

# Moving into composition: the experiences of student composers in higher education during a short course of Dalcroze Eurhythmics

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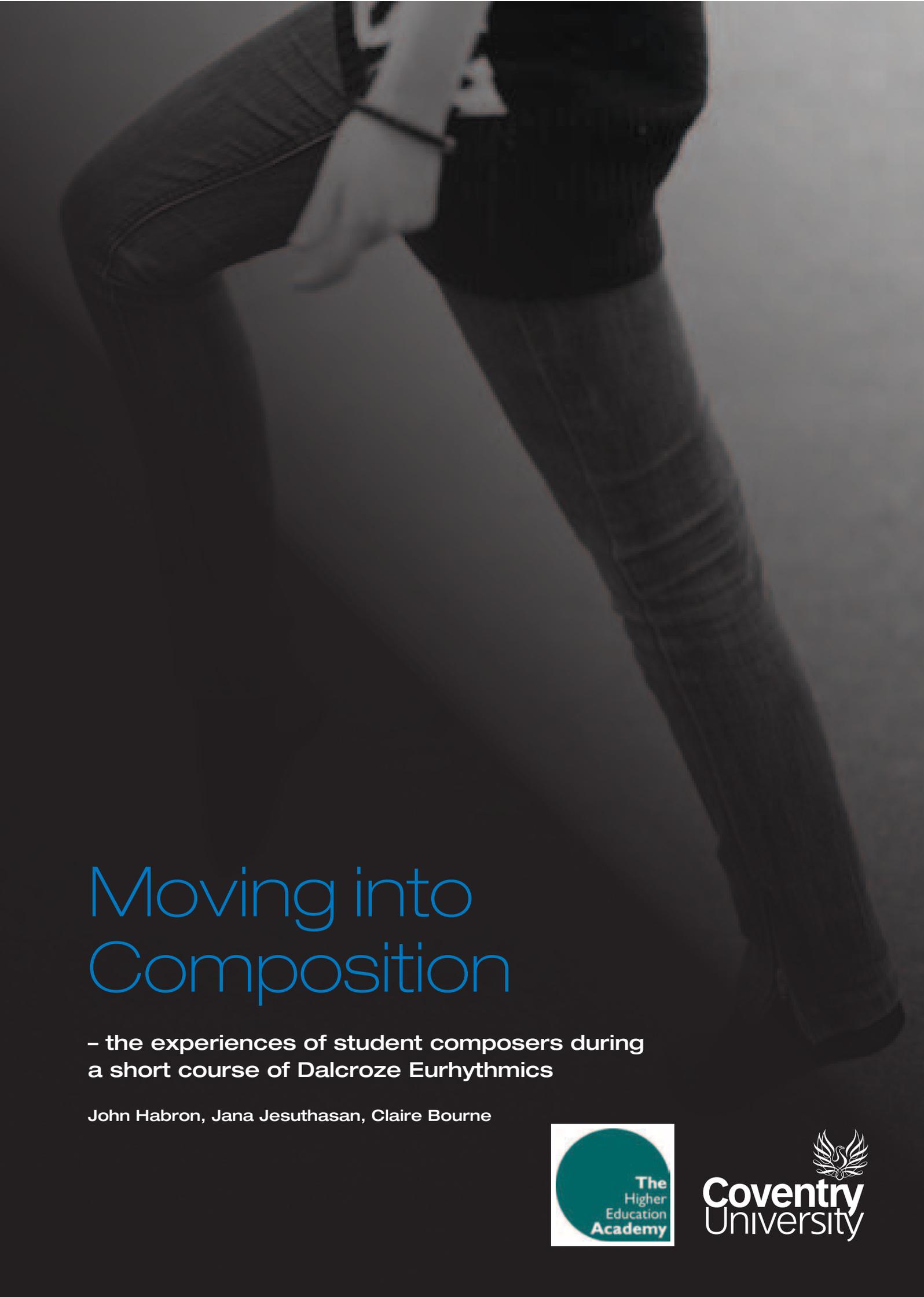
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# Moving into Composition

– the experiences of student composers during  
a short course of Dalcroze Eurhythmics

John Habron, Jana Jesuthasan, Claire Bourne



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# Introduction

Dalcroze Eurhythmics is a well-established method for teaching musicianship and performance. It is applied to different age groups and in a wide variety of music education, dance, drama and therapy contexts. Dalcroze Eurhythmics is a very practical mode of learning, focusing on whole body movement, aural training using singing and improvisation.

Moving into Composition was a research project that brought Dalcroze Eurhythmics into music composition pedagogy in Higher Education. The aims of the research were to develop movement-based teaching and learning strategies for student composers, explore students' experiences and perceptions of such approaches and identify areas for further research.

**The second aim formed the bulk of the research and was broken down into specific research questions:**

1. How did the sessions influence participants' compositional work?
2. To what extent did the sessions impact on musical knowledge and understanding?
3. What were the participants' experiences of learning through movement?
4. How feasible might this method be for student composers in Higher Education?

Moving into Composition was conceived as a pilot. A small group of students at Coventry University accessed a 13-week course, which was facilitated by a Dalcroze practitioner and one of the composers on the staff. Participants were interviewed at the end of the project.

The results show that participants enjoyed the project and a majority noted influences on their compositional work or musical knowledge. Generally, using the body as the primary tool of learning was valued, even though some participants found it challenging. All undergraduate composers who took part recommended Dalcroze Eurhythmics to other students, whereas postgraduate students were more guarded. Although impossible to generalise from such a small sample, the results indicate that further research into the application of the Dalcroze method to composition could be beneficial for the teaching and learning of music composition in Higher Education.

