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Art as a Mediating Tool: Children and Learning in a Music and Arts-Based After School Program

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ART AS A MEDIATING TOOL: CHILDREN AND LEARNING IN A MUSIC
AND ARTS-BASED AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

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2019

Dedication

To my Beloved Parents

ART AS A MEDIATING TOOL: CHILDREN AND LEARNING IN A MUSIC
AND ARTS-BASED AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

by

CLAUDIA SALDANA CORRAL, B.A., M.A.

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This study explores the experiences of primarily Latina/o children with learning music in a Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP) the context of a low-income neighborhood on the U.S- Mexico border. This year-long ethnographic study was conducted in an after-school art program in the Rio Grande Elementary School, in a low-income neighborhood located within one-mile of the U.S.-Mexico border. The purpose of the study is to understand how music and art can be used as a mediating tool for children to construct social and cognitive learning within a culturally diverse community, thus, enhancing the social environment in which they interact. The participants were 36 emergent bilingual students from the 3rd to 5th grade who were learning to play violin, cello, and piano. The theoretical frameworks of Art Education, Zone of Proximal Development, Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), and Situated Learning informed the data collection and analysis to capture an understanding of how art shapes learning in the MABP. The ethnographic study was conducted over one year using diverse methodological tools which provided a form of data triangulation between participant observation, interview, and visual artwork sources.

The data analysis was divided into two stages of analysis to respond to study questions. The first analysis was conducted through a thematic analysis, where findings showed that students learned music through their diverse social activity participation. The students' music learning experiences were expressed through actions and how they were open to supporting each other and being conscious of their strengths and weaknesses. The second analysis was developed through Engeström's (1999) CHAT third-generation CHAT framework. The importance of this analysis through CHAT was not only the understanding of the structure of students' meanings or music-art program activity but the emotional dimension that transformed students' actions.

Within the CHAT analysis, four main tensions were encountered to understand students' meanings. Also, through the analysis, these expressions from students' meanings were seen as expressions of agency.

This dissertation showed how students created a community environment through the connections with diverse organizations where they participated. The MABP engaged students in an environment where the connection with different art forms such as visual art enhanced their music learning experiences. The findings of this study have implications for research, teaching and policy in music and arts-based programs in low-income communities.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	v
Abstract.....	viii
Table of Contents.....	x
List of Tables	xiv
List of Figures.....	xv
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Purpose of the Study	2
Music and Art Education	4
Art-based After School Programs.....	6
Theoretical Framework.....	7
Significance of the Study	8
Positionality and Origins of the Study	10
Organization of the Study	11
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Review of the Relevant Literature.....	14
Introduction.....	14
Eisner and Art Education	16
Vygotsky’s Zones of Proximal Development.....	19
Cultural Historical Activity Theory	21
Third Generation Activity Theory	24
Situated Learning and Apprenticeship.....	28
Literature Review.....	30
Music Education in Marginalized Communities	31
Art and Cultural Diversity	36
Art and Teaching / Learning	41
Art-Based Programs.....	44
Conclusion	50
Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods.....	52
Introduction.....	52
Music and Arts-Based Program Research Setting	53

Rio Grande Elementary School	53
Latin Neighborhood as a Historical Community	57
Art murals in the Latin Neighborhood.....	58
Qualitative Methods, Ethnography, and Arts-Based Research.....	60
Arts-Based Methodology	61
Participant Selection Criteria	64
Gaining Access to the Research Site: Music and Art-Based After-School Program	65
Data Collection	67
Interviews.....	69
Interview Time and Procedure.....	69
Individual interviews	69
Focus-group interviews.....	70
Observation	72
Field Notes	73
Visual Journal as a Methodology.....	74
Visual journal process.....	74
Video-Graphic Method	75
Video Experiences with Students	76
Artifacts.....	77
My role as a Researcher, Participant, and Observer	77
Member Check.....	78
Data Management and Organization	79
Data Analysis	79
Trustworthiness and Validation Procedures	83
Conclusion	84
Chapter 4: Research Context	86
MABP Origins	86
Support from Organizations.....	87
Music and Arts-Based Program Model.....	89
Music Teaching Artists	90
Volunteering	93
Staff Meetings.....	94

Music and Arts-Based Program Structure	95
After-School Tutoring (AST)	95
Unstructured Play.....	100
Music Theory and Practice	103
Music Instruction	106
External Learning Environments Settings	109
El Sol Art Museum (ESAM).....	109
Field Trips and Summer Camps	112
Summer camps.....	112
El Sol University, art-music, and technology campus visits	113
Performances.....	115
Summary	117
Chapter 5: Students’ Music and Art Learning Experiences.....	119
Aspiration and Access.....	123
Exploring New Places.....	125
Access and aspirations through artwork	127
Discovering Music and Acquiring Musical Knowledge.....	131
Learning through Musician Artist’s Visits	137
Learning through Leadership.....	139
Students’ Experiences Receiving Job Assignments	142
Students practice leadership.....	147
Developing Imagination and Creativity.....	152
Composing Music through Art	154
Summary of Chapter 5	160
Chapter 6: MABP Activities and Students’ Meanings as an Activity	163
Music as an Expression within the Activity System.....	169
Mentorship and Guidance	174
Parent support	174
Music teaching artists support	176
Student’s expressions through CHAT.	177
Discovery as an Activity.....	179
Museum of Art as an Activity.....	182

MABP as an Activity	188
Students' Agency as an Expansive Learning.....	192
Leadership Skills.....	194
Students' Academic Success and Future Career Decisions	195
Social Participation	204
Expansive Learning Between Activities	206
Summary of Chapter 6	208
Chapter 7: Discussion and Implications	212
Student Apprenticeship through Music and Art	214
Contributions from CHAT in Students' Meanings.....	217
Agency in Students' Leadership Practices.....	219
Implications of Findings	222
Implications for Teaching Practice and Policy	228
Future Research	231
Conclusion	232
References.....	234
Appendix A.....	247
University of Texas at El Paso IRB Approval for Spring 2016 and 2017.....	247
Appendix B	248
Assent Form For Research Involving Human Subjects	248
Appendix C	250
Focus Group Interview Protocol (Spanish).....	250
Appendix D.....	252
Interview Protocol (Spanish)	252
Appendix E	254
Musical Repertoire.....	254
Appendix F.....	257
MABP Instrument Check Out Form (English-Spanish)	257
Vita	259

List of Tables

Table 3.1. Timeline- Dissertation Development Process.....	53
Table 3.2. Research Questions and Data Collection.....	61
Table 3.3. Research Participants.....	64
Table 3.4. Data Collection Methodology Description.....	68
Table 4.1. Student Enrollment Per Year in the MABP.....	90
Table 5.1. Research Participants.....	120
Table 5.3. Students' Journal Art Work.....	128
Table 5.4. Students' Role Assignments.....	141
Table 6.1. Students' Drawings and Text Future College Expectations	201

List of Figures

Figure 1.1. The stimulus-response process from Vygotsky's (1978) model of the mediated act. (adapted from Engeström, 2005).	22
Figure 1.2. Common reformulation from Vygotsky's model of the mediated act (adapted from Engeström, 2005).	23
Figure 1.3. Leont'ev three levels scheme of activity theory system. (adapted from Engeström et al., 1999).	23
Figure 1.4. The music learning activity in the MABP. Source: adapted from "Expansive Learning: Toward and activity-theoretical reconceptualization" by Y. Engeström (2009). In K. Illeris (Ed.), Contemporary theories of learning: Learning theorists. In their own words (pp. 53-73). London, UK: Routledge.	26
Figure 3.1. Students' visual journal	75
Figure 3.2. Data analysis process.....	81
Figure 3.3. Themes and categories description.....	82
Figure 4.1. Children classroom activity drawings	99
Figure 4.2. Recreational play: "jugando a las canicas."	101
Figure 4.3. Performance reflection classroom activity	105
Figure 4.4. Cardboard violin construction- collaborative learning activity	108
Figure 4.5. Examples from Catrina's museum community activity	111
Figure 4.6. Students' 3D digital practice in the technology department	115
Figure 5.1. Examples from music theory instruction.....	154
Figure 6.1. Cyclical activity process that frames students' expressions, discovery, and agency of students' activity in the MABP. (Adapted from Engeström, 2016).	168
Figure 6.2. Students' learning and acquiring music skills from theory and string music instruction within activity theory	179
Figure 6.3. Art model representation that shows the interaction from music and art connection. (adapted from Brown & Dissanayake art model classification of the arts, 2018, p. 2).	181
Figure 6.4. Alicia's museum experience "art object representation" represented in journal activity.....	185
Figure 6.5. Students' visit museum to learn connections between music and art (tensions between/inside nodes of ESAM activity system)	188
Figure 6.6. Students receiving free and transitional after-school tutoring to prepare students to next instructional music stages (contradiction between/inside nodes of AST activity system).	191
Figure 6.7. Student's agency in the MABP	192
Figure 6.8. Agency as an expansive network within three activity systems.....	207
Figure 7.1. The practical and emotional connection from student's experiences in the MABP	214

Chapter 1: Introduction

An image is not a reality; it is a physical space in which interest and subjectivities of different individuals are intertwined. Langer (1957) argued that “A work of art is an expressive form created for our perception through sense or imagination, and what it expresses is human feeling” (p. 15). Art allows us to intensify our senses, connect with reality, and to let humans be more critical to recognize the things that make us vibrate and feel. Dewey defined art as a “form of experience that exacerbates life; helps the growing child recognize that he or she is alive” (as cited in Eisner, 1972, p. 5). Leo Tolstoy, the famous Russian writer, believed that art is the communication of emotion from one man or group to another (as cited in Eisner, 1972, p. 6). Diverse scholars (Eisner, 2002; Lowenfeld, 1982; Greene, 1995; Langer, 1957; Barone, 2006) have also studied the importance of using art as a way to forge students’ creativity, empowerment to self-discovery, expressivity, solidarity, and collaboration in learning practices.

Various studies show how art is a mediating tool for learning, providing a child the opportunity to express meanings. Eisner (2002) stated that “meanings are nested into levels of abstraction, but reducible to a proxy. This proxy can be visual, it can be auditory, and it can be linguistic” (p. 21). Through art, children can identify signs and symbols immersed in diverse literacies, which enhance learning, socialization, and inclusion development (Kliwer, 2008; Ledford & Wolery, 2013; Joosa 2012; Lindsay, Mcpherson, Asiam, Mckeever & Wright, 2013). Music, as one form of artistic expression, can lead to a positive effect in children learning behaviors, and parents gaining awareness about art and music practices (Desrochers, Oshlaq & Kenelly, 2014; Gerrity, Hourigan & Horton, 2013; Tutt, 2014). Leavy (2015) claimed that “Music is able to connect people through emotional evocation that in certain contexts may transcend language, economic, and other social barriers” (p. 123).

Purpose of the Study

This study explores the experiences of primarily Latina/o children in a low-income neighborhood through music learning in the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP) on the U.S.-Mexico border. The study allowed me as the researcher to understand students' music learning experiences and meanings that were constructed in this community of learning. The purpose of this study is to understand how music and art can be used as a mediating tool for children to construct social and cognitive learning within a culturally diverse community, thus, enhancing the social environment in which they interact.

This study was conducted in an after-school art program as part of the Rio Grande Elementary School where after-school programs are struggling to offer a variety of arts programs. The statistics showed that African-American and Latino children are much likely to be enrolled in afterschool programs compared to the overall population. The demand for more afterschool and summer learning programs is considerable and 1.5 million students are waiting for an available program (Afterschool Alliance, 2013). The non-profit and public community organizations work through galleries, museums, and community art-based programs (Afterschool Alliance, 2013). On the other hand, art-based community organization programs in Texas provide social and cultural services to a diversity of student populations. The non-profit and public community organizations work through galleries, museums, and community art-based programs.

This study seeks to contribute to the areas of art and education through the exploration of the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP) within a culturally diverse community setting by exploring students' music and art learning experiences and students' meanings constructed through art. The study explored the MABP to understand how Latino-immigrant children learn

from music practices. In addition, the study sought to understand how socialization is developed through music in the after-school program setting.

Multiple studies show the need to continue researching art in culturally diverse contexts to understand the cross-cultural challenges children face through after-school programs (Di Maggio & Fernández-Kelly, 2010; Smith, DeMeo, & Widmann, 2011). While this study was conducted specifically with students in the MABP, the voice of the music teaching artist and parents resonated along with the study findings. Music teaching artist and parents added knowledge to the study in the understanding of how students' experienced art in non-formal contexts.

This study explores students' music learning in the MABP, which led to understanding their music experiences and how they connect music learning through visual art in the social environment where they learn. From this perspective, I used the term music and art along with my writing intending to connect music as a form of art and the connection with visual art from students' external learning environment activities. In chapter 6, I explain art forms to understand the music connection with visual art from Brown and Dissanayake's (2018) research perspective. My intention to present Brown and Dissanayake's (2018) art forms perspective is to go more in-depth in the understanding of music and art, emphasizing the art elements where students were involved in the MABP and ESAM activities. Langer (1953), from a philosophical perspective, defines music from the connection with time perspective, "Music is as an 'art of time' in a more intimate and important sense than the traditional one in which the phrase is commonly applied not only to it but to literature, drama, and dance- the sense of *requiring a definite time of perception*" (p. 120). Langer recognized music as an occurrent art to refer to music as an art of

performance, as a physical representation where music is something audible, and as a picture which is something visible (Langer, 1953, p. 120).

Music and Art Education

Diverse studies show that art, like many interdisciplinary approaches in education, suffers from a general lack of continuity within formal schooling. Beveridge (2010) acknowledged that “the long-term effects of NCLB are not yet evident, but the short-term effects have been detrimental to all non-tested subjects, especially those courses that are typically considered electives” (p. 4). Beveridge (2010) explained that art classes are treated or visualized as “fun” courses, undermining the essence of art as a discipline and the professionalism of art teachers. In a similar way, Shin and Junghee (2014) stated, “we believe that this contributes to the misguided assumption that art equals leisure” (p. 236). Eisner (2002) emphasized this idea that “the arts have long been perceived as being ‘affective’ rather than cognitive, easy not tough, soft not hard, simply not complex” (p. 35).

Furthermore, other studies explored NCLB’s impact in music from diverse perspectives such as policy, enrollment, and ethnicity. From this point, Elpus’ (2014) results explored the effect of NCLB in high school music education enrollment. Surprisingly, these results showed no overall decline in high school music enrollment, but disparities in enrollment trends among racial, ethnic and special education, with an emphasis on the no enrollment from Hispanic students (p. 228). On the other hand, diverse research studies remarked that music courses were the most frequently eliminated from the curriculum, where instrumental music (band) is added to the curriculum, providing a reduced music course selection to students (Gerrity, 2009; Abril & Gault, 2008). Moreover, the studies showed the need to research music programs and the impact

in rural and low Social Economical Status (SES) schools, middle, and high school students (Abril & Gault, 2008; Hodges, & O'Connell, 2005).

The changes through education policies have put forward diverse perspectives that have effects in the curriculum. The federal educational policy that followed NCLB was Race to the Top (RTTT) which is reducing the effect of the act originally enacted by No Child Left Behind in 2002, which proposed to leave untested subjects out of the curriculum (Tutt, 2014). However, RTTT focused on the majority of students who are not required to take art—and instead they study core curriculum subjects which are centered in math, tech, science and engineering (U.S Department of Education 2009). In that sense, art continues with the existence outside of the curriculum. Tutt (2014) stated that “teachers, artists, legislators, and the general public continue to debate what students should know and be able to do in the arts” (p. 93). The author argued that students have a minimum opportunity to take art courses during middle and high school education, and most of the students do not have the chance to learn from art or give continuity to an artistic passion. Lu (2013), through exploration in a Korean community-based music school in New York, explained that music education was a way in which Chinese community immigrants acquired social capital that led them to pursue an education in U.S postsecondary institutions: “Music strategy is not simply the acquisition of high culture. It also has an ethnic component meant to circumvent cultural distinctions” (p. 315). The research showed how music and education establish connections and relationships between cultures and allows engaging children, teachers, and families, managing their cultural distinctions and relationships. In addition, the native Asians adapted their culture into a subculture that offered the keys to succeed in the American country. The research gave visualizations on how art can support communities by

providing not only learning and cognitive skills but also a strong consciousness of how art is a medium to generate social capital and educational development.

Lu's research does not involve the consequences of the education system marginalizing art from the curriculum in a direct way. However, formal education gives an important perspective on how art is visualized and developed along the education system to understand the role art plays in external learning environments with children in culturally diverse contexts. In external learning contexts, art can provide students the opportunity to learn and become aware of their identity, culture, and language.

Art-based After School Programs

Numerous research studies showed that art programs in external learning settings vary throughout countries, regions, and communities – especially since each context struggles with a pedagogical structure in a different way (Shin & Junghee, 2014; Di Maggio & Fernandez Kelly, 2010; Smith, DeMeo, & Widmann, 2011). However, the diversity of art programs can shape-the understanding of informal communities, pedagogy, and program actions, to understand how participation between individuals enhances participants' learning experiences. Shin and Jughee (2014) mentioned that art interest in each country has different visualization, but it is important to recognize programs needed to strengthen and meet goals, curriculum, and application in informal settings.

Diverse studies showed that art practices in art-based programs do not work in an isolated way from theory and practice. Art programs develop different perspectives on learning in communities of practice. The connection between theory and practice provides the possibility to create a connection in practices and activities. Wildemeersch and Von Kotze (2014) argued that “the pedagogical and artistic practice is connected to the realities of the neighborhood and, at

best, reflective of unequal relationships and injustices beyond” (p. 325). However, Washington (2011) showed that tensions still surround art inside and outside the school through learning practices. She conducted a research study in a community-based organization by visualizing the necessity to teachers and instructors to re-construct the defragmentation in art concepts to practices discovering new possibilities of art teaching. The different border struggles require the awareness to support education and learning development with children, teachers, and parents; however, exploring art programs must involve understanding how children, teachers, and parents face these challenges.

Theoretical Framework

The following theoretical framework will provide the structure to support and understand the ways of learning in the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP). Ormrod (2008) defined learning “as a long-term change in mental representations or associations as a result of experience” (p. 4). He explained how learning involved transitory use of information, as well as mental representations (concepts). The theoretical frameworks of Art Education, Zone of Proximal Development, Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), and Situated Learning informs the data collection and analysis to capture an understanding of how art shapes learning in the MABP. Eisner’s (2003) art education perspective gives a theoretical framework on how art in education is a medium that strengthens human learning experiences. Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of Zones of Proximal Development (ZPD) analyzes children’s learning and interaction within the sociocultural environment. The sociocultural perspective is also explored through the lens of Engeström’s (2016) third-generation CHAT to find out the students’ meanings that are developed in the MABP. Through sociocultural activity theory, it is possible to grasp how art can act as a mediating tool in community-based organizations of practice. Lave and Wenger (1991),

by means of situated learning and apprenticeship theoretical perspectives, contribute to understanding children's social learning activity in communities of practice across cultural, political, and economic perspectives. Also, situated learning through legitimate peripheral participation recognizes how to understand the concept of learning from the viewpoint of the social environment. Lave and Wenger (1991) define peripheral participation "as an analytical viewpoint on learning [as] a way of understanding learning" (p. 40).

Two main research questions are guiding this study, which includes:

- 1) How do students learn and experience music and art practices through music in the Music and Arts-Based Program?
- 2) How are students' meanings developed through their participation in the Music and Arts-Based Program?

In order to respond to these questions, I found it necessary to examine students' music and art practices from the MABP and external learning settings. The external learning setting connections played a significant role in students' continuum of learning in the MABP. The external setting learning activities like El Sol Art Museum (ESAM) and El Sol Theater shaped students' learning and awakened their sense of curiosity and questioning. Furthermore, to understand students' meanings, the exploration through their experiences created a bridge to understand students' expressions, emotions, and actions in the MABP.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study contribute to the understandings of learning experiences and meanings constructed from students who come from the border communities and to theorize how music and art can be used as a way to reaffirm and celebrate marginalized identities of students at our southern border while also supporting their academic and future success. The study,

developed through a sociocultural lens, contributes to more in-depth understanding how students learn music by acquiring musical and visual art knowledge by the social interaction, access to different learning environments, and leadership apprenticeship through music practices. The study contributes to understanding the structure of music practices and activity in the MABP, as well as the emotional activity from students' meanings constructed by their learning experiences in the MABP.

The study was conducted over one year through an in-depth ethnography study using multiple data methodology tools which provided a form of data triangulation by using ethnographic- data and visual artwork sources. The visual methods collected through artifacts and visual journals created a data connection and confirmed students' expressions and visual representations.

This study has implications for understanding the impact of music learning in arts-based programs, focused on Latino and low-income communities. The focus of the MABP started their structure roots from the successful music program El Sistema in Venezuela created by Antonio Abreu in 1975. This dissertation will show that the MABP program had been creating its model based on the needs of Latino students participating in the music and art program. Foundational to the project is to empower at-risk children to improve their sense of self and community by using immersive music learning and performing located in the low-income neighborhood of the Rio Grande on the border with Mexico.

This study contributes to informing arts-based programs on the importance of understanding student learning within music program learning activities. Furthermore, this study reveals the benefits of finding ways to expand students' knowledge by connecting music with visual art activities.

Positionality and Origins of the Study

I defined my role as a researcher as an insider and outsider in the MABP. My researcher role involved complex participation because I had to move away sometimes from the environment to encourage myself to think and create questions for the data collection. In this study, every child had a story to tell, and each child's experience was different; some of them were more open to sharing their learning experiences and emotions than others. I learned the importance of understanding each child's story, and how music and art was the medium where students expressed their learning experiences.

Children's experiences expressed from their own experiences living as a Latino/a student, immigrants, living in a low-income community, and, for some, struggling with family issues, while also being in the process of learning and acquiring English as a second language. Also, in some ways, my learning experiences intersected with the study's participants. I started learning from art since I was a little girl. My interest in art was awakened during my elementary years. I remember how my third-grade teacher gave me hands-on art activities. Her name was Christina and she used to create art assignments as an extra-curricular activity. I remember, in a project for Mother's Day, I made a one square meter painting of a Japanese woman wearing a kimono on fabric by using oleo and sequins. I believe that my art mentors, such as my third-grade teacher, instilled in me skills that led me into the world of art that defined my artist identity. Elliot Eisner (2005) recognized that term 'artist' it is not necessarily painters, dancers, or poets but "individuals who have developed the ideas, the sensibilities, the skills, and the imagination to create work" (p. 208).

Later in life, I became a graphic designer. As a graphic designer, I learned to do artwork by spending hours developing rough draft drawings that stimulated and inspired my imagination,

leading me to create the finished artwork. From creating art, I learned to be patient and creative and to awake my senses to perceive the things that surrounded me. I learned that art takes time and that it is a set of skills that need to be developed. In this manner, the students in the MABP similarly were shaping their artist identities and skills by learning music through hours of practice, rehearsals, and performance. My positionality in the study is further discussed in chapter 3, in which I explain the methodology employed in this study.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into seven chapters. The following description presents a summary of the structure of this dissertation. Chapter 1 presents an overview of the study by introducing a description of music and art education and arts-based programs to address the purpose and significance of the study. This description provides an understanding of students' learning experiences and meanings constructed in the Music and Arts-based Program (MABP). Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framework and the literature review. The data analysis for this study is based on a strong and well-structured theoretical framework to understand students' experiences in the MABP through a socio-cultural lens. The Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) perspective brings to the study the exploration of the structural activity in the MABP through students' practices, where tensions emerged from students' activities through the analysis. The literature review shows the need to continue researching after-school programs in connection with Latino students—where the statistics showed a higher attendance in African American and Latino children in informal environments (Afterschool Alliance, 2018). The literature review is centered on four main themes that explore: 1) music education in marginalized communities, 2) art and cultural diversity, 3) art and teaching, 4) arts-based programs.

Chapter 3 provides a description of the methodology used in the study. This study was conducted by developing a qualitative and ethnographic research design. The research design offers the means to understand how art can be used as a mediating tool for children to construct learning and to develop cognitive skills in an after-school program, providing education for immigrant communities and thus enhancing the social environment in which they interact. Moreover, qualitative research emphasizes the exploration and understanding of participants' meanings and behaviors (Litchman, 2013; Dey, 1993).

Chapter 4 addresses the context of the study by developing a description from the MABP origins, after-school program support organizations, student program enrollment by year, MABP staff and music teaching artist descriptions, and the MABP practice structure.

Chapters 5 and 6 present an in-depth analysis of the findings from the analysis of the data collected. The findings include students' experiences from the data collected during one year in the field. Chapter 5 provides a thematic analysis that responds to the first question of the study: 1) How do students learn and experience music and art practices through music in the Music and Arts-Based Program? The theoretical framework of Vygotsky (1978) and Lave and Wenger (1991) supports the analysis to understand the way students learn through music practices. The emergent themes from the findings show how students' learning occurred in diverse environments as students interacted inside and outside of the program.

Chapter 6 responds to the second question: 2) How are students' meanings developed through their participation in the Music and Arts-Based Program? This chapter presents analysis from the CHAT perspective, which provides the lens to understand dialogue, learning perspectives, events, and tensions from students' meanings constructed in the MABP. Furthermore, this chapter shows the agency developed from students' music learning as a result

of students' meanings, within the context of what it means for border children to express, discover, and cultivate a sense of agency in the MABP. The sense of agency by students was demonstrated through their knowledge and actions developed in the MABP. Chapter 7 presents the discussion and implications for research, theory, policy, and practice.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Review of the Relevant Literature

Introduction

This research study explores children's art experiences in an after-school program at an under-resourced school located on the U.S.-Mexico border. The purpose of this study is to understand how art can be used as a mediating tool for children to construct learning, and to develop cognitive skills in the after-school program, thus, enhancing the social environment in which they interact.

The following structured framework will support the research analysis under the study of four theoretical perspectives, which can shape the understanding of vulnerable art communities developing within informal learning: 1) Eisner's (2003) perspective focusing on art and education, 2) the sociocultural perspective explored through the lens of Vygotsky's (1978) theoretical perspective through the Zone of the Proximal Development (ZPD), 3) through the lens of Engeström's (2016) third-generation CHAT to find out the students' meanings that developed in the MABP, and 4) Lave and Wenger (1991) situated Learning and apprenticeship theoretical perspective. Through sociocultural activity theory, it is possible to grasp how art can act as a mediating tool in community-based organizations of practice.

Eisner's (2003) theoretical perspective offers a theoretical framework on how art in education is a medium that strengthens human learning experiences. Vygotsky's (1978) theoretical perspective, through the Zone of the Proximal Development, visualizes the social condition of children and their cultural environment. The sociocultural perspective is developed through the lens of Engeström's (2016) Activity Theory (Cultural- Historical Activity Theory - CHAT) to understand mediating meanings which interact with children's social learning environment: "The concept of mediation opens the way for the development of a non-

deterministic account in which mediators serves as a means by which the individual acts upon and is acted upon by social, cultural and historical factors” (Daniels, 2008, p. 58). Through sociocultural activity theory, it is possible to grasp how art acts as a mediating tool in the art-based after-school program. Collins (2008) explained that CHAT establishes a relation with sociocultural and historical phenomenon to evolve into a logical activity that connects individuals to the world.

Lave and Wenger’s (1991) situated learning, and apprenticeship theoretical perspectives contribute to understanding children learning practices in the after-school program through a cultural, political, and economic perspective. Lave and Wenger (1991) recognized social communities as an agent of activity.

The above theories provide the knowledge to understand art, children, and art-based after-school program not only from learning perspective but students’ emotions, as Vygotsky (1971) stated, “Art is the social technique of emotion, a tool of society which brings the most intimate and personal aspects of our being into the circle of social life” (p. 249). Art involves individual and social experiences. The theories give support to understanding how art acts as a bridge to develop learning in the art-based community. Learning is not a static agent; learning is an active agent as Van Oers (2008) explained, “learning is always related to actions (material, perceptual, verbal or mental) performed by the learning person” (p. 6).

The above theories provide the knowledge to understand art, students learning experiences, and the MABP activities from the social context perspective, “Art is the social technique of emotion, a tool of society which brings the most intimate and personal aspects of our being into the circle of social life” (Vygotsky, 1971, p. 249). Art involves individual and social experiences. The theories give support to understanding how art acts as a bridge to

develop learning in art-based community organizations. The following theoretical perspectives establish a connection to understand students' music- art learning experiences and meanings constructed in the MABP.

Eisner and Art Education

The recognition of how children interact in art practices plays an important role in education. Art can provide resources to transform children's consciousness and connect their mind and senses in their everyday life practices. Eisner's art education perspective also explains how art can help the senses develop the capacity of consciousness as a way to explore and uncover things that surround us. The connection of the senses with the environment is a process that continues to shape life, culture, and language. The sensorial system does not act in isolation; development requires instruments of culture, such as language, art, science, and values. Dewey (1943) explained that "all art involves physical organs- the eye and hand, the ear and voice; and yet it is something more than the mere technical skill required by the organs of the expression" (p. 89). In a similar way, Vygotsky (1971) expressed that art performs with our bodies and through our bodies (p. 253). Eisner's (2003) perspective made a connection between art and the following areas: senses, learning, aesthetics, culture, and curriculum. These areas are analyzed through his argument focused on forms of thinking. Eisner (2003) identified six forms of thinking or lessons, in order to understand art in teaching and student practices and curricula: 1) making judgments; 2) formulating of aims; 3) connecting forms and content; 4) articulating knowledge in non-propositional form; 5) responding to distinctive demands of materials; and 6) engaging with experiential learning.

The forms of thinking, or perspectives, provide a structure to visualize and analyze the origin of the standardized culture in which we live in. In addition, the forms of thinking involve

students, teachers, and professionals. Eisner (2003) explained that forms of thinking cultivate feelings and cognitive abilities: “The sensibilities come into play and in the process become refined” (p. 377). The *first form* of thinking is related to making judgments –Eisner (2003) mentioned that “the arts teach students to act and to judge in the absence of rule, to rely on feel to pay attention to nuance, to act and appraise the consequences of one’s choices and to revise and then to make other choices” (p. 377). Eisner wisely explained how art gives the freedom to choose and to evaluate. Art provides students and teachers to work without rules with all senses to evaluate and make the right decisions through the learning experience. The author continued to point out that students need to learn how to construct an argument and how to make decisions. The *second form* is centered on aims. The author showed how the education system needs to forge the exploration and discovery in practices: “Our inclination to control and predict is, at a practical level, understandable, but it also, exacts a price; we tend to do the things we know how to predict and control” (Eisner, 2003, p. 378). For example, the contexts of standardized educational tests in which children and young students are growing up around negate the opportunity to define themselves by their own choice. Eisner (2003) explained how educational models define students’ ways of thinking and rationalization:

Westerns models of rational decision making the formulation of aims, goals, objectives or standards is a critical act; virtually all else that follows depends upon the belief that one must have clearly defined ends. (p. 378)

Eisner added how, because of art, the end is something unfinished; it is something that does not precede the act but follows it, meaning flexibility. The *third form* of thinking is connecting forms and content. Eisner (2003) argued that a form of thinking needs to be joined: “Getting it right means creating a form whose content is right for some purpose” (p. 379). Teachers need to give

continuity to form and content. These relationships give a significant weight in child learning development. A child needs to create, but he or she needs to identify form and content through practices. In that sense, children uncover and question how things are. However, the author emphasized that students' critical thinking skills do not fully develop until they are self-initiating learning and their intrinsic satisfactions are cognitively secured. Heid (2008) explained the importance of teaching children independently; however, this learning is not only individualistic, but it can also be possible through the social environment as well. The *fourth form* is that art can teach education. Eisner (2003) claimed that in the western philosophical tradition, knowledge is related to language or words: "The limits of our cognition are not defined by the limits of our language" (p. 379). The author further pointed out Dewey's words, which asserts that arts can express meaning. Eisner's argument about meaning is important. Meaning acquires an important conceptualization. Eisner related meaning with the mind. In that sense, meaning goes beyond as something intellectual, which provides students and teachers questions about diverse signs that we construct in our lives. He questions:

How can we help students recognize the ways in which we express and recover meaning, not only in the arts but in the sciences as well? How can we introduce them to the art of doing science? After all, the practice of any practice, including science, can be an art (Eisner, 2003, p. 380).

The *fifth form* of thinking is about the practice of education and its relationship with the materials that teachers and students use in practice. Eisner (2003) argued that materials have important qualities, which students use to represent their meanings and forms of expression. The author compares these representations to the flute, "which makes certain qualities that bass fiddle will never produce, and vice versa" (p. 380). The materials act as a way of language. It is a medium

of expression. The materials provide students the opportunity to explore and express themselves and allow students to uncover and live their culture through the recognition of colors and forms. Dewey (1943) stated that “But if we have an organization of equipment and materials, there is another path to open to us. We can direct the child’s activities, giving them exercise along certain lines, and can thus lead up to the goal which logically stands at the end of the paths followed” (p. 37). It is important that teachers allow students to explore diverse materials through painting, drawing, carving, sculpturing, etc. Eisner (2003) declared, “Getting smart in any domain requires at the very least learning to think within a medium” (p. 380).

The *six and last form* is motives for engagement with experiential learning. This form of thinking is like the final product, and how the worker connects his or her sense with the product. The arts, in a sense, “are supermarkets for the senses. But the arts are far more than supermarkets for sensory gourmets” (Eisner, 2003, p. 381). Eisner (2003) asserted that quality in the product matters, but the worker and product needs to become one – for instance, impressionists’ idea is centered in the light, while surrealists are centered on unconscious and cubists are centered on the time of delimiting space (p. 381). In a similar way, Dewey (1943) stated that “the aim is not the economic value of the products, but the development of social power and insight” (p. 18).

The forms of thinking provide a guide to constructing a model of art through this research: “A working model is not something to be copied; it is to afford a demonstration of the feasibility of the principle, and of the methods which make it feasible” (Dewey 1943, p. 94).

Vygotsky’s Zones of Proximal Development

Vygotsky’s art is a multifaceted structure that includes visual art, paintings, music, dance, poetry, and literature. He stated, “Any work of art is a system of stimuli, consciously and intentionally organized in such a way as to excite an aesthetic reaction” (Vygotsky, 1971, p. 24).

Vygotsky (1971) explained that emotions play an important role in artistic creativity. He added that feelings outside us are performed by the strength of social feeling, these feelings are materialized and fixed in external objects of art, which become the tools of society” (p. 249). The importance of analyzing Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as a methodological model in the study is that the ZPD provides a broad perspective between child, learning and social environment. Vygotsky (1978) clarified that children start learning at an early age even before they start school. The author defined a zone of proximal development as “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). The purpose of the ZPD is to teach children how to explore and develop their learning. Education plays an important role in children’s development. The ZPD focuses on learning and development through interaction. Esther Joosa (2012) explained that “from a cultural-historical perspective it required attention to the uniqueness of the individual, as well as the context such as interaction with peers, environment and other [semiotic] [artwork] factors” (p. 28). Vygotsky (1978) discussed that ZPD is a process, whose functions require maturation: “These functions could be termed the buds or flowers of development rather than the fruits of development” (p. 86).

The sociocultural perspective led me to observe and analyze music and art in extracurricular practices and to understand the MABP. From Vygotsky’s (1978) perspective it is possible to understand when teachers and students work together with their creativity amazing things can happen. The diverse meanings constructed by children are interpreted by the identification of diverse semiotic signs which are immersed in school and external environments where they interact. Daniels (2008) pointed out Vygotsky’s argument that “the ways in which

tools and signs are used varies as a function of context and the child's own development" (p. 60). The meanings and discourses constructed in free environments produce a diversity of cultural perspectives in children.

Moreover, the educational structure in free-environment in community-based organizations allows teachers and music teaching artists to identify the disruptions in which children are confronted with their art practices. With art, the different iterative disruptions act as signs for children that allow teachers, music teaching artists, administrators, and researchers to develop practices and policies to enhance and shape the curriculum for formal education. The school has an important task to provide bridges between home and school, and it can do so by "recognizing each child's competencies and home experience as an input into the joint activities in the classroom" (Hedegaard, 2008, p. 290).

Cultural Historical Activity Theory

The CHAT perspective was initially conceived by Vygotsky's, Leont'v, and Luria in the 1920s and 1930s (Engeström, Miettinen, & Punamäki 1999, p. 1). Diverse authors acknowledge that the Socio-Cultural Activity Theory was born from the lineage of the three-generational model and can be traced back to Soviet psychology and philosophy (Engeström et al., 1999; Mashiyi, 2015).

Vygotsky (1978) developed and recognized the diverse forms of sign-activity in children, "The use of signs leads humans to a specific structure of behavior that breaks away from biological development and creates new forms of a culturally-based psychological process" (p. 40). From this origin, Vygotsky introduced the initial terminology mediating artifacts, sign, and tools which contribute to the process of the children's activity manifestations such as drawings pictures, writing, reading, and using number systems (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 38). Vygotsky (1978)

initiated the sign activity process by investigating the connection between stimulus (S) and response (R), “This merger, unique to human beings, signifies, an entirely new form of behavior” (p. 39). Hardman and Amory (2015) recognized Vygotsky's contribution from the social action activity perspective “The CHAT theory, underpinned by the dialectical logic of Vygotsky’s work, helps one to situate individual action in the social context in which actions form part of larger activities” (p. 19). In Vygotsky’s (1978) stimulus→response formula there is an intermediate link “sign” where the author identifies a relation between S and R. Vygotsky (1978) explained that when the individual is actively engaged this link is connected by creating a complete operation (see Figure 1.1) (p. 40). “The use of signs leads humans to a specific structure of behavior that breaks away from biological development and creates new forms of a culturally-based psychological process” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 40). Engeström (2009) explained Vygotsky’s idea of mediation is expressed by a triad of the subject, object and mediating artifact (Figure 1.2) (Engeström, 2009, p. 30).

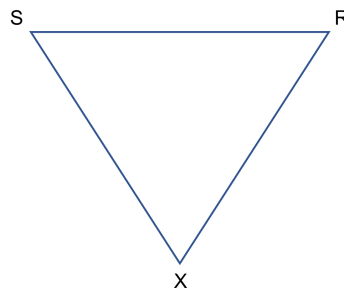


Figure 1.1. The stimulus-response process from Vygotsky’s (1978) model of the mediated act. (adapted from Engeström, 2005).

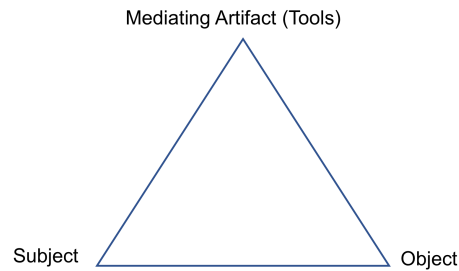


Figure 1.2. Common reformulation from Vygotsky’s model of the mediated act (adapted from Engeström, 2005).

The limitation in Vygotsky’s activity “mediation” theory is individually represented. Hardman and Amory (2015) explained that “mediation can be viewed from different perspectives, but always includes either a material tool or a cognitive sign; may also be explicit or implicit and may include reflection or not” (p. 12). In the second generation of CHAT, Leont’ev expanded Vygotsky’s activity theory in connection to social relations. Leont’ev analyzed the difference between individual action and collective activity (Engeström, 2009; Mashiyi, 2015). Engeström (1999) explained that Leont’ev’s activity system is represented as a hierarchical system recognizing the three-level scheme of 1) activity (motive), 2) action (goal), and 3) operation (instrumental operations) (p. 23) (Figure 1.3).

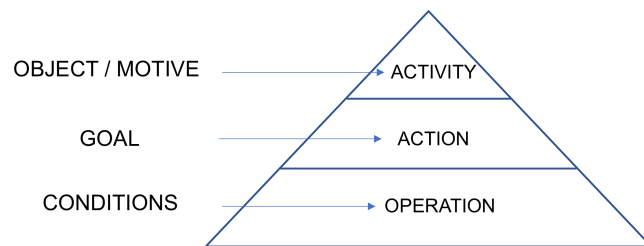


Figure 1.3. Leont’ev three levels scheme of activity theory system. (adapted from Engeström et al., 1999).

Engeström's et al., (1999) activity theory analysis recognized Leont'ev's activity progress, however, Engeström (1999) stated that "Leont'ev did not elaborate on how the triangular model of action should be developed or extended in order to depict the structure of a collective activity system" (p. 25).

Third Generation Activity Theory

Engeström's et al., (1999) third-generation CHAT perspective provided the lens to understand MABP dialogue, learning perspectives, and events as a collective activity system. Engeström's et al., (1999) cyclical activity network provided the conceptual framework to understand the contradictions not as errors, but as resolutions of evolution and realization in the MABP. Engeström (1987) came closer to the mark when he described ZPD as the "distance between the present everyday actions of individuals and the historically new form of the social activity that can be collectively generated as a solution to the double bind potentially embedded in the everyday actions" (Engeström, 1987, p. 174). Engeström (1987) viewed human actions as a collective unit activity and social agency.

Blackler (2009) recognized that Engeström's theory is unique in the analysis which involves groups, organizations, and institutions might more actively influence their social forms (p. 39). Engeström's (1987) third-generation activity theory model recognizes the human activity on the social context in which learning development occurs as a collective activity. Engeström's (1999) CHAT identified three main concepts to be added in the analysis of the activity system: *community, rules, and division of labor* which impact the analysis of subject actions. The author's expansive cycle may be seen as equivalent to zones of proximal development from Vygotsky's.

Blacker (2009) recognized that Engeström is concerned not only to describe but also intervene (p. 23). The intervention from Engeström's (1987) activity theory explained that CHAT analysis is developed through an activity cycle or process in which it is possible to identify the tensions or contradictions which are occurring in the activity systems. The expansive cycle in this study, led me to understand not only the collective students learning activities in the MABP, but also the tensions and expansive learning transformations in the after-school program. Engeström (2015) explained that his learning activity or expansive activity cycle is that "the process of expansive learning should be understood as construction or resolution of successively evolving tensions or contradictions in a complex system that includes the object, the mediating artifacts, and the perspectives of the participants" (Engeström, 1999, p. 384). He also explained that "The contradictions are historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems" (Engeström, 2005, p. 64). The contradiction or tensions in this study are not seen as an error, but as a transformation and agency in the MABP activity systems. The following model (Figure 1.4) describes the structure in the MABP adapted from Engeström's (1999) third-generation model.

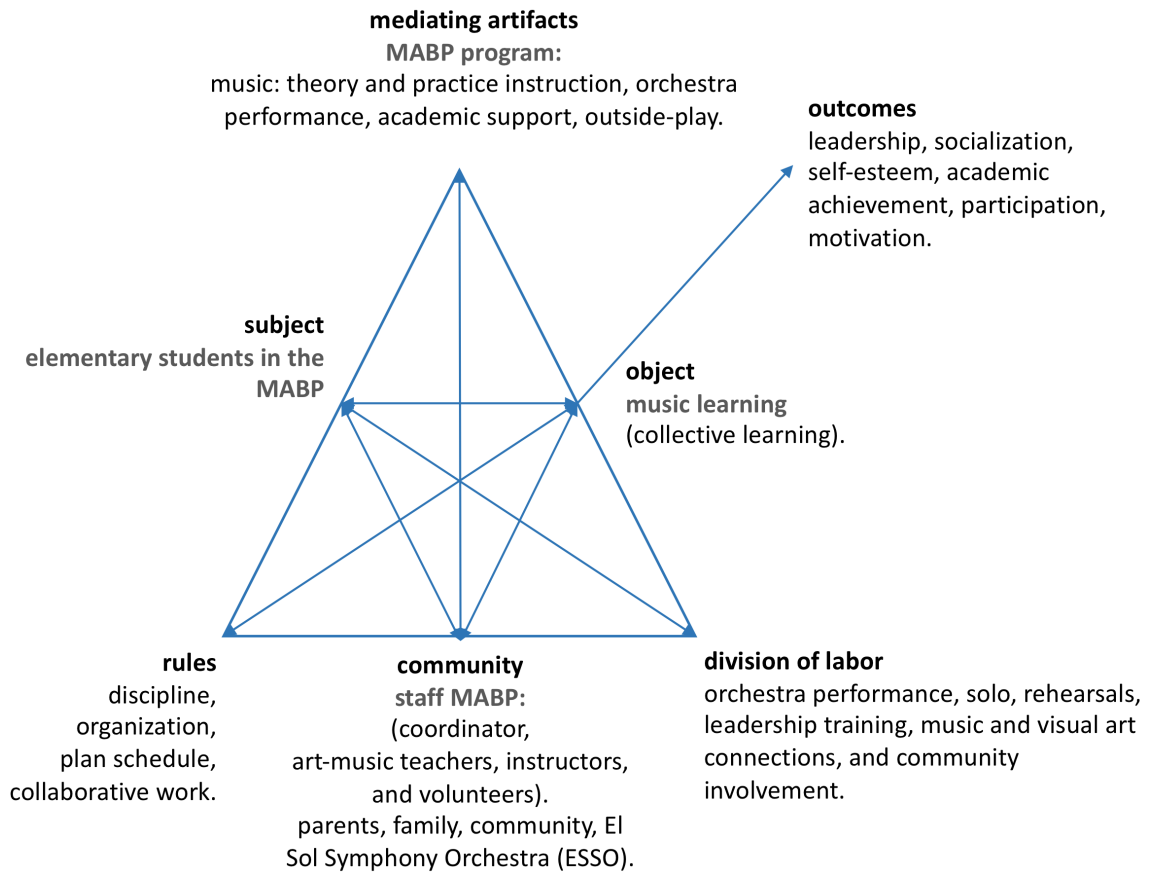


Figure 1.4. The music learning activity in the MABP. Source: adapted from “Expansive Learning: Toward and activity-theoretical reconceptualization” by Y. Engeström (2009). In K. Illeris (Ed.), *Contemporary theories of learning: Learning theorists. In their own words* (pp. 53-73). London, UK: Routledge.

