education. Preschool children perceive that we are the teachers. If they are naughty, the teachers will punish them, so they are very controlled. Japanese teachers allow the children to express themselves freely; their social environment simultaneously teaches Japanese children to respect others, so the children were good at balancing their freedom appropriately.*
>
> *Tong: I think Japanese kids still keep the childlike personality and express themselves without fear. Hong Kong children suffer many pressures from parents and teachers expectations. They won't be like Japanese kids – childlike; many Hong Kong kids are a little precocious.*

The discussion reflected that Hong Kong folk beliefs about spirit contrasted with the Japanese culture. The Hong Kong informants felt that the cultural difference stemmed from social complexities. First, Silvia considered that children perceive teachers as dominant, and they have the power to correct their faults. Thus, students were sometimes worried about their performance when teachers disagreed with their ideas. In the Japanese context, the teachers projected more of a mother-teacher persona. Therefore, the children were not afraid of failure and, consequently, were freer than Hong Kong children. Second, Tong felt that the spirit of Hong Kong folk pedagogy treated children like adults, such that even at the preschool stage, children were faced with lots of competition, external interviews and homework. In terms of speaking aloud, some children were afraid to express themselves because of fear of failure. The interviewees also reflected that their cultural practices were not aimed at building students' confidence. Self-confidence was gradually built up via academic achievements. Chen (2013) described that Hong Kong children have learnt to be humble, and acting proud was considered a negative attitude that showed lower self-esteem (Brand, 2004). Thus, Hong

Kong children were shier (Xu, 2005) compared to Western countries (as cited in Chen, 2013). Although the Hong Kong culture did not have a strong Genki spirit like Japan, Queenie and Vera said that teachers would encourage their students, such as saying 'Give me five', 'Add oil', or other wording to support their children.

Even though the Hong Kong interviewees verbally supported their students, they were unaware of the importance of children's inner spirit, even as teachers, because their previous schooling did not emphasise the Genki spirit. Conversely, many Hong Kong children's inner spirits and self-confidence were fragile because of adults' expectations of their academic performance. In contrast, the pedagogy of childlike characteristics in Japan allowed children to express their true character. Japanese children did not worry about competition at the preschool stage. It could be seen that Japanese children's body gestures and speaking volumes were more expressive than their Hong Kong counterparts. The learning pressures and their level of confidence directly affected Hong Kong children's happiness and whole person development.

***Joso-Kyokiu* and *Kokoro* Belief**. Apart from the pedagogy of *mimamoru* and the *Genki* spirit, the sentimental education (*Joso-kyokiu*) belief was also revealed in Japanese teaching. While the Hong Kong participants actively sought different pedagogical approaches for early childhood certification and emphasised the learning outcomes of the music objectives, this was not the case with the teachers in Japan. The Japanese informants emphasised on moral emotions such as empathy (*Omoiyari*). It was one of the main beliefs that children should be able to empathise with other people and should try to help the others. In the music lesson, Miki used the 'Lonely Frog' song (mentioned in Chapter 4) to let the children empathise with the lonely frog who needed friends. The children gradually acknowledged that they should help people when they asked for help. Sentimental education was highly valued in Japan, and children received emotional education in moral and aesthetic aspects (Hayashsi, 2009;

Rohlen, 1984). Japanese textbooks for language education are full of stories in which reading others' minds is praised, and bad characters are turned to good characters with the support and empathy from friends (a Japanese book). In addition, Japanese music textbooks include many songs that praise friendship.

Another concept emphasised in Japanese teaching is *kokoro*. Kokoro means that the heart supports holistic education by emphasising all aspects of a children's abilities. This belief system strengthens the equal positioning of all disciplines in the school and recognises the unique contribution of each field to the development of kokoro (Sato, 2004). The ultimate goal of education is to develop the heart. In Japanese folk teaching, they commonly believe that the centrality of the heart (kokoro) is the centre of a human's entire being. It connects humans' mental, physical, emotional, aesthetic and spiritual capacities. Therefore, Sato (2004) explained that many Japanese teachers feel that a true education must connect within and outside school, between the subject and other subjects together. In a broader view, Japanese education is highly concerned with the connections of an individual's whole body and one's relationship with the environment and the larger community. Similarly, art is seen as a tool for attaining the ultimate goal in preschool education. In this view, art is incorporated into the school curriculum to achieve its intrinsic value, rather than as a complementary contribution to academic subjects (Bresler, 1995; Matsunobu, 2007).

All three schools in Japan had a very strong heart education motto in terms of children's beliefs. The essence of the messages was that education nurtures human beings, it is the core of human existence. Thus, it is not merely the heart but the entire being (behaviour and thinking) that is nurtured. At the heart of their education was feelings of gratitude and connecting with people with mutual respect and understanding. Children were taught to learn with a thankful heart for the world and every living creature, such as thank you for growing plants to eat. Children were cultivated to love people.

> *Kiki: Our school emphasised children's 'good experiences'. That is very important. Such as good relationships with friends and teachers through self-motivation, self-reliance, effort, perseverance, recognising the difference between friends and myself, caring and caring for and cooperating with friends. In addition, by harvesting vegetables and catching insects in the garden field and the backyard, children can take an interest in living creatures and plants, which makes it possible to have a compassionate mind.* ***Children do not only play with music; music is a thing that is expressed from the bottom of their hearts. I hope children can sing songs with passion.***

Kiki found that as a teacher, her folk values emphasised children's compassion and sentimentality. In summary, her school curriculum integrated sentimental education into five learning areas, including health, human relationships, the environment, language and religion. Both indoor and outdoor play activities were equally highly valued. In the language part, Nagoya and the other two Japanese schools did not emphasise children's writing ability. The nature of preschool education was to emphasise children's self-discovery in the natural world. Similarly, Kiki also emphasised the core values of her Japanese preschool.

Table 8

School's Curriculum in Nagoya School

Health	Playing with a lively attitude Interested in playing in the open space Knowing the habits important for good health Safe living
Human relationships	Forming trusting relationships with teachers Know the pleasure of playing with friends Knowing the importance of promises based on trusting relationships with your teachers and friends Learn to show gratitude towards parents Respect for elderly people Respect for people in the local community
Environment	Familiar with and close to familiar environment Touch things through various kinds of play Familiarity with plants and animals Interest in various tools necessary for daily life
Language	Enjoy the storybook reading and listening time Try to convey your thoughts and experiences **No writing drills in preschool level**
Religion	Learn from the example of the Lord Jesus Christ

The *kokoro* beliefs made a strong impression on this researcher during the observations in Japan. The second day in Hokkaido school, the teacher asked the students to go outside to the playground. Then, a 4-year-old girl, Suki, held my hand, and we walked down the stairs together. She then showed me the shoe rack area and changed into an outdoor shoe. Suki looked at me and I copied her, changing my shoes as well. Suki was a considerate and kind girl who realised I was foreigner, so she was sincerely reminding me to follow their procedure. That a four-year old Japanese girl had learnt to be considerate to other people was a very memorable experience. Yuka talked about the different areas the children are taught. Firstly, children learnt to touch nature and creatures (animals, etc.), learning to respect other creatures in nature. Secondly, children learnt the characters in their storybooks and to empathise with the characters to enrich children's emotions and support their imagination. Thirdly, music lessons refined their mind's curiosity and aesthetics by listening and playing. Fourthly, drawing pictures was an action that led them to express their emotions. Fifthly, body movements ignited children's physical and mental coordination through outdoor activities. Finally, religious and cultural events stimulated awareness of the value of their cultural and spiritual beliefs. Children' sensible characters were trained from early childhood. Yuka said that the surrounding environment cultivated schools, families and society. Walsh (2003) identified common Japanese cultural beliefs about children, which is that they are naturally good and sensible characters.

Apart from music activities, Japanese children were taught to have thankful values through food education. This Nagoya school strongly emphasised planting activities; the school planted various vegetables at the back of the KG. Children were observed climbing up the small mountain to look after their plants every day. They needed to get rid of weeds and insects and water the plants. The children spoke to the plants with care while they watered them every day. They would encourage the plants to 'Cheer up, grow up faster', while they

kept watering and saying this sentence aloud almost eight times. The final day of harvesting potatoes and onions, the children would also say ‘thank you’ to the plants for allowing them to be healthy. Different classes were in charge of different plants, such as cucumbers and potatoes. The children had sentimental feelings for the plants and cared for them. There was joy and gratitude for the harvest that the children could taste because everyone had helped take care of the crops every day. The school prepared the harvested vegetables in salad, miso soup, curry, etc. for everyone.

Figure 19. Cheering up the plants.

Faced with Japanese education, my Hong Kong informants expressed mixed feelings about sentiment education. Tong shared the following observation.

> *Tong*: *According to the plant education, children can learn the importance of food for our health. Every food needs time to grow, and that planting activity teaches children to cherish the food and respect the life of plants. In Hong Kong, we had planting activities for the children, but we never talk to the plants and cheer them up. It is good to see their spirit of respecting the world’s creatures.*

In Tong’s observation, Japanese folk beliefs have deeper values in education. Planting was not only planting for food. Values were given to the students, such as respect for the

creatures, patience and caring while watering. Spirit education dominated the Japanese culture. Tong found that Hong Kong education did not emphasise the values behind the activities.

