

Traversing the chiasm of lived teaching and learning experience embodied practicum in music teacher education

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ABSTRACT

Earlier studies have valued the practicum as one of the most important parts of music teacher education, and not least because it has been so widely appreciated by students. In order to develop high quality music teacher education, we have to understand what happens in practicum contexts. It is in meetings between student teachers, practicum supervisors, students, steering documents, culture and music that student teachers learn how to teach music in adequate ways. This article tries to understand such meetings and learning situations through the phenomenological perspective of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's concept of "chiasm". As expressed by the Greek letter "χ" (chi), "chiasm" means a crisscrossing of the perceiving and the perceived self and the other, and between language and meaning. Chiasm also signifies an inter-twining, an intersection, reversibility, or the process of the flowing of phenomena into one another. In this sense, chiasm can symbolically represent the practicum as an intertwining of theory and practice. Like chiasm, the practicum within music teacher education can be thought of as an endless journey, and the meeting place between a student teacher's self with the world of different and unique music teaching and learning experiences, unpredictable turns, challenges and wonders. This article attempts to communicate a glimpse of such a journey, as expressed through five music teacher students' stories. These stories were collected during individual and group interviews in a Norwegian-Swedish research project focusing on the educational quality of music teacher education. Hopefully the analysis of these stories will contribute to the understanding of how individuals and groups embody knowledge of their music teaching and learning life-worlds.

Keywords: music teacher education, practicum, educational quality, chiasm, flesh

Introduction

The practicum part of music teacher education has been underlined as the most important lesson from both students' and teachers' perspectives (Ferm Thorgersen 2010b; Ferm Thorgersen & Johansen 2012; Ferm Thorgersen, Johansen & Juntunen, 2016). This is also the case in research focusing on general teacher education (Zeichner 1986; Franke & Dahlgren 1996; Yourn 2000). It has been stated that the practicum is the place where student teachers know if they have understood and can handle issues taken up in theoretical courses; and it is here that students express how they have developed their music teacher identity most strongly (Kettle & Sellars 1996; Odena & Welch 2007; Webster 2007; Draves 2008; Ferm 2008; Johansen 2010). The well-functioning practicum seems to be characterized by its status as an authentic arena of meetings between individual and collaborative actions and reflections, between theory and practice, experienced teachers and student teachers, intentions and issues among teachers at the institution and in the field of practice, and the needs and competence of student teachers' actual activities within the classroom (Goolsby 1997; Mills 2002; Ballantyne 2007; Jones 2007). In earlier studies it has become clear that practicum teachers have approached and thought about their roles within this arena in rather different ways, and that student teachers have perceived some gaps in these meetings (Franke & Dahlgren 1996; Jacques 1992; Sinclair 1997; Conway 2002; Ferm 2010a).

To be able to develop and deliver good quality music teacher education, it is important to understand how professional learning takes place within different arenas. Therefore in this article I want to go into the practicum arena a little bit deeper and from some students' perspectives. I want to study the interconnection between students' musical and educational experiences and imaginations, the flow of development, as well as those gaps in a practicum that are constituted by instrumental teaching in municipal culture, music schools, training schools for music student teachers, and classroom teaching in compulsory schools in Norway and Sweden. To be able to deal with these issues, I turn to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's theory, in his later works (1968; 2004), of "intertwinement" or "chiasm". As represented by the Greek letter " χ " ("*chi*"), chiasm means crisscrossings between the perceiving and the perceived, self and other, and language and meaning, thereby implying a contextual encounter between individuals and groups, who, by acting together, can change and transform their life-worlds. Consequently, chiasm can symbolically represent the practicum as an intertwining of theory and practice.

Aim and research questions

The aim of this article is to describe and try to understand the practicum as embodied learning within music teacher education from a student teacher perspective. How do music student teachers embody music teaching and learning through their lived experiences of a practicum? What encourages or hinders student teachers' professional development from the perspective of chiasm?