The identification and understanding of the dynamic activity in the Music and Arts-Based Program offers the possibility to answer four essential questions in the theory of learning (Engeström, 2001, p. 133):

- 1) Who are the subjects of learning? How are they defined and located?
- 2) Why do they learn? What makes them make an effort?
- 3) What do they learn, what are the contents and outcomes of learning?
- 4) How do they learn, what are the key actions or process of learning?

The activity system analysis from the MABP is shaped by Engeström's (2001) principles, which establishes a connection to answer and analyze our learning questions.

The first principle- establish the relationship between mediated artifact and object; this network takes the unit of analysis (Engeström, 2001). The (*unit of analysis*) is the after-school-program and music and art activities mediating the following (*outcomes*): music learning, leadership, socialization, self-efficacy, participation, academic achievement, motivation in students (*subject*) through collective art-music collective learning practices (*object*). The whole (*community*) activity participation in the after-school program has an important role in art-music activities (MABP staff and music teaching artist, parents, family, volunteers, and partner organizations such as El Sol Symphony Orchestra, El Sol Art Museum, El Sol University). The music and art activities are (*ruled*) by free- play activity, organization, plan schedule, collaborative work, and social participation, the (*division of labor*) orchestra performance, solo training, community involvement, art museum activities connecting music, workshops, events, children explorations connecting learning with other areas of study such as STEM.

The second principle- multi-voicedness- “the participants carry their own diverse histories” (Engeström, 2001, p. 136). The participation of the whole community, such as MABP staff, music teaching artist, students, parents, family, and organizations create a community ‘multi-voicedness’ creating a social and collaborative activity.

The third Principle- Historicity- “activity systems take shape and get transformed over lengthy periods of time” (Engeström, 2001, p. 136). The MABP was inspired by El Sistema with the goal to teach music in underrepresented communities (El Sistema Global, 2015). However, the MABP has been working to create its own program model

by identifying their own community needs and focusing on Latino elementary school students from a low-income neighborhood.

The fourth Principle- Historical Contradictions- “Activities are open systems”

(Engeström, 2001, p. 137). The tensions identified in the MABP were part of new practices implementation and activities: MABP staff training development, lessons, learning, and leadership strategies.

The fifth Principle- “the possibility of expansive transformations in activity systems”

(object and motive) (Engeström, 2001, p. 137). The music teaching artist training: workshop and practice guidance, activity and events social development, students’ expanding knowledge and motivation by forming connections with other disciplines different from music, such as visual art and STEM.

Situated Learning and Apprenticeship

The environment plays an important role in individual learning development. Hedegaard (2008) mentioned that the environment is a social setting which are schools and other institutions that promote learning activity. Lave and Wenger (1991) contributed with a learning theory perspective, which considers learning as a situated activity (p. 29). The importance of this theory – through the research analysis – is that the theoretical perspective provides an in-depth understanding of how learning is produced through learning art-based after-school programs. Lave and Wenger (1991) rescued the idea of “apprenticeship” and gave this concept a new meaning: situated learning. Situated seemed to mean people’s thoughts and actions located in space and time. “On other occasions, it seemed to mean that thought and action were social only in the narrow sense that they involved other people, or that they were immediately dependent for meaning on the social setting that occasioned them” (p. 32). The authors recognized learning as a

free-environment in which schooling is not the main issue as a whole context. In contrast, Lave and Wenger (1991) suggested an external environment to study learning and social process of the individual.

Lave and Wenger (1991) argued that learning in social communities has a characteristic that can enable the possibility to establish a connection with newcomers and old-timers in a community. Studies have shown that one of the characteristics in external settings come from the diversity in age groups. This quality in external settings and groups recognized the advantages and disadvantages – which teachers experienced through the diversity of learning groups. Dewey (1943) stated, “The child must be brought into contact with more grown people and with more children in order that there may be the freest and richest social life” (p. 36). Lave (2011) displayed differences between in school and external settings that “included teaching by demonstration versus explicit, abstract explanation of principles, and the learning of bounded bodies of beliefs and values versus acquiring a general understanding of knowledge and symbol systems” (p. 20). Lave (2011) emphasized on how learning is visualized between school and external setting. Learning in an external education setting is flexible, developing higher cognitive skills in which the learning is transferable. On the other hand, Lave (2011) explained that subjects educated in other ways “should acquire only one particular, practical and embedded knowledge that would not transfer” (p. 20).

The diverse theoretical perspectives will intertwine during the data analysis that provided the understanding of the MABP setting. The diverse authors theorize how human learning development acts as an active activity to understand children’s learning through music and art. Eisner’s (2003) and Vygotsky’s (1978) theories showed the understanding of how art is a tool provider of knowledge, constructing learning and social interaction in human beings: “Between

man and the outside world there stands the social environment, which in its own way refracts and directs the stimuli acting upon the individual and guides all the reactions that emanate from the individual” (Vygotsky, 1971, p. 252).

Literature Review

“One important feature of the arts is that they provide not only permission but also an encouragement to one’s imagination as a source of content” (Eisner, 2002, p. 82). The following literature review addresses relevant data in the areas of 1) music education in marginalized communities, 2) cultural diversity, 3) teaching, and 4) art-based programs. The research offers an the understanding of how music and art can provide in education a decoding environment to students’ meanings. In the first section, research informs music education in marginalized communities. The diverse studies reported the importance to build an environment where students learn, create, and explore through music and art. Diverse variables explored along with the studies are retention, access, behavior and emotions, self-esteem, and social capital.

The second section shows the importance of learning through communities. The studies invite readers to reflect on teachers’ practices in art-based communities. Throughout art projects, students develop a consciousness about their own culture. The third section shows the necessity of teachers valuing art practices. Teachers need to learn how to create a positive learning environment for students by creating a connection and receiving support from other teachers, especially those who are immersed in art. The last section addresses how the art-based programs represent a collection of meanings which allows reconstructing the social and cultural contexts.

Music Education in Marginalized Communities

This section explores music education research in connection with low-income, border, and marginalized communities' perspectives. Marginalization is a term that includes descriptive factors or manifestations that diminish the quality of 'being' in the individual. Fitzpatrick, Henniger, and Taylor (2014) identified marginalization as "a complex set of interrelated factors that lead to disenfranchisement from society, institutions or cultural narratives" (p. 106). Similarly, Brown (2006) defines marginalization "as to be marginalized is to be ignored or not taken into account, and this results in a failure to achieve potential in both the individual and society" (p. 361). On the other hand, the term 'informal settings' involves the concept of the community. This concept has a connection with the external environment. Veblen (2013) defines community about music:

Community Music [CM] consists of but is not limited to, informal music-making, which includes teaching and learning dimensions. These activities weave their way through amateur and professional, formal and informal, institutional and non-institutional contexts. Projects can be occasional, one-time, or ongoing. Thus, the CM tapestry is local, personal, multifaceted, and, above, all, fluid. (p. 1)

This definition explains that the community is not only an exclusive setting: it is a broad concept that does not exclude anybody but includes everybody regardless of race, ability, gender, or age. Starting from this concept of community in music education, Wright (2012) discusses the importance of music education from the social capital perspective. The author explained that social capital advantages are to have better health, higher educational achievement and improved economic development (p. 12).

Moreover, Wright (2012) associates social capital with inclusion recognizing that to be included in society the individual needs to possess social capital. She stated, “frequently the socially excluded originate from ethnic minorities, from neighborhoods of extreme poverty, or are those suffering from long term physical or mental health” (p. 12). Wright (2012) also recognized the disadvantages for underrepresented communities to afford music education programs outside the school setting. On this point, it is important to emphasize the need to provide art programs to students; however, it is also necessary to teach students to be conscious about the value of music in connection with other disciplines. Adding to this discussion, McPherson and Hendricks (2010) conducted a study in and outside of the school setting with 3,037 middle and high school music and non-music learners in the US. The findings show interesting data explaining that students reported low competence, values, and interest in music as a school subject; however, they did show interest in pursuing music education outside the school context.

Furthermore, those students interested in learning music outside the school context did not value music as an important discipline to learn from. The non-music learners reported more interest in Math and English where their knowledge is more measured, and they are required to take tests. They lost interest in music “where the task difficulty may not be perceived to be worth the effort” (McPherson and Hendricks, 2010, p. 208). However, this does not mean that they do not recognize the effort that is immersed in music education, but they believe that choosing a different subject will allow them to succeed in their future. Also, the students interested in out-of-school music practices expressed that choosing music was equal to their interest in sports.

Accessibility, retention, and engagement are basic components for a students’ music education motivation. Wright (2012) remarks the importance of accessing the resources and

benefits to all students through the practice of democracy by developing inclusion, participation, and enhancement in education environments and, especially, arts education. She stated, “We need to involve many more of our young people in making music together. Many of our communities desperately need something that makes them feel like a community again. Perhaps music might be part of this” (Wright, 2012, p. 13).

Similarly, Fitzpatrick, Henniger, and Taylor (2014) conducted a study with six students from an undergraduate music education university program. They, from a critical perspective, examined the experiences of students’ who come from marginalized populations exploring retention and access to music education programs. The authors, through interviews, analyzed undergraduate students, high school teachers, and university mentors. The findings report the importance of friendship from peers, and mentorship support from music teachers to help nurture inward perseverance in students (p. 120). Students receiving access to music programs, communication and resources increased students’ retention. Students’ past experiences expressed the lack for opportunities to participate in music programs for diverse reasons such as a lack of monetary resources to pay for private lessons and not being included in activities that could enrich their cultural knowledge. Fitzpatrick et al., (2014) emphasized the necessity to prepare music teachers and mentors to participate with underrepresented populations, “once identified, these students might be paired with peer, staff, or faculty mentors who come from similar backgrounds” (p. 122). The music teachers from similar, even different, backgrounds can provide and share with students their cultural experiences, like language or traditions. Within that connection, students and music teachers will create a holistic learning environment where the purpose of music learning will be valuable.

Even music education in external programs could be perceived as an easy subject. Multiple studies show how students can learn from music like discipline, attendance, and commitment, which have an impact on their academic achievement. Kraus, Hornickel, Strait, Slater, Thompson (2014) conducted a study with children living in a gang zone from Los Angeles participating in a music project. The purpose was to measure students' engagement and class participation and the effects of music program training. Also, the methods correlated reading proficiency with students' engagement and class participation to find out students' improvement in music classes. The study was conducted with male participants from 6 to 9 years old who were immersed in a music training by learning how to play the violin, cello, clarinet, trumpet and French horn in four diverse environments in both school and external settings. The study, through statistical analysis, measured the students' brain and speech processing. The students' class attendance was an important factor in finding out their engagement. Throughout this process of over two years, researchers found that students who had better attendance in instrumental classes had stronger neural coding of speech harmonics and better response to consistency than less engaged peers (p. 4). The findings also showed that reading fluency was connected with students' class participation showing their improvement based on who participated more in class (p. 5). Kraus et al., (2014) show the importance to understand children motivation and engagement, "children more open to new experiences may elect to begin music lessons and continue to participate longer, which leads to larger cognitive benefits, predicting continued retention in music" (p. 6). The authors recognized that community music programs had proven students' success in academic achievement from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The learning environment plays an important role in students' music learning to understand students' ideas and desires. The studies show the need to listen to students' voices

and experiences. Woodward and Pestano (2013) describe research developed within a marginalized community of music. The study was explored in the United Kingdom (UK), through a music project focusing on people who are most excluded from the community or who are at risk of being excluded. The music project was developed in connection with two entities: Croydon Intercultural Singing project (CRISP), a small community music organization, and the Pupil Referral Units (PRU), a program for students who are excluded from mainstream school. The CRISP music project worked in partnership for a short time with the PRU organization providing young people the opportunity to create and learn through music. The CRISP philosophy is based on Mullen's maxim: "We don't teach, we explore" (p. 192). The project was developed for 10 sessions, during two times a week where music projects by diverse activities allowed young people to express their ideas and voice "so words are never censored, no matter how offensive" (p. 192). Youth people learned to sing, play instruments and create music by ear. Through music, young people learned new vocabulary by using thesauruses and rhyming dictionaries, "their voices are unique...they are able to become part of a community...they have something to offer society, and... they are welcome and accept[ed] just as they are" (p. 193).

Similarly, Wright (2012) recognizes the importance of participation from inclusion and social capital perspective where the individual needs to be involved by participating and keeping their autonomy and identity. She stated, "Too often when we invite students in schools to participate in decision making about their education, they are invited to talk, but they are rarely given the opportunity to see their views acted upon" (Wright, 2012, p. 13). The studies described showed the need to focus on the music program structure to identify individual program needs. Also, recommendations were identified through studies by building a positive environment in connection with students' behavior and emotions, competence, attendance, and class

participation. The studies described presented not only a focus on informal programs but connections with school settings measuring academic achievement from music education impacts.

Art and Cultural Diversity

The studies within cultural diversity showed different perspectives. It is important to examine these groups under the arts and education lens in order to understand children's meanings through art and cultural diversity. The following theme of art and cultural diversity comprises varying topics to better understand how cultural diversity embraces inclusion, immigration, underrepresented and low-income groups (Power & Bennett, 2015; Power, Bennett & Bartlett, 2014; Lee, 2012; Lai, 2012; Fattal, 2006). Different studies, through cultural diversity, are centered on teacher's practices, showing the necessity for pre-service teachers and teachers of experience to learn and identify student cultural diversity. However, these studies visualize art as a path to guide teachers and students in the understanding of cultural diversity. With art, Lee (2012) explored race by making facilitating pre-service art teachers learn how to understand the meaning of respect, understanding, and value diverse cultures (p. 53). It is important to grasp that teachers and teaching practice perspectives play an important role in student learning development in a cultural environment. Lee (2012) found that students, through the interaction with other artists from diverse local communities were encouraged to learn how to create connections, interactions, and learning with diverse communities: "Teachers need to address the notions of and tensions among localism, cultural origin, sources of production, and globalism" (Lee, 2012, p. 20). Similarly, Power and Bennett (2015) and Power et al., (2014), conducted similar studies centered on the art-based learning community with Australian Aboriginal communities. The pre-service teachers in the study had the opportunity to acquire

professional experience through a community-based service-learning project. The pre-service teachers recognized how creativity was a journey that connected other possibilities of value through the community (Power et al., 2014, p. 55). Art is a medium to express the diverse cultural meanings. Fattal (2006) stated that “Ethnicity, race, and gender are areas of art historical research that inform contemporary multiculturalism in the visual art” (p. 40). Fattal (2006) research revealed that students developed food representations by using drawings, paintings, printmaking, and sculptures where students and teachers connected cultural experiences. Through the art project, the students used their senses to recognize and learn about themselves by tasting and smelling the diversity of cultural flavors.

With art and immigration diverse research showed that student’ stories need a medium to uncover and express past and present experiences. Danzak (2011), Walsh (2009), and Graham (2009) recognized that telling stories through art media allowed students to connect ideas and experiences in a meaningful way how “immigration is making our country and schools increasingly diverse” (Graham, 2009, p. 160). Immigration stories represent history and silence – something teachers and students need to learn how to break to listen to the diverse voices of life from immigrant students. Danzak’s (2011) and Graham’s (2009) researchs showed how students not only wrote about their immigration experiences, but how students shared their experiences through the depiction of drawings, paintings, and photos. The multimodal design activity lets students tell a story by reconstructing the past with present experiences. The study showed how the different school projects from students represented students’ cultural knowledge about their own families and other people: “The creation of a work of art allowed students to develop their vision and personal voice in a visual language that allowed for enormous divergence and

imaginative responses” (Graham, 2009, p. 160). Students were able to recognize the value of cultures through acquiring knowledge and care about people’s identity.

On the other hand, the studies of underrepresented populations revealed a challenge, but also rewarding achievement for teachers. Davenport and Gunn (2009) examined such a population and showed the necessity to expand the knowledge to indigenous communities; the research’s goal is teaching media literacy and visual culture in these communities. Teachers in a Huichol community in México collaborated and taught their knowledge by using visual arts and animation. The animation workshops influenced career paths for participants, by encouraging students to learn about visual arts by taking advantage of their culture and personal strength. The learning community project was an opportunity to extend knowledge to other countries by sharing and exhibiting students’ works. The study showed the necessity to take advantage of the diverse symbols, which are immersed in culture and traditions as a tool to construct and shape student learning. Herman and Larkey (2006) identified art as a symbol to take awareness of health in a Latino population. Herman and Larkey (2006) stated that, “Viewing the art as a symbol of taking care of self and reminding each other that they need to stay strong and healthy to take good care of family” (p. 667). This study showed that art and the Latino community in a significant way; however, the authors emphasized the necessity to continue working on cultural projects which encourages the participation of Latino communities in provocative educative programs. The study showed art as a symbol to encourage people to discover themselves by finding a significant meaning from their identities to understand that sometimes culture encloses stereotypes and generalizes labels on people. However, art provides people the opportunity to create and generate ideas based on their cultural experiences.

Additionally, programs have been identified as vehicles for several beneficial factors for students (Wright, Duku, Burgos, Krygsman & Esposto, 2009, p. 77). The diverse studies showed through art and low-income communities an important perspective in the activity and interaction between children and art. Walker and Nocon (2007) and Betts (2006) used the activity theory framework (CHAT) to explain the transformation of activity among minority children at play. The authors discussed CHAT and students' activity and mobilization in their activities such as the environment or setting. Betts (2006) explained how CHAT takes human activity as a single unit. CHAT considers the goals and motives of the learners in the context of the setting and its social facets focusing on the interactivity of the various aspects. In reciprocal relationships, participants transform objects and vice versa, and each system component influences this transformation (Betts, 2006, p. 4).

With the CHAT study analysis allows readers to understand mobilization where minority students are involved through the diverse learning activities (i.e., diverse learning tools and the environment inside and outside of school). Betts (2006) study was a 6-year study through arts education and multimedia in a middle school. The study recognized the importance of art because not only did students acquired art and multimedia skills, but they also gained confidence as well. It is a path for students to continue motivated to continue higher education. Similarly, Walker and Nocon (2007) researched two after-school programs. The researchers revealed that art practices provide a dynamic way to organize and develop student competencies through active practices. The after-school programs offered diverse activity practices to non-dominant groups; these practices provided a connection with another cultural context through dance, music, and technology. The different art form development in each program led to understanding the importance of activities, and the recognition of cultural and social competence in students:

“Each activity setting, or system, had a related though different object, set of meanings, people, spatial arrangements, artifacts, and ways of participating, which created a new context” (Walker & Nocon, p. 192). Caterall (2007) explained the mobilization of art activities and groups. The author showed that art drama provides students the ability to construct their reality, and the ability to develop learning socialization. Caterall (2007) used Lave and Wagner’s theories of situated learning, as well as Vygotsky’s ZPD, to explain how students benefited from drama-context and collaborative learning: “Expertise is distributed in various constellations throughout a group, depending on the expertise in question, and this makes the learning process reciprocal and effective” (p. 166). The students learned through context and by acquiring learning experience from others.

Moreover, Lampert (2013) and Adejumo (2010) explained that questioning and analysis of projects provides children the opportunity to develop their visual expressions and become aware of their identity. The author explained that students who belong to a low-income community show higher levels of dropout rates in school. The art school projects enhanced their sense of learning, socialization, and collaboration. Eldridge (2013) stated that “graffiti art is an art form that contests systems of authority and conformity, and that teaching graffiti art to students is one way to disrupt a system that all too often teaches mindless obedience and conventionality” (p. 26). Bussert-Webb (2009) researched an after-school art program in a Latino community. The findings revealed that participants learned by the interaction from their own cultures, as well as developed writing and reading and hands-on experiences in the arts. The researcher also identified common themes that emerged from findings. These themes were enjoyment, creative engagement, multicultural education, community, and communication. On the other hand, time, work, testing, and lack of curriculum integration were more frequently

mentioned in the study. Bussert-Webb's (2009) study indicated the need to improve teachers' learning and confidence in art subjects to create a learning environment that achieves a connection with art and other subjects.

The studies showed that the learning environment allows the opportunity to develop a students' abilities and evolving creativity and ideas. Art presents different techniques, materials, and methodologies that enable this integration. Mc Lean (2008) discussed that "the ability to accept tension and even enjoy the uncertainty of the moment encourages these students to take risks both with their thinking and their behavior" (p. 78). Art provides researchers with an understanding of children interaction through an art activity. The multiple studies show that the learning environment and students' mobilization through art-based communities enhance the learning activity in low-income communities.

Art and Teaching / Learning

"The aim of teaching is to get everyone to the same destination and, in our culture, at about the same point in time" (Eisner, 2002, p. 196). Eisner's statement allows one to recognize and remember the freedom of the human being, as well as his or her nature. However, it is important to question how teachers and students benefit from art. Baker (2007) stressed that teachers and practitioners need to understand children's cognitive processing and that the arts are a path to do just that. The solution is not to avoid the use of metaphors in practice; instead, it is necessary to learn the process of child cognitive learning. Causton-Theoharis and Burdick (2008), Hayhoe (2013), and Wexler (2005) explained that teachers looked for ways to support students by giving them their authenticity and space. However, it is necessary for teachers to learn how to teach art within the early years of childhood. Art provides students with learning that not only goes through a merely physical appreciation but also goes deeper than a physical

appreciation. Art needs to provide a connection from the interior to the exterior life in human beings. Causton-Theoharis et al., (2008) research discovered that paraprofessionals opened and closed gates to students with disabilities in art classroom practices. The authors' purpose was to understand what support or barriers were provided by professionals in the art curriculum through a qualitative study in four elementary schools, three middle schools, and three high schools. The research focused on 18 paraprofessionals, eight art teachers, and two special education teachers. Causton-Theoharis et al., (2008) mentioned that the gate closed when students began looking for their independence, by wanting to express themselves through drawing or painting in where they want to create their own space. Paraprofessionals sometimes denied these students the opportunity to develop their skills through art. The research showed that professionals supported students through art projects, but, "sometimes the type of support [alters] "authentic" status of the art production" (p. 172). Causton-Theoharis et al., (2008) explained that when paraprofessionals value art in practice, the environment is an opportunity for teachers and students to learn positively. In addition, the study showed that the gate opened when art teachers and paraprofessionals enacted this strategy to help all students gain confidence and inclusion through means of support, regardless of a child's disabilities. The authors informed that communication between art teachers, paraprofessionals, and special education teachers needs to be guided towards students' goals and learning development. Wexler (2005) recognized the necessity to create generational social and cultural links through young and old students' experiences: "The involuntary alienation of the young, old, and disabled in our educational and cultural conversation has consequences" (p. 267).

On the other hand, art in teaching practices cannot be seen only as a free activity; art is a discipline that needs to be implemented in the curricula within the education system. The

combination of disciplines with art allows teachers and students to develop a learning connection between meanings and senses. Eisner (2002) explained the importance to unify the form and content in teaching practices. The relationship between art and other disciplines give a significant weight to the children's learning development. Eisner (2002) mentioned that "art can serve as a model for teaching the subjects we usually think of as academic" (p. 196). Eisner's perspective also allows recognizing that art teaches about diversity. In this sense, diversity means to teach the diversity of disciplines through art within the diversity of cultures, and the variety of people's capabilities and differences.

Aesthetics also plays an important role in the recognition of symbols and meanings in teaching practices. Siegesmund (2010) clarified that "aesthetics is a consciousness of human connectiveness to the world" (p. 85). Riddett-Moore (2011) mentioned that she developed practices that helped shift students' perspective: "I believe this sensitivity is developed through aesthetic engagement" (Riddett-Moore, 2011, p. 17). The author explored the nature of caring and living through art. The author described that, through the arts of living, the students learn to perceive the qualities of things. Riddett-Moore (2011) examined practitioners and middle school age students of her teaching classroom. The participants in the study were introductory and advanced drawing and painting students from 6th to 8th graders conducted in a private Catholic school in a suburban area. The study was conducted with a combination of case study, narrative inquiry, and educational criticism, and 'a/r/tographic methodology': "A/r/tography is a methodology that is relational and responsive a living inquiry that will allow me to research caring in the classroom using art making as the process and product of inquiry" (Riddett-Moore, 2011, p. 18). In this study, the students created a 'baby bib' in order to support a daycare that needed new bibs. This activity enabled the researcher to teach children the act of care through

art. Riddett-Moore (2011) explained that the best way to do this activity is by constructing a living curriculum with students. A living curriculum helps students turn habits into inspiration for artwork. The findings in the study showed that teachers need to work as artists, learning and developing caring in their practices with students.

The diverse studies showed the necessity to continue researching art and teaching practices. Teachers needed to establish communication between students. The communication among teachers, art teachers, para-professionals, and special education teachers created a positive learning environment for students. Greene (1995) argued that she grew up with art and visualized the curriculum as an exigency that needed to lead toward new perspectives and understandings: “Inevitably, the curriculum has had to deal with ambiguities, with relationships; it has often opened the way to transformation and unexpected change” (p. 90).

Art-Based Programs

The following literature provides research perspectives from arts-based and community programs. The diverse studies inform us how community-based programs enhance culturally diverse communities by providing individuals self-directed learning, developing self-confidence and the sense of belonging (Jackson, 2010; Matthews, Andrews, & Adams; 2011, Lom & Sullenger, 2011; La Porte, 2015). Lave (2011) stated that, “Persons are always embodied, located uniquely in space, and in their relations with other persons, things, practices, and institutional arrangements” (p. 152). The author explained that binary relations between school /external settings apprenticeships are not related to learning transfers. Lave (2011) claimed that the binary relation involved a situated process of production and activity:

Formal and informal education included teaching by demonstration versus explicit, abstract explanation of principles, and the learning of bounded bodies of beliefs and

values versus acquiring a general understanding of knowledge and symbol systems. (p. 20)

Various researchers provided a holistic perspective through the diverse environments in school and external settings. Ibarretxe (2007) mentioned that Coombs (1990) identified three main concepts in three fields between formal, non-formal, and informal education. Coombs (1990) addressed that formal education is an institutionalized system from elementary through University. Coombs (1990) also recognized that non-formal education is an organized activity, a systematized entity that works outside the curriculum. Informal education, on the other hand, consisted in a constant acquisition of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes through daily experiences, which interconnects the social and cultural contexts (as cited in Ibarretxe, 2007, p. 38).

Art as a discipline is guided and categorized under informal or non-formal education through diverse practices. Each country struggles with a different pedagogical structure; however, diverse programs can shape the understanding of communities, actions, and how community participation between individuals enhances learning experiences. Jackson (2010) revealed in a study that varying communities and migrant groups in London increased opportunities for discovering a sense of group belonging, for affirming diasporic identifications (p. 248). Conversely, Bustamante's (2014) research conducted a critical analysis from transnational engagement Mexican communities' perspective, focusing on political engagement, gender, and family relations. Bustamante's (2014) pointed out Gold's definition of transnationalism "as the flow of ideas, people and resources across national settings shaped by political, social and economic, cultural and familial components" (as cited in Bustamante, 2014, p. 8). Bustamante (2014) suggested that transnational communities were established through

diverse social environments where individuals belong and established networks through different contexts. Bustamante (2014) explained from Rouse's perspective to the concept of *social space* within transnationalism as a construction concept. Rouse referred to "socio-spatial subjective construction of space as a "migrant circuit" to situate the place where members conduct their life activities" (as cited in Bustamante, 2014, p. 8).

Diverse studies referred to socio-spaces learning as spaces of engagement and action. Matthews et al., (2011) explained that social learning spaces provide students to the social network with peers to engage an active collaboration. The collaboration can let students share their knowledge and meet academic challenges (p. 115). The authors emphasized the need for further studies in areas of social learning spaces to foster a sense of belonging in communities. Lom and Sullenger (2011) explored an after-school program to understand how teachers become aware of the connection between teacher-students. The study was conducted in a science action program, which included three schools from elementary and middle school students in a lower socio-economic area in New Brunswick. The study demonstrated that self-directed and professional development impacts the lives of teachers (p. 72). The study showed that self-directed learning plays an important role in individual development, supporting students and teachers. Self-directed learning allowed participants to discover individuals' learning abilities and the potential to be independent and self-confident. The art-based program exploration provided the opportunity to explore students' practices and learning development. Also, the exploration extended teachers or tutors' awareness of the context in which teaching and learning act: "We observe that these environments have the opportunity to foster university student's content mastery" (Hinko and Kinkelstein, 2013, p. 181).

The communities of art play an important role in creating a bridge to develop a social environment in which learning is capitalized by constructing a connection between school and external settings. Ibarretxe (2007) developed a study conducted in the European continent - Spain by exploring the analysis within – school and external setting in a music context. The qualitative study was conducted with 80 children and 20 adults. The purpose of the study was to understand children’s context about the musical chorus. The research explored four choral groups. Two of them worked under a pedagogical framework, and the other two worked under a non-formal structure. The research results showed that schools do not have chorus instruction. The school curriculum is limited for external activities and interdisciplinary courses: “Music holds an important role in children’s lives and is usually overlooked or unrecognized as an instructional tool during formal teaching time” (Vaiouli, 2014, p. 2). Ibarretxe (2007) posited that the relation between school and external settings education promoted strengths to choral instruction. The children enjoyed the choral instruction activities because they liked to sing and to be part of a group. In addition, the researcher revealed that musical activities created strong relationships between family and community.

Hannigan (2012) explained that the community of art represents how art can be a reflection and a response from the society, therefore part of that constructing place (p. 147). Similarly, Denmead (2012) mentioned that communities of art emerge as a metaphor to describe pedagogies that dematerialize ways of making art to encourage social participation in art making (p. 250). The diverse art -based programs allow an understanding of the pedagogies in which teachers/artists develop their practices. Denmead (2012) found through research evidence that communities of artists expressed their pedagogies through metaphors, using a language, which expresses meanings: “Artists wanted to keep open the possibility for new ways of describing

their pedagogies, indeed new ways to enacting them” (p. 248). Denmead (2012) conducted an ethnographic study with eight communities in the UK. The author’s purpose was to understand artists’ pedagogies in the organization and their engagement in art-based communities. Denmead (2012) explained that artists showed a different language, which expresses a new meaning of art and applied to their pedagogies. The author mentioned that the artists before their participation in the research showed some resistance or struggled to describe their pedagogies. The researcher found out through evidence that the “artist wanted to keep open the possibility for new ways of describing their pedagogies, indeed new ways to enacting them” (p. 248). The artist constructed a new way and methodology to communicate with their participants: “The artists wanted to create conditions through their use of words that moved beyond the literal and representational, beyond what can prescribe and judge how to be in the world” (p. 250). Denmead’s (2012) study showed that through artists, teachers, and tutor’s experiences it is possible to understand student’s meanings expressed through art performances within communities.

The community art programs are commonly addressed to diverse groups such as children, and young and adult populations. However, it is important to recognize the varying characteristics within groups (i.e., culture, language, and learning disabilities) are essential to develop an adequate apprenticeship in students lives. Also, Willet (2007) researched a community of multi-aged learners developing learning in different ways. The author suggested that “the focus is not on cognitive learning, but rather on the context of learning and the process involved in constructing something an object or a theory” (p. 168). Willet (2007) examined a community of learners in informal learning and digital culture. The pilot project involved learners from children ages 9-13. The students learned how to make games through a digital programming class in an arts center in North London. The art program involved characteristics

from formal education in the curriculum. The outcomes revealed that the diversity of ages and experiences affect how students learn. For instance, in the study, older students showed more knowledge skills than younger students. Willet's (2007) study illustrated that students apply knowledge and experience acquired through formal education, and students developed that knowledge in the informal context. The study presented the understanding to visualize and identify diverse communities, especially when students engage and develop different modes of learning. Teachers require the knowledge to engage through instruction diverse communities by effective learning. Riddett-Moore (2011) explained that the role of the art teacher is to help children to learn how to accept others whose views also, ethics are different, even opposing, from their own: "the goal should not just to be an appreciation for that which is different, but an understanding of what can be learned from viewing things from different perspective" (Riddett-Moore, 2011, p. 76).

Diverse programs within external settings, act as a medium for education by strengthening diversity in countries in which poverty, violence, and illiteracy affect people their social and economic development in which people live. Ritók and Bodoczky's (2012) study provided a positive art model program that involves a poor community in Hungary. The authors discovered that art-based community programs forged learning in children, women, and families through art practices. Ritók and Bodoczky (2012) explained that art schools furnished extracurricular activities for children that come from diverse schools and neighborhoods. The art program not only fostered children's learning but the program provided to families the opportunity to work and learn from art activities; the women in these communities learned to develop skills through various art activities such as needlepoint and sewing. The art activities encouraged children and women to learn and use their handicrafts as a possible model to ensure

some income for the family. Ritók and Bodoczky (2012) stated that, “Several generations work together this team effort strengthens family ties and the sense of belonging to the community” (p. 335).

Conclusion

Music and art-based programs provide an environment to understand students’ ways of learning. The multiple research reviewed and presented here provides a framework to understand how art-based community programs act as a mobile activity to help students develop a connection with music and art learning and socialization. The art activity conducted through drama, painting, drawing, dance, theater, and music is an opportunity for students from various cultures to learn and acquire skills, enhance their knowledge and expand their social contexts. In addition, the studies reveal the importance of teachers’ involvement in community projects through art. Eisner (2002) explained that teachers, through art, have the opportunity to interact with students in a productive way. In students’ responses, teachers find clues for further interpretations: “The arts have a wonderful open texture that leaves open the entry points for comments” (p. 52).

Previous studies support this research interest in how art can be used as a mediating tool for children to construct learning in art-based after-school programs. However, there is a need to continue researching to understand art activity from students learning music and immigrant communities. There are only a few studies, which explore the areas of music and art -based programs from activity theory and situated learning perspectives. These learning perspectives give the understanding on how art practices connect children's learning process within a community environment: “[art] gives them opportunities to be mobile and to pursue their individual visions” (Eisner, 2002, p. 69). The art activity creates an environment of choice,

which students can imagine creating ideas and choices. Eisner (2002) wisely describes the advantages to learn from external settings:

There may be a large difference between what student do on a test or in the classroom and what student will do when he or she has a choice. In education, the really important effects on teaching are located outside the school. (p. 50)

The following chapter describes the methodology. The methodology will address the research questions to understand students learning experiences and meanings constructed in the MABP.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods

Introduction

In this chapter, I present the methods used to understand how art can be used as a mediating tool for children to construct social and cognitive learning within their culturally diverse community, thus enhancing the social environment in which they interact. This research study is a qualitative and ethnographic study. Also, the arts-based research methodology supports the analysis from the visual data collected considering the following question, “why not use the arts methodologically to reveal what the arts make possible in various situations?” (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. xii).

Qualitative research, in this study, emphasizes the exploration and understanding of participants’ learning, and meanings constructed in the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP). Pursuing a qualitative study through ethnography will provide an in-depth lens to explore the culture. This chapter presents the research questions and describes the research design, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures utilized in this study. Aligned with the methodology, this chapter provides a description from the selected research site and selection criteria for the participants. This chapter also includes a discussion of the dissertation development process along with a description of the role that my positionality plays in the data collection as an insider and outsider researcher during my participation in the MABP. The chapter concludes with a description of the data management, trustworthiness, and validation process.

The research questions line up by addressing the exploration of the methodology by data sources, type of participants and data analysis.

The two main research questions that guide this study are:

- 1) How do students learn and experience music and art practices through music in the Music and Arts-Based Program?
- 2) How are students' meanings developed through their participation in the Music and Arts-Based Program?

Table 3.1. Timeline- Dissertation Development Process

Activity	Time
Dissertation proposal	September 2015
Work on IRB	September to December 2015
Submit IRB Approval	January to April 2016
Prepare instruction and consent forms for participants	April 2016
Interview protocol	April 2016-May 2016
Data collection (interviews)	November and December 2016
Data collection (focus-groups)	June 2016 and November 2016
Data collection (observations)	April 2016 to March 2017
Visual journal (application)	November to December 2016
Data collection (video)	April 2016 to February 2017
Data collection (artifacts)	April 2016 to March 2017
Transcriptions	Summer and Fall 2017
Data analysis	March 2017-August 2018
Writing	August 2018-February 2019
Revisions	January-March 2019

Music and Arts-Based Program Research Setting

Rio Grande Elementary School

The study took place at the Rio Grande Elementary School in the El Sol region of the United States where the Music and Arts-based Program (MABP) is part of the school's after-school program. The exploration through this setting focused on 34 Latino students from the 3rd to 5th grades situated in a Latin Neighborhood (LN). The following description will provide the

details of the two contexts that surround the MABP: 1) the Rio Grande Elementary School and 2) the Latin Neighborhood which is a historical community in the El Sol region.

Rio Grande Elementary School is located in the southwestern U.S. just miles from the U.S.-Mexico border. The elementary school is comprised of 99.1% of Latina/o students who come from underprivileged communities preserving the historical and cultural history of El Sol region. Historically the term Latino/a has acquired different interpretations. Valenzuela (2016) and Anzaldúa (1987) refers to this term as one that shifts according to diverse historical contexts stating, “Identity is therefore never static but always shifting, multilayered, and contextual, related to macro-level demographic categories”(e.g., “Latina,” “Latino,” “Hispanic”)” (p. 7). Anzaldúa (1987), a Chicana feminist scholar from the borderlands region, posits that:

As a culture, we call ourselves Spanish when referring to ourselves as a linguistic group and when copping out. It is then what we forget our predominant Indian genes. We are 70 or 80% Indian. We call ourselves Hispanic or Hispanic-American or Latin American or Latin when linking ourselves to other Spanish speaking peoples of the Western hemisphere and when copping out. We call ourselves Mexican-American to signify we are neither Mexican nor American, but more the noun “American” than the adjective “Mexican” (and when copping out). (p. 84)

Essentially, Anzaldúa (1987) and Valenzuela (2016) are declaring that the term Latino is a broad term that needs to be examined keeping in mind individual, cultural and historical contexts.

While this passage suggests a distancing from Spanish and Hispanic identity, my focus is not on this issue but rather on the idea that each of these children has their own identity. It is important

to recognize their cultural experiences and how the MABP program is a medium that allows them to express themselves.

Rio Grande Elementary School belongs to the El Sol District, which is one of the largest school districts in the region. The school environment at the Rio Grande consists of an immigrant community in which a large number of the families cross the border every day from Mexico to El Sol. Experiencing mobilization every day, border crossers frequently face long lines at the ports of entries as well as immigration laws. Mobilization occurs within a context where families may not have opportunities to visit or move to a different local area. Families are unable to move from one place to another which inhibits their exposure to visiting new places and their opportunities to socialize with other people. Although crossing may require individuals to spend much time going back and forth, crossing the border daily is especially attractive to people as part of quotidian transnationalism. Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt (1999) define transnationalism as “occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders for their implementation” (p. 219). This means that a person can live, to a degree, in two countries simultaneously, with the benefits and limitations that the border provides (Campbell, 2015).

Underserved Latino families face challenges crossing the U.S.- Mexico- border everyday, they also encounter obstacles as they attend school in the US. Sometimes, these everyday practices challenge children’s place stability, because their parents or other family members live in two different places and countries; often, children are taken care of by other family members who are not their parents.

Some of the children that attend Rio Grande Elementary School come from divorced parents, often coming from a single-parent household or a widowed mother facing socio-

emotional and economic problems (Molina, Lawrence, Azhar-Miller and Rivera, 2009). Most of these children belong on the poverty line which allows them to participate in government support programs. 91% of the K-12 students at Rio Grande Elementary participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) which recognizes the need for free lunch for students from a family median income below \$21,590 annually. Additionally, some of these Latino students may experience domestic violence in their families, gangs related issues, sexual abuse, and some of them have even lost their parents because of this, thus causing dramatic changes in their lives. These conditions can end up affecting the children's behavior, contributing to them dropping out of high school and suffering from poor social engagement practices (Delgado-Gaytan, 2004; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, and Walberg, 2004). Studies with Latino students have shown that there is a positive interpersonal trauma in Latino children related with parenting-stress who cause internal and external problem behaviors in children (Whitson, Bernard, & Kaufman, 2015, p. 1148). It is important to note that the focus of this research study is not to provide an in-depth view on Latino families' social-emotional or economic issues, but rather to gain a holistic understanding of how these families, as immigrants, live in a constant stress and mobilization between the U.S.-Mexico border as they participate in the MABP.

Understanding what children are exposed to when they are in the MABP is important because these conditions and environments play a significant role in shaping the students' lives. Rio Grande Elementary School is part of the heart from the Latin Neighborhood (LN) a historical *barrio* in El Sol region. This school receives community support from the diverse places that surround it such as a public library, community support centers, service projects, and recreational playgrounds.

Latin Neighborhood as a Historical Community

“[The Latin Neighborhood] is a vital and historical neighborhood; it is an area that has tremendous odds, yet it holds a history of activism, art, and beauty” (Chew, Chávez, López, Nuño, Renteria, Sotelo, 2007, p. 4). For years, the LN has become an important place for the community in the El Sol region: “for generations, the people of the south [El Sol region] have worked to improve their lives, facing enormous challenges” (Chew et al., 2007, p. 25). This community is located in downtown at El Sol region in the Central Planning Area. It is part of District #8, which includes 96 % Hispanic/Latino population, with 65% of the population being native-born or a naturalized US citizen. Furthermore, 62% of the population lives below the federal poverty line. Educational attainment is low with 79% of adults having no high school diploma or GED and the high school dropout rate being at 23%. In addition to this, the unemployment rate is 29%, and 47% of residents have limited English proficiency (Community and Human Development, 2009, p. 1).

The Latin Neighborhood established a revitalization strategy in 2008 for residents to work with city government and community organizations to clean up the targeted area and improve the quality of life for residents in the neighborhood: “The strategy works to increase housing, neighborhood appearance, infrastructure, safety, and community services and education, and economic workforce development” (Community and Human Development, 2009, p. 2). In addition, the revitalization strategy is a joint community work-effort to work for a better place for all neighborhoods, especially because members of the Latin Neighborhood want to preserve their roots and culture as a Latino community. Despite “[Latin Neighborhood]” being targeted as a place of disease, crime, and backwardness (Chew et al., 2007), cultural life plays an important role in the life of the LN.

Varied community programs to include non-profit organizations were created in the City of El Sol region to support the LN's community needs. For instance, El Sol Center is a non-profit organization that was born "through a grassroots mobilization of afflicted mothers and grandmothers that demanded care for their children and grandchildren. Since discrimination, by official governmental structures, was still at a peak these mothers were denied health services" (Chávez., Gándara., García., Granado., Hernández., Hodge., Lucero., Montoya., Madrid, M., Baylón., Nevárez., & Quiñones, 2006, p. 29). Therefore, El Sol Center works to support health services, educational, technological, cultural programs and economic development for families, children, and elders.

