



Article info:  
Received: 10 February 2023  
Reviewed: 18 June 2023  
Accepted: 30 June 2023

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## Perspectives on Music Pedagogy in Informal, Performance-Based Learning

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**Abstract:** Music learning practices in formal settings, for example, in the classroom, generally apply structured and systematic curriculum-based learning strategies. The entire learning process has generally been organized and implemented with guidance and supervision by the teacher. In Indonesia, music learning in formal schools still applies the standardization of Western music theory. In fact, music learning practices that offer local pedagogical values provide a very diverse portrait. In higher education, music learning that applies local pedagogy has been going on for some time. The Music Education Study Program (PSPM) of Lampung University is one of the tertiary educational institutions that has implemented music learning practices based on local pedagogy. Learning practices that are also performance-based are carried out with "informal" stages and processes. This notion means that local pedagogy is based on informal music practices in Lampung society. Informal music learning practices have not been recognized as the curriculum of formal institutions. This article looks at the concept of Lampung local pedagogy applied in music performance-based learning practices in formal areas. The central theoretical perspective in this research uses Green's (2008) thoughts on informal learning in the classroom. Data were collected through observation and in-depth interviews with lecturers and students of levels 2 and 3. As a result, the concept of local music pedagogy that takes place in music performance-based learning at PSPM University of Lampung (1) provides opportunities for students to learn while creating; (2) provides space for collaboration and social participation; and (3) strengthens peer learning in groups.

**Keywords:** music pedagogy, performance-based learning, lampung music, informal music education

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Informal Music Education

The concept of informal learning in music tends to be associated with popular music practices and regional music (Smart & Green, 2017). Informal music learning practices in the community are part of local knowledge that needs to be valued and legitimized. As evidence, a traditional music practitioner living in an area that masters a certain form of local music can maintain its musical existence and use it to fulfill economic needs. Such music practitioners even acquire aspects of their skills and knowledge autodidactically. Most local (non-academic) musicians acquire these skills and knowledge offhandedly.

Informal learning is often recognized as part of the "lifelong learning system" (Werquin, 2010). This account means that

knowledge and skills are acquired and continue to advance as long as individuals (musicians) continue to interact and work in the context of society. Werquin also emphasizes that learning can happen anywhere, including in informal spaces. For example, a local music practitioner in Lampung shows creativity in various ways, such as through musical expression, spontaneity, and evolving individuality or originality in their performances. They learn from their predecessors, family, close relatives, and the environment.

Informal learning refers to learning at the individual or group level in contexts not associated with institutional provision (Rink, Gaunt, & Williamon, 2017), such as friendship circles, at home, between relatives, or within markets. Informal learning also includes many aspects of unsupervised practice. Two meanings define informal learning; first, conscious, deliberate, and structured learning. Second, learning is unintentional, unconscious, and unstructured (see: Finnegan, 1989; Folkstead, 2006; Green, 2002, 2008; Smilde, 2012). The meaning of the term 'conscious' here is the extent to which learners intend to learn, structure their learning, or are aware of their learning. By 'unconscious' learning, we mean the extent to which they learn without intending to learn or without realizing at the time that they are learning or learning chaotically or haphazardly rather than in a purposeful way.

The first type of informal learning, conscious, includes various self-teaching methods such as dealing with recordings, studying online media, creating techniques, or going to a music library and sorting through scores (Smart & Green, 2017). Whereas unconscious learning includes learning through the process of 'osmosis' or enculturation, i.e., by listening to music and by watching other musicians, absorbing preferred rhythmic, tonal combinations and sound colors, and immersing in a culture's 'performance mode' (Herskovits, 1948; Mans, 2009, p. 84; Merriam, 1964).

### **1.2 Music Performance Pedagogy**

The term performance has multiple meanings when written in some vocabularies. Denzin (2003) generally distinguishes performance terms, including performance, performance text, performer, performing, performativity, originals, and imitation. A performance can be understood as an interpretative event; there are actors, it has a purpose, and it can take the form of scripts, stories, stages, and interactions (Burke, 1969). Performance is a musical process in which ideas are presented and transmitted from composer to listener. In Western music, performance is often seen as an interpretive art, although this is not always true. A practitioner performs a musical performance. The performer can determine which aspects of the music are played. Musical elements such as tempo, phrasing, dynamics, pitch, and instrumentation are fully managed and controlled by the performer.

