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An Examination of Elementary General Music Teaching Practices for Congruence with the Reggio Emilia Approach

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AN EXAMINATION OF ELEMENTARY GENERAL MUSIC TEACHING PRACTICES FOR
CONGRUENCE WITH THE REGGIO EMILIA APPROACH

by

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An Examination of Elementary General Music Teaching Practices for Congruence with the Reggio Emilia Approach

Dissertation Directed by Professor James R. Austin

Abstract

The purpose of this survey study was to explore the extent to which elementary general music teaching practice is congruent with three key characteristics of the Reggio Emilia approach: documentation, hundred languages, and child as protagonist. I also considered whether variance in the congruence of elementary general music teaching practices with the concepts of documentation and symbolic translations might be explained by music teacher education level or the degree to which they report being influenced by major general music pedagogies.

I emailed the Characteristics of Elementary General Music Teaching survey to a stratified, cluster sample of elementary general music teachers in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. Respondents (N = 280) completed rating-scale and selection-type items that reflected the concepts of documentation and symbolic translations. Descriptive statistical analyses were used to examine the extent to which respondents’ reported teaching practices were congruent with the Reggio Emilia approach. I then reduced data (informed by exploratory factor analysis for the symbolic translations items) into reliable, multi-item subscales that supported the use of two statistical approaches to explain variance in teaching practice congruence: multiple regression analyses (estimating variance in congruence explained by influence of general music pedagogies) and factorial ANOVA (comparing group differences in congruence based on college and general music pedagogy education). Lastly, I used inductive coding to analyze narrative responses—addressing the Reggio Emilia-inspired concept of child as protagonist.
Overall, study participants reported teaching practices that reflect some congruence with the Reggio Emilia approach. They collect some student artifacts, display evidence of student learning in certain forms, adapt instruction based on observation of students, provide students opportunities to translate between symbolic systems, and demonstrate a student-centered approach to music education by modifying their teaching practices at the student, class, grade, or developmental level. However, the range, extensiveness, and sophistication of these practices was limited, suggesting an incomplete or tenuous congruence. Variance in the congruence between teaching practice and the concepts of documentation and symbolic translations could not be explained by education level or general music pedagogical influence. In addition, Implications for elementary general music teachers and music teacher educators are discussed.
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A general music teacher looks over drawings made by a small group of second graders. To an outsider, the drawings might just look like a collection of different-sized circles, but in a previous class the teacher saw children drawing these while composing a song with lyrics about driving different speeds—slow in the school zone, fast on the highway. The class will arrive soon. Based on these previous visual interpretations of tempo, the teacher sets out a pile of tree cookies—thin slices of tree branches—of different sizes in the middle of the floor. Her second graders arrive. Some arrange the tree cookies in a circle, from largest to smallest (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 Circle of Tree Cookies
The music teacher takes a photo as students walk around their circle, moving faster where the tree cookies are smaller and slower where they are bigger. One student fetches a basket of rhythm sticks. Two children arrange some rhythm sticks so they are pointing from each tree cookie into the center, like spokes of a wheel. A few other students grab two rhythm sticks each and tap to match their footsteps: slower then faster then slower again. The teacher snaps another photo.

The above vignette illustrates one possible manifestation of a Reggio Emilia-inspired general music class. The teacher began with a provocation (Edwards & Gandini, 2015); that is, she set out materials she thought would be interesting to the students (based on previous observation of the students) and gave them space to explore the materials. Students could easily access and add other materials (Gandini, 2012a). From the beginning, the teacher did not know exactly what the students would choose to do, choose to explore (Edwards, 1998). To help her make sense of their work and emerging understanding, the teacher took photographs, which will serve as a record of experience and learning along with other artifacts. A teacher inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy uses these pieces of evidence to engage in documentation (Dahlberg, 2012); through documentation, the teacher may develop hypotheses about children’s learning processes, their emerging questions and understanding, and the role of teacher support. To regular meetings with other teachers and a pedagogista (pedagogical coordinator: similar to an instructional coach), the general music teacher will bring these photos along with other types of evidence, such as written vignettes, transcriptions of children’s explanations or questions, audio recordings of children’s composing, and children’s drawings and writings. Together, the teachers and pedagogical coordinator will make sense of the evidence through documentation and consider future provocations. Throughout and at the conclusion of a long-term project, the
teacher will display evidence to make children’s learning visible—perhaps in a panel of pictures and text—for the children, their parents, and community members to view.

At the core of Reggio Emilia philosophy is the concept of *the hundred languages* (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998a), which refers to the many different symbolic systems young children use to explore and share meanings. In the example above, children were exploring speed through multiple “languages.” They drew pictures with different sized circles for different speeds and arranged tree cookies to translate this idea from paper to the floor. They stepped and tapped rhythm sticks to varying speeds, transferring from the concept of an automobile’s speed toward musical tempo felt through movement and heard through sound. Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers encourage children to translate their curiosities, experiences, and representation between different languages, thereby deepening understanding and facilitating expressive communication.

From early in the development of the schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy that share and co-create this philosophy, the founders wrote about music as one of the hundred languages; they wrote of music’s importance in young children’s education (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998b). While they created support structures for visual art (*atelierista* and *atelier*: an artist or art resource teacher and art studio), a formal system of supports was not envisioned or widely adopted for music. This structural choice has had the unintended consequence of elevating visual art above music in many of these schools, and in preschools worldwide where educators model curricular and instructional approaches after those established in Reggio Emilia. Two decades ago, Barbara Andress (1998), a leader in early childhood music education in the U.S., wondered about music’s apparent absence from Reggio Emilia-inspired schools in America. She asked, “Where’s the music in ‘the hundred languages’ of children?” (Andress, 1998, p. 14). Perhaps,
she suggested, music’s limited role might be due to a perception of music as being mainly a large-group instructional or performance activity, a view which is counter to the Reggio Emilia philosophy of valuing child-led, open-ended, exploratory, and small-group learning.

More recently, music education researchers have studied the use of music in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools in the United States, finding that some teachers are incorporating music (Bond, 2012, 2015; Waters, 2015; Westlake, 2015). Whereas Andress (1998) appealed to music educators to ensure music is present in all forms of early childhood education, including in schools inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, Bond (2013) recommended that music educators also consider the converse. She suggested music teachers incorporate Reggio Emilia-inspired elements in elementary general music education. Bond noted that the approach is:

- child-centered, flexible, and responsive to student need, qualities that are heralded in music education dialogue today. We can embrace further these Reggio principles in our music classroom contexts to foster child-centered environments that honor innate musicality. (p. 25)

**Problem Statement**

The Reggio Emilia approach emphasizes children’s exploration of and communication through the arts, which can include music. American early childhood educators interpreting the approach in their local preschool contexts have developed many tools for supporting learning in the visual arts, with a smaller but increasing number of supports designed for music. The benefits associated with this approach—in which the teacher acts as a researcher and co-constructor of learning—might also come to fruition if adapted for use by elementary general music teachers. In this study, I will take a first step toward identifying some key opportunities and challenges associated with incorporating Reggio Emilia-inspired techniques in elementary general music
classrooms by exploring the extent to which current practices in elementary general music are congruent with concepts from the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Few researchers have studied the Reggio Emilia approach applied to elementary general music contexts. Those doing so have focused on teachers’ experiences or behaviors in relation to newly implemented curricula, but they have not examined how current practices—perhaps described with different terminology—may be similar to Reggio Emilia-inspired music instruction. Developing an understanding of how elementary general music teaching practices may align with the Reggio Emilia philosophy will have implications for elementary general music teachers (as they reflect on their own practice), music teacher educators (as they develop educational programs supporting elementary general music teachers in adapting and implementing Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching techniques), and music education researchers (as they discuss and examine Reggio Emilia-inspired music education delivered by music specialists and generalist teachers).

An Approach to Education from Reggio Emilia, Italy

The Origin Story

The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education began in the small city of Reggio Emilia, Italy, as people worked to rebuild after WWII, literally using bricks from the rubble of war-ravaged buildings to construct the first preschool. There was initially no plan for funding, but the people from the neighborhood of Villa Cella were determined to begin. Within a year, other schools opened in poor neighborhoods around the city. These were led by local women with support from the National Liberation Committee (Gandini, 2012a).

Loris Malaguzzi, a middle school teacher for seven years, had become frustrated with the format of state-run schools, feeling that as a teacher he was restricted to poor teaching practices. He studied psychology in Rome at the National Center for Research and then returned to Reggio
Emilia. During the day, he ran a town-sponsored children’s mental health center. At night, he worked with the parent-run schools (Gandini, 2012a). Malaguzzi is credited as the founder of these schools and the source of their educational philosophy (“Loris Malaguzzi”, n.d.). He and others allowed (and still allow) themselves to be inspired by, but not bound to, the principles and ideals of other prominent education theorists—such as Jerome Bruner, Maria Montessori, Lev Vygotsky, and John Dewey. They used these principles and ideals to question their own beliefs about education and encouraged each other to go beyond contemporary understanding of children and learning (Dahlberg & Moss, 2006; Thornton & Brunton, 2015).

By 1963, the schools enrolled enough children and garnered enough support that the first city-run school for young children opened. Malaguzzi and others running this school felt pressure to do well, find their identity quickly, and share their work with the community. Every week, teachers brought the school materials and children to an outdoor location (e.g., a piazza, a park) in town as an exhibition. Onlookers saw the power of treating children as protagonists in their own learning, of teachers learning from the children, and of this approach to education that was so different from the city’s Catholic schools that took a custodial approach (characterized by adult-knows-best, strict practices). By means of this always-developing and contextually-located philosophy, a desire to avoid building too many certainties, and openness to unfolding experiences, teachers developed the long-term, open-ended project approach for which education in Reggio Emilia remains known (Gandini, 2012a). Since 1971, Reggio Emilia has also run infant-toddler centers informed by this same evolving philosophy (“Loris Malaguzzi”, n.d.). Today, Reggio Emilia preschools serve children ages 3-6 and infant-toddler centers serve those younger than age three.
Key Concepts

The Reggio Emilia approach is not completely codified, as practitioners strive to keep the sensibilities and competencies of individuals who make up the specific community in which a school is situated at the heart of the philosophy. There are, however, unifying concepts that tend to inform such preschools. These key concepts are the hundred languages, provocations, open-ended projects, documentation, teachers as researchers, and ongoing professional development. Practitioners realize the approach through democratic interaction between the child as protagonist, their family, the teachers, the environment as third teacher, and the atelierista. In this Key Concepts section and the following Key Players section, I will describe the approach specific to Reggio Emilia, Italy. Later in this chapter, I will transition from discussing the Reggio Emilia approach (in Italy) to Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching as found outside of Italy, including in the United States.

The Hundred Languages. At schools following the Reggio Emilia philosophy, children are encouraged to express themselves through many and varied forms of symbols, or the hundred languages. Before writing more about this, I would like to share Malaguzzi’s poem on the topic, alongside Gandini’s translation (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998a).

_Invece il cento c’è_
By Loris Malaguzzi

*Il bambino*  
é fatto di cento.  
*Il bambino ha*  
cento lingue  
cento mani  
cento pensieri  
cento modi di pensare  
di giocare e di parlare  
cento sempre cento  
modi di ascoltare  
di stupire di amare

_No way. The hundred is there._  
Translated by Lella Gandini

The child  
is made of one hundred.  
The child has  
a hundred languages  
a hundred hands  
a hundred thoughts  
a hundred ways of thinking  
of playing, of speaking.  
A hundred always a hundred  
ways of listening  
of marveling of loving
cento allegrie
per cantare a capire
cento mondi
da scoprire
cento mondi
da inventare
cento mondi
da sognare.
Il bambino ha
cento lingue
(e poi cento cento)
ma gliene rubano novantunove.
La scuola e la cultura
gli separano la testa dal corpo.
Gli dicono:
di pensare senza mani
di fare senza testa
di ascoltare e di non parlare
di capire senza allegrie
di amare e di stupirsi
solo a Pasqua e a Natale.
Gli dicono:
di scoprire il mondo che già c’è
e di cento
gliene rubano novantunove.
Gli dicono:
che il gioco e il lavoro
la realtà e la fantasia
la scienza e l’immaginazione
il cielo e la terra
la ragione e il sogno
sono cose
che non stanno insieme.

Il bambino dice:

The hundred languages—and as Gandini translates, “a hundred, hundred, hundred more”—are the many different forms of symbolic communication children can use. For instance, a child might communicate growing understanding of wind through dance, abstract drawing, clay
sculptures, a written or told story, and musical improvisation. Within this philosophy, children are given space, materials, and encouragement to experiment with, practice, and improve their use of these many different languages. Though children often do become better at using a specific medium through their work, this is not the primary goal. Instead, teachers aspire to help children develop facility in multiple media so they can better represent their thinking and develop greater understanding of concepts through use of these varied languages (Gandini, 2012a).

**Supporting the Hundred Languages.** The atelierista (an art specialist) engages children with high-quality materials, often in the atelier (studio) but also throughout the school building and grounds. In an interview, Gandini described the atelier has serving two functions.

First, it provides a place for children to become masters of all kinds of techniques, such as painting, drawing, and working in clay—all the symbolic languages. Second, it assists the adults in understanding processes of how children learn. It helps teachers understand how children invent autonomous vehicles of expressive freedom, cognitive freedom, symbolic freedom, and paths to communication. The atelier has an important, provocative, and disturbing effect on old-fashioned teaching ideas. (Vecchi, 1998)

The atelier is a space but also functions as a mechanism for disrupting common teaching techniques. Here, children are encouraged to explore the world and their understanding through different forms of visual art. Teachers are meant to observe how their students manipulate materials in exploration and communication; this informs a different understanding of children and thus a different approach to teaching.

In the city of Reggio Emilia, I observed that some schools have expanded this concept of the atelierista and the ateliera beyond visual art. Some schools have a visiting movement
**atelierista** who creates provocations in the environment to suggest children explore different forms of movement. In one school, the **atelierista** is a music specialist, instead of visual artist (K. Callaghan, personal communication, October 14, 2017). A few schools also have a music studio, akin to the visual art **atelier** but without a dedicated **atelierista**. In an elementary school that continues this early childhood approach, I found multiple music spaces throughout the school. These housed instruments, books on music, blank manuscript paper, drawings by students of instruments, and displays of in-progress and completed student compositions using traditional and invented notation.

**Open-ended projects.** *Progettazione*, which last weeks or months, lend themselves to exploring a concept through many of these possible languages (e.g., clay, poetry). These open-ended projects often begin with, as Malaguzzi referred to it, a prologue. The teacher observes children to determine what might interest them and how those interests may connect to teacher interests or learning opportunities. Then, the teacher leads an opening discussion (the prologue). The teacher shares ideas and suggestions and remains open to those of the children, thus setting the stage for the project. Some ideas may come to fruition but others will not. This verbal discussion is often followed by the children creating visual representations of how the project could unfold. By using multiple modes of communication, each student considers their ideas through different symbolic languages and can contribute in a format with which they are comfortable and capable. This allows each child to more fully support the group’s developing project (Gandini, 2012a).

Teachers can use two different approaches to reflect on and guide development of an open-ended project. Historically, they emphasized the emergent curriculum, looking at the topics of learning and how these may have narrowed or changed throughout the project. More recently,
teachers have shifted from the emergent curriculum to the *pedagogy of listening*. They consider how they helped children find meaning in their actions and encounters. This is a shift, then, from focusing on *what*—the areas of understanding children develop—to *how* they socially construct understanding (Edwards & Gandini, 2015).

Returning to the opening vignette, the teacher might reflect on the emergent curriculum. She would note that children connected the concept of speed from cars to different size circles and then were beginning to connect speed as represented by circles to musical tempo through movement and tapping rhythm sticks. The teacher might, instead, focus on how she supported students’ social development of understanding through a pedagogy of listening. In this same case, the teacher carefully observed a previous interaction (in which children wrote a song and drew circles) and designed a provocation with tree cookies. She gave students space to explore, and some used movement, some tapped rhythm sticks, and some visually represented the wheel with rhythm sticks as spokes. From here, she would reflect on how to continue encouraging social development of understanding, likely related to tempo but perhaps through listening to or singing songs with tempo changes, connecting sounds to storytelling, or group composition.

**Observation and Documentation.** Teachers using the Reggio Emilia approach collect photographs and recordings of students in action, examples of student work—together these may be thought of as *artifacts* of student experience—and notes on their conversations with and observation of students. Advances in technology, especially the digital camera, have made this data collection less cumbersome in time and cost (Trepanier-Street, Hong, & Bauer, 2001). Staff and parents also contribute, in many schools, to a journal about the days’ events or what the children found interesting or important (Cagliari, Filippini, Giacopini, Bonilauri, & Margini, 2012).
Engaging in documentation, however, goes beyond collecting these materials. Teachers, often facilitated by the pedagogical coordinator, use the materials to initiate and support “dialogue, interpretation, contestation, and transformation” (Dahlberg, 2012, p. 225). In the process of analyzing documents, they recognize there is no neutral, objective point of view, but many possible interpretations that can retain different senses of rightness. The objective, then, of documentation is not to distill the one, true, core nugget of learning that occurred, but to make visible some of the multiple paths and processes of children as they developed a plurality of knowing in a range of the hundred languages.

Thus, while discussing documentation, educators in Reggio Emilia sometimes refer to a goal of retaining the complexity of education (Dalberg, 2012). This complexity supports Malaguzzi’s purpose of documentation: “to reveal in full light the image of the competent child” (Gandini, 2012a, p. 64). A child does not develop competence related to only one of the hundred languages or only one area of understanding in a strictly linear fashion. Instead, their development occurs by means of the convergence and divergence of learning processes through which children engaged in multiple of the hundred languages, many facets of a topic, and different topics.

To “make visible” the full image of the competent child, teachers must collect artifacts on each individual child and also of the group. They must “listen” carefully to what children are demonstrating or saying. Instead of cursory analysis, teachers should revisit documents to question previous assumptions, noting what perspectives they may have superimposed on their analysis and interpretation. Because of this self-questioning, the full process of documentation is not always a comfortable one for teachers.
After and during interpretation, the product of documentation can be displayed in many ways. It is often presented in panels on school walls, including a combination of photos of students, their work, and a teacher-written description of the work or the process of creating it. Sometimes, a student might help write the description. Alternatively, displays can include children’s 3D sculptures and use video or audio recordings. By making a class website, teachers seek to support parents who are unable to spend time looking at documentation panels during drop-off and pick-up (Trepanier-Street et al., 2001).

**Who Does Documentation Serve?** Documentation is designed to serve three inter-woven communities—the children, their parents, and teachers—and it is collected throughout and following an experience (Rinaldi, 2004). For children, documentation can be a form of reflection. Children regularly see their previous work and evidence of their conversations, and this encourages them to develop awareness of where they once were and how far they have come, and predict where they may be going (New & Kantor, 2009).

For parents, documentation is a means of communication—inviting parents to appreciate what young children can accomplish and recognize teachers’ supportive work. The deepened understanding parents may develop through reviewing displays of documentation can lead to higher parent valuing of children’s work in school and support of school-related learning. At times, the use of documentation spreads beyond the school to the greater community (New & Kantor, 2009).

Documentation may also serve as a support tool for teacher research and professional development. Through collecting artifacts and vignettes of student work, selecting on which to focus, and developing displays, teachers and their pedagogical coordinator work to better
understand children and how to (re)design the learning experiences and environments to foster multiple forms of communication and understanding.

**An Example of Documentation.** In Reggio Emilia, schools sometimes publish documentation of a long-term, open-ended project. The subject of these projects varies. Two schools—the Luigi Bellelli Infant-Toddler Center and the Pablo Nerdua Preschool—collaborated on a musical project and publication of their documentation. The project, “Music is a well-made sound: From listening to composition,” took place between January and June 2005 with the aim of encouraging the children to, in their educators’ words, “approach” classical music (Giacopini, Maccaferri, & Zini, 2008).

In the publication, a reader sees photographs of children playing with musical instruments and other objects alone, with other children, and with adults; photographs of classical musicians and a formal performance hall; children’s drawings of musical interactions, invented notation, and attempts to represent traditional notation; quotes from children; and short narratives written by different adult stakeholders. Since this project included composition, this publication—unlike others I saw when in Italy—including a CD with the documentation. The origin and development of projects underlying finished artifacts might not always be readily apparent, and the authors address this:

The project, “Music is a well-made sound”—the title is inspired by the words of Federico, a 4-year old child—has grown out of the *curiosity, questions* and *interests of children*, and their teachers’ interpretations, supported by a *dialogue* that has developed with composers, musicians, and sound engineers (Giacopini et al., 2008, p. 40, emphasis in original).
Parents were involved in the project from the beginning through a variety of means including class meetings, evening presentations at school, formal music performances at a theater, and improvising their own music. They joined with teachers in building their “reflexive and interpretive ability by reading, supporting, and developing the ways in which children work with sound material” (p. 41, emphasis in original).

As I review this publication, I feel unable to read it cover to cover in a linear fashion, to glean one clean, simple story from it. Instead, the format encourages me to flip from page to page, forward and back, engaging in a reflexive process. I look at pictures, read quotes from children, listen to recordings, and read descriptions by adults in a cyclical, messy, incredibly-detailed path, sometimes retracing my steps. By examining this book, I learned about the project, examined some of my own preconceptions about young children and music, and feel recharged to continue learning. Looking forward seems also to be a goal of the authors, who conclude the publication:

These are stages of a journey that has just begun, but that is already full of promise for future initiatives. The publication of a CD with the “compositions” by the children does not mark the end of a project but the need to continue to experiment with the children on musical forms, because music should increasingly become a living presence in the knowledge processes of all people, from the very first years of their lives (Giacopini et al., 2008, p. 41, emphasis in original).

Learning to Engage in Documentation. For many teachers, choosing to incorporate Reggio Emilia-inspired documentation in their teaching requires developing new skills, routines, and attitudes. Early on, teachers may be drawn to certain types of documentation or define documentation outcomes in limited ways. They may first develop the habit of collecting artifacts.
With practice, they can develop comfort making students’ experiences visible—drawing on visual literacy skills to produce and display artifacts of student learning. But to keep evolving in how they use and approach documentation, teachers need to pivot their thinking. They can begin to see documentation not merely as a means of depicting the activities in which children have engaged, but also as a medium for making visible children’s learning from those actions. Then, teachers’ interpretation of artifacts becomes deeper. They interpret and reinterpret, and begin to form theories based not only in the past (What did children do? What did children learn?) but also grounded in the future (What can I do in the classroom to support future learning?) (Wein with Guyevskey & Berdoussis, 2011).

Key Players

**Child as protagonist.** Within the Reggio Emilia philosophy, children are considered competent and capable, afforded the right to develop their abilities through social construction with peers, as facilitated by adults. As protagonist, the child needs to be at the center of their educational experience, and so they help plan their own work. Through a *pedagogy of listening* teachers notice student wonderings and interests, interpret these through their understanding of educational theory and their goals for students, and prepare the environment to support children’s meaningful exploration and development. In Reggio Emilia, children are trusted to learn what they need to learn. Their interests are not co-opted by teachers bent on leading learning toward adult-created standards (Haigh, 2008).

**An Example: A Project About Dinosaurs.** Teachers at the Anna Frank School in Reggio Emilia noticed that many of the 5- and 6-year-olds brought toy dinosaurs to school and spontaneously included dinosaurs in their play. The teachers began by considering many potential directions for a project inspired by this interest, remaining flexible to follow emerging
student interests. Through extensive conversations, teachers determined how best to facilitate the group’s experience while keeping each individual’s understanding and interests in mind. When students’ interest in dinosaurs seemed to wane, the teachers waited a couple of days to ensure student interest remained adequate for the project to be successfully realized (Rankin, 1998).

The children continued acting as protagonists as they gathered more information about dinosaurs. They chose dinosaur books from a local library, bringing these back to the atelier for future reference. They co-wrote letters to invite knowledgeable people—family members and an expert from a local nature society—to share their understanding of dinosaurs, developed questions ahead of each arrival, and welcomed each guest enthusiastically. Though the children learned different types of facts about dinosaurs, the teachers noted that they were most interested in the size of large dinosaurs. Consulting their library books, the children created two large dinosaur sculptures, one from Styrofoam, the other from wire and metal. Following the children’s growing interest, the teachers helped children learn about measuring so they could plan and then trace the true-to-size outline of a large dinosaur in a field. Finally, the children prepared an exhibit to share their work with the school (Rankin, 1998). As protagonists, the children directed their learning by providing the spark of interest and background understanding, choosing at times how to learn more, and taking active roles in developing their understanding and sharing this with the school.

**Family.** A central tenant of early childhood education in Reggio Emilia is valuing the importance of parent-teacher relationships. These educators believe that a strong connection must be formed between the school and home for effective teaching and meaningful learning to be realized in school (Cagliari et al., 2012). In an interview, Sergio Spaggiari (Director of Education in Reggio Emilia) added “We’ve always considered the family to be an essential
element of the educational process” (Gandini, 2012b, p. 121), which is not altogether surprising when considering that the first of these schools were formed, developed, and run by parents. Today, parents and townspeople elect representatives for each school to the City and Childhood Councils. In addition to formal roles involved with running the schools and school system, parents are invited to participate in their child’s school through many means, such as meetings with teachers involved in one classroom or staff from the whole school, work sessions for building furnishings and materials for the school, and school celebrations (Gandini, 2012b).

**Teacher as observer, researcher, facilitator.** When people talk about the role of teachers in Reggio Emilia, they often refer to teachers as researchers. Teachers do create hypotheses based on observations, but Edwards and Gandini (2015) clarify that the teacher processes are somewhat different from those of researchers engaged with systematic hypothesis testing. They liken it to the American idea of innovation. That is, teachers use a “questioning and searching attitude” (p. 93) to develop understanding from multiple perspectives in such a way as to inform the future. Teacher approaches to collecting information for understanding development do not need to be predetermined or consistent, qualities of data collection that Edwards and Gandini (2015) reserve for scientific research.

Teachers also act as facilitators, nurturers, and guides. Based on their innovation/research, teachers aim to arrange the environment to act as a third teacher, facilitating children’s exploration of ideas through materials and physical space. They aid students in forming a community. Regarding children with special rights (in America referred to as children with special needs), teachers facilitate communication between adults serving in supportive roles—including community health providers—to ensure the children receive what they need, what is their due. Teachers also facilitate meaningful interaction with parents (Edwards, 1998).
An Example: Amusement Park for Birds. The intertwining teacher roles of observer, researcher, and facilitator can be illustrated by a project called, “The Amusement Park for Birds,” which occurred in 1992 at La Villetta School, a preschool in Reggio Emilia (Gandini, 2015). The previous year, students made birdhouses and a small lake, though these fell into disrepair. The teacher (as facilitator, acting from previous observation) began this now-famous project by asking a group of 11 children to describe what they had done the previous year and to facilitate conversation on what the children might do to help the birds this year. Collaboratively, they converged on the idea of making a park for birds, and then children were invited to draw pictures of what the park needed. Later that day, the teacher (as researcher) discussed the children’s conversations and drawings with other educators, deciding to further explore with children the ideas they had about fountains. Teachers (as facilitators) brought children to visit a city park where they took pictures and made drawings of fountains. This sparked discussion about how fountains work, which the teacher carefully observed, notated, and discussed with other educators (informing the researcher role with observation).