This report begins with an overview of the background to Dalcroze Eurhythmics and its principles, its relationship to theories of embodiment and its place in Higher Education in the UK. The literature on music composition pedagogy in Higher Education is also addressed. The report then proceeds to describe the design of the project, analyse the results and discuss the implications of the findings.

# 1. Context

## 1.1 Dalcroze Eurhythmics

Emile Jaques-Dalcroze<sup>1</sup> (1865-1950) was born in Vienna to Swiss parents. Dalcroze's mother was a fine pianist and music teacher, and favoured the philosophy of music education put forward by Heinrich Pestalozzi, which prioritised active learning and sensory experience over the written word (Comeau 1995; Frego et al 2004). Dalcroze studied music and drama in Paris, Geneva and Vienna, taking composition lessons from Gabriel Fauré, Adolf Prosniz and Anton Bruckner. During this time he also became acquainted with the work of Matthis Lussy, who wrote about expressive musical performance and musical understanding. The ideas of Pestalozzi and Lussy would come to have a significant impact on Dalcroze's career as a teacher, as would his observations of musicians at work. For example, in 1886 Dalcroze worked as assistant musical director in the opera of Algiers where, as Juntunen (2004: 22) writes: 'He was impressed by the rhythmic sensitivity of Algerian musicians and started to think that a Western musician could also attain such capacity through systematic rhythmic education starting at an early age'.

On returning to Switzerland in 1892 Dalcroze took up a position as professor of solfège (aural training using singing) at the Geneva Conservatoire. After noting deficiencies in the students' abilities to perform expressively and hear notated music internally, he began to reflect critically on music pedagogy. Dalcroze had already noted informally that children and adults responded innately to music, moving various parts of their bodies in time to it (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/2000). From this starting point he developed teaching and learning activities that harnessed the body's natural movements, such as walking, skipping and swaying. As he argued: 'the locomotor muscles are conscious muscles, subject to absolute control by the will. We therefore find in walking the natural starting-point in the child's initiation into rhythm' (1921/2000: 38).<sup>2</sup> Dalcroze explored how the body might respond in movement to the different elements of music and arrived at the idea of engaging the whole body as an instrument for learning music. He used the piano as the primary means of instruction, improvising music to suit a wide variety of exercises in which students moved in order to show the elements of music physically.

The results of his solfège teaching, and his later work with children, led Dalcroze to claim that the moving body was an effective medium through which music could be internalised and understood (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/2000; 1930/1985). He contrasted this with what he saw as overly didactic methods in music teaching, a limited focus on technical virtuosity and an intellectual approach to writing music that did not develop listening skills. Instead, Dalcroze aimed at the development of inner hearing, expression, spontaneity, alertness and a fully embodied musicianship (1930/1985). The exercises and activities that he devised were originally called rhythmic gymnastics, but in the English-speaking world the method is now known as Dalcroze Eurhythmics.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1900s Dalcroze's ideas were seen as controversial by some and enthusiastically received by others (Dutoit 1971). The growing success of the method was reflected initially in the international reach of Dalcroze's own demonstrations during 1903-05 (Juntunen 2004), in the sprouting up of several schools around the world in the 1910s (Jordan 2000) and, in 1915, the founding of the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze in Geneva, Switzerland. At the same time, Dalcroze's interchange with the worlds of music, dance, theatre, literature and philosophy was expressed in the visits made to the Dalcroze school at Hellerau (1910-14) by such luminaries as Sergei Diaghilev, Vaslav Nijinsky, Marie Rambert, Anna Pavlova, Rudolf von Laban, Isadora Duncan, Mary Wigman, Ernest Bloch, Sergei Rachmaninov, George Bernard Shaw, Paul Claudel, Adolphe Appia, Konstantin Stanislawski, Upton Sinclair, Harley Granville-Barker and William James (Dobbs 1968; Dutoit 1971; Juntunen 2004).

<sup>1</sup> Born Emile Jaques, he subsequently changed his name to Emile Jaques-Dalcroze. His surname is often shortened to Dalcroze.

<sup>2</sup> Emphasis in all quotes is in the original.

<sup>3</sup> Dalcroze Eurhythmics functions as singular. See Juntunen and Westerlund (2011: 56) for more detail on the history of the name 'Eurhythmics'.





During the last century, the practice of Dalcroze Eurhythmics has continued to develop in different ways internationally. 'He did not 'train' his teachers' Vanderspar (1984) wrote of Dalcroze; instead his students were encouraged to develop their own applications of his ideas. Dalcroze Eurhythmics is therefore a living tradition, continually developed by professional practitioners, some of whom prefer to style it an approach rather than a method, as it is based on the application of principles, rather than a fixed series of steps (Bachmann 1991; Comeau 1995). Juntunen and Westerlund (2001: 211) state:

'Because it does not give rules to follow, Dalcroze eurhythmics is not a method. Rather it is an approach, an experience, a process or even a philosophy...[Dalcroze's] pedagogical ideas can be applied differently according to social and cultural contexts. Hence, Jaques-Dalcroze did not give straight instructions to follow, only suggestions'

This description, however, may lend a certain fuzziness to Dalcroze Eurhythmics, which would be unhelpful. To counter this, several authors have written about the Dalcroze identity (Bachmann 1991; le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, forthcoming). A major feature of this identity is that the method has three branches:

- Rhythmics (rhythmic movement)
- Improvisation
- Solfège (aural training)

The first of these refers to: 'Rhythmical body movement based on all the elements of music through active listening and the development of inner hearing' (le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, forthcoming: 7). Improvisation is vocal, instrumental and movement-based; it aims to develop spontaneity, expression and imagination as well as the ability to stimulate movement in others. It is also one of the principle means of instruction, as Juntunen (2004: 29-30) notes: 'Because students react to the music and the teacher in turn reacts to students' responses, there is an interaction that recorded or notated music does not allow. The music is constantly changing according to students' response; it is actually made at the same time as it is being moved to'. Finally, solfège addresses aural awareness, vocal skills and knowledge of music through singing. The three branches are interdependent and movement plays a central role in all of them. They can all be experienced in freer or more structured ways and Dalcroze classes combine both these possibilities (Bachmann 1991: 19).