The theory of chiasm

The Intertwining—The Chiasm (Merleau-Ponty 1968) focuses on the relationship between interiority and exteriority. In rejecting a model that assumes an isolated body separate from the external world, Merleau-Ponty takes into account the notion that the body is the threshold of experience. He argues that subject-object distinctions need to be understood from the perspective of entanglement and interconnection. "The bodies of others are not objects; they are phenomena that are coextensive with one's own body" (Merleau-Ponty 1968: 118). Frustrated by a language that maintains dualism and dichotomies, Merleau-Ponty introduced new terms, such as "intertwining", to illuminate the inseparability of subject and world, and "chiasm" to describe the "place in the flesh of the world where the visible flesh also sees, where the tangible flesh also touches". Merleau-Ponty's concept of "flesh" emerges from his understanding of ontology as being grounded in the body. Flesh belongs neither to the material body nor to the world exclusively. It is both subject and lived materiality in mutual relation. It cannot then be conceived of as "mind" or "material substance", but rather flesh is a fold "coiling over of the visible upon the visible" (Merleau-Ponty 1968: 138). Flesh includes chiasmic spaces, and gaps between the body and the world, wherein it folds back on itself in an intertwined and ensnared relationship. Flesh as Being gives rise to the perceiver (seer) and the perceived (seen) as interdependent aspects of subjectivity.

This fleshy entwinement constitutes Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological insight into flesh as our chiasmic interrelationship with our life world whereby "I see and am seen, I touch and am touched; it is the means of communication between ourselves and the world" (Kozel 2007: 276). My body, declares Merleau-Ponty (1968), is a thing among things; it is caught in the fabric of the world, and its coherence is that of a thing. But because it moves itself and sees, it holds things in a circle around itself. Thus perception and sensation are a kind of doubling of the flesh of the world upon

itself. One could think of it as the wave as it breaks and curls over. "It is the place in the wave where the water touches itself" (Young 2001: 114).

To illustrate this double sensation, Merleau-Ponty implements the metaphor of one hand touching and grasping another, which in turn touches it back. This reaching out and crossing over the hand touched (object) reverses or folds back on itself in the act of becoming a touching subject. Thus in the chiasm or space of the fold the body inserts itself between subject and object, between the interior and exterior. Perception is formed in the closeness that is reversible in and through the body. The act of touching inverts the subject-object relationship, thereby breaking the boundaries between self and other.

Consequently, Merleau-Ponty's thesis of reversibility proposes that "to see" opens up the body to others. It is a way of knowing and being formed in closeness and through encounters. This claim is quite different from traditional philosophical models that designate vision as distant and separate, and as being controlled by the seeing subject. It is within the chiasm or gap that perception is doubled, embodied, and entangled. In a gap the outside is never fully absorbed; but is at once both exterior and interior. The gap is a space of tension and excitement.

Our embodiment of action is not separate from our social history of experience. Nor is it separate from the emergent interactions with the environment that bring forth a new perception. By this means experience is inseparable from participation and knowing – it is a boundless, repetitive interpretative process that weaves one's history of experience while "laying down a path in walking" (Varela, Thompson & Rosch 1991). In this sense, the phenomena of experiencing is never one fixed event but an on-going interpretative inquiry.

Experience is always corporeal, relational, temporal and spatial (van Manen 1994). This kind of thinking suggests that the experiences of supervisors and student teachers are intertwined, crisscrossed in a circle of the touched and the touching. The phenomena of supervisors', as well as student teachers' experiences, can be seen as being grounded in the chiasm between them; and as the intertwining of supervisors' experiences of student teachers and their understanding of student teachers' experiences (which are also experienced by supervisors).

Method

The study presented in this paper is based on a life-world phenomenological way of thinking about the world. This kind of thinking implies, as described above, that

human beings are indissolubly connected to the world. Consequently the one and only access to the world is through human beings' lived experiences. To understand the world it is crucial to understand how it is experienced, which is why it is important to consider the lived worlds of human beings. Life-world phenomenological research wants to come close to things themselves; to let them show themselves through human beings' varied experiences of them (Merleau-Ponty 1962: Husserl 1970). This kind of research has to be turned towards things, and to be adapted to things in themselves (Bengtsson 1998). According to this reasoning it becomes crucial to access human experiences of a practicum in order to understand it as a concrete phenomenon.

To gain access to the life-world, or in other words, the lived experiences of student music teachers within the field of the practicum, five student teachers from two conservatoires in Norway and Sweden were interviewed. Both female and male students had experiences in the classroom as well as in instrumental practicum over sufficient time to guarantee a good amount of experience therein. The interviews were based on an interview guide that used specific questions under each theme quite freely. The themes, which each lasted for about one hour, concerned student teachers' learning, identity and choices of content. The conversations were recorded and transcribed, and constituted material that communicated stories about learning among music student teachers within the field of the practicum in Norway and Sweden. These stories communicate a variety of values concerning teaching, learning and music that were connected to and developed in different music education cultures.