The teacher suggested children translate their drawings of fountains—real and imagined—into 3-dimensional forms by using clay. A teacher observed one child had misrepresented the paddle and wheel in a clay fountain. She asked to see the child’s drawing, requesting he make a 3-dimensional paper structure. Through this translation, the child realized the wheel could not turn until it was modified. Immediately after, he went to his clay fountain to make a similar change. In this one-on-one exchange, the teacher’s facilitator role was strengthened by her observer role. During one of the many subsequent conversations, a child suggested expanding the project to making an amusement park for birds. The children involved the entire school, families, neighbors, and workers from the city waterworks system. Many of the
working fountains the children created and the community celebrated lasted a few years in the school’s park. The children’s success was supported by teachers who flowed between observer, researcher, and facilitator roles (Gandini, 2015).

**Pedagogical Coordinator.** In the city of Reggio Emilia, there is a small team of pedagogical coordinators—called *pedagogisti* in Italian—whose individual duties vary slightly. Generally, each pedagogical coordinator works with teams of staff at four schools, the other pedagogical coordinators, and politicians, city officials, and employees. The pedagogical coordinator does not work to disseminate knowledge from a top-down approach but instead facilitates the formation of “collegial zones of knowledge creation and exchange” (p. 137) with different groups of stakeholders (Cagliari et al., 2012).

In a meeting about pedagogical documentation, the pedagogical coordinator encourages reflection on what is and is not represented in the artifacts, and what this may mean about students’ learning and for the teacher’s future work with those students. They bring “everyday yet enduring thorny issues of teaching” which they refer to as “conceptual knots” (Cagliari et al., 2012, p. 138). Everyone present is expected to contribute and learn from each other. As with children, each adult is viewed as competent, coming from a unique and worthwhile orientation, deserving to be heard, and accepting responsibility for adding to the group’s collective understanding (Cagliari et al., 2012; Edwards & Gandini, 2015). Part of the pedagogical coordinator’s role is to “give value to all the contributions and then to integrate all the contributions of the protagonists in the conversation” (Cagliari et al., 2012, p. 138) thus ensuring a democratic synthesis of individuals’ ideas and encouraging valuable input from all.

When working with teachers and other school staff, especially to view artifacts and develop hypotheses in the process of documentation, the pedagogical coordinator seeks to
support teacher autonomy more so than solve problems directly. As such, they do not take on the role of expert but of “active discussant” (p. 140), while looking for bridges between theory and practice (Cagliari et al., 2012).

**Environment as Third Teacher.** Teachers inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach view the *environment as the third teacher;* children interact with and learn from their environment and so teachers carefully arrange it to support children’s exploration (Thornton & Brunton, 2015). Teachers aim to promote calm and well-being by creating an aesthetically-pleasing environment that is serene yet engaging, and well-equipped with high-quality materials.

Specifically, teachers might reflect on observations and documentation to develop a provocation—an experience, idea, or arrangement of items left out to entice children to interact with them (Edwards & Gandini, 2015). Sometimes, Malaguzzi or others from Reggio Emilia used the term “intervention,” referencing when a teacher moves away from the observer role into a more active role. Intervention includes both when a teacher directly engages with a child or when they prepare the environment either in the moment or with advanced planning (Edwards, 1998). More recently, some have described a provocation as being created with a specific child response in mind, contrasting this with an “invitation” which is more open (Jupp, 2016). However, those who worked more closely with Malaguzzi placed great importance on creating a dimension of openness and uncertainty. Teachers might plan a provocation based on observation of children’s past activity, but they must remain open to children taking the provocation materials in their own direction, predicted or not (Edwards, 1998).

**Visual-Aided Summary**

In Figure 1.2 is a visual summary of some of the components of the Reggio Emilia approach. Note that the child, as protagonist, is situated within a web of relationships. The
teacher observes the child in the environment, directly impacting what the teacher—as researcher—brings to the process of documentation. This process is supported by the pedagogical coordinator and atelierista. Through documentation-informed reflection, the teacher (and likely atelierista too) acts as facilitator by adjusting the learning environment—the third teacher—through implementing new provocations. Parts of the documentation process may also be visually displayed in the child’s environment, such as in the classroom. The richness of the manifestation of these interlocking relationships and processes is supported when the teacher provides children with opportunities to develop and communicate understanding through varied symbolic languages in a long-term, open-ended project.

Figure 1.2 Web of Relationships and Documentation Represented Visually
Interest in the Approach Spreads

After developing this approach locally over three decades, Malaguzzi and other prominent Reggio Emilia educators began to share their philosophy and educational approach with early childhood teachers in other parts of Europe. In 1981, an exhibition of documentation from Reggio Emilia schools opened first in Italy and then traveled to Stockholm, Sweden (Moss, 2016). About 90,000 Swedes viewed it. Their interest in the exhibit was strong, in part because of shared social, cultural, and political characteristics and educational philosophy. Since the exhibit, Swedish interest in the Reggio Emilia approach has grown. At first, ideals from this philosophy—especially the notion that teachers serve as reflective and collaborative practitioners who respect the child as competent—were only adopted on a superficial level. In 1993, Malaguzzi and a group of Swedish educators collaborated, forming the Stockholm Project. Through this project, Swedish educators more deeply explored and provided early childhood education born of the Reggio Emilia approach but specific to Sweden (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999).

The Hundred Languages exhibit—what the original exhibition became—was translated into English. It began touring in North America in 1987 and has continued touring since. There have been different versions, each visually representing (“making visible”) teachers’ work in Reggio Emilia and its impact on young children. The purposes of the exhibit were (and are) to share this philosophy and work, serve as a form of professional development, and support meetings of groups dedicated to young children’s education (“About NAREA,” n.d.; Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 2012). The timing of the first exhibit in the U.S. was apt. American early childhood educators were debating the usefulness of direct instruction compared to using play and child-initiated approaches, and in response the National Association for the Education of
Young Children (NAEYC) published a new policy document on Developmentally Appropriate Practice (Bredekamp, 1987). Interest in the Reggio Emilia approach continued to grow (New & Kantor, 2009), and in 2002, the North American Reggio Emilia Alliance (NAREA) was launched at a NAEYC conference.

Educators around the world have founded organizations dedicated to the Reggio Emilia approach. These groups have been established in eight countries (Australia, Germany, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Thailand, and the United Kingdom). Three additional organizations include members from groups of nations: there is the Nordic Countries Network, Red Solare (an association for Latin American countries), and NAREA in North America (“International Network”, n.d.).

**Adapting the Approach in the U.S.**

In 1995, Lynn Hill studied information on the Reggio Emilia approach and then visited schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy. She was especially moved by the beauty of the school environment and sought to bring aspects of this approach into her work at Virginia Tech and with the Rainbow Riders daycare center. She returned to Italy with a colleague and in 1997 gained the approval of Reggio Children (an organization based in Reggio Emilia, Italy that promotes the approach around the world and manages study visits from foreigners) to bring groups of educators to study together in Reggio Emilia, Italy (Zehrt, 2009).

Lillian Katz (1998), who with Sylvia Chard wrote a book on The Project Approach in 1989, was a champion of long-term projects with young children before she learned of the Reggio Emilia approach. However, after observing how teachers in Reggio Emilia support children’s projects, she envisioned many ways that American educators could apply the principles in their teaching. From the Reggio Emilia approach, Katz learned children are capable
of expressing themselves, their understanding, and their questions in many different ways (through the hundred languages). The depth of children’s learning and teacher understanding of what may have been learned are increased in the Reggio Emilia approach, Katz explained, by how children’s expression and teachers’ documentation intermingle (Katz, 1998).

Though American educators may be deeply inspired by the philosophy of the Reggio Emilia approach, they face many challenges implementing it. Hill noted that among these were “strong feelings of nostalgia” (Hill, 2005, p. 74, as cited in Zehrt, 2009) for established ways of teaching. Other challenges (real and perceived) can be logistical in nature. Implementers worry about the cost of establishing and maintaining such a program. It takes time to learn to implement Reggio Emilia-inspired instruction, and this may be more challenging when teachers are not fully immersed in it. In Reggio Emilia, Italy, teachers work in teams of two and sometimes three, but in America, teachers likely do not work with an equal co-teacher or with someone whose role is similar to the pedagogical coordinator. Without collaborators and cooperation, a teacher may have more difficulty in managing the classroom and engaging in artifact collection and analysis that are part of the documentation process. The schools in Reggio Emilia began with parents. Over decades, they have built a cultural expectation of high parental involvement, which very well may not match teachers’ and parents’ expectations in the U.S. (Zehrt, 2009).

Despite these challenges, U.S. educators continue to adapt the Reggio Emilia approach to fit their philosophies, their contexts, and their students. They share their challenges, successes, and emerging thinking through print media such as research articles, books, and magazine articles as well as online videos and blog entries. Contributors to this dialogue—practitioners and
researchers—may work at any level of formal education (early childhood through the university) or homeschool their own children.

The degree to which schools in the U.S. are inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy varies. Learning to implement the approach more faithfully takes time, and educators may choose only portions of the approach as matches their philosophy. But many have learned to incorporate layers of documentation as a form of reflection and professional development, to utilize a pedagogy of listening within open-ended projects, and to collaborate with families in a Reggio Emilia-inspired spirit.

Cadwell, Ryan, and Schwall (2015) shared learnings about the *atelier* from working together at different schools that were part of the St. Louis Collaborative. Their chapter is within a book written both by Americans and Italians, demonstrating their continued strong connection to and collaboration with educators from Reggio Emilia as they interpreted, explored, and adapted the approach for their own American contexts. They shared that the *atelier* functioned both as a space to contain meaning-making but also as a catalyst to spark meaning-making. As teachers, they desired to live as young children, to seek to be changed by their co-created experiences at school. Because of and in support of this desire, these educators not only did not know exactly what meaning-making would happen but hoped it would go beyond their own preconceived imaginings.

In an effort to develop their understanding of how their educational contexts functioned as a living system, Caldwell, Ryan, and Schwall (2015) studied one specific day in exceptional detail. Previous to this day, the children’s visible interest in reflection of light led teachers to discuss potential for learning and ways they might harness such positive energy. The teachers used structures and practices they had developed over time to support action beyond discussion,
leading in this case to a long-term project. These structures and practices included one teacher taking notes while another facilitated the morning meeting; regularly setting aside time for teachers to share observations and wonderings with each other; revisiting ideas as teachers to support ongoing reflection; visits from Caldwell to support developing projects; and communication with parents about what happened in the classroom and requesting support in and out of the classroom. The authors concluded that children and adults learned because they embraced non-linear, unfolding discovery for breadth and depth and the resulting complexity. They brought the spirit of the atelier into all their collaborative work.

An example of a school in the U.S. that is strongly inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach (and one that is well-known among Reggio Emilia-inspired educators in the U.S. and Canada) is the Boulder Journey School in Boulder, Colorado. There, the teachers engage in ongoing professional development through “weekly planning meetings and monthly faculty meetings, attending and facilitating conferences, workshops, and in-services, publishing, working with consultants and visitors to the school, and working as consultants, locally, nationally, and internationally” (“Faculty”, n.d.). Educators at the Boulder Journey School view themselves as being in a shared learning community with students and their families. They build possible interactions with families into the daily schedule and value both families and children as co-learners with the teachers. They display documentation as books, on classroom and school hallway walls, and on their website. Documentation clearly serves as a means for informing curricular decisions based on observations of children and for teachers to continue forming and asking questions instead of seeking finality. In an online publication of documentation from one classroom, teachers noted:
Planning curriculum in this way [based on observations of children] gives value to [these one-year-old] children as active participants, making valuable contributions to how the work unfolds. The result is a democratic classroom, where all voices are represented.

(“Baby dolls”, n.d.)

The Boulder Journey School illustrates one of many interpretations of the Reggio Emilia approach in varied contexts across the U.S., with some educators having successfully developed a reputable local approach that is consistent with the Reggio Emilia philosophy.

**American Reggio Emilia-Inspired Preschools and Music.** Over the past few decades, music education researchers have made important advances theorizing about early childhood music education and developing effective curricular and pedagogical approaches. And though many music specialists have crossed over to work with generalist early childhood educators, music still seems to have a tenuous place in American early childhood education, including schools that employ a Reggio Emilia-inspired approach. However, from research literature (which I will describe in greater detail in Chapter Two) and other sources, there is evidence that music can be a successful language of the Reggio Emilia-inspired implementation in U.S. schools. At what is perhaps the most basic level of support, some preschool teachers allow children to engage in music making. But others go beyond this by encouraging frequent, complex musical play and responding to children’s interests (Bond, 2015). In Reggio Emilia-inspired preschools, children may engage in many forms of musical activity such as singing, vocal exploration, playing instruments, and creating musical plays (Waters, 2015; Westlake, 2015).

Educators are finding many ways to support understanding of students’ emerging musical competencies through provocations and documentation. They sing different types of songs; play
instruments for/with children; engage in vocal exploration; play singing games; improvise and compose; provide instruments, other sound-making items, stages, props, and audio recordings; guide musical storytelling; encourage children to explore many functions of music; and make materials available so children can document their own music making. Evidence of learning and engagement with materials might be created/collected in the forms of student-written/drawn compositions, drawings/collages of music-makers, audio or video recordings of musical play episodes, discussions/written vignettes of children’s music-making processes, or transcriptions of children’s music (Bond, 2013; Crisp & Caldwell, 2007; Hannah, 2016; Matthews, 2000; Waters, 2015).

In Context with Other Early Childhood Approaches

In this section, I place the Reggio Emilia approach in a wider early childhood educational context. There are many other influential approaches, methods, and models of education for young children. I compare the Reggio Emilia philosophy with American early childhood education overall, consider the meaning of “project-based” and “problem-based” education because these terms are commonly used in reference to Reggio Emilia-inspired education, and describe how some other well-known forms of early childhood education compare to the Reggio Emilia approach.

Phillips and Bredekamp (1998), leaders in early childhood education in the U.S., compared American preschool approaches to Reggio Emilia. They pointed out that while both share many philosophical roots and so have some similarities in practice, there also are substantive differences. For instance, in the U.S. the school is viewed as a more “static entity” (p. 441) under administrator or teacher control with parent involvement serving to reinforce the policies and practices of the school their children attend. In contrast, staff of Reggio Emilia-
inspired schools work to build reciprocal relationships with their students’ parents. Schools can then better take advantage of the skills of their current students’ parents. Informed by a core philosophy, a school may change based on influence of different parents in different years (Phillips & Bredekamp, 1998). This contrast is a cultural difference predicated on beliefs about and a desire for administrator-led (and possibly teacher-led) continuity of educational practices at a school in the U.S. and teacher-facilitated collaboration between many stakeholders in Italy.

Early childhood teachers in Reggio Emilia and the U.S. begin with similar amounts of preparation. In Italy, early childhood teachers typically have completed the equivalent of one year of vocational school, which is similar preparation to many early childhood caregivers in the U.S. who can earn an early childhood certificate (for pre-elementary school) in less than one year. Some early childhood teachers in the U.S. complete a bachelor’s degree with licensure. Though early childhood teachers in Reggio Emilia have little in the way of formal teacher education, new teachers quickly grow in their environment through continual professional development focused on supporting thoughtful collaboration and autonomy instead of “training” (Phillips and Bredekamp, 1998).

In both Reggio Emilia, Italy and the U.S., a variety of means fund early childhood education. In the U.S., under half (41%) of four-year-olds are enrolled in publicly-funded preschool programs, which include state preschool programs (e.g., within a public school district), Head Start programs, and special education preschool programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Children in the U.S. might attend a private (secular or religious; run by non-profit or for-profit organizations), cooperative, or home-run preschools, but data on these types of enrollment are not systematically collected. In Reggio Emilia today, the 57 infant-toddler
centers and preschools are organized in different ways with different types of funding: municipal, private, and cooperative (“Children’s Schools”, n.d.).

Developmental-Interaction Approach. In 1916, Lucy Sprague Mitchell founded an experimental school that would later be renamed the Bank Street College of Education, and Harriet Johnson became the founding director. Though some call the teaching that developed there the Bank Street approach, those most closely associated refer to it as the developmental-interaction approach. Over time, the approach was expanded from the early years to include elementary school. Leaders from Bank Street became prominent voices in other programs, such as Head Start (Cuffaro & Nager, 2009).

Though not synonymous with constructivism, the developmental-interaction approach is compatible with it. Teaching the whole child—connecting cognitive and interpersonal growth—is at the core of the philosophy. The activities in which children engage at school are connected to their lives in meaningful ways. Teachers promote children’s natural curiosity to understand their world through experimentation and sensory exploration. The curriculum reflects an integration of the teacher’s deep understanding of child development on the general level and knowledge of each individual child. Teachers implement a broad range of authentic assessments to examine students developing academic, social, and emotional knowledge and capabilities (Cuffaro & Nager, 2009).

High/Scope. In the 1950s and ‘60s, David Weikart observed that many children—especially those living in poverty—were failing in school and administrators offered few realistic solutions. In response, Weikart developed a preschool program designed to preempt the behavioral patterns viewed as contributing to failure in later school years. The High/Scope model began in 1962 at the Perry Project Preschool in Michigan (Weikart & Schweinhart, 2009).
Students whose parents sought enrollment were randomly assigned to attend a traditional school or one employing the High/Scope program so researchers could assess program effects. The High/Scope program brought strong economic benefits to the community (Schweinhart, 2003). Federal funding, especially programs related to President Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty, supported the development of the High/Scope model over many years. Materials created for the program have been translated into many languages, and the model currently is in use in five continents (Weikart & Schweinhart, 2009).

High/Scope is described today as an “active learning curriculum” (“Preschool”, 2017) with play at its “heart.” Learning is maximized when students plan, carry out, and reflect on their activities. Pre-determined assessment is integral to the High/Scope curriculum. Teachers observe students in play-based activities over a period of time to facilitate recording what learning outcomes have been achieved by each individual (“Assessment,” 2017). Possible learning outcomes are aligned with U.S. state and national standards and represent eight areas of development: “(1) Approaches to Learning; (2) Social and Emotional Development; (3) Physical Development and Health; (4) Language, Literacy, and Communication; (5) Mathematics; (6) Creative Arts; (7) Science and Technology; and (8) Social Studies” (“Frequently Asked Questions”, 2017). In a High/Scope classroom, teachers maintain a daily routine that facilitates individual, small-group, and large-group work; arrange areas of the room to support different interests; and join in children’s activities using complex language that supports children’s problem solving and intellectual, social, and physical development (Weikart & Schweinhart, 2009).

**Montessori.** Maria Montessori, the first woman in Italy to study medicine and earn a doctorate, did research and volunteer work in a psychiatric asylum. She studied the work of Jean
Itard and Edouard Seguin who disagreed with the thinking of the time that cast children, such as those in the asylum, as being ineducable. Montessori combined ideas from the research of Itard and Seguin with pieces of education philosophy from Pestalozzi and Froebel, then merged with her own understanding of the scientific method, in developing her teaching method. In 1907, she became director of a new school, the first Casa dei Bambini. Though locals first intended this school merely to diminish children’s vandalism while parents were at work, Montessori’s students excelled far beyond the meager expectations. Two years later, she began teaching a training course in her method. Throughout her life, Montessori revised how she spoke about her method. For instance, during World War II, she added peace education to the curriculum (Hainstock, 1997). Near the end of her book, *The Montessori Method*, Montessori (trans. 2008) emphasized that the method should not stay static:

> This book of methods, compiled by one person alone, must be followed by many others. It is my hope that, starting from the individual study of the child educated with our method, other educators will set forth the results of their experiments. These are the pedagogical books which await us in the future. (p. 242)

Many Montessori schools in the U.S. are preschools, though the method is also used with older students, up through high school. Classrooms traditionally have children from a 3-year age span. Younger children can learn indirectly by observing a teacher’s lesson with an older child, and older children learn from being a model for and helping younger children. Montessori discussed the role of the teacher as one of eliciting the spark of curiosity for learning in the real world, what she called imagination. She did not want teachers to force children to understand a specific concept or to memorize facts (Montessori, 1948/1967). A Montessori teacher carefully prepares the environment as child-sized, orderly, and flexible. On easily-accessible low shelves,
the teacher displays manipulative materials, also called didactic materials or works. Each work isolates a single difficulty, usually includes a control so students know when they have completed a task correctly, and can involve children exploring alone or in small groups. Works become progressively more complex. Though not the totality of the method, these works are what most people associate with the Montessori method (Torrence & Chattin-McNichols, 2009).

**Project- and Problem-Based Learning.** The terms project-based learning and problem-based learning have been used interchangeably by educators. For both types of learning, the teacher should begin with no exact, “right” outcome in mind but remain open to many possibilities that could result from incorporating student input. Projects likely begin with a teacher choosing a topic expected to be of interest to students and presenting it with open-ended questions. In developing the project, students might explore multiple curricular areas. Versions of a project-based approach were developed in England in the 1920s, in Reggio Emilia, Italy in the late 1940s, and in the U.S. in the 1970s. In problem-based learning, a class begins with a problem—likely based in the real world—that needs solving. Students and the teacher develop an understanding of the problem’s different facets to arrive at a solution. Commonly today, teachers may identify with the terms project-based or problem-based learning, but Strevy (2014) stresses they do not necessarily embrace the open-endedness required to truly reflect these approaches. With project-based learning, for instance, the teacher may end up focused on the product instead of the process or attempt to duplicate previous successful teaching instead of allowing the work to unfold in a new manner. Project- or problem-based learning might be used by Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers but these elements alone do not fully represent the Reggio Emilia approach. If keeping true to the model from Reggio Emilia, Italy, educators inspired by this approach must emphasize malleable learning experiences that keep the child as protagonist,
pedagogical documentation as a means of capturing but also hypothesizing about student learning and interests, deep connections with families, and continual professional development for teachers.

**Tools of the Mind.** Teachers who adopt Tools of the Mind use Vygotskian-based teaching techniques with infants through sixth graders. The approach was developed by Dr. Elena Bodrova and Dr. Deborah Leong. Bodrova, a Russian and a student and colleague of Vygotsky, moved to the United States and began collaborating with Leong in preschool and kindergarten classes in 1993. They developed a Vygotskian-based approach to teaching young children in America, which they named Tools of the Mind (“History”, n.d.).

As the name suggests, teachers using the Tools of the Mind approach aim to support children as they develop mental tools (e.g., writing a line for each word in a sentence before trying to write the words) and progress from accomplishing some tasks with help to achieving them without external support. When assessing students, teachers initially determine what a child can do independently, which presents a limited picture of their capabilities, and then assess what they are able to do with support. By assessing both ends of the Zone of Proximal Development, the teacher is able to gauge a child’s independent capabilities and those that are near to emerging (Bodrova & Leong, 2007).

**Waldorf.** Waldorf education originated in Germany based on Rudolf Steiner’s philosophical beliefs on exploring humanity and the spiritual together. Steiner developed a theory of child development where he viewed children’s physical and spiritual development as occurring within seven-year cycles. As this form of education has spread around the world, it has sometimes been dramatically changed, such as removing the spiritual component in American public schools to respect the separation of church and state. Though perhaps most often linked to
early childhood education, the Waldorf approach may also be found in elementary, middle, and high schools (Williams & Johnson, 2009).

Teachers implementing the Waldorf approach in early childhood education begin with the classroom and outdoor environment. Both should be aesthetically pleasing, filled with natural materials, and reflect a traditional home. Children are arranged in mixed-age groupings, mirroring the home. Teachers work to build strong connections with parents so that each can support the other in their relationships and interactions with children. At school, Waldorf teachers build routines for metaphorical “breathing out” and “breathing in” on different time intervals: daily, monthly, seasonally, and annually. Within these routines, children are encouraged to enjoy childhood, not rush through it, and engage in play alone and with peers. The education of the mind and body is thoroughly connected to the spiritual in Waldorf schools, and children are not assessed based on standards (Williams & Johnson, 2009).

**Comparing Different Approaches.** Commonalities between the Reggio Emilia approach and the other early childhood approaches highlighted previously center around the teacher role. Educators using these approaches value creating an aesthetically pleasing classroom, and may extend the classroom to an outdoor setting given their belief that the environment supports children’s autonomy and learning. Through observation, teachers make some decisions about curriculum and/or materials to be made available for children, while allowing children to determine their own level of interest. In many of these approaches, social interactions with peers is viewed as key to children’s development. Considering what a child can accomplish individually, according to some of these approaches, only gives a partial picture of a child’s skills and understanding—the teacher must also consider what the child can accomplish when collaborating.
The Reggio Emilia approach differs from these other early childhood approaches, however, in some important ways. Teachers whose professional practice is informed by the Reggio Emilia philosophy do not believe in focusing judgement of students on learning standards, or teaching students with an emphasis on “school readiness.” They also do not introduce materials (i.e. didactic manipulatives, adult-structured thinking tools) to children expecting these to be used in one way with a specific outcome.

**Elementary General Music**

**Imagined Reggio Emilia-Inspired General Music Class**

The manifestation of Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching in the elementary general music class may be difficult for readers less familiar with either the Reggio Emilia approach or the elementary general music classroom to imagine. I share here two imagined possibilities. In the first, the teacher has chosen to take multiple class periods for a focused, intensive incorporation of Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices, akin to thinking of instruction in terms of units. In the second, the teacher incorporates Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching in smaller pieces, infusing the philosophy through routines over the course of years.

**Vignette 1: Reggio Emilia-inspired general music unit plan.** *The music teacher recently observed that the third-grade students were interested in striking Boomwhackers (plastic tubes of different lengths that when hit each produce a pitch in the C-major scale) on anything they could find. He decides to design a provocation around the Boomwhackers. Students gather in a circle and verbally make predictions about what kinds of sounds they could create with the Boomwhackers if they took them to the playground. They engage in their playground-Boomwhacker exploration while the teacher collects video clips, photographs, and written vignettes based on observation or*
discussion with students. When the students return to the classroom, they draw and write
about their processes and sound products. The teacher brings this documentation to a
weekly meeting to share his own and consider additional theories with other teachers and
a pedagogical coordinator. He prepares three tri-fold posters to display in the classroom,
one with artifacts of students’ predictions, one of their exploration, and one with student
reflections.