In the reference to the teachers' dialogues, sentiment education was ignored in Hong Kong preschools. A major issue is the social mentality of winning at the starting line, which has been accelerating in Hong Kong education (Watkin, D., 2010). The effect of this mentality in recent years has been affecting parents' expectations of preschool teachers. Queenie felt that many local parents were pushing their children to the extent that they were under pressure and had a negative attitude towards learning. Queenie responded that as a teacher-mother, her parents 'chatroom and the school teacher also accelerated her stress when talking about her children's performance.

> *Queenie: Even though I am a teacher, I also feel pressures from my son's (age 6) parents group. Different parents will talk about their kids' progress, complain and update news about the school, events or tutorial classes. This virtual information actually shows me that parents have high expectations for their children. If the child does not work harder, he cannot survive in their society. Besides, my son's teachers also affect my feelings. For example, 'Your son is not working hard; please follow up on your child's progress.'*

Queenie mentioned that her students' parents attempted to request the teachers to provide more writing and reading drills to their children to further their primary preparation. She showed an example of one local Hong Kong primary school where 6-year-old children were required to identify many Chinese words; the Chinese word for 'healthy' 健康 included 21 strokes. Apart from the Chinese subject, students also learnt English grammar and vocabulary and complicated mathematics. With this enormous knowledge input, parents should equip their children with strong literal abilities before their children enter primary school. In reviewing Queenie's reflections, although the early childhood education reforms and teacher-training programmes in Hong Kong imitated certain concepts such as child individuality,

child-centredness and learning-through-play, these may not reflect the priorities of parents and teachers in non-Western contexts (Pearson & Rao, 2006; Prochner, 2002). Queenie wished to have more music time to nurture children' creativity; however, their ideal pedagogies may not be fully accomplished because of the negative social environment. In fact, many parents were still worried that their children would not progress in primary school. Queenie considered that Hong Kong education could not eliminate academic-based education unless the whole Hong Kong examination culture was transformed to an interest-based learning approach. The role of preschool education in Hong Kong did not reflect the meaning of KG (children's playground), which became a steppingstone to fulfil the needs of primary schools. schools.

> *Queenie: Hong Kong education from kindergarten to primary school cannot connect with each other. Primary schools expect kindergarten teachers to learn more vocabularies so that the students can catch up with the primary syllabus quickly. You can imagine if a child cannot write his name in kindergarten, how is he going to survive in primary school?*

Vera also explained that the strong emphasis on academic achievement spoiled children's inner spirit. In some of the worse cases, she reflected that Hong Kong students' etiquette was in need of improvement. She described how some of her students were less energetic. For example, when she said good morning to the children, their response was slow and passive. Some students look tired in school because their parents arranged many after-school activities for them. They had participated in tutorials or interest classes to help them improve their schoolwork, speak foreign languages, master musical instruments and excel in sports. The mentality of winning at the starting line affected Hong Kong children' whole-person development. Hence, Tong, Vera and other Hong Kong interviewees strongly opposed the value of winning at the starting line. They were passionate that preschool education must ignite the learning interests of their students and trust their abilities. Some positive attributes,

such as empathy, compassion and open-mindedness, were helping them to empower themselves and to become agents of social betterment.

> *Vera: I strongly oppose 'winning at the starting line'. I would try my best to protect my children from overlearning. In music education, I just want them to enjoy the music and build up good social relationships with their peers. This is my basic expectation. As you know, different children have different abilities; some students can learn more, such as beat, rhythm, or they can feel the mood of the music. I would be very grateful if they learnt more than I expected.*
>
> *Tong: I really want my students to learn as much as possible, but I need to reflect again by teaching objectives. I should give more freedom to the children. And* ***I should enjoy my lesson as well and not worry too much about my objectives.*** *The core of music lesson is for us to 'feel' the joy of the music.*
>
> *Silvia: The negative cultural mentality pushes me to be more determined to teach music better. I will try to let the children release their emotions through the music lesson. I don't want to be a killjoy and accelerate children's pressure.*

Silvia believed that children nowadays were overly stressed, and she wanted to release children's emotions and allow them to establish good social relationships through music education. Tong said that if the students could also hear the music elements, it would be an extra bonus in her teaching. Silvia also reflected that she could not enjoy her music lesson because of focussing too much on the children's behaviour. Silvia reconstructed her concept of the music lesson, saying that teachers should enjoy the music along with the students. The directions of the teacher and the students were interconnected.

The value of discipline. The vision of discipline that the Hong Kong informants propounded goes beyond the children's behaviour. It also encompassed learning to respect the rules as well as the people in the same classroom. Based on the teachers' discussions, the Hong Kong informants believed in the existence of Chinese authoritarian values. The concept of 'Guan'（管）reflects that teachers and parents govern their children, and it is an act of showing children love and care in the tradition of Confucian beliefs (Tobin et al., 1989). The Hong Kong participants tended to regard discipline as behaving well in class, adhering to the

rules, and being respectful towards the teacher and other classmates. In the Hong Kong context where teachers are stereotypically viewed as authority figures (Littlewood, 1990) and lessons are highly structured, a well-disciplined class was essential in order to listen carefully to the teacher's instructions. In contrast, discipline as a classroom management tool did not hold as much importance in the Japanese cases. Japanese teachers did not emphasise the word 'discipline' in terms of controlling children. Children had already learnt etiquette through social, family and school interactions. Thus, they were able to discern appropriate conduct in different situations. Japanese children knew that the role of a preschool teacher was as a supporter. Significantly, Walsh (2002) found that as children assumed responsibility in a group, they developed self-discipline rather than people controlling their discipline. Japanese teachers believed that children are responsible for looking after themselves, and they should take responsibility for the group as well. Thus, the Japanese informants were not worried about their students disturbing the classroom environment (Walsh, 2002; Adachi, 2012: Hayashi & Tobin, 2015).

The Hidden Values of Body Gestures and Words

In the observations, two cultural differences in teaching styles emerged through distinctive body language features and spoken words. The body movements and language between teachers and students, such as hugging and affectionate words, helped to reveal hidden cultural beliefs in the two cultures.

The word hug derives from the Saxon and Teutonic words *'hog' or 'haggen',* which means 'to be tender of, to embrace' (Forssell, 2012). Hugging behavior has been studied in anthropology in comparisons of different cultural and social contexts. Hugging reflects teachers 'emotional and physiological alterations' (Forssell, 2012).

Figure 20. The difference between Hong Kong and Japan hugging gestures in the music lessons.

To an outsider, the above pictures of Hong Kong and Hokkaido schools indicate that Japanese teachers will hold a student in their arms when he or she needs care or love. It was a very common physical attachment between Japanese children and teachers in the three observed Japanese schools. When the children felt sad or insecure, they would ask the teacher to hug them. From an outsider's perspective, it was interesting to see that Japanese teachers could hug the children and teach the class at the same time. During the summer dance lesson, one girl kept crying. She wanted her beloved Yuka to hug her. After Yuka hugged her, the little girl felt happier and secure. From this study's observations, the Japanese way of

hugging seldom appeared in Hong Kong classes. In a sense, the folk teaching of Japanese teachers symbolises the role of a mother rather than a teacher.

> *Yuka: Our role of teacher is vague. Children sometimes treated us as their mother. When the children cry, we hug them to show a sign of love and care for them. I don't mind hugging them in my arms or being hugged back by them.*

The degree of intimacy between the teacher and the students was very closed in the observed Japanese schools. Although the pedagogy of *mimamoru* drew the teachers and students apart in that the teachers do not actively participate in children's activities, Japanese teachers are always with the children if they need help or support. The preschool teachers assumed a dual role as both mother and teacher, such that children looked for a mother's love through their preschool teacher. In Hong Kong society, the degree of intimacy between teachers and students is manifested in other ways. Some students preferred to hug their teacher, but seldom would a Hong Kong teacher hold a child in their arms or at the back (a traditional approach with older generations, in which a large cloth was wrapped around their backs to secure the child). The observed Hong Kong teachers assumed a professional role as a leader among the children. For younger nursery children, Hong Kong teachers would hug the students to show their love and care for them. This is an interesting observation; in both countries, it is in children's nature to choose warm and caring teachers to hug. The relationship between teachers and students was a continual exchange of sentimental interactions. The four Hong Kong informants discussed their cultural beliefs about caring for children and the hugging gesture.

> *Vera: Actually, I don't mind hugging children in my arms, but I find that it is not our culture to hug children at the back or in our arms. Hugging in the arms seems to be a closer relationship between child and mother. Hugging at the back is an even more traditional bearing-children approach from the 1960s.*

> *Queenie: I think Japanese teachers' physical strength is much better. I couldn't stand if I hugged my students at the back. I probably would have back pain. Besides, I think*

loving children can be expressed in other ways. I still can love my students and hug them closely rather than hugging them in my arms.

Tong: It feels sweet when students come to hug me. But I do feel that if children always ask us to hug them in our arms, it is not good for them. Children should learn to be independent during lessons. I can hug each of them after class.

Silvia: Hong Kong culture won't accept this. It is impossible for us to teach and hug the children at the same time. The principal won't let us do it.

Tong shared her thoughts about hugging children. Hong Kong teachers have a strong identity as professionals, and love and teaching children should be separated during lessons. All of the Hong Kong respondents expressed that the language of love could be presented in different ways. The way Japanese or Hong Kong teachers hugged their students might not reflect the level of the teacher–student relationship. The Hong Kong teachers believed that back hugs or hugging in the arms signified a parent–child relationship rather than a teacher–student relationship.

Use of clear instructional words. It was observed that teachers taught their students how to tidy up and to follow specific procedures to accomplish tasks through the use of clearly spoken instructions. For example, one Japanese teacher was observed showing great patience in guiding the children. After singing the bento songs and finishing the meal, the conversation between Yuka and her students was about tidying up their lunchboxes.