The study of Rhythmics includes time-space-energy relationships. This is seen when, for example, a certain gesture needs to be performed in a shorter or longer period of time; the energy of the gesture will change. Using this as a basis Dalcroze proposed correlations between all aspects of music and particular types of movement. He also developed a way of teaching students to express whole pieces of music through what became known as *plastique animée*<sup>4</sup> or 'moving plastic': 'all the nuances of time', he wrote, 'all the nuances of energy...can be "realised" by our bodies, and the acuteness of our musical feeling will depend on the acuteness of our bodily sensations' (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/2000: 60). In Dalcroze pedagogy, *plastique* is considered the summation of the method (Greenhead 2007: 80) and is made possible through the ongoing study of the three branches. It could be called an enactive approach to analysing music, which uniquely shares with music itself the fact that it unfolds over time: when the piece ends, the *plastique* ('analysis') ends.

One of the principle tenets of Dalcroze Eurhythmics is 'education through and into music' (Bachmann 1991). In today's practice both improvised and recorded music are used to elicit or suggest gestures and movements. Classes tend to focus on particular musical parameters and the teacher devises specific exercises that afford experiences of the element/s in question through movement (for examples see Urista 2003). Often these experiences prepare the students to understand a piece of music that is introduced towards the end of the class. Music is the means of education and musicality or musicianship is the end. Put another way, a non-discursive form (the body) is the site of understanding of another non-discursive form (music) (Juntunen and Hyvönen 2004: 205). Central to the whole method is personal experience. As with any dance form or somatic practice, no amount of words will fully convey the phenomenon. As Dutoit (1971: 11) states: 'it has to be "lived"'.

<sup>4</sup> Often shortened to *plastique*.

However, Shusterman (2006: 2) points out that the body is: 'the basic instrument of all human performance, our tool of tools, a necessity for all our perception, action, and even thought'. Dalcroze Eurhythmics does not have a monopoly on the embodiment of music; after all, music making is a touchstone of embodied knowledge (Blacking 1973; Bowman 2004). It does however focus on the kinaesthetic sense to a very high degree and aims to imprint musical knowing deep in the psyche and soma. Thus it was Dalcroze's conviction that coming to understand music through the moving body would build up a store of 'images' for use later in performance or composition: 'Rhythmic experiences combining music and movement are stored as aural, visual, and kinaesthetic images, which can be recalled when reading, notating, composing, performing, or creating music' (Juntunen 2004: 27; see also Abril 2011, Moore 2000 and Urista 2001).

In 1930 Dalcroze wrote: 'Rhythmic gymnastics starts from the principle that the body is the inseparable ally of the mind; it affirms that body and mind should harmoniously perform their diverse functions, not only separately but simultaneously' (Jaques-Dalcroze 1930/1985: 108). Thus Dalcroze shares common ground with the tradition of thinkers that has critiqued Cartesian dualism, the split between body and mind (Dewey 1934, 1958; Damasio 1994, 2000; Johnson 1987, 2007; Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999; Sheets-Johnstone 2009; Shusterman 1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2006; Varela 1992). In his method Dalcroze aimed at affording learners a thoroughly lived experience of music, which relied on physical and mental resources working together, rather than one transcending the other. This resonates with contemporary notions of the embodied mind (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 1999) and distributed cognition, according to which: 'the mind is not in the brain, but in the vast network of neural interconnections that exist throughout the body' (Bowman 2004: 36).

It is possible that Dalcroze's thoughts on mind-body dualism were influenced by his visit to Algiers, where he noticed more active bodily responses to music than he had seen in Europe (Juntunen 2004). Indeed, as Shusterman notes, different musical traditions may exhibit more or less evidence for the cultural predominance of the mind-body split (Shusterman 1997; 2000b). Dalcroze predicated his method on the idea of holism: 'To be completely musical, a [person] should possess an ensemble of physical and spiritual resources and capacities, comprising, on the one hand, ear, voice, and consciousness of sound, and on the other, the whole body (bone, muscle, and nervous systems), and the consciousness of bodily rhythm' (1921/2000: 36). This has led Juntunen and Westerlund (2001: 212) to claim that: 'The work of Jaques-Dalcroze may be interpreted as a musician's and educator's practical effort to dissolve the mind-body dualism'.