In music learning, performance learning methods emphasize individual and group-based knowledge (Green, 2008). In a music performance practice, there are essential learning experiences for learners. In preparing a performance activity, learners will always

communicate, discuss, ask questions, correct, negotiate, practice skills, and develop a sense of responsibility. Music performance practice is one of the most crucial learning practices besides listening, composing, creating, and improvisation (Green, 2002, 2008, 2017). Music performance practice is a procedure of music pedagogy that leads to performance music pedagogy. The word pedagogy generally relates to autonomous areas of skill or knowledge (Mantie, 2013), for example, pedagogy for stringed instruments, piano pedagogy, world music pedagogy, violin pedagogy, and so on (Abril & Gault, 2016). Music pedagogy deals with the process of instruction or teaching, methodologies, approaches, activities, and strategies (Mantie, 2013).

Mack (2007) sees a dilemma in music education in Indonesia, especially concerning the curriculum oriented toward Western music theories. Hess (2015) also reinforces that alternative curricula and learning materials (other than Western) must be developed to decolonize music education. This view also seems to align with the spirit of music education offered by Pendidikan Seni Nusantara (PSN), the Center for Research and Development of Traditional Arts Education (P4ST) UPI Bandung, and the Ford Foundation. Even in a broader context, the strengthening of music pedagogy based on locality (ethnicity) is also campaigned by many research communities; they introduce a framework called World Music Pedagogy (WMP).

The WMP encompasses several questions, curiosities, and concerns of contemporary educators who teach music with the goal of musical and cultural preservation (see: Campbell, 2018; Campbell, 2014, 2016; Campbell & Lum, 2019; Coppola, Hebert, & Campbell, 2021; Vita & Campbell, 2021). WMP brings together various methodologies to experience music from ethnic groups or local communities around the world. WMP works with an emphasis on musical excavation skills and cultural knowledge. WMP is based on ethnomusicology principles, and it involves field research from American and global cultures. The scope of the WMP includes (1) an introduction to music for its cultural context and meaning; (2) developing skills that lead to the possibility of performing the music and creating something meaningfully "new" yet still connected to the music studied. The WMP also provides learning pathways to support music learning practices in primary and secondary schools. In WMP-based music learning, music performance is associated with other music pedagogies, such as listening, discovering, creating, improvising, and integrating them in contexts relevant to everyday life (Vita & Campbell, 2021).

Music pedagogy concerns instructional activities by teachers, methodologies, approaches, activities, and strategies (Mantie, 2013). Jones, Bacon, & Williams (2010) see any activity connected to music as another form of music pedagogy. For example, music listening activities that are learner-centered and encourage them to participate actively. Music pedagogy encourages teachers to prepare classroom learning experiences that engage learners so

that they can construct meaning from their learning experiences (Kolb & Kolb, 2006).

### **1.3 Lampung Traditional Music as Ethnopedagogy**

Lampung people are moderately musical because almost every traditional activity or ritual involves music (Hidayatullah, 2022). The actualization of the local values of the Lampung people is expressed in every musical activity, such as seeing, hearing, imitating, creating, and improvising. For example, in learning music, Lampung people recognize the concept of ilmu nyambang and halu-halu badak or tetilu badak (Hidayatullah, 2022; Irawan, 2022).

This concept is one of the styles of Lampung people learning secretly and improvising.

The particular music education system in formal schools in Lampung applies traditional or local-themed music materials. In some circumstances, using these localized materials has elevated the musical potential of children and youth to a high level of performance, pedagogical proficiency, and competence. Historically, formal school curricula have been mostly designed to promote instrument playing and singing, entirely discouraging the development of performance skills. The same is true of traditional music learning. Despite its local theme, traditional music learning still considers aspects of music performance in the classroom. The music subjects taught in formal schools play an important role in music education and practice. Music performance in Lampung's traditional music classes is generally about composing or performing (songs) with attention to all performance elements.

Although musical performances in traditional music classes and musical instruments have their specificities, it is still possible to define some general elements that determine the success of musical performances. These specific elements should be permanently applied in music teaching using specific teaching methods. In formal schools and universities in Lampung, traditional music learning always goes to implement local values. This fact means that when referring to the idea of appropriate music education in Indonesia (see: Mack, 2007), implementing the concept of localization is already the right notion.

### **1.4 Nusantara Music Learning at PSPM University of Lampung**

The Nusantara Music course is one of the specialization courses at Music Education Study Program (PSPM) University of Lampung. In the odd 2022/2023 academic year semester, nine students attended the lecture. Erizal Barnawi, M.Sn, taught this course. This course is oriented towards exploring traditional music following the students' background. In the 2022/2023 academic year, there were three types of student ethnic backgrounds, namely: Batak, Palembang, and Lampung.

Learning activities are mostly occupied with performances. Lecturers provide an introduction, discussion, and practice demonstrations for each instrument. The output of this course is performing music on stage. In the process, students develop

musical composition ideas that depart from the idioms of each region. Musical works can be new compositions or compositions of traditional music in the region. Each meeting is filled with performance activities with lecturers and students. The process of discussion and demonstration in each session takes place informally. That is, various learning activities are carried out unstructured as formulated in the lecture design. This informal music learning activity is a form of acquisition of local knowledge in Lampung society. This research describes the pedagogical concepts found in performance-based Nusantara Music learning. According to our understanding, special studies that focus on music performance pedagogy in informal music learning based on locality have not been carried out.

