

# Improvisation through Dalcroze-inspired activities in beginner student jazz ensembles: A hermeneutic phenomenology

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigated the meanings students from beginner jazz ensembles ascribe to learning jazz improvisation through Dalcroze-inspired activities. Over the course of ten weeks, students from three respective beginner jazz ensembles were exposed to Dalcroze-inspired activities as the medium for learning to improvise. The sessions were held on a weekly basis, facilitated by the researcher. Hermeneutic phenomenology guided the research procedures. In-depth interviews, personal reflections, participant reflection essays as well as video recordings were the methods of data collection. Through the use of Atlas.ti 7, the data were organized and analysed by means of coding and categorisation, which led to the identification of five themes. The five themes that emerged from the data analysis were: feeling the music in my body, supporting development as a jazz musician, building character, building relationships, and stimulating and motivating learning. This study provides an understanding of the connection between jazz improvisation and Dalcroze Eurhythmics as well as how students experience learning jazz improvisation through Dalcroze-inspired activities. Through this understanding this study proposes a more holistic approach to jazz improvisation teaching that can inform further research and application of Dalcroze Eurhythmics in jazz pedagogy.

**Keywords:** *bodily experience, embodiment, embodied cognition, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, improvisation, jazz ensemble, musical experiences, hermeneutic phenomenology*

## ABSTRAK

Hierdie verhandeling ondersoek die betekenis wat studente in beginners jazz ensembles toeskryf aan die leer van jazz improvisasie deur middel van Dalcroze-geïnspireerde aktiwiteite. Oor die verloop van tien weke was studente van drie onderskeie beginner jazz ensembles blootgestel aan Dalcroze-geïnspireerde aktiwiteite, waardeur hulle geleer het om te improviseer. Die sessies, wat deur die navorser gefasiliteer is, is op 'n weeklikse basis gehou. Die navorsingsprosedures is onderlê deur hermeneutiese fenomenologie. Data is ingesamel deur middel van in-diepte onderhoude, persoonlike refleksies, deelnemer refleksies sowel as video-opnames. Atlas.ti 7 is gebruik om die data te organiseer deur kodering en kategorisering. Data is vervolgens geanaliseer en het gelei tot die identifisering van vyf temas. Die vyf temas is soos volg: voel die musiek in die liggaam, ondersteun die ontwikkeling as jazz-musikant, bou van karakter, bou van verhoudinge, asook stimulering en motivering van leer. Hierdie studie lig die verband tussen jazz improvisasie en 'Dalcroze Eurhythmics' uit en dit verskaf 'n beter begrip van hoe studente dit ervaar om jazz improvisasie te leer deur middel van Dalcroze-geïnspireerde aktiwiteite. Die studie beoog dus om deur 'n verbeterde begrip van studente se ervarings 'n meer holistiese benadering tot jazz-improvisasie-onderrig voor te stel wat verdere navorsing en die toepassing van 'Dalcroze Eurhythmics' in jazz-pedagogie kan beïnvloed.

**Kern woorde:** *liggaamlike ervaring, verpersoonliking, liggaamlike kognisie, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, improvisasie, jazz ensemble, musikale ervarings, hermeneutiese fenomenologie*

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