Yuka: Yes. So today we have to be busier than normal. Do you know why?
Children: Because we have to tidy up more dishes.
Yuka: Apart from the dishes, do you know what you are wearing now?
Children: Hair towel and apron.
Yuka: Did any children put these two things into the bag this morning?
Children: Yes. Me.
Yuka: Can we put them in separately?
Children: No, we cannot. We should put them in together.
Yuka: Then, please do remember to put everything into your bag after your lunch.
Children: Yes.

It can be seen that the Japanese participants would not remind the children directly. Yuka guided the children to think logically. Another example of the conversation was seen through Kiki's teaching; she taught her students how to make shower bottles for water play.

> *Kiki: Tomorrow, we will go to play with water in the pool. The water will be sprinkling from this bottle like a shower.*
> *Children:* [very excited] *REALLY?* [noisy]
> *Kiki: We need to design the bottle with this oil coloured pencil. If you paint on your clothes, you cannot wash it.*
> *Children: Sen (means yes).*
> ……
> *Kiki: You write your name with this oil pencil. So, if you draw on your apron, you cannot wipe it off.*
> *Children: Sen.*
> *Kiki: Just in case you do paint on another student's apron, let's roll up our sleeves. Do not draw on your classmates' clothes.*
> ……
> *Kiki: Will you eat this pen? It looks yummy.*
> *Children: No, it is not yummy . . .we cannot eat it.*
> *Kiki: Then, do not put the pen into your mouth.*
> *Children: Sen.*

Kiki used many guiding questions to remind her students to use the oil pencil carefully. Her voice was clear and her speech was slow to ensure that every student had time to think carefully about what she was saying. Regarding the above excerpts with Yuka and Kiki scene, the Hong Kong informants reflected on the emotional difference between Hong Kong and Japanese teachers.

> *Silvia: I think in the Hong Kong culture, we will not spend six questions to ask children to put the head towel and apron into the bag. I will ask the children directly to put them inside the bag. I will say, 'When* ***you finish your meal, please do not forget to put these inside your bag****'.*
> *Tong:* [laughing] *Yes . . . Time is valuable. I will have a similar direct approach as you. 'Children,* ***pack your stuffs into the bag'.***
> *Vera: The Japanese teacher shows a good example of guiding students to remember to do things by asking them questions. She makes them think so they won't forget.*

In the above conversations, the Japanese teachers clearly described each point to get the children to react. Once the children responded to the teacher, she would say another

sentence. In this way, the Japanese teachers proceeded in a logical and patient manner in guiding their students. Their voices were clear and their speech was slow to ensure that every student heard what was said.

In the observations, responsive echo commands were seen in the four Hong Kong interviewees' classes, which were not observed in Japan. Tong preferred using a moderate approach to get the children's attention without blaming or shouting at them. Once the children heard the sound, they would know that the teacher was calling them to focus. The other three Hong Kong teachers also frequently used this technique. In responsive echo commands, teachers employed sound echoes, whereby the teacher makes a sound and the children repeat it. For instance, after the warm up, the children were talking to each other. Thus, Tong said, 'Ting Ding Ding Ding', and the children immediately copied her sound, repeating 'Ting Ding Ding Ding'.

Responsive Echo command

The following is a conversation between Tong and her students after the warm-up exercise:

Tong: Children. Please be seated [during the messy time]
[Tong tries to get the students to focus.}
Tong: Ting Ding Ding Ding
Students: Ting Ding Ding Ding [response]
Tong: Ting Ding Ding Ding [clap and say]
Students: Ting Ding Ding Ding [clap and say]
Tong: Good.
Tong: Children, we haven't played the game [said excitedly and with a very expressive face] . . . *But, I have to remind you that if I observe you pushing or pulling a student or fighting with each other, I am sorry but you will be asked to sit away from us. Let's put the floor pad together.*
Tong: Now, I am going to invite you to queue up.

Compared to the Japanese teachers, the Hong Kong informants' eye contact and hand gestures reflected the strong temperament of a leadership role when teaching the students.

When asked about the reasons behind the cultural differences in the teacher's role, Vera explained that teachers in Hong Kong must be strong leaders to look after the students. If one or two students did not follow instructions, other students would copy those children's misbehaviours. Otherwise, the teacher would be in trouble and the classrooms would be in a very messy state in a confined area. The other three Hong Kong informants also believed that students should behave well and respect the teacher.

Confucian impacts on Japan and Hong Kong culture

Based on the data of chapter five, on a deeper conceptual level, Japanese's emotional education and notion of caring are based on the *Kokoro* (heart) beliefs that emphasised on humanistic value influenced by Confucian concepts in different ways, particularly in political, social and family education (Tucker, 2018; Tamai et al, 2002, Hmeljak, 2017). *Kororo* unties the notions of heart, mind and spirit in the human being. All thoughts, feeling and perception and moods are felt with the body (Weber et al., 2011). It relates to Confucian's Xin (heart-mind 心) is a type of intellectual intuition of the moral beliefs that reflects the human beings' behaviours (Lee, 2017). Empathy is part of *Kokoro* belief that Japanese was cultivated the human relationship and moral education must be empathy with others "from heart to heart" (Weber et. al, 2011). It can be seen that many Japanese filial attitudes are loyalty and conformity with authority. And other part of *Kokoro* also links to Genki spirit, Japanese believed that spirit, vigour, energetic, good health (Genki 元気) that can sustain the human' energy of living, health and universe (Suzuki et al, 2018,Walsh, 2002 & 2003).When origin 元 and the idea of 気 (energy and mind) blends together, the person can work and live in positive ways.

Besides, the Japanese culture interprets Confucian's benevolence (*Ren* 仁) as the central beliefs in early childhood education (Weber et al, 2011& Tamai et al, 2002). The Confucian conception of *Ren* aims at teaching humanity to govern the country with self-

respectful and self-responsible. Through the observation from the Japanese informants, teachers were energised to see the reflection of children's heart, so they could reveal their natural tendencies and eventually actualise their self. Japanese were also expected to students to the principles of politeness (*Li* 禮). The concepts of *Li* and *Ren* are highly regarded in Japanese preschool education.

On the other hand, according to Hue (2005a, 2005b, 2007 & 2008), Hong Kong teachers' teaching practices of classroom management were influenced by Chinese culture and Confucian traditions. The notion of caring was strongly emphasised in the way of Dao(道). The definition of caring in Confucian in education is that 'a teacher is the one who preaches the way (*Dao*) that transfer their experiences and knowledge to the new generation (Hue, 2018 & Lee, 2017). The goal of teaching objective is to help students to solve their daily difficulties, and to gain various knowledge for preparing future academic success. Two cultures were influenced by Confucian beliefs, however, the perspective of educating children is perceived differently through preschool education.

Summary

In this chapter, the Japanese informants' values and beliefs concerning preschool education helped the Hong Kong informants to examine their internal teaching beliefs. The teaching of the Japanese teachers was characterised by: a) a prevalence of play lessons that were less organised than in the Hong Kong culture; b) an emphasis on the inner spirit rather than external knowledge input; c) instilling empathy in children's characters; d) an emphasis on the value of self-learning; e) the pedagogy of *mimamoru*, as in fostering children's self-discipline; f) the role of the music teacher as a companion rather than a leader; and g) patient and logically guided questioning. However, after the intercultural observations in the Japanese culture, the Hong Kong informants' teaching was found to be characterised by: a) an emphasis on teacher-led approaches; b) the value of the traditional Confucian authoritarian

parenting approach; c) revulsion at the mentality of winning at the starting line; d) a strong desire for educational reform from academic-orientated to whole-person education; f) the role of the music teacher as a leader rather than a companion; and g) a preference to use instructional commands rather than guiding questioning.

After observing the Japanese preschool data, a multiplicity of beliefs and practices were discussed. The advantage of observing Japanese teachers would help stimulate Hong Kong teachers' beliefs and new thoughts in their current teaching. After the observations, the teachers were interviewed about their beliefs one year later. The discussions re-evaluated their folk pedagogies and teaching status. Due to the limitations of time and resources, the Japanese teachers did not participate in the intercultural dialogue in this study. The Japanese data were treated as counterpart cases for the Hong Kong informants to reflect on their values and cultural beliefs. The participation of Japanese teachers in the intercultural dialogue in future research has rich potential, for example, to explore different perspectives behind their teaching activities and to shed light on both groups of participants as reflective perspectives.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In this study, the Hong Kong preschool music teachers' reflections of their beliefs and practices mirrored with those of Japanese preschool teachers highlighted their distinctive views towards music, children and the nature of music education. This chapter is concerned with summing up the findings of the study. It includes a discussion of various themes for methodological reflection, a reflection on cultural beliefs', transforming beliefs and implications for future research, and a closing message. After answering the research questions, the Hong Kong informants were given space to engage in transforming their beliefs after observing Japanese music education. As illustrated earlier, some of the Hong Kong informants did indeed reveal hidden perspectives that allowed them to incorporate their counterparts' dominant practices into music education.

Based on the video observations and discussions with the two cultures' teachers, the three questions were answered in regard to Hong Kong teachers commonly used folk pedagogies in music teaching as follows:

Addressing the Research Questions

Question 1: In Hong Kong, what are music teachers' teaching pedagogies in early childhood education?