Analysis

The interview material was analysed in a phenomenological hermeneutic way comprising of naïve reading, structured analysis, and comprehensive understanding and formulation of the results in a holistic manner.

Naïve reading

The interview texts were read several times in order to grasp their meaning as a whole. I tried to be open enough to allow the text to speak to me so that aspects of learning processes, learning context and content became visible. The naïve understanding of the text was formulated in phenomenological language whereby concepts of learning experiences, unpredictable turns, challenges and wonders, perceiving and the perceived, self and other, and language and meaning, enabled reflection and depth analysis of the material in relation to the theory of chiasm.

Structured analysis

This naive reading was followed by a phase of structural analysis, which can be seen as a way of identifying and formulating themes, and which provided opportunities for trying out Merleau-Ponty's concepts as headings that could relate to the material. A theme is a thread of meaning that penetrates parts of a text in the process of conveying the essential meaning of lived experience. In order to capture this meaning of lived experience I have formulated the themes, not as abstract concepts, but rather as condensed descriptions in a way that discloses meaning. The meaning units were read through and reflected on in relation to the background of the naive understanding. I then used processes of condensation, sorting and rereading, after which constructions of themes and subthemes could take place. The importance and usefulness of the concept of "gap" became obvious in this phase of analysis, during which I have tried to be as clear as possible by decontextualizing the meaning units from the text as a whole. The process was finished when the themes validated the naive reading.

Comprehensive understanding (interpreted whole)

The main themes and sub-themes were summarized and reflected upon in relation to the research question and the context of the study, which is to say the field of the practicum. The text was read again as a whole with the naive understanding and the validated themes in mind, and with as open a mind as possible. I have tried to use my imagination to think of associations. The focus was not mainly on what the text said but on the possibilities of living in the world that the interview material opened up. The results of this phase were living descriptions of situations based on the experiences of the participants.

Formulating the results in a phenomenological hermeneutical way

The results were then formulated in everyday language, guided by the theory of chiasm, and as close to lived experience as possible. My ambition was to only use theoretical language to make the results clear and understandable, and thus to reveal the complexity of the field of the practicum from students' perspectives. Everyday language emanated from the elemental lived experience of the content of a practicum as embodied knowledge amongst the student music teachers. So when I have tried to express the meaning of lived experiences of the practicum I have used everyday language in combination with concepts from chiasm theory, primarily as verbs rather than nouns. This phase of the analysis aims to resituate the findings as close

to practice as possible. For example, the concept of “gap” shows the importance of the dynamics of distance and nearness between supervisor and student teacher in order to allow a tensional space for professional meaning-making and development.

Result

The result shows that the phenomenon of embodied learning among music student teachers in a practicum, seen from a chiasm perspective, is constituted by the following themes: growth and meaning-making in the flesh of any practicum; unpredictable turns; gap – tension or non-meeting; the transformation of musical content and educational knowledge in the field of a practicum; seeing oneself through the other – student teachers through practicum supervisors, pupils and class-mates; and the function of language in meaning-making.

To grow and make meaning in the flesh of a practicum

Within the field of the practicum, understood as “flesh”, the music student teachers experienced the profession as “music teacher” whilst at the same time experiencing becoming music teachers. They perceived the activities, content and traditions of music teaching by seeing, doing and through discussion and reflection, whilst at once being perceived by supervisors, pupils, classmates and by themselves. In this way the student teachers were intertwined with other human beings, the classroom and music education activities. Additionally, their earlier experiences of theoretical, practical and philosophical issues were intertwined with new ones more-or-less closely and more-or-less challengingly. Depending on the participants’ imaginations and their common understanding, the context was perceived and developed so as to become an authentic space for professional development.

By observing supervisors acting as experienced music teachers, the student teachers saw themselves, and imagined themselves doing things as, and acting like, music teachers. Thus their theoretical experiences could be tried out through the experience of other’s actions. Through these actions the students perceived themselves in their semi-authentic role of a music teacher and as a growing student teacher, whilst at once being perceived by the pupils in the role of their teacher; and, by the supervisor, in student teacher and collegial roles simultaneously. They learned as they taught. By embodying actions, educational approaches, musical content, methods, strategies, skills, theories in practice and professional surroundings, and within the context of a

challenging and confirming atmosphere over time, they developed within the flesh of the practicum as the professional field. In so doing they transformed music (education) knowledge and a given content into their own embodied knowledge. Through reflections, both verbal and non-verbal, and discussions with their supervisor and classmates, they saw themselves in different roles at the same time as they experienced knowledge transformation.