In the next class, the teacher continues Boomwhacker exploration in the
classroom by providing a small pail of woodchips and metal chairs so students can
choose to mimic the sounds they created on the playground. By the third class, students
are organizing their sounds into some repeating patterns, and the teacher decides to
encourage composition by stating that in the last ten minutes of class, each person or
small group will be able to share some of their Boomwhacker musical ideas. He arranges
some of the photos, written vignettes, and his developing theories about what and how
children were musically and socially engaging, displaying this documentation in an
online post he shares with parents and in his weekly meeting with a pedagogical
coordinator and teachers.

In the following three class periods, the teacher and students come together as a
group, the teacher acting as a facilitator for group composition. The teacher brings
documentation to meetings, and feels encouraged in his theory development and making
time to continue the group composition. Then he develops another online parent
newsletter, this time restricting the documentation he shares to photographs and
vignettes focusing on process to allow for an element of surprise when students are ready
for a final unveiling of their composition. He prints the same photographs and vignettes
to display on a tri-fold poster in the music room when the class returns, leaving sticky notes for students to add their own comments about their process.

In the weekly meeting with the pedagogical coordinator, the teacher voices that the students seem content with their composition but that by moving on, they might miss learning opportunities. Someone suggests the students try to translate their song into a different one of the hundred languages. Then the teacher places bins with construction paper (the colors of the Boomwhackers), scissors, glue, and tape with small groups in the next class period. He asks students to somehow “make their class composition with these papers.” Most groups use the materials to visually represent their music, though one group attempts to make miniature, paper Boomwhackers to play their song another way.

Observation of this group inspires the teacher in the seventh class meeting to make many instruments available and suggests students explore playing their composition on different instruments or singing it. Throughout the class period, he video records different groups playing the class composition on different sets of instruments (asking other groups to pause their work so he can make a cleaner recording). In the subsequent class period, students watch a video showcasing variations of the class composition. The students reflect verbally, in writing, and through drawing. The teacher brings the video and student reflections to the weekly meeting, adding to his theories before compiling and sharing a third online parent newsletter.

In this imagined, Reggio Emilia-inspired, long-term, general music project, the students are given opportunities to develop their musical understanding through different languages, translating between different symbol systems. They begin by making predictions verbally before exploring sound through play, which is likely freed up by changing the setting from the
classroom to the playground. Then they document their sounds and processes through drawing. Based on memory and reviewing their drawings, they recreate and continue this exploration with Boomwhackers and playground-inspired materials inside. As a group, they organize these explored sounds into a composition, which most small groups translate into a visual using colored paper. They translate between music performance languages by taking their Boomwhacker piece and arranging it for other instruments and/or voice. From performing, listening, and viewing video recording of their composition, students translate again their musical experience, through self-reflection, into speaking, writing, and drawing. The process is not linear but messy. Translations may seem at times to move forward, back, and sideways, together enriching the composing and performance processes and resulting learning.

**Vignette 2. Infusing general music teaching with Reggio Emilia-inspired moments.**

Throughout the school year, a general music teacher acts as facilitator for classes in creating music and movement to help tell a story, or story and movement to help display the musical and extra-musical characteristics of a folk song. Often, students perform their completed work for another class, also inviting parents and administrators to view an “informance” in which students perform while informing the audience about the processes and music learning they engaged in to create their work. Once or twice a class period throughout the weeks leading up to the informance, the music teacher takes a photo of student activity. As they near the informance date, she invites an upper elementary teacher to send a student to interview music students, view the informance, and write an article for the school newsletter. The article and a short interpretation written by the music teacher are later posted in the hallway by the school’s main entrance. They also appear—along with a video of the informance and additional
photographs from the students’ creative process—on the password-protected section of the music department webpage.

The same music teacher has created a list to keep by her computer where she plans lessons. In this moment, she is planning a follow-up lesson for students who were applying their knowledge of folk dances to create their own dance for the song, “Circle ‘Round the Zero.” The students were having some difficulty in agreeing on movements that connected to the characteristics of the music. The teacher skims her list of ideas related to the hundred languages and decides to set aside a portion of the next class for students to use playdough to visually show characteristics of the music and of the dance.

In this second example, the general music teacher infuses her work with moments, processes, or routines that demonstrate an inspiration from the Reggio Emilia approach. She engages in aspects of documentation of students’ collaborative creations that are shared through an informance. She shares the responsibility of documentation with a student, and displays their work for the school and parent communities. As the year continues, these articles accumulate and grow the community sense of creation students undertake in the general music classroom. At the same time, the music teacher makes this work manageable by engaging in the documentation process for only one class at a time. Since she will have the same students for many years, she is able to create depth of documentation, depth in the image of the competent child slowly over the long term.

This general music teacher has also built in routines to remind herself to provide opportunities in which his students can engage with music and musical concepts through the hundred languages. Based on her general music pedagogical orientation, she naturally affords students opportunities to improvise on instruments using the rhythms of speech patterns, to
engage in movement through folk dances and creative movement. To support a diversity of symbolic systems, though, she has created a list of items representing hundred language-inspired experiences that diversify the symbolic systems through which students develop, communicate, and translate their understanding and performance of music. Some items on the list are common to general music teaching (e.g., invented, iconic, and traditional notations as drawn representation), but others are less common (e.g., weaving yarn to express both mood and form of a piece of music). During the described lesson planning session, she took a brief moment to reflect on students’ recent experiences, goals, and needs, deciding that diversification of experiences through a hundred languages lens would better support students’ musical development, creation, and eventual performance.

**Four General Music Pedagogies**

Elementary general music teachers may incorporate an array of possible influences to their pedagogy. Following is a description of four such possible influences: the Dalcroze approach, the Kodály Concept, Music Learning Theory, and the Orff-Schulwerk. Any individual teacher may take inspiration for their teaching from any or all of these, to lesser or greater degrees. Though there are many sources to consult about each of the four, I compiled information for each from an (American) national organization website as this might reflect the organization’s most current message about their philosophy/theory and related practice.

In the Dalcroze approach to music education, students learn to understand music through engaging in rhythmic movement (eurhythmics); aural training (solfège); and improvisation in physical, vocal, and instrumental media. Emile Jaques-Dalcroze developed this approach to teaching music in the early 1900s in Switzerland. Originally meant for adults, Dalcroze later expanded the approach for children. In a eurhythmics class, students learn to interact with other
people through creating and inventing movement responding to music they hear their teacher play—often improvise—on the piano. By physically responding to music they hear, students develop an understanding of how music moves, which they can later bring to music they make (DSA, 2018).

Zoltán Kodály was a composer, musicologist, and philosopher who believed that every child should be educated in music. In the 1920’s in Hungary, he began composing for children’s choirs and decided to reform music education. The resulting concept of music teaching is an experience- and literacy-based, comprehensive music education program in which students develop music skills. At its essence is singing, which along with learning solfège, is believed to best develop a student’s inner hearing. Teachers engage students in performing quality literature including folk songs and art music, within a sequenced curriculum that targets learning specific music concepts and skills. They help students prepare for a new music term through actively engaging with the concept without the term. Then they present the term and provide opportunities for students to practice using it. Through taking this approach, teachers hope students will feel success upon which they can build, leading to a lifetime love of music (OAKE, 2018).

Music Learning Theory, developed by Edwin E. Gordon, was initially an explanation of how people learn music. Gordon and his colleagues developed teaching approaches based on this theory to best help students build their audiation skills. Audiation, a term coined by Gordon, is one’s ability to hear and understand music in the mind. To achieve this, students are taught music in similar fashion to how they learn language, beginning with listening before imitating and thinking in the language, and then engaging in (musical) conversation before learning to read and write. Teachers use a Whole/Part/Whole approach to teaching, engaging students in whole pieces
of music, as well as the parts of music via learning sequence activities with tonal or rhythm patterns. These activities take up about five to ten minutes of each class and represent the most direct application of the theory to practice. In a given class, these activities will focus either on tonal or rhythmic characteristics of music. The teacher will perform patterns that individual students perform either with the teacher (teaching mode) or alone (evaluation mode). He will also perform patterns that the whole class performs together (GIML, 2018).

Orff Schulwerk is an approach to teaching developed by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman beginning in the 1920s in Germany. Active music making is at the core of the philosophy. Teachers using this approach support students’ developing musicianship through integrating speech, singing, playing instruments, movement, and drama. Students explore elemental music and movement by engaging in spontaneous play that includes imitation, experimentation, and personal expression, such as through improvisation. Being based in spontaneous play, elements of the music making and movement are open-ended and approached through collaboration. Students might refine and share their music in a formal performance, but process—not a performance product—remains the focus of the approach (AOSA, 2018).

Each of these four general music pedagogies has some potential for overlap with the Reggio Emilia approach. Dalcroze and Orff support music learning through engaging in multiple languages, such as speech, singing, playing instruments, (rhythmic) movement, and drama. Improvisation, a unique way to engage in the symbolic system of music, can be considered through a Reggio Emilia-inspired lens to be one of the hundred languages; and improvisation is an integral component of Dalcroze, Music Learning Theory, and Orff. Teachers using the Orff approach may engage their students in creative projects that share some similarities with the Reggio Emilia-inspired open-ended projects in terms of student input and choice, social co-
construction, and a degree of emergent curriculum. Within any of these pedagogical frameworks, teachers can interpret and choose to implement them with varying degrees of student agency (child as protagonist); they can choose to collect different forms of artifacts about student learning and share these with students and the school and wider communities, using these artifacts to inform teaching decisions (documentation); and vary the symbolic systems of understanding and communicating (hundred languages) through which they develop deeper and broader understanding of music.

**Need for the Study**

Despite the strong reputation and growing influence of the Reggio Emilia philosophy and approach among U.S. early childhood educators, a relatively small number of American preschools have fully adopted a Reggio Emilia-inspired approach. Moreover, even within preschools that have, and despite the fact that the hundred languages clearly include music, teachers seldom develop a classroom environment in which music constitutes a vital component of children’s explorations and learning experiences. Among elementary music education specialists, the Reggio Emilia approach is even less well known, with few general music classrooms exhibiting the characteristic mix of provocations, open-ended projects, and documentation, and children, teachers, and parents rarely occupying the roles of protagonist, researcher, and collaborator respectively. Limited research related to Reggio Emilia-inspired music education in the U.S. has been conducted, with but one study in a preschool (Smith, 2011) and one study that encompassed elementary and middle school (Gould, 2006). A Canadian music educator conducted an autoethnography in a K–8 school (Yanko, 2015). Clearly, there is a need for more systematic and generalizable research on Reggio Emilia-inspired music education in U.S. elementary schools. In the current study, I am utilizing the Reggio Emilia philosophy as a
conceptual framework through which to view, analyze, and reflect on general music teaching practices.

The Reggio Emilia philosophy did not develop in a vacuum but was inspired by previous work in education—such as by Jerome Bruner, John Dewey, Friedrich Fröbel, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky—work which has also influenced the development of educational approaches that elementary music teachers in the U.S. may use (Taetle & Cutietta, 2002). Elementary general music teachers may adopt instructional approaches reasonably congruent with the Reggio Emilia philosophy without doing so intentionally or using shared terminology. For instance, both a Reggio Emilia-inspired teacher and a music teacher may use Vygotsky’s work to inform their practice, having students collaborate so that those with more knowledge—or more attained skill on their instrument—may support their peers in a community of practice. Without naming the practices as documentation, elementary general music teachers may collect and display varied forms of artifacts of student music making and understanding, such as students’ invented notation for their own compositions or a video recording of their music performance. They likely engage students in different symbolic systems, referred to as the hundred languages by Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers. And teachers in both settings may view their practice as centered on each individual student. But as different general music pedagogies emphasize different experiences—improvisation, rhythmic movement, singing from notation—how teachers engage students in experiencing music through different symbolic languages and how they document students’ experiences may differ based on their influence by the Dalcroze approach, the Kodály Concept, Music Learning Theory, the Orff-Schulwerk, or broader curricular choices. Two ways that elementary general music teachers develop their practice are continuing their college education and participating in general music pedagogy educational opportunities (e.g., Kodály
levels, workshops at a conference). Teachers with more education may learn new teaching tools and alter their teaching philosophy. To support informed discussion of Reggio Emilia-inspired music education and viable implementation at the primary or intermediate grade levels, it is important to examine congruencies between current elementary general music education practices and the Reggio Emilia approach.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to survey practicing elementary general music teachers about their current teaching practices and determine the extent to which those practices are congruent with key characteristics of the Reggio Emilia approach.

**Research Questions**

This study was guided by two research questions:

1) To what extent do elementary general music teachers report teaching practices that align with three key concepts of the Reggio Emilia approach: documentation, the hundred languages, and child as protagonist?

2) To what extent can variance in congruence with Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices (documentation and symbolic translations) be explained based on general music pedagogical influence (Dalcroze, Kodály, Music Learning Theory, Orff-Schulwerk) or amount of college or general music pedagogy education?

**Delimitations**

This study will be delimited to self-report data on teaching practices. I will not attempt to examine—through artifacts or observation—the manifestation of teachers’ practices in their classrooms. Nor will I examine the effectiveness of their practices in relation to student learning or achievement.
Definitions

When American educators adopt a Reggio Emilia-inspired view and practice of education, they may use the terms in Italian as used at schools in Reggio Emilia or make their best translations into English. A challenge with using the Italian words is they can be difficult for non-Italian speakers to use with fluency. English translations also pose a difficulty, as sometimes there is no direct translation and/or the term in English may have other meanings or connotations. Below are some key terms from the Reggio Emilia approach as I will be using them in English.

**Reggio Emilia approach/inspired** – “Reggio Emilia schools” refers only to schools located in the city of Reggio Emilia, Italy. There, educators may use the Reggio Emilia approach, but the philosophy developed there has influenced and been adopted by educators elsewhere. As this form of education is not codified, I will not use the term method. Teachers and schools outside Italy are inspired by this philosophy.

**The Hundred Languages** – These are the many different symbolic ways of knowing and communicating that children can explore and use. The number is meant to show there are many, not a specific amount. I suggest music is not only one of the hundred languages but has its own set of numerous languages.

**Symbolic Translation** – In addition to providing students experiences with different languages, Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers may intentionally guide students to translate understanding between different languages, or symbolic systems. I am naming this “symbolic translation.”

**Child as Protagonist** – The child, who is viewed as competent and capable, needs to be at the center of their educational experience. They help plan their own work, and through a pedagogy of listening teachers may—informed by detailed observations and understanding of pedagogy—
suggest work based on student interests. In this way, the teachers and children act as co-constructors of learning. Instead of co-opting children’s learning and forcing it to fit adult-created standards, teachers trust children to learn what they need to learn. (Note that teachers, too, are protagonists in their professional learning.)

**Pedagogy of Listening** – Teachers observe children by “listening” through different lenses and modalities to support their study of how children co-create understanding with peers and with adults. It is through this *web of relationships* (between teachers, other school staff, children, and parents) that understanding of the learning context is developed. Teachers are supported by the pedagogical coordinator to connect their practice with pedagogy, in both directions, letting each inform the other. Through a pedagogy of listening, teachers develop theories of practice and pedagogy that are rooted in observation of their students, theories they use to inform practice, retaining the *child as protagonist*.

**Documentation** – This term references items and the three stages of processes they undergo. Initially, the teacher collects items: artifacts (photographs and recordings of student experience, student work samples) and notes on children’s experiences and learning. These items inform three processes: collecting artifacts and notes; analyzing them; and displaying findings. The final displays are developed to share children’s doings and learnings, as well as to serve as a means of professional-development-through-reflection for the teacher.

**Open-ended projects** – Instead of creating objectives for what students will do and learn, Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers develop open-ended projects (*progettazione* in Italian). They form hypotheses about what materials students might need for their explorations and how the students will use the materials. The same concepts or materials will be explored in many different ways over a long period of time (Rinaldi, 1998). The teacher must resist the urge to
gently push the open-ended project toward a particular outcome and instead actively enable children to control where the open-ended project leads (Edwards, 1998).

**Pedagogical coordinator** – Called a *pedagogista* in Italy, this person interacts with many stakeholders. They meet with teachers to discuss documentation, ensuring that everyone—as protagonist—contributes and is heard through a democratic sharing of ideas. One of their main responsibilities is to keep a connection between pedagogy and practice.

**Provocation** – After observing students, the teacher designs an experience, idea, or arrangement of materials meant to entice further inquiry by students.

**General Music Pedagogy** – General music teachers may incorporate the Dalcroze approach, the Kodály Concept, Music Learning Theory, or the Orff-Schulwerk in their teaching practice. Alternatively or in addition, they may be influenced by, incorporate, or implement other frameworks, a blend of approaches in an eclectic manner, or follow published curricular guides. For the purposes of this study, *general music pedagogies* will collectively refer to the Dalcroze approach, the Kodály Concept, Music Learning Theory, and the Orff-Schulwerk.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RESEARCH LITERATURE

A comprehensive review of research on the Reggio Emilia approach in the U.S. is beyond the scope of this dissertation. I focus on elements that will best support or are most germane to my study. First, I review the three studies I have identified that use a quantitative research method. Literature on implementing the Reggio Emilia approach in U.S. schools and on documentation (as a form of professional development for stakeholders in addition to teachers) follows. Then I discuss the role of the (visual art) studio before considering the relationship between music and the Reggio Emilia approach. Though in other sections I focus on research in the U.S., the section on music education extends beyond America and synopses are of greater depth given the smaller body of studies and the insights specific to music teacher implementation of Reggio Emilia-inspired practice. Throughout this chapter, I will employ terms as used by the author(s). I close this chapter with a review of survey research related to K–5 music teaching practices by inservice teachers. Though these studies are not directly related to the Reggio Emilia approach, my study will add to this body of literature, and I considered these studies during questionnaire development.

Reggio Emilia-Related Research

Quantitative Research

Few researchers have studied the Reggio Emilia approach using quantitative techniques (Elliott, 2005; Keskin, 2016; Schneider et al., 2014). Though the topics of these three studies do not directly relate to the current study, I have chosen to briefly discuss them in recognition that there is previous quantitative research on the Reggio Emilia approach. Keskin (2016) conducted
A content analysis of two (out of 21) open access early childhood research journals to determine coverage of different early childhood approaches. In Reggio Emilia, Italy, Schneider and colleagues (2014) explored factors that support students’ transitions between a preschool and primary grade school. They collected data from student interviews and from teacher and parent questionnaires regarding the transition of 288 students who started at one of 24 preschools. Elliott (2005) used survey techniques with faculty, laboratory school staff, and graduate students ($N = 63$) at seven U.S. early childhood education centers to assess how instruction on the Reggio Emilia approach was being adopted within restructured teacher education programs. Respondents believed maintaining collaboration as inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach was one of their greatest successes, and collaboration was also viewed consistently across institutions as a great challenge.

**Implementation of the Reggio Emilia Approach**

Mathis (2011) was interested in supports for and barriers to adopting the Reggio Emilia approach in one California preschool. Data were program documents and highly-structured interviews with five experienced teachers and one administrator. Mathis examined data using narrative analysis and content analysis methods, supporting formation of grounded theory. When beginning to apply Reggio Emilia techniques, preschool teachers and the administrator initiated projects based on observation and documentation that encouraged small-group work. They expressed challenges related to beginning with very little formal training in the Reggio Emilia approach, learning how to maintain daily collections of documentation, supporting project work, and working more with parents. With time, the teachers believed they improved their ability to implement the Reggio Emilia approach.
Kersting (1995) explored the impact of implementing the Reggio Emilia approach at a Missouri preschool that included kindergarten using case study methodology by: interviewing six teachers, one pedagogical coordinator, and one studio teacher; observing daily routines and activities in three classrooms (57 students) over three weeks; inviting parents to participate in focus groups (14 participated); and reviewing documentation and other classroom artifacts. Learning documentation skills and processes was challenging. The teachers felt frustration and went through periods of uncertainty. They questioned the sheer amount of work required for the documentation process and what students might miss if teachers only follow their interests, but through collaboration and outsider support, their implementation became more authentic and true to the Reggio Emilia philosophy and principles. For example, the teachers began to value collaboration. They redesigned their spaces, removing wall decorations to shift the eye’s focus to materials available to students. They also transitioned to implementing open-ended projects that followed children’s interests, presenting evidence of documentation, and improving communication with students and parents.

**Documentation**

Goldhaber (2007) studied 35 early childhood educators, administrators, and teacher educators from across Vermont who formed an action research collaborative. Collaborative members met every six to eight weeks over two years “guided by the concept of documentation as a cycle of inquiry” (Goldhaber, 2007, p. 74). Each person who attended contributed in some way, though not everyone always brought observations, artifacts, or video from their school. Together, they spoke about and reflected on what children were demonstrating, thereby broadening the perspective of any single collaborative member’s analysis. Through this collaborative, educators were able to help each other celebrate successes and support each other
through challenges. These experiences taught them to think of documentation not as static or concrete but as “process driven and conceptual” (p. 77). The shared documentation highlighted children’s connection to their local communities and nature. At the culmination of this experience, participants curated an exhibit of children’s learning that traveled across the state.

Documentation has been labeled a “change agent for teachers” (Given et al., 2009, p. 36). Through the act of documenting children’s experiences and learning, teachers are motivated to engage in collaborative inquiry and professional development, which then serves to alter school culture and practice. Given and colleagues worked with educators at three sites (infant toddler center, elementary school, and lab school for students aged 2-8) as they began using documentation to promote collaborative professional development. At each site, teachers developed as a community of learners and reflective practitioners through meetings and dialogue about documentation. Their community was further strengthened as they collaborated to overcome challenges of preparing documentation to share publicly, though collaborating to create visual displays was not without difficulties. As one teacher voiced, “Design by committee is not always the best way, especially the visual part” (p. 40). Still, this specific form of collaboration was perceived as beneficial by teachers. One stated, “Working together in this way gives everyone a voice. I feel that we all own the room” (p. 40). As teachers worked through challenges together, they (at each site) began to take ownership of their group, relying less and less on the researcher-facilitator.

Some perceive Reggio-inspired teaching and professional development as costly and therefore less viable for U.S. schools with fewer financial resources. Lyon and Donahue (2009), however, found evidence to the contrary when they studied two cases—each being a single teacher who worked in the same public childhood development center in San Francisco, which
served a diverse population including many students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. They collected data in three forms: (1) three interviews, including one in which teachers reflected on a video of their teaching, (2) two observations in which the researcher looked for authentic representation of the Reggio Emilia approach, and (3) artifacts such as journals, documentation displays, and meeting minutes. Researchers used inductive and deductive coding to develop themes. Over the course of the three-year project, teachers grew more positive in their view of documentation. At first, they only used documentation as a form of assessment, a collection of artifacts displayed after a lesson as proof they had accomplished something with students. With time, though, the teachers learned to view documentation as a process, not merely a product. They began to view it through multiple components (listening to, observing, collecting, analyzing, collaborating) with different people (children, teachers, parents), as a means of supporting reflection, building theory, and revising practice. Through implementing the process of documentation, the teachers began “to see children as highly capable, themselves as researchers, and the environment as a support for children’s learning” (p. 109). One teacher also asked parents to collect and share documentation of a project at home (materials sent home from teacher), deepening the school-home relationship.

Teachers who work with older students have also successfully incorporated pedagogical documentation in their teaching. Soble and Hogue (2010) aimed to use documentation to support high school students’ self-perceptions of competence, resourcefulness, and inventiveness. With no age-appropriate models to reference, however, implementing Reggio Emilia-inspired documentation proved challenging. At first, Soble and Hogue used documentation to capture what happened in class during a typical lesson. This felt forced and was not deemed successful. Subsequently, in a manner more aligned with the Reggio Emilia approach, students were given
more time and freedom in how they completed their assignments (through open-ended prompts intended to elicit students’ points of view), and teachers engaged in a “pedagogy of listening” by exploring what was important to their students. The teachers and students began to value documentation for its ability to advance students’ and teachers’ learning in the classroom more so than as a public display. Though not always practical to implement, high school students were sometimes able to participate in collecting and analyzing documentation, and when they were able, this resulted in powerful learning for the teachers and students.

**Reggio Emilia-Inspired (Visual Art) Studios**

A Reggio Emilia-inspired preschool likely includes a dedicated space in which an *atelierista* engages small or large groups of children with high-quality visual art materials. Ganus (2010) used a type of qualitative research developed by Eisner (as cited in Ganus, 2010) called educational connoisseurship and criticism, to explore such spaces (studios) in U.S. preschools. At two schools that “fully embrace” (p. 188) the Reggio Emilia philosophy and have a studio (one each in Colorado and Missouri), data were collected from observations and interviews with teachers, children, and administrators over two weeks. Ganus found differences between the studios as each was designed to fit within its specific school context. Studio teachers viewed their space as a place that supports expression through the hundred languages, exploration and development of artistic techniques with different materials, and integration with classroom curriculum. The teachers prepared the environment to support social interaction, and in these environments, children learned to approach education positively, reuse and preserve materials, think creatively, and connect ideas to build their own theories.

Parnell (2011) collaborated with two studio teachers who worked in separate studios in the same Reggio Emilia-inspired school, which was located on an urban university campus in
Oregon and served children ages 4 months to six years. The researcher aimed to use a phenomenological lens, remaining open to the different ways studio experiences were lived without a priori reference to theories. Data consisted of observations, photographs, and audio recordings of collaborative sessions. Separately, then together, the researcher-participant and two studio teachers examined the data. They found that engaging in reflection could feel “scary at times” (p. 123) but helped keep studio teachers open to the children, studio environment, classroom teachers, parents, and school. The sense of openness in the studio was reflected in the teacher working to allow a “hum” in the space, or a flow that can result from giving space to children for interacting with each other and materials. The studio teachers were always seeking a balance which impacted the “hum”: they wanted to connect with who was in their room without being overly intrusive. Even in this Reggio Emilia-inspired school, the studio teachers felt a lack of respect from other teachers about their work. When learning was connected between classroom and studio (content and use of hundred language materials), it seemed to be much richer, but not all classroom teachers sought, promoted, or responded to efforts to build such connections.

**Music Education and the Reggio Emilia Approach**

**Music in Reggio Emilia-Inspired Preschools.** A music specialist introduced four-year-old children to opera, in a specialized research and demonstration preschool in Australia. The trained opera singer intended to review many operas but noticed the children were captivated by Mozart’s *Magic Flute*. Given that Reggio Emilia principles already were implemented school-wide, the music specialist responded by providing many and varied opportunities in the music studio for children to more deeply explore the story and music of the *Magic Flute*. One student became especially enthusiastic about the Queen of the Night’s aria, watching it repeatedly on
YouTube, imitating the singing, and using metaphors to describe it (Nyland, Acker, Ferris, & Deans, 2011).

