

Abstract symposium 90 minutes

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Assessment as learning in music education - the risk of 'criteria compliance' replacing 'learning' in the Scandinavian countries

Recent reforms in England and USA give evidence that teaching methods and content can change rapidly, given a strong external pressure, for example through economic incentives, inspections, school choice and public display of schools' and pupils' performances. Educational activities in the Scandinavian countries have increasingly become dominated by obligations regarding assessment and grading. A common thread is the demand for equal and just assessment and grading through clear criteria and transparent processes. Torrance (2007) states that clarity in assessment procedures, processes and criteria has underpinned widespread use of coaching, practice and provision of formative feedback to boost achievement, but that such transparency encourages instrumentalism. He concludes that the practice of assessment has moved from assessment *of* learning, through assessment *for* learning, to assessment *as* learning, with assessment procedures and practices coming completely to dominate the learning experience and 'criteria compliance' replacing 'learning'. Thus, formative assessment, in spite of its proven educational potential, threatens to be deformative (Torrance, 2012). In the symposium we will explore to what extent and how this development is visible from four perspectives. Four examples of assessment investigation of dance and music education in primary, lower and upper secondary schools will function as entrances to the dilemma.

The symposium will start with an introduction of assessments demands in general and in the Scandinavian countries specifically, ending up in the theories of Torrance, and the risk of *assessment as learning* or even. Thereafter the following perspectives and settings will be described.

Professionalism in Action – Music Teachers on an Assessment Journey

If assessment practices within education have led, as Torrance (2007) claims, to instrumentalism in the form of "assessment *as* learning [and] criteria compliance" (p. 281-282), how can teachers and researchers reclaim the exploratory notions of (music) education? In an ongoing collaborate Research and Development and Participatory Action Research project, a group of Swedish upper secondary school music teachers together with a researcher investigates issues regarding assessment, for instance why equality is not spelled "exactly the same thing" and how teachers balance professionalism with accountability.

Demands on documentation of dance knowledge in upper secondary schools in Sweden – how does that processing assessment practice?

In the syllabuses from Gy11, expressed dance performance can be seen as an embodied action. Though, students and teachers are asked to evaluate themselves and fill out a written rubric in the same way as all other subjects at studied upper secondary schools. The focus on criteria-referenced feedback can have coherence to assessment as learning instead of

assessment for learning. Based on observations, conversations and written reflections teachers are expressing the insufficiency with the rubric in combination to dance. How is the demand on documentation processing the assessment practice? Through a study of grading conversation teachers' conception of qualities are illuminated. What is the base for what is assessed and communicated and how is that effect the teaching professionalism? What is prepossessing teachers' conceptions of qualities?

An outline of an understanding of assessment as didactical self-defence strategies

The findings of Vinge (2014) indicate a clear tendency towards a systematic criterion based assessment practice in the compulsory music of subject in lower secondary schools in Norway. This change in practice follows the implementation of the latest curriculum reform (LK06, *the knowledge reform*), a curriculum reform initiated to enhance student learning within the frames of international competency comparison. Music teachers make use of new assessment principles and techniques designed to enhance student learning, associated with the so-called assessment *for* learning concept. However, the analysis indicates that these principles and techniques are being used mainly for grading purposes and settings – assessment *of* learning. All though teachers seem to face lots of difficulties in the construction of various assessment schemes; once adopted they seem to become important tools in the teachers' strive for effectiveness and control. This poses a central question, which will be elaborated in this presentation: Who is assessment actually for? Is it for the students or the teacher?

Teaching for learning or teaching for documentation: on the effects of a curriculum reform

The Swedish 2011 curricular reform brought considerable change to the school system. Among other changes, grading was to take place from school year 6 and not from year 8 and a new grading regime was introduced with more grades and more detailed criteria than in the preceding curricula. In this presentation, preliminary results from a survey among music teachers in Swedish compulsory school will be discussed. The survey is based on the findings in a qualitative study of music teachers' perceptions of this reform (Zandén & Ferm, forthcoming) and aims at giving a representative picture of the effects of the reform on music education and music teachers' professional situation.

Finally Lauri Väkevä will draw lines between the different contributions, comment critically, and conclude with with a Finnish perspective.