Moreover, the non-profit organization plans events that incorporate the community into LN history. The events organized by El Sol Center are supported by the local university, El Sol University, as well as by social justice activists that share their knowledge and experiences that help enrich the community. During my visit and observation of the LN community in El Sol Center, I witnessed how families and children attend and participate in the various events. Children are invited to attend the programs and are encouraged to participate in the activities and share their ideas. Not only is the LN a place where history is celebrated, but it is also a place known for its many artistic features and events which make it an iconic neighborhood in the El Sol area.

Art murals in the Latin Neighborhood

The culture in the Latin Neighborhood can be seen through poems, art murals, music, and historical experiences developed over the years. Chew et al. (2007) explained that the Latin Neighborhood had produced poets, doctors, musicians, lawyers and artists (p. 14). The LN is traditionally known as an artistic community. This area has attracted several artists including

Jorge Acevedo (pseudonym), a famous muralist born in the LN. In an interview with Acevedo, he mentioned that numerous artists and musicians have come from the LN community. Today, these artists and musicians continue to contribute to the artistic history of the community by participating in different programs or by creating new programs. Acevedo's murals paintings have made a significant contribution to the community in El Sol region. The muralist has expressed, through vivid colors in his work, the diverse scenarios from the LN. His art portrays a small part of the Latino's experiences living in this historic community. Acevedo stated that "*Lo que quiero es que siga contando la historia*" (What I want is to continue telling the story) (Interview, Dec 2017). While Acevedo explained the importance of murals, he also mentioned that music plays a vital role in the LN because music is such an integral part of Mexican culture, especially the *corrido*. The *corrido* is considered a Mexican music style that tells or narrates a story through music. He mentioned that "*El corrido y sus historias era el periódico de antes*" ("The [corrido] and its stories were the newspaper of the past" (Interview, Dec 2017). One of his future goals is to open art galleries in the area to make museum learning resources accessible to the residents of the Latin Neighborhood.

Furthermore, Chew et al. (2007) mentioned that Leonardo Diaz (pseudonym), a poet from the LN who defends his Hispanic roots, recognized the institutionalized racism evident in segregated schools. Similarly, Cesar Vivar (pseudonym), is another muralist who paints the walls in south El Sol region, creating a symbolic vision of history. He pointed out, "The theme of space symbolized that behind the walls of the [Latin Neighborhood] lies the immense knowledge and culture which our children represent" (p. 111). Chew et al. (2007) stated that, "we hope artists will continue to emerge and develop in this neighborhood, which has proved to be fertile

soil for talent” (p. 114), further solidifying Vallejo’s idea about the importance of the symbolic history from the LN.

Qualitative Methods, Ethnography, and Arts-Based Research

This research was conducted using a qualitative ethnographic and arts-based research methodology, “Qualitative research is an umbrella term that encompasses many different ways of studying humans” (Litchman, 2013, p. 5). This qualitative research allowed me to explore and interpret verbal and non-verbal participants’ communication as they work in an after school environment, and which diverse methods (i.e., observation, field notes, interviews, video, visual journals, and artifacts) interact as a process in the organization of data collection. In addition, ethnography led to an understanding of the social-cultural environment of students who come from Latino underrepresented communities. Wolcott (1997) defines the word *ethnography* as a picture of the way of life of some identifiable group of people. Those people could be any culture bearing-group in any time or place (p. 329).

The research questions were lined up by addressing the exploration of methodology, by data sources, type of participants and data analysis.

The research questions were supported through several data sources such as interviews, observations, field notes, visual journals, videos, and artifacts; the following chart (Table 3.2) shows how the process of data collection, theoretical framework, and data analysis explored and supported the research questions.

Table 3.2. Research Questions and Data Collection

Research Questions	Data Sources	Participants	Data Analysis and Theoretical Framework
How do students learn and experience music and art practices through music in the Music and Arts-Based Program?	Observations, field notes interviews, focus groups, visual journal, video, and artifacts (drawings, photos from the artwork)	34 students from the MABP For purposes of this study data analysis was focused on 14 students from music and art experiences	The data analysis was developed through a Thematic Analysis From Vygotsky's (1978) and Lave and Wenger's (1991) theoretical lens
How are students' meanings developed through their participation in the Music and Arts-Based Program?	Observations, field notes interviews, focus groups, visual journal, video, and artifacts (drawings, photos from the artwork)	34 students from the MABP For purposes of this study data analysis was focused on 14 students from music and art experiences	The data analysis was developed from The Cultural Historical Activity Theory Engeström's (2015) perspective

Arts-Based Methodology

Arts-based research supported the visual data analysis in the research. The arts-based methodology provides the researcher with a guide to understand and interpret the participants' meanings from students' visual images. Bresler (2011) explained that arts-based inquiry is based on the notion that processes and products of arts can contribute to research (p. 1). The visual data collection was developed through Arts-Based Research (ABR) since this methodology provides the tools to explore the data collection and develop an in-depth analysis, interpretation, and representation of social research. Leavy (2015) stated that "The emerging tools adapt the tenets of the creative arts in order to address social research questions in holistic and engaged ways in which theory and practice are intertwined" (p. 4). The ABR created a dialogue discovering and supporting participant's voices. Through music, the ABR's visualization creates an environment,

which lets participants represent their thoughts and experiences by evoking an emotional expression of meanings.

On the other hand, the researcher has the opportunity to interpret textual, verbal, and non-verbal communication practices into truthful meanings. Leavy (2015) asserted that ABR is not a different methodology from any other research paradigms. ABR enhances social research. However, there is an important characteristic to highlight in ABR's method that distinguishes it from other methodologies: the aesthetics, "Aesthetics can increase usefulness" (Leavy, 2015, p. 30). ABR is defined by the presence of certain aesthetic qualities or design elements that infuse the inquiry and its writing (Barone, Eisner, 1997, p. 73). Leavy (2015) defined ABR as "a set of methodological tools used by researchers across the disciplines during all phases of social research, including data generation, analysis, interpretation, and representation" (p. 4). ABR lets the researcher think like an artist. Leavy (2015) explained that artists conceive their work as doing (p. 29). In other words, art is an active practice of "doing."

This methodology provided the researcher with a guide to understand and interpret participants' meanings of texts and images. The research ABR processes for this study will be developed based on Barone's and Eisner's inquiry. The authors proposed diverse features: 1) the creation of a virtual reality; 2) the presence of ambiguity; 3) the use of expressive language; 4) the use of contextualized and vernacular language; 5) the promotion of empathy; 6) personal signature of the researcher/ writer; and 7) the presence of aesthetic form (p. 73). The authors explained that virtual reality is an experience that is re-created by the human being. With art, the human being has the capacity to experience his or her own reality, "The role of educator was not merely to develop better ways of identifying the variations already occurred in nature to select individuals who are most competent" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 16). The presence of ambiguity

talks about how the stories or literacy are close to ambiguity – and the authors acknowledged the need for literary artists to “persuade readers to contribute answers to the dilemmas posed within the text” (Barone, Eisner, 1997, p. 75). The ambiguity exists; however, there is a need to create a dialogue within interpretations. The use of expressive language has components, which fuses real experiences with imaginative experiences. The representations, metaphors, and symbols work through the expressive language traveling within writer and reader. The use of contextualized and vernacular language provides the researcher with a thick description of the language, which the ethnographer has the possibility to explore the events, setting, and character of participants. The authors argued how language, through every day vernacular forms, is more associated with experiences: “Vernacular forms of speech are more likely to be useful in expressing the meanings of school experiences than are theoretical forms of discourse” (Barone, Eisner, 1997, p. 76). Barone and Eisner (1997) expressed that vernacular language promotes the empathic understanding. With the arts and humanities, it is possible to reconstruct subjects’ perspectives. Through the inquirer’s ability to understand the subject’s stories, the researcher prints a personal signature in the interpretation texts: “Each work of arts-based literary inquiry embodies the unique vision of its author” (Barone, Eisner, 1997, p. 78). The last feature is based on the presence of the aesthetic form explaining the final process, by analyzing the stories and events; during this process, there are dilemmas to give solutions. Barone and Eisner (1997) stated, “arts-based educational inquiry text, its format, and contents will serve to create a new vision of certain educational phenomena” (p. 78).

Leavy (2015) asserted that ABR practices draw on diverse disciplines such as music, dance, visual art, film, literary writing, and other mediums. The artistic practice and practice of qualitative research are intertwined: “Qualitative researchers do not simply gather and write; they

compose, orchestrate, and weave” (Leavy, 2015, p. 17). The ABR allowed researchers to visualize the process of data collection in a creative way. In this manner, ABR shaped the understanding of visual images in the study.

Participant Selection Criteria

On April 2016, I started the exploration in the Music and Arts-Based Program focusing on 34 Latino students from 3rd grade to 5th grade who belonged to the third and fourth generations of the program (2013-2017). Only two of the children’s parents did not sign the IRB consent form allowing the students to participate in the study. For purposes of this study, the findings were focused on the voices from 14 students (nine girls and five boys) and their lived experiences in the MABP. The participant’s selection criteria considered students’ time participating in the program, also considering student’s music learning engagement and achievements, or behavior and social involvement problems in the MABP. Also, participants included five students in their last year from elementary school at the time of the study, and one student was interviewed in her last year of elementary school and during her first year in middle school. Also, some of the students participated in the El Sol Symphony Youth Orchestra (ESSYO) as advanced students. The following (Table 3.3) shows the 14 participants selected and record information by participating in the MABP.

Table 3.3. Research Participants

Participants (pseudonym)	Grade (at time of the study)	Years in the program (at time of study)	Last year of elementary school (fifth grade)	Participating in El Sol Symphony Youth Orchestra (ESSYO)	Instrument
Nancy	3 rd	4 years	-	yes	violin
Daniel	3 rd	4 years	-	yes	violin
Alan	3 rd	1 year	-		violin

Flor	3 rd	2 years	-		cello
Amelia	3 rd	3 years	-		violin
Miguel	3 rd	2 years	-		violin
Gerardo	3 rd	3 years	-		cello
Alicia	4 th	2 years	-		violin
Camila	4 th	2 years	-		violin
Victoria	5 th and 6 th	4 years	yes	yes	violin
Veronica	5 th	3 years	yes		cello
Karime	5 th	2 years	yes		violin
Javier	5 th	3 years	yes		violin
Karla	5 th	1 year	yes	yes	violin

The participant selection criterion was the following:

- 1) The research explored children from both genders and diverse ages from 3rd grade to 5th grade.
- 2) Being a student of music in the music and arts-based program
- 3) The music teaching artist must identify children and young students as a Latino student
- 4) Children and their parents have to be willing for them to participate

Gaining Access to the Research Site: Music and Art-Based After-School Program

The context of the study was developed in the Music and Arts-Based Program. The music program came about in 2013 and is currently growing and supporting the Latin Neighborhood in El Sol region. The word context in this study implies the different settings where students move and participate in daily activities. Gee (2005) defines context as:

an ever-widening set of factors that accompany language in use. These include the material setting, the people present (and what they know and believe), the

language that comes before and after a given utterance, the social relationships of the people involved, and their ethnic, gendered, and sexual identities, as well as cultural, historical, and institutional factors. (p. 57)

The program provides students opportunities to learn specifically about music education as an extracurricular activity. The MABP takes place Monday through Thursday from 3:30 to 5:30 in the afternoon. The students participating receive a daily nutritious snack, daily music theory and practice, music instruction, after-school tutoring, performance, and field trips to cultural events. In addition, children receive four hours of music instruction and four hours of music theory and practice each week. Music classes include violin/cello ensemble instruction, wind/brass ensemble instruction, full orchestra, music fundamentals, choir, and composition.

I started the MABP research as a volunteer in September 2015. During this time, I met students, the MABP coordinator, music teaching artist, parents, and volunteers. First, I visited the program with Dr. Campo, a faculty member guiding professional development sessions for the program, before I started volunteering. Throughout this visit, Dr. Campo introduced me to the coordinator and music teaching artist from the MABP. The volunteering visits allowed me to have a broad idea about the music program and the activities that they developed. I was always well received, and I remember, with gratitude, that Ms. Rose a volunteer from the “Village Group” gifted me two tickets to attend a Concert from El Sol Symphony Orchestra at El Sol Theater, that was my first experience attending a performance from the MABP. It was a great experience to start my participation in the MABP which opened the doors for me to start this study with confidence.

Furthermore, the volunteer experience was the most important opportunity to meet and interact with students. I started participating by attending one day during the week, from 3:15

pm. to 4:00 pm. There is a 45 minutes after-school tutoring instruction where students received daily tutoring instruction support. During this time the students did their homework or played recreational games. During my visits, the students started asking me questions about their math homework, and also allowed me to play bingo and construction blocks with them.

Before my IRB approval, I set up an appointment with Ms. Padilla, the director of Rio Grande School. I presented myself and my interest to conduct my study in the Music and Arts-Based Program. Ms. Padilla showed interest in the study and extended her support to conduct the study. In April 2016, I obtained IRB approval and I met again with Ms. Padilla. She gave me the names of the students from the school attendance and grades list. She also commented that the “[students] are smart, they observed, they do not speak very well English, but they take advantage of their music knowledge” (Field notes October 21, 2016).

Additionally, the MABP coordinator Mr. Christian supported the research during my year in the field, and he included me in the Parents Committee where he introduced me to all of the parents. The Parents Committee allowed me to participate as an insider. Mr. Christian asked me: “Claudia, *gustas comentar algo a los padres de familia?*” (Claudia, would you like to mention something to parents? (Field notes, September 8, 2016). This experience allowed me connect parents’ experiences with students’ data collection and analysis.

Data Collection

The data collection methods were conducted through observations, field notes, interviews, visual journals, video, and artifacts in order to go more in-depth into the phenomena of study. The following chart (Table 3.4) shows the period of the data collection and describes each method.

Table 3.4. Data Collection Methodology Description

Method	Description	Date
Interviews	Two semi-structural interviews (40-60-minute).	November 2016 and February 2017
Focus-Group interviews	Two focus-group interviews (50-minute). The first focus-group was conducted with 4 students. The second focus-group was conducted with 4 students in their last year of elementary school.	June 2016 and November 2016
Observations	250 hrs. observation from MABP instruction and activities in inside and outside settings.	April 2016 to March 2017
Field notes	I wrote field notes from each MABP scenarios in inside and outside settings. I also wrote memos that supported my ideas for the analysis.	April 2016 to March 2017
Visual Journals	Visual Journals were conducted during Music and Practice Instruction. The visual journal was a collection of drawings and text from students' reflections and experiences in the MABP.	November to December 2016
Video	270 hrs. video recordings from student's music daily activities in and outside the MABP.	April 2016 to February 2017
Artifacts	The artifacts were collected from students' and music teaching artist activities. (i.e. photos, drawings, program	April 2016 to March 2017

Interviews

In this study, I used ethnographic methods in order to understand students learning experiences and meanings developed in the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP). I conducted two individual semi-structured interviews (both 40-60-minutes), and two focus-groups (50-minutes each). The individual interviews were conducted between November 2016 and February 2017. Furthermore, I conducted an additional two focus-groups (50-minute) in June 2016 and November 2016. The focus-group interviews were conducted with four students each.

Interview Time and Procedure

Individual interviews

I conducted two semi-structured interviews with Victoria and Miguel. Each interview was different from each other. I requested permission from the MABP's coordinator the permission to interview the students for my study. It was challenging to find the right time to conduct the interviews, because of the music instruction. For this reason, I decided later to conduct the focus-group with the students. I first interviewed Victoria during the MABP music instruction hours. This was good experience. In the beginning, she showed shyness, but later, gained the confidence to express her ideas and the things she liked the most from the music program. Her responses were not too descriptive, but they expressed the learning experiences acquired by being four years in the MABP. She showed motivation and later commented that she enjoyed the interview and asked me when we could meet again.

On the other hand, the interview with Miguel was conducted at his home in the company of his mother and little brother. It was a grateful experience to have the opportunity to conduct

the interview in a context where Miguel felt confident and relaxed. However, during the interview, he showed restlessness and was very active and played with wooden blocks while I talked with him. He did not make eye contact, and although his responses were short, they were also descriptive. In addition, I perceived that he felt happy having me at his home.

Focus-group interviews

The first focus-group interview was conducted with four students who were in the last month of their fifth-grade year. The students were: Javier, Karla, Veronica, and Karime. These students were part of the MABP for about two and four years, with Karla also being a part of the El Sol Symphony Youth Orchestra (ESSYO). These students were in the fifth grade and their last year of elementary school. The focus group interview was divided into three-time sessions:

1) initial-time, 2) middle-time, and 3) final interview.

The initial-time was a time where students introduced themselves and provided the period that they participated in the program. After the presentation, I did an activity with the students where they thought and expressed their learning experiences in the MABP. The activity was conducted by using drawing and writing. I also asked them to think about how would they imagine themselves in 10 years.

In the meantime, students expressed their ideas in their drawings and text reflections and shared their music learning experiences in the MABP. Three out of the four students expressed their ideas in text form, with Karla being the only one who used a drawing. The focus group activity was an opportunity to listen to students' ideas. Since they are children they played and made jokes among them, nonetheless they participated enthusiastically. Interviewing the children was a great experience, but it was also a challenge because we had to commit to specific times to conduct the interview sessions. Before conducting the interviews, I prepared myself by reading

diverse literature in an effort to understand students' reactions, behaviors, and responses in the interview. Greene and Hogan (2005) explained the issues that may arise when conducting interviews with children. The authors emphasized the importance to be open to children's meanings by observing and listening to their responses when, often, "they are seen as having little or nothing to contribute" (p. 143). As a researcher, I was open to listening to students' responses by giving them their space to think and reflect on their experiences.

In the final session, I thanked the students for their participation and I asked them about how they felt about doing the focus-group interview. Veronica, Javier, and Karime were the most participative from the four students, and Karla was more of an observer by responding occasionally.

The second focus-group was conducted with four students: Nancy, Alicia, Amelia, and Alan. I conducted the focus-group in a public library near the MABP. The library provided me a space to meet with the students and I tried to create an environment where students could share their experiences. I invited them to draw or write the things they enjoyed the most from the MABP. The girls were very participative drawing violins and commenting that they enjoy playing the violin. By contrast, Alan was restless and made jokes at girls—he did not want to participate as much as the girls did. I observed through the focus-groups that students enjoyed the music program because they could be with their friends. At the end of the interview session, we spent time together playing and eating pizza; I observed that they felt safe and confident. Later from that day, Alicia expressed: "Miss, I want to meet again with all of you." Her reaction caught my attention and made me think about students' value in expressing themselves and in having someone listen to them.

Observation

I conducted observations in inside and outside areas at the Music and Arts-Based Program, El Sol Art Museum, El Sol Theater, and during field trips. Abedin's (2010) observation method perspective stated: "My goal was to be part of the natural environment while maintaining enough separation from classroom activities that allowed me the opportunity to observe and record information" (p. 90). Litchman (2013) clarified that the observation is a process, which needs the practice to visualize details and descriptions of what the researcher is seeing and what is important for the researcher to observe on participants and context. Adding to Abedin's (2010) observation perspective from my experience, I was part of the natural environment observing the daily activities, but also I participated as an insider where I was invited to participate in some of the activities in the music and practice instruction by giving my opinion in the activities and being part of the monthly parents committee and support meeting.

The period for observations occurred over a year, where I spent 250 hours in indoor and outdoor settings. The observation is an important method in the study in that it allowed me to gather data to observing how participants extended their views and represented their learning skills into informal learning.

The observations were also conducted through an arts-based research lens. The visual art enhances the researcher's reflective ideas. Furthermore, in the visual journal data collection, I guided Ms. Moore in the Music and Practice while she was applying the activity with students and I observed while students were doing their drawings. The process of visual data analysis started from the observations as well as taking field notes. The iterative observation exercise supported my understanding to connect students content analysis with their experiences in the MABP.

Field Notes

I identified the process of the observation by connecting the field notes, memo writing, and visual images. The field notes were a tool to document the different settings that I observed. I took field notes every day while I was in the field from in and outside each setting. For me, as an observant each day was different.

Additionally, sometimes the environment did not allow me the time to take notes as I wished, however, during those days I organized myself to take time and write notes about the things that resonated with me more when I conducted observations. During my observation days, I also wrote memos, by following the same process as the field notes; but whereas the fieldnotes required that I record things objectively, memos allowed me to include my own interpretation from the observation. The memo-writing included my personal and detailed reflection of the whole research process that I lived during the data collection. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011) stated that the “ethnography tells a story that can be understood fully only by reading the progression of analytic ideas and field note excerpts” (p. 237).

Furthermore, in connection with the observations and field notes the subjectivity immersed in a visual image allowed participants to express feelings, thoughts, and experiences. The connection between text and images reinforced my understanding from participant’s meanings. Litchman (2013) claimed that “written material that [researchers] create- a journal, a diary, field notes, or a poem –provides insight into your thinking and reactions to what you are studying and its effects on you and others (p. 232). The field notes served as a bridge to connect observation thoughts in words necessary to the researcher in order to interpret the participants’ meanings: “I use myself as an instrument of observation and view the student/teacher’s

classroom as descriptively possible, writing down as much of the actions as I can” (Frank, 1999, p. 89).

Visual Journal as a Methodology

The visual journal complemented data collection to help visualize and capture the real moments, experiences and meanings from participants as images. Litchman (2013) stated that “I believe images enhance and embellish and make alive the words we use to express our thoughts” (p. 234). In a similar way, Leavy (2105) mentioned, “Visual imagery does not represent a window onto the world, but rather a created perspective” (p. 224). Leavy (2015) explained that an image offers a perspective in which every human has his or her own interpretation. In addition, Riddett-Moore (2011) claimed that visual journals allowed her, as a researcher, to revise conversations, notes, and memories of the lessons through visual journaling.

Visual journal process

The visual journals were conducted during music and practice Instruction during November and December 2016. The visual journal was a collection of drawings and text from students’ reflections and experiences in the MABP. The students were invited to participate in this activity by expressing their experiences from within and outside activities in the MABP. The participants had the opportunity to combine drawing and text in their journals. I created a special journal for each child (a little notebook). The notebook included seven tags that described MABP activities: 1) snack-time, 2) homework, 3) music and practice, 4) music instruction, 5) play time, 6) birthday celebrations, and 7) art museum (Figure 3.1). The tags served as a guide for students to start developing their creative process and draw or write their music and experiences. I received the support from Ms. Moore and the coordinator Mr. Christian to guide

students into the journaling process where students spend 30 minutes in total working in their journals. In chapter 5, I present a detailed data analysis table from students' visual journals artwork.

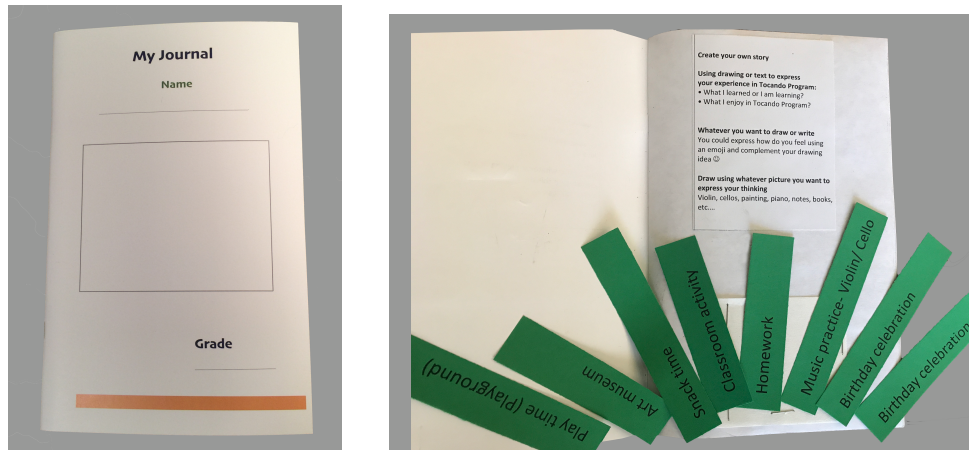


Figure 3.1. Students' visual journal

Riddet-Moore (2011) mentioned that visual journal processes “allowed her to dwell with the data to layer it, to smudge it, to tear it, to alter the physical nature of it in order to construct meaning” (p. 100). The visual journal allowed me to explore text or images in a deeper way. For instance, Leavy (2015) mentioned in her book that Kay (2009), created participants’ interpretation from a mixed-media collage from paper and pastels. The visual technique provided her the opportunity to reflect on her field note observations by transforming text on visual images, which is another way to interpret data for this research study. The visual journals through ABR method gave me the tools to plan, gather, analyze, and collect data from participant’s thoughts and actions.

Video-Graphic Method

The video methodology is a flexible methodology that offered me the opportunity to visualize participants’ mobilization inside and outside settings where I captured colors, shapes,

details, and scenes from the diverse students' activities in the MABP. Kullman (2014) stated that "screens are sites for the shared exploration and elaboration of experiences that allow images to be mobilized as potentially transformative entities" (p. 55). The research analysis through video enhanced the images, voices, and sounds from the daily activities in the MABP settings by capturing participants' reactions and expressions, that allowed me to analyze students actions through image visualization.

The video method was analyzed in the study through the daily everyday experiences with students from in and outside settings. I spent 270 hours capturing video recordings from students' music daily activities in and outside the MABP. The video camera was set-up during the MABP model stages: 1) After-school tutoring, 2) Unstructured play, 3) Music and practice, and 4) Music instruction. Also, in the external learning settings: 1) El Sol Art Museum, 2) El Sol Theater, and 3) Summer camps: "The purpose was not only to represent children mobility as they appeared but to bring out their unexplored potential" (Kullman, 2014, p. 50).

Video Experiences with Students

As a researcher taking video with students, especially children, was a challenge. At the beginning of my study, they started asking me questions about why I was taking video and field notes. Later on, I built trust with them, and they came to me and asked me if they could support me with the camera or by taking videos. Also, they wanted to participate, and be involved in the research work.

On the other hand, some children who were shy did not want to be recorded. During my video recordings, I tried to be careful to protect students' identity and to observe when they do not want to appear in the scene. Through my role as a researcher taking video with children and the MABP staff, I learned to be patient, follow the rules, listen and observe students and MABP staff detail actions, as Saldaña (2016) stated that "video analysis is comparable to a video

camera's and player's functions. Your eyes can zoom in and out to capture the big picture as well as the small details" (p. 64).

Artifacts

The artifacts were a different research source used to triangulate the data collection in this study. Some of the students and music teaching artist artifacts were collected during 1) After-school tutoring, 2) Music and practice, and 4) Music instruction and 5) El Sol Art Museum (ESAM). In addition, I always received support from Ms. Moore and the MABP coordinator often sharing lessons and students' work with me from the Music and Practice class. I also collected repertoire, music sheets from the Music Instruction class, and lesson plans from ESAM. The documents for the analysis included personal images and documents from various students' work, photos about music and art practices, and some documents from students' school work. The varying data collection served as sources to verify data in connection with the other methods. Through data analysis process from diverse methods, I learned from Saldaña (2016) the importance of artifacts, "When I analyze hard-copy materials such as teacher-prepared handouts with my research methods students, I propose them "Tell something about the person who created this document, based on what you infer from the document's appearance and content" (p. 61). The artifacts are something personal from the students that helped me obtain valuable information for the study.

My role as a Researcher, Participant, and Observer

My role as a researcher from an insider and outsider perspective allowed me to observe, participate, interact, and work closely with students, MABP staff, and music teaching artists within and outside the classroom. Litchman (2013) stated, "This contemporary position reflects

the new thinking about power and privilege and the relationship between those being studied and those doing the studying” (p. 226). My researcher’s positionality as an art instructor and graphic designer in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua., gave me the possibility to reflect with an artistic lens on children’s experiences and meanings, and to participate in music and practice classes. My experience as a teacher in art and education shaped my understanding of the importance of art in everyday life. Being a Mexican citizen and living in a borderland between U.S.-Mexico allowed me to visualize in a broad perspective the multiple cultures and binational languages. Indeed, the self-consciousness of my identity was possible through constant communication with other cultures. In addition, being in another country does not mean that I had to change my identity as a Mexican. On the contrary, I am learning to become aware of my culture to understand the different issues in which the Spanish and English language is immersed in daily educational practices and social environments.

Member Check

The process of member check included feedback from Dr. Campo, MABP staff and music teaching artists. This process allowed me to review data and explore the veracity from findings interpretation. The member checking was conducted by presenting to the Music and Arts-Based Program the results of the study, providing a detailed copy of the study description from the beginning with the ‘purpose’ of the study and ending with the ‘conclusions and implications’ from the study, “The purpose of this comprehensive check is not only to test for factual interpretative accuracy but also provide evidence of credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 374). The member checking was an opportunity as a researcher to validate data, clarify questions and comment for future research needs in the MABP.

Data Management and Organization

The data collected through this research was handled with confidentiality and privacy. The data was kept in a secure file saved on an external drive on a computer at home. All files were stored with password-protected files, and those files will be deleted a few months after the research is completed. As the researcher, I will be the only person with access to the data. The data collection interview, audio recording, field notes, visual journals, video, and artifacts were kept in a locked file cabinet at my home. I used a personal encrypted laptop, a private space in a home-office to transcribe, analyze, and write up the data. I also used pseudonyms to protect the participants' names. The data collection information from research participants was shared only with the Music and Arts-Based Program and El Sol Symphony Orchestra staff related directly with this study.

Data Analysis

The following process of data analysis in this study was developed from the beginning of the data collection until the end of the analysis. The data analysis involved the coding process to respond to the questions for this study by interpreting participants' learning experiences and meanings constructed in the Music and Arts-Based Program. Part of the data analysis was based on Cresswell (2009), who provided a guide to organize the data collection through following steps: 1) organize and prepare; 2) read all the data, and 3) begin the detailed analysis with the coding process (p. 185). In the initial phase of codification of data analysis was supported in connection with the field notes and writing memos. Memo-writing allowed me to develop ideas and to identify and clarify the main thoughts and views from participants' data.

Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (2011) recognized that the data analysis process starts in the way in which the researcher interprets the diverse meanings of the members in the research. The

process of codification was developed through three steps: 1) initial coding; 2) focused codes, and 3) categorizing. The first step in the codification process was conducted by the selection of codes that represent the main excerpts of participants from data collected. The second step focused on coding identifying codes with more frequent interaction. Charmaz (2006) mentioned that “focused coding means using the most significant and frequent earlier codes to sift through a large amount of data” (p. 57). The third step in the data analysis was categorization. On this phase, the analysis presented the categories and themes that emerged through the diverse connections by identification from codes and focused codes. The process of categorization allowed me refine codes and understand the concepts that were immersed in each code. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that “the results of the analysis should have theoretical relevance, that is, it should permit generalization from the analyzed text to some theoretical model” (p. 337). The theory sustains the purpose of research by providing to the analysis a delimitating line in categorization, “the ethnographer’s assumption, interests, and theoretical commitments enter into every phase of writing and ethnography” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011, p. 198).

The following (Figure 3.2) shows the two main themes and codes that emerged from the codification process which emerged from the codification and categorization process. Also, this process of codification let me respond to the main questions in this study. The figure describes the data collected from the study, the main codes emerged from the three codification steps which guided me in the categorization process. The data analysis process was connected with the theories to sustain and explain the study data.

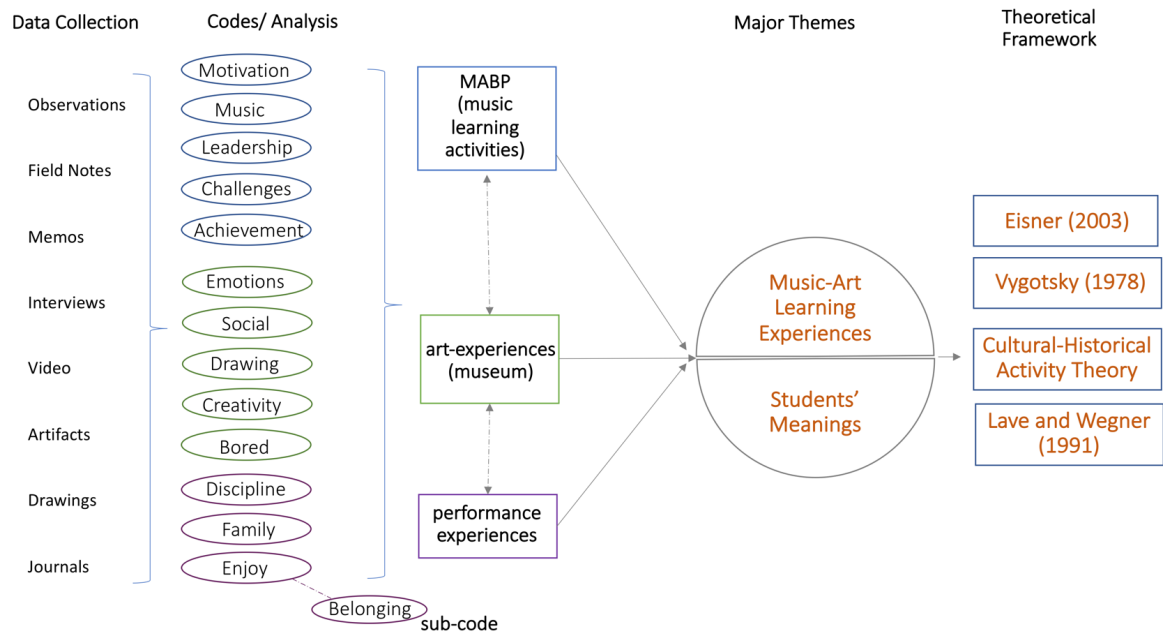


Figure 3.2. Data analysis process

In the first code analysis, I found 14 codes, in the second code analysis, I found nine codes, and in the last codification, I found four main categories to respond to the first question for this study, and three main categories that respond to the second question for my study, see Figure 3.3. This figure shows the two categories: 1) students' music-art learning experiences, and 2) students' meanings. Each category shows a description that I use to develop the findings of the analysis in the study.

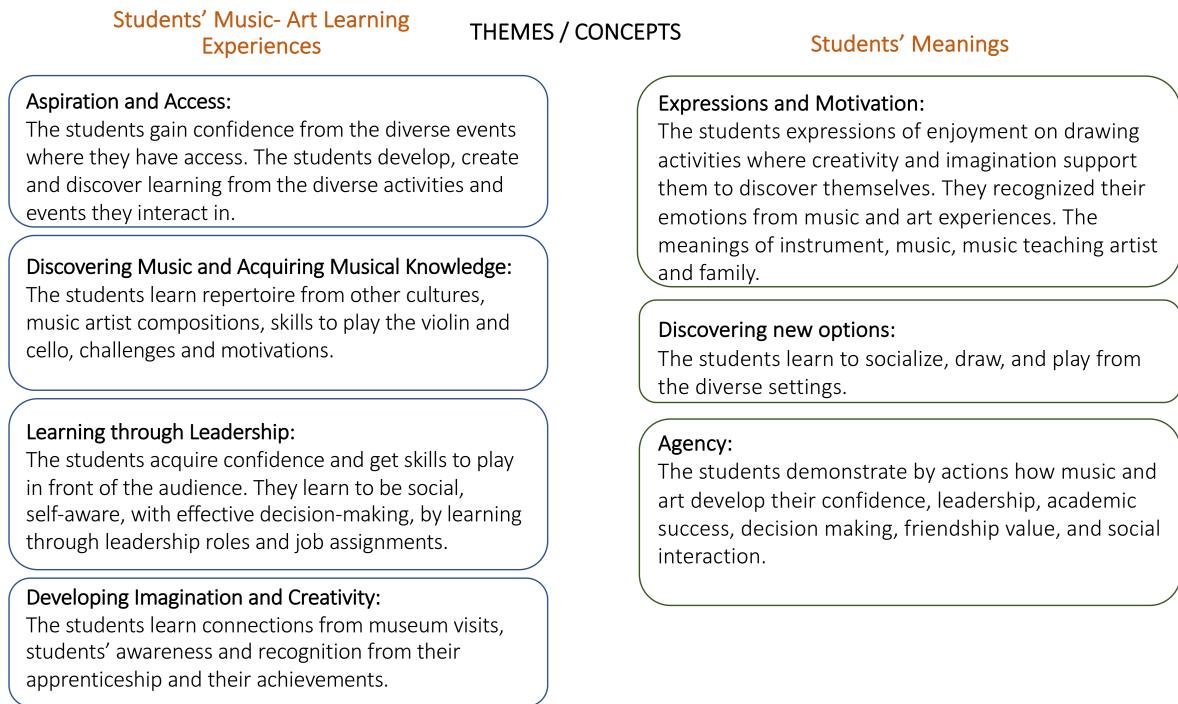


Figure 3.3. Themes and categories description

Furthermore, the visual data from drawings, visual journals, and video supported the field notes, memos, interviews and artifacts. Saldaña (2016) stated that “Today’s mediated and visual cultures seem to indoctrinate and endow all of us by default with visual literacy-heightened awareness of images and their presentation and representation (p. 65). However, the process of visual data is not an easy process. Through this study, I realized the importance of participants’ meanings represented through visual images. Students visual image was a silent art form of expression through color, form, content, and representation. The visual images were a material visible to interpret along with how this interpretation occurred in this study. I made a connection between the content analysis, interpretation, images and the wider context from the diverse events and scenarios from students visual art. Also, some of the students’ drawings were accompanied by text that supported the visual representation. Leavy (2015) and Saldaña (2016)

coincided in the researcher's intuition perspective from the data analysis process. They explained that the researcher needs to follow their instincts and voice in the data analysis process, "begin from where you are, learn as you go, trust your intuition, take risks, balance your goals and abilities, and accept that no research product can be things to all people" (Leavy, 2015, p. 285).

In this study, the process of codification was done manually as well as by using QSR International's NVivo 11 qualitative analysis software. The two processes supported the data analysis. The manual coding allowed me to start visualizing and organizing the data collected from the diverse sources and getting an initial understanding from the participant's voice. The software supported my analysis to organize the categories and themes from the codification analysis that I started manually.

Trustworthiness and Validation Procedures

Mishler (1990) emphasized that research validation has to be involved in a constant practice that not only involves textual descriptions but instead requires that the researcher develop hands-on experiences in order to explore a holistic way of participants' knowledge and thinking. Eight primary strategies followed the trustworthiness and validation process. However, research analysis used only six of these strategies, which are suggested by Creswell (2009) to validate findings: 1) triangulate; 2) use member checking; 3) use rich, thick description; 4) clarify the bias; 5) negative or discrepant information; and 6) prolonged time in the field. Throughout validation strategies, I validated the evidence from participants.

Triangulation plays an important role in the process of validation. Mathiason (1998) discussed that data triangulation "refers simply to using several data sources, the obvious example being the inclusion of more than one individual as a source of data" (p. 14). This study was triangulated in two ways. Corroborating data between participants developed the first

validation. The second triangulation was corroborating data through methods (observations, field notes, interviews, visual journals, video, and artifacts). Throughout the triangulation, it was possible for the researcher to support evidence-providing reliability for the audience.

In addition, Arts-Bases Research (ABR) allowed me to identify and visualize another way to analyze truthfulness and trustworthiness. Leavy (2015) asserted that in ABR, these concepts are denominated and visualized as resonance, such as “Does this work resonate?” (p. 273). The author discussed that resonance looks for details and quality on research authenticity. Validation and trustworthiness allowed me to analyze different perspectives from visual and text sources.

Conclusion

“Human experiences cannot be understood separately from the environments in which they occur. We live in a visual world with a historically specific multitude of visual stimuli in our daily environments” (Leavy, 2015, p. 230).

The research study conducted in the Music and Arts-Based Program provided the lens to explore Latino students from a low-income community, to understand students learning experiences and meanings developed through music and art activities and instruction, and how they learn through the diverse setting in which they function. The environment in the MABP community plays an important role in the research; it is a place where students interact with diverse factors such as culture, language, and identity. The after-school program is centered on music as a medium to engage students in knowledge and learning: “music is innately social, a penetrating part of every culture” (Leavy, 2015, p. 123). The study conducted through qualitative and ethnography research methods provided the structure to explore the art-based community: “The anthropologist aims to recreate for the reader the shared beliefs, practices, artifacts,

knowledge and behaviors of some groups of people” (Bresler, 1995, p. 3). The iterative nature of qualitative research through the different methods, such as interviews, field notes, observations, video recordings, visual journals, and artifacts, allowed me to have a broader perspective from participants experiences in the MABP: “We believe that the human will tend, therefore, toward interviewing, observing, mining available documents and records, taking account of non-verbal cues, and inadvertent unobtrusive measures” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 199). The iterative process in qualitative research provided a whole picture of different perspectives and contexts from participants through the methodology.

Through visual art methodology, the ABR provided an understanding on how to analyze images and text (vice versa) in an in-depth way. This study visualized students’ music and art learning experiences as artistry. Throughout ABR, the researcher, as an artist, has in mind, the aesthetics immersed in participants’ experiences and research environment. This methodology contributed to a social area of music and art and education with Latino, immigrant, and low-income students, to understand their voices, learning experiences and meanings constructed in the mobility of border communities of practice.

Chapter 4: Research Context

This chapter provides a detailed description of program events which took place during the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP). The first part of this chapter includes a description of the MABP origins and program model which includes the students' daily instruction. The second part of the chapter includes the external learning environment activities connected with the MABP.

MABP Origins

The Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP) originated with an idea from the director of El Sol Symphony Orchestra (ESSO), Ms. Rochelle. During an interview, Ms. Rochelle and Ms. Patricia, who is the program assistant at ESSO, explained that one day in 2006, Ms. Rochelle was watching a report on the CBS program "60 Minutes". The episode featured a musical program from El Sistema Music Program. The purpose of this program is aimed to help disadvantaged communities in Venezuela through music education with an orchestra. From that day, the visualization and dream to create a similar program in the El Sol region became one of Ms. Rachelle's goals. Later in 2013, Ms. Rochelle set in motion the idea to create a program that would offer learning opportunities to those children who came from areas with limited music and art resources. Ms. Rochelle commented that the program founders selected Rio Grande Elementary School in the Latin Neighborhood (LN) in El Sol region because it was a community in need. She emphasized that "there were not any after-school or activities for the kids, we were the only one, there is no soccer, there is no nothing" (Interview, January 4, 2018). Ms. Rochelle and Ms. Patricia added that the after-school programs that currently exist in that area were created sometime after MABP started. These ladies recognized that the LN environment that

surrounded the community included gangs and violence and that children needed to be engaged or kept busy during summer while parents and family were working.

Consequently, Ms. Rochelle saw a need to provide an outlet for children and engage them musically. As the director of ESSO, Ms. Rochelle provided the experience and knowledge to start a program that would introduce students to music education. In conjunction with the ESSO, she began working with ten other education and outreach music programs. Participating programs included El Sol Symphony Youth Orchestra (ESSYO), an orchestra specifically focused on youth and their musical talent and one of the largest education programs from ESSO serving 300 students each year, since 2005. The joint effort by ESSO and ESSYO benefited the students in the MABP providing them the opportunity to participate with the youth orchestra music projects and performances. Ms. Patricia commented that the symphony provides children and parents the credibility of the music program, emphasizing “because what who we are or what our organization does.” The parents are exposed to and experience the same opportunities as the students such as attending season performances for free and participating in ESSO activities with students.

Support from Organizations

Putting together a musical program, especially one of this magnitude, requires a lot of planning, time and funding. The Music and Arts-Based Program receives funding support from diverse organizations; some of them are ESSO, Carnegie Hall- Weill Music Institute, and Women’s Organization. Writing grants for funding demands time and collaboration from ESSO and MABP members. They work as a collaborative team in writing grants. Through grants, they write the program goals and students’ achievements to give continuity to their education by adding music and art. Another sponsor of the MABP is Carnegie Hall Play USA. Play USA is

part of a growing set of Weill Music Institute (WMI) programs that have expanded beyond New York City to reach students and teachers nationwide. Approximately 600,000 people each year engage in WMI's programs through national and international partnerships, in New York City schools and community settings, and at Carnegie Hall (BWW News Desk, 2016). Carnegie Hall Play USA supports partner organizations across the country which offer instrumental music education programs to low-income and underserved K–12 students (The Carnegie Hall Corporation, 2018). Scholarship from Carnegie Hall Play USA provide support, not only for students, but for MABP staff too. The funding provides support for artist music teachers who receive workshops and training, and students are supported with instruments, either purchased or rented, as well as instrument repair. Other program costs are covered such as training and professional development for teachers including both onsite residencies and access to online resources, and monthly webinars (BWW News Desk, 2016). The MABP staff received onsite workshops and monthly online webinars from Carnegie Hall Play USA. The onsite workshops engage music teaching artists with music leaders in the education field.