First, the Hong Kong participants showed strong goal-oriented beliefs in teaching and learning. Hence, structured and progressive learning approaches were common pedagogies of Hong Kong education. Every lesson was set as goal to guide the students to understand music concepts or other key themes. They taught music lessons systematically, which followed the tradition of the Herbartian approach to lesson planning. Creating lesson plans is a practical teaching approach, as teachers can rely on written procedural steps to achieve their teaching objectives. In the classes of the observed teachers, each lesson generally followed a typical flow. In the first stage, the teacher introduced an interesting scenario to get the children's

attention. When the children started to inquire about the topic, the teacher presented the theme or story in the second stage, and music activities were linked to the story or theme. In the third stage, they often applied borrowed Western pedagogies, such as Kodály, Orff and Dalcroze, to their music teaching. A key characteristic of Dalcroze and Orff teaching is the element of play, which helped the children learn music in an interesting and enjoyable way. The musical concepts were learned through singing, chanting, dance, movements, drama and the playing of percussion instruments. These activities started with the most basic concepts, such as a steady pulse, then became increasingly complex and more challenging, especially when the integrative approach was employed. As discussed in Chapter 4, Hong Kong music teachers mainly taught young children music concepts such as tempo (fast and slow), beat (three beats and four beats), dynamics (soft and loud), note values (crochet and quavers) and solfege systems (do, re, mi). The ultimate goal was to engage with the music through hearing, sight and touch, and to feel the music. The fourth stage was the application part, which provided students with the opportunity to improvise or create their songs after learning musical concepts. The final stage was a recapitulation session in which the teachers summarised their teaching content. The four informants were used to planning weekly, daily and yearly lesson plans. Lesson planning was part of their teaching practice, and they felt that good planning ensured that their students would learn effectively.

Second, according to the observed participants, the borrowed Western music pedagogies were modified to suit the needs of the Hong Kong culture. In addition, the teachers did not adhere to only one teaching method. Generally, they merged Dalcroze with other teaching pedagogies to fit their music lessons and the particular ages of the students. For example, due to the limited space of the classrooms, the Hong Kong children could not move about freely. Creative activities and body movement training had to be adapted to suit the constrained space. As discussed in Chapter 4, Vera pointed out that Hong Kong folk

pedagogies were gradually transforming. Traditionally, students sat in chairs and learnt songs, and the lessons incorporated a relatively passive teaching approach. Nowadays, teachers play music games, introduce drama and dance, and use music to teach other disciplines. Children's participation was observed as more active than in previous decades. In general, the teachers' classroom management was still highly structured, and students were expected to be well behaved and respectful towards others to ensure a safe and effective classroom environment. However, music lessons in Hong Kong were usually less than 20 minutes. Hence, teachers also reflected that creativity can hardly be nurtured in children in music lessons of such short duration.

Third, the Hong Kong teachers commonly integrated interdisciplinary concepts in their music teaching. During the Hong Kong participants' interviews, they perceived that the music subject was not only for creating happy moments for children; knowledge from other disciplines, such as English and the sciences, could be also integrated with music in classroom lessons. In addition, children can develop social, linguistic, cognitive and music skills through set topics and themes. From the Hong Kong teachers' perspectives, music brought many positive impacts, such as children's whole-person development, including improved literacy, memorisation, aesthetic enjoyment, social bonds and physical response. Based on the observed Hong Kong informants, they appreciated the thematic approaches that linking the music curriculum with other subjects' activities afforded. The thematic approach aims to motivate children to investigate a topic in depth (Wu & Rao, 2011). Children can develop other potentials and domains, such as languages, music or sciences. The advantage is that more possibilities exist for children to make mental connections and to map general mental processes through conceptual coordination (McDonel, 2013). Significantly, the informants also reflected that the thematic project approach required classroom teachers and the music director to implement interventions in class activities.

With reference to the interdisciplinary view in preschool education, many researchers found that an interdisciplinary curriculum was significantly beneficial for young children (Carpenter, 2004; Economidou et al., 2011; Jolivette et al., 2009; McDonel, 2013; Simmon, et al, 2015 & Woodward, 2005). Carpenter (2004) mentioned that music is not only interdisciplinary in its nature, but it can be also rooted in mathematics, sciences, aesthetics, history and culture. Music instruction can enhance the learning of other disciplines; in addition, students can learn expressiveness, emotions, self-assuredness and other psychological developments. Woodward (2005) and McDonel (2013) also observed that music-mathematics has a direct correlational relationship between rhythm learning and numeracy learning. They confirmed that giving children structured music lessons in an interdisciplinary curriculum can benefit them in two subject areas. Moreover, Jolivette et al. (2009) stated that interdisciplinary preschool programmes provided younger children with disabilities with choices. The school could arrange their team members from the disciplines of education, speech and language pathology, occupational therapy and physical therapy that were developmentally appropriate practice expectations for the children's natural growth. In sum, apart from music and mathematics, whole child development concepts incorporated mind, body and soul into early childhood education (Simmons et. al, 2015). Interdisciplinary views of teaching provide children with a holistic approach to build stronger potentials in their meaningful lives.

Question 2: How do Hong Kong teachers articulate their own practices in relation to their counterparts in Japan?

The findings indicated that the shared intercultural music pedagogies through the exchange of video observations and discussions deepened Hong Kong teachers' understanding of their own culture. The Japanese music educators also evaluated whether their teaching beliefs and pedagogies were suitable to meet their music teaching objectives. According to the

individual and group discussions and the researcher's observations, the themes for cultural reflection are summarised in the following section.

Themes for Cultural Reflection

The two groups of teachers showed significant differences in their attitudes and beliefs about preschool teaching. Their distinctive views in light of their counterparts' perspectives are highlighted below, based on the analysis of the data in the previous chapters.

Perspective on play. The Hong Kong and Japan informants perceived music education from different perspectives, and in terms of play in this context, Hong Kong and Japan are culturally distinct. Their play pedagogies were strongly related to their cultural perspectives and social environments, particularly in adult beliefs and children's play differed among cultures. Wu & Rao (2011) suggested a well-known saying '*ye jing yu qin, huang yu xi*' (*業精於勤,荒於嬉*) by the Neo-Confucianism Hanyu (*韓愈* 768–824). The traditional Confucian view is that two sides are separate and regarded as two different meanings. Traditional Chinese maintain that play may affect students' success. Study must involve hard work with deep concentration. Many Asian parents consider academic training important in early stages rather than play. This is apparent in their parental practices at home regarding the amount of time allocated for study and play (Chan & Chan, 2003; Wu & Rao, 2011).Wu & Rao (2011) examined video clips from 42 days over a period of half a year to observe cultural differences in terms of play themes between German and Chinese children. German schoolchildren engaged in more play activities, such as cooking, shooting, imitating animals and playing with dolls more than Chinese children.

Hence, the role of play in Hong Kong education varies from its role in Japan education. Embedded with the traditional values of teaching children knowledge as a first priority, the interviewees were used to assigning structured play starting from kindergarten. Hong Kong interviewees perceived their play as facilitating limited freedom in class activities. Two features

were identified. First, the folk teaching of the observed music teachers was generally used to set various objectives and to guide their students through the process and completion of the tasks. Second, the main pedagogy of Hong Kong music teachers was intrinsically 'teaching' students, rather than inspiring students to learn. Lui (2012) and Li et al. (2012) pinpointed that current Hong Kong teaching practices favoured transmissions models, whereby teachers are at the centre of the learning experience and activities are structured. In order to balance children's learning enjoyment and interdisciplinary learning, the Hong Kong context tends to use a teacher-centred approach, rather than a child-centred one (Rao, 2002). Structured play brings positive advantages to the students. The goal of structured play is to keep children active while learning (Rock, 2017) in a clear and consistent way to improve their literacy skills (Adams, 2018).

Although Hong Kong education has been criticised for its high academic purpose and lack of providing children time for free play (Chan and Chan, 2003), the folk beliefs of Chinese culture about learning and education might become constraints for fully adopting play-based pedagogies. The observed Hong Kong interviewees have also faced the challenge of how to incorporate more free elements in their child-centred curriculum. Teachers, education leaders and school programme designers should evaluate the implementation of play activities and approaches to develop a better understanding of children's needs (Cathie, 2011 & Saracho, 2012).

In contrast, Japanese teachers adopted a free play spirit in teaching music to students. The Japanese free play concept was developed from Frobel and Kurahashi's concept of free play as a tool to foster children's emotional and individual development (Synodi, 2010). In some European-heritage societies, play is regarded as inseparable from learning. From Frobel, Montessori, etc., theories have suggested that play is an important vehicle for early development (Bodrova et al., 2013; Christie & Roskos, 2006; Fung et al., 2017; Wu & Rao,

2011). Apart from the concept of Western pedagogies, Japanese free play education also contained the folk pedagogy of *mimamoru*, which gives children the opportunity to explore their preferences whether participating in music activities or dealing with conflicts. The pedagogy of *mimamoru* did not only exist in schools. Holloway (1988), Tobin (1989) and Lewis (1995) all described Japanese parents as emphasising 'natural learning' opportunities that allowed children to deal with conflicts with their peers on their own. Such high respect for free play reflects the Japanese ethos to facilitate children's healthy development in body and mind through active and independent engagement in play. When the Hong Kong informants observed the Japanese children, they noticed that the pedagogy of free play did not negatively affect the children's self-discipline, such as being out of control or disrespectful towards teachers or other students. The children had learnt that interpersonal relationships within a group require an attitude of cooperation and the pursuit of a collective goal.