Unpredictable turns

The reflection part of development, whether verbal or non-verbal, towards becoming a music teacher in a practicum influenced the process of this becoming and forced it in new directions. Unexpected incidents made the gaps in the flesh clear, and they demanded reflection. The students talked about such events as, for example, suddenly seeing a theory in practice, and thereby taking up another relationship to it; and mentioned that, through their interactions with pupils, supervisors and surroundings, they were confirmed in their new role. The participants also stressed that they saw themselves doing new things in new ways when the level of safety was suddenly changed.

Gap—tension or non-meeting

In the theory of flesh and chiasm the gaps between them constitute possibilities for meaning-making if the surfaces are placed at sufficient distance to each other to constitute tension. In all the meetings mentioned above there were gaps wherein student teachers' earlier experiences were challenged in relation to practice, thoughts, actions, new situations, new content, new ways of using what is already embodied, expectations and demands. For tension to emerge, two surfaces have to come close enough to each other. The students said that such challenges can contribute to a feeling of "I can teach", and in turn, good self-esteem. If the surfaces do not come close enough to each other, there is a non-meeting, which makes the challenge too big, and the development towards becoming a music teacher within the field of the practicum, seen as flesh, does not happen. Hence, the possibility of perceiving oneself, or as being perceived as a teacher, does not occur. The outer and inner organization of a practicum seems to influence the possibilities for such meetings, and thereby possibilities for tension and meaning-making. In this case the outer organisation is steered by people responsible for the design of music teacher education as a whole, whilst the inner organisation of the practicum is steered mainly by the practicum supervisor in relation to teachers of theoretical subjects and the student teachers themselves.

Gaps that offer tension and meaning-making are, for example, those that emerge when a student music teacher is left alone with their pupils: “Then you are forced to learn in practice”. In that situation the student teachers were intertwined with different pupils, with different experiences, prerequisites, behaviours and ways of learning. When the knowledge and expectations of the student teachers and what they thought the pupils needed, meet the wishes, demands and rights of pupils, this situation demands specific ways of being: “I had to reconstruct myself to be able to contribute”. When the student teachers handled what the pupils were expected to learn, but were challenged in their meeting with them, their teaching had to be transformed. This kind of challenge demands that the supervisor is able to organize the setting for each student teacher whether or not they were handling larger or smaller gaps.

Non-meetings, where surfaces are positioned too far away from each other, and gaps become too big or even non-existent, are also exemplified in the material. Some of the meetings, depending on time limits or lack of communication, just do not take place. The discussion part of the intertwining of a student teacher with a supervisor is, for example, left aside for practical reasons connected to time and localisation, which limit the possibilities for student teachers to experience themselves in the development of flesh. The same reason also limits the possibility to make experiences over time, which in turn hinders the meeting of many surfaces. At such times opportunities to plan and embody deep and holistic knowledge in and about the profession is limited.

Lack of communication within the general organisation hinders supervisors’ attempts to organize a practicum in such a way as to offer students meaning-making gaps, as the frames are then rather unclear. Supervisors do not know what students have learnt in theoretical courses, they do not know what they are expected to learn in a practicum, what they are to be assessed upon, what their specific interests are, or not even in what role they are to enter the field of a practicum: “It is you as a student who has to tell the supervisor why you are there and what you should do”. On the other hand, students might not receive any information from the institution regarding what the supervisors want them to do, what content to teach, or what kind of pupils to meet. In such situations the possibility for surfaces to meet when they are placed at a distance wherein tensional gaps are constituted between them does not occur. Finally there are also examples in the material of non-gaps that are constituted by surfaces being placed too close to each other, which also hinders tension and meaning-making. For example, there are situations in which the professor of a theoretical subject is the same person as the supervisor, and when the activities in a practicum are totally controlled by him or her.