Additionally, Carnegie Hall Play USA provides constant communication with the MABP nurturing the quality in teaching program practices. Through these workshops, music teaching artists from the program are cognizant about their music practices and of their teaching pedagogies development. Students also benefit from Carnegie Hall Play USA music visiting artists. Carnegie Hall Play USA visitors follow student progress through music activities. The Carnegie Hall Play USA creates an environment of learning for staff and children. Carnegie Hall Play USA believes that “eventually we imagine that what we learn together might also be shared more broadly across the field” (Carnegie Hall Play USA News, June 2016).

Similarly, monthly webinars involve staff from the MABP with leaders and different programs in the areas of art, music, and education. During the one-hour connection, the webinars provide the audience with a variety of themes which offer support on current issues in social, economic political and educational arenas. The guest leaders introduce topics related to art, music, and education; thus, creating an environment in which audiences learn, discuss and share ideas from their own program experiences.

Music and Arts-Based Program Model

The MABP started in the fall of 2013 at Rio Grande Elementary School to serve and enhance the Latin Neighborhood (LN). The MABP took place after school Monday through Thursday, from 3:15 p. m. to 5:30 p. m., and was designed to develop three learning classes: 1) academic support, 2) outside play, and 3) music class instruction: theory and practice.

At first, the MABP accepted students from 1st to 3rd grade. Later, the MABP focused on students from 2nd to 5th grade. The MABP staff recognized students' need to be ready to begin the program. "*To be ready*" for the program means that students accept the commitment to attend and participate actively in the program, and parents support students in activities and program events physically and emotionally. MABP recognizes that all students have the equal opportunity to be part of the program, regardless of their socioeconomic status, academic record and music aptitude. The MABP aims are to promote social and academic success through ensemble music. The social and academic success is achieved by developing five core values: 1) teamwork, 2) self-confidence, 3) leadership, 4) respect, and 5) communication (Curriculum Guide and Teacher Handbook, 2016-2017).

The MABP recruits and invites students to enroll by promoting the program through flyer distribution and informational letters. This material is sent to each student enrolled at Rio Grande

Elementary School. The MABP informational letter includes the program goals, guidelines and steps to become a member informing students and family who are interested in enrolling. Later, MABP follows up with students who are interested in being part of the music program. Members of MABP conduct an informal meeting with parents providing a detailed handbook about MABP's purpose, answering questions, and meeting program staff. The students interested in enrolling in the MABP need to receive parents' authorization by signing a student consent form which allows them to participate in the music program.

The program is designed to introduce students to music education and orchestra performance. To achieve this goal, the MABP is divided into two groups: Mozart and Vivaldi. These groups are further divided by learning levels: beginners and advanced. Advanced students are placed in the Mozart group while beginners are placed in the Vivaldi group. The number of students participating in MABP varies each year by school cycle. Students' participation is composed of by girls and boys; however, the girls' participation is larger. The following (Table 4.1) shows the number of students participating in the MABP from the period beginning September 2013 until the end of the data collection in March 2017.

Table 4.1. Student Enrollment Per Year in the MABP

Years	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Students	38	64	36	34

Music Teaching Artists

The MABP is composed of administrative and artistic positions and volunteers. The administrative position is under the program site coordinator led by Mr. Christian. His commitment and devotion to art, music, culture and working with children has taken him to lead

the MABP organization. Mr. Christian willingness and openness for the Latino community and commitment for social improvement in El Sol region provides him the visualization to communicate with students, families, and the music teaching artists from the MABP.

Moreover, Mr. Christian has administrative experience acquired through work in ESYSO; this work provided the vision for future music connections to apply later with students in MABP. Mr. Christian is a Hispanic individual who speaks Spanish and English fluently, and his language skills allow him to communicate with confidence with students and parents in the LN. Mr. Christian demonstrates his dedication to the MABP organization by developing the schedule meetings for staff, workshops, and by arranging the events and performances. He also plans field trips to the museum, summer camps, and makes time to celebrate participants' birthdays, among other activities.

The artistic positions in the MABP are divided by teaching musicianship and strings teaching artists. Ms. Moore leads the teaching musicianship position, and Ms. Rebeca is the Musicianship and Choir assistant teaching artist to Ms. Moore. Ms. Moore holds a degree in Music Education focusing on Elementary Education, with a certificate in Music, Math, and Kindergarten. Ms. Moore's devotion to teaching and extensive years of experience enables students to learn about music theory, teaching the basic elements of music, rhythm, beat, melody, singing and piano classes. She is also a music teacher at Rio Grande Elementary School teaching 1st -5th grade providing instruction to 5 or 10 schools in the El Sol District. Ms. Moore is a white European-American individual who has been working in El Sol Region for 30 years and whose native language is English. Her understanding of Spanish comes from living in this region; however, she does not speak Spanish, but her teaching charisma allows her to communicate with students. She is very conscious to include music repertoire in Spanish in her practices and

performances. Her assistant teaching artist, Ms. Rebeca, is Hispanic and speaks English and Spanish fluently. She is pursuing Music Education at El Sol University. Ms. Rebeca's experience participating in orchestra and chorus allows her to be involved in choir programs at El Sol University. Ms. Rebeca shares her knowledge and skills with students and parents in the MABP by providing them with choir classes. The teaching musicianship position supports the music theory instruction class for beginners and advanced students.

The string teaching artist position is conducted by Mr. Jesus, Mr. Omar, and Mr. Alan. They are Hispanics and speak English and Spanish fluently. Mr. Jesus leads the string music classes. He has a Music Education degree from El Sol University. His aspirations, his music education experience, and violin and composer skills allow him to participate in orchestras, performances and lead a Mariachi band. Mr. Jesus' teaching passion and expertise are also recognized by a middle school where he is an orchestra teacher. Additionally, Mr. Omar teaches violin and cello classes in the MABP. He is pursuing a Music Education degree at El Sol University. Mr. Omar skills' and experience playing viola allow him the opportunity to participate in diverse symphony performances and music organizations. Mr. Jesus and Mr. Omar teach the music practice instruction class in the MABP for beginners and advanced students.

Mr. Alan is a music teaching artist from Colombia. He speaks English and Spanish fluently. His role in the after-school program is of a lead string teaching artist. He has a bachelor's degree in Music Education and a Master's in Cello Performance. Mr. Alan started playing the cello at age 15, and while he was studying in Colombia, he learned and experienced music education from a similar program structure used by El Sistema in Venezuela and the MABP. Mr. Alan has experience participating in orchestras as a soloist in diverse countries. In 2014, Mr. Alan became part of the MABP at Rio Grande Elementary School supporting

advanced string classes. One year later, Mr. Alan became the coordinator for the second site of the after-school program in a different school district. Mr. Alan's passion for music education and awareness working with underserved communities for a social change, led him to support the MABP with his knowledge and experience in music education.

Eric Booth (2009) explained that there is no specific definition for teaching artists. Booth (2009) recognized that a profession is not considered by their credentials, but rather it is based on the quality of their work (p. 3). It is the vocation that calls human beings to practice with devotion, pride, and humility. Booth (2009) reasoned that artistic experience is the capacity to expand, observe, and visualize the way how the world is, and he compares this meaning with the definition of learning. In that sense, teaching artistry, it is an interwoven word that is unified to create one purpose. Booth (2009) recognized teaching artistry as "the artful, effective, engaging, successful, joyful, transformative, proven way to guide humans into and through those experiences" (p. 7). Booth (2009) explained that there is no creativity without art. The teaching artist's action is visible in the teacher's creativity at the time when they perform their classes.

Volunteering

Volunteering is an important component of the program. MABP offers volunteer opportunities for parents, family, and community members. Volunteering is a word which embraces several concepts such as time, support, motivation, companionship, social activity, identity, and commitment. Penner's (2002) definition for volunteerism is "a long-term, planned, prosocial behavior that benefits strangers and occur within an organizational setting" (p. 448). Volunteering involves actions and social participation, benefiting both sides: volunteers and recipients. In MABP, volunteers can participate actively by collaborating in classes, activities, field trips, and birthday celebrations with students and staff members. From the diverse learning

and activity classes offered in the program, the After-School Tutoring (AST) is the area where students need the most support with homework and mathematics assignments.

The MABP has an active group of women volunteers called “Village Group,” which started since the MABP began its activities. They support the program especially during AST, as well as in multiple program events, sharing their time with students and helping them with homework. Most of the volunteers speak Spanish and English which allows student support in both languages. Furthermore, the Village Group organizes a gourmet outdoor party once a year, which is a fundraising event to support the after-school program. On this event, MABP staff and music teaching artists actively participate by performing live music concerts and soloist performances for attendees. In that sense, the fundraising event offers attendees the opportunity to learn more about the structure of the after-school program and how this program contributes to the students in the Latino Neighborhood.

Staff Meetings

The music classes and activities in the MABP have their purpose and goals. These goals are planned and developed collaboratively through meetings by the MABP staff members. The MABP organizes an initial meeting at the beginning of the school year, and they have regular meetings once a week at the end of each program activities. The purpose of the initial meeting is to plan and create an agenda and organize the schedule for activities and event performances for the program year. Furthermore, at the meetings, the staff discusses the curriculum, teaching practices, song repertoire, instruments, and students’ learning development as well as parents’ collaboration activities. The agenda provides the staff with some organization to develop a schedule in advance by keeping in mind all the components that are required. A well-planned

agenda impacts children learning development as well as offers opportunities for parent social involvement.

Furthermore, the MABP has professional mentoring teaching meetings for staff twice during the semester; these are scheduled on Fridays at the beginning and the end of the semester. These meetings are conducted by Dr. Campo, a faculty professor and researcher from The El Sol University. Through research and mentoring Dr. Campo contributes her knowledge, teaching experience, and community commitment to the MABP. The mentoring sessions enhance MABP staff in their everyday teaching practices and professional development. Mentoring sessions are also an opportunity to share ideas, reflection, and questions. The bi-monthly meetings are an opportunity for staff to present an overview of the after-school program, projects, and goals. The diverse review meetings help the program work consistently and focus on the agenda to evaluate program goals for teaching and students learning practices in the MABP.

Music and Arts-Based Program Structure

After-School Tutoring (AST)

After-School Tutoring time is the first learning activity that children experience as they transition from formal to informal school. Forty-five minutes out of the total duration (two hours) of the MABP program, children receive AST to do their homework, play recreational games, create color drawings, and receive their snack. Furthermore, MABP provides spaces of knowledge or areas designated for students to complete their work with the support from MABP staff and volunteers. In these areas, children are informed about special event celebrations and are given information on events featured in the weekly program agenda. The AST area is a place where students start actively participating in different activities in MABP program. For example,

students receive snacks while they are performing diverse activities that include completing homework, reading, or playing.

During AST, students obtain support to do their homework from staff members and volunteers. Usually, the AST is led and guided by Mr. Christian, the coordinator of the MABP. Approximately 36 children, from both the Mozart and Vivaldi groups, take advantage of this time to work on different subjects such as mathematics, reading, and science. The students, most of the time, ask for support in mathematics, but frequently the after-school program does not have enough volunteers to support all children in this subject. Other ways that students use this time is by playing games or reading a storybook. Some of the games that children play during AST are bingo, cards, or they create games with building blocks. During AST time, students play or read collaboratively. For example, children not only receive support from staff and volunteers, but also from each other.

The AST is a free environment to do activities, and children choose what to do with the support from collaborators who supervise each child during their work activity. Mr. Christian coordinates AST and provides student information about cultural celebrations and upcoming events. This information gives children an idea about why they are working on specific assignments, music lessons or rehearsal performance. Students also receive information about how they should be dressed for an event and how to go over the schedule for rehearsals and performances. Furthermore, Mr. Christian takes advantage of this time to commend students on their accomplishments related to their performances. He congratulates them and offers some advice on discipline too. Mr. Christian and the staff members care about the discipline in the program. The discipline in MABP follows the “Three B’s” model similar to the one used at Rio Grande Elementary School; thus, creating consistency from the school day to the after-school

program. Students are expected to *Be Ready* for classes each day by arriving with their instruments, music, and homework. Students are also expected to *Be Responsible* for their actions and their instruments and to *Be Respectful* of their fellow students, teachers, and instruments (Paso del Norte Health Foundation, 2014). Moreover, in AST, Mr. Christian receives support from Nancy, who is an outstanding student in MABP.

Nancy is a 4th-grade student who belongs and began with the program since its inception. She is part of the Mozart advanced group. During AST, Nancy's role is to provide and announce the upcoming events and celebrations to everyone in the classroom. Nancy presents the news by reading a poster board with event information. She enjoys doing this activity, which allows her to learn and develop leadership skills in the program by identifying herself as a "hostess." In an interview with Nancy, she commented, "*Aja, el trabajo que me esta gustando ahorita es el del hostess como que doy las noticias como si fuera la señora de las noticias*" (Uh-huh, I am enjoying the hostess job, I announce the news as if I am newscaster from the news) (Interview, November 2016). Nancy is a dedicated and successful student in the MABP, with accomplishments and acknowledgments in formal and informal school. As a member of the program, Nancy is an outgoing, participative and expressive student. She has confidence during music and art activity practices and enjoys music and drawing activities in MABP. Her participation in the program allows her to acquire learning skills to apply inside and outside the MABP program. Nancy is a girl who jokes, likes to play with other children, and is very creative. Moreover, Nancy's achievements and music skills allow her to participate in the El Sol Youth Symphony Orchestra (ESYO) too. She attends the ESYO once a week, learning, participating and socializing in this music program. Children participation in program activities is experienced in different ways. These experiences are visible through participatory actions, drawings,

paintings or writings. Nancy's participation is a visible example of how active learning participation is developed in MABP classroom.

The MABP practices are carried out in two classrooms. One classroom is assigned specifically for AST and Music Instruction, and another classroom is allocated for Music Theory and Practice. The AST and Music Theory and Practice classroom decoration is an example of the children's participation in the MABP. The classroom is decorated with musical themes, such as instruments, music, notes, storytelling books, and colorful work drawings from the children (Figure 4.1). The music teaching artist Ms. Moore recognizes the students' creative efforts placing their work accomplishments throughout the classroom. Since the classroom is filled with students' work, this helps also to display their personality and creativity. The students' work is an example of the things that they like to draw, but the drawings also express students' behavior and their daily moods. The most common classroom art where students express ideas or activity experiences is with drawing of violins, musical drawings or paintings, and coloring pages that they use as gifts for their music artist-teachers. The worktables are set-up to fit four-students as a way to encourage collaboration. Each table is covered with a colorful table cloth with a big musical pentagram design. The classroom is a musical space that invites children to talk, play, read, and do homework. The classroom also has resources available that support staff and teaching artists who provide help with the instruction of lessons.



Figure 4.1. Children classroom activity drawings

During AST, the language interaction is diverse. Most students are in the process of learning English; in fact, a larger percentage of students at Rio Grande Elementary School have limited English proficiency. From the 34 participating students, all were classified as bilingual Latinos. However, Spanish is often heard when students are engaging in informal conversations, especially during unstructured play. During unstructured play time, students engage and feel comfortable speaking in their native language, Spanish. Multiple authors recognize the importance of preserving the ‘mother tongue’ as a way of keeping alive people’s cultural capital in their everyday contexts where they move and socialize with others (Anzaldúa, 1987; Valdés, 1998; Cummins, 2001).

The everyday practices in the MABP are places where Spanish and English language dialogue is created between students and teaching artists. These dialogues are expressed through the students’ ideas and reflections which are conveyed by verbal and non-verbal communication. Forty-five minutes before the students go to the second learning step, which is the playground, children work to clean the classroom leaving it practically ready for the next lesson. When the cleaning is completed, Mr. Christian starts naming children one by one, and then they walk to the door making a line to head out to the playground. Discipline is important and it is demonstrated

in every activity; if the student does not behave well during AST, the student must wait for a time in the classroom before being allowed to play outside. The coordinator of AST explains to the students that if they behave well, do their homework or any other activity; they will receive extra time to play outside. However, if students misbehave, their time to play outside will be shortened. This type of discipline strategy is used during AST and Music Theory and Practice. The discipline strategy is different in each learning step. For example, in AST, Mr. Christian leads the class, observes and makes decisions about students' behavior. In Music Theory and Practice, Ms. Moore leads the class, and she conducts the classroom discipline strategies and rules differently. However, she uses a similar discipline model based on adding and subtracting points during students' activities.

Unstructured Play

The second learning activity in the MABP is unstructured play at the playground. The after-school program provides students the opportunity to create childhood experiences. Landerth (1993) noted that play is the place children use to express ideas, move their body, and develop imagination. Landerth (1993) defines play as “an integral part of childhood, a unique medium that facilitates the development of expressive language, communication skills, emotional development, social skills, decision-making skills, and cognitive development in children” (p. 42). For instance, students in the MABP take on different roles while they are playing, telling stories and feeling free and safe in this environment expressing and doing whatever they want to play and do. Vygotsky (1978) observed play as “more nearly a recollection of something that has happened than imagination. It is more memory in action than a novel imaginary situation (p. 103).

The unstructured play in the MABP is a special time for the students; they get to play outside in the playground for 15 minutes. The students take advantage of this time to rest, to create through play and socialize with their peers and teachers. Vygotsky (1978) explained that child play is conceived with a purpose, “Purpose, as the ultimate goal, determine the child’s affective attitude to play” (p. 103). Students participate in playgroups based on their age. Younger children distance themselves from older children, but this does not mean division. The two groups, Mozart (advanced) and Vivaldi (beginners) play together, but the younger students play in a separate area away from, the older ones. The younger children feel secure playing together and this is demonstrated by running or creating their games in the playground. Also, Mr. Christian, teaching artists, and volunteers play with them in the playground, taking care of them during their playtime and providing discipline if needed. Since most of the time the students speak Spanish, most of the games reflect their cultural background. They play traditional Mexican games or “*juegos tradicionales*,” such as *canicas* (marbles), *estatuas de marfil* (the ivory statues), *la roña* (tag) or jumping and climbing on the playground (Figure 4.2). Vygotsy (1978) recognized that play is not a simple act of children’s imagination; it involves children being active and thinking cognitively.



Figure 4.2. Recreational play: “jugando a las canicas.”

During unstructured play, children run, talk to each other, laugh, or cry when someone gets hurt-physically or emotionally. During play, students take turns being in control or being leaders in a specific game or situation; in this manner, they experience some kind of freedom to take command. Landerth (1993) noted that children, through play, are a medium to express themselves, taking roles and learning without rules:

Children may experience environments at home or school that are overly structured and controlling, interactions in which they experience being controlled by others, but in unstructured free play, the child is the master, the boss, the person in control, the one who decides what to play, how to play, and the outcome. (p. 46)

While the play is a special moment for children, they also use this time to express their behaviors or moods. If they feel sad or have a difficult school day, they retreat to a quiet place. In this respect, one can say that children mimic adult behavior, “Play is to children what verbalization is to adults. Given the opportunity, children will play out their feelings and needs in a manner or process of expression similar to that for adults” (Landerth, 1993, p. 51). Sometimes they isolate themselves because they want to be alone, or maybe they want to do something different. As a researcher, I participated in children’s play activities. Since I spent much time observing, students allowed me to play with them, inviting me to participate in their activities. While I was among them, the students became curious and asked me questions about how my day was. Eventually, I felt comfortable enough to ask them questions during their play.

Although the unstructured play was unstructured, discipline was never forgotten. Discipline is a constant rule in every learning stage. Children learn about the importance of time through discipline. They learn about discipline in the beginning, middle and end of each activity.

They learn when an activity will start or when silence is needed, which is regulated by a sequence of applause from MABP staff. At the end of each activity, children make a line to give continuity to the following activity. The unstructured play is a free space to play, and one of the goals is to prepare children to become mindful of their music theory and music practice instruction following classes.

Music Theory and Practice

The Music Theory and Practice comprise two different sessions in one class: theory and practice, which in turn is further divided into two ability groups: Mozart and Vivaldi. Each group alternates from one music class to another. So, when the Vivaldi group is doing Music Theory and Practice, the Mozart group is taking Music Instruction. The Music Theory and Practice sessions are based on music fundamentals and choir lessons, and this is accomplished through diverse learning activities. The Music Theory and Practice class is led by Ms. Moore who guides students through different lesson activities during the 45 minutes of the class. Students learn about music theory through music symbols, drawing, painting, storytelling, body movement, and group collaboration.

The Music Theory and Practice allow students to learn music interactively through notes, beat, rhythm, patterns, pitch, melody, and harmony. Ms. Moore's class introduces students to diverse music vocabulary connecting concepts and instruments such as piano, sleigh bells, tambourine, harmonica, claves, dholak, maracas, triangle, drum, and the xylophone and others. Moreover, the students' physical body becomes an instrument, which teaches students to explore themselves through music and movement. Through these practices students use their body to sing or dance. Ms. Moore recognizes that this type of activity teaches children how to work

collaboratively in groups or with partners developing confidence in themselves. In this manner, children, through collaboration, motivate others to participate.

The Music Theory and Practice, and Music Instruction are connected both demonstrating a clear continuation in their learning program, working together to make sure that each lesson builds on a common goal – to present a synchronized performance. During concert preparation, Ms. Moore creates a learning environment to improve students' participation and motivation. To ensure that performance go smoothly, Ms. Moore introduces children to several songs, such as an open string Samba song, Frère Jacques song, the alphabet song, and other songs from diverse countries including Africa, México, Venezuela, and the United States. The students are introduced to an extensive repertoire learning about the history of the songs.

Additionally, Ms. Moore's incorporates learning strategies so that the students may develop vocabulary reflection skills; it is an opportunity for children to think about their music performances. After each performance, Ms. Moore brings the students together and asks them to reflect on their own experiences. In response, children use art tools to express their emotions and experiences. Students express and print these experiences in a journal. In this journal, students draw, paint, and some of them write down what they feel. While, this journaling idea started as a data collection method for the study, Ms. Moore also used this journaling activity to learn more about students experiences, Ms. Moore's class provided the students with a space to think about their performance experience. Ms. Moore started working with journal reflections by bringing a journal pamphlet for all of the students (Figure. 4.3) and then asking the students to write down their ideas. The journal activity was a collective and individual experience at the same time. Ms. Moore supported the journal reflection time through questioning, giving examples of the performance, remembering words from the performance, music, and details of the event. To

obtain consecutive journal reflections, as a researcher participating in the activity, I created a journal for all students. The advantage of this journal was for students to keep a record of their drawing performance experiences. The journal is a personal document for the student to express their ideas, not only about music performance but also of what they liked or did not like in that situation or moment. It is a “journal” in every sense of the word.

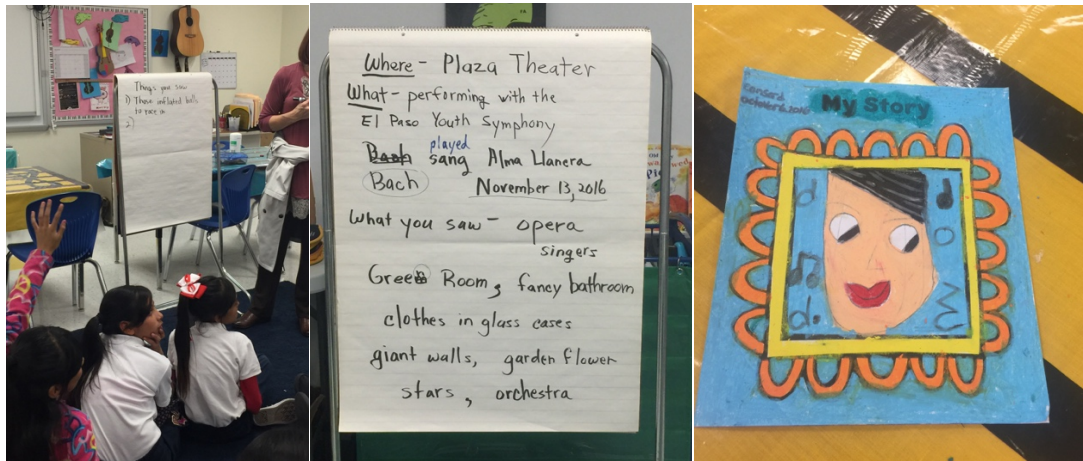


Figure 4.3. Performance reflection classroom activity

Music Theory and Practice prepares students to learn music theory actively and dynamically. Ms. Moore always starts class with different activities and allows students to participate. However, every day is different for the children, and their behavior, their emotions, and their problems are expressed during these activities. At the same time, structure plays an important role in MABP classroom practices. The students' behavior is commonly expressed through activities, sometimes they do not want to participate during practices, and instead stay seated, for example, they do not want to dance or even talk. This type of behavior is common in students who have problems at home or with themselves and end up becoming angry or sad, which is reflected in their behavior through practices. However, the situation is completely different in Music Instruction, even if the student has exhibited bad behavior. In this case, the

children take their instruments and try to play, they may still show a similar behavior attitude, but through playing an instrument, things are different. This change can be attributed to the fact that they cannot leave the instrument and stop; they need to continue practicing with their peers and music teaching artist. Therefore, one can say that the instrument moves children into a different dimension, where Eisner's (2003) from the six forms of thinking engaging with experiential learning explained the relationship with the product, "the work and the worker become one" (p. 381). The author emphasized the quality of the medium in connection with the experience. The students' connection with their instruments by playing was medium which allowed them to identify and express their emotions and feelings. Miguel, a student is participating in the study, connected music with his feelings, "*Creo que la música me ha ayudado a tranquilizarme un poco. Si, y hacer mas con calma mi trabajo*" (I believe that music has helped me calm down a little bit. Yes, and make my job with calm) (Interview, February 2017). I witnessed that student through practicing instrument children developed concentration, commitment, and patience and applied it to his other everyday practices.

Music Instruction

Even if the children have little to no musical experience, the Music Instruction provides the skills students need in learning to play string instruments. Children learn from string instruction by playing violin or cello, and by participating in full orchestra classes, developing instrument skills connecting students' musical literacies acquisition. There are several Music Teaching Artists including Mr. Jesus, Mr. Omar, and Mr. Alan are the Music Teaching Artist. Mr. Jesus leads the music class as a string teacher, guiding the Mozart and Vivaldi groups. Mr. Omar is a string teacher supporting music instruction class. Music teaching artists introduce students to Music Instruction through discipline and learning repetition. For example, students

learn about how to position their body, instrument care, attendance and establishing a sense of responsibility for the program and outside events. In the same manner, the MABP guides children and parents on how to care for instruments to give continuity to their practice at home. Early on, the MABP provides a special meeting for parents and students to explain about the instrument care before the children have been assigned their instrument. Parents read and sign a contract that states the instrument rules stipulating, that if the children have an accident with the instrument or do not provide proper care for the instrument, the parents must take responsibility for any instrument damages. Children need to return the instrument in the same condition as it was given to them at any time it is requested. The students are assigned an instrument which is theirs to keep throughout the school year with the commitment and responsibility from the student and their parents that the instruments will be cared for and returned at the end of the school year.

Before children are assigned to their instrument, they start learning violin instruction through a collaborative activity of building a cardboard violin with other students, staff, and volunteers. With this activity, students learn about violin structure (e.g., parts of the body, neck, and fingerboard, strings, pegbox, and bridge). Furthermore, this activity provides students an opportunity to learn how to respect and care for their instruments before receiving real instruments from the program or instruments acquired on their own. Children easily remember their first challenging experiences and incidents with their real violin. This was the case for Karime who recalls her first experience with violin, “*Yo por accidente se me cayo el violin en el piso y se me solto la cuerda*” (My violin accidentally fell on the floor, and the string was released) (Interview, June 2016). It is apparent that for some students, violins are something that they own, care and value. Interestingly, the instrument for students is a tool for them to express

their emotions as well. A student mentioned that if she is angry, she does not care for the violin. Caring for the instrument is a disciplined exercise for all students. The goal is for children to develop their sense of responsibility and discipline through playing music and taking care of their instrument.

During the cardboard violin construction activity, students recognize the diverse forms and symmetry of the violin. The activity involves students to continue learning and guiding students to learn and question the parts of the violin (Figure 4.4).



Figure 4.4. Cardboard violin construction- collaborative learning activity

This activity is crucial for music teaching artists to introduce children to real instrument instruction. Music Instruction with real instruments is a dynamic learning endeavor; music teaching artists motivate students during practices. As a result, students learn how to play instruments through reading notes and repetition. The instrument learning practice goal is connected to a full ensemble learning modality. The MABP schedules monthly performances through the whole school calendar year. Children perform in diverse sites, such as schools, the Art Museum, or El Sol Theater. Because of the limit of time between each scheduled event, music teaching artists and students challenge themselves in performances preparation. However, music teaching artists always make time to introduce students to a different repertoire in each performance. During preparation time and with each performance, students develop their skills abilities, confidence, and feel proud of their hard work. It is important to note that their work is not isolated learning; it involves the work from the MABP staff, volunteers, and parents. Music

teaching artist develops childrens' senses so they can observe, to listen, to move and follow instructions. Additionally, children emphasize their learning about finger position and strings. Students share those experiences and how they feel about learning. Nancy's experience is about recognition, she mentions, "*Si como que me siento orgullosa*" (Yes, like...I feel proud) and Ana's experience is about position, she mentions, "*Yo veo los fingers, y asi ya lo puedo tocar bien*" (I see the fingers, and that way I can play it well) (Interview, November 2016). Students not only look up to the music teaching artists as role models, but they are also extremely proud of learning from such talented group of people. Music teaching artists lead students to mature in their music learning development and this is evident in the way that students grow musically.

The different learning classes in the MABP provide students opportunities to learn and to engage through music. However, the after-school program model not only provide students learning experiences inside the program, but also outside the program. For example, there is a learning continuity through El Sol Art Museum (ESAM), field trips, and summer camps, involving students and parents in active social participation.

External Learning Environments Settings

El Sol Art Museum (ESAM)

During the time of the study, the MABP students and staff were scheduled for four school-visits during the year; they were going to El Sol Museum of Art (ESAM). ESAM's goal for MABP was to create a program that would connect art and music. The idea was generated by the ESAM director and Dr. Simmons, the art museum program coordinator. ESAM and the MABP worked in partnership to coordinate music and visual learning activities through a program called Arts Vibration. The Arts Vibration created a curricula lesson plan for beginners and advanced students. The lesson plans let Arts Vibration and the MABP staff establish

learning goals for students. They discussed the students' lesson plans and followed up each activity so that this would impact students' museum visiting. Dr. Simmons and three museum docents coordinated the art museum visits. Dr. Simmons acknowledged that the Arts Vibration idea is to create a series of lessons to understand how students learned about music and connected that learning with new learning experiences through art (Interview, August 2016). The students' art museum visits focus on artworks exhibits and music connection. Through Arts Vibration children learn about art by observing paintings and sculptures and learning new vocabulary through art instruction. The visual images opens their imagination to create music, rhythms, tones, line, dynamics, connecting music and art. The museum docents addressed students' questions through activity art practices. For example, during art practices, students observe artworks and listen to music connecting the visual art with classical music. During art observations, the museum docents asked students questions about which of the sounds are similar or have connections with the artwork. The music-art connection allows children to learn how to create and compose songs by playing violin and cello which in return fosters an extraordinary art inspiration environment. The art museum interactions encourage students' growth cognitively, gain confidence in themselves, learn social skills, and respect their peer's opinions and promote collaborative work.

The art museum activities are not an isolated activity with students and staff; it is an activity that involves family and community through art activities and presentations. Additionally, the Arts Vibration and the MABP create activities developing social collaboration between students, parents, and community. Some of these activities connect and preserve Mexican traditions for the Latino community. For example, Arts Vibration created an event to celebrate *Dia de Muertos* (Day of the Dead) with students and the community. This celebration

is an important Mexican event celebrated every year on November 2nd. The students, music artist-teachers, and parents participate in the community together creating a wonderful learning activity. Furthermore, Arts Vibration promotes activities to engage students and parents taking advantage of their experiences living on the border as a way to preserve their Mexican family roots. The project activity was developed by students, parents, MABP and Arts Vibration staff. The project activity was called “*La Catrina Comunitaria*” (The Catrina Community). This activity project was an artwork that was part from the famous local artist exhibition. A local artist created a large Catrina as part of his exhibition. Students from the MABP and community from El Sol region participated in this event by including their own designs in The Catrina artwork (Figure 4.5).



Figure 4.5. Examples from Catrina’s museum community activity

In this project, the students drew pictures of their loved ones who had passed away, and these pictures were made into the skirt of the Catrina. The final product of la Catrina was revealed at an evening reception in the ESAM where the MABP students and their family were treated as guests of honor. The immense pride they felt by having their childrens’ artwork exhibited at the ESAM was best stated by a parent “Now you are an artist.” Another, student added, “Now we are an artist!” with smiles on their face (Field notes participant observation, November 2016). The Arts Vibration museum program has a positive impact on parents and families. Parents expressed that the Catrina community project was the first time that the family

developed an activity together (Field notes participant observation, October 2016). This artwork activity provide students and family social skills as participants develop the curiosity to discover diverse ways of learning. The visits to the museum are not just a way to expose students to art, they are opportunities for students to meet local and prestigious artists, as well as a chance to not only learn about their artworks but also to participate with them through music while attending and performing for community in the El Sol region area.

Field Trips and Summer Camps

The field trips and summer camps expand students' learning experiences in the MABP. The after-school program members organize one field trip per year. The field trips comprise diverse event activities, such as traveling to different places outside of the El Sol region area, summer camps, and visiting the El Sol University. Many of the students participating in MABP have limited opportunities to visit different cultural environments that take place outside of their communities. The MABP staff carefully prepare field trips by connecting music and art to improve not only students' music skills, but social skills and community collaboration as well.

Summer camps

The summer camps are part of the ESYSO; it is a well experienced and structured one-week music summer camp. During the one-week event, students receive violin and cello practice for five hours each day. At the end of the week, students close the summer camp with a final performance. In this performance, the students present a concert playing a three songs repertoire learned during the one-week summer camp. The students' participating in the summer camp are the ones who are advanced students with one year or more experience; the summer camp implies

students' and parents' commitment and music skills. The summer camp prepares students to challenge themselves through intensive rehearsals, learning new songs, rhythms, and tones.

Additionally, the summer camp is an environment that allows students to share their personal experiences. It is a flexible and fun music program for students to socialize and meet new friends, learn music techniques and play music together with students from ESYSO and other schools. As a result, the students meet and interact with different music teaching artists who teach and prepare students to partake in new music experiences. The summer camp is an investment and productive time for students, which provide continuity to their music education in the MABP.

El Sol University, art-music, and technology campus visits

El Sol University (ESU) carefully plans a campus visit for the MABP staff, students and volunteer parents to connect art-music, technology and engineering. The ESU's project visit is a collaborative effort with the MABP staff, researcher, faculty and staff from the colleges of Liberal Arts, Technology and Engineering. The ESU campus visits involve a full one-day field trip providing students and volunteer parents the opportunity to become acquainted with a college exploration. Furthermore, the MABP encourages parents and family to participate in the trip to learn, engage and socialize in the diverse learning activities scheduled during the field trip.

The field trip organizers arrange visits to the ESU campus by creating an agenda and scheduling a special time for the different department activities. The ESU campus visit experience is divided into three sections, 1) Visual Arts Center, 2) Music Education Department, 3) Technology 3D Printing Lab, and the 4) Engineering Department.

During the time of this study, the MABP and ESU organized the first campus visit. Each college department organized activities allowing children interaction and socialization. The experience was unique for each student visiting the university; the students traveled from one department to another. The diverse disciplines created an environment of curiosity and questioning, which made students more observant and excited about their visit.

The first place to visit was the campus visual arts museum, students experienced and learned about contemporary art as well as about new artist and art students' exhibitions related to living on the border. Additionally, they learned from different media available on display such as photography, video art screens, and art jewelry. The visual arts center was a open environment for students to take photos and touch some of the art pieces. The second-place students visited was the music department where students explored the music classrooms and theater. They learned about different instruments, observed student musician practices in their classroom where faculty professors and students were playing and rehearsing an orchestra piece. Moreover, children showed enthusiasm after seeing their music teaching artist practicing, who is studying at Music Education at ESU.

The next visit was the Technology Department and Engineering Department, where students actively participated with the undergraduate students. In the Technology Department, students developed two main activities: 3D digital practice and 3D printing. During the 3D digital practice, each student received a mini-lesson on how to model a program in 3D. Each student had a computer where they could create their 3D design as they were instructed by undergraduate students (Fig.4.6). In the 3D printing presentation, students observed printing machines as well as learned new vocabulary and robotics.

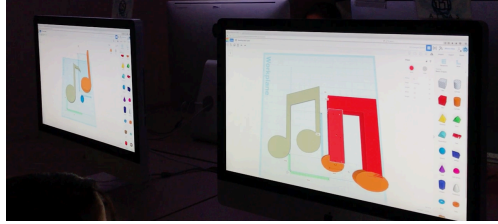


Figure 4.6. Students' 3D digital practice in the technology department

Lastly, during the College of Engineering visit, the students enjoyed two main activities: Engineering Design Challenge: Building the Tallest Tower Activity, and Leadership Activity: Crossing the River of Lava. Faculty and students from ESU conducted these activities in a playful environment, which promoted students' leadership, socialization, and problem-solving. The students learned how to work as a team and think critically. Heath (2001) mentioned that "Leadership moves collaboratively and often works collectively, while individuals also step out to display their talents and help others learn" (Heath, 2001, p. 13). Field trips contribute to developing students' leadership, creating and impacting their future career choices and decisions. The students from ESU involved students from the MABP by sharing their career experiences and encouraging students to think about their future education as artists, educators, scientist or engineers.

Performances

The concept of performance has an important significance for the Music Arts-Based Program. Performance in the MABP involves concepts such as music learning instruction, confidence, self-esteem, discipline, commitment, peer support, social skills development, and community engagement among others. Performance in the MABP is the structural body and complement in students' music education learning. The orchestra structure in the MABP is followed by a similar model as used in El Sistema in Venezuela. Abreu's founder from El

Sistema in Venezuela expressed that orchestra and chorus are more than an artistic structure, school model or social life; he emphasized that singing and playing together means to coexist (Abreu, 2009). The orchestra model is a way of music learning for students in the after-school program. The MABP organized six performances by year. The performance is a way to observe students' music learning process, challenging students to live new experiences in a different environment from school. The students' performances occur in diverse places, such as El Sol Theater, ESAM, Civic Center among others. However, the main performances are held in El Sol Theater. El Sol Theater is a historical place where students not only attend as guests but also a place where they participate actively and experience a performance with EPSYO. El Sol Theater opened its doors in 1930; it is an antique and classic theater, the majesty in their decorations preserve the architecture and classical style and this makes it a historical place, benefiting the community from El Sol region area.

The performance demonstrates students' music learning culmination. The presentations comprise the hard work from music teaching artist and the MABP staff, the students' intensive hourly-practice rehearsals, program learning music integration in a short amount of time, and family involvement. Additionally, the accessibility for parents and students to be involved in cultural events and performances are the MABP's goals. In an effort to bring students and parents together the ESSO provides free tickets for students and parents to attend season symphony performances. In this manner, the performances serve to engage parents and the community developing motivation and self-esteem for students in their presentations and music learning process.

Performances are a significant moments for musicians to communicate with the audience through the whole body and instrument. Booth (2009) stated, "The identity, personality, and

“vibe” of performers are crucial information for an audience, who read performers more profoundly than most players realize” (p. 190). The MABP prepares students to be engaged in their performances by receiving not only the teaching music experience from the music teaching artist in the MABP but from professional musicians too. The students have the privilege to receive music artist guests from other countries which engage and teach students about their music experiences playing in a symphony. Through the artist’s visits the students learn about different instruments, music techniques, and body position. The students learn and acquire knowledge on how to perform by observing other artist musicians, while at the same time constructing their own learning experiences through practice and application, “Active experiential learning, which forges immediate and personal connections with the music” (Booth, 2009, p. 197).

Summary

The Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP) context presents the after-school history from its origins, and the purpose to start a music education program in a low-income community in El Sol region. The MABP model shows how since inception in 2013 follows a structured model that is supported by the music project founder ‘El Sol Symphony Orchestra’ and receives external support from organizations like Carnegie Hall Play USA. The MABP provides music learning with the support of talented and professional music teaching artists who make possible students music learning possible by receiving music theory and practice, and violin and cello instruction. This chapter illustrates the connection from the MABP and the external learning settings where students give continuity to music apprenticeship by museum visits, performance in El Sol Theater, and field trips to El Sol University. The research context from the MABP, not

only demonstrates the structure model from the music program but shows a music and art model structured for a Latino community in El Sol region.

Chapter 5: Students' Music and Art Learning Experiences

The following chapters include the findings from the students' exploration in the music practices and activities in the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP). The findings chapters are divided into two sections. The first section focuses on student learning and experiences through music and art practices. The second section examines student meanings developed through music and art. The second section will present findings as interpreted through the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). This framework provides a clear means for understanding students' meanings when participating in different music-art practices, and performance events in the MABP.

In this chapter, I present the emergent themes and key findings from data collected on the music and art practices; these include activities from inside and outside the program and students' performance events. The goal of this chapter is to gain a better understanding of students' experiences as they learned and moved in different contexts. Two main questions guide these experiences: 1) How do students learn and experience music and art practices in the music and arts-based program? 2) How are students' meanings developed in the music and arts-based program? This second question will be explored more in the next chapter.

The findings in this chapter describe students' learning experiences, as they are the protagonists and main learners in the MABP. The findings include students' experiences from the ethnographic data collected during one year in the field. 34 students were participating in the study. The findings were focused on the voices of 13 students (eight girls and five boys) and their lived experiences in the MABP. The following (Table 5.1) was described in Chapter 3. This table shows MABP participants' background information. In addition to being in the program, four students showed their participation in El Sol Symphony Youth Orchestra (ESSYO) as

advanced students, five of them were in the last year from elementary school at the time of the study, and one student was interviewed in her last year in elementary school and during her first year in middle school. The table also shows the type of instrument students played in the MABP.

Table 5.1. Research Participants

Participants (pseudonym)	Grade (at time of the study)	Years in the program (at time of study)	Last year of elementary school (fifth grade)	Participating in El Sol Symphony Youth Orchestra (ESSYO)	Instrument
Nancy	3 rd	4 years	-	yes	violin
Daniel	3 rd	4 years	-	yes	violin
Alan	3 rd	1 year	-		violin
Flor	3 rd	2 years	-		cello
Amelia	3 rd	3 years	-		violin
Miguel	3 rd	2 years	-		violin
Gerardo	3 rd	3 years	-		cello
Alicia	4 th	2 years	-		violin
Camila	4 th	2 years	-		violin
Victoria	5 th and 6 th	4 years	yes	yes	violin
Veronica	5 th	3 years	yes		cello
Karime	5 th	2 years	yes		violin
Javier	5 th	3 years	yes		violin
Karla	5 th	1 year	yes	yes	violin

This section describes student learning and experiences in the MABP. Student learning in the MABP was not something that happened at a specific point, but rather through a process. Vygotsky (1978) recognizes that children are learning through social interaction in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). To understand children’s development through ZPD, the author differentiates two learning processes: the learning process and the developmental process. He claims their “learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that can operate

only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers” (p. 90). Vygotsky (1978) explains that learning is a process which happens through human interaction. When the child assimilates the meaning of the word, or masters an operation, their developmental process is essentially completed. Vygotsky’s (1978) identified both processes as conversion through children’s external knowledge that results in children’s internalizing these abilities. Similarly, Engeström et al., (1999) recognized the internalization and externalization in the activity process equivalent to the zone of proximal development (p. 34). Engeström et al., (1999) explained that the internalization process is the training and socialization that prepares members of the activity to be competent. In my study, the internalization process in the MABP program acted through music-art teaching; furthermore, the teaching process prepared the students as they participated in Music Instruction and activities.