Across two Asian cultures, the Japanese teachers and Hong Kong teachers have different assessments in guiding children to play. Lam's (2018) study reflected that most Hong Kong preschool teachers were not acquainted with children's free playtime, because the local educational system requires the assessment of academic learning outcomes and achieved objectives. A traditional teacher-centred approach is more applicable for teachers' practices in children's assessments, such as their skills or vocabulary competencies. This study also reported that Japanese teachers would assess children's behaviours and abilities in terms of their levels of happiness, self-engagement and other social abilities with other children and school members through free play or various school activities. Whether it was free play teaching or structured play teaching, the teachers' pedagogies highly reflected the core of values from their own culture and practices. Through the observations of the Japanese and Hong Kong teachers, it became apparent that folk pedagogies are not only the responsibility of

the schools. The family and the community at large must share the same philosophy to ensure children receive a holistic education.

The value of Confucian teaching concepts. Some studies have shown that the Confucian culture still has an influence on Chinese people's personalities, behaviours and mental health (Kleinman & Lin, 1981; Lin et al, 1995, Lin & Ho, 2009). In terms of the educational aspect, according to Hue (2008), in Confucianism, the notion of caring children was strongly emphasised in the way of Dao. Hue (2005a, 2005 &2008) showed that Hong Kong teachers' teaching practices of classroom management were influenced by Chinese culture and traditions. The definition of caring children in Confucian in education is that 'a teacher is the one who preaches the way (*Dao* 道), transfers knowledge and helps students resolve difficulties'(Hue, 2008). The Hong Kong teachers in this study envisaged their teaching role as helping students to solve their daily difficulties, such as interpersonal conflicts or family issues. Thus, the guidance teachers are not the only ones who have a caring role. Not only parents but teachers also have the duty to 'help' students learn in terms of teaching them to gain the knowledge from their studies and schoolwork. In contrast, the Japanese culture interprets Confucian's benevolence (*Ren* 仁) as the core beliefs more than Dao at the preschool level (Hmeljak, 2017 & Hue, 2008). The Japanese informants strongly emphasised helping students 'independence and social skills in every aspect of their school lives. Japanese students were energised to see the reflection of their heart, so they could reveal their natural tendencies and eventually actualise their self. Students were encouraged to pursue concern for others, which emphasised the cultural values of collectivism. Human characters were trained to look at the macro-self, rather than the micro-self (Cheng, 2004 & Hue, 2008). They were also expected to be able to present their social selves and roles according to the principles of politeness (*Li* 禮). The concepts of *Li* and *Ren* are highly regarded in Japanese preschool education.

The value of discipline. The vision of discipline that the Hong Kong informants propounded goes beyond the children's behaviour. It also encompassed learning to respect the rules as well as the people in the same classroom. Based on the teachers' discussions, the Hong Kong informants believed in the existence of Chinese authoritarian values. The concept of 'Guan'（管）reflects that teachers and parents govern their children, and it is an act of showing children love and care in the tradition of Confucian beliefs (Tobin et al., 1989). The Hong Kong participants tended to regard discipline as behaving well in class, adhering to the rules, and being respectful towards the teacher and other classmates. In the Hong Kong context where teachers are stereotypically viewed as authority figures (Littlewood, 1990) and lessons are highly structured, a well-disciplined class was essential in order to listen carefully to the teacher's instructions. In contrast, discipline as a classroom management tool did not hold as much importance in the Japanese cases. Japanese teachers did not emphasise the word 'discipline' in terms of controlling children. Children had already learnt etiquette through social, family and school interactions. Thus, they were able to discern appropriate conduct in different situations. Japanese children knew that the role of a preschool teacher was as a supporter. Significantly, Walsh (2002) found that as children assumed responsibility in a group, they developed self-discipline rather than people controlling their discipline. Japanese teachers believed that children are responsible for looking after themselves, and they should take responsibility for the group as well. Thus, the Japanese informants were not worried about their students disturbing the classroom environment (Adachi, 2012: Hayashi & Tobin, 2015 & Walsh, 2002).

The degree of professionalisation. A theme closely linked to the different orientations of the preschool teachers' roles concerns the degree of professionalisation. As noted above, the Hong Kong interviewees hold a high level of accountability in their schools' affairs. Consequently, the Hong Kong teachers viewed their training as leaders, since they are

responsible for managing the children's safety, learning progress and conduct, and are expected to serve as role models and assume other administrative tasks. They considered teaching a professional and noble career, as it is the teachers who provide expert knowledge to the students. The Hong Kong informants were continually taking related early childhood music education courses to upgrade their teaching qualifications, even though all had grade eight piano levels and either held a degree in education or had obtained an alternative teaching certification. They considered professional knowledge very important as teachers and worked hard to continually improve the quality of their teaching. In fact, in Hong Kong preschool education, the government did not require music teachers to have keyboard skills. Any teacher could be a music teacher as long as he or she could sing songs. However, the Education Bureau did send representatives to monitor preschool teachers' teaching practices, including music teaching. For this reason, more preschool teachers are designing structured lesson plans to submit to the government for quality appraisal. In addition, more teachers are taking the initiative to study musical training courses or pedagogies to enhance their teaching qualities.

In contrast, in the Japanese educational system for preschool teachers, all teachers were trained to play the keyboard, so they could sing and play the piano with the children. As discussed with the Japanese informants, they did not hold strong views about the professional role of teaching music, except for one informant, Miki, who was a specialised music teacher in the school. In general, the Japanese informants in this study perceived themselves as all-round teachers, who were more concerned with helping children learn social skills through play, rather than teaching knowledge. They also perceived music as a very important part of the daily activities, and the teachers and students regularly sang songs and played musical games at various times throughout the school day.

Furthermore, body gestures and speaking styles also reflected the teachers' levels of professionalism. The observed Japanese teachers expressed care through their physical attachment, such as hugging and bearing their smaller students on their backs or holding them in their arms. The Hong Kong informants did not think that bearing their students on their backs or in their arms was typical behaviour of preschool teachers, and that those kinds of caring behaviours were the domain of the mother in traditional Chinese culture. Thus, the classroom observations revealed that Japanese teachers seemed to have closer relationships with the children than their Hong Kong counterparts. The roles of the Japanese participants were not as teachers per se, but as companions who facilitated the students. Conversely, the Hong Kong informants were firmly established as professional teachers, and students were expected to follow the teacher's guidance and instructions. In the Hong Kong context, teachers widely praised children's good behaviours verbally while body gestures were rare.

Moreover, in terms of voice projection, the Hong Kong interviewees noted that their voice projection was flatter and firmer than that of Japanese teachers. Their spoken dialogue was stronger and firmer to project their role as the students' leader and to command their attention. Whereas the Japanese participants took the role of the students' companion, and they preferred smiling and speaking in a higher-pitched voice to reflect a friendly persona and pleasant disposition.

Beliefs undergirding the format of teaching. Although the Japanese and Hong Kong teachers shared a common ground in terms of pleasant learning through music education, each culture perceived music education differently and distinctively. One of the distinguishing features between the Japanese and Hong Kong music teaching contexts was the teaching format. In general, Hong Kong teachers followed a Western music teaching approach, which is atomistic: breaking down music into components to be taught in isolation

(pitch, tempo, etc.); by contrast, the Japanese system viewed music teaching as more holistic, integrated into daily activities and the emotional lives of children.

Japanese preschools did not arrange fixed music lessons at specific times. Music activities were integrated into daily activities, such as morning time, greeting time, lunchtime and story times. The Hong Kong informants had fixed music lessons every day, and each music lesson was highly dependent on the topic theme of the week or month. Based on the topic, appropriate songs were chosen, and for each song, a music element to teach the students was selected. The selected elements were incorporated into appropriate music games or interactive body movements related to three beat training. Songs or activities were flexible, depending on the teachers' preferences.

Importantly, the Japanese counterparts' practices provided a means for the Hong Kong teachers to evaluate some issues in their own teaching contexts. They acknowledged that Hong Kong folk education ignored emotional education. The Hong Kong participants often observed problems in their students' behaviour and emotions. Some students had relatively strong self-centred personalities, and empathy for others was not emphasised. The selected video excerpts of the Hong Kong children's behaviours also indicated that their facial expressions, body gestures and voice intonation were weak and less confident compared to those of Japanese students. This was because in Japan, children's inner characteristics, such as empathy and the spirit of Genki, were highly emphasised during their preschool education. The Genki pedagogy trains students to have stronger physical and psychological strength through self-exploration and interactions with people (Walsh, 2004). After observing the Japanese children, the Hong Kong teachers could see how an emotional education can help students become more independent and confident. Thus, the Hong Kong informants welcomed educational reforms that would allow children to unlock their inner abilities, realise their potential, and deal with their problems on their own.