## 2. METHODS

This research focuses on the pedagogical aspects of performance-based music learning. Primary data was collected through interviews and observations in the Nusantara Music classroom at PSPM University of Lampung. Some unstructured questions were asked to lecturers and students who took the course in the 3rd semester of the 2022/2023 academic year. This Nusantara Music course is a specialization course. The interview with the lecturer (Erizal Barnawi) was conducted by facilitating storytelling (see: Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) about the lecture process. The main role of the interviewer was to be a listener, resist the urge to interrupt, and occasionally ask questions that could clarify the story. Interviews with students served to confirm the recorded information. The observations had two functions: (1) to confirm the results of interviews with lecturers and students; (2) to find codes and research themes. Interviews are the foundation for building the initial concept of research ideas. The concepts found through the interviews will then be interpreted.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the odd semester of the 2022/2023 academic year, the Nusantara Music course carries three musical traditions: Batak, Palembang, and Lampung. Lampung traditional music offers bronze (perunggu) music, for example, talo balak from East Lampung. The theme or work composed comes from the camang ngembuk music. The music learning process begins with presentations and giving examples of music performances through videos. The works presented are the works of lecturers and previous students as modeling. This process was conducted for 2-3 meetings. This stage also explains the process of making and composing music. This stage is done to provide an understanding of the lecture outcomes. Presenting works can be in the form of new creations or types of monumental works already existing in the area. Lecturers give self-determination in choosing the method of composing and the material of the work. As a briefing for the traditional music that the students have chosen, Erizal uses two methods: (1) composing per part; (2) composing the work as a whole. In composing a piece

by piece, students are given an understanding of the structure of a composition. A musical work consists of an introduction (intro), riff, core section, dynamics, nuances, and the formation of "climax" and "anti-climax."

The next stage is the creation process which is carried out by playing together between lecturers and students. The musical instruments are used to adjust the work's needs and the regional instruments' characteristics. This stage is also referred to as the form-finding stage. To adjust the work, each student plays a musical instrument alternately with the lecturer. The joint musical work done with the lecturer mostly practiced bronze music such as talo balak. This stage was done considering the availability of musical instruments in the rehearsal studio. Erizal quoted the gupek beats found in the sigeheh penguten dance accompaniment. In the creative process, the rhythmic patterns in the tabuh gupek were used as material for the creation (Figure 1). This stage is the process of modeling the work that has been created.



**Figure 1.** The rhythmic pattern of tabuh gupek was used as material for the creation of the work

To study the climax and anti-climax in the creation of the work, Erizal provides the next tabuh gupek pattern. This rhythmic pattern is used to illustrate the dynamics of the composition. The creative process took place not only by playing and modeling but also by playing with existing works without making changes.

The next stage was a performance presenting works of regional origin with their musical instruments. Some students played kulcapi from Karo, gambus tunggal Lampung from bedana dance, and gamolan pekhing. Each student performed the work using musical instruments with simple patterns. The work was initially presented independently by one student. Then, students develop their work into a broader composition by forming a group or ensemble. In the final stage or finalization, students are asked to make a concept of the work presented to the lecturer. If there are still things that are not appropriate, the lecturer will provide recommendations for improvement. The concept is made in the form of a description or synopsis. In addition to discussing the structure of the work, the idea also outlines artistic needs, such as lighting, stage, makeup, and costumes. Before being presented and assessed, the lecturer gives time to perfect the work.

### 3.1 Assessment

The presentation of the student's work already presents the formation in group form. The presentation or performance stage (group) is divided into two phases, namely: (1) performance in the middle of the semester (UTS); and (2) performance at the end of the semester (UAS). The presentation of the work is divided into several

performances. The mid-semester performance is still conducted in the classroom. Each meeting presents two performances.

Meanwhile, the end-of-semester performance is performed on stage with various artistic equipment. Evaluation is always given every time students have finished performing their work. This phase is a stage of continuous improvement. The ability to play musical instruments is a determining factor in the success of the performance. Students who make music compositions must have a good skill background. This opinion is the first assessment point for the lecturer. Secondly, the concept is the next assessment point. In addition, the ability to interpret the work is also a concern. Third, the next assessment point is the ability to transmit ideas to the group. Fourth, the assessment of presenting the work as a whole in performance.

