

What's In A Song? Exploring the Analytical-Creative Learning Process in Indigenous Kenyan Children's Songs

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Past research on indigenous Kenyan children's songs focused on content and its usage for music and cultural education (Akuno, 1997; Andang'o, 2009). These songs were found to be a rich source of information for the acquisition of music knowledge and development of skills, proving to be useful material for multi-cultural education. They were particularly found to be useful in enhancing learning in environments with learners of mixed-cultures. Following the development of the Rhythm-Interval Approach (Akuno, 1997) for teaching music to 6 - 8 year old children, and a workshop presentation of the approach with one of these songs at an international music education conference (29th ISME World Conference, Beijing, 2010), this article explores the analytical-creative learning process inherent in these songs. The article reports the workshop activities, the response of the workshop participants and lessons learnt by the author. It sums up the learning experiences as participatory, inclusive and progressive (PIP), notions derived from call-and-response processes pertinent to the performance practice of indigenous Kenyan children's songs. This culminates in the interrogation of the analytical-creative learning process as an avenue for musical development through the songs.