

**THE USE OF METAL AND PLASTIC WASTES IN THE TEACHING OF
MUSIC IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTING****Agustinus Arum Eka Nugroho** ✉

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Abstract

The teaching of simple musical production is one of common practice in Indonesian early childhood education. This however is accompanied by the fact that most Indonesian early childhood centers has no ability to provide musical instrument to supports their children's learning. Considering that exposure to music is essentially importance to encourage children's sense of aesthetics the Semarang University's Department of Early Childhood Education initiated a short course on the teaching of music to young children for the teachers of disadvantaged centers. Unlike typical course on music, in this short course plastic and metal wastes were used to substitute musical instruments. The wastes were those, which can produce the sound of percussions, such as used water gallons, jerry cans, and metal biscuit cans. Percussions are chosen considering the fact that the teaching of music in Indonesia is combined with fine motor development stimulation. In addition, percussion is much simpler for children to play compared to others. At the end of the short course, the department has learnt that not only the program has given an alternative for the teachers of how to teach music to their children, but also has given them much confidence to do that. On the other hand, even though the use of plastic and metal wastes were also an emergency exit strategy, somehow the teachers have learnt to not depend on the "real", mostly expensive musical instruments amidst the lack of financial support. This has also allowed teacher to not ask for more money from the parents.

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INTRODUCTION

Many educational institutions, especially early childhood centers, are still lacking in availability of musical learning media. Unavailability or lacking of musical learning media makes learning less effective. This practically affects student's learning achievement. Conclusion can be made that learning media is a teacher's necessity as learning supporting factor. Other fundamental issue is of teacher's musicality, one that we often find as minimal.

Fulfilling the need for learning media does not always require factory made products. A lot of environmental resources can be repurposed as learning media. For example, lets consider rhythm competence of musical learning. This competence learning requires percussive musical instrument. Resources in the environment can be made usable as learning media if the required percussive instrument availability is lacking. These environmental resources may come in the form of metal and plastic wastes.

Musical learning on early years of children life is very recommended for its benefit of children growth and development.

Musical activities will develop musical intelligence on children. During musical activities, singing a song for example, with mentoring from teachers, children will imagine objects according to the song being sung. Aside to that, body movement while dancing along the musical rhythm bring benefit to children's gross motor capability.

Learning can affect children even more significantly if children are involved in playing of musical instrument. It is very unfortunate if children involvement in musical instrument play is limited by unavailable of learning media and also teacher's musicality capability. To overcome these issues there needs to be musical learning shortcourse in order to expand early childhood teacher's musical learning knowledge, insight and experience.

Early Childhood and Teacher Education Department of Unnes, collaborated with early

childhood centers around Gunung Pati subdistrict, through which can be assessed that musical capability of early childhood teachers there can still be categorized as minimal. This is proven by the minimal quality and quantity of musical learning. This leads to children can not get maximal musical experience, for example only in singing skill but no involvement in musical instrument play.

The above illustration concludes that aside from minimal teacher's musicality capability, the school's availability of musical learning media is also limited. The problem causes musical learning in early childhood centers in Gunung Pati subdistrict to become not maximal. Therefore Early Childhood and Teacher Education of Unnes held a shortcourse on musical learning utilizing metal and plastic wastes as learning media.

METHOD

The shortcourse can be broken down to following three stages:

1. First stage, the team create the early plan of the shortcourse : goal of the shortcourse, shortcourse format plan (including acitivity sequences, material scope, training method and techniques, and preparing the evaluation tools)
2. Second stage, activity starts with pre shortcourse evaluation to understand trainee's starting knowledge. This is followed with handing the main material.
3. Third stage, final evaluation to assess how much given material received by trainee.