On the other hand, externalization occurs as an individual creation to produce a transformation in the activity system in which students learn. The externalization in MABP is visible in the connection between music and learning through different music instruction and activities, music program implementations and innovations, music teaching artists training, and community events. It is a cycle with components that are closely intertwined.

Students’ music-art learning experiences played a significant role in how they achieve their goals, make decisions, face challenges and how they express their voices in the MABP (inside and outside from the school context). The students’ learning process occurred not only as an isolated practice but also as a social learning development. Learning through a socio-cultural lens “is an integral and inseparable aspect of social practice” (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 31). Lave and Wenger (1991) recognized learning as a social practice. The authors explained that students learn through community participation which happens in an active environment,

“Practice does not take place in a static context, the practice itself is in motion” (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 116). In this study, learning in the MABP is developed through social learning interaction from students, staff, music artist-teachers, parents, and community through the diverse activities in which all of them interacted and participated.

The following section describes findings developed by applying a thematic analysis to examine students’ learning and experiences in music and art practices in the MABP. The goal of this section is to gain a clearer understanding of how students were learning and to capture their experiences as they participated in diverse practices and activities in the MABP. It is thematically organized, highlighting four major themes that emerged from the data analysis: 1) Aspiration and Access, 2) Discovering Music and Acquiring Musical Knowledge, 3) Developing Imagination and Creativity, and 4) Learning through Leadership.

While many themes were reinforced via all forms of data collection (observations, interviews, field notes, artifacts, video, and journals), some contrasting findings emerged when all data were considered (Aiken, 2012). The emergent themes from the findings show how students’ learning occurred in diverse environments as students interacted inside and outside of the program. In addition, learning was developed by music teaching practices, techniques, melodies, rehearsals, performances, assignments, and the materials and tools which students used as a medium to acquire knowledge and express learning.

The following table shows the themes that emerged from the analysis. It also shows data sources, including the students’ artwork, which helped support the analysis. The findings demonstrate how the data collected are validated by the students’ artwork sources from their journals and other diverse drawings. The students’ artworks are unique drawings and text narratives which students produced from journals, drawing and painting sources. Artwork

sources are examples of how students expressed learning and experiences by visual art, and “Because of these varied orientations and accompanying views, the children’s explanations of their artwork were vital to a full understanding of the artifacts” (Aiken, 2012, p. 62). The following table (5.2) shows data from the four themes that emerged from the data collected, and how the data were triangulated to validate the findings in this study.

Table 5.2. Music Art Learning Experiences Themes

Participants	Aspirations and Access	Discovering and acquiring musical knowledge	Learning through Leadership	Developing Imagination and Creativity
Nancy	EDS, VADS	EDS	EDS	EDS
Daniel	EDS, VADS			EDS
Alan	EDS, VADS	EDS		
Flor	EDS			
Amelia	EDS, VADS			EDS
Miguel	EDS, VADS	EDS	EDS	EDS
Alicia	EDS, VADS			EDS
Gerardo			EDS	
Victoria	EDS, VADS	EDS		EDS
Veronica	EDS	EDS		EDS
Karime	EDS	EDS		
Javier	EDS			
Karla	EDS			
Camila	VADS			

Ethnographic data sources = (EDS) observations, interviews, field notes, videos, and artifacts
Visual artwork data sources= (VADS)

Aspiration and Access

The students in the MABP had the opportunity to enjoy diverse forms of music instruction and participation to learn and acquire knowledge from inside and outside of the program. Lave and Wenger (1991) made an argument about learning and participation in the community: “To become a full member of a community of practice requires access to a wide

range of ongoing activity, old-timers, and other members of the community and to information, resources, and opportunities for participation” (p. 101). The students in the MABP had diverse forms of access representation. The access was represented physically through places, by social interaction among students, MABP staff, and community receiving diverse learning and teaching sources to acquire knowledge from music and art practices. Lave and Wenger (1991) contend that “learning itself is an improvised practice; a learning curriculum unfolds in opportunities for engagement in practice; it is not specified as a set of dictates for proper practice” (p. 93).

The *aspiration and access* theme describe students’ learning experiences inside of the after-school program, and outside practices such as performing in El Sol Theater, visiting El Sol Art Museum (ESAM), and the different places which students move and learn. Throughout aspirations and access theme students recognize which practices and activities they enjoy the most. Enjoyment is not a concept that only describes students’ preferences but practices that expressed aspirations and access to student learning experiences. The aspirations and access are connected to students’ preferences to do “something different” and “explore new places.” From students’ preferences, they recognized drawing as a practice that is developed inside of the program through Music Instruction activities, and they expressed they would like to develop similar practices through drawing but in outside practices too, where they would like not only to observe but also to do and apply for artwork in outside activities. Nancy is a student who connected drawing with museum practices. She desired to practice and apply drawing in museum activities and compared Ms. Moore’s class to describe her experience while engaging in this activity.

“Que fuera como con Ms. Moore como mas de dibujar” (“That it was like with Ms. Moore as more drawing”) (Interview, November 22, 2016).

Ms. Moore teaches the Music Theory and Practice class in the MABP, where students learn about the theory of music in an environment of learning and creativity. The students in Ms. Moore's class learn music through diverse learning strategies using, drawing, painting, playing, reading, and singing. Ms. Moore's classroom environment encouraged in students' the sense of curiosity to ask questions and learn interactively. The students used their senses and body to learn music. During a classroom observation in Ms. Moore's class, there was a student drawing and coloring; she commented to me that the blue color she used in the drawing was like the sky. These practices promote students' creativity not only to express through drawing their ideas but writing too. Through drawing the students expressed their thoughts, feelings, and learning, inspiring students to learn and explore through the diverse environments where they visit.

Exploring New Places

The students' access to diverse environments leads them to recognize the need to visit and explore new places. Some students' concept of learning is expressed by using expressions such as "*aburrido/ boring.*" These expressions are used when they communicate that they want to explore new places because they know that they acquire confidence and knowledge by for example performing in El Sol Theater or visiting El Sol Art Museum. The students aspire to visit and explore new places.

Nancy was a 3rd grader who was an advanced student in the fourth year in the after-school program at the time of the data collection. She expressed her confidence by performing in El Sol Theater, and by sharing that she wants to perform in a bigger theater, even bigger than El Sol Theater. This theater is one of the most important and historical theaters in El Sol community region. She stated that if she had the chance to perform, she would like to do it in a big theater:

“mmm, ...solo si es un lugar como bien lujoso, que vaya mucha gente eso si porque el plaza theater como que ya me aburrio, como que quiero otro theater mas grande....”

(“mmm...only if it is a place like very luxurious, that many people go to because the Plaza Theater got me bored like I want another bigger theater”)

(Interview, November 22, 2016).

Furthermore, the students learn to observe the details of the places where they perform. For example, they look at the decoration and architecture, and they listen to the orchestra performances, musicians playing, the instruments, and the music repertoire. The students recognized how they feel and how they are learning through music performance. For each student, the learning experience is different. Javier is a student that music performance motivated to become confident to perform in front of the audience. He expressed that feeling confident is what has supported him during football soccer games,

“Yo se como se siente porque tengo todavia partidos y me ven casi todos” (“I know how it feels because I still have games and almost all of them see me”) (Interview, June 3, 2018).

For students, performing in El Sol Theater means feeling nervous during their presentations, with their hands sweating and playing music as they are performing for an audience of 2,000, which can be a stressful occasion. When asked how she felt the first time she had to perform, Karime mentioned: *“yo me asusté la primera vez”* (“I was scared for the first time”) (Interview, June 3, 2016). The students recognized their emotions and feelings about learning music through performance, but students do not start learning to perform only by playing music in El Sol Theater. The students start learning performance from the music instruction practices: Music theory and practice, and Music Instruction activities. The students apply their music knowledge

and music experience through performing. Performance is a discipline that students learn through teaching practices by playing violin and cello daily. The students' experiences of feeling nervous were expressions that represented how they felt in that moment even that they know the repertoire and had hours of practice, performing let students to learn how to be aware of their emotions and to control their natural expressions of nervous.

The following description shows the analysis of students' artwork (journals). The students selected were followed through data collection, and the purpose of collecting students' artwork is to validate findings from data collected through interviews, observations, field notes, video, and artifacts. The findings from the student artwork in their journals show participants' learning experiences as they performed in El Sol Theater.

Access and aspirations through artwork




The artwork analysis was not an easy task. As a graphic designer, I believe in the importance of capturing the images through drawing, painting, or photos as it is evident that the visual image has a unique essence that comes from individual human experience. Gatlin (2012) mentioned her point of view about research and the importance of artwork exploration:

The accessibility of images, and the ability to look at the work on more than one level, to enjoy the work as a visual display while at the same time offering more and deeper readings are all reasons why I have chosen this format to present my work. (p. 20)

In the study, the images reflected a rich perspective from the participants' point of view. The students express their ideas through drawings and writing text; they shared their past experiences, and bring these experiences to the present. Mitchell, Theron, Smith, and Stuart (2011) explained that drawing is a simple method for data collection; however, it implies complexity in the interpretative process. The following (Table 5.3) shows the analysis through

drawings and written text from students. The analysis from journals validates students' learning experiences of performing in El Sol Plaza Theater through visual art. The following questions let students think about their learning in the MABP through journals: What did I learn, or I am learning?

Table 5.3. Students' Journal Art Work

Participants	Drawing	Written text	Interpretation
Nancy		<i>"I felt a storm in my stomach, after the concert I felt a little better. After playing my concert my mom was very happy with me"</i>	Feeling nervous performing
Daniel		<i>"I liked because it was a more different instrument like base yellow viola violin and flut. I saw gentlemen and wemen singing. They are actors in singing. And I was nerveous because they were the yout syhomphyn".</i>	Learning through music, orchestra, different instruments, musicians. Recognizing the music environment and musicians
Amelia	No drawing	<i>"I like the green room and I like when I play and I feel happy"</i>	Recognizing signs from the place, motivation through music and performance
Miguel		<i>"I played alma llanera with another orchestra. My mother went to my concert at the plaza theater. The bathroom was so elegant"</i>	Learning through music repertoire, recognizing signs from the

			place, family participation
Alicia		<i>“The best thing that I like in the plaza it was the green room because the seat was so cool. I played the violin”</i>	Recognizing signs from the place, music motivation through music
Camila		<i>“Yo toque el violin la canción Alma Llanera. Lo que me gusto mas fue las estrellas que estaban en el techo del teatro. Me sentia nerviosa porque pense que me iba a equivocar. Me sentí feliz cuando tocaron muy bonito el violin, viola, cello, bas, etc.”</i>	Learning through music, orchestra, different instruments, music repertoire, musicians. Motivation through music and performance

Through drawings and written text, the students were able to bring up their experiences, emotions, and understandings of music learning. The use of metaphors was evident in the meanings found in the drawings. Nancy expressed through metaphor how she felt during and after the performance; this was evident in her depiction of a storm in her drawing representation. Boroditsky (2000) explained that a metaphor is a mental representation, which is “used to explain how abstract conceptual domains might be represented” (p. 26). As an advanced student in the MABP, Nancy showed her level of understanding and re-created the scene from her learning experience. Nancy used the colors grey and yellow in her drawing to represent her feelings, and her expression was a mental representation from the real action. Lakoff and Johnson (2009) stated that “The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (p. 93). Johnson’s idea, it is visible that each of the students’ visual representations described in a different way how they experienced music performance. The

students Amelia, Miguel, Alicia, and Camila used text writing to describe details from the theater which surprised them. Their description included the stars on the ceiling, the green room, and the luxury of the bathrooms.

Interestingly the descriptions were similar among the students. The students learn to observe and recognize the symbols from El Sol Plaza Theater such as colors and the architecture that was present in this historical location. The learning of the music through instruments, orchestra, musicians, and repertoire was depicted and described by Daniel and Camila. Their drawings were very similar in the sense that they both represented how they and other musicians were engaged playing music and expressing happiness, as they performed during such an important event, at least, that is how they perceived such occasion. Performing in the theater inspired and motivated students to learn about the instruments in the orchestra. The names of the songs, which they learned through practices, also played an important role in their motivation. In addition, their family's participation in the events supported students' music learning development which is connected to their aspirations and access as community members, not only for them but for the family too. The depictions by two students, Miguel and Nancy, described their mother's participation in the events. Miguel showed enthusiasm and joy for his mother's participation in the performance expressing "*mama mia!!*" through colorful words. Brice-Heath (2015) argued that children and parent's participation in similar activities enhance relationship and conversations between them as "a way for [them] to talk with [their child] about something neither [had] ever imagined [they] would or could be doing" (p. 186).

Furthermore, the students talked about their practice experiences, and everything that surrounded them; students' learning experiences as a source of aspiration for them to continue to acquire knowledge and learning through music. Access is a tool for students to continue

exploring new places. Brice-Heath (2015) stated that “one’s place within not only certain given “high education” pursuits such as performing Shakespeare but also within a high risk, highly visible performance for an entire city translates into philosophical reflections” (p. 185).

Discovering Music and Acquiring Musical Knowledge

The students in the Music and Arts-Based Program learn to play violin and cello through Music Theory and Practice Instruction. Through this instruction, the students learn music techniques, music repertoire, developing music skills which imply for students to face challenges through everyday practices and performances. During the music instruction practices, the students learn repertoire from diverse parts of the world, from famous composers. In addition, through music repertoire, students not only learn about rhythm, pitch, and musical notes but from diverse cultures and languages too. Students apply their music learning along with the six performances they have for the whole year. The students learn music not only through the instruction by music teaching artists in the MABP but also from musicians artist who frequently visited the after-school program performing informally for students in the MABP. The musician artist visits are supported by El Sol Symphony Orchestra (ESSO) and other partner organizations. During the visits, the musicians artist show students about their professional music trajectory and their experience playing the viola, cello, trombone, bass, among other instruments. The students, through the artist-musician visits, had the opportunity to interact with music artists by asking questions, sharing thoughts and practicing their music knowledge and experiences with them.

The students recognized the challenges of learning music and the value of belonging to the MABP. They feel proud of their music learning. An example of this experience was a situation with Miguel. Based on my observations and interviews, I noticed that Miguel was a

student who struggled with behavioral issues. I observed that it was difficult for him to express his thoughts and feelings. Miguel sometimes exhibited behavioral challenges that affected his emotions, his participation in the program and his relationship with others. However, I observed that he enjoyed the Music Instruction, museum visitings, and drawing. During an interview with Miguel, when asked about his experience in the program, he expressed that he was happy being part of the program and the opportunity to learn so many things about music:

“De que tuve esta oportunidad de estar en el programa y saber muchas cosas de música” (“That I had this opportunity to be in the program and learn many things about music”) (Interview, February 3, 2017).

Miguel further provided additional information on what *“many things about music”* meant for him. He added:

“De que aprendo muchas cosas canciones nuevas que nunca he escuchado, este... nuevas clases de violin y pues otras cosas” (“That I learn many new songs that I have never heard, like ... new violin lessons and other things”) (Interview, February 3, 2017).

Learning music through Theory and Practice Instruction involves multiple characteristics which are not only determined by the curriculum and structured by the lesson plans, but also by students’ learning experiences that shape their music learning. The students, during the music learning process, faced diverse challenges through instructional time, such as rehearsing, developing skills, memorizing, performing, improvising, etc. For students in the MABP, learning challenges started by the instrument that they play, which is the main tool for them to develop music learning skills. The study findings revealed that students observed the differences from playing a violin or cello during their practices. Some of them expressed the desire to play a different instrument from what they already play. For example, Karime is a student who plays

the violin, expressed her wishes to play a different instrument like the cello. Similarly, Miguel could play and practice on the violin, but it was difficult for him to play a different instrument., *“Para mi es fácil tocar el violin y para mi es difícil hacer, tratar de tocar otro instrumento”* (“for me it is easy to play the violin and for me it is difficult to try to play a different instrument”) (Interview, February 3, 2017).

It was a different experience for Veronica, another student in the program. Veronica plays the cello, but this was not by choice, she expressed that her mother told her to select the violin as the instrument for her practice, *“Pero es que yo queria tocar el violin y mi mama me dijo que tocara el cello”* (“But I wanted to play the violin and my mom told me to play the cello”) (Interview, June 3, 2016). Furthermore, during instruction, Veronica recognized that it was easier to play the cello; she mentioned that some of the advantages of learning to play the cello were that, “you must be seated all the time, and you cannot stand up. Also, you could see your fingers, you don't have your head up” (Interview, June 3, 2016).

For the students in MABP to learn to play the violin and cello, the Music Instruction class is guided by the music teaching artists who encourage students to learn music through practice and rehearsal, two important characteristics in the music instruction. Hallam and Gaunt (2012) explained that practice involves diverse functions in the musician preparation and expertise, “For inexpert musicians, practice is required to develop a range of musical skills: the technical skills for playing the instrument; listening skills to monitor whether the music is being played appropriately; and skills concerned with reading and performing music” (Hallam and Gaunt, 2012, p. 47). The students in MABP are students who learn music step by step through daily practices investing hours of practice by repetition. “Each step offers the unstated opportunity to consider how the previous step contributes to the present one” (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 72).

The everyday practice fosters students' discipline, where students can master a skill. Hallam and Gaunt (2012) showed that "the development of automaticity requires repetition. Repetition does not occur only by practice. Every time that the individual plays their instrument, skills are being repeated and enhanced" (p. 49).

The students' music learning process by practice, rehearsals, and repetition is not an easy task. They challenge themselves in every practice. Two students, Nancy and Alan, expressed that they do not like so much repetition in the Music Instruction class. It is not easy for students to understand their music learning process, and how they are mastering their learning skills by repetition and rehearsing, even if they understood the practice, played well, or finish to play their music repertoire during practice. Nancy expressed that she did not like repetition in practices,

"Miss lo que no nos gusta es de que nos hace repetir, repetirlo aunque ya lo hayamos hecho bien la tenemos que repetir" ("What we do not like is that it makes us repeat, repeat it even though we have already done it well we have to repeat it" (Interview, November 22, 2016).

For Alan, practice repetition means something that makes him feel tired,

"Casi toda una hoja todo y estamos asi, terminamos, y luego repitalo, hay...Casi me muero, eso me cae mal" ("Almost a whole sheet and we are like that, we are done, and then repeat again. I almost died; I do not like that") (Interview, November 22, 2016).

Every day the Music Instruction repetition is prepared and motivated by music teaching artists; the students are not alone in their musical learning journey. The music teaching artists teach students about how to keep their posture, to practice in silence, to observe and listen to the music artist instructions. The students, applying the music teaching artists instruction by learning to concentrate and to read musical notes from the musical pentagram. "While the anticipation of

performance often adds motivational energy to student's efforts, rehearsals are not just preparations for performance but also the homeland of musical and social learning" (Tunstall and Booth, 2016, p. 127). The students learn to play the violin and cello socially in an ensemble setting, where students learn from the instruction of music teaching artists but also their peers. "In ensemble, they also learn to listen to one another, to emulate and to teach, to cooperate, to keep trying even when it's hard or tedious" (Tunstall and Booth, 2016, p. 110). The music teaching artists encouraged students to learn music through the violin and cello practices. Miguel's behavioral problems (as mentioned earlier) were evident during the practices. During a classroom observation, Miguel was playing the violin and made a mistake. Mr. Jesus, the music teaching artist, responded by saying that everyone makes mistakes, and Mr. Jesus reinforced Miguel's action and commented: "lo hiciste muy bien, todos nos equivocamos, but don't give up" (You did it very well, we all make mistakes, but don't give up"). (Classroom observation, October 24, 2016). After this, Mr. Jesus asked Miguel to play a violin solo, and he played it. Mr. Jesus told Miguel that he played very well, and after class, he spoke with Miguel. Tunstall and Booth (2016) explained that the ensemble is a characteristic from El Sistema model, which teaches students to learn together as a team, "the orchestra offers opportunities for complex and often simultaneous communication, which makes it a valuable vehicle for communicative learning" (p. 126).

Consequently, students learn to communicate with their peers and music artist-teachers. The communication is not easy work for students, but Music Instruction teaches them how to express themselves, as well as their ideas, concerns, and questions. The practices and rehearsals encourage students and music teaching artists' communication. I observed that students, through

practices, learned to acquire confidence, and when students expressed their worries and concerns the classroom environment felt different; the communication was opening for all.

The Music Instruction opens the communication for all and moves the conversation to students learning. An example of this experience was during Music Instruction with Mr. Jesus. He was practicing with students the Tremolo and Pizzicato music effects. In the Music Instruction classroom, eleven students were playing the violin, and two students the cello. Flor is one of the students that played the cello, she was a very participative during practices, as an active and sensitive girl. During one practice, Mr. Jesus stopped the rehearsal and began a conversation with her about why she held back during practice,

Mr. Jesus: *¿Qué paso Flor?* (What happened Flor?)

Flor: *Me equivoque* (I was wrong)

Mr. Jesus: *Porque?* (Why?)

Flor: *Me quede atrás* (I'm left behind)

Mr. Jesus: You stopped thinking on the pattern

Flor:*Y es que los dedos me duelen* (...and my fingers hurt)

Mr. Jesus: No, the fingers are fine, I promise you. Ready try again.

(Observation, October 20, 2016).

Tunstall and Booth (2016) cited in their book the voice of a former director from an organization who followed the El Sistema model. The director stated that “Children learn everything in orchestras, “values, habits. It’s really important that we work toward these things, not just toward technique” (p. 127). Tunstall and Booth (2016) explained that children learning to play the cello or violin, through ensemble environment, learn to connect their knowledge through music, creating a beautiful ensemble all together. The music ensemble is not only a way to learn music,

but also a way that teaches students about themselves to recognize their knowledge from their confidence. The students' music learning starts when confidence is evident in the environment in which they learn and move: School, home and community.

Learning through Musician Artist's Visits

The MABP provides a bridge for students to continue learning and receiving music advice from diverse musicians artist from external organizations who work in partnership with El Sol Symphony Orchestra (ESSO). In addition, most of the artist musicians are National and International visitors who come and perform in El Sol Theater. Through visiting artist musician's program, they provide informal performances for students. The students had the opportunity to learn about multiple topics, such as the artist's biography, instruments, repertoire, music history, and diverse fundamentals of music. Furthermore, the musician's artist visits allowed for informal conversations, developing students' ability to observe, listen and question. During a musicians artist visit by one composer, performer and educator, the students had the opportunity to develop an activity by receiving the guidance by the expertise of the musician artist. They experienced the activity by practicing the violin and cello, creating a music piece guided by the musician artist. The musician's artist encouraged children to express their emotions, feelings, and thoughts. The musician's artist started the session by asking students words associated with music. The students began associating the following words: thing, art, story, sharing, mood, feelings. The session continued, and the artist played the violin, and asked children: what do they feel with listening to the melody? What kind of sound would you have? Joyfully they asked: jazz, soft, and then fast, louder, forte. The students, through the Music Instruction, connected music and play. They used their body and voice to start thinking and exploring new sounds. The students were very excited and created rhythms with their hands. They moved their hands with an exquisite

ability and expressed themselves, some of them who were very shy not too loudly, and others who were more confident with strong and firm hand movements. Furthermore, in the final stage of the activity, the students were more confident than during the practices and began showing their leadership skills by responding to the questions. They used their knowledge responding through non-verbal and verbal communication. The musician's artist developed the lesson using her body, voice, and music connecting her mind, heart, and soul. At the end of the session, she asked students: what do you need to think the next time? (when they play), and a student responded: "count time."

The MABP staff prepared students to be ready for every artist musician's visit, and it was evident that the students enjoyed every artist visiting and inspiring them. Some of the students expressed their contentment in their facial expressions, voice, and actions. Victoria was a disciplined student who graduated from Rio Grande Elementary School, and someone who continued participating in the after-school program and the Youth Symphony (at the time of the study). Victoria has been participating in the MABP for four years. She started to play the violin at an early age in México. She expressed that there are two things that she most enjoyed from the program: the outside play and the visiting artist musicians. Victoria discovered learning and inspiration in musicians artist: "*Siento que como en esas personas puedo inspirar yo en tocar como ellos*" ("I feel that people can inspire me to play like them") (Interview, November 29, 2016). Also, Victoria remembered a cellist who visited the program; she said that she recorded when he was playing the "cello song." She commented that she enjoyed that moment and shared with me the melody. Victoria expressed that she liked to listen to classical music during her free times. In a similar way, Flor who plays the cello in the MABP was motivated after the cellist presentation; and she expressed that she would like to play the cello in the same way as the artist.

Her facial expression of happiness denoted motivation to continue learning in her cello apprenticeship classes (Observation, January 2017).

Learning through Leadership

The following findings provide important data to give continuity to future research work in the art and leadership field. Hsu (2017) argued that there is limited research about “leadership qualities and transformational processes in art education” (p. 5). She stated, “Great leadership exists in the art education field, and those existing art education leaders recognized the needs of the field, constructed a research scope, and advanced the theoretical foundation of art education” (Hsu, 2017, p. 58). Hsu (2017) recognized the importance of leadership in art, claiming the need to create a commitment to developing practices where leadership can be explored, interpreted, applied and lived through an art perspective. The author’s research perspective emphasized the idea to focus on art education and leadership; the goal was to develop leaders in school settings, private and public sectors, non-profit organizations and communities. “I believe leaders need to be creative and artistic, which is not always scientific” (Hsu, 2017, p. 8). In other words, art is not measurable, and it is based on subjective interpretation; following this art education leadership perspective, the theme learning through leadership described students learning and leadership throughout the music program instruction. The findings highlighted how students developed leadership skills and thus acquired, self-confidence, ownership, and commitment. The MABP fosters students’ leadership skills through multiple musical activities. The MABP staff acknowledged the need for providing students a structure in which they could develop a sense of agency through leadership. Students developed diverse functions for where they applied and practice leadership by role/job assignments in the program activities. The purpose of students’ role/job assignments in the after-school program was to provide them with the opportunity to

learn about ownership by developing responsibility, commitment, self-awareness from their everyday music instruction. At the same time, students felt proud of successfully belonging to the MABP.

The students were assigned to specific roles/job assignments which were periodically rotated. These roles allowed students to explore new job positions and responsibilities. The following (Table 5.4) describes sixteen role/ job assignments assigned to students. The MABP coordinator in support from music teaching artists assigned a role to each student. However, some role is allowed students to work in partnership with two or three students. Furthermore, the roles have the mission to develop student's leadership skills, and at the same time, the roles created a connection not only with music but with classroom duties. For instance, they learn how to be an attendance keeper or an event planner. Furthermore, students from leadership roles learn by developing pre-determined role/job assignments which helps the students acquire a sense of usefulness in the program, and with their peers.

Freedman (2011) argued the importance of centering art leadership education into a clear vision of the future. He stated that "vision should be related to the leading edge of the field, reflect best practices, and be written in a curriculum rationale" (p. 41). The author explained how art education and leadership provides human beings with ways to learn and develop creative leadership skills, embracing students to participate in sociocultural conditions, sustainable design, visual technologies, and popular visual culture, which open to students' vision to new opportunities toward diverse disciplines and choose future elective programs.

The following table shows an example from the varying students' jobs assigned that were applied during the Music Instruction class.

Table 5.4. Students' Role Assignments

Attendance keeper	Equipment manager (stands)	Line leader	Rhythm creator
Composer	Event planner	Posture supervisor	Snack manager
Conductor	Graphic artist	Principle cello	Stage presence manager
Equipment manager (chair)	Librarian	Principle violin	Usher

Initially, the students received a personalized badge with the name of the job assigned to them. Through this process, the students learn about the goal of each role and the significance of each role. The students learned from each other with the guidance of the MABP staff. The MABP staff led students to learn about job role duties. The following (Table 5.5) shows the students' apprenticeship process where they are involved in leadership practices. Lave and Wenger (1991) identified five main characteristics which support the understanding and application from student's leadership practices and apprenticeship in the MABP using materials, apprenticeship, social interaction communities of practice, independent practice, and active experimentation. The five characteristics are listed and described in the table below. Table 5.5.

Students' Apprenticeship Process in Leadership Practices

Materials	Apprenticeship	Social interaction communities of practice	Independent practice	Active experimentation
Leadership jobs guide and strategies procedure Badges (job assignments)	The students in MABP learned to develop leadership skills through job assigned roles by practices and application in their everyday activities.	The students received instruction from MABP staff (coordinator and music teaching artists),	The students learned to be confident, developing performing skills, and being aware of themselves. They recognized	The students received informal training before their assigned positions. They learned about the importance of their badges, role

Music theory and practice agenda	There are almost sixteen job positions to practice student's leadership.	who were the role models for the students in music learning instruction. Leadership is developed, practiced and promoted collaboratively with their peers.	their efforts and accomplishments in formal and informal school.	meanings, and new vocabulary. The students learned about their strengths and weaknesses through leadership practices and leadership development.
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Students' Experiences Receiving Job Assignments

The students learned the role/job assignments process from each other and through performing everyday practices. The coordinator and music teaching artists taught students the significance of their badges, which are coded according to each student role assignment. Also, the MABP staff explained the roles in detail by using real examples. They emphasized three main steps during the role/job students' assignment. First, the coordinator Mr. Christian started emphasizing the value of being a student in the program. He expressed, *"So you all are very important for the organization, so that is why these badges are really important to take care of them"* (Observation, February 7, 2017). Second, the students learned to value the role/job and their significance from the coordinator and music teaching artists who served as role models. For example, Mr. Jesus (music teaching artist) asked students, *what is Mr. Christian's (coordinator) job?* By posing this question, the students recognized Mr. Christian as a lead coordinator in the after-school program.

Further, Mr. Jesus explained to the students the significance of being the coordinator, the responsibility of his job position, and how they need to take their jobs seriously. Mr. Jesus emphasized and explained to the students that the coordinator has an important role which allows

him to make everything happen in the program. With this statement, the music teaching artists encouraged students to think further about the responsibility to represent each of their roles in the program. Third, the students learn about the meaning of commitment as teachers express the importance of performing well and wherever the job they have. The students, through the apprenticeship process, learned how to develop their job assigned as well as new vocabulary. The MABP staff introduced students to leadership skills by explaining the different roles in the program such as conductor, sectional leader, stage presence managers, composers, and so on. During each explanation about what the jobs entail, Mr. Christian and Mr. Jesus familiarized students with diverse roles. Most of the students were as they received their badges indicating the name of the role. They proudly asked questions about their role and what the position meant. An example of this interaction was when Mr. Christian and Mr. José talked about what it means to be a stage presence manager. They used different examples to explain, in a simple way, the meaning of each role. Also, Mr. Christian and Mr. José explained students' roles by using English and Spanish. In connection with these expressions the use of both languages was used as a resource to explain the meanings of leadership roles, Link and Arango (2017) beliefs that “within and across both levels there exist dialogical relationships that intersect and shape each other” (p. 38). The use of English-Spanish repertoire during dialogue interaction opened a space of understanding and communication.

The following example exemplifies the interaction between students and the MABP staff.

Mr. Christian: ...Also, we have stage presence managers....

Students: *Que es eso?* (What is that?)

Mr. Christian: Good question, so stage... *arriba del escenario*, presence, “*presencia*” *como nos vemos nuestra presencia en el escenario* (Good question, so stage.... above the stage, “presence” how we see our presence in the scenario).

Mr. José: *Como nos vemos.... Vemos, nuestra apariencia en el escenario....* (How do we see each other ... We see, our appearance on stage)

Mr. José: The way they look at the stage

Mr. Christian: If we are sitting upstage and we have ugly [wrist] *y con el hombro asi todo caido....* (and with the shoulder like this all fallen)

Mr. José: am I doing my job?

Students: no

Mr. Christian: ...Stage presence manager... it does not mean that you are going to be a mean police officer always looking who are doing things wrong, no, it means that you are helping the group have a better presence (Observation, February 7, 2017).

The MABP staff collaboratively promoted students’ job positions. They identified students’ strengths, and weaknesses where sometimes advanced students supported new students. The act of student’s collaboration reflects what Lave and Wenger (1991) contend that “members have different interest, make diverse contributions to activity and hold varied viewpoints” (p. 97). In the same manner, the students in MABP learn to work collaboratively through roles.

Furthermore, the students brought their own stories and experiences to the program, which were defined through their voices and actions. As I mentioned in chapter 5, from Nancy’s example, that she enjoyed her role participating in the MABP activities, recognizing herself as a leader and her role as a hostess in the MABP. Nancy takes advantage of her leadership skills and also wants

to share her knowledge and leadership experiences with her peers too. She always showed her interest to share her knowledge with other students by supporting them in music activities. The students' experiences and actions were connected; Dewey in his book, *Art as Experience* (2005), explained that "art is not nature, but is nature transformed by entering into new relationships where it evokes a new emotional response" (p. 82). Dewey (2005), from an art perspective, identified that experience is a connection between art and aesthetics. In this manner, the students' experience their roles not as a duty, but as an action that helps them to identify their abilities. From Dewey's perspective, art is something that is living, "doing or making," and aesthetics is experienced as appreciative, perceiving and enjoying (p. 49). The students' actions let them be aware of their environment in which they move and learn. Dewey (2005) recognized the human being experience as being in constant change, "The real work of an artist is to build an experience that is coherent in perception while moving with constant change in its development" (Dewey, 2005, p. 53). As students perform diverse roles, they experience a constant change providing a learning development through their everyday music instruction.

The students, through the Music Instruction, developed experiences that produced actions that emerged from the selection of job positions. The job position roles were assigned to each student based on their skills and abilities as well as through collaboration. In this manner, students had the opportunity to learn and receive support from their peers. Also, some of the students, during the role assignment selection, expressed their discontent about their roles assigned, as they compared among them. The job assignments were a practice which forged students to recognize and be conscious of their strengths and weaknesses. Gerardo, one of the students, was concerned during role assignments and I observed his discontent when he received his badge. He wanted to perform a different role. Gerardo asked Mr. Christian (coordinator) why

he was assigned to that role, and if he needed to teach Flor. Mr. Christian explained to Gerardo that he needed to learn about consistency, and consistency is something that we must do every day. Gerardo paid attention to Mr. Cristian and asked more questions about what consistency is; he wanted to know more about that concept. Then, Mr. Christian explained with more detail that consistency is to have a positive attitude every day, not only to one day. “It is not to say today I do it, and the other day I don’t” (Observation, February 7, 2016). Gerardo learned about the role from his curiosity, also he learned why he was not assigned to a different role by his questioning.

Miguel’s job assignment learning experience was as an active motor activity. He stated that he learned a lot from his job assignments and that this has been supported in his formal school classes. He said, “*A mi las tareas de MABP me han ayudado en mis clases normales porque asi tengo mas, como se dice energia y no tengo...no soy flojo*” (“To me, the jobs from MABP have helped me in the formal classes, because, how do you say, I have more energy, I am not lazy”) (February 05, 2017). It is evident that job position roles supported students not only in the informal practices but also in their formal school practices too. Hsu (2017) outlined that, “Leaders with the capacity to recognize organizational culture tend to be more capable of maintaining good organizational cultures and creating innovative ones” (p. 58). The author’s idea is supported on how students in the program recognized the significance of each role/job, which provided confidence and social development interaction with peers and community.

A leadership environment is promoted by the MABP staff, where as role models they guided, cared and maintained students’ motivation through a leadership learning process. The students learned through everyday practices about themselves by being aware of their behaviors, actions, and knowledge. “Arts leaders entered others’ lives to bring others’ life journeys positively to another level, which can be inspiring to keep others’ growth continuously beyond the present

time” (Hsu, 2017, p. 143). The roles assigned to each student taught them about leadership practices and how to develop their roles, but the most important is that they were developing their sense of curiosity, learning and motivated to pursue a different role that demonstrated their interest to learn and to know more about different job/roles.

Students practice leadership

The students’ leadership skills were developed and applied during music learning practices. This confidence was evident in some students during classroom Music Instruction and performance events. The students’ improvement was visible in outside practices. Miguel was one of the students who demonstrated his confidence and music skills during a performance. Miguel’s music knowledge and skills encouraged him to lead and teach two female students during music rehearsal a few minutes before their performance. The three students were practicing some notes from the Jingle Bells melody. Miguel motivated students and guided them to repeat notes by encouraging them to follow him with the violin. He carefully observed the girls playing the violin, identifying which notes needed some music support, and then led the practice showing students how to play those notes. Miguel expressed to students while he played the violin, “*Mira, 1,2,3, inténtalo*” (“Look, 1,2,3, try it”) (Observation, December 3, 2016). In addition, Miguel’s body language communicated confidence that showed his music skills and allowed him to share his music knowledge to peers. Lave and Wenger (1991) asserted that “Learning to become a legitimate participant in a community involves learning how to talk (and be silent) in the manner of full participants” (p. 105).

In the same manner, the students in the MABP acquired and expressed their knowledge, talents, learning experience and leadership, not only in formal practices following music artist instruction but also in improvised practices too. Lave and Wenger (1991) stated that “A learning

curriculum unfolds in opportunities for engagement in practice; it is not specified as a set of dictates for proper practice” (p. 93). The author’s idea brings attention to the previous example, on how students’ experience unfolded during an improvised practice where learning and leadership flourished and was shown unexpectedly. Lave and Wenger (1991) explained how members in the communities of practice have diverse interest and make contributions within their communities. The authors stated that the old-timers (experts) contribute to the community by providing resources to newcomers (beginners) and giving access to members in the communities of practice. Miguel, as an expert in music practices, participated and contributed within the community as a full member. Hsu (2017) explained that a leader is someone that motivates and solicits an action in their followers, “A good leader is able to encourage followers to develop motivation in different ways and to recognize motivation problems in time to keep followers engaged and satisfied with their own behaviors” (Hsu, 2017, p. 57). Miguel was a good example of motivation and leadership with his exchange of knowledge with the students during the practices as they progress in ongoing activities.

The students’ leadership skills were a result of the music teaching artists practice efforts, “Leadership development is a continuous process of advancing leadership skills. Each organization and leader have different approaches to developing their respective leadership qualities” (Hsu, 2017, p. 152). The Music Instruction, through leadership inside the program, had a positive effect on the students’ outside practices. The way practices are taught in the classroom encouraged students to learn how to gain the confidence to perform in front of an audience, not only through music play but by singing too. Ms. Moore fostered her teaching practices by encouraging students to practice leadership by performing in front of their peers and using body language and movements in connection with their instruments. Students led and gave

instructions to peers, and with these practices' students learned to apply their cognitive skills, technical skills, musicianship skills, performance skills, and learning skills. It is a holistic music learning acquisition and leadership practice (McPherson and Hallam, 2009, p. 260).

Besides, Ms. Moore, as a charismatic and transformational leader, promoted students' leadership skills and kept them engaged in their practices. Ms. Moore allowed them to take diverse roles during practices such as music director, as well as singing and performing as a trio, duet or solo. For instance, the music director's job assignment let students learn and practice leading a group by using their body language, connecting communication with the audience, developing internal control, memorizing notes and repertoire, understanding the structure of music, and understanding music keys, among other characteristics. Furthermore, the trios, duets or solos, teach students about coordination and communication with other performers, expressive tone quality, memorization of music, understanding harmony, rhythm, understanding the structure of music, good intonation, and the ability to know how music will sound without having to play it (McPherson and Hallam, 2009, p. 260). The trio, duet or solo performances were not easy learning practices for students. During practices, the students expressed their feelings and emotions. Some of them felt nervous and expressed their nervousness by smiling or showing their anxiety through their body language when they were performing in front of Ms. Moore and their peers. A good example of this experience was when Daniel made the sign of the holy cross before his trio-performing practice. He expressed his emotions using a symbol expressing a cultural-religious tradition. The diverse music practices motivated students toward participation and action and provided students the opportunity to express beliefs, language, and cultural traditions which are part of their experiences and identity. Schein (2010) explained the

interconnection between culture and leadership to understand human beings' actions into society and groups:

If we understand the culture better, we will understand ourselves better and recognize some of the forces acting within us that define who we are. We will then understand that our personality and character reflect the groups that socialized us and the groups with which we identify and to which we want to belong. Culture is not only all around us but within us as well (p. 9).

Even with their different performing experiences, the students enjoyed learning by taking diverse roles through the Music Theory and Practice instruction with Ms. Moore. Nancy expressed her confidence and encouraged Ms. Moore to select her to practice in a trio.

Nancy: Ms. Can we do a trio?

Ms. Moore: Let's see if there is anyone else that did not get to sing yet, that would like to sing? Let see anyone else wants a chance...a solo or what?

As this scene unfolded, the students then raised their hands; some of them went to the front and sang in the trio. The student's participation was visible, and through music activities, the music teaching artist encouraged them to continue learning on this journey. The leadership roles were not only roles assigned; leadership was an everyday practice that music teaching artist developed in students through music instruction.

Furthermore, the students practiced singing the music repertoire in Spanish and English. Ms. Moore gave them a choice to sing in the language of their preference. Most of them chose to sing in English. At the final of the practice, Ms. Moore told them "Thank you, good leaders, good job" (Observation, December 15, 2016). Even though Ms. Moore's instruction involved structure, the students learned through her practices to improvise, also, promoting students'

proactivity in practices. Lave and Wenger (1991) explained that mastery comes through time, through practices or by training, and this learning will provide the capacity to manage diverse situations. “Mastery involves the timing of actions relative to changing circumstances: the ability to improvise” (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 20). The students through these practices were learning not only to master their music abilities but to improvise during the diverse situations in which the leadership training involved them.

The findings described in the Learning through Leadership theme showed students’ experiences with leadership in the MABP. The experiences allow students to recognize their actions through the diverse roles assigned and practiced during the various music instruction, activities, and performances. The students’ experiences were expressed through actions, their motivation to participate, their collaboration to guide their peers during practices and their disposition to learn from others. The MABP staff, as a role model, lead students into diverse jobs, mentoring and guiding them in everyday practices. The everyday practices were steps for students which provided an instruction that impacted not only in their informal learning but also their formal learning in school. The students’ curiosity was expressed by questioning their assigned jobs. Freedman (2007) stated that “Making art often means *making trouble* and teaching about art can and should *make trouble* of its own” (p. 205). The author explained that trouble means inspiration which incites students into a change “in the way students think, change in the way they behave, and specifically a change of mind leading to creative action” (p. 205). In a similar way, Hsu (2017) noted that artistic action enables leaders to establish critical skills such as conceptualizing growth, developing empathy, embracing changes, fostering collaboration, and encouraging creativity (p. 214). The connection in the practices through art education and

leadership fostered students' creativity to grow not only in a personal way but in a social way too.

Developing Imagination and Creativity

One of the final themes that emerged from the first part of students' findings was related to how students developed imagination and creativity while they are learning music and making direct connections between music and museum practices. The students in the MABP received diverse learning resources from outside settings which encouraged them to connect with music learning. The El Sol Art Museum (ESAM) is one of the areas, where outside practices take place, that contributed to students' imagination and creativity. ESAM is a venue where students learned about artwork and artists, art styles, and vocabulary which allowed them to create a connection with their music learning instruction. This connection was possible through the interaction with visual arts which were intended to open students' imagination so they could create and connect art with music by using diverse elements of music such as rhythm, tone, line, or dynamics. The students make this connection by bringing their instruments to the museum and playing during the observation. During the students' explorations, their disposition to learn and participate was visible. For instance, Miguel was a student who stated that the museum visit was the best activity that he enjoyed in the program (Interview February 3, 2017). Miguel showed a special interest in art from inside and outside music-art practices. The students become aware of art practices and recognize the significance of their practices, and ESAM was a medium to promote art. Booth (2001) stated that "When people dig into the work of art, they no longer have to ask about its value because they know" (p. 12). The author explained how the work of art as a practice involved participants in an active experience.