#### **Over recent decades Dalcroze Eurhythmics has been applied in a wide variety of musical contexts:**

- Children (Aronoff 1979, 1983; Campbell 1991; Custodero 2005; Joseph 1982; Mead 1994; Ping-Cheng Wang 2008; Vanderspar 1984; Zachopoulou et al 2003; Zachopoulou, Tsapakidou and Derri 2004)
- Professional training of musicians (Choksy et al 1986; Juntunen 2004; Stone 1986; Turbin 1986)
- Specific populations of musicians, including singers (Caldwell 1995; Liao and Davidson 2007) and string players (Medoff 1999)
- Choral and orchestral conducting (Henke 1984, 1993; McCoy 1994)
- Music theory and solfège (Caldwell 1993, 1995; Choksy et al 1986; Findlay 1971; Steinitz 1988; Urista 2003)
- Adult learners (Alperson 1995) and older adults (Kressig, Allali and Beauchet 2005)
- People with illness, disability and special needs (Daveson and Skewes 2002; Dutoit 1971; Frego 1995, 2007, 2009; Frego et al 2004; Krason and Szafraniec 1999; Silvestre and Valero 2005; Swaiko 1974)<sup>5</sup>

With regard to the specific context of Moving into Composition, Dalcroze Eurhythmics has a presence in Higher Education settings across the world including the UK (Alperson 1995; Bachmann 1991; Becknell 1970; Juntunen 2004; Mayo 2005; Southcott 2007). Over the past 15 years, students at the following Higher Education Institutions in the UK have experienced, or are currently receiving, Dalcroze classes: Royal Northern College of Music, Trinity College of Music, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Royal College of Music, Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, and the universities of Bristol, Canterbury Christchurch, Exeter, St Andrews and Warwick (Greenhead 2012, Vann 2012 and Wilkinson 2012). These tend to be single events, short courses or parts of modules, rather than entire training courses.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> For a fuller bibliography see [www.dalcrozeusa.org/resources/bibliography](http://www.dalcrozeusa.org/resources/bibliography)

<sup>6</sup> The Dalcroze Society UK offers training at Certificate and Licence level: [www.dalcroze.org.uk](http://www.dalcroze.org.uk)





## 1.2 Music composition in Higher Education

Music composition is a widely offered subject at many Higher Education Institutions in the UK. A web search of a random selection (20%) of the 130 institutions funded by HEFCE in 2011-12 reveals that on average more than two thirds offer undergraduate courses that include music composition. The discipline of composition appears to be a significant part of tertiary level music provision. Whilst Welch et al (2004) have noted that 'Research on the compositions of school-aged children...has increased considerably over the last 20 years', there is little similar work regarding Higher Education. Notable exceptions are some studies on the differences between novice and expert composers (Younker and Smith 1996) and research that investigates composition pedagogy (Carbon 1986; Beck 2001; Barrett 2006; Barrett and Gromko 2007; Lupton and Bruce 2010).

Based on a literature view and a piece of empirical research, Lupton and Bruce (2010) put forward a composition pedagogical model that has four themes: learning from the masters, mastery of techniques, exploring ideas and developing voice. These articulate what they see as the prime ingredients of composition pedagogy in Higher Education. The first two focus on content and are termed teacher-centred, whereas the second two have more to do with creative process and are considered to be learner-centred (Lupton and Bruce 2010: 273). The authors acknowledge that the themes are not independent and that some are more prominent in the existing literature than others. Therefore, in reflecting on the bringing together of composition pedagogy and Dalcroze Eurhythmics, it would seem useful to consider Lupton and Bruce's themes as well as the core Dalcrozian principles applied during *Moving into Composition*, in order to see the mutual influence of one on the other.

The existing literature that focuses mainly on primary and secondary level music learning may however provide some theoretical insight for the research. Berkley (2004) states: 'Teaching composing should facilitate students' discovery of the phenomena used to make a composition...in order to promote a working conceptual knowledge of musical principles and elements. Students need to become familiar with both verbal, formal knowledge and non-verbal, informal, situated knowledge in composing' (258). This would seem to map onto Gardner's distinction between know-that and know-how (1983), which distinguishes intuitive and practical knowledge from the more analytical and abstract kind. Dalcroze Eurhythmics, given its holistic nature, deals with both sorts of knowing and would thus seem able to facilitate the discovery that Berkley (2004) advocates. However, given the participants' levels of study (undergraduate and postgraduate), it might be hypothesised that non-verbal, informal, and situated knowledge as revealed through movement would be a novel and potentially more challenging aspect of the experience than the development of verbal and more formal knowledge, which one might expect to be already advanced in students in Higher Education.

In the same way, Burnard's (1999) research into 'knowing what' (composing knowledge coming from instruments) as opposed to 'knowing how' (procedural knowledge of improvisation), points to the praxial nature of music making and the hands-on engagement with sound sources in the process of composition. She discusses the important role of embodied knowledge and 'motor grammar' in the composition process: 'it can be argued that the compositional process is manifested through the "knowing body"' (1999: 171). Though dealing with schoolchildren, Burnard articulates a version of musical creativity that may still be relevant for applying Dalcroze Eurhythmics to composition in Higher Education, as it brings procedural knowledge and motor grammar into the model. Any Dalcroze Eurhythmics experience requires participants to improvise and to work with embodied knowledge (Bachmann 1991).

Lupton and Bruce (2010: 272) recommend 'that more work be carried out in identifying a range of pedagogies of music composition, both theoretically and empirically'. The absence of research into the application of Dalcroze Eurhythmics to the teaching and learning of composition in Higher Education thus leaves a gap for this research project. *Moving into Composition* extended the range of the method into an unexplored field and drew initial support from findings, such as Southcott's (2007), that detail the responses of postgraduate students to Dalcroze Eurhythmics. She writes: 'Experiential learning can occur at any age and educational stage including tertiary music education' (Southcott 2007: 77). Indeed, it is worth remembering that Dalcroze developed his method initially for adults, at conservatoire level. In 1916 he wrote that his method: 'would be of benefit to the most cultivated of intellects and the most accomplished of talents, and could lead composers into entirely novel forms of expression' (1930/1985: 11).