Bond (2012) conducted a multiple case study to explore how music manifested in three Reggio Emilia-inspired preschools in different regions of the U.S. (Bond, 2012). The researcher spent two weeks at each school collecting data from observations, participant-observation, and documents, while also conducting interviews with teachers, parents, and an administrator. Bond first investigated the school as a whole, at each site, before focusing on a specific preschool classroom. For each case separately, Bond wrote field notes and transcripts, read and reflected on the field notes and transcripts, wrote analytical memos, coded data, and developed themes, finally analyzing data across cases.

Bond (2012) found that sites had unique and shared characteristics related to music. Children at all sites engaged in various forms of spontaneous music making, sometimes using fragments from group-led music instruction (singing, playing with sound makers, moving to/with music). This reflected some, but not all, parts of the National Pre-K Music Education standards. Different types of catalysts ignited music-making in the classrooms, such as materials and soundscapes in the environment; teacher-led music as instruction, routine, or classroom management; and student-initiated music, sometimes based on music learned from teachers. Musical instruments were, at some sites, easily available to children, and the children in these classrooms seemed to play them more. Children at other schools still played with sounds, finding objects such as Styrofoam that made interesting sounds. Within a social constructivist environment, music was successfully incorporated by teachers and students engaging in dialogue about music making and teachers using “intentions” instead of lesson plans to facilitate their
ability to follow the students. Music was seen as one of the hundred languages in the sense that it can be used to communicate and support learning, but it was also its own topic of study.

Bond (2015) also conducted a comparative case study to investigate music in two Reggio Emilia-inspired preschools within different sociocultural contexts. Students in one school—the John Dewey Center (JDC)—were predominantly Latino and African-American with lower socioeconomic backgrounds. The other school—Mountain Top School (MTS)—was in the suburbs, with a student body of mainly Caucasian students from high socioeconomic backgrounds. MTS was located on a college campus, and most children who attended MTS had at least one parent who worked at the college. Bond collected data from varied stakeholders at each site: children ages 3-5 in one class, their teachers, a focus group of parents, and an administrator. Over two weeks, the researcher observed the class and meetings, recorded children’s spontaneous and teacher-led music making, and conducted interviews. Bond cyclically analyzed data through rereading daily notes, writing analytic memos, transcribing interviews, and coding for each case separately before comparing them.

At both sites, Bond (2015) observed that the generalist teachers were responsible for teaching music and they addressed this, in part, by scheduling a 15-minute block of teacher-led group singing. At the JDC, the teachers led the same, teacher-selected, three songs and chants each time, whereas teachers at MTS chose the first song, let a child choose the second, and then used a regular transition song. Teachers at the JDC provided a wide variety of recorded music as a provocation for children’s dancing. Children at both sites initiated and discussed their own music making, especially with spontaneous vocalizations. At MTS only, children often came back to their music motives from earlier in the day. The teachers at both schools engaged children in dialogue about their music making, but this was very short at the JDC. At MTS, this
could be prolonged and followed the interest of the children. One reason that teacher support of children’s musical play and therefore the complexity of that musical play was less at the JDC may be that these teachers had many mandates to follow (due to requirements related to Head Start and other funding sources), which resulted in stricter scheduling and less time for teachers to engage with and follow the students.

Waters (2015) used narrative inquiry to explore what happens when adults and children co-construct music in a Reggio Emilia-inspired preschool, having been a member of this school for the previous two years as a play partner and researcher. During this study, Waters followed a pedagogy of listening when playing with children, observed their musical play, brought provocations, and co-created documentation (audio, video, and photo artifacts of student activity). Shared musical stories were collected in the form of audio and video recordings, photographs, student work, and a research journal. Following established narrative research techniques, Waters restoried vignettes of children and adults, developing them into a grand narrative.

Waters (2015) found that when adults and children acted as co-researchers of musical play, taking on the role of protagonists, this led to “abundant, creative musical expression from children and adults alike” (p. iv). Students were eager to document their own music making via audio and video recordings. It was possible to make music learning “visible”, but any music making or play activity had “deep layers behind” (p. 227) this visibility. Waters encouraged “documenting and uncovering these layers… [to help] develop each child’s identity as a musician and researcher” (p. 227). Waters recommends adults actively and intentionally listen to, notice, and value children’s music making and exploration, suggesting that even within structured music classes, music teachers can adopt Reggio Emilia-inspired behaviors, especially
those aligned with the pedagogy of listening. Adults can shift their lens to see children’s competencies and adopt the role of a facilitator, offering choices and providing learning tools within the environment.

Together, these studies demonstrate that music can be incorporated on multiple levels in Reggio Emilia-inspired schools. Teachers can see it as a form of communication, as one of the hundred languages. They might lead large group music instruction, provide materials (instruments, found-sound objects, recordings) and soundscapes in the environment, and allow or even encourage student-initiated music making. Teachers can use a pedagogy of listening regarding children’s music-related interests and form provocations to encourage children to further explore and learn about music. Though music is not necessarily connected to the visual dimension, documentation can make music learning “visible.” Many forms of music engagement can occur in preschools implementing Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching, but precisely how engagement becomes manifest depends on unique school structures and teacher competencies.

**Reggio Emilia Principles in Music Education.** Having discussed research on Reggio Emilia-inspired schools, I pivot here to application of Reggio Emilia principles in music classes. The following three studies pertain most directly to my investigation, so I describe each in greater detail than those discussed above.

Smith (2011) implemented the Reggio Emilia approach in two music classes at a private preschool in Manhattan. Different curricula were developed for each class to connect with learning in students’ other classes and in anticipation of different developmental levels (students in one class were 3-4 years old, 4-5 in the other class). For each class’s theme, Smith introduced children to activities and ways to use materials as provocations. Students in the older group developed a class composition and then a musical performance, which they video recorded and
shared with families online. Video recordings allowed children to revisit their work in subsequent lessons. Smith found it more difficult to stick to a project with the younger class, so instead applied ideas from the approach to record students’ music making in lessons. The younger children were excited to watch an edited movie of their many music making episodes. Before sharing this video as documentation with families, Smith added subtitles with children’s reflective quotes from their viewing.

Smith’s (2011) writing shows varied success at incorporating Reggio Emilia principles in the early childhood music classroom. It may be challenging for music educators new to this approach to view younger children completely from a lens of competency. While children were able to demonstrate their competency through documentation, Smith observed they also experienced difficulty in collaborating due to “developmental differences” (p. 13).

Smith began with structured plans when working with the older children and allowed the work to follow the children’s lead as they developed the class composition and performance. The environment acted as the third teacher for both classes, with materials available for play with shadow and light. The children demonstrated internalization of Western music conventions when they expressed themselves through composition, one of the hundred languages. Smith likened group composition to group murals in visual art. Children also used movement and shadow play as languages. Documentation went beyond mere collection of artifacts, as evidenced by Smith showing videos to children and later incorporating their responses. Smith wrote that though the projects were successful, using this emergent approach may be time consuming and difficult to manage for a music teacher who likely has many different classes each week. The music teacher might address this difficulty by connecting with the classroom teacher, which is analogous to the role of the visual art studio teacher in Reggio Emilia schools.
Gould (2006) studied music educator Carol Matthews and her students as they collaboratively composed music in a class, engaging in “philosophy as experience.” In a K–8 school in the U.S., Matthews used Reggio Emilia-inspired pedagogy to teach music. Together, the teacher and students engaged in—as Gould describes it—an improvisational “dance” to create and rearrange musical sounds, composing through experimentation and play that was practical and pragmatic. Matthews asked students in two classes (kindergarteners and first graders in one, second and third graders in the other) what they were learning in their general, non-music class and helped them organize this information as a pre-composition step. By taking this approach, Matthews focused on what aspects the students had learned, as opposed to what the teacher was teaching. She then facilitated students’ musical exploration related to their topic by asking for children’s musical ideas, scaffolding if they got stuck, and notating their ideas to preserve them. After each musical idea was completed, Matthews sang/played it back to the class, having found this a particularly helpful and needed form of scaffolding. The younger class composed a song, “Plants, Plants,” and the older composed, “Remembering Flight.”

Gould discovered that as students developed group compositions, the knowledge they relied on and experience they accrued took them down different paths, some that successfully led to finished compositions and others that did not. When children were slow to respond or develop ideas, they were provided with additional time to contemplate musical options, and the teacher might also pose new or more interesting questions to consider. In this sense, the teacher’s role involved facilitating the arrangement of children’s different ideas into one group composition. Through the dance, students did not achieve a specific curricular goal; rather they developed their ability to “think music” (Gould, 2006, p. 203).
Yanko (2015) incorporated philosophy and practices from Reggio Emilia into elementary and middle school music education, and studied this implementation through a different lens: autoethnography. The school in Canada where Yanko worked had a few teachers who incorporated ideas from Reggio Emilia, and the principal and teachers were supportive of bringing those philosophies into the music room, with Yanko acting as a music studio teacher for the school. Early excitement was tempered by the realization that Yanko would need to begin giving up some control to students without having attained a complete enough understanding of the approach. Jumping in and changing teaching in such dramatic ways was worrisome. Yanko’s perspective shifted, however, after joining a class of first and second graders on a nature walk. During this excursion, Yanko witnessed how different groups of students enjoyed exploring music and sounds in unique ways. This positive experience convinced Yanko to finally bring Reggio Emilia-inspired principles into the music classroom.

Over the course of a school year, Yanko (2015) began incorporating ideas from the approach into the music classroom in a more extensive manner, expanding from working only with younger students to working with all 500 students enrolled in grades K-7 across 20 classes. Students began with instrument exploration, initially pleasing the teacher with the results. Yanko later noted students’ explorations were hindered by using only real instruments. The purchase of some “found sound” objects served to lift teacher- and student-imposed restrictions and promote more creativity. After manipulating found sounds, students felt freer to explore recorders and percussion and brass instruments in new ways. Emphasizing exploration did not hinder students’ musical performance, which had been the primary purpose of the program before Yanko adopted Reggio Emilia-inspired techniques.
After learning to be a co-learner with students and to co-develop curriculum, Yanko (2015) realized the need to go beyond “documenting” in a gradebook, which students could not access. The teacher-researcher created a documentation bulletin board by putting up theme-related photos organized by class and without any commentary. Students looked at the photos, talked about what they had been doing with each other, and wrote simple sentences about what they learned, which could be added to the documentation board. Though for younger students the sentences were less rich than the stories they told verbally, the written word and photos together acted as catalysts for further reflection.

One challenge to adapting the Reggio Emilia approach for music class (also in Gould, 2006) was finding an appropriate balance between the teacher supplying musical ideas and finding ways to incorporate students’ suggestions. This was especially difficult for Yanko (2015) during a group film composition activity. With a background in film composition, Yanko had the urge to make musical suggestions and even “scoff” at some of the students’ ideas initially. But by following a pedagogy of listening, Yanko found the students capable of developing and sharing a high-quality product, in which they took great pride.

Yanko (2015) concluded that music teachers can bring Reggio Emilia-inspired concepts and techniques (role of child, teacher, and environment; the hundred languages; documentation; and the studio) into their music classrooms in ways that are greatly beneficial for their students and themselves. As Yanko gave student freedom, they developed new self- and peer-regulation skills. It is not the only and best way to teach, notes Yanko, but Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching may better serve students’ needs than conventional music teaching approaches by cultivating a passion for music making beyond school.
Across these qualitative studies, researchers provided evidence that Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices may be successfully implemented in the general music classroom (preschool through middle school), and also identified some associated challenges, such as discomfort when shifting away from a completely teacher-led model. Music teachers can most easily adapt this approach to facilitate sound exploration and group composition, given the open-ended nature of projects and related documentation. One researcher (Smith, 2011) successfully coupled composition activities with culminating performances, while another researcher (Yanko, 2015) concluded that implementing Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching need not diminish opportunities for students to develop their music performance skills. To succeed in providing children with comprehensive and meaningful music learning opportunities, teachers need to follow a pedagogy of listening while reconciling the differing opinions that will inevitably emerge when teaching a large number of students from diverse backgrounds. It may be difficult for some music teachers to view young children as competent, and they may expect the process of documentation to be too time consuming. Yet, there is more than a modicum of evidence that children are capable and the process of documentation is possible. Music teachers have documented student learning with photographs, videos, and teacher- or student-written descriptions of music-making episodes, displaying these artifacts and reflections online or on the bulletin board in their music classroom.

**Survey Research on General Music**

Researchers have examined different facets of elementary students’ music education by utilizing survey research methods. They have considered how generalist teachers incorporate music when teaching other subjects (O’Keefe, Dearden, & West, 2015), and the status of music teaching and learning as reported by principals (Abril & Gault, 2006) or music specialists
themselves (Legette, 2003; Rimington & Reese, 2000; Schmidt, Baker, Hayes, & Kwan, 2006; Shouldice, 2014; Strand, 2006). Aspects of methodology from these studies are discussed here for their ability to inform the design of the current study.

Researchers disseminated questionnaires by mailing paper copies (e.g., Legette, 2003) or emailing a link to an online survey platform (e.g., Shouldice, 2014). Most researchers sent one or two reminders after the initial invitation, via: email; mailed letter; phone call; or postcard. The number of K–12 music teachers who returned questionnaires was between 176 and 391; response rates ranged from 26% (it is possible more teachers received this survey than were eligible to complete it) to 70% (Legette, 2003; Rimington & Reese, 2000; Schmidt et al., 2006; Strand, 2006).

Multiple response formats were used for item development, such as selection-type items, rating-scale items, and open-ended prompts. Many researchers examined the frequency with which certain aspects of music were included in instruction (Legette, 2003; O’Keefe et al., 2015; Rimington & Reese, 2000; Schmidt et al., 2006; Strand, 2006). A few researchers (Abril & Gault, 2006; Shouldice, 2014; Strand, 2006) included a small number of open-ended items to which study participants could provide more detailed narrative responses. Strand (2006) and Shouldice (2014), for example, gave respondents the opportunity to explain why they included composition in their teaching.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education has been adopted in numerous American preschools during the past 20 years. Bond (2013) recommended elementary general music teachers “further embrace…Reggio principles…to foster child-centered environments that honor innate musicality…with all school-age children” (p. 26). Using qualitative research methodologies, Gould (2006) and Yanko (2015) explored the purposeful application of Reggio Emilia-inspired music instruction in the general music class. However, researchers have not yet determined whether the Reggio Emilia approach is compatible with current elementary general music teaching practices given the variety of pedagogies that already influence how general music is taught, traditional notions of learning objectives and musical knowledge/skill development that influence what is taught (including expectations for standards-based lesson planning), and contextual realities (staffing, budget, instructional time) that otherwise constrain opportunities-to-learn in elementary general music classes. Understanding the types, degree, and explanation of existing congruence—guiding analysis of general music education by utilizing the Reggio Emilia philosophy as a conceptual framework—may inform future efforts in educating elementary general music teachers about the Reggio Emilia philosophy and Reggio Emilia-inspired music instruction, supporting music teachers’ intentional incorporation of these ideals and practices in their individual contexts, as may be deemed appropriate for individual contexts.

As described in Chapter One, a Reggio Emilia-inspired teacher supports each student as a competent and capable being with the right to be the protagonist in their own education. They create opportunities for students to translate understanding through different types of symbols, or
the *hundred languages*. Through the process of *documentation*, Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers develop theories about student understanding and interests and how to support future learning through the collection, analysis, and display of student artifacts.

The purpose of this survey study was to explore the extent to which elementary general music teaching practice is congruent with key characteristics of the Reggio Emilia approach. My investigation was framed by two major research questions:

1) To what extent do elementary general music teachers report teaching practices that align with three key concepts of the Reggio Emilia approach: documentation, the hundred languages, and child as protagonist?

2) To what extent can variance in congruence with Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices (documentation and symbolic translations) be explained based on general music pedagogical influence (Dalcroze, Kodály, Music Learning Theory, Orff-Schulwerk) or amount of college or general music pedagogy education?

**Sampling**

To access study participants, I utilized a combination of stratified random sampling and cluster sampling. Elementary general music teachers working within five Rocky Mountain Region states (Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Wyoming) constituted the target population. First, I identified all school districts within each state using data maintained by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and then classified each school district according to U.S. Census Bureau descriptors used by the NCES. A *City* is located within a “Principle City”, a *Suburb* is outside the Principle City yet still in an “Urbanized Area.” *Towns* are defined as located in an “Urban Cluster” and within 35 miles of an Urbanized Area. Areas more removed from an Urbanized Area and Urban Cluster are *Rural* (NCES, n.d.). Some districts listed within
the state of Montana were listed as elementary, high school, or K–12, and I deleted those labeled high school only. Once school districts were classified, I used a stratified random sampling technique to select 25% of all school districts within each state, with the number of City, Suburb, Town, and Rural districts proportionally represented within each state. These randomly selected school districts represented clusters.

Within each district/cluster, I identified all schools that included elementary grade levels, and then determined which schools employed a general music specialist. I searched district and school websites to obtain emails for all general music teachers who worked with elementary-aged students (i.e. K-5, K-6, K-8, or K-12 school). If a district did not have a website or did not list both a teacher’s subject and email address for at least 50% of schools, I removed the district from my list and randomly replaced it with another (43 districts were removed and replaced in the Colorado sample, 55 in Idaho, 175 in Montana, 17 in Utah, 6 in Wyoming, resulting in a total of 296 replacement districts). This sampling strategy resulted in my obtaining between 39 and 343 emails for elementary music teachers employed by one of 13 to 77 districts per state, for a total of 671 emails (see Table 3.1 for more detail).
Table 3.1

**Characteristics of Districts Sampled**

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>692</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>911</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>671</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Item Pool Development**

Researchers have almost exclusively utilized qualitative methodology to study the Reggio Emilia approach, so I was unable to reference previous surveys on the same topic for my own questionnaire development. I consulted survey studies related to music teaching practices, some of which included elementary music teachers as respondents, but the topical focus and research
methods associated with those studies were not particularly useful in developing questionnaire items that addressed Reggio Emilia-inspired music education. I did, however, incorporate scale response formats used by Shouldice (2014). To create an appropriately valid pool of questionnaire items, I drew on my study of the Reggio Emilia approach and my study and practice of elementary general music teaching, which included implementing aspects of documentation. I created items that would address three concepts associated with the approach—child as protagonist, documentation, and hundred languages—as they might be manifest in an elementary general music class.

The original version (see Appendix A) of my *Characteristics of Elementary General Music Teaching* (CEGMT) questionnaire went through multiple rounds of revision. Items were reviewed by this researcher and my dissertation chair for clarity. Two master’s students in music education who had conducted survey research as part of a required research course reviewed the questionnaire for item clarity and completion time. Three experts reviewed a later version of the questionnaire for item clarity and adequacy of response options. Two had experience teaching elementary general music methods to preservice teachers and researching general music in elementary schools. The third worked in a Reggio Emilia-inspired preschool, engaged in ongoing professional development about the Reggio Emilia approach, and previously studied the application of music to their specific classroom setting with this researcher. The penultimate version of the CEGMT (see Appendix B) was completed and reviewed by three elementary general music teachers (one from Colorado who works in a district not sampled for this study, and one each from Nebraska and Oklahoma). These teachers were not told about the study’s focus on the Reggio Emilia approach so that they might review the questionnaire solely from the general music teacher perspective.
Based on comments from reviewers, I altered item formats and added response options to selection-type items, a group of 8 symbolic translation items, and 2 open-ended prompts. For example, I decided to use a matrix response format to gauge the frequency of observation-related instructional change. “How often within a month does what you observe students doing change (a) instruction in the moment, (b) your plan for the following lesson, and (c) your plan for the following unit of study?” replaced three separate items (e.g., “How often within a month does what you observe student doing change your plan for the following lesson?”). Response options were added to the items: “Mark the types of information you collected about students’ music making and understanding in the last month,” (“Assessed level of student participation in music class”; “Paper/pencil worksheet, quiz, or test”); and “Mark any ways you displayed the information you collected in the last month about students’ music making and understanding in the last month” (“Students demonstrated evidence of music making and understanding in a live performance.”). I added eight items on the frequency of symbolic translations, addressing reviewers’ concerns that different types of music processes were not sufficiently represented, including singing, playing instruments, improvising, composing, and performing known songs.

Midway through CEGMT development, I asked elementary general music researchers and one Reggio Emilia-inspired teacher to label each item stem as best representing documentation, the hundred languages, or child as protagonist as a means of establishing the content validity of items designed to measure key elements of the Reggio Emilia approach. The three experts demonstrated complete agreement on 13 items. Two agreed on each of the 6 remaining items. I compared inter-rater agreement for each pair of reviewers (Reviewers A and B, B and C, A and C) using Cohen’s kappa. The mean for the resulting three kappa values was 0.66 (reflecting a moderate to substantial level of agreement), which was considered sufficient
since each rater was only expert in one of the two topics under study: elementary general music or the Reggio Emilia approach.

Upon further reflection, including input from my dissertation advisor and a second member of my dissertation committee, I concluded that the length and complexity of the CEGMT might result in a low response rate, particularly given the range of school contexts represented by music teachers being sampled. Items not relating directly to the research questions were removed. In the process of reorganizing the questionnaire, I reconsidered a comment from the expert reviewer who teaches in a Reggio Emilia-inspired school. They noted that many of the selection-type and scale items I created to represent child as protagonist could also be coded as documentation. Selection-type and scale items were condensed to focus on two concepts—documentation and hundred languages, or symbolic translations—with open-ended prompts allowing for insights regarding the third concept—child as protagonist. Some demographic items were deemed superfluous and removed, while I also added items to better understand teachers’ instructional support: “Do you have a dedicated music classroom?”, “On average, how many times do you meet with each class of elementary students in a week?” (see Appendix C for final questionnaire). Two researchers experienced with survey methodology reviewed the final version of the CEGMT, suggesting no edits. Additionally, two researchers completed the questionnaire for time: both took between 9 and 10 minutes.

The final version of the CEGMT included five sections. The first and third sections, together, contained a total of 16 selection-type and scale items on documentation. In the second section were 24 scale items on symbolic translations. The fourth section contained two open-ended prompts: one on how their teaching reflects a child-centered approach; the other on
aspects of their teaching context that facilitates or inhibits using a child-centered approach. The CEGMT concludes with 14 items on teacher characteristics and demographics.

**Procedures**

**Pre-Data Collection**

I submitted my study to the Institution Review Board on March 21, 2018 and received approval April 3, 2018. After collecting email addresses, I prepared lists of teachers in Qualtrics, an online survey platform available through my university.

**Data Collection**

Via the Qualtrics system, I sent individualized emails with an invitation to participate in the study (see Appendix D) on April 4, 2018. This date was chosen so all possible respondents would receive the invitation after their Spring Break. Follow-up emails were sent on April 6, 12, and 18 (see Appendices E-G). As recommended by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014), I sent emails early in the morning, varied the wording in these emails, kept follow-up emails short to be mobile-friendly, and requested respondents’ “help” instead of framing my requests as an opportunity for them to share their opinions. The survey closed on April 20.

Data were analyzed during the second half of April and through May. Data analyses were organized into five phases. First, descriptive statistics were produced for all variables—frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations depending on the type of data collected. Second, data from items representing similar Reggio Emilia concepts were consolidated, and reliability was estimated for responses to the resulting composite variables. Third, multiple regression analyses were used to determine the degree to which variance in congruence of general music teaching practices with documentation and symbolic translations can be explained on the basis of various general music pedagogical influences (Dalcroze,
Kodály, Music Learning Theory, Orff-Schulwerk). Fourth, factorial Analysis of Variance was used to explore main and interactive effects of education level on documentation and symbolic translations as represented in general music teaching practice.

Finally, open-ended responses were analyzed using inductive coding and classical content analysis. I began with a full read-through of narrative data. In subsequent readings, I assigned inductive codes to chunks of data. Complete reading of data as a whole and then in coded chunks aided me as I looked for patterns and disconfirming evidence (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Based on inductive analysis and the focus of this study, I formulated one subset of related codes for each prompt. For the first prompt (on teaching style and philosophy), the subset of codes addressed the degree of choice included in instruction. For the second prompt (on facilitators and inhibitors in the teaching situation), the subset of codes addressed valence of responses. Researchers use classical content analysis to examine the frequency with which different codes are assigned to data, identifying which codes may be most important to participants (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). I examined the frequency with which respondents indicated different degrees of choice in their instruction. Regarding written comments on how teaching context facilitates or inhibits using child-centered teaching practices, I examined the frequency of different valences.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The Characteristics of Elementary General Music Teaching questionnaire (CEGMT) was emailed via Qualtrics (2018) to 671 general music teachers who work with elementary-aged students in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. This randomized cluster sample was stratified to ensure proportional representation of districts representing different locales (City, Suburb, Town, Rural) within each state. The first email yielded 81 valid responses. Up to three follow-up emails were sent to individuals in the sample if they did not respond. An additional 127 responses were obtained after the first follow-up, 35 after the second, and 37 after the third. This resulted in 280 total valid responses (response rate = 41.7%, 4.5% error rate at a 95% confidence level).

Quantitative data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 24.0). First, multiple approaches were used to estimate the extent to which the respondent sample may be representative of the population sample and target population, and to estimate response bias. Then descriptive statistics were produced for all variables, including demographic items related to teacher participants and their teaching positions, general music teaching pedagogy education and self-reported influence on instructional beliefs and practices representative of documentation and symbolic translation—two important elements of the Reggio Emilia approach.

As a data reduction strategy, a logic-basic categorization process was used to group documentation items, and then responses to items within each grouping were summed to create two composite scores related to documentation—one reflecting the thoroughness with which respondents analyzed student artifacts, and the other indicating how often and to what extent
respondents changed their instruction based on observation of students. Before reducing data related to symbolic translation, I used the Markov Chain Monte Carlo method for multiple data imputation because missing data (0.46%) did not demonstrate a pattern, and this procedure allowed me to retain sample size (and optimize statistical power) for subsequent analyses. Exploratory factor analysis was then used to reduce data associated with symbolic translation practices and identify underlying dimensions/factors for composite scores. Reliability (internal consistency) was estimated for documentation and symbolic translation composite scores.

Multiple regression was used to explain variance in composite documentation and symbolic translation scores; factorial Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether composite scores differed on the basis of education level (highest college degree earned) and general music pedagogy education. With all tests, I used the same significance level (α = .05). Narrative responses to open-ended prompts, which addressed the “child as protagonist” element of the Reggio Emilia approach, were analyzed using inductive coding and classical content analysis, by hand and in Microsoft Excel.

Descriptive analyses are organized by major sections of the questionnaire and by major variables. Demographic information is separated into Individual Characteristics (gender, state of residence), Teaching Position Characteristics (e.g., number of students taught), and Teaching-Related Characteristics (e.g., influence of and training in general music pedagogies). Descriptive statistics on demographic information are followed by descriptive statistics for the major variables (documentation and symbolic translation) representing congruence with Reggio Emilia principles.
Descriptive Analyses

Estimating Representativeness of the Response Sample

A total of 280 music teachers completed the CEGMT. While an additional 181 gave partial responses, their data were excluded from the analyses (see Appendix H for details about attrition). The largest number of respondents were from Colorado \( (n = 127) \), followed by Montana \( (n = 49) \), Utah \( (n = 46) \), Idaho \( (n = 37) \), and Wyoming \( (n = 21) \). The overall response rate was 41.7\% (4.5\% error rate at a 95\% confidence level), with music teachers in Wyoming (53.8\%) and Montana (52.7\%) producing the largest within-state response rates.