Transforming musical content and educational knowledge in the field of practicum

When a student music teacher grows into the flesh of a practicum, they perceive the teaching of music at the same time as their pupils, supervisors and classmates perceive that student teacher develop their teaching and begin to behave as a music teacher. When student teachers' musical and educational knowledge is challenged they make meaning in the gaps that are constituted in the interaction. What constitutes the musical and educational content is steered by the student teachers' interests and earlier knowledge, the interest and earlier knowledge of pupils, the expectations of the supervisor, the curricula and the context. What to say to pupils, what to go into with them, and what to work with in music education practice decide the content of a practicum. By being in the flesh of a practicum – planning, observing, teaching, reflecting and discussing – student teachers embody different strategies to choose between, different ways of treating musical (educational) knowledge in different situations and in their interactions with pupils.

In other words, student teachers interact with, and are expected to embody, educational knowledge of how to approach, meet and handle different pupils of different ages, with different experiences and levels of knowledge and in different constellations, how to teach in proper ways, how to lead a group, how to be an authority, how to help others to tackle problems and formulate tasks, and how to organize a music lesson. Furthermore, student teachers have to find their own ways to communicate with and mediate knowledge to pupils, colleagues and parents. At the same time, they must learn about and transform specific genres, repertoire, musical methods, musical activities, how to solve specific musical problems, different techniques, accompaniment and ensemble playing. Different activities and ways of teaching music can be exemplified by playing by ear, score-reading, improvisation, and how to be a musical role model. All kinds of content are intertwined in the flesh of the practicum.

To see oneself through the other – student teachers through the “eyes” of supervisors, pupils and classmates

As mentioned earlier, in the being of the flesh practicum music student teachers develop double roles as both student teacher and teacher. They interact with and mirror themselves in the practicum supervisor as their professor and/or colleague. It becomes clear that the practicum supervisor is really important along with co-students and pupils. The material communicates how the supervisor values her or him as a professor who can shift roles to a colleague when suitable. The professor can answer

questions, discuss, challenge and confirm students' growth, and make space for them to feel free, though not alone. The participating students said that they felt dependent on what their supervisors thought about their actions. They also appreciated being seen from the outside, and being able to establish distance and new perspectives.

As a more experienced colleague, the supervisor is an important role model who offers students the opportunity to use different actions and methods by observing and listening to their stories, and by providing a model for them to experiment with. In this role the supervisor can point out important issues, give advice and share ideas about how the student's teaching can be organised; and also make students feel trusted to take on the authority of a teacher by showing how that supervisor expects the student teachers to know something. Gradually, when the student teacher becomes more secure, the supervisor can function as a more equal colleague.

All the other roles of the practicum field offer the opportunity for student teachers to mirror themselves in their growth – if their roles are clear. The student teachers underlined that they expected the supervisor to be a safe person who they could develop a relationship with. Examples of unexpected and unclear roles arise when the supervisor expects the student teacher to take over teaching, to function as a teacher *to* the supervisor, to be unable to teach, or to just take part in everything the supervisor is able to do with his or her best pupils. Obviously, to use and develop the flesh of practicum as a chiasmatic field of professional growth demands clear roles, trust, confirmation and challenges.

The others that student teachers are intertwined with in the practicum can, as mentioned above, be the co-students or pupils with whom they have grown to know themselves. The supervisor functions as a group supervisor in the interaction wherein student teachers mirror themselves in one another. It is important that members of the group are able to challenge each other, for example, to do things that they do not handle so well. "Something happens in co-operation". It becomes evident that student teachers' roles in relation to their pupils are the most important in a practicum, which underlines the importance of meeting several different cohorts of pupils. To be able to interact with pupils it is important to gain their trust.

The function of language in making meaning

Merleau-Ponty (1968) underlines that language, when used in a broad sense, influences the development of a context and vice-versa. Thus, how language is used in the practicum influences people's being, just as the participants in this study who have learnt its language. The language used in any context should be seen as an internal part of interaction and intertwining. Language, again in a broad sense, is not only

expressed by words. Nonetheless, some issues have to be clearly formulated, conceptualised and made possible to communicate, at the same time as they encourage reflection. The participants reported that clearly defined goals on an overarching level are an important guide for what the student teachers were growing towards in their practicum: "We miss some thinking about what is the most important to learn in the younger ages, and what we need to be able to teach them in a good way." Such formulated concepts could be used in planning activities in a practicum, and also for enhancing communication between student teachers and their supervisors, co-students and their pupils, and in meetings between the different surfaces mentioned earlier. The student teachers really liked to talk about how reflection on the activities in the practicum gives meaning. Language can, for example, be valuable for understanding theory in practice, or for discussing what is not functioning in the practicum.