Furthermore, the ESAM provided students the ability to connect art and music through practice and application. The visits to ESAM serve an apprenticeship for students as they are exposed to the artwork. The student's apprenticeship process is developed through the art and music connection. Lave and Wenger (1991) explained the value of apprenticeship during practices, "An apprentice's contributions to ongoing activity gain value in practice a value which increases as the apprentice becomes more adept" (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p. 111). The students in the MABP developed music and art skills which prepared them to be experts as Lave and Wenger (1991) cited. For instance, Miguel learning experience through visual art and music was connected with art forms:

Miguel: "*Cuando haciendo líneas podemos tocar con ellas...cuando podemos combinar las líneas con la música*". ("When doing lines, we can play with them ... when we can combine lines with music")

Researcher: "*Cuáles líneas Miguel?*" ("Which lines, Miguel?")

Miguel: "*Pues curvadas, este... punteadas, las gruesas, delgadas, directas, las que van así bien derechos y los zigzags*" ("Well curved, mmm ... dotted, the thick, thin, direct, which are straight and the zigzags") (Interview, February 3, 2017).

The visual arts permitted students to recognize art elements through shapes, forms, color, perspective, depth, and aesthetics or symmetry, which support them to connect that knowledge with their music instruction. The students learned and practiced diverse concepts at ESAM, which were then practiced in the program music instruction. In this manner, the ESAM visits provided students an opportunity to practice their music knowledge in a "real environment." Also, during practices in the Music Theory and Practice, students were introduced to diverse musical elements and related them with art elements. The following illustration (Fig 5.1) shows

an example from the Music and Practice class. Ms. Moore explained the music elements like dynamics, tempo, and texture are related to the art elements like line, dashes, dots, wavy curly and texture. Ms. Moore explained to students from an art perspective (image) the elements of art to connect later the music elements in student's music learning. Also, the elements of art were practiced in the real environment through ESAM visits.

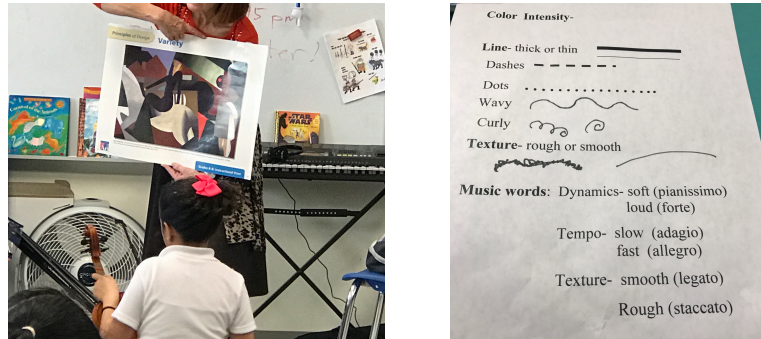


Figure 5.1. Examples from music theory instruction

The students' apprenticeship connection between inside and outside practices introduced them to holistic learning. The ESAM and MABP staff introduced students to this learning process step by step through lesson plans. The ESAM created lessons plans to guide students into different education goals which, 1) allow students to respond emotionally to artworks, 2) help students express their emotional response through music, 3) continue building students' skills in articulating ideas and critical thinking, and 4) encourage students to find connections between individual musical compositions and individual artworks (ESAM, Art lesson I-VII).

Composing Music through Art

During the museum visits, the students had the opportunity to start learning, creating, and playing musical compositions through art. The music composition learning process provided students an environment to share and discuss ideas in a collaborative manner. The students'

learning to create music compositions through artwork was a process which took almost three years. The MABP and ESAM staff worked with the students' instruction helping them move forward in the final composition learning process.

The following activity describes how advanced students learned to create music composition. The activity was inspired by the artwork of a famous Mexican sculptor whose works included an art style that uses large geometric shapes. Before the creation of music compositions, the students had the opportunity to observe the artist's artwork at an ESAM exhibition. The students observed both the digital and physical representation of the artwork. For example, the students were able to see the previous digital sculpture work from the artist before the finished product. Observing closely, the students became engaged with the artist's digital interactive artwork which inspired them to develop their music composition creation. The interactive digital artwork provided students the opportunity to explore shapes, forms, texture, colors, volume, velocity, and geometry. This music composition activity forged students' creativity, not only through art and music but also through exploring geometry which required students to use mathematics skills. The activity motivated students to express their ideas and emotions in their music compositions with the support of Mr. Jesus (strings teaching artist). Mr. Jesus explained that the students' music creations were their inspiration, and as such the pieces created by the students were not changed in the final composition process, but respected. In other words, Mr. Jesus did not alter students' creation; instead he respected the students' choices as they created their own art music compositions.

The students stated that they composed the music piece by dividing the work among their peers. Further, the students developed and named the music pieces based on their inspiration. They created three music compositions with the following names pieces: 1) Starfish Dance, 2)

Seashell Waltz, and 3) Crown Waltz. Mr. Jesus explained that waltzes names were chosen because students connected the music compositions with a triangle shape which has three sides. The students connected the triangle sides with the musical rhythm of the waltz. The waltz has a rhythm of one, two, and three, similar to the three points in a triangle. Veronica, as an advanced student in her last year of elementary school, visualized her music composition experience as a collaborative effort:

“Hicimos tres, y luego o sea es que una parte del salon hacia una, otra y luego yo y unas niñas” (“We did three, and then one part of the classroom did one, then one, and then me and girls” (Observation, June 3, 2016).

The students’ involvement in music composition activity allowed them to be aware of the music composing process. Veronica stated that she thought composing music was going to be a difficult process; however, after the learning activity, she stated that it was not as hard as she expected.

This learning activity gave students the confidence to perform their music compositions creations at the ESAM as well as in front of the community which included their parents, relatives, guest artist and celebrities from El Sol area. Performances at ESAM provided opportunities for students to meet local artists, to learn from the artist’s artwork, and to participate with them musically by attending and performing at community events in El Sol region.

As it is evidenced, the ESAM contributed to students’ art and music learning process. The ESAM opened its doors to MABP giving to student’s time, care, and art instruction. The ESAM director and the museum docents volunteered their time and knowledge which impacted students’ art learning. The artwork from the ESAM’s staff encouraged students’ cognitive

growth, inspired confidence, developed social skills, fostered respect and promoted collaborative work.

Dr. Simmons as a director of the after-school program at the museum expressed that she witnessed students' learning and social development during museum visits,

“Students have always tended to be a little shy, a little bit less comfortable in public speaking and performing. The students have shown tremendous growth, and they are the ones who worked the seniors, the ones who get the composition, and who performed the composition” (Interview, August 5, 2016).

During the student's visits to ESAM, they learned how to observe artworks and how to connect their ideas and inspirations to create and perform compositions. The museum visits and continued practices helped students' creativity. The artworks and music connections were practices that developed in students a type of curiosity and disposition which they can apply as they practice their music knowledge in a real environment. For example, during a practice activity, Nancy and Daniel, who were advanced students in the program, accurately connected artwork observations with music. They were inspired to play and compose through the artwork; when art and music connection happened, the music flows by itself. Nancy and Daniel played violin together under Dr. Simmons' guidance. During a specific session, the students played the violin taking turns imitating and creating new variations from each other's inspirations.

Dr. Simmons: Daniel, whatever do you want to play, and Nancy is going to change it.

Dr. Simmons: Nancy, do you want to try?

Dr. Simmons: Daniel, let her do the thing and then you do the variation.

Diego: yes

Dr. Simmons: Wow, that's wonderful if you can start doing that, then you really are starting to understand about playing music, and how to make music not just playing, but how to create music, and now you are doing it, and that it is really neat (Observation, November 14, 2016).

The students' imagination and creativity were visible through the diverse art and music instruction. The students' creativity and learning development allowed the students to recognize their learning progress in the MABP. Nancy's learning process was expressed in a clear example by using a metaphor. For Nancy the learning process in the after-school program was compared to a journey to the sky:

Pero al principio como que estas en el piso y luego al segundo grado de [MABP] estas en como en el sky, y luego al avanzado estas como fuera en el espacio y en el mega avanzado estas en las estrellas. (At the beginning like you are in the floor, then in the second grade of [MABP], like you are in the sky, and then in advanced like you are in the space and the mega advanced like you are in the stars) (Interview, November 22, 2016).

As evidenced Nancy used a metaphor relating to space to explain how she felt. In the same manner or similarly, other students experienced how they felt in their learning about music. For instance, Alicia's learning experience was different. She stated, "*Me siento en el suelo...*" ("I feel [like] in the floor"). She explained that she is working on her music learning.

On the other hand, Amelia expressed that she felt the same as Nancy in all three levels. The student's metaphors were connected with their thinking and actions, "Teaching art is inextricably linked to reflexive and metaphoric thought because the inquiries with students take the form of dialogue and actions with students across domains" (Serig, 2006, p. 245). The reflexive dialogue that Nancy, Alicia, and Amelia had, showed not only how they experienced

their music learning process but also their critical thinking and dialogue between their mind and body as they were creating new meanings and understandings.

It is evident that the practices that took place inside as well outside of the museum contributed to the student's music learning process. The music served as a medium which encouraged students to learn from other disciplines such as science, math, and engineering among others. In the following examples, the students made a clear connection to the math discipline. The students learned to apply their knowledge creatively and imaginatively. For instance, the findings showed that students applied their music knowledge and learning experiences in their everyday school practices developing mathematical connections with music. The students' music knowledge supported their school practices connecting mathematic operations with music elements, such as notes, half notes, tempo, and others. To show this, Victoria explained how she connected her music experiences in formal school practices with math skills. "*Cuando estoy en la escuela, cuando hago la tarea de vez en cuando ponen half y luego pues yo pongo las notas como half*" ("When I am at school when I do the homework, they put half and then I put the notes as half"). Rothstein (2006) stated that "Making connections requires some sense of the essential; it requires abstraction" (p. 8). Similarly, Victoria worked with her basic knowledge of math and music and created an abstraction comparing the numbers with notes to understand the concept better. Victoria's knowledge of music supported her connection to math. Furthermore, the music notes encouraged Victoria to count the bits and to know how many bits each note has, helping her to conduct mathematical calculations. I observed that Victoria struggled while she was doing her mathematics homework during After-School Tutoring (AST). The evidence from Victoria learning by developing music connections with

mathematics operations showed how students can develop their critical and analytical thinking through music practices.

Rothstein (2006), in his book the *Emblems of Mind*, recognized the distinctions between mathematics and music explaining that “they are between truth and beauty, timeliness and change, science and art” (Rothstein, 2006, p. 7). Throughout the Music Instruction, the students were able to recognize the beauty of music, and at the same time, they can distinguish the structure inherent in math. While math and music are two distinct disciplines, the common characteristics are structure, numbers, and tempo which makes a connection possible.

Rothstein (2006) explained that music and math have symbols, which represents human ideas: We “read” according to the passage of time, imagining the sound. It is also purely linear; it involves the vertical dimension along with the horizontal, the first presenting a form of musical space, the second the progression of musical time. (p. 16)

In this manner, Victoria, made the connection between music and math by expressing her ideas and how she applied her learning in and outside of school when she counted bits in her notes. Through instruction, practices, and activities inside and outside the after-school program, the MABP provided experiences that encouraged students to observe and explore different environments. These experiences afforded students the possibility to connect music learning experiences and to move them to a context which awoke their curiosity and stimulated their capacity of questioning and reflecting.

Summary of Chapter 5

This chapter addressed the first question of the study: 1) How do students learn and experience music and art practices in the music and arts-based program? To respond this question, I described four main themes that emerged from the students’ exploration in music-art

practices in the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP); 1) Aspiration and Access, 2) Discovering Music and Acquiring Musical Knowledge, 3) Learning through Leadership, and 4) Developing Imagination and Creativity. The goal of this chapter was to gain a better understanding of students' experiences as they learn and move in different contexts, inside and outside of the MABP. In conjunction with students' observations, interviews, field notes, artifacts, video, and journals the findings revealed the students' learning process in the MABP. The findings showed that students learned through diverse social activity participation. The students' learning experience was expressed through actions and how they were open to supporting each other, and to be conscious about their strengths and weaknesses to learn and receive support from students.

The support and mentorship were evident from MABP staff, music teaching artists and parents. Lave and Wenger (1991) emphasized the importance of engagement in practices, where apprenticeship is not only to learn how to master music skills but to learn holistically. "The apprentice's ability to understand master's performance depends not on their possessing the same representation of it, or of the objects it entails, but rather on their engaging in the performance in congruent ways" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 21).

The theoretical perspectives from Vygotsky's (1978) and Lave and Wenger (1991) allowed analyzing student's individual and social learning experiences in the MABP. Also, to understand the learning dynamic that occurred inside of the program and outside practices. Two main elements influenced students' learning: environment and learning tools. The learning environment from inside and outside of the music and art practices influenced student's apprenticeship to master not only music and art skills but also social participation. The learning

tools were the students medium to acquire music knowledge and express learning such as techniques, melodies, rehearsals, performances, assignments, and lessons.

The visual data analysis provided rich content from students' learning experiences and added a significant graphics perspective from students' expressions to the study. The theme *Aspiration and Access* showed an analysis from students' journals by performing in El Sol Plaza Theater. The visual data validated students' learning experiences expressions. The students' visual data brought their ideas through drawings and writing text; they shared their past experiences and brought these experiences to the present. The following questions let students' think about their learning in the MABP through journals: What I learned, or I am learning? (see Figure 5.3). The students expressed the diverse signs they identified in El Sol Theater, as a historical and famous place from the city. They provided descriptions and details from the color, instruments such as violin and cello, stars, repertoire, musicians, also by using adjectives and metaphors to name their fabulous ideas and experiences in El Sol Theater.

The students' learning apprenticeship findings showed the connection between music and art through the diverse environments they experienced. The El Sol Art Museum (ESAM) activities allowed students to learn from visual art; the visual art appreciation turns into functional learning, where the students connected their music skills with visual art (museum) and extraordinary moments that happened at the same time. These moments involved students' Music Instruction into active learning, where students applied their knowledge learned in everyday music instruction. It is a real connection in a real environment.

Chapter 6: MABP Activities and Students' Meanings as an Activity

The following chapter outlines the findings from students' meanings developed through music and art. This analysis draws from the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). The CHAT framework helps provide a clear understanding of students' meanings as they participate in different music-art practices and performing events in the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP). The present analysis uses a CHAT lens and responds to the second research question of the study: How are students' meanings developed through music and art in the arts-based after-school program?

To find out the students' meanings that developed in the MABP, I analyzed students' experiences, which were highlighted in the MABP. The concept of meanings has been explored from the socio-cultural context and has been identified by different authors. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) contend that "Human actions are based upon, or infused by, social or cultural meanings: that is, by intentions, motives, beliefs, rules, discourses, and values" (p. 7). In a similar manner, Hall (1997) identified meanings from a cultural environment. The author states that "it is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture and the linguistic and other presentational systems to construct meaning, to make the world meaningful and to communicate about that world meaningfully to others" (Hall, 1997, p. 25). According to these authors, the cultural background has an impact on the construction of meanings, and how human beings live their everyday experiences.

The students in the MABP program developed meanings through the different contexts in which they operated inside and outside of the MABP. My exploration of students' experiences created a bridge to understand their meanings, which were analyzed based on students' expressions, emotions, and actions through music and art practices.

As primarily Latino/a immigrants, the students in the MABP carried their own cultures and identities, where language, traditions, history, socioeconomic status, and assimilation had a significance in the construction of students' meanings. Dewey (2005), in his book *Art as Experience*, explored the concept of experience through art, aesthetics, and perception. He argued that experience is a continuous process which has its rhythm and movement:

For life is no uniform uninterrupted march or flow. It is a thing, of histories, each with its own plot, its own inception and movement toward its close, each having its own particular rhythmic movement; each with its own unrepeated quality pervading it throughout (p. 37).

Dewey (2005) identified experience using art and aesthetic perspective. This perspective on art signifies "doing or making," and involves aesthetic perception, appreciation, and enjoyment. This perspective "denotes the consumer's rather than the producer's standpoint" (Dewey, 2005, p. 49). The author recognized the intimacy from the art and aesthetic connection in the lived human experience. Through this intimacy, Dewey (2005) explained that aesthetics involved the work of perception where a human being needs to take consciousness from observations and actions to create their own experiences. For Dewey (2005), perception is not a passive scene but rather it is a burst of energy that is immersed at the moment and becomes a real experience:

Perception is an act of the going-out-of energy in order to receive, not a withholding of energy. To steep ourselves in a subject matter we have first to plunge into it. When we are only passive to a scene, it overwhelms us and, for lack of answering activity, we do not perceive that which bears us down. We must summon energy and pitch at responsive key in order to take in. (p. 55)

The art and aesthetic perspective are not an isolated action. Therefore, the real human experience lived is a result of his or her observations and actions. John-Steiner, Connery, and Marjanovic-Shane (2010) explained that Vygotsky identified emotional experience by using the term *Perezhivanie*, which translates to a lived emotional experience in individuals. This term is also understood as the “social interaction among children and adults [that] is perceived from the lens of previous experience” (John-Steiner et al., 2010, p. 8). González Rey and Mitjans Martínez (2016) recognized the ambiguity in the concept *Perezhivanie* in Vygotsky’s last life works (p. 148). Vygotsky’s (1994) *Perezhivanie* perspective was studied from childhood development as a social situation development (unit of emotional experience) about the social environment and individual work (unity of consciousness):

An emotional experience [perezhivanie] is a unit where, on the one hand, in an indivisible state, the environment is represented, i.e., that which is being experienced- an emotional experience [perezhivanie] is always related to something which is found outside person- and on the other hand, what is represented is how I, myself, am experiencing this. (p. 342)

Michell (2016) explained that Vygotsky’s *Perezhivanie* concept was related to the environment of a child’s development. “The environment-mediating function of the child’s *perezhivanie* is described with cognitive terms [such] as “awareness,” “interpretation,” “insight,” and “attitude” towards a given situation (p. 18). In this manner, the child’s development is a consequence of the child’s environment where not only cognitive experience is developed, but also emotional experience as imagination, fantasy, and emotion is developed, “how a child becomes aware of, interprets, [and] emotionally relates to a certain event” (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 341).

In this study, the students' experiences in the MABP were related and connected to their social-emotional learning (SEL) based on how they expressed emotions and feelings through self-confidence, motivation, behavior, leadership and social development. Zins, Weissberg, Wang, and Walberg (2004) define SEL "as the process through which children enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving to achieve important life tasks" (p. 6). The authors recognized socio-emotional learning as a component that connects a student's emotions to develop a set of experiences to learning at the same time cultivating school attitudes, school behavior, and school performance.

Dewey (2005) noted that experience is also emotional, and it carries diverse characteristics which make it a holistic unity:

An experience has a unity that gives it its name, that meal, that storm, that rupture of friendship. The existence of this unity is constituted by a single *quality* that pervades the entire experience in spite of the variation of its constituent parts. This unity is neither emotional, practical, nor intellectual, for these terms name distinctions that reflection can make within it. (p. 38)

The students' different experiences in the MABP embodied their thoughts, which were the result of their actions. The students in the MABP created their own experiences by reacting to the environment through all of their senses. Eisner (2002) explained in his book *The Arts and the Creation of Mind* that aesthetic experience comes from the beauty of the senses, "Virtually every form that can be experienced, from sound to sight, to taste and touch, can yield aesthetic forms of experience if we can learn how to attend to them through an aesthetic frame of reference" (Eisner, 2002, p. 231). Eisner (2002) further added the importance of cultivating the

sensibilities, and that it is possible from the physical processes in the human being in connection with feelings.

It is important to emphasize that emotional perspective from Vygotsky's (1994), Eisner's (2002) and Dewey's (2005) theoretical perspective extend a connection to CHAT theory, where the emotional perspective analyzes the individual human action activity. In connection with these theories Engeström (2009) CHAT perspective let to understand the collective human learning activity through dialogue, multiple perspectives, and networks of interacting activity systems (Engeström, 2009, p. 55)

To understand the children's meanings developed in the MABP the following findings are described and analyzed using a Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) perspective, which was used as a guide to examine students' meanings as they participated in different music-art practices and performances in the MABP as a collective activity. The next section is organized by highlighting three major themes that emerged from the data analysis used to understand students' meanings. The data are described with three activity diagrams: 1) Expressions, 2) Discovery, and 3) Agency.

The data were interpreted as an activity based on CHAT, using three activity systems and their components. The six components were the: 1) subject, 2) object (goals), 3) rules, 4) community, 5) division of labor (roles), and 6) mediated artifacts/tools. The findings present a detailed definition of each component within the three activity systems (figure 1, 2, 3).

As I explained in chapter 2, the CHAT perspective was initially conceived by Vygotsky's, Leont'v, and Luria (Engeström et al., 1999). "The lineage of the three-generational model of the Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) can be traced back to Soviet psychology and philosophy" (Mashiya, 2015, p. 173). For purposes of this study, the findings

were analyzed through the third generation of activity theory as developed by Engeström. Engeström's et al., (1999) CHAT perspective provided the lens to understand MABP dialogue, learning perspectives, and events within the different activity systems. Furthermore, utilizing Engeström's perspective, it is possible to recognize the cyclical process of the three MABP activity systems through the analysis of internal tensions or contradictions. Engeström's cyclical activity network provided the conceptual framework to understand the contradictions not as errors, but as resolutions of evolution and realization in the MABP. The cyclical activity network was developed by the analysis of the three themes: 1) Expressions, 2) Discovery and 3) Agency (Figure 6.1). The analyzed themes provided the understanding of students' meanings by a cyclical activity process. The cyclical activity unifies students' meanings and the transformative process to develop the expansive learning and an agentic activity dimension represented through the three different themes. Lee (2011) explained that the relationship or connection between the activity systems created or produced an outcome, "in the process of expanding learning there occurred a combined object created from the (three) activities, and then the outcome of the activities can be derived by the combined object" (Lee, 2011, p. 150). The three themes were directed toward different activity actions (object) guided to attain an outcome.

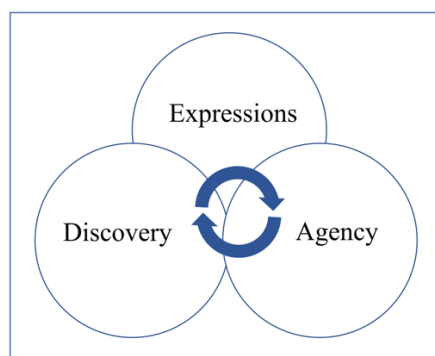


Figure 6.1. Cyclical activity process that frames students' expressions, discovery, and agency of students' activity in the MABP. (Adapted from Engeström, 2016).

Music as an Expression within the Activity System

The students' experiences carried emotional meanings which have characteristics of expression and motivation. These characteristics emerged from the MABP music-art practices, performance, music teaching artists instruction, outside practices, and family support. The theme, *expressions of emotions*, draws from students' feelings which embraced students' self-awareness of the different meanings they constructed in the activities or events. The students recognized how music supported them not only in learning but in their life experiences to express their emotions.

Miguel, who was in third grade at the time of the data collection, was in his second year of the MABP and was learning to play the violin. He commented that music supported him to be more concentrated in his activities, "*Creo que la música me ha ayudado a tranquilizarme un poco. Si, y hacer con más calma el trabajo*" ("I think the music has helped me to calm down a bit. Yes, and work more calmly") (Interview, February 3, 2017). As I will show here, music let him become aware of his emotions such as happiness, sadness, and anger. These music practices supported Miguel in identifying his emotions and how to deal with them. During practices, Miguel sometimes struggled to control his behavior. For example, when he felt angry his anger was expressed within himself, not that he was aggressive towards his peers or music teachers, but that he did not want to participate in class. Miguel's moodiness was more visible during Ms. Moore's music theory instruction where he didn't want to actively participate in music practices. In Ms. Moore's Music Theory and Practice class, students learned music theory through singing, dancing, and playing diverse instruments. However, sometimes Miguel's family issues affected his mood and behavior, distracting his learning development to participate and engage actively in music-art practices.

Miguel had experienced a difficult family environment. His mother is a single parent and the only provider for Miguel and his youngest brother. On the days that there was no after-school program, Miguel spent much time alone waiting for his mother, Berenice, to arrive from work. Moreover, on the days Miguel had MABP, Miguel's mother picked up his brother from kindergarten, then she picked up Miguel from the MABP. She has to take several buses to arrive on time and pick up Miguel from the after-school program. Usually, Miguel was the last student in the after-school program to get picked up. During an interview with Berenice, she expressed that she wanted Miguel to participate in the MABP because she does not want Miguel playing outside the home, because of the drug addicts living in or near the neighborhood. In addition, she commented that one of Miguel's closest friend in the apartment complex had moved away, and Miguel's friendship from the after-school program friends were valuable, as expressed in his statement that, "*No tengo casi amigos, pero tengo a Alan y a Daniel*" ("I do not have friends, but I have Alan and Daniel") (Interview, February 3, 2017).

Playing music lowered Miguel's anxiety and anger to where he could express his feelings and thoughts with other classmates: "*Creo que la música me ha ayudado a decir lo que en verdad paso ó a veces decir lo que sentimos*" ("I think music has helped me to explain what really happened or sometimes express what we feel") (Interview, February 3, 2017). For Miguel, learning and performing music was a mediated tool which gave him self-awareness to recognize and control internal emotions and thus modify his behavior in the MABP.

Another student, Veronica, who was in fifth grade at the time of data collection, was in her second year of the MABP program and was learning to play the cello. Veronica experienced music as a meaning of the expression. Veronica was a friendly student, she liked to learn and participate in music-art practices and activities, not only in her music practices but informal

school too. Veronica was happy to share that she received the citizenship award in her last year of elementary school. She was talkative, and always smiling when participating in MABP. Her experience of learning music, visiting museums and attending performances were ways to express her feelings, "*Pues es que a veces con la música como que te expresas...*" ("Well, sometimes with music, like, you express yourself...") (Interview, June 3, 2018). She mentioned a moment when her classmate cried after listening to Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" (Interview, June 3, 2016). Veronica emphasized that her classmate never cried before, but Beethoven's music seemed to move him to tears. This event was memorable for her because it allowed her to recognize the power that the music holds and how music triggers emotions.

These meanings of expression created by the students through music illustrated how they learned music, by playing the violin or a cello, and by paying attention to the content of the piece. The students recognized the composers and the names of these classical pieces. In this manner, the orchestra conductor Gustavo Dudamel (Deutsche Grammophon, 2012), who shaped his music training in El Sistema music program, recognized the existence of a cliché in the classical music. He explained that the term "classical music" is a term that is usually related to an older generation and is not common with the younger generation:

I think there's a bit of cliché about classical music...beginning with the word 'classical' itself... which distances young people from the music and makes them think... 'This is something from my grandparents, my parents, it's music for dead people, it's sad music.' So, I'd tell them that that's not true and that classical music is an incredible world...offering experiences that are quite unique, obviously to get the most out of classical music you have to understand it. But classical music was the pop music of its day... and the music we have now is the result of what came before and it's just a full of

sensation, energy, and color. (qt. in Deutsche Grammophon, 2012)

Miguel and Veronica's meanings of expression demonstrated that the act of learning and practicing music was a tool to express their emotions. These experiences showed how they felt and, as a result, their emotions produced an action that they could apply in their everyday lives. Miguel and Veronica's emotions allowed them to recognize and externalize their thoughts, behavior or actions, as well I will provide evidence on how they developed self-esteem and confidence.

It is important to know about the students' background to understand the impact that the after-school program had on them. The students experienced diverse social issues, such as family problems, which many students brought to school. Some of the students were more communicative among their peers or with their teachers, but others were shy, quiet or just kept to themselves. Dewey (2005) explained that there is no expression (*activity*) without motivation (*tension*). The author recognized the act of expression (playing music or listening to music) as something that goes beyond the expression alone:

There is no expression without excitement, without turmoil. Yet an inner agitation that is discharged at once in a laugh or cry, passes away with its utterance. To discharge is to get rid of, to dismiss, to express is to stay by, to carry forward in development, to work out to completion. (p. 64)

For some students, the emotional discharge they experienced through music practices were acts of awareness and expression. The students' emotional expressions were not only an emotional discharge but also an act of expression which promoted students to develop self-reflection. The act of expression is more than just playing a song; it is a way to relieve, to improve, to comprehend, to perceive, and ultimately to act. This became evident when students

borrowed their first violin or cello from the MABP. For example, Karime who was in fifth grade at the time of data collection was in her second year of the MABP program, and she was learning to play the violin. She was a student who had an accident with the violin, which caused the violin to fall and break a string. Karime mentioned that when she started music practices in the after-school program, she did not start practicing with a cardboard violin like the other students. The student's music practice learning involved commitment and discipline to their music learning practices before they get a real violin their hands, as I mentioned in Chapter 4.

Karime's experiences showed how students constructed meanings throughout a specific time process. That is to say that students' experiences changed from the time they received a borrowed instrument to the time that they acquired their instrument. The students' experiences handling their first borrowed violin were different compared to the experience of when they had their own violin. For example, Victoria expressed that her violin had a different appearance. She did not mean that there was something wrong with it, such as being out of tune or being different from others, but that her own violin had a different meaning to her. For Victoria, her violin was something valuable, of quality, and important enough for her to care. In this case, by having her own violin, Victoria embraced meanings of pride; however, she also experienced moments where she released her anger toward the violin. While in one case she cared and took pride in her violin, in other instances she rejected the violin. For example, one day Victoria behaved as if she did not care about the violin when her family picked her up late after the music program. This experience demonstrated that an instrument, a violin, can be a medium for students to express meanings that are manifested in behavior.

The students expressed their emotions about how they felt during specific moments. They recognized that music and their instruments supported them, providing concentration or

relaxation to improve their music practices. Furthermore, the key elements of music and instruments were physical mediums of expression. Dewey (2005) explained that mediated objects established an intimate contact with the self to create inspiration:

It means that the expression of the self in and through a medium, constituting the work of art, as itself a prolonged interaction of something issuing from the self with objective conditions, a process in which both of them acquire a form and order they did not at first possess (p. 68).

Mentorship and Guidance

Parent support

The students' music instruction required effort, commitment, and perseverance to their everyday practices. Parental advising and music teaching artists support were distinct characteristics of students' learning, which forged their self-confidence and motivation to continue striving in their daily practices and performances. For example, Victoria felt her mother supported her music and practicing, "*Una vez estaba, mi mama estaba ayudando a tocar, y luego me equivocaba mucho y luego me dijo que gritara como para desahogarme ó algo así, pues yo grite y pues ya me salio bien*" (Once I was there, my mom was helping me to play, and then I did a lot of mistakes and then she told me to scream like to vent or something like that, and I shouted and it worked out well") (Interview, November 29, 2016). Victoria's mother was a nurse studying psychology and helped Victoria release her stress and frustration while practicing her violin at home.

The students' practices at home helped forge their commitment, discipline, perseverance, and also strengthened their motivation to play music. Booth (2009) explained how El Sistema in Venezuela promoted the growth and relationship between child and parent, "It is common for the

families to sit around and listen to the student practice at home because they feel involved in and important to the process” (p. 228). Parental support was different for each child; some parents participated more in the MABP events and activities than others. Karime commented that her mother usually did not attend the performance events but had good memories of when her mother attended her first concert in the MABP, “*Mi mama no podia ir, si.... porque trabaja y va a la escuela. El que fue primero fue cuando tocamos allá en la cafeteria...*” (My mom could not go, yes.... because she works and goes to school. The first was when we played there in the cafeteria...) (Interview, June 3, 2016). This memory was special to Karime as it kept her motivated to continue learning in the MABP. Moreover, the children in the after-school program who came from divorced parents experienced family issues such as how the mother or father struggled to share time with them to do homework, being picked up at school or the after-school program on time, participation at school events and time to attend parents’ meetings.

The family concerns that students lived with at home affected their commitment to music practices and social development. In this manner, the MABP understood students’ family situations and the challenges they faced in their everyday lives. This understanding was developed through the environment of the after-school program created by promoting the interaction and participation among students, music teaching artists and parents. The MABP encouraged parent’s participation to the different events that program organizes such as: Birthday celebrations, students’ performances in school and external settings, parents’ monthly meetings, choir classes to parent’s, and field trips. Zins et al. (2004) stated that “Engagement with learning is fostered by relationships with teachers, parents, and peers” (p. 71). The authors emphasize the importance of encouraging student’s motivation through the development of

social and emotional programs where enhanced student's autonomy, belonging and competence not only for receiving benefits in the informal environment but in formal schooling too.

Music teaching artists support

The mentorship and guidance from music teaching artists played an important role in student's music learning, not only in teaching and instruction but also in mentorship and guidance. The MABP staff support had a positive impact on developing students' self-confidence and self-esteem. Victoria recognized that music teaching artists provided mentorship and guidance to understand how to contend with music and violin practices to develop cognitive skills, musicianship, performance, technical, aural, and learning skills (McPherson and Hallam, 2009). Victoria expressed that, "*Pues en veces me han dicho que me equivoco si, pero pues igual es normal que me equivoque. Todo el mundo se va a equivocar*" ("Well sometimes I have been told that I made a mistake, yes, but it is normal that I make mistakes. Everyone is going to make a mistake") (Interview, November 28, 2016). The music teaching artists developed students' musical skills through motivating students to observe, to listen and to speak. The Music Instruction was a participative and interactive class, where students were encouraged into dialogue. The music teaching artists further motivated students to continue their music education beyond the MABP.

Booth (2009) explained in his book *The Music Teaching Artist's Bible*, "We can compel many kinds of behavior and action, but not the action of the heart and spirit that lead the curiosity, hunger, and dedication" (p. 226). An example of curiosity and motivation during string music class was demonstrated by Mr. Jesus, who developed teaching strategies to nourish students' curiosity. Mr. Jesus faced challenges in every class. For instance, students sometimes got tired of their regular classes, or their behavior and mood changed depending on the school

day. One day, Mr. Jesus encouraged students to participate using metaphors and music while they all played violin and cello. He told his students that he was hungry, then one student responded: me too. He then asked her: “What are you hungry for? Or What are you craving?” (*¿Que se te antoja?*) to which the student responded: “*tamales*”. Then he said to everyone: “Let’s do tamales, let’s go”. Mr. José started playing a piano solo showing students the rhythm and tone that they needed to follow with their instruments. All the students were motivated to play the rhythm “*tamales*.” The students all laughed and played with the violin and cello (Classroom observation, September 21, 2016). Mr. Jesus encouraged students to participate while learning musical rhythms. The students were encouraged to play and follow the different music tones by giving a musical rhythm of tasty food that students and music teaching artists had created in their imagination, like tamales. The food was used as a metaphorical representation to support student’s music instruction practice. This teaching strategy developed students’ confidence to participate and even encouraged those who did not show it before the activity.

Student’s expressions through CHAT.

I developed the following activity diagram to show the students’ music experiences as an expression centered on CHAT in the MABP. The activity was analyzed based on music theory and practice, music instruction (as a learning tool) and orchestra performance (*mediating artifact*). The activity system shows the relation between students in MABP (*subject*) and the music theory and string music instruction (*object*). The music practices were governed by the (*rules*) of the MABP, where students received instruction based on MABP discipline and scheduled agenda. In this activity system students in the MABP followed the rules set for them by the music artist-teachers, such as discipline, organization, schedule, and collaborative work. The agenda was regulated (*the division of labor*) by learner of music, the practitioner of the

instrument, soloist, and performer. The (*community*) social participation and interaction came in the form of the MABP staff, parents, and El Sol Symphony Orchestra promoted student's music learning.

The CHAT analysis showed that students' expressions of emotions were an action. The music and art practices allowed students to express their meanings through emotions, which were then transformed into actions. "The clear distinction between the activity and action levels allows us to link collective needs and emotions to the former, and individual needs, emotions, and feelings to the latter" (Roth, 2009, p. 71). The student's activity is a cyclical process where the components of each activity were connected and generated which produced an outcome, such as music support to express emotions, the instrument as a learning tool, and mentorship and guidance from music artist-teachers and parents. The student's meanings of expression showed how the expressions of emotion (activity) were transformed into student's expressions of motivation, knowledge, action, self-awareness, recognition, and learning application (tension) through their everyday music and art practices. Roth (2009) argued that through Engeström's mediated triangle activity it is possible to explore the mediated human activities. Roth (2009) also identified the need to link activity not only as a structural activity, "but think exploration about it *together with* the sensuous nature, emotive, identity-related, and ethical-moral dimensions of human actions and activities that currently are not highlighted in this representation" (Roth, 2009, p. 65). In this manner, the following diagram (Figure 6.2) shows the student is mediated music practice activity in the MABP, and the data analyzed here showed student's meanings of emotion through the mediated activity.

The tensions in this theme were not identified as structural aspects of the activity such as a new implementation or innovation in the activity, but as an emotional dimension that transformed the human actions, as Roth's (2009) name "sensuous aspects of the activity" (p. 53).

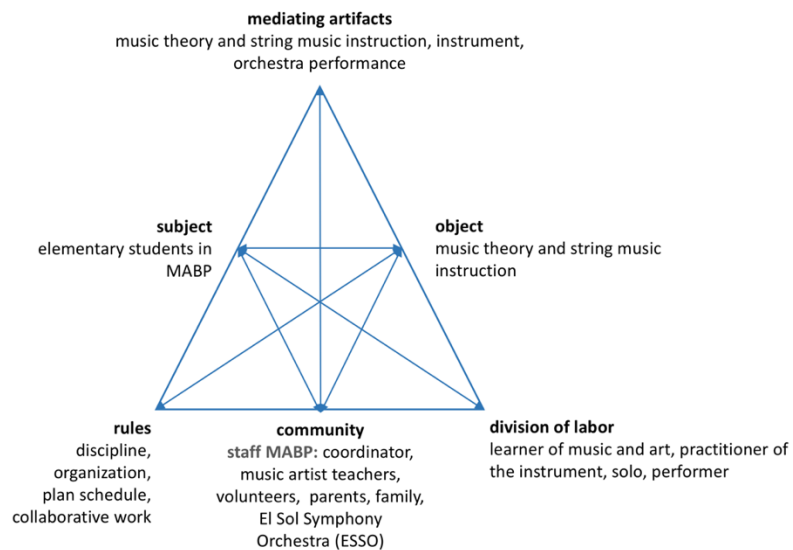


Figure 6.2. Students' learning and acquiring music skills from theory and string music instruction within activity theory

Discovery as an Activity

The following theme described students' meanings as they discovered and explored spaces in the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP) and El Sol Art Museum (ESAM). The theme of discovery shows students' learning activities and the contradictions that emerged through music-art practices. Engeström (2015) explained that contradictions are a new qualitative form of activity that emerges to provide a solution to activity tensions.

The theme *discovery* described students' meanings experienced through music-art practices and how their curiosity led them to want to explore new options or places to visit. Engeström (2015) explained learning by examining the object of the learning activity. "The

object of learning activity is the societal productive practice, or the social life-world, in its full diversity and complexity” (p. 99). He recognized the object of learning activity as an action, as a problem or task, which generates an interaction from activity models as an expansive movement.

The findings in this theme describe two main events that commute between two places: the MABP and the ESAM. These findings show a similar perspective from the chapter five findings where I described students’ learning experiences and how they experienced access and preferences to different practices inside and outside of places, such as a museum, theater performance, field trips, and university visiting. My intention in this theme is to show students’ meanings of discovery as an action of what they want to know and where they want to visit or explore. Through the CHAT activity system, it was possible to identify the tensions that emerged from students’ discovery meanings and how the students used learning spaces as a learning tool. St. John (2010) stated that “Using found resources in the environment and through their interactions with persons and material, they self-scaffold learning, thereby defining their own learning space” (p. 66). The students’ learning activities were conducted through the connection between music practices (MABP) and art activities (ESAM) which enhanced the student’s learning process.

The following findings show the connection between (MABP and ESAM) activities through art. In this manner, I present Brown and Dissanayake’s (2018) research perspective from *Synthesis of the Arts: From Ceremonial Ritual to Total Work of Art*, which provided me the understanding on how art intertwines with other diverse art forms such as theater/film, music, dance, and visual arts. Brown and Dissanayake’s (2018) art perspective helped shed light on how the art (museum) and (music) combination works from doing as action and by identifying the interaction within the variety of art forms:

We conceive of the arts in terms of the standard conception of “branches” found in the humanities, with the four major branches being music, dance, theater (and film, but also including oral forms of storytelling and poetry), and the visual arts (p. 2).

Brown and Dissanayake’s (2018) research perspective in the study does not intend to establish a connection with a CHAT perspective. My intention to present Brown and Dissanayake’s (2018) perspective is to go more in-depth into the understanding of art, emphasizing the art elements where students were involved in the MABP and ESAM activities.

I adapted the following model (Figure 6.3) from Brown and Dissanayake’s (2018) art classification to show MABP and ESAM art representation. The art model explained the music representation as a written and verbal utterance (performing art) which has characteristics of *human behavioral* concepts, and visual art as a static object represented by images, language, social practice (representational art) which has characteristics of *human cognition* concepts (Dissanayake, 2018, p. 2).

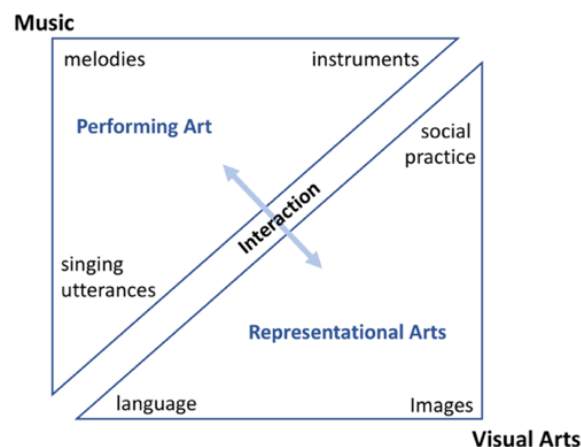


Figure 6.3. Art model representation that shows the interaction from music and art connection. (adapted from Brown & Dissanayake art model classification of the arts, 2018, p. 2).

The art model shows a representation of both art forms developed by students in MABP. It is possible to visualize not only the elements interacting between art forms but the learning connection too. The students in MABP learned music and art in the museum and by creating music compositions, where they observed art images and sculptures. The students learned to recognize images and objects involved in the historical places such as theaters and museums. They also learned art history and visual images from famous artists. The interaction between art forms (music and visual art) let students discover what they learned and what they wanted to do. The students' meanings provided a broad perspective to think about their learning, experiences, emotions, and behavior.

Museum of Art as an Activity

The music and museum activities let students think about what they were seeing, and how they felt; it was not passive observation. The students expressed that they enjoyed art museum practices, but sometimes they expressed that they felt bored during museum visits. The following findings show student's expressions of boredom not as a negative word, but as a meaning of discovering. For example, Javier was a fifth grader who was an advanced student in his third year in the after-school program at the time of my data collection. He expressed that he felt bored during museum visits, "*Diciendo la verdad, me hacian sentir aburrido...*" ("Telling the truth, they made me feel bored...") (Interview, June 3, 2016). However, Javier and other students' *aburrido*/bored expressions had a different meaning. Javier's expression of boredom represented an example of how students were learning differently through art developing meanings of discovering. In this manner, the students had the opportunity to be involved in diverse art activities; the findings show how they were fascinated with the dimensional artwork.

The expressions of boredom meant that they want to explore something new, different places. I observed students' engagement and involvement with the museum and different activities propitiated them to learn new ways of discovering and doing. For instance, Javier's experience in museum visits let him remember when he and all his peers were creating a music composition by observing the art sculpture from the famous Mexican artist, Sebastian. Javier expressed that the sculptures were great, "*Se me hizo chidas las esculturas*" ("The sculptures seemed cool to me") (Interview, June 3, 2016). Javier kept in his memory the art sculpture (3D object) activity from experience by connecting music and art. The finding shows that students' art museum experiences made a connection with music and art practices application. Piscitelli and Anderson (2001) stated that "The early accounts of the impact of the museum on the young child show that some exhibits have real staying power as iconic experiences" (p. 278). The authors showed the power of the images in the artwork immersed in the museums, such as 3D objects from sculptures and cultural artifacts which were conducted in ESAM. The students in the after-school program were learning to identify the art images, dimensional objects such as sculptures, with different forms and textures. Some of these images, sculpture caught more of their attention in their memory.