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Research design and ethics

A series of Dalcroze classes was offered to student composers at Coventry University. Participants undertook these sessions outside class time and on a voluntary basis. Given that the research questions intended to discover their experiences and perceptions of the Dalcroze classes, it was decided that a qualitative methodology using interviews was most appropriate. This grounded the research in an interpretive model, which focused on the individual views of participants (Cohen et al 2011). When viewed as a small pilot study, the research design also partakes of some aspects of action research, in particular the four stages of planning, action, observation and reflection (Bannan 2004; Phillips 2008). Once complete, the four stages are usually cycled through again, to refine the technique or method in question. This is our hope for a similar future project that will encompass a larger sample of students at different institutions.

The research team consisted of the Principal Investigator (PI), Senior Lecturer in Music at the university, and two Senior Researchers from the university's faculty of Health and Life Sciences ('the researchers'). Coventry University Ethics Committee granted ethical clearance for this research (28 February 2011). As a result of the informed consent process, names of participants have been altered. The choice of photographs in the report has also been made according to the participants' wishes.

### 2.2 Recruitment, sampling and participants

Recruitment began with a poster campaign around the Performing Arts department at Coventry University, as well as with emails to music students and verbal notices in class. The publicity clearly stated the aims of the research project, what it would involve, as well as the potential benefits of taking part and the fact that it was voluntary. The intention was to research the experiences of student composers, thus the sample population was limited to students on the BA Music Composition and MA Music Composition, as well as other music students who considered themselves to be composers. 12 students expressed a wish to participate; their levels of study and gender were as follows:

**Table 1: Details of participants**

Programme of study	Number	Level of study	Gender
BA Music Composition	6	Level 1: 0 <sup>1</sup> Level 2: 4 Level 3: 2	M = 6
BA Music Performance	3	Level 1: 1 Level 2: 2 Level 3: 0	M = 1, F = 2
MA Music Composition	3	Masters	M = 3

In terms of previous movement experience, around half the participants had engaged or were currently engaged in: Irish dance, martial arts, sport, dancing at clubs, drama training, and composing for and choreographing with dancers at university. These activities ranged in significance for the participants, with some having stopped at primary school, and others being recent memories. Only one participant had any significant prior experience of Dalcroze Eurhythmics, on a summer school.

<sup>1</sup> It must be noted that due to limited staff availability, the session time clashed with a Level 1 class for the BA Music Composition students, some of whom expressed regret that they could not participate.

## 2.3 The sessions

Dalcroze Eurhythmics is a complex method with interrelated branches and is not easily explained in a short space of time. However, funding only allowed for 13 sessions, each lasting 1.5 hours. Due to term breaks and vacations, the sessions were not always held on consecutive weeks. The PI and a licensee of the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, Geneva ('the teacher') designed the sessions.<sup>2</sup> Table 2 presents an overview of the sessions and repertoire used.

**Table 2: Overview of the sessions (\* indicates that scores were handed out)**

Session	Topic	Repertoire used
1	Introduction	'Bag's Groove' Heavyweights, Bobby Shew Quintet; 'Freddie Freeloader' Kind of Blue, Miles Davis
2	Two-part composition	The Glow Worm Mills Brothers Greatest Hits; 'Harmonic Necklace' Penguin Café Orchestra; 'Ayre' Jeremiah Clarke; 'Reflection' and 'Pastorale' Mikrokosmos Book 1, Bartók; 'Fata Turchina' In Cerca di Cibo, Trovesi and Coscia
3	Two-part composition	Piano improvisation; 'Variation 2' Variations on Je te dirai Maman (Twinkle Twinkle Little Star) Mozart; Scarlatti sonata movement
4	Metre	'Ciel d'Automne' Rock and Reel, La Bottine Souriante; 'Cissy Strut' Groove Armada Presents, Butch Cassidy Sound System
5	Feedback session	
6	Metre	'Teasing Song' For Children, Bartók; 'Pink Lady' Jazzing About, Pamela Wedgwood; soundtrack from Betty Blue, Gabriel Yared; 'Tragnala Rumjana' Bulgarian folk song*
7	Metre	Piano improvisation
8	Feedback session	
9	Chords and bass lines	'Ländler no.2' Six Ländler, Mozart; 'Peeping Tom' Anthology, Toots and the Maytals; 'Let's Stick Together' Down in the Groove, Bob Dylan; 'Conradanse no.9' 12 Contradanses for Orchestra, Beethoven; String Quintet D956, Schubert*
10	Feedback session	
11	Theme and variations	'Around Scrijabin Predule Op.16' Round About Bartók, Beirach, Huebner and Muaz; 'Promenades' Pictures at an Exhibition Mussorgsky orch. Ravel; 'Variations' Mikrokosmos Book 3, Bartók*
12	Theme and variations	'Shaman' Toby Twining Music
13	Final session, sharing	

<sup>2</sup> Teaching qualifications in Dalcroze Eurhythmics are offered at three levels: Certificate, Licence and Diplôme Supérieur. Currently, the latter can only be awarded by the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, Geneva.

The sessions covered four main topics of music composition: two-part writing, metre, chord sequence with varied bass lines, and theme and variations. These topics were considered to offer a sufficiently broad set of compositional principles to those from different backgrounds; for example, metre and metric change could be applied to any music that is metred, whereas theme and variation could potentially suggest possibilities for students working in any genre. See box for an example lesson plan.