The respondent sample was representative of the population sample with regard to school district locale, and was representative of elementary teachers across the United States in terms of teaching experience and gender. I compared the percentage of general music teachers representing different district locales in the respondent sample and population sample using the Chi-Square test of association. A separate test was run for each state to better reflect the stratified sampling procedures. Chi-Square tests were nonsignificant in four states, reflecting comparable proportion of teachers from different school district locales within the respondent sample and population sample. The one exception was the state of Idaho where teachers from Town districts were marginally underrepresented in the respondent sample \( (X^2(3) = 7.99, \ p = .046) \). Most forms of demographic data for the target population (elementary general music teachers in five Rocky Mountain Region states) are not known, so I also estimated the extent to which the respondent sample was representative of elementary teachers nationally using the 2015-2016 National Teacher and Principal Survey (NCES, 2015-2016) as a proxy. The Chi-square test provided evidence that these groups were equivalent with respect to teaching experience \( (p = .975) \) and gender \( (p = .201) \).
In addition, survey data were examined and found to show no evidence of nonresponse bias. Armstrong and Overton (1977) write that respondents who complete a questionnaire early in the survey window do so more readily than those who complete the survey in later waves, after they have received additional reminders or requests to complete the questionnaire. Later-responders “are assumed to have responded because of the increased stimulus and are expected to be similar to nonrespondents” (p. 397). With this form of extrapolation serving as a proxy for comparing respondents and non-respondents, I used ANOVA to assess differences in teacher characteristics based on when (in which wave) they completed the questionnaire: between the opening email and the first email reminder, between the first and second reminders, between the second and third reminders, and between the third reminder and survey closing. There were no significant differences in the number of years respondents had been teaching music or their highest level of education based on the wave in which they completed the questionnaire. Since late-responders served as a proxy for nonrespondents and there were no differences between early- and late-responders, this suggests that with regard to teaching experience and education level there was no bias in who chose to complete the questionnaire.

I concluded that my survey responses are reasonably representative and non-biased given the extent to which I was able to compare demographic data for general music teachers included in the population sample and respondent sample, a national sample and the respondent sample, and different waves of the response sample. Given the careful sampling procedures, it is also reasonable to assume that findings may be generalizable to the target population (teachers of elementary general music in the five northern Rocky Mountain states).
**Participant Characteristics**

The majority of respondents described themselves as women (81.8%); 17.1% as men, and the remaining three respondents either did not complete the item or preferred to self-describe their gender. No respondents reported trans as their gender. Just over one half (53.6%) of teachers reported that their highest level of education was a bachelor’s degree. Other teachers reported their highest level as a master’s (25.0%), master’s plus 30 credits (20.4%), or doctoral degree (0.4%). Two respondents did not complete this item.

A preponderance of respondents (91.1%) indicated they spent the majority of their time teaching elementary school, instead of middle school or high school. Including the current school year, they had between 1 and 44 years of music teaching experience ($M = 13.96, SD = 10.12$). Most general music specialists (71.8%) reported teaching more than 300 students, with the vast majority (93.2%) having a dedicated music classroom.

Respondents reported the level to which their teaching decisions were influenced by the Dalcroze approach, the Kodály Concept, Music Learning Theory, the Orff-Schulwerk, and “other” pedagogies. Additionally, they reported their type and level of general music pedagogy education and membership in related national organizations. Overall, the Orff-Schulwerk and the Kodály Concept were most salient in terms of self-reported influence on teaching decisions, experience with pedagogy education, and national organization membership. Many respondents (36.1%) reported being very or extremely influenced by two or more general music pedagogies. By far, the two most common combinations of general music pedagogies that highly influenced teaching decisions were Kodály and Orff ($n = 39$) and Kodály, Music Learning Theory, and Orff ($n = 21$). Nine respondents reported being highly influenced by all four general music pedagogies. A more detailed summary of these responses appears in Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3.
### Table 4.1

**General Music Pedagogical Influence on Teaching Decisions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pedagogy</th>
<th>Influence Rating</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kodály</td>
<td></td>
<td>276</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orff</td>
<td></td>
<td>276</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Learning Theory (MLT)</td>
<td></td>
<td>273</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze</td>
<td></td>
<td>271</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Very/Extremely High Influence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kodaly Orff</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodaly MLT Orff</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze Kodaly MLT Orff</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLT Orff</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodaly MLT</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze Kodaly Orff</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze Kodaly MLT</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze MLT</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze MLT Orff</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze Kodaly</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze Orff</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Anchors for the five-point scale were: Not at all influenced (1), Slightly influenced, Somewhat influenced, Very influenced, and Extremely influenced (5)*

### Table 4.2

**Number Respondents with General Music Pedagogy Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pedagogy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orff</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodály</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Learning Theory</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Respondents also reported education in World Drumming, Conversational Solfege, Guitar, Suzuki, and SongWorks. Twenty-four respondents (8.6%) indicated that they had completed education in more than one general music pedagogy.*
Table 4.3

Membership in General Music National Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Orff-Schulwerk Association</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of American Kodály Educators</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gordon Institute for Music Learning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Eurhythmics Society</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalcroze Society of America</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Teachers reported membership in 17 additional national music education organizations, the most represented being the National Association for Music Education (55.7%), American Choral Directors Association (3.6%), and Music Teachers National Association (2.9%). One third of respondents (n = 93) reported holding no memberships in national music education organizations.

Documentation

Because of a dearth of established research measures focused specifically on elementary general music teaching practices, I opted to create multiple questionnaire items, using varied response formats, to determine whether certain instructional practices were representative of documentation and symbolic translation. These item pools were generated on the basis of my study of the Reggio Emilia approach, as well as my experiences in teaching children and teachers through and about the Reggio Emilia approach as situated within early childhood music education and elementary general music.

For two documentation items, respondents selected the forms of student music-making artifacts they collect and display. They also used multiple rating-scale items to indicate how much information they believe a music teacher should collect about student music making and learning, how much information they actually collect about individual students’ musical development, how thoroughly they analyze student artifacts, the impact this analysis should have on instruction on the whole, and the impact analysis and observation have on their own instruction.
Music teachers “somewhat agreed” or “agreed” that a music teacher should collect information about each individual student’s music making and musical development (on a scale from 1 to 6, $M = 4.43$, $SD = 0.95$). Regarding their own practice, they reported collecting between “a little” and “a moderate amount” of such information (on a scale from 1 to 5, $M = 2.71$, $SD = 0.82$). Of ten forms of student music making and understanding information, most teachers reported collecting artifacts related to at least one of these. The most common form was assessing the level of student participation in class (84.6%), followed by a paper or pencil worksheet, quiz, or test (78.2%). Overall, the extensiveness of documentation reported by teachers varied considerably (i.e., between 0 and 10 forms), with most collecting 5 forms (median and mode). See Table 4.4 for more details.
Table 4.4 *Forms of Information Collected*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of information</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessed level of student participation in class</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>84.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper/pencil worksheet, quiz, or test</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>78.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade from a performance-based rubric</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-created written or drawn work</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video recordings</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-written composition</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio recordings</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I (the teacher) transcribed music that students improvised or composed.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect any information about students' music making and understanding.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I (the teacher) wrote a short story describing something that happened.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reggio Emilia-inspired documentation is a process that includes not only collecting artifacts of student learning but displaying select artifacts and reflecting on what these artifacts might tell a teacher about student interests and understanding. Of those who reported collecting artifacts at some point in the school year (91.4%), most reported displaying these in at least one format in the most recent month. The most common form of displaying evidence of student music making and understanding was a live performance, followed by hanging up student work in the music classroom (see Table 4.5). Respondents reported examining this evidence more for students’ musical performance abilities and musical understanding than for their musical interests and interests outside of music (see Table 4.6). They reported that examining student
artifacts had a large impact on future lesson planning ($M = 8.22$, $SD = 2.03$, on a scale from 0 to 10).

Table 4.5 *Evidence of Student Music Making and Understanding Display Formats*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Display Approach</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students demonstrated evidence of music making and understanding in a live performance.</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>84.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of their work was hung up in the music classroom.</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of their work was posted on a website.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of their work from music was hung up elsewhere in the school building (not the music room or their regular classroom).</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of their work was NOT displayed.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of their work was included in a newsletter that went home to families.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of their work from music was hung up in their regular classroom.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 *Extent Respondents Examined Collected Evidence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information examined for…</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of music</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music performance abilities</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical interests</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests outside of music</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Response options were on a five-point scale (1 = Not at all, 2 = A little, 3 = A moderate amount, 4 = Quite a bit, 5 = Very thoroughly).

Another concept connected with documentation is changing instruction based on what the teacher observes. In the aggregate, respondents reported believing it important that a music teacher adapt instruction based on observation of students ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 0.71$; importance scale from 1 to 5). With regard to frequency of change, they reported responding to observation
by often changing instruction in the moment and for the following lesson ($M = 4.04, SD = 0.72$; $M = 4.01, SD = 0.69$; frequency scale from 1 to 5); they adapted a subsequent unit of study somewhat less often ($M = 3.59, SD = 0.92$). Respondents reported the extent to which they adapt instruction, or the magnitude of the change. They adapted instruction: “quite a bit” in the moment ($M = 4.18, SD = 0.76$; scale from 0 for “I NEVER change this” to 5 for “Extensively”); “quite a bit” for the next lesson ($M = 4.11, SD = 0.82$); and between “somewhat” and “quite a bit” for a following unit of study ($M = 3.59, SD = 1.09$). Overall, respondents described adapting instruction as important and reported doing so frequently and fairly extensively in their own teaching.

**Symbolic Translations**

Teachers applying the Reggio Emilia philosophy consider not only the many languages—or symbolic systems—with which their students engage, but encourage students to translate between different symbolic systems. As I suggested in Chapter One, music can be understood and expressed through many languages. Some of these are musical, or specifically related to the creation of or listening to sound (e.g., singing, improvising), and others non-musical (e.g., moving, storytelling). I asked respondents to indicate the frequency with which their students engaged with one language after engaging with a specific other type of language—at least one of these two languages was always musical. More specifically, respondents completed items regarding the frequency with which their students engaged in translating between musical languages (8 items), from a music language to a non-music language (8 items), and from a non-music to a music language (8 items) over the course of the school year. The two most common forms of translation involved translating listening into performance or translating listening into
movement to demonstrate musical characteristics. Results are summarized in Table 4.7 on the basis of the a priori classification system described earlier in this chapter.

Table 4.7 *Frequencies for Symbolic Translations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music to Music Translation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>listened THEN performed</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sang THEN played instruments</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>played instruments THEN sang</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to recording of themselves performing a song they were taught</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened THEN improvised (inspired by listening)</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened THEN composed (inspired by listening)</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to a recording of their own composition</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to a recording of their own improvisation</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music to Non-Music Translation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>listened/perform THEN moved to show musical characteristics</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened/perform THEN moved to show mood/emotion</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened/perform THEN moved to show a story</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened/perform THEN created a visual (not traditional notation) to show musical characteristics</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened/perform THEN represented music with traditional notation</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened/perform THEN told a related story</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened/perform THEN created a visual to show mood</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened/perform THEN created a visual to tell a related story</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Reduction and Reliability Analysis

Documentation

I engaged in data reduction by creating two composite scores representing different concepts related to documentation: the thoroughness with which teachers reported analyzing evidence of student work; and the extent to which they changed their instruction based on their observations of students. The disparity of item stem formats and response formats (i.e. categorical vs. scaled data, different scale types) used to measure documentation practices made it impractical to create a single composite score. Instead, I grouped items that were comparable in terms of concept and scale, and summed responses across multiple items within each group, to form two composite variables or scores for subsequent analysis –Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis and (Documentation-Driven) Change in Instruction. Beyond computing basic descriptive statistics for these composite scores, I also estimated reliability (internal consistency of composite scores).
Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis was computed by summing responses to four items (5-point thoroughness scale) addressing the thoroughness with which general music teachers analyze evidence of student work for understanding of music, music performance abilities, musical interests, and interests outside of music. The reliability estimate for this composite score was adequate (\(\alpha = 0.76\)). Respondents generally scored in the mid-range for Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis (possible and actual range 4 to 20, \(M = 13.00, SD = 2.67\)).

Change in Instruction was computed by summing responses to six items (5-point frequency and magnitude scales). In three of these items, respondents reported the frequency they change (a) instruction in the moment, (b) the plan for the following lesson, and (c) the plan for the following unit of study. In the other three, they reported the extent to which observation of students leads to each of these three kinds of changes. Change in Instruction scores ranged from 8 to 30 (possible range, 6 to 30), reflected a high frequency and degree of change on average (\(M = 23.52, SD = 3.93\)), and were highly reliable (\(\alpha = 0.87\)).

**Symbolic Translations**

To support item development, I considered three a priori groups for symbolic translations items: Music to Music Translation, Music to Non-Music Translation, and Non-Music to Music Translation. Instead of subsequent analyses on these classifications, however, I used exploratory factor analysis to determine the underlying dimensionality or structure of responses, and to create factors/subscales on which subsequent analyses could be based.

Three assumptions that need to be tested before conducting factor analysis are linearity, factorability, and sufficient sample size (Russell, 2018). Scatter plots demonstrated no curvilinear relationships among variables. Factorability was tested using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
(KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett’s test. Data met the factorability assumption as the KMO value was above the recommended .8 (KMO = .892) and the Bartlett’s test was significant at the $\alpha = .05$ level ($p < .001$). Also, data exceeded the expectation of at least 10 participants for every variable ($n = 280, 24$ variables).

I ran multiple factor analyses to facilitate comparing the number of cross loadings, conceptual clarity, and reliability of resulting subscales. Six factors had an eigenvalue above 1.0. Because of lack of clarity in the scree plot (Figure 4.1) and difficulty interpreting a 6-factor solution, I subsequently forced 5-, 4-, 3-, and 2-factor solutions. For each solution, I used a Promax rotation (allowing for correlation between factors).
I ultimately determined the 4-factor solution provided the best interpretability while accounting for an adequate amount of variance (54.2%). Two items did not load on these four factors (i.e. “How frequently this school year have your students FIRST sung music and THEN played it on instruments” and “…FIRST played music on instruments and THEN sung it”). One item (i.e. “How frequently this school year have your students FIRST read traditional notation and THEN created music?”) was removed because it cross-loaded on two factors, reduced interpretability of the factor on which it more strongly loaded, and reduced subscale reliability.
The four underlying symbolic translation factors represented: Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music (SMI; 10 items, $\alpha = .89$); Movement and Listening/Performing (MLP; 4 items, $\alpha = .76$); Listening to Student Recordings (LSR; 3 items, $\alpha = .76$); and Representing Musical Characteristics (RMC; 4 items, $\alpha = .75$). Factor One items imply that general music students are engaged in translating—in either direction—between listening to or creating music and representing the story or mood of music with visuals, movement, and storytelling (SMI). Factor Two items suggest that students translate listening to or making music into movement to show different aspects of the music characteristics (MLP). Factor Three items reflect translation arising from when students listen to recordings of their improvisations and prepared performances—translating from a performance-based language to a reflection-through-listening language (LSR). Finally, Factor Four items demonstrate that students represent musical characteristics (music-embedded symbols) through movement, traditional notation, and visuals other than traditional notation (RMC) (see Table 4.8 for items and factor loadings for rotated factors above .30).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How frequently this school year have your students...</th>
<th>Factor One: Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music</th>
<th>Factor Two: Movement and Listening/Performing</th>
<th>Factor Three: Listening to Student Recordings</th>
<th>Factor Four: Representing Musical Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>created or viewed a visual related to a story and THEN created music</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>created or viewed a visual related to mood or emotion and THEN created music</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engaged in or watched movement related to a story and THEN created music</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engaged in or watched movement related to mood or emotion and THEN created music</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual to show the story of the music</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual to show the mood or emotions of the music</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heard, told, or wrote a story and THEN created music</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to or performed music and THEN told a story (out loud or in writing) related to the music</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to music and THEN used it to inspire composition</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to music and THEN used the listening to inspire improvisation</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How frequently this school year have your students…</td>
<td>Factor One: Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music</td>
<td>Factor Two: Movement and Performing</td>
<td>Factor Three: Listening to Student Recordings</td>
<td>Factor Four: Representing Musical Characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show characteristics of the music</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show the story of the music</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td></td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show the mood or emotions of the music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to music and THEN performed it (singing and/or on instruments)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>read traditional notation and THEN created music</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td></td>
<td>.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to a recording of their own improvisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to a recording of their own composition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to recording of performing a song they were taught (not their own composition or improvisation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>created or viewed a visual (other than traditional notation) related to musical characteristics and THEN created music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engaged in or watched movement related to musical characteristics and THEN created music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual (other than traditional notation) to show characteristics of the music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listened to or performed music and THEN represented the music with traditional notation (through writing or use of manipulatives)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Factors loadings less than .30 are suppressed. Intercorrelations among factors range from .19 to .62, with a median coefficient of .45.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exploring Variance in Documentation and Symbolic Translation Practices

I employed two statistical approaches in an effort to understand how general music teachers vary in their documentation and symbolic translation practices. First, I used multiple regression analyses to determine the degree to which documentation and symbolic translation practices can be explained on the basis of general music pedagogical influence. Second, I used factorial ANOVA to explore main and interactive education effects of two forms of education (post-baccalaureate hours/degrees, general music pedagogy professional development) on documentation and symbolic translation practices in general music.

Multiple Regression Analyses

The purpose of multiple linear regression is to assess the degree to which a continuous dependent variable can be predicted or explained by a set of independent variables. Two methods are simultaneous regression and stepwise regression. In the former, all independent variables enter the equation at the same time, producing a full model solution in which the composite effect of all independent variables is assessed. The latter involves analysis at each step to determine the continuing unique contribution of the independent variables entered previously into the equation. In stepwise regression, variables can be retained or deleted from the model based on their statistical contribution (Meyers, Gamst, & Guarino, 2006; Warner, 2008).

Simultaneous regression and stepwise regression are appropriate for different situations. Researchers use simultaneous regression when dealing with a small set of independent variables and when they are more interested in maximum explanatory power than in determining which variable(s) may be the strongest predictors. Stepwise regression is considered most appropriate when there is a larger pool of potential independent variables but no clear basis (theory or prior
research) on which to include or hierarchically order the entry of the variables, and the research goal is primarily one of prediction (Meyers et al., 2006; Warner, 2008).

I employed the simultaneous regression method to examine the extent to which documentation and symbolic translations used in general music teaching practice can be explained on the basis of respondents’ pedagogical influence from the Dalcroze approach, the Kodály Concept, Music Learning Theory, and the Orff-Schulwerk. This was deemed most appropriate because there were few independent variables and the purpose of analyses was explanatory rather than predictive. Separate multiple regressions were run for the different composite scores representing documentation (Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis or TDA; and Change in Instruction or CII) and symbolic translations (Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis or TDA; Change in Instruction or CII; Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music or SMI; Movement and Listening/Performing or MLP; Listening to Student Recordings or LSR; and Representing Musical Characteristics or RMC).

The statistical assumptions of multiple regression—linearity between dependent and independent variables, homoscedasticity, normality of each variable, sufficient number of cases based on number of variables, and absence of multicollinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Russell, 2018)—were each met. On the basis of inspecting scatter plots, I concluded the first two assumptions were met. The skewness value for each variable was between -1 and 1, meeting the assumption of normality (.11 < |skewness| < .93). For each multiple regression run (explaining TDA, CII, SMI, MLP, LSR, and RMC), there were five variables: four independent variables representing pedagogical influence and one dependent variable. Since there were at least 267 cases (with complete data for independent and dependent variables) for each multiple regression analysis, this meets Russell’s (2018) recommendation of a minimum of 10 to 20 observations per
variable, and Tabachnick and Fidell’s (2007) recommendation that there be at least 108 observations when testing for 4 individual explanatory factors. The two independent variables (sources of pedagogical influence) with the strongest correlation were Dalcroze and Kodály ($r = .34$, $p < .001$); no two independent variables had a strong enough relationship to raise concerns about multicollinearity.

I examined relationships between the independent variables (influence of general music pedagogies) and each dependent variable (composite scores for documentation and hundred language) using the Pearson product-moment correlation. All relationships were positive; the more a teacher reports being influenced by a specific general music pedagogy, the more congruent their reported practice is with the Reggio Emilia approach. Most relationships were small. Moderate relationships were observed between two general music pedagogies and frequency of symbolic translations: between Dalcroze and Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music; between Kodály and Movement and Listening/Performing; and between Kodály and Representing Musical Characteristics (see Table 4.9 for summary).
Table 4.9

*Relationships Between Congruence with the Reggio Emilia Approach and Influence of General Music Pedagogies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbolic Translations</th>
<th>Dalcroze</th>
<th>Music Learning Theory</th>
<th>Kodály</th>
<th>Orff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music</td>
<td>.305*</td>
<td>.262*</td>
<td>.203*</td>
<td>.235*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement and Listening/Performing</td>
<td>.231*</td>
<td>.145*</td>
<td>.306*</td>
<td>.156*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to Student Recordings</td>
<td>.138*</td>
<td>.151*</td>
<td>.104</td>
<td>.135*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representing Musical Characteristics</td>
<td>.244*</td>
<td>.154*</td>
<td>.321*</td>
<td>.137*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Documentation                                   |          |                      |        |      |
| Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis          | .128*    | .248*                | .071   | .144*|
| Change in Instruction                           | .169*    | .104                 | .090   | .169*|

Values reported are Pearson $r$

* $p < .05$

For each dependent variable, I ran a simultaneous multiple regression with the four independent variables. See Table 4.9 for a summary of regression analyses. The $R^2$ values for most were equal to or less than .12 (accounting for 12% or less of the variance in documentation or symbolic translation metrics). Pedagogical influence explained the greatest amount of variance for the Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music variable ($R^2 = .157$). Overall, this finding suggests general music pedagogical influence did not sufficiently account for the degree to which respondents reported teaching practices congruent with the Reggio Emilia principles of documentation or symbolic translations (hundred languages).
Table 4.10

Regression Analysis Summary for Congruence with Reggio Emilia-Inspired Practice Explained by Pedagogical Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement and Listening/Performing</td>
<td>.342</td>
<td>.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to Student Recordings</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representing Musical Characteristics</td>
<td>.364</td>
<td>.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis</td>
<td>.275</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Instruction</td>
<td>.227</td>
<td>.052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A separate, simultaneous multiple regression was run for each (of 6) dependent variable, representing an aspect of general music instruction congruent with Reggio Emilia-inspired practice.

2x2 Factorial Analysis of Variance

I conducted multiple 2x2 factorial ANOVAs to examine the main and interactive effects of two levels of education (bachelor’s degree, master’s degree or higher) and two levels of general music pedagogy education (no workshops or courses, one or more workshops/courses) on music teaching practice. A separate factorial ANOVA was run for each of the six composite scores representing different measures of documentation and symbolic translation: TDA; CII; SMI; MLP; LSR; and RMC. Because I was completing a total of six factorial ANOVAs, I used
the Bonferroni correction to reduce the likelihood of a Type I error (Bonferroni-corrected $\alpha = .008$).

Statistical assumptions for factorial ANOVA include that the dependent variable is normally distributed and there is homogeneity of variance (Russell, 2018). For discussion of normality testing, see the previous section. Two variables did not demonstrate homogeneity of variance: Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music; and Listening to Student Recordings (see Table 4.10 for Levene’s $F$ and $p$-value). Factorial ANOVA, however, is robust to this violation because there were “roughly equal number of participants in each group” (Russell, 2018, p. 96).

Table 4.11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Levene’s Tests for Homogeneity of Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representing Musical Characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement and Listening/ Performing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to Student Recordings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: A significant result demonstrates a lack of homogeneity of variance.

No interactions or main effects were statistically significant, suggesting that general music teaching practices congruent with the Reggio Emilia philosophy did not differ for respondents who had distinct levels of education. See Table 4.11 for a summary of group difference analyses.
Table 4.12

*Analyses of Differences in Reggio Emilia-Inspired Practice Based on Education Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>0.308</td>
<td>.579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Music Pedagogy Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>.577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.667</td>
<td>.415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Movement and Listening/Performing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>0.164</td>
<td>.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Music Pedagogy Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>.976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening to Student Recordings</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>0.563</td>
<td>.454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Music Pedagogy Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>.704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.172</td>
<td>.678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representing Musical Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>0.154</td>
<td>.695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Music Pedagogy Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.437</td>
<td>.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>.897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thoroughness of Documentation Analysis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Education</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>.764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Music Pedagogy Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.379</td>
<td>.538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.531</td>
<td>.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change in Instruction</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>271</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Music Pedagogy Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>.714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis of Child-as-Protagonist Open-Ended Items**

I engaged in inductive coding and classical content analysis of narrative responses to two open-ended prompts ("Please describe how your teaching style or teaching philosophy reflects a child-centered approach to general music instruction"; "Please describe how your teaching situation either facilitates or inhibits your efforts to adopt a child-centered approach to general
music education”), separating analysis of data for each item. See Appendices I and J for each final inductive codebook.

In the following sections, I use quotes from respondents as examples. For context, I parenthetically reference characteristics of each respondent after each quote. The first two letters stand for the state in which they teach. The next letter represents their district Locale (C for City, S for Suburb, T for Town, and R for Rural). Finally, I list a number representing the years they have been teaching music. So, a respondent who has taught music for nine years and currently teaches in a Town district in Idaho would have the following parenthetical reference: (ID-T-9).