Kathryne Andrews and Caroli Asia's (1979) study showed that artwork (objects) that were explored by students in the museum were perceived only as things by the students. Andrews and Asia's (1979) study was conducted with teenagers and found the necessity to lead students into a discussion related to students' museum learning interests (p. 229). The authors argued students' negative experiences in museums through school visits stigmatize the opportunity to create new experiences: "A successful program for teenagers would depend upon our ability to listen, care about, and respond to their observations and questions" (p. 229).

The students in the MABP were learning how to name the objects and identify artwork in the museum in connection with the music instruments. Alicia was an example of how they were learning by museum art interaction through the objects. Alicia was a restless, friendly, and dedicated girl in the MABP. She depicted in her visual journal a 3D object that caught her interest with a drawing from museum experiences (Figure 6.4). Alicia's drawing representation showed that she identified the artwork (3D object), in this case, the sculpture, where she described and wrote as "*culter*" referring to the word "*sculpture*." Alicia's representation through words and drawings expressed her enjoyment in the museum, where the happiness experienced was represented by the color, the forms, the lines, and by using children representations where they face expressed happiness. She enjoyed museum visits, describing in the journal, "I like when I go to the art museum is to fun". Furthermore, Alicia narrated that she really like the sculpture "*culter*" because it was like a mirror, emphasizing that she can be seen through the sculpture. "Words are symbols which represent objects and actions in the sense of standing for them; in that senses, they have meaning" (Dewey, 2005, p. 86). The interaction between ESAM (music) and MABP (art) practices let students apply music knowledge, create new learning experiences by observing visual art. These experiences were created through the environment with they interact. Dewey (2005) remarked the meanings of objects as a medium to create new experiences:

Through art, meanings of objects that are otherwise dumb, inchoate, restricted, and resisted are clarified and concentrated, and not by thought working laboriously upon them, nor by escape into a world of mere sense, but by the creation of a new experience (p. 138)

The students could not touch the art paintings in the museum, but art practices developed their senses to touch art through playing music.

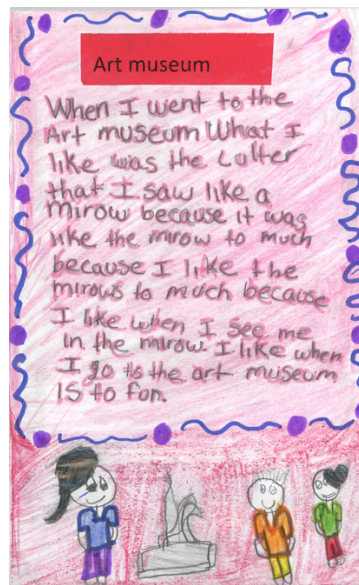


Figure 6.4. Alicia's museum experience "art object representation" represented in journal activity

The findings revealed that students held a positive disposition with their museum experiences. However, students' expressions as *aburrido*/boring were expressions that meant new ways to explore, socialize, draw, and play. They wanted to do something new, explore different museums and do different activities, and to have free time in ESAM and MABP. For example, a group of girls expressed, "*Miss, es que siempre vamos al art museum...*" ("Miss, it is that we always go to the art museum..."). Then, Alicia emphasized this statement and gave a new idea, "*Si, ir a otros places*" ("Yes, go to other places") (Interview, November 22, 2016). The students wanted to explore new options and give their ideas too. Nancy expressed that she would like to do activities applying and connecting music and drawing in the museum. Nancy, as an advanced student, experienced the "*doing*" connection with music and drawing practice with the guidance of Dr. Simmons (director of the after-school program at the ESAM). From Nancy's

drawing experience in the museum, she expressed how she enjoyed the activity by connecting music and drawing in the museum:

“Si me gusta el arte, y además con Dr. Simmons es bien divertido... y hasta la otra vez nos dejó dibujar” (“I like art, and also with Dr. Simmons it is fun... and even the other time she let us draw”) (Interview, November 22, 2016).

These opportunities to draw and play music were not given to all students, opportunities to draw were given to advanced students in the MABP. The findings showed that students like to do more hands-on activities where they could touch, paint, and draw. The analysis through CHAT makes it possible to identify the visible tensions in the activity system at the museum from students’ expressions. The findings also showed tensions inside of the nodes between program (rules) and activities (a division of labor) in connection with the mediated artifact (ESAM), which affected students and moved them away from a different *activity of discovery*. I used the word affected not as a negative concept, but instead as a positive reference to identify students’ expressions and desires.

The student’s ESAM interaction (as the activity system) was examined based on the connections between music and art activities. The students from MABP visited the ESAM (subject) learning to make connections between music and art (object). The students worked on the understanding of learning how to create music compositions through art, understanding similarities between art forms, expressing emotions and feelings through art and music (the division of labor). The students progressively shaped their identity as artists in the evolving interaction between music and art (as the mediation). The ESAM and MABP have created a lesson plan for museum students visits, social and discipline outside the school environment, and community participation (as the rule). The museum docents from ESAM, coordinator, and music

teaching artists from MABP, parents, and volunteers (as the community) contributed to a change in students' music and art learning process development.

The ESAM's activity system diagram (Figure 6.5) showed the two tensions that emerged within the activity nodes from students' expressions in their activity interaction were between music and art. Tensions are usually between two things or two nodes. A tension between rules and subject caused a move to another activity system or a change in the rules. The first tension: contradiction between students' activity as a place for students art exploration as a free-environment and the mediating artifact. The second tension: contradiction between students' music and art practices following a lesson plan, activity structure and the mediating artifact. Lee (2011) stated that "when this concept of contradictions is applied to education and training purpose, learning emerges as a resolution of the contradiction" (p. 141). The tensions or contradictions within the nodes in the activity systems, as I mentioned before, were identified as evolution and aperture from students' meanings. The findings show that students enjoyed art and drawing activities, but their curiosity led them to want to explore new places and develop agency about the learning environment where they move.

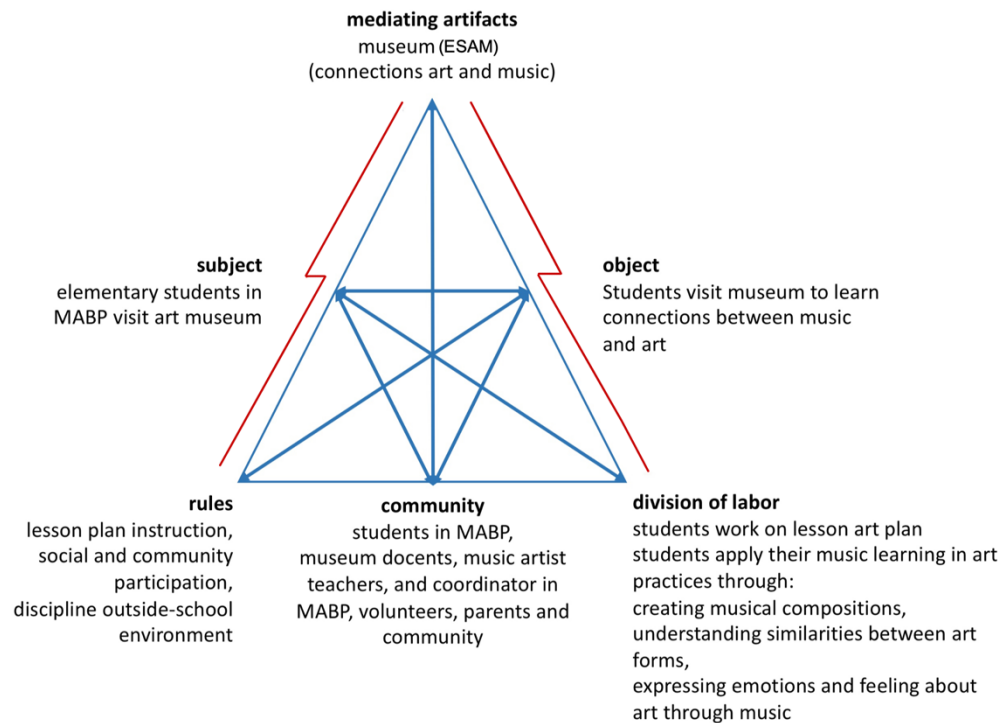


Figure 6.5. Students' visit museum to learn connections between music and art (tensions between/inside nodes of ESAM activity system)

MABP as an Activity

The CHAT analysis between activity systems in ESAM and MABP showed a developing student tension between activities. In this manner, the students' expressions were not only visible in the museum practices, but they were also visible in the MABP too.

Even when the after-school program offered a different curriculum structure from the formal school, the students expressed that they wanted to do something different and have more free time during the activities. They revealed that they would like to see a movie or draw. They wanted time to be themselves without a formal structure to follow.

The MABP occurred as an informal learning practice where students followed a time structure and discipline. Nancy, Alicia, and Amelia related the word "discipline" with homework

during the after-school tutoring. As I mentioned in chapter 4, that after-school tutoring (AST) provided students the opportunity to focus on their homework, play recreational games, create color drawings, and eat their snacks. The AST was not a structured learning stage in comparison with the Music Theory and Practice, and the Music Instruction. During AST, the students followed instructions from Mr. Christian (program coordinator); however, Nancy and Amelia expressed that they would like to play, draw and talk more during the AST:

Nancy: “Es que como niños no nos gusta hacer la tarea, pero debemos de hacerla o si no nos van a castigar...” (“As children, we do not like to do homework, but we must do it or if they are not going to punish us...”).

Amelia: “Y no nos dejan hablar para nada...” (“And they do not let us talk at all...”)

(Interview, November 22, 2016).

I observed that students in the MABP had the opportunity to play, draw and talk during the AST, but the limited time and structure to do activities challenged children to express themselves and share their ideas in the program.

The students wanted to contribute their ideas and express the activity they would like to do. The limited time and structure from the after-school program did not give enough time to develop free-time activities for students. For example, I observed that students had limited time to do free activities during a movie-watching activity. During this time, the students saw the movie “*Fantasia*” which is connected with music. As they watched the movie, they enjoyed eating popcorn and had a relaxed time. The findings show that students enjoyed movie time; however, Nancy’s statement below expressed what she and other students were feeling:

Porque la otra vez que estábamos viendo así como una película yo quería dibujar y no, el mister me dijo que lo ponga en un lado porque no puedo estar dibujando al mismo

tiempo (Because the other time we were watching a movie, I wanted to draw, but the mister told me to put it to the side because I cannot be drawing at the same time)
(Interview, November 22, 2016).

The finding described from Nancy's shows that students' experiences have roots in the MABP structure where students did not have the power to transform the MABP rules. However, students learning environment through music and art activities where they interact developed students' agency as expansive learning. Engeström (2016) stated that "more radical way to understand expansivity is to see it primarily in material and cultural terms, as the inherent potential of learning to produce new material objects, practices, and patterns of activity" (p. 9).

The students' expressions of "doing" something different were expressions of action that move students to different *activity* of *discovery* as developmental learning. Engeström (2015) states that "Learning it is not only necessary precondition of development - development is also a necessary and always present ingredient of learning" (p. 125). The development in the MABP as an activity system has its connection with contradictions which has its course in students' learning development.

The students' MABP (subject) activity was examined based on students' meanings from their participation in after-school tutoring (AST) (object). The students from MABP participated in AST doing different activities such as working on their homework, playing recreational games, drawing, painting, or reading (as the mediation). The AST was not a guided activity; however, students followed discipline and instructions (rules) from the MABP coordinator, music teaching artists, and volunteers (as the community). The students worked individually and collaboratively on homework, played recreational games, drew, painted, and read (a division of labor).

The MABP activity system diagram (Figure 6.6) shows two tensions that emerged within the activity nodes. The first tension: contradiction between the discipline (rule) requiring students to do homework and free activities common in the MABP. The second tension: the transitional time from school activities to MABP is not very well structured that also creates some contradictions. These activities were developed as a free time (mediation) which prepared students for the next stages such as music theory and practice instruction. The activity diagram significance showed the two tensions from the after-school tutoring (mediated activity). The rules and division of labor presented tensions that students identified during their homework and discipline (activity).

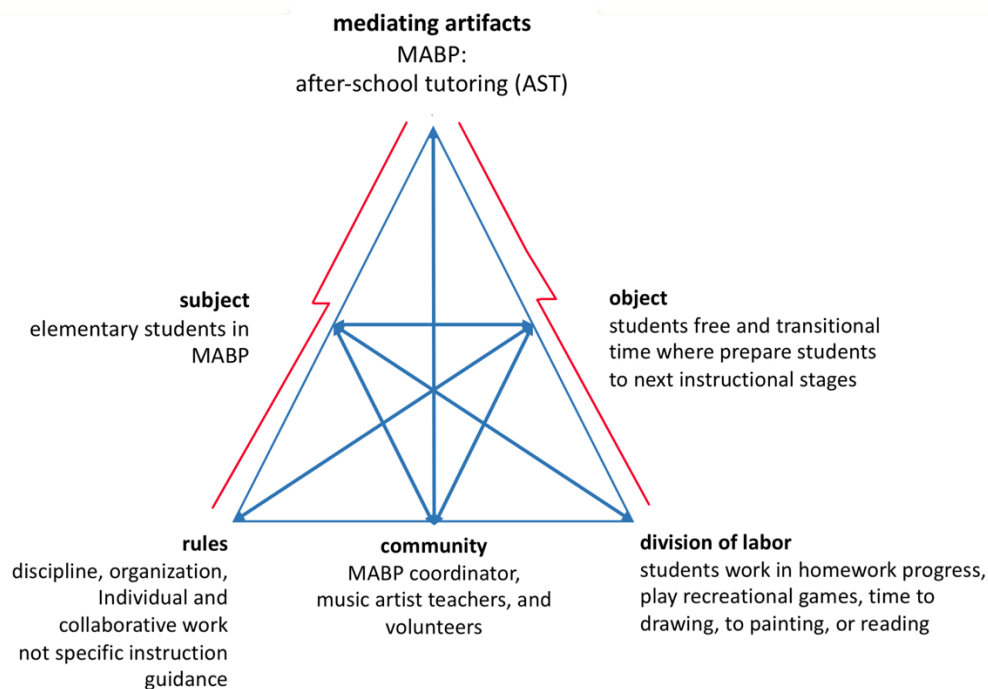


Figure 6.6. Students receiving free and transitional after-school tutoring to prepare students to next instructional music stages (contradiction between/inside nodes of AST activity system).

Students' Agency as an Expansive Learning

My analysis of student agency in the MABP draws on the concept expansive learning as a result from students' meanings considering what it means for border children to express, discover, and cultivate a sense of agency in the MABP.

The sense of *agency* from students was demonstrated through their thinking and actions developed in the MABP. The following diagram (Figure 6.7) represents findings which describe three main elements from students' agency: 1) leadership skills, 2) academic success 3) future decisions, and 4) social participation.



Figure 6.7. Student's agency in the MABP

Agency, in this study, means the students' actions, mobility, self-recognition, self-confidence, and the awareness to think, and question their achievements, future goals, and decisions. Engeström (2016) explained that "the very idea of expansive learning is built on this theoretically consequential *distinction between action and activity*. Expansive Learning is movement from actions to activity" (p. 40). The connection between the concept of 'agency' in

an ‘activity’ from Engeström’s (2016) perspective part from the idea that learning activity is transformed into a new form of practice (p. 42). Similarly, the agency is a transformation from students’ ways of think (emotions) and actions. Agency in the study it is not only physical (external) transformation but as an emotional (internal) transformation.

Engeström’s expansive learning theories draw from the idea of Learning III from Bateson’s (1972) learning theory, “Learning III or expansive learning is much about learning something which it is not yet there, where you learn by constructing a new activity” (Interview with Yrjö Engeström, 2002). Engeström (2016) explained that Learning III occurs in the form of questioning and awareness about the activity where participants are involved in creating and bringing consciousness about the activity.

The students’ meanings of expression and discovery were visible by the way that students questioned and constructed a larger picture of their context as a result of their learning experiences. Moreover, students’ tensions were a result of their learning experiences which encouraged students to think about their music-art learning practices and activities where they connected with their emotions and feelings to express a voice of leadership, academic success and future decisions, and social participation. Engeström (2016) visualized tensions as a contribution and evolution of the learning activity: “The theory of expansive learning sees the mechanism of transition in the stepwise evolution of contradictions inherent in the object of learning- that is, in the activity that is being transformed” (Engeström, 2016, p. 27). The tensions found in students’ meanings were tensions derived from students’ learning development through activities in MABP. The following elements illustrate students’ actions through activities and how they progressively expanded learning to activities that they wanted to develop. The findings show students’ voice of creativity that led to their creating of new activities in the MABP.

Leadership Skills

The students' leadership was evident through practices and activities. Leadership skills describe how students gained confidence and personal development through the different roles they cultivated during music-art practices in the MABP. Also, the music learning process allowed students to recognize achievements between peers. Nancy was an example of leadership in MABP. Nancy recognized her leadership skills and felt proud of her achievements. Nancy developed and practiced her leadership skills by announcing the MABP performing event's agenda supported by Mr. Christian, the MABP coordinator. Mr. Christian encouraged and supported Nancy's leadership skills by creating a written discourse which describes the performing events, where Nancy read during the after-school tutoring. Nancy was an example of a successful student not only in the MABP but also in the formal school too. Nancy enjoyed her role participating in the MABP activities, recognizing herself as a leader and her role as a hostess:

"Aja, el trabajo que me esta gustando ahorita es el del hostess como que doy las noticias como si fuera la señora de las noticias" ("Uh huh, I am enjoying right now the hostess job, I give the news as if I were a news anchor") (November 22, 2016).

Nancy recognizes herself as a hostess; however, her peers recognized her as a *Grandma*. The nickname was connected with her time being in the program, her belonging and achievement, positioning her as an advanced student in the MABP. Nancy enjoyed her leadership role, and felt proud to be recognized in the MABP by the coordinator, music teaching artists, and her peers:

"Que voy bien avanzada, que soy una grandma, me gusta ser eso, es bien divertido..." ("I'm well advanced, I'm a grandma, I like to be like that, it's fun") (November 22, 2016).

Nancy's leadership example encouraged other students to follow her lead, and she felt that playing the *hostess* role could teach her peers how to behave. Moreover, Nancy wanted and desired that her peers have the same experience in the MABP:

“Si es que yo también quiero que otros participen, para que ellos también experimenten lo mismo” (“Yes, I also want the others to participate. So that they also experience the same thing...”) (Interview, November 22, 2016).

The student's self-confidence and self-recognition was visible not only inside music practices but outside the program too. Victoria experienced self-confidence as a result of her music apprenticeship in the MABP in outside music practices. She was an advanced four-year MABP student, and she was also part of the El Sol Symphony Youth Orchestra (ESSYO). I had the opportunity to observe Victoria's learning music trajectory. Victoria graduated from Rio Grande Elementary School, and her music eagerness encouraged her to continue learning music in the middle school orchestra. Victoria expressed how her music skills and self-confidence let her show others music skills outside the program:

“Porque cuando estoy allá en [la escuela secundaria], como estoy en orchestra de vez en cuando la Miss me pone a tocar sola para que los demás oigan” (“Because when I'm there in [the middle school], as I'm in the orchestra sometimes, the Miss asks me to play alone so that others can hear me”) (November 28, 2016).

Students' Academic Success and Future Career Decisions

The following findings were part of data collected from five students as part of a focus group conducted in the last month of their fifth-grade year. The following students were: Javier, Karla, Veronica, Karime, and Victoria. These students were part from the MABP between two

and four years, and Karla and Victoria were part of the ESSYO. These students were in the fifth grade and their last year of elementary school.

The findings described students' expressions about their academic achievements in formal school and how they felt proud of the awards they received in elementary school. The findings showed a brief description of their test performance in the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program from their last year of school. The research did not intend to present students' data for comparison purposes or intend to connect students' academic scores achievement in formal school with MABP performance. Instead, I wanted to show the process of students' academic achievement, and how the MABP program supported students' school in academic requirements.

Moreover, the findings present an analysis of students' drawings as a future college expectation. The purpose of this analysis was to show student's expectations to continue studying and how they perceive them as a future college student.

The students Javier, Karla, Veronica, and Karime expressed their excitement about the achievements they got during their elementary graduation ceremony. The student's excitement manifestations were expressed when I asked them if they were happy for their graduation. They responded quickly and very excitedly:

Karla: "*Yo agarré un trofeo*" ("I got a trophy")

Javier: "*Yo agarré AB honor roll*" ("I got AB honor roll")

Veronica: "*Yo de citizenship and two certificates*" ("I [got one] of citizenship and two certificates")

Karime: "*Yo no agarré nada, nada más agarré una B*" ("I didn't get anything, I just get a B") (Interview, June 3, 2016).

The students' recognitions were examples of their accomplishments achieved in elementary school. The findings show that they not only felt proud of their achievements; they also felt proud of their peers' attainments too. For instance, Veronica mentioned that her friend Karla got perfect attendance and AB honor roll award—even though Karla did not mention those awards when I asked her. The students' recognized their achievements and felt proud of them, but also mentioned their weaknesses and how they needed to continue improving music practices to play better and to learn more music repertoire.

Students recognized that MABP motivated them to continue studying. Students also used the lessons learned in the MABP to improve their study habits. The students' music practices demanded students' perseverance to improve their home practice. Victoria recognized that she felt proud of her music knowledge acquired by playing the violin. She mentioned that she enjoyed practicing and playing the violin at home emphasizing that practices improved her music skills more and more. The student's experiences showed how music practices challenged them to be better students and how it has helped them break down barriers. The MABP provided students with learning tools to succeed not only in an informal space but to apply these learning tools in any context or event they participated. For instance, Miguel explained that MABP had increased his confidence and had made him more participative. He recognized that before his enrollment in the music program he did not participate in activities as he did now, "*Ahora no tanto me da vergüenza...*" ("Now, not so much, do I feel embarrassed...") (Interview, February 5, 2017). Moreover, Miguel emphasized that he would like to be more participative in the MABP. The everyday music practices let Miguel be aware of his accomplishments that he was learning to demand of himself, "*No sé, a veces no me siento satisfecho con lo que yo hago...*" ("I do not know, sometimes I do not feel satisfied with what I do...") (Interview, February 05, 2017).

The students' academic performance in the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) program shows the students' performance in three main categories: Reading, Mathematics, and Science. These categories were required by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for students in the fifth grade. The STAAR is a mandatory standardized test applied in public schools in elementary and middle school, "[it] is an assessment program designed to measure the extent to which students have learned and are able to apply the knowledge and skills defined in the state-mandated curriculum standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)" (TEA, 2007-2019). The frequency of STAAR tests are realized once a year during the regular school agenda and could be applied in English and Spanish versions. Spanish versions are available for grades 3-5.

The MABP supported students before the test by creating an environment during the after-school tutoring where students stayed concentrated and focused. During the AST students received support from the coordinator, music teaching artists, and volunteers. During the STAAR test week, students did not attend the MABP; instead, they had a free week to focus on their studies for the STAAR test preparation.

Javier, Karla, Karime, and Victoria showed a good performance in the STAAR test from the three categories tested (reading, mathematics, and science). The scores showed that Javier performed a good outstanding in Mathematics and Science, in a similar way Karime showed a good performance in Science, while Veronica struggled with mathematics and reading, also showed that in reading and science test Veronica performed in Spanish. Furthermore, in a formal school setting, students received grade reports which measured their academic learning progress. They developed knowledge and skills by learning and mastering different approaches through mandatory standardized testing. The standardized testing measured students' knowledge with the

goal of preparing them for and provide a pathway to college. The MABP worked together as a team to make student learning, not an impossible assignment, but a possible and realizable goal. Also, the MABP taught students to prepare and face challenges, make decisions, and value themselves.

Ms. Moore, the instructor from the Music Theory and Practice class, recognized the challenges that students face in their music learning pathway. Ms. Moore commented on the importance of attending to students' mistakes and guiding them into the awareness of their failures. Ms. Moore further discussed the importance of teaching them how to develop the capacity of questioning, by recognizing their talents and capabilities. Encouraging them to work on it, do it better and trying again without shame or fear to fail again.

Ms. Moore emphasized that students' learning awareness gives them the tools to apply in formal classes or any diverse situation:

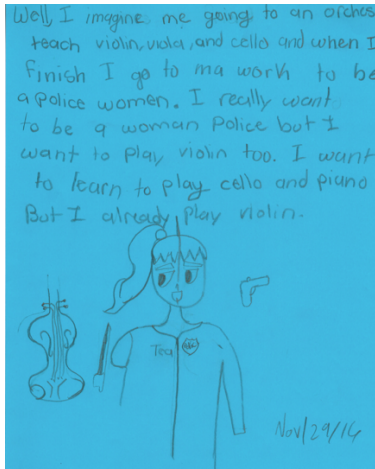
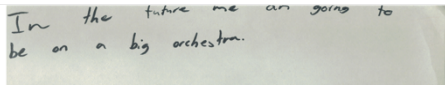
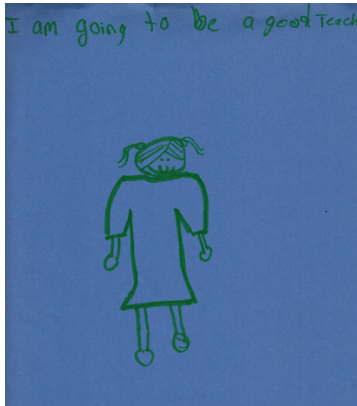
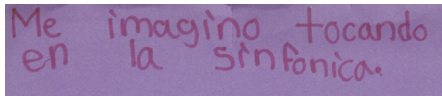
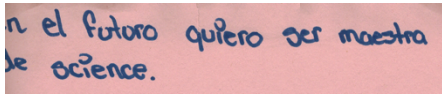
They start listening, they start noticing more, and when they notice then they can correct things which make it better for them in music, and they start correcting other things in their classwork stuff like that they can start recognizing that just because I made a mistake doesn't make me bad, I made a mistake in this paper it doesn't make me bad, it doesn't make me a failure, I didn't pass that test I'm not a failure ok... I have some things to learn, but I'm not a failure, I'm special, I'm good and I can be good, and I can be better and that's a hard thing to get across to some of the children.... (Interview, August 20, 2016).

The findings described showing a small part of the student's academic performance achieved in formal school. However, these findings provided data which invite researchers to

continue studying the connection from students' participation in music-art programs and students' academic success.

The following (Table 6.1) presents an analysis of students' drawings and writing text descriptions of their future college expectations and how they visualize themselves as a future student. The MABP students' learning experiences provided them the opportunity to think and be open to diverse education opportunities which lead them to be aware of their professional future. The last column of the table presents an interpretation of my understanding of students' drawings and text descriptions (Ebersöhn, Ronél Ferreira, & Bathseba Mbongwe, 2011, p. 163).

Table 6.1. Students' Drawings and Text Future College Expectations

Participants	Drawing	Writing text	Interpretation
Victoria		<p><i>“Well I imagine me going to an orchestra teach violin, viola, and cello and when I finish, I go to ma work to be a police woman. I really want to be a woman police, but I want to play violin too. I want to learn to play cello and piano But I already play violin”</i></p>	<p>Perseverance, to learn to play new instruments to teach other students and visualize herself as a police woman. Her expectations in drawing was divided into two options to pursue a career.</p>
Javier		<p><i>“In the future me am going to be on a big orchestra”</i></p>	<p>Using the word big related to his future expectations and dreams.</p>
Karime		<p><i>“I am going to be a good teacher”</i></p>	<p>Drawing of herself, smiling like a good teacher that cares and provides support.</p>
Veronica		<p><i>“Me imagino tocando en la sinfonica”</i></p>	<p>Creativity to think the future, applying music learning experiences.</p>
Karla		<p><i>“En el futuro quiero ser maestra de science”</i></p>	<p>Taking awareness about abilities, learning experiences and preferences.</p>

The student's college expectations, as communicated through drawings and text descriptions, were complemented by their comments expressed during the focus group interview. The students' comments confirmed the graphic representations of their desires to pursue college pathways.

The students' representations described how they have been learning to negotiate their own time and professional goals. Victoria, Javier, and Veronica expressed that they would like to be a musician, play in an orchestra, or continue learning a new instrument. Gottfredson (1981) showed that children go through a period of fantasy period where they do not recognize their abilities or career aspirations. The author explained that people's career decisions development based on the concept of the self-concept, "The self-concept is actually the totality of different ways of seeing oneself, some more important and central to one's sense of self than others" (p. 547). The ways of seeing oneself included one's skills, interest, and identity. Victoria, Javier and Veronica's future aspirations were based on how they recognized their understanding and music abilities acquired by playing an instrument. Gottfredson (1981) identified aspiration "as a single occupation named as one's best alternative at any given time" (p. 548). The students' college expectations were not expressions of fear; instead, they wanted to go forward in their dreams to build new life opportunities.

Javier's expressions confirmed his choice to be a musician, and that he would like to study video gaming and technology.

"Apuesto que en el futuro me voy a hacer un musican. Yo quiero hacer como video juegos o algo asi..." ("I bet that in the future I am going to become a musician. I want to do like video games or something like that") (Interview, June 3, 2016).

In the same manner, Veronica recognized her knowledge and abilities acquired by learning music. Veronica learned to play the cello, which motivated her interest to perceived herself as a future teacher:

“Yo quiero ser o maestro de música o maestro normal o maestra de matemáticas...”

(I would like to be a music teacher or normal teacher or mathematics teacher...”)

(Interview, June 03, 2016).

When asked why her interest was to be a musician, Veronica response was related to her music learning experience of playing an instrument:

“No sé, nada más porque ya aprendí a tocar algo... Y luego ya lo aprendes, y se queda en la memoria, y luego piensas que eso vas a ser de grande” (“I do not know, just

because I have already learned to play something ... And then you learn it, and it stays in your memory, and then you think that is going to be when you grow up”

(Interview, June 03, 2016).

The students’ college aspirations were expressions based on their music-art learning experiences in the MABP as well as from their learning experiences in formal education. Karla and Karime mentioned that they would like to become a teacher. For instance, Karla expressed that she imagined herself as a Science teacher, emphasizing that she enjoyed learning about planets. Karla’s college aspirations were based and shaped based on her science class content experiences. In a different career perspective, Karime imagined herself as an Art teacher; she expressed that she liked to do art by drawing but not to paint. In this manner, music and art practice provided students the opportunity not only to learn music skills but also encourage students to discover and develop art skills through art activities and museum visits.

Karime learned to recognize that she enjoyed art by drawing; Javier, Karla, Veronica, Karime, and Victoria were learning to make their own decisions by doing the things they enjoyed and shaping their future paths, aspirations, and identity, “We anticipated that the drawings would ‘speak’ for the participants and provide a prompt for a brief written explanation of what encouraged their “doing well” despite many challenges [in their lives] (Malindi & Theron, 2011, p. 106).

It is important to understand not only student’s abilities but also how their career aspirations were connected with the social space. An example of this was Victoria; her drawing representation expressed how she wants to pursue two careers such as policewomen and artist-musician (see Table 6.1). Victoria’s aspiration to become a policewoman was expressed by her value to care of others and to provide a social contribution to the community. Auger, Blackhurst, and Wahl (2005) explained Victoria’s aspiration as she was finishing her elementary school. The author stated that “Older children displayed a significant tendency to aspire to more prestigious careers than the younger children, suggesting that judgments of the social value of different careers had been made in the mid-elementary year” (Auger, Blackhurst & Wahl, 2005, p. 327).

Social Participation

The student is participating in the MABP value and acknowledge peers who are following the same music learning path. These students learned through practices and activities about socialization, caring, and valuing their friendship. Every year the MABP starts a new cycle, inviting new students to participate in the program where new adventures began for each child. New groups of children arrive enthusiastically to start learning music, and some of the older ones returned to give continuity to their music learning. Every year, students learn to make new friends while others strengthen ties with old ones. In the first day of classes, for example,

the students explored the class environment. Returning students displayed happiness when they greeted their old friends. Most students expressed hopeful expectations of learning new music, seeing new art, and meeting new teachers.

Several activities in the MABP promoted socialization and community participation. Birthday celebrations were an activity inside the MABP that fostered students' social interaction and community development. Each month birthday celebrations offered students the opportunity to be more relaxed, play, and share moments with their peers without the pressure of doing a specific task. During birthday celebrations students sang the happy birthday song and ate cake and food; it was a space where not only students and music teaching artists teachers participated, but their family too. Mothers came to support the program and prepared food for their children. Moreover, children felt proud to read their names on the board and celebrate their birthdays with their friends, music artist-teachers and community.

The compilation of internal and external activities of the MABP contributed to positive results in students' music-art learning practices. These results were evident when students showed their desire to care and support their peers in practices. They expressed their desires to want their friends to advance like them. Nancy expressed her feelings on how friendship-related to music learning instruction, she wanted her friends to excel too,

“Es que nosotros como que si vamos aprendiendo las notas y quiero que Alicia y Nadia como que si estén conmigo, ósea que estén aquí a mi lado que estén avanzando como yo, las dos...” (“It is that we are like learning the notes, and I want Alicia and Nadia to be with me, so that they are here by my side that they are advancing like me, both”)

(Interview, November 22, 2016).

Students' meanings of friendship were expressions that communicated their worth toward others. Learning music by playing cello or violin was a practice that challenged students' practices. However, students' collaboration provided and fostered her/his motivation to continue studying in their everyday practice. Alicia recognized the challenge by learning to play the violin. Alicia explained that learning the notes on a violin was complicated; however, she emphasized that she and her peers supported each other. The evidence of students' caring for friendship was not only expressed verbally, but it was also visible through their actions. Miguel encouraged two of his classmates to rehearse and practice the notes by demonstrating the rhythm of the repertoire with his violin, then Miguel patiently observed the girl's playing their violins, listening to the sound of the notes. Miguel's learning experience in this unexpected moment captured not only meanings of caring and friendship, but leadership and self-confidence as well.

Expansive Learning Between Activities

The expansive learning was the result of student's meanings from their emotions, experiences, and actions experienced inside of the MABP and outside music-art practices. The expansive learning in this study identified student's learning music and art through their emotions. The findings showed tensions inside and outside practices where students do not resolve an activity as Engeström (2016) mentioned about expansive learning. The findings showed students' meanings from music and art learning experiences expressed through their emotions. The contradictions showed students' desire to do a specific activity such as drawing during practices or visiting different museum places for future activities. Through CHAT it is possible to recognize the variety of activities and practices in the MABP and understand the children perspective that is less rigid and free as the MABP perspective developed.

Moreover, findings from students' *agency* drew expansive learning from students' learning and how they progressively expanded their learning into actions. The students' agency was the students' actions developed within the music-art practice which included their leadership, academic success, and future aspirations, and social participation. The following diagram (Figure 6.8) shows the combination of activities that promoted student's expansive learning. The diagrams are not focused on the contradictions that were explained before, but instead, they focus on showing the learning objects that contributed to student's expansive learning progress.

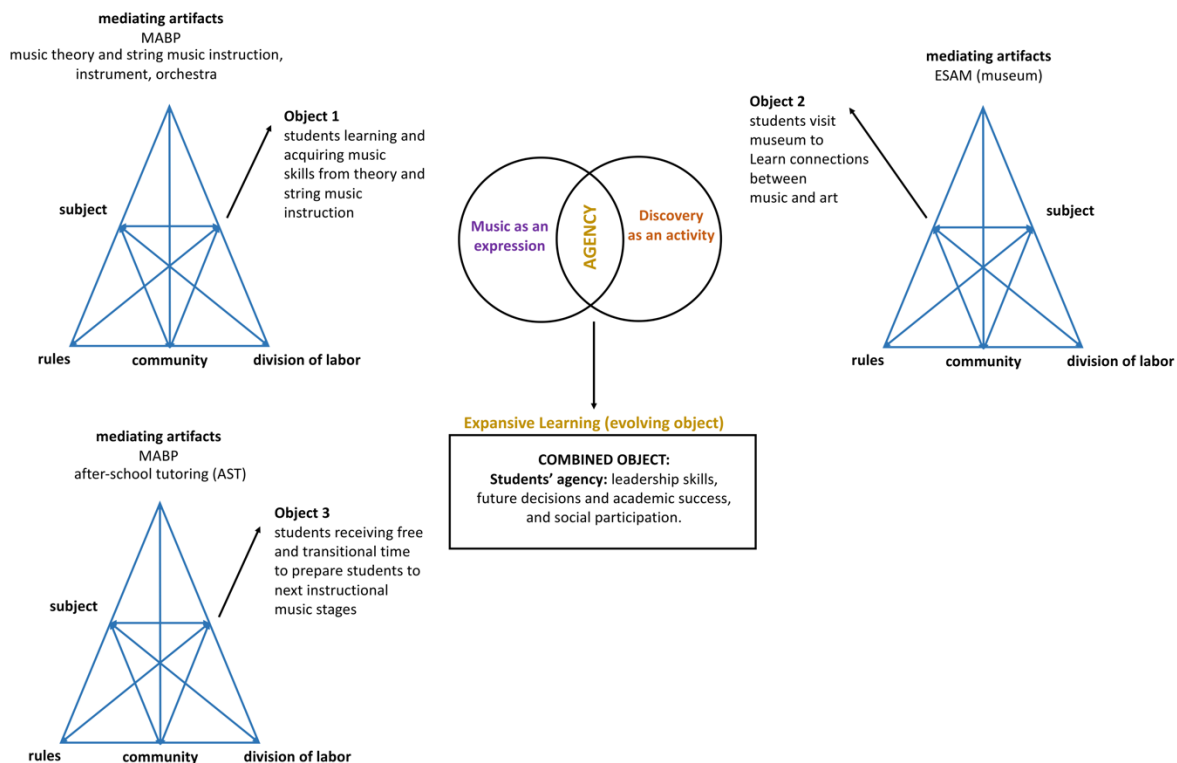


Figure 6.8. Agency as an expansive network within three activity systems

The expansive learning progress is derived from the combination of the three objects in each activity system, 1) students' learning and acquiring music skills from theory and string

music instruction, 2) students' visits to the museum to learn connections between music and art, and 3) students receiving free and transitional time to prepare them for next instructional music stages. The combination of objects between MABP and ESAM (museum) produced an evolving outcome where each one collaborated as a network and produced a common goal. Engeström (2016) explained that each object is an independent client, where they are interconnected in the activity to form a producer-client relationship collaboration (p. 45).

Summary of Chapter 6

This chapter addressed the second question of the study: How are students' meanings developed through music and art in the arts-based after-school program? The data were analyzed under the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) lens to understand student's meanings developed through music and art practices. The findings described were analyzed through the third generation of activity theory by Engeström et al., (1999). Engeström's et al., (1999) perspective provided the lens to understand the cyclical process of the activity presented in this chapter which was developed mainly between the Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP) and El Sol Art Museum (ESAM). The cyclical activity network was developed by the analysis of the three themes: 1) Expressions, 2) Discovery and 3) Agency. Through Engeström's perspective, it was possible to recognize the cyclical process of the three MABP activity systems analyzed to understand the internal tensions or contradictions found in students' music and art activities. Engeström's cyclical activity network provided the conceptual framework to understand the contradictions not as errors, but as resolutions of evolution and realization in the MABP.

In order to explain how these themes emerged and how they influenced the understanding of students' meanings through activity, three activity systems were created, as adapted from Engeström et al., (1999).

1. Students' learning and acquiring music skills from theory and string music instruction.
2. Students' visit museum (ESAM) to learn connections between music and art (showed contradictions between/inside nodes).
3. Students receiving free and transitional after-school tutoring to prepare students for the next instructional music stages (showed the contradiction between/inside nodes).

The importance of this analysis through CHAT was not only the understanding of the structure in the student's meanings or music-art program activities but the emotional dimension that transformed students' actions. The first theme *Music as an Expression within the Activity System* showed how the expressions of emotion (activity) were transformed into student's expressions of motivation, knowledge, action, self-awareness, recognition, and learning application (tension) through their everyday music and art practices. Through the analysis, these expressions from student's meanings were expressions of agency.

Within the CHAT analysis, four main tensions were encountered to understand students' meanings. The second theme *Discovery as an Activity* addressed the two tensions emerged in ESAM and AST activity system. The following description explains the tensions in each one of the activity systems:

1. From ESAM's activity system (Figure 6.5) emerged tensions within the activity nodes from students' expressions in their activity interaction, were between music and art. The first tension was examined in the *rule* element within the discipline which had contradictions between students' activity as a place for students' art exploration as a free-environment from outside practices in the after-school program connecting music and art (as the mediation). The second tension was examined in the *division of labor* element where students developed music and art practices following a lesson plan and an activity

structure connecting music and art (as the mediation). The tensions were identified as an aperture and evolution from students' meanings. The findings showed that students enjoyed art and drawing activities, but their curiosity led them to want to explore new places and develop agency about the learning environment where they move. Students' expressions of boredom were not analyzed in the study as a negative meaning but as a meaning of discovering. The student's expressions of doing were expressions of action that move students to a different activity.

2. From the AST activity system (Figure 6.6) emerged tensions within activity nodes. The first tension was examined in the *rule* element within the discipline which shows a contradiction between the students' time to do homework and do a free activity (as a mediation) not regulated by a specific activity. The second tension was examined in the *division of the labor* element where students did not develop specific activities. These activities were developed as a free time (mediation) which prepared students for the next stages such as the Music Theory and Practice class.

The third theme *Students' Agency as an Expansive Learning* showed students' agency in the MABP which draw on the concept of expansive learning as a result from students' meanings considering what it means for border children to express, discover, and cultivate a sense of agency in the MABP. The expansive learning was described through three main elements which draw students' agency in the MABP: 1) leadership skills, 2) academic success and future decisions, and 3) social participation. These elements were a result from the expansive learning progress derived from the combination of the three objects in each activity system, 1) students' learning and acquiring music skills from music and practice theory and string music instruction, 2) students' visits to museum to learn connections between music and art, and 3) students

receiving free and transitional after-school tutoring to prepare students for the next instructional music stages. The combination of objects between MABP and ESAM (museum) produced an evolving outcome where each one collaborated as a network and produced a common goal in students' music-art learning: music theory and practice, music instruction, orchestra performance, leadership practices, music-art learning connection, social and community participation.

Chapter 7: Discussion and Implications

This study examined a Music and Arts-Based Program (MABP) serving a borderland community with interest in how music creates possibilities for children to expand their ways of being, doing, and of thinking while drawing on their rich cultural resources. I used several theories to understand students' learning experiences and meanings developed through music and art in the MABP: 1) Eisner's perspective focusing on art and education, 2) Vygotsky's theoretical perspective through the Zone of the Proximal Development (ZPD), 3) Cultural Historical Activity Theory, and 3) Lave and Wenger (1991) situated Learning and apprenticeship theoretical perspectives. In chapter 5, I developed a thematic analysis using socio-cultural lens where Vygotsky's (1978) and Lave and Wenger's (1991) theories led me to understand that students' music and art learning process is not an isolated practice, but a social learning activity where they interact with MABP staff, music artist-teachers, volunteers, parents, and the community. In Chapter 6, the analysis through the CHAT perspective provided me the lens to understand students' meanings based on students' expressions, emotions, and actions through music and art practices. The analysis of students' meanings led me to understand not only the activity structure of students' learning but also the emotional structure to express their feelings, motivation, and confidence leading them to develop leadership skills, future decisions, and social skills. These elements were a result of the expansive learning progress derived from the combination of the three objects in each activity system: 1) students' learning and acquiring music skills from theory and string music instruction, 2) students' museum visits to learn connections between music and art, and 3) students receiving free and transitional academic support time to prepare students for the next instructional music stages.

The richness of the data collected from observations, interviews, field notes, artifacts, video, and journals provided a wide perspective for analysis, particularly for the visual data. The data analysis was reinforced and triangulated from the students' visual journals and drawings. I analyzed the findings in both chapters presenting a visual perspective from students' learning experience and students' meanings in the MABP. The students' ideas and imagination were expressed through visual art which confirmed their actions expressed through the diverse methods collected. Now I will present a discussion on the main findings, and their implications on theory, research and policy.

As I bring this dissertation to a discussion, I found that the findings from chapters 5 and 6 showed a similar connection between categories. The categories were analyzed by different theoretical perspectives which let me understand and respond to the study's questions through diverse lenses. The (Figure 7.1) shows a visual connection between the main categories analyzed and described in the two chapters: 1) students' music and art learning experiences, and 2) MABP activities and students' meanings as an activity. The figure shows the practical and emotional connection from the categories analyzed.