## Moving into Composition, Coventry University – Lesson plan Week 6

**Subject:** Metre

**Musical Material:** 'Teasing Song' Bartók; soundtrack to Betty Blue, Gabriel Yared; 'Tragnala Rumjana' – Bulgarian folk song

**Lesson Objectives:** To draw on the embodied experience of simple and compound time metres from previous week and consolidate into a piece of creative work

**Equipment:** Piano, tennis balls

**Previous lesson background:** Students bouncing large gymnastic balls on the 1st beat of the bar (improvised music from piano) then, with one ball between them, bouncing to each other around the circle. Metre changes. Adapting the energy in the gesture. Similarly with rolling a ball between two. Clear distinction between energy in 2/4 and 4/4 metres. Showing various compound time rhythmic patterns using beanbags; improvising with them. Showing a combination of simple and compound metres with the balls. Moving into unequal beat metres. Sing a 3-part Bulgarian folk song in 7/8 metre.

Exercise	Purpose	Music
If 2/4 music, bounce/catch ball; if 6/8 music, draw the ball in a figure of 8 between the hands.	Consolidate some experiences from the previous lesson (see above).	Piano improvisation
Combine simple and compound beats in various ways to create a variety of unequal metres. Write down the metres. Show how one would beat time for them with Dalcroze "big arm beating" gestures.	Experience various unequal beat metres physically before analysing and writing them down.	Piano improvisation
If the music played is in simple time, walk in straight lines with right angle turns. When music stops, invent 'open and close' angular gestures with various parts of body. If the music is in compound time, walk in curved lines. When music stops create swinging, circular gestures.	Add an element of travelling into the contrast between simple and compound metres. To introduce the notion of inventing gestures/movements as preparation for the creative work.	Piano improvisation
Get into pairs. Invent 8 bars of movement in 6/8 (compound) metre; perform it in unison. Then transpose the sequence to 2/4 (simple) metre. Perform. Then combine both ideas to transpose the sequence to 5/8 (unequal beat) metre, by taking one "curved" gesture and one "straight" for each bar.	Draw inspiration from the previous exercise. Collaborative work. Adapting/transforming material. Awareness of the ensemble when performing.	
Add 'body percussion' to the movement.	Punctuate the movement with body sound gestures as preparation for the instrumental work.	
<b>Task:</b> students to compose piano music for the movement sequence for the following week. Suggestion to non-pianists: use black-note clusters for compound and white-note clusters for simple. Technical ability not important, rather the focus is appropriate gesture, energy and articulation.	Take the movement sequence as a starting point for composition. Emphasis on "doing"/"experiencing" then playing for the gesture. Drawing on the muscular memory in the body as inspiration.	





The intention was that the participants experienced each topic bodily before beginning to compose. In order for participants to experience composition in relation to movement, four compositional tasks were set over the course of the project. The design of the project was such that participants would be asked to compose music based directly on their experiences during the sessions:

- Two-part composition
- A piece using metric changes (6/8, 2/4 and 5/8)
- A chord sequence with varied bass lines
- Theme and variations

(For an example of a student composition resulting from the task set in week 6, see Appendix 1.)

Sessions began with warm-ups, to prepare the body for safe movement and in many cases to introduce material for the lesson. For example, a warm-up including turns served both to warm up the body as well as to engage the necessary muscles and spatial awareness for making turns in movement sequences later on in the session. As is typical of beginners in Dalcroze, the participants first moved to music with natural movements, such as walking, striding, jogging, skipping and swaying, and were required to follow changes in the music, in terms of energy, dynamism and speed. This aimed to develop basic skills in moving to music and to develop quick and expressive responses. The teacher also asked participants to relate movements to musical elements such as stepping on the on-beats, clapping on the off-beats and changing between these at a signal. This aimed to develop basic skills in co-ordination and quick response, and led on to exercises in which, for example, the feet would step the rhythm of the bass line and the hands would clap the rhythm of the treble. In such ways, the exercises aimed to develop listening into the textures of polyphonic music.

Participants also experimented with: creating movements to show pitch relationships; using gym balls and tennis balls to show metric accents, phrasing and energy within a piece of music; and showing, in groups, the structural elements of pieces of music through movement. They also created their own movement sequences, using a variety of gestures and whole-body movements, improvised vocally to match the energy and timing of the movements and transformed these into instrumental or electroacoustic compositions. All these exercises combined group, pair-work and individual work. Participants were encouraged to reflect on their experiences and learning processes during the sessions. As well as sessions facilitated by the teacher, there were feedback sessions facilitated by the PI. In the feedback sessions, students would show rehearsed movement sequences and present compositional work that emerged from them. This was in order to promote discussion about learning processes and the application of the Dalcroze method to composition as well as to develop participants' reflexivity for the purposes of the final interviews.

## 2.4 Data collection and analysis

Participants were issued with a notebook in the first session and encouraged to keep a personal log of their experiences. Participants were asked to be honest, not to omit anything on the grounds that it might seem too obvious or simple, and to consider how and why they responded as they did. As the project spanned five months, it was thought that such a record might serve as an aide-memoire for the interviews, which took place one week after the last session. The researchers, who were unknown to the participants, carried out the interviews, which were recorded and transcribed.