**Aspects of Teaching Style and Philosophy**

The vast majority of participants (n = 237) provided narrative responses regarding how their teaching style or philosophy reflects a child-centered approach to general music teaching (a proxy for the child-as-protagonist element of the Reggio Emilia approach). This approach was defined as one “in which the teacher plans based on children's needs and interests, adapting this as they learn more about each child, and gives children meaningful choice in the classroom.” Most respondents gave explanations or examples from their teaching philosophy and practice that supported aspects of a child-centered approach to teaching elementary general music. Some wrote about adapting instruction and giving students choice. Others retained such decision-making for themselves, centering their approach on the child by building teacher-led instruction around knowledge of child development and their students’ interests. Multiple respondents described relationship-building, a key to a child-centered approach, as the core of their philosophy and practice of teaching. Very few teachers shared that they do not believe in using a child-centered approach or they do not use it “yet.”
Respondents wrote about adapting instruction in their lesson plans—either ahead of time or in the moment—based on observation of students’ engagement, interests, and performance abilities. They made these adjustments at the individual, class, grade, or developmental level. For instance, one wrote:

It is crucial that the teacher is able and willing to adjust their instruction in the moment. If something is not working, the teacher must interfere by either slowing the pace, adjusting the procedure, or putting things in another context for the student. (CO-C-1)

And another shared:

I take note of which activities the children seem to participate in and enjoy more than others and then adapt my instructional methods to include more of that style of teaching or subject matter. (MT-R-21)

Some teachers described a child-centered approach in which they gave students choice. They framed student opportunities for decision-making in varied ways, from making small choices within teacher-led lessons, to selecting activities or repertoire from a teacher-approved list, to engaging in creative musical decisions in individual, small-group, or whole-class music exploration, improvisation, composition, or arrangements. Reflecting on choice, a respondent shared, “I start the year with a textbook preview where students indicate pages they are interested in for us to work on all year and I include those” (MT-R-4). Others incorporated choice as a means of motivating student engagement. For example:

I am folk music based in my teaching, so [students] learn songs they can share with other generations previous and in the future, connecting them all. I get buy-in from students to perform by giving them choices to do certain parts in shows (actor, singer, instrumentalist, speaker, dancer). (CO-C-26)
And a few regularly gave students a good deal of choice:

One day a week, the kids are allowed to choose what they learn and how they learn it.

They can read, use laptops and iPads, or interview. I use apps to enhance learning, as well as YouTube videos. I want kids to learn, but mostly, I want them to enjoy music. (CO-C-36)

Other respondents used their teaching experience and knowledge of child development to infuse teacher-led lessons with fast pacing and variety. One noted, “A fast pace and variety in each lesson allows students to connect with the material in many ways meeting their individual needs” (CO-C-11). The term “variety” was used to refer to varied music genres, performing music through singing and playing instruments, studying different musical concepts, and engaging with music or music concepts through multiple modalities (i.e. kinesthetic, visual, auditory). Addressing music variety, one teacher wrote:

I, as an elementary music educator, get to introduce students to a huge variety of music from around the world, to the popular music of today, classical, instrumental, musicals, etc. I use a wide variety of types of music to teach basic music concepts to which I continue to build upon every year. (ID-S-14)

Others also described variety in terms of their teaching:

I believe variety is important in a music classroom to make it child-centered. Each learns differently and each has different strengths and weaknesses… I think that providing music in a variety of forms is important as well as using different teaching techniques (ex: visual, hands-on, verbal, etc.) to teach music. (UT-S-4)

A few teachers also sought to balance students’ interaction with the familiar and the new. One wrote, “I do feel that as an expert in music and music education, I can give children insight into
styles of music and other activities, but often not without relating to what they already know and enjoy” (UT-T-14). Respondents described supporting students based on understanding of who they are individually, their knowledge, and their learning processes while retaining power, as the teacher, to decide what music will be most beneficial for students.

Quite a few teachers referred to their relationship with students; they viewed relationship-forming as preceding effective teaching, for example writing, “I believe in relationships first; it doesn't really matter what subject I teach, I am teaching people. I use the medium of music to do that” (CO-C-19). Some believed in leveraging this relationship to support students forming a love for music:

Beyond any subject matter, I want my students to know they are loved and important. I want my positive interaction to become part of who they are and what they believe about themselves. At the beginning of each day, I take a moment to remember who I am teaching and how important they are. As a music teacher, I want to open the door to a lifetime of experience in music and the arts. I want my students to realize they can be a participant and not just an observer… I want to ignite the passion that music can bring into life. (UT-S-8)

Very few respondents shared that they do not engage in a child-centered approach. One implied they may like to do so, writing, “Not great at this yet” (CO-C-28). Two simply stated they do not engage in this form of teaching. A fourth seemed to take issue with the idea of letting students choose music they study:

This is not my approach. My approach is about what I as an adult know children need to know to be successful and participating in and creating music. I also believe in exposing them to music they would not naturally choose on their own. They will choose the music
they already are comfortable with on their own time; it is my work to expose them to
music they would not have chosen. (CO-T-27)

I examined how often teachers described different degrees of choice in their instruction
by first developing codes through inductive coding, then going through data with a code list
limited to this theme, and finally using classical content analysis to examine frequency. The
majority of teachers (74.2%) described their child-centered approach to teaching in such a way
as to indicate they make all meaningful decisions in their classrooms. They may base decisions
on a generalized understanding of children’s developmental levels or on group/individual student
observations. Many fewer respondents described providing students with opportunities to engage
in creative decision-making. Students made creative decisions when working individually or in
small groups, facilitated by the teacher in a large group, or interspersed within teacher-led
activities. See Table 4.12 for frequencies of codes representing degrees of choice-based teaching
practices, as assigned to respondents’ open-ended description of their teaching philosophy and
style.
Table 4.13

Frequencies of Different Choice-Based Teaching Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-selected repertoire and activities based on general knowledge of students</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-selected repertoire and activities informed by observation of a group of students (i.e. class)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-selected repertoire and activities informed by observation of individual students</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-selected repertoire and activities from a teacher-generated list</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-led instruction interspersed with moments for student creativity</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher facilitates group creative choice</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students have opportunities for open-ended creative choice</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>163</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Codes are listed based on the level of student involvement in choices from least (top) to most (bottom).*

Impact of Teaching Situation

Respondents \((n = 240)\) wrote about how their teaching situation either facilitates or inhibits their efforts to adopt a child-centered approach to general music instruction, discussing one or more of the following: their teaching load and schedule; school and community atmosphere; school facilities; access to resources; and teaching background. Though many spoke to identical or similar themes, respondents often did so using different valences. I examined the valence of responses using content analysis and found that some respondents painted themes in negative terms related to child-centered teaching (50.0%), others in positive terms (30.8%), and some in both negative and positive terms (10.8%). The remaining few wrote comments that
could not be coded as negative (inhibiting a child-centered approach) or positive (facilitating this approach).

Respondents addressed multiple facets of teaching load. Many wrote about numbers: the number of students in a class, the number of classes they teach, the number of schools in which they teach, or the total number of students taught. Regarding each of these, some cited having too many responsibilities (i.e., being overloaded), which inhibited their use of a child-centered approach. For instance, they wrote “Way too many kids” (ID-C-35), “Most classes are very large” (UT-S-6), and “I think the fact that I teach 30 classes in 3 different schools with over 600 students it is virtually impossible to take into account the interests and needs of every student” (MT-T-16). In contrast, other respondents noted they had a small enough number of responsibilities to facilitate a child-centered approach:

Teaching in a small school (7-12 students per elementary grade) gives me a lot more chances for one-on-one instruction and making sure that the concepts stick with every student. (MT-R-1)

Respondents described their contact time with students in a negative light or a positive—“ideal” (UT-C-4)—one. Examples of the former includes not having enough time with students and/or seeing them too infrequently: “My classes are too short and younger grades are only once a week” (MT-R-12). Planning time was described as “not enough” (MT-T-10) or competing with other obligations. One teacher wrote, “I teach K-12 in a high functioning school setting. The jazz/marching/choir competitions take away time that I would like to dedicate to prep for my K-6th classes” (ID-R-8).

Teachers who had similar teaching situations might describe these same conditions as either supporting or hindering their implementation of a child-centered teaching approach. For
instance, one wrote “I have an ideal teaching situation. I see each class twice a week for 30 and 40 minutes. This provides enough time for child-centered instruction” (UT-C-4). Another teacher also sees students twice a week, but in contrast they noted:

My teaching situation effects the child-centered approach in that I only see my students twice a week. I do not get to know them as well or observe them as much. Also, if a child misses a day of school on a music day, it is a whole week in between music classes. That is a long time to try and retain information. (MT-R-14)

Music teachers in this study also viewed their school and community atmosphere as supporting or hindering a child-centered approach to teaching. For some, the school philosophy matched this approach, which supported their implementation of it. One teacher wrote, “my school believes in a child-centered philosophy, so I am encouraged and supported by my administration in implementing child-centered teaching” (CO-C-16). But others described a school philosophy that did not match. “The school philosophy… is teacher directed. The students are used to being told what to do” (WY-C-5). One respondent wrote that they tried a very open, child-centered approach, but were unsuccessful because this approach did not match the school context:

…to try that approach in public schools is not honest. I tried it. And the kids just didn’t know what to do with that amount of autonomy. Sad to say but true. We’d need to change the entire public school approach. (CO-T-27)

Two other respondents referred to student characteristics, indicating that they could not use a child-centered approach, because students had high “behavioral and emotional needs” (WY-C-25) or came in with a lack of background knowledge, having “grown up in unmusical homes” (MT-R-4). Administrators, classroom teachers, parents, and the greater community might either
support music education or devalue music education, with administrators, other teachers, parents, or other community members perhaps viewing the music teacher as a “babysitter” (UT-C-8). Some respondents reported feeling part of a community of elementary music teachers—two working collaboratively in Professional Learning Communities (CO-C-7; WY-C-19)—or feeling isolated because as the only elementary general music teacher in the district, they have a “lack of input from others in my profession” (CO-T-3).

As noted in the descriptive analysis earlier in this chapter, the vast majority of respondents have a dedicated music classroom but some do not. Having a classroom was described as a support for child-centered teaching: “I have a classroom of my own that makes it easier to facilitate a child-centered approach” (MT-C-7). Not having a classroom was described as an obstacle:

I teach off a cart which means I go from room to room. This is difficult because a lot of the long-range projects are hard to manage, and it takes time to set up instruments in the room which eats into my time. I'd like to do more center-based work (with an instrument clinic led by me for a small group, for example, while students work in other centers around the room) but not having my own space makes that time-consuming and difficult to set up. (MT-R-4)

Of those who have a classroom, some described the size and quality of the space as impacting their ability to use child-centered teaching practices. On the positive, one wrote, “My room is large, so I can easily differentiate the lessons and have the freedom to use manipulatives, technology and any supplies needed for child-centered instruction” (MT-C-24). But more respondents who wrote about their classrooms shared ways the setting inhibits a child-centered approach to teaching music:
I teach in a cement room (including floors) that began as a shop classroom. The walls are not soundproof (only covered windows to the next classroom) and the room is very live. During our three years in this room, my students have not had the opportunity to improvise independently because of the noise level. A child-centered approach requires time for students to be noisy. This has been the biggest obstacle I have experienced in my eight years of teaching. (MT-R-8)

In addition to a classroom, teachers noted that having “access to up-to-date equipment and resources to teach and supplement my lessons” (WY-T-7) could facilitate using a child-centered approach. In contrast, having no, few, or poor-quality materials—such as “a lack of good-quality instruments” (MT-R-15)—can hinder this approach to teaching. Similarly, financial resources (from the school budget or a supportive PTA) facilitated this teaching approach when available and hindered it when unavailable or very minimal.

Last, a few respondents wrote about themselves—their experience, their background—in terms of hindering a child-centered approach to elementary general music. A first-year teacher wrote, “my lack of experience… inhibits my efforts to adopt a child-centered approach” (UT-C-1). More experienced teachers noted that their experience was in other forms of teaching (i.e. teacher-led approaches), so they “have the habit of teaching that inhibits [a child-centered] approach” (ID-S-11).
The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education originated in Italy but has spread world-wide over the past 35 years. While this approach shares some philosophical roots with American music education, Reggio Emilia-inspired music education is not the norm in U.S. schools and some music educators (e.g., Andress, 1998) have questioned why music does not have a more prominent place within the Reggio Emilia approach. There is evidence, however, that in recent years music has been successfully incorporated in preschools using the Reggio Emilia approach (Bond, 2012, 2015; Waters, 2015; Westlake, 2015). Moreover, Bond (2013) has recommended that music educators incorporate Reggio Emilia principles within the elementary general music classroom. Yet in certain school contexts—particularly some public elementary schools—the philosophy, curriculum, instructional pedagogies, and assessment practices may not support such implementation. Still, viewing elementary general music practices through the Reggio Emilia philosophy as a conceptual framework may illuminate unique aspects of and concerns within elementary general music. The extent to which effective implementation of Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching is viable in U.S. elementary general music classrooms is dependent on the degree to which current practices may already reflect Reggio Emilia principles.

Therefore, the purpose of this survey was to explore the extent to which elementary general music teaching practices are congruent with three key characteristics of the Reggio Emilia approach: documentation, hundred languages, and child as protagonist. I also considered whether variance in the congruence of elementary general music teaching practices with the Reggio Emilia concepts of documentation and hundred languages might be explained by music
teacher education level or the degree to which teachers report being influenced by major general music pedagogies.

I emailed the *Characteristics of Elementary General Music Teaching* survey to a stratified, cluster sample of elementary general music teachers in five Rocky Mountain states: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming. Respondents (n = 280) completed researcher-developed rating-scale and selection-type items that reflected various facets of two concepts from the Reggio Emilia approach—documentation and the hundred languages—manifested within the elementary general music context. Descriptive statistical analyses were used to examine the extent to which respondents’ reported teaching practices that were congruent with the Reggio Emilia approach. I then reduced data (informed by exploratory factor analysis for the symbolic translations items) into reliable, multi-item subscales that supported the use of two statistical approaches to explain variance in teaching practice congruence: multiple regression analyses (estimating variance in congruence explained by different general music pedagogies) and factorial ANOVA (comparing group differences in congruence based on college and general music pedagogy education). Lastly, I used inductive coding to analyze narrative responses—addressing the Reggio Emilia-inspired concept of child as protagonist; respondents wrote about their teaching style, philosophy, and work environment related to teaching elementary general music with a child-centered approach.

**Summary of Major Findings**

One research question focused on the extent to which general music teachers reported practices congruent with three concepts integral to the Reggio Emilia approach: documentation, hundred languages, and child as protagonist. Prior to conducting the study, I thought I might find evidence of alignment given there are some shared philosophical roots between American music
education and the Reggio Emilia approach, and there is emphasis within some general music pedagogies on symbolic languages beyond sounds that are heard or performed, such as rhythmic movement. Overall study participants reported teaching practices that reflect some congruence with the Reggio Emilia approach. They collect some student artifacts, display evidence of student learning in certain forms, adapt instruction based on observation of students, provide students opportunities to translate between symbolic systems, and demonstrate a student-centered approach to music education by modifying their teaching principles and practices at the student, class, grade, or developmental level. However, the range, extensiveness, and sophistication of these practices was limited, suggesting an incomplete or tenuous congruence between elementary general music instruction and Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices.

Through a second research question, I considered general music pedagogy and education as explanatory factors that might account for measured variance in the congruence between general music teaching practices and the Reggio Emilia approach. The four general music pedagogies presented in this study (Dalcroze, Kodály, Music Learning Theory, and Orff) have unique histories of development and implementation within elementary general music education, and emphasize different processes and aims with regard to children’s musical experiences and learning. I believed, for instance, that music teachers choosing to focus on singing and music literacy through sequenced curriculum (Kodály) or supporting whole music learning through an intensive focus on tonal or rhythm patterns (Music Learning Theory) might be less inclined to view music education through a Reggio Emilia-inspired lens than those emphasizing musical expression through movement (Dalcroze) or creative musicianship through imitation, exploration, and improvisation (Orff-Schulwerk). I also believed that teachers who attained more education—through college or focused study of one or more general music pedagogies—may
have developed more skills for being responsive to individual students and an understanding of music learning that may lead to providing students with diversified types of experiences. However, variance in the congruence between teaching practice and the Reggio Emilia concepts of documentation and the hundred languages could not be explained by general music pedagogical influence or amount of education.

**Interpretation of Major Findings**

In this section, I interpret major findings, connecting to prior literature, as organized by research question and Reggio Emilia concepts. That is, first I consider general music teaching practice for its congruence with documentation, then hundred languages, and child as protagonist. Then I interpret why the selected variables (general music pedagogical influence, education) did not sufficiently account for congruence between elementary general music practices and the Reggio Emilia approach.

**Documentation**

Respondents agreed that music teachers should collect information about individual student’s music making and development, but they reported collecting less than a moderate amount. It may be that the teachers held a narrow view of what they might collect or the purpose the collection might serve. Indeed, the most collected forms all served evaluative purposes (participation, worksheet/quiz, performance-based rubric grade). The next most frequently collected forms of information were students’ direct work (their written or drawn work, compositions, recordings, photographs). Least frequently, teachers attempted to document their interpretation of student work (via transcribing students’ music making or writing a vignette of student activity). Collecting documents with an evaluative component may be part of Reggio Emilia-inspired practice, but it should not be the whole part. Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers
collect documents to initiate and support interpretations of student experience that are complex (Dalhberg, 2012). General music teachers’ interpretations are constrained to the extent that they engage in documentation to a limited extent or for narrow purposes.

Music teachers mainly collected evaluative forms of artifacts, possibly due to their perception of more elaborate documentation as infeasible or not worth the effort. Learning to collect artifacts to support the process of documentation can be challenging, but doing so becomes increasingly possible over an extended period of time (Kersting, 1995; Mathis, 2011). Lyon and Donahue (2009) also found that teachers initially used documentation only as a form of assessment. General music teachers who participated in the present survey study, including those with more years of teaching experience, however, seemed to adopt a somewhat narrow view of student musical development and therefore were relatively content with the types of documents collected. It also is plausible that they lack the time required to collect extensive information at the individual student level. In fact, most teachers reported having over 300 students, multiple teachers reported having 600 students, and one reported 900 students.

Music teachers in this study most prevalently used one form of displaying students’ music making and understanding: a live concert. There is certainly power in preparing for or attending a performance, and performance is an important facet of the music education experience. However, such a display is bound in time and location. This inherently limits who may participate in the performance, who may view the display, and how deeply performers and viewers reflect on what the display means or implies. Through alternative methods of dissemination (e.g., password protected video recording links), music teachers can support parents who may want to view documentation displays but are not able to spend time at the school (Trepanier-Street et al., 2001). Yet, fewer than one out of every four respondents reported
extending student learning displays beyond the school boundaries in the previous month, doing so principally through a school website.

**Hundred Languages**

Elementary general music teachers provide students with opportunities to translate between some forms of symbolic languages, and the most prevalent types are similar in nature: students first listen to music then perform it; listen to or perform music and then move to show its mood or musical characteristics; sing and then play instruments; or read notation before creating music. Most music educators would agree that each of these symbolic translations is a common and important component of the elementary general music experience. However, when viewed through a Reggio Emilia-inspired lens, the prevalence of these symbolic translations to the neglect of others limits students’ reflective and interpretive development. Reggio Emilia-inspired teachers can support students’ deepened understanding by providing them with the opportunities and encouragement needed to successfully translate their ideas about a concept between any number of the hundred languages (Gandini, 2015), what I am calling symbolic translation. Though music teachers seem to be supporting a range of symbolic languages, the forms of symbolic translations that were most prevalent had similar characteristics. Music teachers might be able to support students—by providing opportunities for a wider range of symbolic translations—to more richly develop understanding of music, and the ability to communicate through music.

The least frequently reported form of symbolic translation involved students listening to recordings of their improvisations and compositions, translating from a creative performance language to an analytical listening language. Respondents in this study did not comment directly on the prevalence of specific symbolic languages (absent of the translation component), but they
may—as reported by Indiana general music teachers (Schmidt et al., 2006)—devote less instructional time to improvisation and composition. Other researchers have also previously commented (Shouldice, 2014; Strand, 2006) that though including improvisation and composition is important to music education, it seems underrepresented by elementary music teachers. Prior to the study, I speculated—based on findings from Smith (2011) and Yanko (2015)—that music teachers could most easily incorporate Reggio Emilia-inspired practices through group composition and sound exploration. However, teachers in this study engaged students in few symbolic translations that included improvisation or composition.

An elementary general music teacher may delimit symbolic translations based on the level of student choice they want to support or encourage. Each of the most common symbolic translations noted above can include creative musicianship, but they do not require it. Teachers are able to retain control of classroom and musical decision-making during activities that support the types of symbolic translations most commonly reported. Though decision-making in improvisation and composition activities also exists on a continuum from more student control to more teacher control, these activities also necessarily include some student choice. Bond (2013) suggested music educators value engaging in flexible instruction that centers around the student and is responsive to their needs. For some students, general music teachers might meet their needs related to music development without allowing for any creative decision-making power, but for many students this would likely be insufficient. Some elementary-aged students may be able to learn to listen critically to music in the moment while performing, but many likely need space from the act of performing granted by listening to a recording of their performance. Through considering a broader range of symbolic translations, music teachers may be able to practice values that share philosophical roots with the Reggio Emilia approach while teaching in
real situations with the complexities of local expectations, teaching loads, and schedules (as evidenced in Gould, 2006; Yanko, 2015).

**Categorizing symbolic translations.** In addition to considering individual symbolic translations—as above—I also examined categories of symbolic translations. Using exploratory factor analysis, I found four categories for symbolic translations: Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music; Movement and Listening/Performing; Listening to Student Recordings; and Representing Musical Characteristics. This finding implies that teachers may conceive of symbolic translations and implement related instructional activities based on the nature of the music itself (story, mood, inspiration, or musical characteristics) and how students interact with the music (listening or through movement), rather than as a bridge between music and non-music symbolic languages. Non-music symbolic languages, then, might not be conceived of as distinct from music languages, but as a means for further interpretation of music listening or music making.

These categories of symbolic translations may be a useful tool for bridging interpretation of the National Core Arts Standards (National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, 2014) with elementary general music teaching practice. The three artistic processes around which these standards are organized are Creating, Performing, and Responding, and these are typical ways of organizing general music instruction. Additionally, the authors framed “open-ended Connecting” as an essential component of these processes. The names of the three processes may imply only using musical symbolic languages. However, further examination of standards by process and grade level suggests a view similar to that of the teachers in this study—not a dichotomous view but one in which non-musical symbolic languages are a means for engaging in music making, listening, and understanding. Many of the key terms used in the K–5 general music standards
(explore, experience, demonstrate, document and organize musical ideas, talk about, describe, and explain) further support the place of non-music symbolic systems. Though some of these terms privilege verbal symbolic languages, when viewed through a Reggio Emilia-inspired lens, they could be reinterpreted to support a more complex image of music, of the music student, and of their potentials as students immersed in a music program.

The questionnaire item that represented symbolically translating from traditional notation to creating music did not fall into one of the four major symbolic translation categories, perhaps because the underlying musical activities (e.g., arranging variations on a notated melody, improvising over a set of chord changes) are conceptually unique. This finding also does not imply that music teacher participants deemphasize notation reading or creative music making, but perhaps they do not pair them as often as other music activities (descriptive data indicate once or twice a month). Many music teachers include music literacy as a goal of music education; Kodály educators believe in rooting music teaching in literacy and experience (OAKE, 2018). Alternatively, teachers might not view reading music for performance as a translation, at least not in ways comparable to the four factors named above.

**Child as Protagonist**

Teachers using the Reggio Emilia approach view each child as the protagonist of their own education within a web of relationships that includes their family, peers, teacher, and atelierista. Instead of introducing a new term, I asked music teachers to write about a child-centered approach to teaching general music. Below, I first explore possible reasons elementary general music teachers may give students different types of choice in the classroom; then I expand on the importance of perception when considering teachers’ statements about facilitators and inhibitors of a child-centered approach to teaching.
Child-centered teaching style and philosophy. Respondents seemed to hold different views about what child-centered teaching is and how they might approach it in their own contexts. Approaches varied from a teacher-oriented pedagogy with generalized knowledge of students’ developmental needs, to one of allowing students to choose from teacher-selected options or providing students time to make open-ended creative decisions. The majority of teachers described their child-centered approach to teaching in such a way as to indicate they make all meaningful decisions in their classrooms. Smith (2011) suggested that music teachers may find teaching through a child-centered, emergent curriculum difficult because of the class load. But some respondents who cited challenges in their teaching load also described providing students with opportunities to engage in creative decision making. So, I am left wondering if teaching load is really a decisive factor, or if contextual realities interact with personal beliefs and values on some level in determining how child-centered a music teacher’s approach eventually becomes. In past studies, music teachers reported not including composition because they felt they had too many other learning activities to include (Shouldice, 2014; Strand, 2006). Though framed as an issue of time with students, this convenient explanation may obscure other important considerations. It is also an issue of value because teachers may internally prioritize different learning activities based on the amount of instructional time each activity takes in relation to the time available, as well as other potential costs, such as increased risk of classroom management issues.

Though my analysis of responses to rating-scale and selection-type items indicated some congruence of general music teaching practices with the Reggio Emilia approach, narrative responses to the first open-ended prompt provide a more nuanced interpretation. Respondents did engage in some—if limited—artifact collection and display, adapting instruction based on
observation and symbolic translations. However, absent a classroom environment in which students have opportunities to share their voice—as protagonist—through meaningful decision-making, the potential richness of student artifacts for informing instruction and generating an image of each student as complex and competent seems greatly reduced, when viewed through a Reggio Emilia-inspired lens.

**Impact of Teaching Situation on Child-Centered Teaching.** Many respondents described components of their teaching situation that supported or inhibited their ability to teach with a child-centered approach; these descriptions reflected day-to-day teaching realities as interpreted through an individual lens. The same teaching situation (e.g., seeing students twice a week) was described by some teachers as supporting a child-centered approach and by others as inhibiting such an approach. Teachers’ perceptions of their context may be filtered through other perceptions related to: the needs, competencies, and behaviors of their students; the philosophical goals of the school; the value others in the school and wider community attribute to music education; their personal reasons for being a music teacher; and their ideal of a teaching situation.

Smith (2011), an experienced music educator who implemented Reggio Emilia-inspired music instruction in private preschool music classes, suggested a child-centered, emergent curriculum may be challenging for some music teachers. As demonstrated with generalist preschool teachers, it is possible that many of the skills needed to teach with this approach could be learned over time (Given et al., 2009; Kersting, 1995; Lyon & Donahue, 2009; Mathis, 2011; Soble & Hogue, 2010). Two researchers (Gould, 2006; Yanko, 2015) have explored application of the Reggio Emilia approach to the elementary general music classroom. In these two situations, teachers were able to adapt the approach to their context, working within typical
constraints of a general music teacher. I do not mean to imply that a full implementation of Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices is possible in every elementary general music context. It is likely, however, that with additional exposure to, education in, and experience with the philosophy and principles of the Reggio Emilia approach, commonly voiced perceptions about inhibitory factors might give way to successful, incremental implementation of general music teaching practices that more clearly embody the ideals of documentation, symbolic translation, and child as protagonist. First, teachers need to believe that a child-centered education is important. They need to think it feasible for and relevant to elementary general music. Then, they need to have the tools to implement a child-centered general music education in their specific teaching context. Finally, they need to choose to do so.