The values of songs. Other differences between the Hong Kong and Japan respondents became apparent with their viewpoints about songs. The Hong Kong interviewees preferred singing foreign English songs and Christian hymns. They also found that fewer local Cantonese folk songs and children's songs were composed in the Hong Kong culture. Furthermore, the interviewees perceived that it was very important for songs to be singable. They analysed that Cantonese children's songs were rarely composed and hardly sung due to the Cantonese pronunciations. For instance, Chen (1999) identified that melodies in Cantonese songs may be tone-mismatched. This was another reason why the Hong Kong informants preferred singing songs in a language other than Cantonese. Chen (1999, 2013) and Cheung (2004) also discussed local teachers' preferences to sing foreign songs rather than Chinese folk and Cantonese songs, due to pronunciations and Western influences. The Hong Kong teachers explored more English songs along with CDs and song books for teaching purposes. Songs from Japanese and English cartoons also had a large impact on Hong Kong children's music education, even though some of these songs have lengthy lyrics and disjunctive melodies, such as Disney's songs from *Frozen* or *Toy Story* or *Miyazaki' Totoro* songs. Furthermore, children enjoy singing cartoon tunes more than children's folk songs. Regarding the value of Christian songs, three of the observed teachers highly stressed the purpose of Christian songs. As Christianity (both Catholics) in Hong Kong has a large impact on preschool education, the message of Christian songs helps their students to have a stronger faith in Christianity. In regard to the song lyrics, Xian (2014) and Dumbauld (2010) described the effort and difficulty of translating existing Christian songs and creating new Christian songs in Hong Kong in the last centuries. During this researcher's school visits, the Hong Kong teachers sung many English Christian songs, Putonghua Christian songs and Cantonese children's pop songs. Old Chinese folk songs were less sung in these four Hong Kong schools.

The Japanese informants valued their own Japanese children's songs and folk songs. Japan had an enormous children's song databank starting from the period of the *Taisho* democracy (Van Das Does-Ishikawa, 2013). Many children's songs were largely composed and classified into different types. They included folk music (民謡 minyou), music made for school music education (唱歌 *Shoka*), music composed by children (わらべ歌 *warabeuta*), ; and music made by adults for children (in Japan, this is 童謡 *douyou*; Van Das Does-Ishikawa, 2013; Manes, 2012). Many writers and poets, such as Kitahara Hakushu, composed children's songs from daily life and the environment. Manes (2012) described the melodies of Japanese children's songs, such as 'Warabeuta' or 'Shouka', as conjunct with limited ranges and few pitches. There are also some unusually large skips in pitches within the songs, and the melodies are mostly pentatonic (do, ri, mi, so, la). Today, some Japanese cartoon songs and foreign songs are used in globalised schools of music education, such as Doraemon, Miyazaki' songs, and Western folk songs, and are largely sung in preschools. During the observations for this research, children were heard singing cartoon theme songs and Western children's songs, such as 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star'. The two observed Japanese schools also had an edited set of songbooks (*Shogaku-Shoka*) that included traditional songs, popular children's pop songs, school anthems and religious songs. In addition, Miki's and Yuka's vice principal had participated in composing their school anthem to depict everyday life and school activities.

Questions 3: What are the beliefs that affect teachers' folk pedagogies as reviewed by the Hong Kong teachers?

In light of the answers to the second question, the most important outcomes of the folk beliefs of Hong Kong teachers are summarised as follows: a) the value of the traditional Confucian authoritarian parenting approach, b) revulsion at the mentality of winning at the starting line, and c) the high value of music education as an educational purpose for

emotional and physical benefits. Based on their folk beliefs, all interviewees transformed their beliefs through some practical actions after reviewing Japanese education.

First, the most critical folk belief was influenced by the Confucian parenting approach. According to the Hong Kong informants, they did not realise that their belief on caring for children and the responsibility of governing children were stronger than that of the Japanese until they observed their teaching. The folk pedagogy of music education is still in the shadow of the traditional Confucian parental style of governing children both mentally and physically. The teachers admitted that they had implicitly placed high demands on the children's musical progress and behavioural control in their school performance. If a child failed to meet their expectations, they felt insecure and frustrated about their teaching. From this study's observations, all of the Hong Kong informants had strong faith in their teaching abilities in terms of giving students sufficient knowledge to equip them for their future learning. They considered a 'successful' teacher as one who has good teaching qualities to achieve the teaching objectives. Excelling in teaching is also a key value of Hong Kong teachers, who continually pursue early childhood music courses for their personal development. Hue (2008) and Tam et al. (2014) described that Confucius valued education and that teachers had three key responsibilities, namely transmitting knowledge to students, developing their careers, and helping students to resolve difficulties. They explained that the basic tenets of Confucianism are strongly expressed in the classroom and emphasise academic achievements. For this reason, Wong and Lau (2001) asserted that local people valued academic subjects more than musical activities in Hong Kong society. Hong Kong Chinese are largely affected by the impact of Confucian teaching; the Western conception of free play learning could not be fully executed in Hong Kong preschool education. With the folk beliefs of Confucian values, teachers' cultural beliefs and learning experiences were seldom about nurturing creativity in their past schooling. Hence, children's creativity in

music learning could be implicitly suppressed in teacher-led lessons. More importantly, the free play approaches could not be fully realised for children's self-exploration in Hong Kong preschools. The music pedagogies and students' behaviours were restricted by external factors, such as school space, school curriculum and parents' expectations.

Apparently, as a Cantonese culture, the notion of Confucian beliefs was invisibly affecting Hong Kong teachers in regard to their orientation in music teaching and learning. After reviewing the cultural differences between Japan and Hong Kong, all the teachers considered that they should take action to transform some issues in preschool education, particularly music education and whole person development. They took practical actions to transform their new beliefs.

First, for the teachers' themselves, they learned to appreciate their efforts in the process rather than their high demand for successful outcomes. They attempted to give the children more opportunities for self-exploration and problem-solving rather than governing their behaviour. One of the Hong Kong interviewees, Silvia, realised that the folk beliefs on Confucian values were highly influencing her teaching; on a deeper level, she also ignored the authentic Confucian values not only emphasis on academic purpose, the Confucian teaching but also emphasised on the manifestation of humanness (Ren) with sympathy and empathy, whole person development in virtuous and faithful character are important (Chu, 2016). The teaching of Confucian values was less influenced after the British took over Hong Kong. Traditional Confucian values and Western values have been confused in the 21st century. Hence, teachers' folk beliefs of their self-expectations about their teaching must be evaluated. According to the Bruner's (1996) cultural psychology, human beliefs are distorted or misperceived from past cultural and social influences; therefore, teachers' folk beliefs must be renewed by evaluating children's needs and analysing cultural issues.

Second, the Hong Kong participants strongly disagreed about the mentality of winning at the starting line. Many local Hong Kong preschools were highly concerned about parents' academic expectations (Chan, 2002; Wong & Rao, 2015). Thus, the notions of child-centredness and holistic development were interrupted. All of the Hong Kong informants insisted that children should have a balance between learning and play. An overemphasis on academic achievement would eventually destroy their learning interest. They were aware that children nowadays were becoming more stressed about their self-performance. Low self-confidence and exhaustion were showing in their facial expression and behaviours. For this reason, the informants had a strong desire to use music education to release children's emotions, by providing them with interesting games and other interesting experiences as stimulation. Queenie understood that her emotional status would affect the children's learning, so she tried to improve her facial expressions by smiling more and to speak in a friendlier tone. Moreover, Queenie mentioned that the hardest thing was to educate the parents, but the parents must be educated to better support the students. Communication between teachers and parents required time, but she was not going to give up easily. This is because they now held the new belief that as long as it was for the good of the students, they should not give up. The general consensus among the interviewees was that building children's characters and instilling good manners were the most important elements at the preschool stage.

Third, the Hong Kong participants believed that music education has educational value. They still perceived that having fixed time slots for music lessons every day was advantageous. They thought that integrated music education was the ideal model, which would incorporate sharing happiness (emotional release), knowledge (music elements or stories or other disciplines), imagination (emotional release and creativity) and reflections of the children's own experiences. It would be better if music teachers could also instil values of

emotional education, such as empathy and childlikeness, through the sung songs or social interactions. This would be the optimal folk pedagogy of Hong Kong music education. Two informants, Vera and Tong, tried to devise possible improvements to foster children's creativity and self-exploration through music education. They assigned real free-play music lessons to the children, such as creating new instruments or composing songs together with the teacher. The lessons gradually evolved into being student-centred rather than teacher-centred. Furthermore, the teachers did not force the children to achieve their aims.

In sum, a number of differences in preschool education have been discussed between the two cultures. Although both cultures share a common Western background influence in education, many of the cultural assumptions differ. The core reasons are geographical, social, historical and financial environments that affect human's thinking. Eventually, they develop their own features of local folk pedagogies. However, these differences were very important issues to be revaluated.

A Methodological Reflection

The findings of this study not only highlighted the views and attitudes of the preschool teachers with respect to their own cultural group. Key themes were also summarised, regarding how teachers expressed and discussed their pedagogical beliefs to understand their culture. This study attempted to discuss methodological procedures and explain t how data were obtained and analysed.

The nature of interview response. The purpose of observation is to convey how respondents perceive their perspectives and beliefs. The impressions that emerged through interviews with the teachers from Hong Kong and Japan emanated from their distinctive communication styles. The Japan informants tended to speak politely and specifically on a range of topics. Due to languages barriers, all data were highly reliant on translators; thus, the essence of the dialogues' meaning might be missed. This is in contrast to the Hong Kong

interviewees, who responded with fast, clear and concise answers to the questions. Apart from inviting them to individual and group discussions, the conversations and follow up questions were conducted through text messages due to time constraints. Because of the different personalities of the Hong Kong informants, some were likely to discuss different issues concerning Hong Kong education in general, while others were more interested in discussing topics specifically related to their music teaching. Because of this particular style of communication, different interviewees provided broader information on particular issues.

All of the interviews with the Hong Kong and Japanese teachers were conducted in the classrooms after class or at the end of the school day. It seemed that the Hong Kong informants were busier with multi-tasking in schools. Thus, extra interviews were conducted via phones and texts. The Hong Kong informants were very eager to share their music teaching careers and students' stories. Their discussions reflected both their frustration and happiness at work, which elucidated the folk beliefs behind their pedagogies. For example, it was interesting that teachers discussed the phenomenon of their student's behaviours. The informants recognised that some children may not be as intelligent as others, but when the parents were willing to listen to the teacher's advice, their children showed progress. In turn, the behaviour and learning of children who are more intelligent might worsen due to their parent's neglect of their emotions and needs.