The advantages of interviews over questionnaires are noted by Cohen et al (2011: 412) and include: extensive opportunities for asking, the possibility of probing, and a good rate of return. Most importantly, the researchers and PI felt that in-depth interviewing would reveal richer data than questionnaires, as the research questions dealt with the potentially complex and highly nuanced nature of musical and bodily experience. A standardised open-ended interview schedule was developed collaboratively between the PI and the researchers (see Appendix 2). This ensured that all participants were asked the same questions in the same order. It also allowed for greater comparability between participant responses than an unstructured interview would have done, whilst still allowing for digressions to be probed or explored (Patton 1980). The schedule was divided into three sections: before the project, end of project and future. This was intended to orient the interviewee: first, on their musical background, their motivations for taking part and their feelings prior to participation; second, on their experiences looking back at the project, whether it had any impact on their practice as composers and what they had learnt; third, on their predictions for their own practice and the possibility of future involvement in Dalcroze Eurhythmics. The interviews also gathered factual and demographic data about participants' first instrument, year of study, attendance during the project and the number of set tasks completed (Appendix 3).

The researchers and PI discussed the best way to gather data from the three non-completing participants. Given that more than three months separated the date of exit from the classes and the interviews, and given that the non-completing participants would not have much detail in their personal logs, it was decided that the best way to interview them was in a focus group. In such a situation, the interaction between the interviewees themselves would be as likely to provoke memories and stimulate ongoing discussion, as would questioning from the interviewer (Cohen et al 2011). The interview schedule was the same as that shown in Appendix 2 except that certain questions were left out, for example, due to the fact that the non-completing students had not composed as part of the project.

The researchers analysed the interview data according to the research questions in order to allow a framework to emerge across the data set (Ezzy 2002; Ritchie and Spencer 1994). This would serve to ground the analysis and discussion in the data, rather than in pre-existing theory or the assumptions of the interview schedule (Glaser and Strauss 1967). This process was repeated until all the data were accounted for. Representative quotes were extracted and the analysis presented to the PI, who did a second framework analysis that nuanced some of the themes. The reliability of the process was enhanced by a further review by the researchers. The data from the focus group and the teacher's interview were not included in the same analysis as the completing participants, as the interview schedules were different. Instead, the PI summarised both sets of responses according to the most commonly emergent experiences and perceptions, and these too were checked by the researchers.

## 2.5 Bias

The PI knew most of the participants in the capacity of lecturer and department member. He also led the feedback sessions, when the participants brought compositional work to share. In terms of power relations (Layder 1994), it is possible that data from participants reflected the imbalance of prior relationships, which may have prompted them to make 'correct' or 'pleasing' responses in the interviews. Whilst the possibility of bias cannot be ruled out altogether, it was guarded against in three ways:

- The PI did not deliver any of the Dalcroze sessions, only the feedback sessions
- The interview schedules were designed collaboratively between the researchers and the PI
- The researchers carried out the interviews, presented an initial framework analysis of the data and made a final review of the analysis



# 3. Results

## 3.1 Retention, attendance and tasks completed

Of the 12 students who signed up, 9 completed the project. Given that the project was voluntary, a retention rate of 75% would seem to be significant in itself. The three students who dropped out did so due to late night gigs and the early start (09:00), work commitments that compromised availability, and preferring to focus on degree study.

There were 30 absences out of a possible 117 (this number represents the total possible attendances of completing participants). The reasons given for not attending were: working late the night before, the early start, illness, study workload and personal issues.

There were four compositional tasks. Discounting the three participants who dropped out, 27 out of a total 36 compositions were generated during the project. These were in addition to university coursework requirements.

## 3.2 Framework analysis

The table below presents an overview of the main themes, sub-themes and sub-categories that emerged from the data analysis. These results relate to the participants who completed the project. A summary of the feedback of the focus group for the non-completing participants is included at the end of this section and is cross-referenced where possible to the themes below.

Four main themes were identified, all of which relate to the primary research aim: to explore students' experiences and perceptions of approaches to composition teaching and learning that focus on music and movement. Within each theme, if responses from several participants clustered together around a particular issue, a sub-theme was created. Some themes were nuanced further into sub-categories, if two or more participants reported similar experiences. The themes are detailed below, with representative quotes from participants.



**Table 3: Overview of themes, sub-themes and sub-categories**

Themes	Sub-themes	Sub-categories
1. Influence on compositional work and processes	Had an influence	High degree of influence Specific compositional practices Inspiration Short-term influence
	Had no influence	Seeing composition differently No influence
2. Influence on musical understanding and knowledge	Musical understanding	Aural awareness Metre and duration Altered understandings Clarification Applying the Dalcroze approach
	Musical knowledge	Seeing things in a new light New musical knowledge
	Had no influence on musical understanding or knowledge	
3. Experiences and benefits of learning through movement	Movement into musical sense	
	Movement as a vehicle of learning	
	Self consciousness	
	Speed of learning	
	Body awareness and change	
	Other positive experiences	Self confidence, physical benefits and positive psychological impacts
4. Feasibility of Dalcroze Eurhythmics for composers in Higher Education	Enjoyment	
	Recommendations	
	Styles and traditions	
	Group work	
	Negative aspects	

## Theme 1:

### Influence on compositional work and processes

This theme is divided into two sub-themes:

- Had an influence
- Had no influence

#### Had an influence

This sub-theme presents variations in the findings as some of the participants reported a direct influence on compositional work and processes, whereas others reported that the workshops had an indirect effect on composition. These participants talked about how movement could provide a basis for compositional work.