Activity method applied in this shortcourse is training and evaluation. Training is meant to giving musical learning shortcourse to early childhood teachers. While evaluation is final activity post shortcourse to measure how much of the material given is received by the

shortcourse attendee. The evaluation technique chosen is by interviewing the attendee.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This shortcourse targets on utilizing metal and plastic wastes as music learning media by formal and informal early childhood center teachers in Gunung Pati – Semarang. This pinpointing was chosen to increase musical capability of early childhood teachers both theoretically and practically. The number of teachers attended the shortcourse was 30 attendees, while the shortcourse itself took place at laboratory of Early Childhood and Teacher Education Department, Unnes.

First day training activity was started at October 1 2010, starting 13.00 until 15.30. First day activity was recognition knowledge of percussive musical instrument, home-waste based musical instrument assembly process, and musical theory teaching material. Knowledge and recognition of percussive musical instrument was focused on percussive sound categorization. This categorization was low toned and high toned percussion. Low toned percussion was represented by bass drum, while high toned percussion was represented by snare drum.

Shortcourse activities were well executed as planned. This can be indicated by participants' response on explanations, also their active interactions with the instructors. Based on behavioral observation on the participants, this meant that the given teaching materials can be well received. The given teaching material was percussive play in the shape of simple marching band concept. This simple concept can be explained like this, the marching band rhythm pattern is customizable with the need and developmental stage of children aged 4 to 6 years (rhythm patterns can be found in Appendix).

The shortcourse then continued with the application of given musical theory. This application was by playing the percussive musical instrument according to notation / music theory, leading to percussive music

harmonization on marching band rhythm. The participant was enthusiastic when playing the functionally sublimized house wastes.

First day was ended by evaluation of the whole day activities, starting from assembly of musical instrument up until percussive play with marching band rhythm. The result was participants have better knowledge of theoretic and practical on the marching band music play, which will be followed up in the next day program.

Second day activity held on October 2, 2010, starting from 13.00 up to 15.30. Just as the first day, this day participants played rhythmical element using percussion with marching band pattern concept. Additionally, melodic elements was added to complete the already used rhythmic element. Melodic elements was played using pianica, by playing some melodies from children songs and some march type songs. The played songs was Naik Kereta Api, Menanam Jagung, Naik Delman, Libur Telah Tiba, and Mars Proklamasi Kemerdekaan RI. Upon enthusiastic request of an attendee, a real keroncong song titled

Jembatan Merah was also played. The whole songs was played using marching band rhythm, which according to music theory used 2/4 taps, and played on fast tempo (starting from tap 110), played with lively musical expression.

First day evaluation concluded that participant's musical understanding and experience were lacking. Most participant could not read musical notation. Aside to that, their percussive instrument play could still be categorized as minimal. Therefore the basic musical theory was given first, in the form of musical notation knowledge. This knowledge then applied to playing percussive musical instrument in marching band rhythm. In the end of the first day, all participants could read musical notation and play marching band rhythm albeit still in the simple level.

This continued in the second day of shortcourse, musical rhythmic via percussion in marching band rhythm was collaborated with

melodic musical elements using pianica music instrument. The implementation technique was participants were divided into two groups, one played percussion, and the other played pianica. The collaboration of the two elements created harmonization in marching band concept. Result of the learning activities from both days of shortcourse have reached the learning indicators. First learning indicator was percussive play with marching band rhythm, while second indicator led to collaborative harmonization of rhythmic element and melodic music.

Based on these results, can safely be assumed that the shortcourse held on October 1st and 2nd, 2010, was executed well. Participants responded enthusiastically. This could be seen by their enthusiasm while playing the musical instrument. Material delivery method used was speech and demonstration. Main objective of this activity was to give better musical knowledge, experience and capability to participants, in hope that they can create a more effective and applicative musical learning in musical instruments.

By looking at participant's responses, the shortcourse was run well. This was shown by their active questioning on question and answer session of the shortcourse regarding the given material. Surprisingly, at the end of the last day, many of the participants expected such shortcourse to be held periodically in the hope of keeping the participant's musicality. The participants believed this music themed shortcourse enhance their insight and knowledge and skill in music.

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