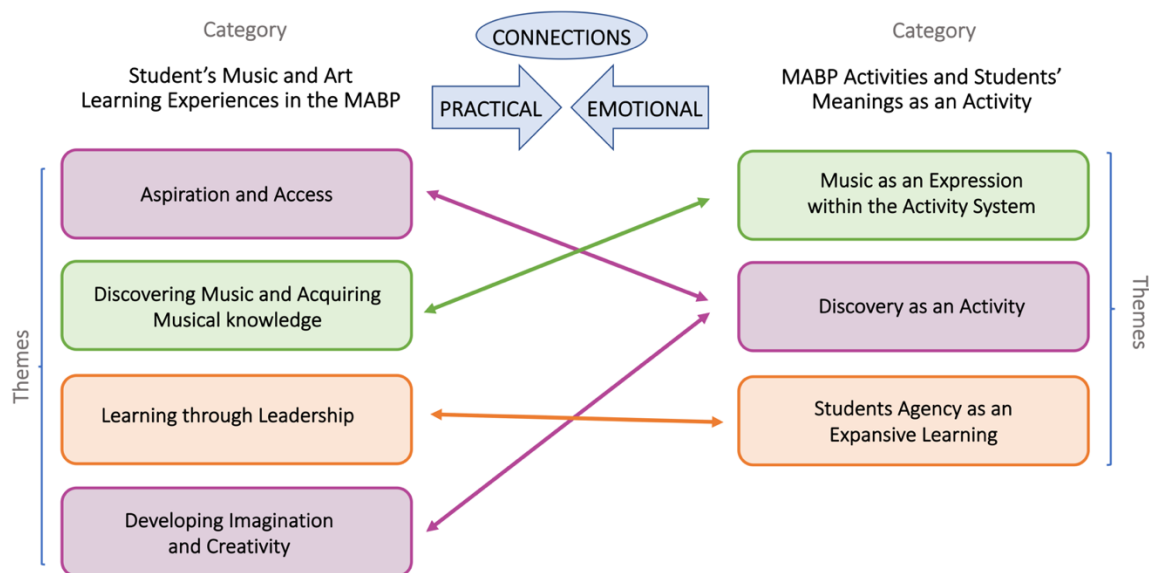


Figure 7.1. The practical and emotional connection from student's experiences in the MABP

This discussion will show the *practical and emotional* connections which emerged from the dynamic application of theory in the study. The theories moved the study into an active exploration of students' music and an art activity. The *practical and emotional* connections between these categories develop a discussion from students' findings participating in the MABP.

Student Apprenticeship through Music and Art

The students' music practices go beyond learning violin and cello in the MABP. Miguel and Nancy were examples that I want to focus on in this discussion. Miguel, as I explained in chapter 6, was a child that showed behavior problems in the MABP. Throughout the in-depth analysis, it was possible to observe the positive influence of the MABP on Miguel's learning development. Miguel was a clear example as a unit from the practical and emotional connection.

The word unit was used to express how Miguel's experiences embraced holistic learning from the diverse themes analyzed through chapter categories.

Miguel's learning through music and art practices was visible in his active participation where he not only showed that he learned music skills, but also leadership and social participation. During his participation, he learned to master and manage learning situations. Miguel's learning occurred inside and outside the MABP. One of the outside practices was visits to ESAM. The art museum was a place where students brought their music knowledge to a real environment. This practice encouraged students to make connections between music and visual art. The MABP staff and ESMA docents from guided students through these journeys. Miguel was an example of how music and art practices were created by making connections between *practical and emotional* learning experiences.

Miguel's experience in ESMA showed how learning music is more than a practice in the MABP. In the museum, Miguel played a solo with confidence in front of the docents and peers. He improvised a melody from his inspiration by connecting his body and emotions with his music skills. Miguel demonstrated that he mastered the situation and performed the melody by playing the violin with soft notes and movements to express through music the sadness of the art image. Miguel connected his emotions with music skills and created beautiful notes inspired by a beautiful image of Christ in his moments of prayer and sadness. The following dialogue shows the expressions from Miguel's playing the violin:

Docent: think about the emotion, how does it make you feel?

What word should you use? Listo,

(Here, Miguel played a melody from his inspiration for one minute and after his participation, she continued asking him questions)

Docent: what is the emotion?

Miguel: sad

Docent: what is in the picture that shows what you feel you in your heart?

Miguel: the face

Docent: what is in the face?

Miguel: very sad...

Docent: extreme sadness. Do you notice, how the artist uses darkness, and the shine lighting in his face? So, do you feel that sadness? It is beautiful...

Do you want to play one more time, *por favor* (please) *tan bonito*... (so, beautiful) ...

(Then, Miguel continued playing the violin one more time with the same confidence as the first time)

(Observation, February 6, 2017).

Miguel's performance was a learning experience developed in an environment where he not only connected with his music knowledge but with his emotions too. The event encouraged Miguel to interpret the melody by taking awareness of the present moment as Vygotsky's (1994) outlined from *perezhivanie* perspective. Vygotsky's (1994) theoretical perspective explained that children connect her/his situational experience from an emotional experience with the environment. From the *perezhivanie* perspective, it was possible to understand Miguel's relation with the learning environment where he participated, and how he reacted to a given situation. Miguel showed motivation and confidence by participating in music and art practices.

Furthermore, in chapter 6 the evidence described how Miguel supported two classmates before a performance. He encouraged students to learn and practice music skills that he mastered. He showed motivation to support the two girls by rehearsing and practicing the

musical notes with them. The examination from Miguel's examples showed his leadership, self-confidence and social participation during the different situations described. As Vygotsky's (1994) stated, "The crux of the matter is that whatever the situation, its influence depends not only on the nature of the situation itself but also on the extent of the child's understanding and awareness of the situation" (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 343). Miguel's examples show the extent to how music and art learning in the MABP was not acquired in an isolated way, and also, how he and his peers contributed to one another's learning. Even though students' music practices and rehearsals challenged students with several hours of practice, rehearsals and performance, the MABP created an environment where students learned from social and community development. As Tunstall and Booth (2016) stated, "While the anticipation of performance often adds motivational energy to student's efforts, rehearsals are not just preparations for performance but also the homeland of musical and social learning" (p. 127).

Contributions from CHAT in Students' Meanings

The students' involvement in different practices inside and outside the MABP enhanced their confidence to visit, to explore and to discover new places. I argued in chapter 6 that students' meanings of discovering expressed their needs to continue exploring new places. The students' meanings of "*aburrido*" resonated in chapter 5 and chapter 6. However, in chapter 6 In the examination of students' meanings of discovering through CHAT perspective analysis, it was possible to analyze the tensions that emerged from the activities in students' expressions of "*boredom*." The student's expressions of *boredom* were a result of how they felt at that moment. They expressed that they wanted to practice drawing during either the MABP or museum practices (mediated) and that they wanted to discover and explore new places and be able to socialize with their peers in practices (activity). Students expressed that they wanted more free

time (rule) even though it was an after-school program where the curriculum was more flexible than formal school (a division of labor). The students expressed their enjoyment in museum visits to ESMA, where the 3D objects caught their interest, and they learned to compose music.

The students' expressions of enjoyment and boredom showed contradictions. However, the analysis showed that students' *boredom* was a result of students' expressions to move the activities. In chapter 6, the evidence showed that Nancy's expressions of enjoyment in ESMA were expressions of fun during the activities. Also, Nancy expressed that she would like to do activities such as applying and connecting music and drawing in the museum. These findings suggest the value of hands-on activities by promoting students' connections with music and art, and developing activities where students could touch, paint, and draw. Eisner's (2003) theoretical framework (chapter 2), described the fifth form of thinking, which sustained the importance of the materials in education. Eisner's (2003) extensive experience in art and education allowed him to argue that materials are a medium to communicate as languages are. He explained that materials application is a way to explore students' meanings and forms of expression.

It was evident during observations that students enjoyed activities where drawing and painting practices were present, and their smiling faces denoted an expression of delight. It is important to give continuity to students' creativity by developing activities where they can stimulate their ideas, critical thinking, and hands-on skills by creating moments of leisure and recreational time. In connection with students' expressions of *boredom*, John Spencer (2018) recognized "*boredom* as a vital part of the creative process" (p. 1). Spencer (2018) strategically developed boring activities with his students to stimulate their thinking and creativity. He explained that boredom "is a gift to creative thinking" (p. 2). Spencer (2018) developed a

research study where he asked his students to take four minutes of uninterrupted silence to let their minds distance from the outside and inside everyday noise. He found that this exercise let his students re-connect to themselves and discover and generate new ideas.

The MABP, through art involvement, can take advantage to develop activities where students through art can disconnect themselves from the formal and structural activities where they always are involved in their everyday life. This dissertation found that students' frequent visits to ESMA generated and fed students' desires and curiosity to discover new activities and places.

This discussion showed the need to continue researching music and art activity from an emotional perspective. The CHAT perspective provides the opportunity to focus on a structural activity that links the communication between or among activities; however, this dissertation highlighted not only the structure of the activity between students but their expressions from an emotional learning perspective.

Agency in Students' Leadership Practices

The following discussion addresses students' agency as expansive learning in the MABP, as described in chapter 6. Agency means students' actions, motivation, mobility, self-recognition, self-confidence, and awareness to think about and question their achievements, decisions and future goals. I want to address this discussion from the *practical and emotional* connection in leadership practices described in chapter 5 and chapter 6. The descriptions in these chapters showed how students developed leadership through their everyday practices.

Chapter 5 describes how students learned from leadership, especially from the continued practice of role/job assignments which were applied and practiced through the music-art program activities. The role/job assignments in the after-school program provided the opportunity for

students to learn from ownership by developing responsibility, commitment, self-awareness from their everyday music practices.

Lave and Wenger (1991) supported this analysis to understand the students' apprenticeship process in leadership practices. The situated learning perspective led me to understand students' participation in leadership activities through access to materials, apprenticeship, social interaction, independent practice, and active experimentation see the table in chapter 5. The characteristics enlisted students' learning process through involvement in leadership practices from the beginning to the end in the role/job assignment. The materials (badges, agenda, and jobs guide) provided students with a structure to understand their roles assigned, the strategies established, rules and procedures assigned to each role. The students through this process were involved in a learning dynamic which had an impact on their learning and motivation. The students learned from the MABP staff how to develop their assigned roles, which were the role models for students' music learning practices. Also, leadership practices encouraged students to participate actively in promoting socialization between peers. The students learned to be confident by developing leadership skills and becoming aware of themselves. They recognized their efforts and accomplishments in formal and informal school. This example was evident in chapter 6 when Miguel's experiences from his participation in the music program activities improved his confidence to perform and socialize with others. Miguel recognized that before his enrollment in the music program he did not participate in activities as he did now.

Chapter 6 describes students' agency not only from students' actions and mobility but how they developed their apprenticeship from the recognition of who they are and their efforts and achievements. The findings showed not only the structure of the music and art learning

practice and activity but the structure of students' emotional learning. From an emotional perspective, students' leadership expressions were connected with their interest to share their knowledge with other peers. For example, Nancy described learning interest from other students, and how they can learn from her role in the MABP and follow her lead. Nancy developed and practiced her leadership skills by announcing the MABP performing event's agenda supported by Mr. Christian, the MABP coordinator. Nancy's leadership example motivated herself, and she felt that in playing the *hostess* role could teach her peers how to behave.

The students' leadership roles assigned through the structure from the role/job assignments or by the everyday practices as I described in chapter 5 and chapter 6 fostered students desire and curiosity to learn new roles from the assignments, and leadership practices encouraged students' awareness to question what and how are they performing. This example was evident in Gerardo's experience (chapter 5) when he questioned the MABP coordinator about his role/job assigned. He wanted to perform a different role; however, Mr. Christian explained the character of the role where he needed to learn about consistency and that consistency is something that we must do every day. Gerardo's questioning made him aware of learning more about the role and himself.

From the practical and emotional connection described in finding chapters, the students' showed how they were learning music skills through leadership role assignments. The concepts of motivation, confidence or self-esteem were confirmed through evidence in chapter 6 from students' academic success, and future decisions and social participation.

I want to close this discussion by addressing the concept of motivation in students' music and art learning in the MABP. The discussion showed evidence that students were motivated through diverse music and art practices. The evidence showed, for example, Miguel's

experiences, where music supported him to externalize his thoughts, to change his mood or behavior. He showed motivation by externalizing actions that supported his expressions in how he felt during these practices. Miguel showed confidence presenting in front of their peers; he showed self-esteem and took risks to teach and rehearse a repertoire with two girls. He decided to start learning music practices in the MABP because he wanted to, and not because others imposed it. The theoretical frameworks from the sociocultural perspective in chapter 2 supported the motivation state in students' practices. The students through practices were developing the intrinsic motivation even from external motivation causes such as the structure from the music program where the rules and division of labor from the activities, in chapter 6, showed that they did not have a free environment to discuss or develop their ideas in a flexible way. Woolfolk (2011) stated "intrinsic motivation is the natural human tendency to seek out and conquer challenges as we pursue personal interest and exercise our capabilities" (p. 460). The evidence showed that the future for these students in a Latino community is lived day by day. Every semester students' retention was observed between fifty and eighty percent, where students start or come back to the MABP. This discussion raises questions about what motivates the children to want to come back and continue in the music program.

Implications of Findings

In the previous section, I presented the three major findings that emerged from this study: 1) *Student's apprenticeship through music and art*; 2) *Contributions from CHAT in student's meanings*; 3) and *Agency in students' leadership practices*. In this section, I will discuss the implications of these findings.

The theoretical framework in art education from Eisner's (2003) perspective suggested six art forms of thinking or lessons addressed in chapter 2. However, I related four forms of

thinking to connect the implications to this study. The following forms of thinking encompass art education practices from teachers, students, curricula and classroom practices: 1) formulating of aims; 2) connecting forms and content; 3) responding to distinctive demands of materials, and 4) engaging with experiential learning. Eisner's forms of thinking sustain the following implications for this study.

The MABP emerged originally from the idea of the successful music program El Sistema in Venezuela. I explained in chapter 4 that El Sistema is a music program that empowers at-risk children to improve their sense of community. It was funded by Antonio Abreu, who created an impact in music programs in the whole world. The MABP followed a similar structure from El Sistema; however, the MABP mission was to create their model based on Latino students and the community's necessities. From this perspective, the dissertation findings echoed the structure in the MABP based on students' music and art learning and meanings developed in the after-school program. Also, the student's evidence showed how the music and arts-based program developed in students positive learning experiences in school context too. From this idea, the implications in this study have implications not only in after-school context, but the study invites to transform teaching practices from actions to activity (Engeström, 2016, p. 40).

Eisner's (2003) theoretical framework explained that the concept of the artist was used not only to address artist preparation. Instead, he recognizes that the term 'artist' it is not necessarily painters, dancers, poets and playwrights, but "individuals who have developed the ideas, the sensibilities, the skills, and the imagination to create work that is well proportioned, skillfully executed and imaginative, regardless of the domain in which an individual works" (Eisner, 2003, p. 376).

The first implication in this dissertation showed the importance of applying music and art practices from a curricular perspective where the students can develop learning experiences to make their own choices. The music and art practices not intended to control the children but instead guide them by creating a free environment where they can have a flexible discipline to define themselves by having the liberty to choose. Eisner's (2003) perspective in the form of thinking *formulating of aims* explained that standardized tests negate the opportunity for children to define themselves. The students participating in the MABP can learn from the music and art practices but also learn from a learning structure where the music teaching artists did not evaluate by testing but instead by observing and engaging them through music and art practices. In chapter 5, Ms. Moore's music teaching experience showed how she created an environment where she encouraged students to learn Music Theory and Practice in an environment of learning, creativity, and participation. Her class promoted students' individual and group participation where they developed leadership skills, self-confidence, and music and practice engagement. The evaluation in the MABP was not measured by a test that implies date and time; instead learning music and art was a result of the music teaching artist involvement in students' music apprenticeship from observation, music teaching artists teamwork commitment, teaching and lesson preparation, and staff meetings scheduled to discuss students' and program goals.

The MABP challenges of evaluation and assessment is a continuing process of learning how to evaluate students music learning. The MABP did not evaluate the individual students progress, but collectively evaluated students, for example during the performance. The evaluation and assessment were an important topic for the MABP, where was discussed during the MABP staff meetings; however, the limitations of time did not let to staff and music teaching

artists to be prepared to conduct this level of assessment, there is no way to document students progress.

In the second implication shows CHAT analysis contribution to this study from students' meanings constructed in the MABP. The most important characteristic found through CHAT analysis was the emotional sense to understand students' meanings developed through the MABP structure in the activities. The ethnographic lens, theoretical framework, and methodology provided the structure to recognize the music instruction and activities, that allowed me to analyze what students wanted to develop and do different and theorize through the diverse theoretical perspective students evidence.

As a result, key findings showed that students discovered that visual art activities such as drawing awaken their senses by discovering new learning experiences. Eisner's (2003) stated that "the limits of our cognition are not defined by the limits of our language" (p. 379). He explains that meaning is something intellectual which provides students and teachers questions about diverse signs that we construct in our lives. Most importantly Eisner's (2003) perspective highlighted Dewey's assertion that "while science state[s] meaning, the arts express meaning" (p. 380). The students' expressions of *doing* were expressions of *action* that moved students to different activity of discovery as Vygotsky's (1978) and Engeström's (1999) perspectives show as developmental learning. Also, the evidence from findings showed that the connection with an external learning environment student enhanced their motivation and creativity. In connection with these assertions of 'doing' from through study findings, Washington (2011) from his interest to understand how art do difference in practice, addressed the concept of performance by researching an after-school art program in Albany, where 62 refugees' children from diverse countries, like Sudan, Nepal, Rwanda, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Thailand. Washington (2011)

introduced the concept of performance as an action verb where the concept is more than simply doing an activity. He stated, “it is a showing doing” that is done or cited in light of reflexivity” (p. 266). Washington (2011) explained that the concept of performance enables us to apply this concept in community pedagogies where ‘doing’ as a verb it is more than this, it is an act of remembering, researching, searching, finding, sharing, remaking, painting, exhibiting, taping, stringing, and laying work on the floor (p. 266). The author reflection was based on an activity developed with children from the study and how the verb was an action of showing. This description from a performance classroom experience let to realize that every activity needs to have their own ‘verb’ as a pedagogical tool. “we learn to emphasize the actions of verbs of art while teaching art for the sake of community building” (Washington, 2011, p. 266).

The concept of performance as a form of the verb has implications in the way that art is used as a pedagogical tool. Eisner (2003) explained in the form of thinking, *connecting forms and content* that teachers need to give continuity to form and content through practices, where children uncover and question how things are. Eisner’s (2003) stated that “the limits of our cognition are not defined by the limits of our language” (p. 379). He explained that meaning is something intellectual which provides students and teachers questions about diverse signs that we construct in our lives.

The findings by the analysis through a CHAT perspective theorize students’ desires, motivation and discovering to expressions of ‘doing.’ Furthermore, this study through music and art contribute to CHAT theory to transform claims in music and visual culture activity instruction. Through students’ expressions of doing materialize their meanings developed through music and art, in connection with Dewey’s perspective, “This transformation is of the very essence of the change that takes place in any and every natural or original emotional

impulsion when it takes the indirect road of expression instead of the direct road of discharge” (p. 81).

The third implication in this dissertation recognized that arts-based programs are mediums to promote motivation and social engagement environments (Education Commission of the States, 2018). This dissertation showed how students created a community environment through the connections with diverse organizations where they participated. The MABP engaged students in an environment where the connection with different art forms enhanced their music learning experiences. Eisner (2003) in the form of thinking *responding to distinctive demands of materials* recognized the relation that materials represent in teachers and students’ practices as a way to represent meanings and forms of expression. The students in the MABP expressed the meanings constructed through music and art; these connections shaped students understanding of the world. The music and art were the medium or the language to construct meanings. Examining the diverse settings where students learned provided the lens to understand how they experience and constructed meanings by the accessibility and mobilization from the diverse places they interacted. Diverse studies from music and marginalized communities did not focus on the dynamic where students learn music through a qualitative lens. The studies were conducted through quantitative methods by measuring students’ self-esteem, self-concept, behavioral problems, academic performance, and motivation (Shin 2011, Slater et al., 2014, McPherson and Hendricks 2010, and Wright, John, Alaggia, and Sheel, 2006). While studies conducted through qualitative methods in music and arts-based communities in marginalized communities were exploring and understanding friendship, mentorship, program resources needs, and moral development (Woodward and Pestano, 2013, and Fitzpatrick et al., 2014). Woodward and Pestano, (2013) research contribute to the understanding of the work of entities

involved in the progress of community development. In consideration of this, I believe that the use of qualitative and ethnography was pivotal for achieving the findings of this study, also this study has implications to theory from the diverse lens explored to understand students learning experiences and meanings constructed in the MABP.

Eisner's (2003) concluded in the form of thinking *engaging with experiential learning* the importance of the final product. The author explained that the final product perspective is the connection between the worker and the sense of the product. Eisner (2003) and Dewey (1943) coincided that product development has to be centered in perception and insight to produce social power. Dewey (1943) explained that from this perspective of the product, about educational practices, they should not be mere routine practices. The author claimed the importance to create occupations in school "to become the child's habitat where [she/he] learns through directed living instead of being the only place to learn lessons having an abstract and remote reference to some possible living to be done in the future" (p. 18). In the MABP the final product has implications in the way students learn and receive music instruction in connection with other activities like leadership role activity, and the connection from the diverse settings like El Sol Art Museum, El Sol Theater and field trips. Eisner's (2003) statement led me to question: what will students do with music and art learning acquisition in their present and future?

Implications for Teaching Practice and Policy

Diverse academic and non-academic organizations have been working for decades to construct better practices and policies in art education. These organizations from the whole world like federal agencies, arts-based advocacy communities, researchers, and school programs have engaged in efforts in working in the structure of policies in art education to benefit and

strengthen the curriculum, lessons, and practices from inside and outside the school. First of all, it is important to highlight the importance of the sense of place and the role of art from the art advocacy community. The Americans for the Arts non-profit organization (2018) re-considered the concept for arts-based community development as a placemaking concept that involved community development:

We believe that creative placemaking sometimes referred to as arts-based community development is a key strategy in achieving access to a full, vibrant creative life and community for all. Creative placemaking is generally understood as the use of arts and culture by diverse partners to strategically shape the physical and social character of a place to spur economic development, promote enduring social change and improve the physical environment. (Americans for the Arts, 2018)

The findings from this dissertation are committed to contributing to arts education through research for better practices in formal school and arts-based community programs. The following actions from *Arts Education Partnership* (AEP, 2017) 2020 agenda for Advancing the Arts in Education identifies four state-level priority areas in which arts and education leaders can situate their work (Arts Education Partnership, 2017, p. 6). AEP (2017) recognizes that, disproportionally, the students who lived in poverty and attended low-income school have less access and involvement in art practices. The following actions from AEP (2017) supports the implications in the dissertation discussion which provides recommendations to arts in education and leaders, essentially for art development in low-income communities: 1) Raise student achievement and success, 2) Support effective educators and school leaders, 3) Transform the teaching and learning environment, and 4) Build leadership capacity and knowledge.

The first action addressed the priority to adopt higher standards and the implementation of new accountability systems, “States across the country are rethinking what it means for students to be ready for the college, career, and life” (AEP, 2017, p. 8). This action plan is to inform and create accountability systems by positioning art as an essential definition of college and career.

The second action highlights the preparation, support, and evaluation for educators and school leaders. This action introduces the concept of the workforce as a rethinking of the system of teaching preparation where calls to the state are made to ensure the level of experience of the teacher is knowledgeable, and he or she is ready and able to engage art as a core academic subject. This call forges art teaching preparation into including subjects other than arts for school leaders and arts-based arts educators.

The third activity shows the importance of the learning environment. This priority is centered on the learning environment by exploring art-centered and arts-based solutions and strategies for using time, resources, and technology in new and innovative ways to ensure students’ needs.

The last action addresses the need to provide easy access to information that can support all parts interested in the arts-based with resources, policies, and tools. It “Engage[s] and build[s] relationships with key arts and education stakeholders invested in education improvement” (AEP, 2017, p. 9).

The AEP (2017) actions specifically pointed out the need to prepare students for the current society through arts-based education. These actions informed about the high-priority areas to study in order to cause an impact on students’ academic achievement and future success. My experience as a student exploring the Latino arts-based community in a low-income

environment let me re-think art education as a research-scholar and graphic designer. The necessity to continue exploring early childhood environment in both formal and informal contexts led me to believe that formal school and arts-based community programs need to be connected and receive support from each other and from directors, teachers, parents, community, and organizations to address strengths and weaknesses through art education.

This dissertation suggests that students' academic achievement and future decisions can be informed by students' music and art learning experiences constructed in arts-based programs. The students' agency as expansive learning in this study was a result of students' actions. Engeström (2016) explained that expansive learning "is a movement from actions to activity" (p. 40). The evidence from students' learning experiences was expressed from the physical and emotional activity. The students' activity was created, generated, and produced.

Future Research

The dissertation's initial purpose was to research with students, music artist-teachers, and parents from the MABP. I had the privilege to conduct interviews and observations with music teachers and parents. However, for the purposes of this study, I focused my dissertation on students' music learning experiences and meanings developed to respond to the principal guiding research questions. Through my analysis, I observed the need to further research to understand the voices of music teaching artists' perspectives on art practices in the MABP. Also, more research is needed to understand the role of parents and their beliefs in the MABP program about students' academic achievement, performance, and social participation experiences.

This dissertation suggests the need for further exploration of student's academic success and future decisions as an impact of participating in music arts-based programs. I find importance in exploring the experiences of students who graduated from the MABP and

following-up their next steps in future art education practices. The study's implications show the need to focus on this area of research in order to recognize the current art education needs and to continue planning actions for better practices to support the next generations. Furthermore, there is a need to explore formal school art practices in connection with arts-based programs to examine students' academic success, leadership, and decision making in relation with their participation in arts-based programs such as music education, dance, visual art, and theater.

The dynamic of the activity in the Latino students' participating in music and art practices studied from the Engeström's (2016) perspective led me to understand the connections between the ESAM and MABP. Through these connections, emotional meanings emerged from CHAT activity exploration, where Roth (2009) recognized the emotional activity as a sensuous nature of the activity (p. 64). This study proposes further exploration in the area of emotional activity in connection arts-based programs, as Roth stated, "Yet the emotional aspects of work are seldom captured in the activity-theoretical studies" (Roth, 2009, p. 64).

To conclude, I want to emphasize the importance of focusing on inclusion as a broad concept in the music and arts-based programs. I observed inclusion in the MABP from the disability perspective where children with disabilities were part of this community and noticed their disability was not a barrier to learn music and art, sing, play, draw, create, and desire the same opportunity as everyone.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to understand how art can be used as a mediating tool for children to construct social and cognitive learning within culturally diverse communities, thus, enhancing the social environment in which they interact. The findings contribute to the understanding of music learning experiences and meanings constructed by students who come

from border communities and to theorizing about how art can be used as a way to reaffirm and celebrate marginalized identities of students at our southern border while also supporting their academic success. The descriptions of the finding were a response to the two main questions that led the study: 1) How do students learn and experience music and art practices through music in an arts-based after-school program?; 2) How are student's meanings developed through music and art in the arts-based after-school program?

By using diverse theoretical perspectives, it was possible to understand students' ways of learning in the MABP and to understand how art was a mediating tool in Latino students' practices in music and art-based activities. The detailed analysis through CHAT perspective provides this dissertation the visual and formal structure of the activity in the MABP and connected students' learning and cognitive experiences with their emotions through their meanings developed in the MABP and ESAM.

I believe that art in current history is still visualized as an unapproachable subject to be included in the curriculum. This dissertation shows the need to continue researching arts-based programs to make approachable practices where children expand their ways of being, doing, and thinking while drawing on their rich cultural resources.

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Appendix A

University of Texas at El Paso IRB Approval for Spring 2016 and 2017



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
Office of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Projects
Institutional Review Board
El Paso, Texas 79968-0587
phone: 915 747-8841 fax: 915 747-5931

FWA No: 00001224

DATE:	April 14, 2016
TO:	Claudia Saldaña, Master
FROM:	University of Texas at El Paso IRB
STUDY TITLE:	[881720-1] Art as a Mediating Tool: Children and Learning in a Music and Arts based After School Program
IRB REFERENCE #:	College of Education
SUBMISSION TYPE:	New Project
ACTION:	APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE:	April 14, 2016
EXPIRATION DATE:	May 13, 2016
REVIEW TYPE:	Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. University of Texas at El Paso IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This study has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

Appendix B

Assent Form For Research Involving Human Subjects

University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Institutional Review Board
Assent Form for Research Involving Human Subjects

Protocol Title: Art as a Mediating Tool: Children Learning in a Music Art-based After School Program

Principal Investigator: Claudia Saldaña, Doctoral student,
Beverley Calvo, Ph.D, Associate Professor (Educational Psychology and Special Services)

Erika Mein, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Literacy/Biliteracy Education (Division of Bilingual Education, Literacy/Biliteracy, and Sociocultural Studies)

UTEP: Department of Education, TLC Doctoral Program

I am being asked to decide if I want to be in this project study because Claudia Saldaña is a doctoral student in Education program, interested in conducting a study in the area of art and education.

The student Claudia is developing a project that will explore children's learning experiences in music program.

I know that to be in this study I will expect of child to participate by explaining Claudia my experiences have been during my participation in the music program Tocando, and the diverse activities in which we participate.

The following table shows the activities I might be participating in through the afterschool program.

Participant's information	Context
Participation in occasional weekly activities	Project- based activities Interviews Focus groups.
Observations	Claudia or Dr. Calvo will observe music classes and program activities through duration of study.
Journal/ Diary	Annotations and activities Classroom activity.
Video	Digital video recordings and pictures will be collected during students and teacher practices, inside and outside the program.
Work samples	Artifacts (work samples) will be collected during students and teacher art practices, inside and outside the programs.

Revised: 05/14/09



Approved on: 04/14/2016
Expires on: 04/13/2017
Study Number: Saldaña
881720-1

As a way of thanking you for your participation at the completion of the study you will receive a book related to art or music.

Assurances:

- I know that I can ask questions about this study at any time.
- I know that I can stop being in the study at any time without anyone being mad at me. I will not get in trouble if I stop being in the study.
- I know that only the people who work on this project study will know my name and it will not be used in any of the study reports or documents created.

I want to be in the study at this time. I can ask about what happened in the study after it is over by contacting Ms. Claudia Saldaña by e mail: csaldanacorral@miners.utep.edu

Child's Printed Name: _____

Child's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Witness or Mediator: _____ Date: _____

I am being asked to be audiotape, photographed and videotaped on this project study.

I accept Yes ☐ No ☐

I don't accept Yes ☐ No ☐

I have explained the project study at a level that is understandable by the child and believe that the child understands what is expected during this study.

Signature of Person Obtaining Assent:

_____ Date _____

Revised: 05/14/09

Appendix C

Focus Group Interview Protocol (Spanish)

I. Introducción (5 minutos)

Buenos Días, Gracias a cada uno de ustedes por estar aquí participando.

Mi nombre es Claudia Saldaña, soy estudiante de Educación en University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). Estoy interesada en conocer sus experiencias de aprendizaje a través de la música y el arte en “MABP”.

Todos ustedes son de quinto grado, y pronto estarán graduándose. Voy a realizar varias preguntas relacionadas con sus experiencias vividas y aprendizaje en el Programa.

La respuesta que ustedes responderán no se calificará y no habrá respuestas equivocadas. Solo me gustaría conocer lo que ustedes piensan y sienten por medio de las preguntas que realice.

Sus nombres y respuestas permanecerán anónimos.

Me gustaría que tuviéramos orden y respeto al contestar nuestras preguntas, y también respetemos las respuestas de sus compañeros. Debemos esperar a que su compañero termine de hablar para continuar con el siguiente. Pueden levantar su mano para hablar y tomar turnos. Podemos opinar o sugerir ideas sobre el tema.

1. Tiempo inicial.

El primer paso es presentarnos cada uno, solo su nombre y tiempo que tienen en el programa por favor.

Vamos a realizar una actividad que nos va ayudar a reflexionar sobre nuestras experiencias. (Explicar actividad) les voy a entregar una hoja de color y aquí tenemos marcadores, pueden tomar uno y dibujaremos (podemos utilizar texto):

Ahora pasarán a otra etapa en su educación:

-Dibujaremos se imaginan o visualizan en 5 o 10 años. **(tiempo 10 minutos)**

II. Tiempo Medio

Muy bien el siguiente paso es compartir nuestras experiencias, (pueden mostrar si ustedes gustan sus dibujos)

Pregunta: introducción-

-¿Cómo piensas acerca de tu primera experiencia en MABP?

Pregunta: Intermedia-

- ¿Cómo te imaginas en un futuro? ¿Qué te imaginas realizando?

-¿Cuáles recursos identifican importantes en el programa? ¿Cómo te ayudaron? Experiencia alguna.

Por ejemplo:

- a) Visitas al museo b) Presentaciones y visitas “Orquesta”

III. Tiempo Final de la entrevista.

¿Cómo se han sentido después de haber participado en este grupo y hablado sobre este tema?

Me gustaría dar a todos las gracias por haber estado aquí y hablar conmigo esta mañana. Realmente me ha dado mucho gusto reunirme con ustedes y sus preguntas me han ayudado a entender aún más sus experiencias en el programa.

- Tienen ustedes alguna pregunta, ó algún comentario.

Notas/ preguntas:

- ¿Cómo te ha sido tu experiencia social al estar en el programa?
 - Fortalezas de estar en el programa
 - Obstáculos o barreras que vencieron
- ¿Cuáles situaciones identificas que el programa les permite interactuar ó participar más con sus compañeros y te ayudan a tu interacción social?

Appendix D

Interview Protocol (Spanish)

1. ¿Cuánto tiempo/ años llevas en el programa?
2. ¿Qué te motivó a entrar al programa?
3. ¿Que te gusta del programa?
4. ¿Cuáles actividades identificas importantes en el programa? ¿Cuáles disfrutas más?

Por ejemplo:

- Actividades de arte- visitas al museo
- Concierto-Presentaciones y visitas al Teatro
- Practicas con violin/cello
- Clases de musicianship
- Visitas de artistas al programa

5. ¿Recuerdas alguna experiencia importante para ti en alguna de estas actividades?
6. ¿De que te sientes orgulloso?
7. ¿Cómo te sientes cuando vas a un concierto?
8. ¿Te gusta participar en las actividades del programa? Como visitas al museo, actividades en comunidad, conciertos?
9. ¿Cómo te parece cuando los artistas-músicos visitan el programa?
10. ¿Por qué es importante tener un trabajo ó tarea (job/role)? ¿Cómo te sientes?
11. ¿Qué te parecen las visitas al museo de arte? ¿Qué es lo que más te gusta?
12. ¿Qué actividades son fáciles y que actividades son difíciles para ti?
13. ¿Qué piensas cuando observas a tus maestros tocar? En un concierto ó en el salón de clases?
14. ¿ Tus papás te apoyan para estar ó seguir en el programa? ¿Cómo en que actividades?

15. ¿Cuándo estás tocando ó practicando y dice el profesor por ejemplo (Do you remember the things that you learned in presentations to practice in your everyday activities? (posture, discipline, learning).

16. Tú tienes ya tu propio violin, ¿Qué significa para ti tener tu propio violin?

Follo-up Questions:

¿Qué te motiva ó que piensas cuando observas a tus maestros tocar? En un concierto ó en el salon de clases.

¿Cuándo estás tocando ó practicando y dice el prof. José por ejemplo (posture... Do you remember the things that you learned in presentations?

¿Tú tienes ya tu propio violin, que significa para ti tener tu propio violin?

¿ Es difícil para ti adaptarte en el programa?

¿ Que cosas son fáciles y que cosas son difíciles?

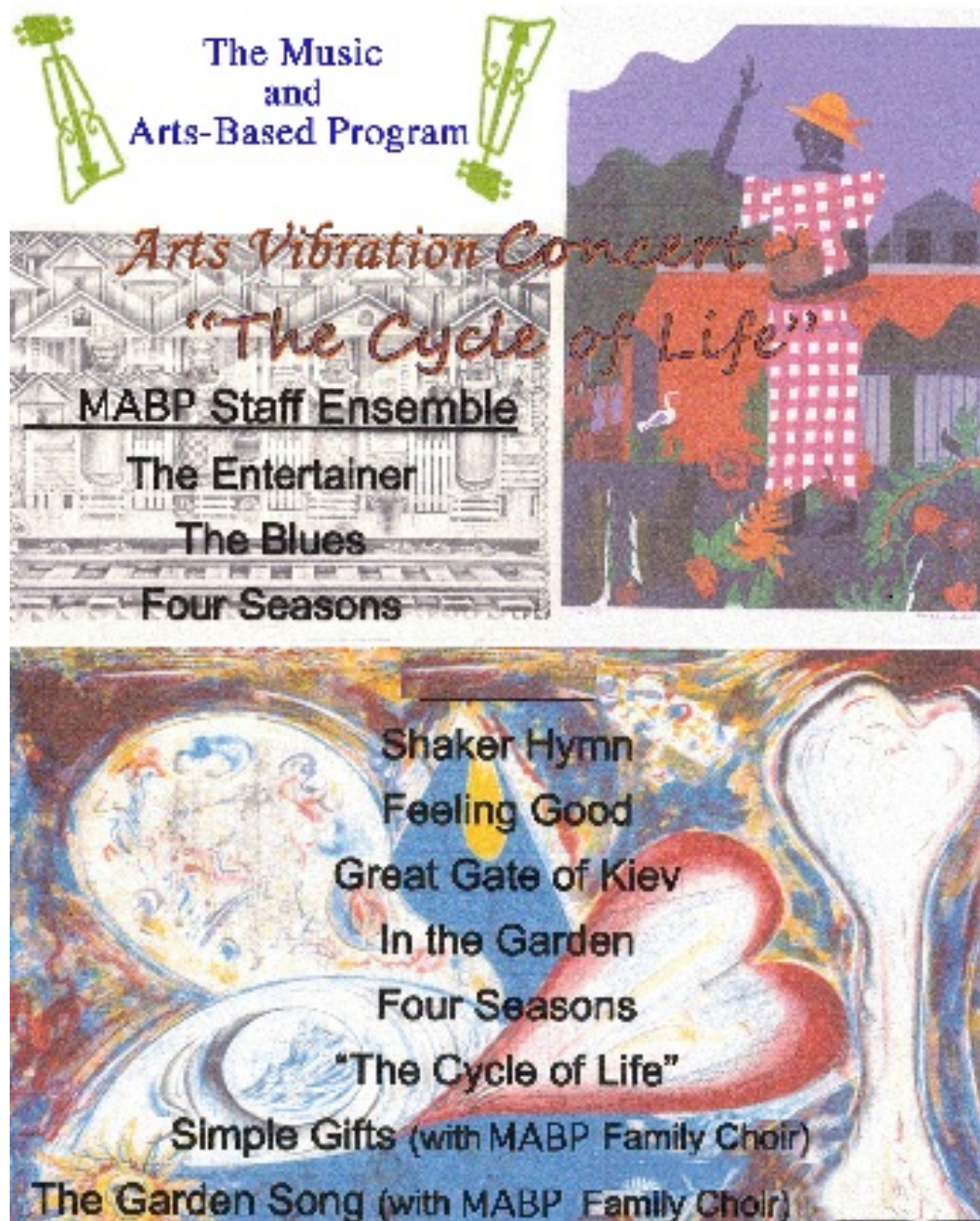
¿Cuando estás en prácticas para tener una presentación ó un concierto que sensaciones tienes?

¿Qué piensas cuando estas ensayando para un concierto que vas a presentar? Te gusta ensayar ó te sientes presionado? Pensando en el concierto.

¿Cuál es tu rol (tarea) asignación, (gafete)? Te gusta el rol, ó apoyar en las tareas? ¿Cómo te sientes?

Appendix E

Musical Repertoire





The Music and Arts-Based Program

Arts Vibration Concert

May 19, 2016

5:30pm • El Sol Museum of Art (ESAM)

PROGRAM

**Introduction –*

- March Heroic
- Hunter's Chorus

MABP Strings Ensemble (Rio Grande Elementary School)

Jesus Mares conductor

** Words by Rio Grande Elementary School Principal,*

- Open String Samba
- This Old Man
- D Major Scale
- G Major Scale
- G Major Jig
- Mary Had a Little Lamb
- Lightly Row
- Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

Alan Hernandez, conductor
Omar Moreno, conductor

- Eine Kleine Nachtmusik
- Libertango
- Serenata Huasteca

MABP Staff Ensemble

**Student Award Ceremony*

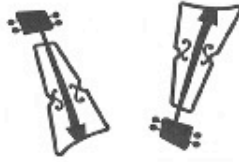
-Frere Jaques

**Arts Vibration Presentation by Mr. Christian Rodriguez and Presentation
on Artwork & Composition by Jesus Mares
Premiere of Three Little Dances By MABP Musicians!*

I. Starfish Dance

II. Seashell Waltz

III. Crown Waltz



The Music and Arts-Based Program

FALL CONCERT OCTOBER 6TH, 2016

STAFF ENSEMBLE

Eline KleineNachtmusik Mozart

VIVALDI GROUP

I've got Music American Folk Song

VIVALDI & MOZART GROUP

Frerer Jaques French Folk Song

MOZART GROUP

Cantamos Americanos American Folk Song

VIVALDI & MOZART GROUP

Chey Chey Koo Ley African Folk Song

VIVALDI GROUP

Twinkle Twinkle American Folk Song

BRAHAMS GROUP

Enter The Heroes
Dragon Hunter

Appendix F

MABP Instrument Check Out Form (English-Spanish)

Student Name: _____

The instrument listed below is loaned to the above student for the spring semester ().

Instrument: _____

Number: _____

Condition: _____

Accessories: Shoulder Rest _____ Bow _____ Rosin _____

The following conditions apply:

1. You are responsible for the repair of any damage to the instrument during the time that the instrument is in your care.
2. You will return the instrument in the same condition that it was given to you.
3. You are responsible for the proper care of the instrument.
4. The instrument must be returned at any requested time.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

MABP Formulario para la Entrega de Instrumento

Nombre del Estudiante: _____

El instrumento mencionado abajo será prestado al estudiante para el semestre de primavera 2014.

Instrumento: _____

Numero: _____

Condicion: _____

Accesorios: Apoyo de Hombro _____ Arco _____ Colofonia _____

Bajo estas condiciones:

5. Soy responsable de reparar cualquier daño al instrumento mientras este a mi cuidado.
6. Regresare el instrumento en la misma condición en el que me fue entregado.

7. Soy responsable del cuidado correcto del instrumento.
8. Regresare el instrumento en cualquier momento que sea requerido.

Firma del Estudiante: _____ Fecha: _____

Firma del Padre/Madre: _____ Fecha: _____

Vita

Claudia Saldaña Corral earned her Bachelor degree of Arts in Graphic Design from Autonomous University of Ciudad Juarez, México in 1996. In 2006 she received her Master degree of Business Administration from Autonomous University of Ciudad Juarez, México. In 2012 she joined the doctoral program in Teaching, Learning, and Culture at the University of Texas at El Paso.

Ms. Saldaña Corral received honors and awards including a fellowship from the Women's Auxiliary Fellowship, Travel Grants from UTEP Student and German Federal Ministry of Education and Research in Düsseldorf (Germany). While pursuing her degree, Ms. Saldaña Corral worked as a research assistant and EL3 Lab Coordinator at the University of Texas at El Paso. Ms. Saldaña Corral presented her research at national and international conference meetings including the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the American Anthropological Association (AAA), Art Education Research Institute Symposium and the International Perspectives of Research in Arts Education, Düsseldorf, Germany. Additionally, she has published her work in the *International Journal of Special Education*, *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education* and *Journal of Mathematics Education*. Ms. Saldaña Corral's dissertation entitled "Art as a Mediating Tool: Children and Learning in a Music and Arts-Based After-School Program," was supervised by Dr. Erika L. Mein (chair) and Dr. Olga Kosheleva (co-chair).

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