### **3.2 Self-Concept**

Among the various traditional music performance formats in this Nusantara Music course, the kulcapi instrument's presentation is the lecturer's focus. The scales are different because of the shape and organological structure of the instrument and the color of the sound. The attitude in playing the instrument and the techniques used to give an idea of the sense of 'localness.' The presentation of various types of musical instruments provides a learning experience, especially from a multicultural perspective. On the one hand, the identity of Lampung traditional music is highlighted by students who play Lampung traditional music; on the other hand, students are also presented with the fertilization of Nusantara culture. However, lecturers have a different perspective on seeing students' self-concepts. Armed with musical instruments that are mastered and come from their region, cultural awareness, especially towards their music, is expected to emerge.

This performance activity in traditional music learning encourages interaction, legitimization of composer and presenter abilities, and the role of lecturers in curating. This notion means that in music performance, students know the importance of involvement and collaboration. Limitations on the vocabulary of musical forms (rhythmic, ornamental, improvised sentences, etc.) become obstacles in creating works. This phase is where the role of interaction and cooperation between students in the group. Despite the idea of multiculturalism-based music education, students still have a bad attitude toward their abilities. The students' excessive anxiety hampered many of the ideas that emerged. Even though the space for expression provided through group involvement is open, they feel inferior (the students). In addition, the informal approach to music learning is also the main foundation of this course.

Erizal's Nusantara Music course applies three main concepts, including (1) modeling; (2) creation process; and (3) performance. The goal of stimulating taste binds together all aspects of learning. In the tabuh gupek exercise described earlier, Erizal emphasized

rhythm-sense (see: Green, 2012), one of the fundamental aspects of performance-based music learning.

### **3.3 Learning by Being Creative**

Creating a piece of music that will be performed at the end of the semester occurs with various small stages. For example, the music that will be used as material for the work has not been fully mastered by the members of the group or ensemble. The identification of the piece by the students occurs over a period of time. Rehearsing and determining the work occurs in an informal situation (mostly outside lecture hours). The main tool of the creation process is group togetherness. Skill acquisition occurs gradually and without annotations, entirely through practice.

### **3.4 Collaboration and Social Participation**

Collaboration creates the desire to help, work together, and teach each other. In preparing their musical works or compositions, students are directed to form groups. Active participation in music study groups encourages all students to be involved and play an active role. Green (2005) calls this process the assimilation of skills and knowledge in an informal way according to the musical preferences (of each member). This group learning emphasizes independent and peer learning. Learning activities are not entirely under the supervision and guidance of lecturers and are bound by a rigid curriculum. Assessment can occur internally and externally; it means the lecturer observes the whole creation process to performance.

### **3.5 Reinforcement of Peer Tutor Learning**

The concept of music performance-based learning applied to the Nusantara Music course reinforces peer teaching. Lecturers prepare procedures and rules for students to continue interacting and having discussions. Although the students design the ideas in the creation process, communication and argumentation occur in the rehearsal process. At this stage, there is an unconscious learning process - they see and listen to each other and absorb rhythmic patterns, tonal concepts, and various things (Green, 2002; Mans, 2009). Lecturers intentionally apply learning conditions in this informal situation. In addition, the music learning process also involves the concept of 'peer-directed' (see: Green, 2002) learning process is explicitly done through demonstration as a method of sharing knowledge.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Performance-based music learning uses more informal learning approaches. Especially in the creation process, the learning process occurs through listening, paying attention, and improvising. The process of creating works mostly occurs independently or by applying the peer tutor learning model. Rehearsal activities and work refinement are done outside the lecture time and environment. The students entirely manage the

learning system during rehearsal. Composing material that departs from different cultural backgrounds (students) is also an important part of Nusantara Music learning at PSPM. In creating works, students incorporate various musical styles and cultural traditions. This stage helps them develop their insights and skills. Students also gain a deeper understanding of the multiple aspects of traditional music.

Performance pedagogy in the Nusantara Music course applies skill reinforcement. The strategies used in teaching and developing skills are derived from the procedures explained by the lecturer previously. An important aspect of effective performance requires a combination of technical mastery, musical understanding, and musical expression. These three aspects collaborate in one learning activity. In addition to learning traditional musical content, students understand that each individual has unique ideas. For example, discussion and argumentation become the main capital of music learning in the creation process. In assessing this learning process, it is not enough to use assessment measures but to consider aspects of individual capacity holistically.

The main concept of music performance pedagogy in this study is the idea of mindful practice. After being given instructions by the lecturer, students focus on composing the piece of work and how to maximize its presentation. During rehearsals and discussions, each group member is aware of their role in the group, in this case concerning playing instruments and accompaniment. Students consistently practice and review the progress of their work from time to time. The main objective of learning Nusantara music is to provide insights and skills about the diversity of traditions. Therefore, all music learning activities are organized in a special procedure following the existing lecture conditions at PSPM.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the individuals and Music Education Study Program, Department of Language Education and Arts, and Faculty Teacher Training and Education that have contributed to the publication of this research paper.

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