The dynamic interaction between the researcher, the informants and the context. As this researcher was an insider in two cultures, an attempt was made to remain objective when listening to the interviewees' discussions. Although the researcher was one of the Hong Kong teachers and could, therefore, understand some viewpoints regarding the Hong Kong culture, questions continued to be asked to evoke the respondents' thinking. For example, winning at the starting line is a common mentality of Hong Kong parents. Still, it was important to elicit Hong Kong teachers' opinions and views about this mentality. The

participants' different observations and comments were beyond the researcher's expectations as a cultural insider. However, as a visitor at the Japanese schools, this researcher's duty was to give the Hong Kong informants solid information, including views and descriptions, which were usually supported by written and visual data to prevent any prejudices. This study presented an opportunity for Hong Kong music teachers to share and learn about their cultural contexts and systems. Some teachers found that it was very helpful to review their 'take it for granted' teaching pedagogies and beliefs, such as the teacher as leader, the teacher can control students' behaviours, etc. In the five whole days spent with the Japanese teachers at the three schools, a closer relationship was forged with each of the teachers. This allowed for gaining an understanding of the Japanese teachers' roles and thoughts. Although interpreters assisted with communication, their cultural beliefs and values were clearly understood by their facial expression and body gestures.

Practical Implications

This section discusses significant contributions in terms of understanding preschool music teachers and the common features of folk beliefs in teaching.

Contribution to intercultural understanding. In summary, intercultural teacher education (Burton, Cain, 2015; Lo, 2013 & Westvall, & Karlsson, 2013;) has discussed the significant benefits that music teachers can gain through comparisons and discussions with different cultures, thereby deepening their cultural and teaching horizons. In this research, an intercultural study of music teacher education led to a re-evaluation of Hong Kong's folk beliefs and pedagogical effects on music teaching. This study implies that the transformation of teachers' beliefs is stimulated and constructed by the processes of observing, surprising, confusing, awakening and regenerating. As teaching and learning are too complex to be predefined, the problem usually occurs because folk pedagogies are in the form of tacit and implicit knowledge. For Hong Kong teachers to gain a greater understanding of folk teaching,

the Japanese teaching video ethnography provided powerful evidence for outsiders to reflect on its hidden values. After the discussion, the study revealed that the four interviewees had positive and negative beliefs about teaching. Some beliefs were distorted due to mixed cultural backgrounds, some values were generated by their past schooling and parents' expectations, etc. In the cases of Japanese and Hong Kong music education, both cultures adopt free play and interactive music pedagogies, but the nature of their teaching pedagogies are totally different. Teachers' expectations and beliefs on music teaching affect children's learning interests and behaviours.

As suggested in Chapters 4 and 5, Hong Kong teachers' thoughts have never been unfolded until they observed Japanese teachers' and students' emotional and physical interactions. They gradually opened up about their own cultural beliefs and values compared to other teachers, both from Hong Kong and Japan. In general, they were aware of their beliefs about the play approach in teaching music. However, the perspective was different in Japan, which portrayed positive and childlike characteristics, and where children could play freely in the music class and move their bodies through different physical games and activities. Emotional education and the "Genki" temperament were considered important elements in the music education of Japanese children, who learned music to express their inner emotions freely and sensibly with family, peers and other social relationships

In contrast, the four Hong Kong participants perceived that children's musicianship and auditory sensibilities should be nurtured from a very young age. Therefore, the Hong Kong teachers were passionate about exploring interactive music pedagogies to stimulate children's music interests. The cultural mentality dictated that Hong Kong teachers must be able to 'teach', 'prepare' and 'organise' their students. Hence, the content of the lessons was naturally arranged as structured play with teacher-centred approaches that matched their cultural beliefs. In general, the Hong Kong teachers perceived free play differently from the

Japanese teachers. The Japanese participants viewed play as self-exploration, the pedagogy of *mimamoru*, which provides children with the opportunity to explore their preferences, whether participating in music activities or dealing with conflicts (Holloway, 2000; Tobin, 1989). Conversely, the Hong Kong informants believed that music education not only emphasised playing music happily, but also highly valued systematic music training at the preschool level. Another significant feature of Hong Kong music lessons was the adoption of interdisciplinary concepts, in which the theme topics integrated music and other subjects, such as art and languages. Children could learn multi-disciplines in the same lesson, thus providing the best opportunities for a child's development.

After some of the intercultural observations of Japanese preschool education, the Hong Kong teachers began to feel conflicted about their teaching styles and methods. Although the Hong Kong interviewees thought that Hong Kong children learned more musical and literal knowledge than Japanese children, they admitted that Japanese children's level of happiness and whole-body development were stronger than that of Hong Kong children. Japanese children's characters showed their child-likeness and happiness in music class, their vigour in doing crafts and performing school duties, and their empathy when interacting with people. Japanese children's behaviours made the Hong Kong informants reconsider what would be the best education for their Hong Kong students.

Apparently, the Hong Kong informants acknowledged that their students' physical strength and self-care abilities were relatively weak. The parents, the community and the school have tried to give the students the best conditions for their development, but the educational system seldom encouraged children to have free time for self-exploration. The Hong Kong preschool curriculum also did not emphasise children's inner spirits, characteristics that strongly affect individuals' abilities in the future and throughout their adulthood. Furthermore, the Hong Kong informants reflected that they were too concerned

about the quality of their teaching, competition and parents' expectations. In a discussion about these themes, the Hong Kong interviewees felt that the Hong Kong culture would hardly remove the values of academic achievement due to the complexity of the education system and the social environment. In fact, when they looked at the spirit of Japanese children, they realised that they must trust children's abilities, even though many parents were still overprotective of their children. After the previous discussion, they held some thoughts that they wished they could develop the inner spirit in Hong Kong children, like the Japanese Genki spirit of confidence and vigour, a temperament that would benefit both teachers and students.

After one year of reconstructing beliefs, the teachers' thoughts and mentalities have been renewed in terms of understanding the children's needs and reflecting on people's teaching. The four interviewees were asked again whether their beliefs have been transformed in terms of teaching and learning. They gradually released their concerns and transformed their mentality of folk values to be more positive. Vera expressed that she gave the children more time to create music.

> *Vera: Actually, I have done some free play music lessons. I collect different kinds of old kitchen tools, such as frying pans, woks and other tools. Children can make sounds freely without any restriction. I found that some children can play in beat naturally, while other kids randomly play for fun. I think that it is good to offer them some free play classes, but not every lesson. Children need more guidance in music lessons.*

Vera tried to gradually integrate her new pedagogies, both structured play and free play activities. She allowed her students to enjoy hitting the different tools. She found that every child perceives beats differently. She did not insist that every student follow the same beat; in fact, she found that some children were creating their own funny rhythm by themselves. They might not know it is rhythm, but when she saw the boy was extremely happy to show her his composition, she realised that music education brought them true

happiness and self-confidence. In the later lessons, she then introduced the beat to her students, with some of the played activities incorporating beat training. Vera found that the mixture of structured play and free play education resulted in effective outcomes for the students.

Meanwhile, Tong attempted to build up her self-confidence in teaching, as she used to worry about her teaching qualities. Tong felt that she was not fully enjoying music teaching. The biggest impact on her from observing Japanese education was the children's spiritedness. She told herself not to worry about learning outcomes, that every child has their own learning pace, and building good relationships in music lessons was above all other objectives. In her transformation, she had composed funny lyrics with children, such as using the children's names or railway names to compose songs, which made all the children laugh and sing happily. More importantly, she also told her principal about her visions, which helped her to teach more confidently.

> *Tong: I find that I have become more solid now in terms of reminding myself to follow my beliefs. My belief is to let children explore by themselves. We compose songs together; it's more down to the earth; children are happier and freer. I found that discussions with my principal are very important, letting her know my vision.*
>
> *I used to worry about too many things, particularly my teaching qualities, but now I try to ask students what they want to play. Based on their interests, I assign suitable games for them. My attitude has changed; children's needs are the main area for me to discover. I am still discovering my children. They are like treasure.*

Another participant, Queenie, spent one year assessing her students' needs. She found that her students this year were different than the students from last year. Her students' personalities were more active, so they could not concentrate like last year's students. She found that her music lesson plans did not work because of the children's fluctuating temperaments. Queenie observed that children's characters were strongly related to their parents' teaching approaches. Her students' parents arranged too many activities for their

children; therefore, their concentration was relatively weak. Hence, she introduced time for drawing and music listening so the children could calm themselves down, and she used quiet music to release their emotions. Queenie pointed out that teaching music elements did not work for her class; her students required more quiet time to nurture their patience and concentration. More importantly, she attempted to talk to her students' parents about her perspectives on teaching, such as overprotecting children and over-drilling academic exercises. As a mother and a teacher, Queenie considered communication with parents significant and thought that parents would trust her professional opinion.