Exploring Diverse Perspectives

As reiterated earlier in this chapter, quantitative analyses did not support the premise that general music pedagogical influence or education level contributed to variance in congruence between elementary general music teaching practices and the Reggio Emilia approach. There were, however, three moderate relationships between general music pedagogical influence and teaching practice congruence. Elementary music teachers who reported being more influenced by the Kodály Concept were more likely to give students opportunities to translate music listening or making into movement—showing musical characteristics, mood, and story—and to represent musical characteristics in movement, traditional notation, and visuals other than traditional notation. Teachers who reported being more influenced by the Dalcroze approach gave students more opportunities to translate between listening to or creating music and representing the story or mood of music with visuals, movement, and storytelling. The self-report measures of general music pedagogical influence (i.e. Dalcroze, Kodály, Music Learning Theory, Orff) may not
accurately represent the extent to which a teacher’s practice is reflective of each pedagogy. Even within the self-reports, some respondents completed education in more than one general music pedagogy and reported being highly influenced by more than one general music pedagogy. Additionally, there are wide-ranging interpretations as to how each of these pedagogies might be applied to music teaching and learning in diverse school and music program contexts. For instance, the American Orff-Schulwerk Association suggests, “there are many, many ways that educators across the country and around the world have used this approach to inspire students in different and equally unique ways” (AOSA, 2018). Alternatively, it is possible that different pedagogies influence the extent to which elementary general music teachers engage in documentation and teach through varying symbolic translations in contradictory ways, thereby creating a null effect.

Differences in teaching practices—as congruent with documentation and symbolic translations—were not based on the amount of education teachers reported having completed, be it the highest college degree earned or aggregate general music pedagogy education. Likely, it is the content or focus of their education (i.e. in music education or general education, relative emphasis on theory as opposed to practical application) and the teacher’s buy-in and perceived ability to implement the child-centered practices in their teaching context that may impact: their collection of different forms of artifacts; the extent to which they analyze and share artifacts (especially since time is often limited for elementary general music teachers); the influence of observation and artifact analysis on teaching decisions; and how frequently teachers employ different forms of symbolic translations.
Implications

I suggest that the Reggio Emilia approach is a useful lens for reflecting on general music teaching practice. In this approach, teachers function in a web of relationships to support their application and study of pedagogy. They use observation and artifact collection—privileging the student as protagonist—to evaluate their teaching practices with the goal of informing future practice that may be more tailored and beneficial to individual students and groups of students. One of the purposes of pedagogical documentation is to subvert current teaching practices (Gandini, 2012a), but I believe this means subverting practices that do not serve students as well, practices teachers engage in based on tradition. The process of documentation would support effective teaching strategies. By adopting Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices and adapting these to their individual contexts, elementary general music teachers may be supporting their ability to plan learning environments in which students both develop and identify as musical beings.

Application of the Reggio Emilia philosophy to teaching rests on local interpretation, informed by the needs and competencies of stakeholders in the specific context. Some elementary general music teachers may be in a position to fully infuse their teaching with Reggio Emilia-inspired practices. Others, however may be teaching in a context where doing so would not meet the needs and expectations of all stakeholders, or they may not yet feel comfortable taking such an approach all the time. They might decide to let aspects of the approach infuse routines in their planning, teaching, and reflection practices, or they might set aside time for emergent curriculum inspired by the student as protagonist in a multi-week unit plan. Though elementary general music teachers may write about the limited time they see students as an inhibiting factor for teaching with a child-centered approach, they do have an advantage over
most generalist teachers in that they likely see the same students year after year. Slowly, over the course of six or more years, and especially through adaptation of Reggio Emilia-inspired practices to their context, elementary general music teachers can build a longitudinal, complex image of each student’s experiences, development, and expression in and through music.

An elementary general music teacher’s ability to envision change and adapt the Reggio Emilia approach to fit their context and culture of instructional practice requires adequate time, effort, and support (Given et al., 2009; Kersting, 1995; Soble & Hogue, 2010). Educators from Reggio Emilia, Italy expect such implementation to vary between contexts. In the elementary general music setting, Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching may mean, for instance, devoting segments of certain classes to individual or group creative decision making. Music teachers may—intentionally, throughout the course of the year, and spread out over different classes—collect varied forms of artifacts, which they interpret alone, with students, and with fellow teachers to form theories about what students are learning. These theories might reveal the complexity of music and music learning in ways that inform teaching practices. Some artifacts and theories could be displayed via live performances, others in visual displays throughout the school and in online platforms extending beyond the school, to support reflection and engagement among varied stakeholders. As a practicing elementary general music teacher, for instance, I personally found success in slowly, over the course of the year, lining the hallway outside the music room with student work and photographs of students’ music experience in the classroom and with guest artists. With each artifact or set of artifacts, I displayed a short blurb that included information about who was involved, what they did, what the experience meant for students, and when it occurred. Additional implementation of Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices may involve having teams of music teachers or arts specialists engage in short- and
long-term planning in which they consider the many different symbolic languages students use to
develop and communicate understanding of music, recognizing that different forms of symbolic
translations afford individualized interactions with material and concepts.

Following are specific suggestions, first for teachers of elementary general music, then
for music teacher educators. Undertaking the suggestions may seem daunting, but in my
experiences as an elementary general music teacher and music teacher educator, I have found
that reinterpreting general music methods through a Reggio Emilia-lens can lead to a more
nuanced understanding of students, music teaching, and myself as a teacher as well to rich
learning experiences for my students. Though I could gear these suggestions toward primary
grade levels as being most akin to the developmental levels and educational structures of
preschool, instead I offer these suggestions for working with students in both primary and
intermediate elementary school. Most often, I recommend re-evaluating a current teaching
practice through a Reggio Emilia-inspired lens. Because this lens promotes adaptation across
various developmental levels, and because the Reggio Emilia approach and Reggio Emilia-
inspired music teaching have been successfully implemented in both primary and intermediate
grade levels, these suggestions may prove useful for music teachers working with younger or
older elementary students in varied school contexts.

**Suggestions for Teachers of Elementary General Music**

- Evaluate teaching practice for the amount and degree of meaningful choice students are
  offered. If little or no choice is currently offered, consider incorporating short
  opportunities for students to make choices within large group instruction (e.g., students
  individually create a body percussion ostinato to accompany a song, then simultaneously
  share theirs with the class before the teacher guides students in choosing one or two to be
learned by everyone). If some choice is offered, consider structuring extended periods of
time in which students engage in creative decision making related to the study, creation,
or performance of music (e.g., a small-group composition unit during which students
have 20+ minutes each class period to compose, revise compositions, and practice for
performance).

- Consider balancing periods of emergent and teacher-chosen curriculum. The teacher
  might follow periods of emergent curriculum with analysis of student learning viewed
  through the lens of content standards. Knowing which standards have been addressed can
  then inform the direction of subsequent lesson planning.

- Intentionally—and over the course of the year and years—diversify the forms of artifacts
collected and displayed, starting with acknowledging the forms already used and then
building on these.

- Examine ways teaching practice allows for intentional analysis of student artifacts and
  observation by the music teacher and by the students. As a starting point, the teacher may
  consider intentionally scheduling a time to adopt this practice once a year for a class in
  each grade (scattering these over the course of the year).

- Balance more common forms of documentation displays, such as live student
  performances in the school building, with alternative documentation displays that use
  visual or electronic media.

- Examine the thread of repertoire and musical ideas for opportunities by which students
  might engage with different symbolic languages, considering each language’s unique
  combination of affordances and constraints.
• Note the prevalence and directionality of various types of symbolic translations used over the course of the school year, and consider how using the lens of symbolic translation, coupled with observation of students and analysis of their work, may influence planning.

• Plan to diversify symbolic translations, and view these through the following categories: Story, Mood, and Inspiration of Music; Movement and Listening/Performing; Listening to Student Recordings; and Representing Musical Characteristics.

• Connect with other (generalist or arts) teachers in the school, or other music teachers in the district/area, to support each other in adopting a more child-centered approach. Developing organizational structures to support such work may first require advocacy efforts with administration.

Suggestions for Music Teacher Educators

• Support preservice teachers in collecting varied forms of artifacts that can be analyzed to develop theories about the nuance and complexity of their own understanding of music and music education; engage preservice teachers in revisiting artifacts for further theory development and long-term reflection.

• Help preservice teachers develop the skills needed to collect varied forms of artifacts representing their students’ musical understanding and music making, especially focused on efficient management of data collection and analysis when teachers face context-specific challenges (e.g., large teaching loads).

• Make explicit with preservice teachers the diversity of symbolic languages through which students can develop an understanding of and communicate through music.
• Consider—and likely diversify—the symbolic languages through which preservice teachers are encouraged to explore music, analyze others’ teaching, and build their capacity to teach.

• Support preservice music teachers as they consider embedding symbolic languages and intentional symbolic translations in their teaching.

• Engage in dialogue with inservice teachers regarding how they might approach child-centered music teaching given their contextual realities, recognizing that there can be trepidation to take risks associated with such an approach.

• Offer professional development for inservice teachers to further explore reasons to engage in documentation (collecting varied artifacts, analyzing with peers, and diversifying forms of display) and how to make documentation use more feasible in their individual teaching contexts.

• Offer professional development for inservice teachers to reevaluate teaching practices through the lens of symbolic translations.

• Work with music teachers to co-develop value propositions they can use when talking about child-centered general music education to different audiences (i.e. administration, generalist teachers, music teachers, parents).

**Study Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

This study was limited by a reliance on teachers’ self-reports of their teaching practices, with a focus on what teachers say they do in the classroom. No attempt was made to corroborate their self-reports with lesson plans, reflections, or observations. I did not explore the impact of these types of teaching decisions on students. Due to the length of the questionnaire, only three key concepts from the Reggio Emilia approach were examined for their congruence with
elementary general music teaching. Developing an adequate pool of valid and reliable items reflecting the application of key concepts from the Reggio Emilia approach to elementary general music teaching was difficult, as classroom educators and music educators oftentimes use different terminology, and there was no existing quantitative measure of this approach on which to draw. Open-ended prompts used the term “child-centered” to approximate “child as protagonist” because the former was a term in the lexicon of elementary general music teachers. However, the former term can be interpreted to disregard the web of relationships, role of the teacher, and importance of reflective teaching practice through documentation that may more fully support the child as protagonist.

Nonetheless, this study represents a unique contribution to music education literature in that researchers have not previously employed quantitative research methods in assessing the extent to which elementary general music practices are congruent with the Reggio Emilia approach. In two studies, researchers have explored the small-scale implementation of Reggio Emilia-inspired general music instruction in elementary and secondary general music (Gould, 2006; Yanko, 2015). Other researchers have each examined the presence of music in one, two, or three Reggio Emilia-inspired American preschools (Bond, 2012; Bond, 2015; Nyland et al., 2011; Waters, 2015). Based on findings of this study, I have several recommendations for future research: continued examination of apparent congruence between elementary general music education and the Reggio Emilia philosophy; and intervention studies in which teacher educators and teachers learn about and implement Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching practices with their students in context-specific, authentic, and meaningful ways.

Researchers might further explore Reggio Emilia-congruent general music teaching practices to develop examples for teachers and teacher educators. For instance, a case study
could be used to explore and describe the approach a successful teacher takes in keeping strong, meaningful, individualized student records even when they have a large teaching load. They might examine how facilitators and inhibitors of the teaching context are impacted by the school Locale (City, Suburb, Town, Rural) or by serving different student populations. Through case study or phenomenology, a researcher could explore the experience of the many students, music teacher(s), pedagogical coordinator, and family members who form a web of relationships that center the child as protagonist while engaging in pedagogical documentation in the music classroom.

As many music teachers do not engage in teaching practices congruent with the Reggio Emilia approach, researchers could provide an intervention for teachers in which they are supported while implementing an aspect of Reggio Emilia-inspired teaching in their general music teaching context. The researchers might qualitatively examine teachers’ experiences or quantitatively assess the effect (pre/post; treatment/comparison) of the intervention on: student agency, identity, and music learning; parent and administrator involvement or support; and the self-efficacy, planning approach, and burnout of music teachers. Researchers may build on precedent for implementing documentation with older students in science class (Soble & Hogue, 2010) by examining the feasibility of incorporating Reggio Emilia-inspired documentation in secondary music. Researchers could collect data over the course of a year on teachers’, their collaborators’, and students’ varied perceptions of the process. Researchers might also conduct case studies or use phenomenological research methodologies to explore music teachers’ experience when engaging with documentation as collaborative professional development with other elementary general music teachers (a music-education specific extension of Given et al., 2009).
To build on findings in this study, researchers could use multiple forms of data, corroborating the self-report. Researchers could begin by creating a more extensive list of the different forms of symbolic languages in which elementary general music teachers engage their students (hundred languages), gathering data from interviews and observations. They might then create and validate a quantitative observation measure, so that subsequent studies can use observation data instead of, or in addition, to self-report data. Additionally, researchers may choose to rate teachers on the extent to which their teaching is child-centered, using self-report, observation, and interview data. They might analyze variations across contexts based on what respondents claimed hindered their ability to adopt a child-centered approach, their beliefs on the importance of using child-centered teaching, and their teaching self-efficacy.

In future studies, researchers could seek to better understand teachers’ reasoning for their teaching practices. They could ask teachers to describe their thought processes and motivation for giving restricted choices; researchers could stimulate recall via playing a video of teaching, or by reviewing lesson plans and student artifacts. In these interviews, researchers might explore if teachers’ motivation for these teaching practices is related to scaffolding for the individual student, classroom management concerns, or retaining teacher control of music making. Or they might similarly examine how teachers conceptualize displays of student understanding and music making (e.g., as a showcase of student achievement, to demonstrate growth, as a means for developing understanding of student learning, or to support adapting future instruction).

Closing Thought

Inspired by findings, I shall close with two sketches, illustrating teaching practice alongside teacher reflection. The first is a composite sketch of a typical music teacher from the
study. In the second, I extrapolate how her practice and reflection may manifest if she took time to intentionally apply Reggio Emilia concepts to her specific teaching context (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1

*Closing Thoughts Vignettes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Practice</th>
<th>Teacher Reflection</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A group of 25 first graders hold hands in a circle. Their music teacher gives the first pitch and a visual cue, and together they sing, “Ring around the Rosie” while walking in a circle. Near the end of the song, students start playfully bumping into each other. The teacher stops the song, saying, “Does anyone remember how we fall down so we don’t hurt our friends?” Percy raises his hand and the teacher calls on him to demonstrate gently falling down. “Thank you, Percy. That’s exactly how we fall down.” They sing again. At the end of the song, 24 students gently “fall down” as taught, but Caitlyn releases her neighbors’ hands and looks up and out the window. Students move to sit in their assigned spots on a rug. The music teacher sings “Bounce high, bounce low, bounce the ball to Shiloh.” She plays a chime for the high note (B) on “high” and “ball.” She plays a chime for the low note (F-sharp) on “low” and “loh.” The teacher sings again. This time, half the students sing the high words, half the low. Finally, one student gets to play the high chime, another the low. The rest of the class sings the song and moves around the room, focusing their movements up high for the high pitches and down low for the low pitches.</td>
<td>“I picked this song because over the last decade I haven’t had a single class that didn’t enjoy it. It’s a classic for a reason!” “I noticed this was about to be a disaster. Someone was going to get hurt or at least cranky. I stopped the game so we could fix this before a more serious problem could start.” “I made a note in my gradebook that Caitlyn wasn’t fully participating. That’s a new thing for her.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Following Year
(after time working to implement Reggio Emilia-inspired music teaching)

A group of 25 first graders look at their music teacher who says, “Shall we play ‘Ring around the Rosie?’” She holds up silk flowers. Jorge picks a rose, and the students move to stand in concentric circles. Once the room is still and quiet, Jorge begins to sing. The others join in and they play the circle game.

“I picked this song because over the last decade I haven’t had a single class that didn’t enjoy it. It’s a classic for a reason! Over the last month, students have wanted to make the game their own. After I told them a posy is a small bouquet, they decided to use flowers as inspiration for their variations of the game. Their rose version has concentric circles representing the way the petals overlap around the center of the flower. I am hoping they may want—eventually—to translate their variations in the game to variations in music, whether it’s this song or another.”

Near the end of the song, students start playfully bumping into each other.

“Reese really surprised me. I hadn’t thought of showing high notes with small animals and low notes with bigger animals. I’m going to have to think of how to make this an exploration option for more students soon. It might help Marcus, who has been struggling with the high/low concept. Maybe my choice of animals could connect to future provocations: a bird and a wolf for ‘Peter and the Wolf’ or a bird and an elephant for ‘Carnival of the Animals.’ I’ll bring this up with another music teacher to see if they have any other suggestions. I’m glad I took the picture. I might be able to make a story board documenting the ways that students’ spontaneous decisions have led me to change
The teacher invites one student to play the high chime, another the low. The rest of the class sings the song and moves around the room, focusing their movements up high for the high pitches and down low for the low pitches.

“With the high and low notes in this song, students had the opportunity to sing, play chimes, and move. A few students are still having trouble with the concept. Perhaps there are other ways they can develop understanding and communicate this idea. Should they draw pictures? Improvise on barred instruments with high and low notes? Choreograph movement for this song? Listen to a recording of their own singing? Add high and low sound effects to a story? I think I’ll quickly write a list of ideas and then see what happens organically in the next class. Perhaps one of the ideas will suggest itself in the moment.”

instruction through a spiral curriculum and the student learning that results. This is so exciting!”
References


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History (n.d.). Retrieved from https://toolsofthemind.org/about/history/


Appendix A

Questionnaire – Version 1

1) How frequently this school year have your students first listened to or performed a piece of music and then… (Response options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always)
   a. Moved to show characteristics of the music (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form
   b. Moved to show the mood or emotions of the music
   c. Moved to show the story of the music
   d. Created a visual (other than traditional notation) to show characteristics of the music (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form)
   e. Created a visual to show the mood or emotions of the music
   f. Created a visual to show the story of the music
   g. Told a story (out loud or in writing) related to the music
   h. Represented the music with traditional notation (through writing or use of manipulatives)

2) How frequently this school year have your students created music after (and based on or inspired by… (Response options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always)
   a. Engaging in or watching movement related to musical characteristics (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form)
   b. Engaging in or watching movement related to mood or emotion
   c. Engaging in or watching movement related to a story
   d. Creating or viewing a visual (other than traditional notation) related to musical characteristics (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form)
   e. Creating or viewing a visual related to mood or emotion
   f. Creating or viewing a visual related to a story
   g. Hearing, telling, or writing a story
   h. Reading traditional notation

3) In 100 minutes of instruction over the course of a week, how many minutes do you think each of the following forms of instruction typically occur in your classroom?
   a. Teacher-led instruction
   b. A student leads a whole-class activity
   c. A student leads a small-group activity
   d. A student gets to choose how to engage in an independent activity

4) How often within a music lesson does what you observe students doing change your instruction in the moment? (Response options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always)

5) (If did not answer Never for #4) How would you describe the average size of the change in instruction? (Response options: 1-Small, 2, 3, 4, 5-Large)

6) (If did not answer Never for #4) How effective would you rate this change in instruction? (Response options: Not effective at all, Slightly effective, Moderately effective, Very effective, Extremely effective)

7) How often within a month does what you observe students doing change your plan for the following lesson? (Response options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Every lesson)

8) (If did not answer Never for #7) How would you describe the average size of the change in instruction? (Response options: 1-Small, 2, 3, 4, 5-Large)
9) (If did not answer Never for #7) How effective would you rate this change in instruction? (Response options: Not effective at all, Slightly effective, Moderately effective, Very effective, Extremely effective)

10) How often within a school year does what you observe students doing change your plan for the following unit of study? (Response items: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always)

11) (If did not answer Never for #10) How would you describe the average size of the change in instruction? (Response options: 1-Small, 2, 3, 4, 5-Large)

12) (If did not answer Never for #10) How effective would you rate this change in instruction? (Response options: Not effective at all, Slightly effective, Moderately effective, Very effective, Extremely effective)

13) Mark the types of information you collected about students’ music making and understanding in the last month
   a. Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect any information about students’ music making and understanding.
   b. Grade from a performance-based rubric
   c. Student-completed worksheet
   d. Student-created written or drawn work (not a formal worksheet)
   e. Photographs
   f. Video recording
   g. I (the teacher) transcribed music students improvised or composed
   h. I (the teacher) wrote a short story describing something that happened.

14) (If “Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect any information…” not selected for #13) Mark any ways you displayed the information you collected about students’ music making and understanding in the last month
   a. Evidence of their work was hung up in the music classroom
   b. Evidence of their work from music was hung up in their regular classroom
   c. Evidence of their work from music was hung up elsewhere in the school building (not the music room or their regular classroom)
   d. Evidence of their work was included in a (paper) newsletter that went home to families.
   e. Evidence of their work was posted on a website.

15) (If “Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect any information…” not selected for #13) Working on your own, how thoroughly did you examine what this information told you about students’… (Response options: Not at all, A little, Somewhat, Much, A great deal)
   a. Interests
   b. Musical performance abilities
   c. Understanding of music

16) (If “Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect any information…” not selected for #13) Working with a colleague, how thoroughly did you examine what this information told you about students’… (Response options: Not at all, A little, Somewhat, Much, A great deal)
   a. Interests
   b. Musical performance abilities
   c. Understanding of music
17) (If answered “Not at all” for #15 & #16) How big an impact did your examination of the information you collected have on your future lesson planning?
Appendix B

Questionnaire – Version 7 of 8

1. Overall, how much information do you collect (in writing or via audio/video recordings) about each individual student’s musical development? (Response options: None at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal)

2. To what extent do you agree that a music teacher should collect information (in writing or via audio/video recordings) about each individual student’s musical development? (Response options: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Agree, Strongly agree)

3. Mark all the types of information you collected about students’ music making and understanding in the last month:
   a. Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect any information about students’ music making and understanding.
   b. Assessed level of student participation in class
   c. Paper/pencil worksheet, quiz, or test
   d. Grade from a performance-based rubric
   e. Student-created written or drawn work
   f. Student-written composition
   g. Photographs
   h. Audio recordings
   i. Video recordings
   j. I (the teacher) transcribed music that students improvised or composed
   k. I (the teacher) wrote a short story describing something that happened.

4. (If did not select “Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect…” for #3) Mark any ways you displayed the information you collected about students’ music making and understanding last month
   a. Evidence of their work was NOT displayed.
   b. Evidence of their work was hung up in the music classroom.
   c. Evidence of their work from music was hung up in their regular classroom.
   d. Evidence of their work from music was hung up elsewhere in the school building (not the music room or their regular classroom).
   e. Evidence of their work was included in newsletter that went home to families
   f. Evidence of their work was posted on a website.
   g. Students demonstrated evidence of music making and understanding in a live performance.

5. (If did not select “Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect…” for #3) Did you take time to examine the information you collected about students’ music making and understanding in the last month? (Response options: No, I did not take time to examine the information.
   b. Yes, I examined the information by myself.
   c. Yes, I work with a colleague to examine the information.
   d. Yes, I BOTH examined the information by myself AND worked with a colleague to examine the information.
6. (If b. or d. selected for #5) Working on your own, how thoroughly did you examine what this information told you about students’… (Response options: Not at all, A little, Somewhat, Much, A great deal)
   a. Musical interests?
   b. Interests outside of music?
   c. Musical performance abilities?
   d. Understanding of music?

7. (If b. or d. selected for #5) Think about what you learned from examining student information on your own. How big an impact did this examination have on your future lesson planning? (Response options: 0-None, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)

8. (If c. or d. selected for #5) Working on your own, how thoroughly did you examine what this information told you about students’… (Response options: Not at all, A little, Somewhat, Much, A great deal)
   a. Musical interests?
   b. Interests outside of music?
   c. Musical performance abilities?
   d. Understanding of music?

9. (If c. or d. selected for #5) Think about what you learned from examining student information with a colleague. How big an impact did this examination have on your future lesson planning? (Response options: 0-None, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)

10. How frequently this school year have your students… (Response options: Never, Once per year, 2-3 times per year, Once per month, Once per week, Almost every class)
    a. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show characteristics of the music (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form)
    b. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show the mood or emotions of the music
    c. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show the story of the music
    d. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual (other than traditional notation) to show characteristics of the music (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form)
    e. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual to show mood or emotions
    f. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual to show the story of the music
    g. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN told a story (out loud or in writing) related to the music
    h. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN represented the music with traditional notation (through writing or use of manipulatives)
    i. FIRST engaged in or watched movement related to musical characteristics (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form) and THEN created music
    j. FIRST engaged in or watched movement related to mood or emotion and THEN created music
    k. FIRST engaged in or watch movement related to a story and THEN created music
1. FIRST created or viewed a visual (other than traditional notation) related to musical characteristics (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form) and THEN created music
m. FIRST created or viewed a visual related to mood or emotion and THEN created music
n. FIRST created or viewed a visual related to a story and THEN created music
o. FIRST heard, told, or wrote a story and THEN created music
p. FIRST read traditional notation and THEN created music
q. FIRST listened to music and THEN performed it (singing and/or on instruments)
r. FIRST listened to music and THEN used the listening to inspire improvisation
s. FIRST listened to music and THEN used it to inspire composition
t. Listened to a recording of their own improvisation
u. Listened to a recording of their own composition
v. Listened to a recording of themselves performing a song they were taught (not their own composition of improvisation)
w. FIRST sung music and then played it on instruments
x. FIRST played music on instruments and then sung it

11. In 100 minutes of instruction over the course of a week, how many minutes do each of the following forms of instruction typically occur in your classroom?
   a. Teacher-led instruction
   b. A student led a whole-class activity
   c. A student led a small-group activity
   d. A student got to choose how to engage in an independent activity
   e. Students worked collaboratively in small groups

12. How important do you think it is that a music teacher changes instruction based on observation of students? (Response options: Not important, Slightly important, Moderately important, Important, Very important)

13. How often within a lesson does what you observe student doing change your…
   (Response options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always)
   a. Instruction in the moment?
   b. Plan for the following lesson?
   c. Plan for the following unit of student?

14. What is the size of the change in instruction when your observation of students leads you to change your… (Response options: 1-Small, 2, 3, 4, 5-Large, I NEVER change this)
   a. Instruction in the moment?
   b. Plan for the following lesson?
   c. Plan for the following unit of student?

15. How effective is the change in instruction when your observation of students leads you to change you… (Response options: Not effective at all, Slightly effective, Moderately effective, Very effective, Extremely effective, I NEVER change this)
   a. Instruction in the moment?
   b. Plan for the following lesson?
   c. Plan for the following unit of student?