The different kinds of chats among the participants about their practicum required a common language. The supervisor used language to express motives, ideas and their own teaching methods, and also for commenting and reflecting on the student teachers' activities, reflections and questions. Meanwhile, the students needed a language to be able to communicate with their supervisors, each other, and with their pupils. They said that language was extremely important for their interactions with their pupils because their choice of words strongly influenced their pupils, in the sense, for instance, that they would "speak through my instrument".

Another way of helping the student teachers to become aware of their own development in the practicum seen as "flesh" was through asking them to perform reflective tasks. Merleau-Ponty (1962) in his earlier writings states that the body in its pre-reflective perceptual presence engages and synchronizes with the world at hand. This pre-reflective awareness is defined as the "*tacit cogito*", or "the presence of oneself to oneself". Reflection, according to Merleau-Ponty, makes explicit the genesis of sense already at work in the pre-reflective, while the pre-reflective is present only in its appropriation by reflection. Accordingly, while reflection is a creative act of expression, the sense it expresses is nonetheless one's own. Hence, the aim of reflection is not to give a picture of student teachers' pure experiences, but to give them a new awareness of actions in practice that can be communicated, reflected upon and discussed. Such tasks could focus on how to handle specific issues in music teaching and learning, such as improvisation, judgement and evaluation, which all require some kind of common language. Hence, the interview material shows that language is an important part of being present in the chiasm.

Discussion—an endless journey?

The intertwining process of developing towards becoming a music teacher could be seen as an endless journey, like a crosspiece or meeting place of a student teacher's self with the world of different and unique music teaching and learning experiences, unpredictable turns, challenges and wonders. For the supervisor's being as a teacher in the flesh, physical movement, speech and music-teaching activities are central. Music education knowledge is embodied, and thereby constitutes the flesh of practice, together with how directedness towards a student teacher's growth constitutes the field of the practicum. If so, how can embodied learning, as chiasm in the practicum as flesh, be understood as a journey within music teacher education?

Based on the findings above, embodied learning has to be seen as a specific journey within the endless travelling of professional growth. It should have a departure, and an arrival that have been decided, whilst being open to unpredictable turns, challenges and wonders. Where to stop, what people to meet and interact with, and what language is appropriate for which kinds of themes, should all be clear, whilst being open to the interests and needs of any student teacher. Moreover, what to have and put into student teachers' backpacks, what mountains to climb and what seas to swim should all be decided upon. It should also be clear that the students they visit know why they have come and what they should do, what competences they should have and what equipment they need. To know when to stop and be able to intertwine, and when the journey comes close enough to the sites to offer some kind of tension, are all desirable – at least at the outset. In the intertwined chiasmatic interplay with mountains, seas and human beings the student teachers found out who they are and who they could become as music teachers.

One important task for the supervisor is to draw student teachers' attention to the things music teachers believe to be significant, thereby lifting them up, and momentarily out of the primordial sea of possibilities, thereby giving them value. This pedagogical gesture of meaningfulness assumes the "phenomenality" or experienced appearance of things. Bringing things to student teachers' attention invites them to perceive and understand the world as their supervisors do.

Another task for the supervisor is to orient the student teacher to what lies beyond what is immediately present, thereby drawing them into a magical but now taken-for-granted realm of meeting pupils and teaching music, a world of ideas characterized by physical movements, speech and music in the teaching practice seen as flesh. The supervisor opens a shared *topos*, a place that over time reveals to the student teacher a wide range of music teaching practices and disciplinary orientations, and more specifically, a knowledge *topos* involving the student teacher becoming a teacher, which

is increasingly oriented towards and imitates that student teacher's own actions and reflections. Such "supervising-with" develops a common understanding wrought through the phenomenological power of mimetic supervisor-student-pupil relations. As Merleau-Ponty (1964: 145) tells us, mimesis

... is the ensnaring of me by the other, the invasion of me by the other; it is that attitude whereby I assume the gestures, the conducts, the favourite words, the ways of doing things of those whom I confront ... It is a manifestation of a unique system which unites my body, the other's body, and the other himself.

This kind of organized travel primarily aims to offer the student teacher the opportunity to discover her- or himself as a *growing* music teacher, at the same time as that growth itself. The double chiasmatic constitution of the flesh of the practicum offers good opportunities for such a voyage if all the participants are aware of the function of their roles, who represents the travel agency, who drives the train, who checks the tickets, who is the guide, and who those are that function as bodily perceivers and perceived, experiencing human beings.

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