> *Queenie: One more breakthrough for me was sharing my beliefs with the parents. I always tell them the story of the turtle and the rabbit. I give the example of my son, how I teach my son and how I maintain a good relationship with my son. I think my story can be useful for parents to trust my advice. Even though some parents may not fully accept it, but I try my best.*
>
> *More importantly, I cannot rely on lesson plans because my students are super active. My plan always changes, depending on their needs. But my children need to have more quiet time as their schedules are busier than adults. I want them to have a piece of serenity and free time to dream and release their fluctuating emotions.*
>
> *I keep smiling more and speaking loudly while teaching. I try to give more positive messages to the students. Sometimes, jokes, funny pictures, etc. But what I learnt is that giving them free time to play is the best reward for children.*

The final informant, Silvia, pursued a part-time master's course and worked in another school that matched her vision. She felt that music education was one of the cornerstones of Hong Kong preschool education. Silvia understood that children's self-care abilities and helping hands training must be a first priority of Hong Kong education. Although she enjoyed teaching children more than taking a higher school position, she was greatly determined to study and, therefore, took a higher teaching position in other schools.

> *Silvia: I like teaching children more than doing administrative work, such as principal. The Hong Kong teaching culture requires pioneer educators and leaders to impact on the teaching culture. I want to reform the preschool culture and music*

> *education. So, I need to equip myself and contribute my vision to Hong Kong preschool education. I am happier than before, even though the work is still busy, but working in different schools, I can explore more teaching experiences with different schools and cultures.*

The intercultural video observations and discussions were significantly helpful for regenerating teachers' beliefs. More importantly, stronger beliefs sustained their pedagogies in music education and other interactions with parents and students. Although many Hong Kong parents are still concerned that academic preparation is vital for their children's entry into primary school, the interviewees held the positive perspective that children's play and self-care abilities are more important than academic drills. They found that folk beliefs must be re-evaluated, because they have a great impact on people's actions and behaviours. Consequently, the interviewees expressed that they were willing to overcome their folk beliefs, such as giving children more freedom, to encourage their creativity. Due to research budgetary and time limitations, this study only focused on the side of the Hong Kong teachers. It would be more significant if the Japanese teachers are given an opportunity to respond to their observations of the Hong Kong teachers' teaching practices, and if they could participate in a two-way discussion about their music education.

Additionally, in terms of the mode of transformational learning through intercultural video observation, intercultural visits or activities with Hong Kong music education teachers across cultures should be highly promoted. The teachers' experiences of and reflections on their encounters between their familiar and unfamiliar cultural contexts can inspire different perspectives, and challenge teachers' beliefs and perceptions in further teachings. The use of video cameras to encourage and stimulate constructive reflection on educational practices are on the increase in the domains of language, intercultural comparisons and international university contexts for the exchange of ideas and improvements (Falcinelli & Gaggioli, 2016; Siqueira, 2017; Van Der Aalsvoort et al., 2010). The use of videotaped episodes from

interviews and class teaching give professionals and students a chance to find out the consciousness and differences. The recent trend in early childhood education is to adopt effective tools, such as multi-media and video, to give a broad perspective to exchange pedagogies. For future research, further studies need larger samples to obtain a broader view of intercultural music education across different countries. Future research is warranted to give further thought to Singapore music education. It would be interesting to know how Singapore music teachers deal with parents' issues in music education. Singapore and Hong Kong have in common the stresses on academic achievement. Thus, music teachers' perspectives should be applied to gain and compare insights from the two cultural pedagogies.

Furthermore, the field of preschool music education would benefit from further recommendations through the following channels:

a) Specialised music teacher programmes should provide opportunities to expose pre-service or in-service teachers to a variety of approaches to preschool education from different countries. Intercultural interactions through exchange programmes may be a significant contribution. The opportunity to observe various approaches to music education gives practitioners a vision to learn.

b) To facilitate the above efforts, preschool music teachers can set up online blogs or chat rooms to exchange ideas and knowledge. Emotional support is very important for teachers in Hong Kong. If possible, sharing good video recordings of teachings may provide more inspiration to exchange ideas.

c) Traditional Cantonese children's songs must be highly promoted and composed. Teachers should highly encourage composing songs or lyrics together with the students. One of the biggest problems of Hong Kong music education is that local people do not

value the importance of local children's songs. Thus, Hong Kong music teachers may finally explore songs from other countries.

d) Classroom music teachers should gradually develop their own folk music pedagogies. Although Western music pedagogies are very practical and useful, Hong Kong education should not rely on borrowing other countries' pedagogies. More experienced preschool music teachers need to be encouraged to share our Hong Kong music teaching or to enter into collaborations. Additionally, more specialised training programmes for music educators and composers may incorporate more holistic music pedagogies.

e) Parents' education is needed. The relationships between teachers, parents and society affect the folk pedagogy of children's development. To a larger extent, parental influence is another critical issue to be observed. Teachers and parents must communicate to share the teachers' beliefs with parents. Two-way communication is the best way to help students.

Implications for Future Research

The finding of this study provides a broader view to understand the needs and thoughts of Hong Kong preschool music teachers.

Shortage of early childhood music educators and composers. In a larger extent, Hong Kong has many music educators and musicians; however, few professional early childhood music educators and composers have been trained or nurtured in Hong Kong society. As mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5, Hong Kong folk songs and children's songs were largely imported from Japanese cartoons and English songs. Local teachers were used to collecting songs from overseas. Few composers or teachers were encouraged to compose children's songs, as Western and Japanese societies provided many publications of music books, songs books and music sheets. Unfortunately, Hong Kong's production of children's

songs was scarce. Moreover, fewer early childhood music educators have developed a set of Hong Kong teaching pedagogies, such as the Japanese Suzuki and the Swiss Dalcroze. As these pedagogies have been popular for more than three decades, it is questionable why no other educators have developed better teaching pedagogies in music education. As suggested in this study, each culture should have their own folk pedagogies to suit for their children's and society's needs. In teacher's colleges, music education in early childhood is seldom promoted or considered a compulsory subject. Thus, many pre-service or in-service teachers study music training courses through other organisations. Needless to say, the shortage of preschool music teachers affects the quality of music teaching. According to the feedback from the four Hong Kong teachers, the quality of local music teachers are of varying standards. Some teachers might not adopt Western pedagogies in their teaching because of weak musical backgrounds. As in the Japanese case, all preschool teachers must be able to learn basic keyboard skills prior to receiving teaching certification, and then they must be given opportunities to increase their music teaching qualities.

Limitations. The samples of preschool teachers in this study were selected based on their teaching experiences in both the Hong Kong and Japan contexts. This project tried to find comparable cases between Japan and Hong Kong. However, during the invitation process, it was difficult to find similar music lesson contexts and musical backgrounds among Japanese and Hong Kong teachers. In addition, obtaining approval for video recordings in Hong Kong preschools was challenging. Many schools rejected the video recordings to protect children's safety. In Japan, the music teaching context differs from the Hong Kong context; many Japanese schools do not offer regular music lessons. Finally, all the final interviewees were invited based on other teachers' referrals. Each country selected three to four teachers in different regions in Japan and Hong Kong. The Japanese teachers' interviews were used to provide supportive evidence to the Hong Kong teachers when they

asked about the culture of Japanese preschools. Due to time and budgetary limitations, the study focusses on the discussions with the Hong Kong teachers. The review would be more comprehensive if the Japanese teachers could also be invited to view the Hong Kong teachers' videos and discuss both folk pedagogies.

The issue of culture. Through the observations of Hong Kong and Japanese folk pedagogies, intuitive and implicit beliefs about education can be reached, especially those characterised by every culture. This culturally rooted knowledge is carried by every member of a certain culture and acquired in earliest childhood (Marina & Bojovic, 2016). Recalling Chapter 2, Olson and Bruner (1988) defined culture as shared knowledge and a meaning-making process that generates a set of everyday practices, culture and community, and human minds that are indistinguishable. The meaning-making process provides a complex web of significant meanings, such as knowledge, art, music, morals and norms, which are reflected in their cultural features (Geertz, 1973). Based on meaning making, we can observe the behaviours and preferences of specific cultural groups. At the same time, to a certain extent, humans' beliefs and values are relatively hard to observe and understand. Particularly, when Kantor (1982) mentioned that Western people viewed non-Western people differently in terms of cultural deviance, understanding other cultures requires comprehending their social and cultural contexts. It is imperative to emphasise that the cross-cultural reflection in this study offers ways to reflect and express these teachers' views in terms of their roles, use of tools and methods, and their body gestures and spoken dialogues. The interview questions and reflection discussions also helped to address the understanding of intercultural relationships. The Hong Kong informants discovered that the folk pedagogy of education attached great importance to preschool education, especially the education of younger children, and that upbringing primarily focused on discipline and the development of obedience in children. From the teachers' perspective, folk pedagogies are the foundation for

the development of teachers' beliefs about education and teaching. Finally, the study was intended to make teachers rethink whether their beliefs were suitable for their current teaching and to improve their music teaching pedagogy through intercultural observation and discussion.

A Final Message

In the study, the data analysis revealed that folk pedagogies are significant and implicit to teachers and students. The folk beliefs and teachings from teachers, society and parents will consequently pass to the children. Further cultural exchanges are significant, whereby educators can exchange their ideas, teaching experiences, and observations for their counterparts' practices. This comparative gaze provides insights for teachers to evaluate their intentions, expectations, and pedagogies, and to make improvements. In the global view, the cultural boundaries today are disappearing. More teachers are willing to visit other countries or adopt information technology that facilitates the communication of teaching ideas, contributes teaching qualities and fosters a mutual understanding. With further cultural exchanges, teachers from the two countries can strengthen the power of preschool music education. Comparative and in-depth communicating about the cultural system of preschool music education are needed to help teachers enhance their teaching qualities and empower students' learning. The findings of this dissertation contribute to that end.

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