16. Please describe characteristics of your **teaching style** or teaching **philosophy** that impact how often you change instruction based on observation of students in class.
17. Please describe characteristics of your teaching situation that impact how often you change instruction based on observation of students in class.
18. Please describe a time when what you observed students doing led you to change instruction, what you changed, and what makes you to think this was or was not effective.
20. Indicate the type of school in which you currently teacher (Response options: Public school, Charter school, Private school, Other (please specify))
21. Indicate the level in which you spend the MAJORITY of your time teaching. (Response options; Elementary, Middle School, High School)
22. What portion of your total teaching load is represented by teaching MUSIC classes?
23. How many years (including this year) have you taught music?
24. How many years (including this year) have you taught in your current school?
25. Roughly, how many student do you teach music?
26. In your general music teaching, to what extent are your teaching decisions influenced by… (Response options: Not at all influenced, Slightly influenced, Somewhat influenced, Very influenced, Extremely influenced)
   a. Dalcroze
   b. Music Learning Theory
   c. Kodály
   d. Orff-Schulwerk
   e. Other (write-in)
27. Have you completed courses in or earned certificates for Dalcroze, Music Learning Theory, Kodály, Orff-Schulwerk? (Response options: Yes (please list the approach/theory and highest level attained), No).
28. Please check all the national music education organizations for which you hold a current membership. (Response options: American Eurhythmics Society (AES), Dalcroze Society of America (DSA), The Gordon Institute for Music Learning (GIML), Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE), American Orff-Schulwerk Association (AOSA), National Association for Music Education (NAfME), Music Teachers National Association (MTNA), Early Childhood Music & Movement Association (ECMMA), Other (please specify))
29. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed? (Response options: Bachelor’s degree, Master’s degree, Master’s plus 30 credits, Doctoral degree)
30. I identify my gender as: (Response options: Woman, Man, Trans*, Prefer to self-described)
Appendix C

Questionnaire – Final Version

1. Overall, how much information do you collect (in writing or via audio/video recordings) about each individual student’s musical development? (Response options: None at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal)

2. To what extend do you agree that a music teacher should collect information (in writing or via audio/video recordings) about each individual student’s musical development? (Response options: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Agree, Strongly agree)

3. Mark all the types of information you collected about students’ music making and understanding in the last month:
   a. Beyond observing students during class, I did not collect any information about students’ music making and understanding.
   b. Assessed level of student participation in class
   c. Paper/pencil worksheet, quiz, or test
   d. Grade from a performance-based rubric
   e. Student-created written or drawn work
   f. Student-written composition
   g. Photographs
   h. Audio recordings
   i. Video recordings
   j. I (the teacher) transcribed music that students improvised or composed
   k. I (the teacher) wrote a short story describing something that happened.

4. Mark any ways you displayed the information you collected about students’ music making and understanding last month
   a. Evidence of their work was NOT displayed.
   b. Evidence of their work was hung up in the music classroom.
   c. Evidence of their work from music was hung up in their regular classroom.
   d. Evidence of their work from music was hung up elsewhere in the school building (not the music room or their regular classroom).
   e. Evidence of their work was included in newsletter that went home to families.
   f. Evidence of their work was posted on a website.
   g. Students demonstrated evidence of music making and understanding in a live performance.

5. How thoroughly did you examine evidence of student music making and understanding for what it told you about students’… (Response options: Not at all, A little, To a moderate extent, Quite a bit, Very thoroughly)
   a. Musical interests?
   b. Interests outside of music?
   c. Musical performance abilities?
   d. Understanding of music?

6. How big an impact does examining evidence of student music making and understanding have on your future lesson planning? (Response options: 0-None, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)
7. How frequently this school year have your students… (Response options: Never, Once per year, 2-3 times per year, Once per month, Once per week, Almost every class)
   a. Listened to a recording of their own improvisation
   b. Listened to a recording of their own composition
   c. Listened to a recording of themselves performing a song they were taught (not their own composition of improvisation)
   d. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN represented the music with traditional notation (through writing or use of manipulatives)
   e. FIRST listened to music and THEN used it to inspire composition
   f. FIRST sung music and then played it on instruments
   g. FIRST created or viewed a visual related to a story and THEN created music
   h. FIRST created or viewed a visual related to mood or emotion and THEN created music

8. How frequently this school year have your students… (Response options: Never, Once per year, 2-3 times per year, Once per month, Once per week, Almost every class)
   a. FIRST listened to music and THEN used the listening to inspire improvisation
   b. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual (other than traditional notation) to show characteristics of the music (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form)
   c. FIRST engaged in or watch movement related to a story and THEN created music
   d. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual to show the story of the music
   e. FIRST created or viewed a visual (other than traditional notation) related to musical characteristics (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form) and THEN created music
   f. FIRST engaged in or watched movement related to musical characteristics (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form) and THEN created music
   g. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN created a visual to show mood or emotions
   h. FIRST read traditional notation and THEN created music

9. How frequently this school year have your students… (Response options: Never, Once per year, 2-3 times per year, Once per month, Once per week, Almost every class)
   a. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show characteristics of the music (i.e. pitch, rhythm, steady beat, form)
   b. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN told a story (out loud or in writing) related to the music
   c. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show the mood or emotions of the music
   d. FIRST listened to or performed music and THEN moved to show the story of the music
   e. FIRST listened to music and THEN performed it (singing and/or on instruments)
   f. FIRST played music on instruments and then sung it
   g. FIRST heard, told, or wrote a story and THEN created music
   h. FIRST engaged in or watched movement related to mood or emotion and THEN created music
10. In your opinion, is it important for an elementary general music teacher to adapt instruction based on observation of students? (Response options: Not important, Slightly important, Moderately important, Important, Very important)

11. How often within a lesson does what you observe student doing change your… (Response options: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always)
   a. Instruction in the moment?
   b. Plan for the following lesson?
   c. Plan for the following unit of student?

12. To what extent does your observation of students lead you to adapt your… (Response options: Not at all, Minimally, Somewhat, Quite a bit, Extensively, I NEVER change this)
   a. Instruction in the moment?
   b. Plan for the following lesson?
   c. Plan for the following unit of student?

For the following two questions, consider a child-centered approach to general music instruction to be one in which the teacher plans based on children’s needs and interests, adapting this as they learn more about each child, and gives children meaningful choice in the classroom.

13. Please describe how your teaching style or teaching philosophy reflects a child-centered approach to general music instruction.

14. Please describe how your teaching situation either facilitates or inhibits your efforts to adopt a child-centered approach to general music education.

15. In your general music teaching, to what extent are your teaching decisions influenced by… (Response options: Not at all influenced, Slightly influenced, Somewhat influenced, Very influenced, Extremely influenced)
   a. Dalcroze
   b. Music Learning Theory
   c. Kodály
   d. Orff-Schulwerk
   e. Other (write-in)

16. Please check all the national music education organizations for which you hold a current membership. (Response options: American Eurhythmics Society (AES), Dalcroze Society of America (DSA), The Gordon Institute for Music Learning (GIML), Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE), American Orff-Schulwerk Association (AOSA), National Association for Music Education (NAfME), Music Teachers National Association (MTNA), Early Childhood Music & Movement Association (ECMMA), Other (please specify))

17. Have you completed courses in or earned certificates for Dalcroze, Music Learning Theory, Kodály, Orff-Schulwerk? (Response options: Yes (please list the approach/theory and highest level attained), No).


19. How many years (including this year) have you taught music?
20. Indicate the level in which you spend the MAJORITY of your time teaching. (Response options: Elementary, Middle School, High School)
21. Do you have a dedicated music classroom? (Response options: Yes, No)
22. To about how many students do you teach music? (Response options: 0-75, 76-150, 151-225, 226-300, 301+)
23. On average, how many times do you meet with each class of elementary students in a week?
24. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed? (Response options: Bachelor’s degree, Master’s degree, Master’s plus 30 credits, Doctoral degree)
25. I identify my gender as: (Response options: Woman, Man, Trans*, Prefer to self-described)
Appendix D

Invitation to Participate

Dear [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME]:

I am writing to ask your help with the Characteristics of Elementary General Music Teaching Survey I am conducting for my dissertation. The goal of this survey is to explore how music teachers in five Rocky Mountain states (Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming) approach planning, teaching, and analyzing elementary general music. You are part of a random sample of music teachers who, according to your school or district website, teach at least one general music class to elementary-aged students.

The online questionnaire should take about 10–12 minutes to complete. To begin the survey, simply click on this link:

Follow this link to the Survey:
[SURVEY LINK]

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
[SURVEY URL]

This survey is confidential. Your participation is voluntary. When you click on the link above, you will see a little more information about the survey to help you decide whether or not to participate.

As a thank you to those who choose to complete the questionnaire and give their preferred email address at the end of the survey, I will enter your name into a raffle to win one of 20 $50 gift cards to West Music. I will send an email to those selected during May.

The survey will remain open to you for just over two weeks, closing on Friday, April 20, 2018.

Please feel free to email me at hefa8224@colorado.edu if you have any questions or if you would like to receive a brief, easy-to-read summary of findings from this study September 2018.

Sincerely,

Ellie

H. Ellie Falter
PhD Candidate in Music Education
University of Colorado Boulder
hefa8224@colorado.edu

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
[LINK]
Appendix E

Follow-up Email #1

Hello [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME],

Earlier this week, I sent you an email to you asking for your participation in the Characteristics of Elementary General Music Teaching Survey.

I hope that providing you with a link to the survey website makes it easy for you to respond. To complete the survey, simply click on this link:

[SURVEY LINK]

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
[URL]

Please consider helping me complete this study whose findings music education researchers, music teacher educators, and music teachers may all use in their future work.

Your anonymous response is voluntary and I appreciate your considering my request.

Sincerely,

Ellie

H. Ellie Falter
PhD Candidate in Music Education
University of Colorado Boulder
hefa8224@colorado.edu

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
[LINK]
Appendix F

Follow-up Email #2

Dear [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME],

Recently, I sent you an email asking you to complete a survey about how you approach planning, teaching, and analyzing general music with elementary-aged students. To date, [NUMBER] teachers have completed this survey, [NUMBER] from your state of [STATE].

If you have not answered the questionnaire yet, I’d like to urge you to do so. It should only take about ten to twelve minutes to complete. Simply click on the link below to begin answering questions:

[SURVEY LINK]

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[URL]

The Characteristics of Elementary General Music Teaching Survey is important; we currently know little about how general music is taught across Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming.

If you have questions or comments, or would like to receive a brief, easy-to-read summary of findings from this study September 2018, please contact me at hefa8224@colorado.edu. Thank you for your help, and best wishes in the final leg of the school year.

Sincerely,

Ellie

H. Ellie Falter
PhD Candidate in Music Education
University of Colorado Boulder
hefa8224@colorado.edu

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[LINK]
Appendix G

Follow-up Email #3

Dear [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME],

I am writing to follow up on the message I sent last week asking you to participate in the Characteristics of Elementary General Music Teaching Survey. This survey is drawing to a close, and your last chance to respond is on Friday, April 20.

You can find the survey at:

[SURVEY LINK]

I hope you will consider anonymously contributing to our field’s understanding of current practice in elementary general music by completing this survey. Please remember that out of those who complete the questionnaire, twenty will be randomly selected to receive a gift card to West Music.

Sincerely,
Ellie

H. Ellie Falter
PhD Candidate in Music Education
University of Colorado Boulder
hefa8224@colorado.edu
Appendix H

Survey Attrition

Of those who began the questionnaire, most (77.3%) completed it. Attrition—respondents leaving the survey—happened around three groups of items: the first item (11.9%), before or in the middle of items on symbolic translation (6.6%), and before or between the two open-ended items (4.1%). In the graphic representation below, the height of bars represents the number of respondents. The x-axis represents proportional progress through the questionnaire.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
<th>Sample Data</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjust instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on child</td>
<td>adjusts planning based on the developmental level of students</td>
<td>Curriculum is focused on age groups of students taught. Children have the opportunity to sing and play instruments, learn about music notation and composers.</td>
<td>ID-R-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on whole grade</td>
<td>adjusts planning based on the grade level in general or specific to their school</td>
<td>Every decision I make is centered on the interests and abilities of a specific grade level.</td>
<td>CO-C-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grade level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on class –</td>
<td>adjusts planning based on interpersonal dynamic of a specific class</td>
<td>Each class has its own personality so I have to adapt my approach just a little whenever I teach. For example, my 2nd grade class works well together and likes socializing so we do a lot of group activities and competitions so they can work with their friends and learn with them.</td>
<td>MT-R-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on class –</td>
<td>adjusts planning or instruction in the moment based on the interests of students in a</td>
<td>I plan for my students to get engaged as much as possible to encourage growth. I will often modify my lessons if I see student interest faltering.</td>
<td>MT-R-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interest</td>
<td>specific class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on class - pace</td>
<td>adjusts instructional pacing in the moment based on how a specific class is responding</td>
<td>I have been teaching a long time, so I have certain things that I know work. As far as child-centered, I adjust according to how fast students are learning.</td>
<td>CO-C-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to the lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on class –</td>
<td>adjusts planning or instruction in the moment based on the ability levels of students</td>
<td>I make adjustments to lessons and how I teach lessons based on the abilities of my students, to make sure the majority of</td>
<td>MT-T-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability</td>
<td>in a specific class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
my students can be successful in the lesson.

| Based on individual student | Adjusts planning or instruction in the moment based on an individual student's needs or abilities | My teaching style is very child-centered as I am always adapting lessons to meet the needs of all my students. I work with some children especially that are on IEP's and specialized learning plans. Many of them need to have an individualistic plan for their success in my class. | CO-S-20 |

| Give student choice | small in teacher-led lesson | gives students small choices within a teacher-led lesson | When playing a xylophone accompaniment, the children always get to choose one of three accompaniments (usually a simple, average, or intricate pattern). | CO-C-11 |
| | select from teacher list | allows students to make choices from a teacher-created or -approved list | I start the year with a textbook preview where students indicate pages they are interested in for us to work on all year and I include those. | MT-R-4 |
| | whole-group creative decisions | facilitates creative decisions among the whole group of students (a class) | I work with students in creating their own operas where they choose setting, characters, plot, resolution, paint the scenery, stage the opera and perform it so they determine the choices within guidelines of no one gets hurt, everyone participates and it is the children's work. | UT-S-11 |
| | small-group | facilitates or provides opportunity for small groups of students to make choices | Students are given the opportunity to choose a song/piece to perform in small groups and | CO-R-1 |
individual - pacing | facilitates students differentiating the pacing of individual instruction | I believe every student can learn, but some learn at different speeds, so I try to offer self-paced opportunities for my students who play recorders in 4-5 grade and my students on barred instruments in 3rd grade. 

balance structure and choice | describes a balance between teacher-developed structure and student choice | I have a wholistic approach to teaching and strive to give children structure but have moments of creativity and discovery. 

Variety | music genre | describes teaching multiple music genres | I, as an elementary music educator, get to introduce students to a huge variety of music from around the world, to the popular music of today, classical, instrumental, musicals, etc. I use a wide variety of types of music to teach basic music concepts to which I continue to build upon every year. 

| sing, instruments, movement | describes including singing, instrument, and movement as a form of instructional variety | I try to do many different types of musical thing in my classroom to reach every student in some way ie instruments, singing, movement 

| music content | describes including different forms of music making and listening, including different music concepts | I believe that each child learns in different ways, so try to cover each style in each lesson. Focusing not just on reading music, or rhythm cards, or playing instruments, or singing, but on each of those things throughout the lesson. |
### modalities
Describes giving students opportunities to engage with music through different modalities (i.e. kinesthetic, visual, auditory)

My teaching style adapts to make learning music accessible for all students by implementing multiple modes of learning (visual/auditory/kinesthetic) and providing opportunities for students to express creativity.

### new vs. familiar
Describes a balance between music material that is new or familiar to students

I do feel that as an expert in music and music education, I can give children insight into styles of music and other activities, but often not without relating to what they already know and enjoy.

### Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship before content</th>
<th>Relationship to love of music</th>
<th>Not child-centered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Values forming relationships over teaching content; the former is needed to effectively do the latter.</td>
<td>Values instilling students with a love/ passion for music, doing so through their relationship.</td>
<td>Beyond any subject matter, I want my students to know they are loved and important. I want my positive interaction to become part of who they are and what they believe about themselves. At the beginning of each day, I take a moment to remember who I am teaching and how important they are. As a music teacher, I want to open the door to a lifetime of experience in music and the arts. I want my students to realize they can be a participant and not just an observer… I want to ignite the passion that music can bring into life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I believe in relationships first; it doesn't really matter what subject I teach, I am teaching people. I use the medium of music to do that.

CO-C-19
yet does not 'yet' incorporate child-centered teaching approach Not great at this yet. CO-C-28

not my approach does not incorporate child-centered teaching approach This is not my approach. CO-T-27

My approach is about what I as an adult know children need to know to be successful and participating in and creating music. I also believe in exposing them to music they would not naturally choose on their own. They will choose the music they already are comfortable with on their own time; it is my work to expose them to music they would not have chosen.
Appendix J

Codebook – Impact of Teaching Situation on Child-Centered Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Operational Definition</th>
<th>Sample Data</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Load and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students +</td>
<td>cite the number of students as supporting child-centered approach</td>
<td>Teaching in a small school (7-12 students per elementary grade) gives me a lot more chances for one-on-one instruction and making sure that the concepts stick with every student.</td>
<td>MT-R-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students -</td>
<td>cite the number of students as inhibiting child-centered approach</td>
<td>I teach 500 students. I'm not able to personalize learning for that many students.</td>
<td>CO-C-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Classes -</td>
<td>cite the number of classes as inhibiting child-centered approach</td>
<td>In my teaching situation, I teach 12 classes a day, two classes of each grade (Kindergarten through fifth grade)... It is a very demanding schedule, and I don't spend too much one-on-one time with my students, as I only see them briefly during the day. Sometimes this makes it difficult to have a child centered approach to General music education</td>
<td>CO-T-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Size -</td>
<td>cite the number of students per class as inhibiting child-centered approach</td>
<td>The class size creates a major challenge in meeting the needs or adapting the lesson material for each child. I have between 35-45 students in a class.</td>
<td>UT-S-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Schools -</td>
<td>cite the number of schools in which they teach as inhibiting child-centered approach</td>
<td>Because I am divided between two schools, I have zero time for interaction with students when it is not the classroom setting.</td>
<td>ID-T-29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contact Time + cite the amount of time they see students as supporting child-centered approach I teach 25-minute lessons to classes twice a week. This is ideal for music retention and engagement! CO-C-6

Contact Time - cite the amount of time they see students as inhibiting child-centered approach We are on a 3 day rotation. On average I see students 7 times a month. This greatly inhibits a child-centered approach, as this is not an age appropriate instructional structure for children, and retention of content. CO-C-26

Planning Time + cite the amount of time they have to plan as supporting child-centered approach My school is understanding that being a Montessori school and mixed aged classrooms requires a significant amount of planning on my part. CO-C-5

Planning Time (and Other Time Obligations) - cite constraints on their planning time, which inhibits child-centered approach I teach K-12 in an high functioning school setting. The jazz/marching/choir competitions take away time that I would like to dedicate to prep for my K-6th classes. ID-R-18

School and Community Atmosphere School Philosophy + the school philosophy supports a child-centered approach in the music classroom My teaching situation facilitates a child-centered approach by being a school that operates under these philosophies. The burden is then on me to follow the school's standards/curriculum/etc. expectations and design units of study that are open for students to explore/design/create. CO-S-15
### School Philosophy -

The school philosophy is contrary to a child-centered approach and inhibits it in the music classroom. It seems like my music teaching style is often at odds with the school philosophy which is teacher directed. The students are used to being told what to do. Guiding them to be creative and in charge of their own music learning is difficult. They would rather be told explicitly what to do than figure it out on their own. Also, group work is difficult when it is not supported in the regular classroom.

### Parent Perception Impacts Administrator Support +

Students' families are supportive of the music program in a way that supports a child-centered approach. My administrators receive a great deal of positive feedback on my program from the community, and that makes them very supportive of my philosophy.

### Generalist Teacher Perception -

Generalist teachers in the school are not supportive of the music teacher, in ways that inhibit child-centered approach in music. Prep time coverage for teachers means that I'm often viewed as a babysitter. Teachers and administrators still don't see music instruction as an effective way to raise test scores or help students who are struggling, so I sometimes don't get to keep those students who need music the most.

### Student Needs -

Describes student needs the teacher perceives as inhibiting a child-centered approach. My students have serious emotional and personal needs. They need a lot of structure and guidance, which often inhibit independent activities. Discipline is an ongoing issue schoolwide.
| Community Context - | describes negative aspects of students' community as inhibiting a child-centered approach | My school is an urban school with families of lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Mobility is high. Absences have skyrocketed. English language learners are on the rise, as well. Parent involvement is low. | CO-C-20 |
| Connection with Music Teachers + | able to connect professionally with other music teachers, and perceives this as supporting a child-centered approach | I collaborate frequently with other music teachers in the district and this definitely facilitates my efforts for create a child-centered approach to general music instruction. | ID-S-6 |
| Connection with Music Teachers - | not able to connect professionally with other music teachers, and perceives this as inhibiting a child-centered approach | As the only elementary music teacher in the district I do have a lack of input from others in my profession. | CO-T-3 |
| School Facilities |  |  |  |
| Dedicated Music Classroom + | states that having a dedicated music classroom supports a child-centered approach | I have a classroom of my own that makes it easier to facilitate a child-centered approach. | MT-C-7 |
| Dedicated Music Classroom - | describes limitations associated with not having a dedicated music classroom, limitations which inhibit a child-centered approach | In my situation, I do not have a classroom, so there are limitations to being able to focus on students individually and/or set up centers for them to improve certain areas. | MT-R-12 |
| Quality of Classroom + | describes positive aspects of dedicated music classroom that support a child-centered approach | My room is large, so I can easily differentiate the lessons. | MT-C-24 |
| Quality of Classroom - | describes negative aspects of dedicated music classroom that inhibit a child-centered approach | I teach in a cement room (including floors) that began as a shop classroom. The walls are not soundproof (only covered windows to the next classroom) and the room is very live. During our three years in this room, my students have not had the opportunity to improvise independently because of the noise level. A child-centered approach requires time for students to be noisy. This has been the biggest obstacle I have experienced in my eight years of teaching. | MT-R-8 |
| Quality of Classroom Location - | describes negative aspects of the location of the dedicated music classroom, which inhibits a child-centered approach | Classroom space and location do play an important part in the structure of my class... and being located in the center of the building means that certain activities create a noise disruption for those around me. Beginning band and recorder sounds are not always appreciated. | MT-T-34 |
| Openness of Curriculum + | describes freedom in curricular decisions, supporting the option of a child-centered approach | I do not have a required curriculum or assessments, therefore I can create and implement my own curriculum and assessment choices. This gives me a lot of freedom to hand over curricular choices to the students. | CO-C-16 |
| Openness of Curriculum - | describes strictness in curriculum that inhibit the option of a child-centered approach | My teaching situation however, does not easily facilitate a child-centered approach as I do have a curriculum to follow. So I have to keep on track even | MT-T-25 |
when I let the students divert the initial plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access to Resources</th>
<th>describe having sufficient classroom materials available to support a child-centered approach</th>
<th>I have very generous resources (annual budgets, abundant quantities of pretty much every kind of instrument I could want, a high quality piano).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources +</td>
<td>I have very limited resources at my schools and a very small budget. I have a classroom set of 1 instrument. I have been applying for grants to get more instruments for the students to experience more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources -</td>
<td>I have very limited resources at my schools and a very small budget. I have a classroom set of 1 instrument. I have been applying for grants to get more instruments for the students to experience more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget -</td>
<td>I have very generous resources (annual budgets, abundant quantities of pretty much every kind of instrument I could want, a high quality piano).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Experience -</td>
<td>I feel that… my lack of experience (I have only been teaching for three months) inhibits my efforts to adopt a child-centered approach.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K

Institutional Review Board Documentation

Office of Research Integrity
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

APPROVAL

03-Apr-2018

Dear Heather Falter,

On 03-Apr-2018 the IRB reviewed the following protocol:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Submission:</th>
<th>Initial Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review Category:</td>
<td>Exempt - Category 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
<td>Characteristics of Current Elementary General Music Teaching Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigator:</td>
<td>Falter, Heather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol #:</td>
<td>18-0224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents Approved:</td>
<td>18-0224 Protocol (3Apr18); 18-0224 Consent Form (3Apr18); recruitment email templates; Questionnaire;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents Reviewed:</td>
<td>Protocol; HRP-211: FORM - Initial Application v8;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The IRB approved the protocol on 03-Apr-2018.

Click the link to find the approved documents for this protocol: Summary Page Use copies of these documents to conduct your research.

In conducting this protocol you must follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,
Douglas Graef
IRB Admin Review Coordinator
Institutional Review Board
Permission to Take Part in a Human Research Study

**Title of research study:** Characteristics of Current Elementary General Music Teaching Practices  
**IRB Protocol Number:** 18-0224  
**Investigator:** Ellie Falter  
**Faculty Advisor:** Dr. James Austin

**Purpose of the Study:** The purpose of this study is to explore characteristics of current elementary general music teaching practices. Findings from this research will be used to develop a picture of how music teachers approach elementary general music in five Rocky Mountain states (Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming). This might also impact how music teacher educators work with both preservice and inservice music teachers on supporting elementary students’ music education.

I invite you to take part in this study because you are a music teacher who works, at least in part, with elementary students. I expect that it will take you about 10-12 minutes to complete this survey. I expect almost 500 other music teachers across 5 states will be in this research study.

**Explanation of Procedures:** If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to anonymously fill out the following questionnaire this one time only. There will be no requests for completion of follow-up questionnaires as part of this study. In this questionnaire, you will be asked up to 53 questions about the kinds of activities you plan for your elementary general music classes, students’ role in leading any of these activities, the types of information you collect about your students’ interest and learning in music, and how this information may or may not impact future planning. Finally, there will be 11 items in which you can indicate characteristics about yourself, such as descriptions of your teaching situation and teaching influences.

**Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:** Whether or not you take part in this research is your choice. You can leave the research at any time (by closing the window) and it will not be held against you.

**Confidentiality:** Information obtained about you for this study will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. Research information that identifies you may be shared with the University of Colorado Boulder Institutional Review Board (IRB) and others who are responsible for ensuring compliance with laws and regulations related to research, including people on behalf of the Office for Human Research Protections. The information from this research may be published for scientific purposes; however, your identity will not be given out.
**Payment for Participation:** If you complete the survey, you may choose to submit your preferred email address to be entered into a lottery for one of 20 $50 gift certificates to West Music. All those who submit their name will have an equal, random chance of being selected. Gift cards will be shared with the winners during May 2018.

If you choose to enter your email, this information will be stored in a different file than your answers to the survey in order to protect the anonymity of your survey responses.

**Questions:** If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, contact the researcher at heather.falter@colorado.edu or the faculty advisor at james.austin@colorado.edu. This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB). You may talk to them at (303) 735-3702 or irbadmin@colorado.edu if:
- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

**Consent:** If you agree to participate in this study, click "Next" to begin the questionnaire.