Two participants stated that Dalcroze Eurhythmics had a high degree of influence on their work:

‘It definitely had a great influence on how I compose and how I can compose’ (Simon)

‘My composition has come along so much in that space of time [the duration of the project]’ (Billy)

Some participants identified specific areas of compositional practice that had changed as a result of the project, including metre, gesture, microtonality and compositional planning:

‘Everything I’ve written since then has been with changing metres, which is something I never really did before’ (Ashley)

‘My writing has never been very complex at all, but there are more layers to it now, I mean I’m working more with microtonal music...which never would have occurred to me before this’ (Billy)

More than one participant reported an influence on their compositional inspiration:

‘The movement definitely made me think more about metre and then that in turn went into my composition. I just mean I can’t see myself personally moving around and composing from it in the future, but definitely as a way of just inspiring thought about different topics, you know I think was good’ (Ashley)

Other participants reported short-term effects on compositional processes, such as expanding their range of possible ways to compose, but this was sometimes only for the set compositional tasks:

‘I felt like I was writing to serve that particular aspect of music we looked at in the session’ (Jacob)

‘It definitely has short term influences, it’s impossible to say whether it’s going to have a long term one’ (Ashley)

#### Had no influence

Participants also reported that the Dalcroze sessions had no influence on their compositional work or processes. One participant reported ‘seeing’ composition from a different perspective, but did not report specific influences on her compositional work:

‘I started to see composition differently and that’s it’ (Angela)

Similarly, other participants reported a raised awareness of different styles they could use to compose, or of the link between music and movement. However, these did not necessarily inspire specific compositional processes:

‘It’s given me ideas that could be useful in the future for maybe teaching classical rhythm or so on, but I don’t know about necessarily actually specifically for composition... although the idea for the last exercise with the composing a body theme with movement and then doing variations on that theme, I could see how that could be inspirational if you really are stuck for ideas’ (Naseem)

Only one participant reported no influence from the Dalcroze sessions:

‘Nothing they did changed anything I think about, nothing I participated in engaged my brain in a way that made me, would have me compose differently’ (Kevin)





## Theme 2:

### Influence on musical understanding and knowledge

This theme comprises three sub-themes:

- Musical understanding
- Musical knowledge
- No influence on musical knowledge or understanding

#### Musical understanding

Some participants reported improved aural awareness and others gave examples of new musical understanding, especially to do with metre and duration:

'I feel like my ears are a bit more open now, I am more receptive to what's going on around me rather than just being contained within my head and my bass' (Jacob)

'I have an idea in my mind, but I don't really get the time signature 'til I see it on paper...and after this [I realised that], if I can feel in 2/4 then it's 2/4, not 4/4' (Angela)

Several participants felt that learning through movement did afford them an altered understanding of music. It helped to clarify and consolidate their understanding of existing areas of knowledge and experience.

'I never got 2/4, never understood it, but after doing the sessions I had a very clear understanding of 2/4 and the difference it has to 4/4 say' (Jacob)

Two participants mentioned that shifts of understanding related more to the Dalcroze approach and how their experiences could be applied in other contexts:

'I suppose not so much musical knowledge, but again knowledge about the way movement relates to music and also different ways to approach actually writing music. So its approach really is what I learnt as opposed to musical knowledge' (Jude)

#### Knowledge

Some participants saw their existing knowledge base in a new light, even if they felt that they hadn't learnt new pieces of information:

'I haven't felt like the project was a huge turning point in terms of me learning musical theory in terms of knowledge, but I think the fact that we were looking at musical theory through movement it makes me see it in a different way' (Jacob)

Other participants reported gaining some new knowledge of specific areas such as retrograde rhythm, rhythmic augmentation and ornamentation or, more generally, of 'tools' for composition:

'It's just expanded all the tools that I have for musical composition' (Simon)

#### No influence on musical understanding or knowledge

Only one participant reported not gaining any musical knowledge or experiencing any impact on their understanding as result of being involved in Dalcroze Eurhythmics.

'None, movement does not contribute to my musical understanding' (Kevin)

## Theme 3:

# Experiences and benefits of learning through movement

### This theme has six sub-themes:

- Movement into musical sense
- Movement as a vehicle of learning
- Self consciousness
- Speed of learning
- Body awareness and change
- Other positive experiences

## Movement into musical sense

Participants reported a range of experiences as a result of being involved in the Dalcroze sessions. Several of these pertained to the understanding of music in a holistic way, such as the ways in which the world can be perceived musically, or the realisation that music can be embodied:

'I noticed that I don't actually get space on a piece of paper, I don't get the idea of space, with the ball I got the idea...so it kind of gave me the idea of space and time, it was just a revelation' (Angela)

'At first I didn't see how it could help me compose, as the weeks went on I started to realise how music and musical instinct is not restricted within the brain, it's a bodily function' (Jacob)

One participant, who struggled to express his learning process, did report that moving during the sessions had influenced his compositional workings, whilst others reported enjoying the movement for itself:

'It [the movement] was exciting, it was nice' (Angela)

## Movement as a vehicle of learning

The majority of participants valued the use of movement as a vehicle for learning and two contrasted this to what they termed 'sit down and take some notes' or 'factual' learning. One participant spoke of the contrast between talking about something and the experience of it, and compared this to the difference between a book and 3D cinema:

'It was nice to start from a movement and to end up with something' (Angela)

'Everything was engaging all the activities were really, really interesting and got you thinking about something that you would generally cover in a music lesson as a sit-down-and-take-some-notes thing into this run-

around-the-room-and-use-this-motion-to-represent-this [thing]...it just made me feel really interested in it and it made me feel free as well' (Simon)

'Well it's a bit like, say you had just a book, a stuffy old book on music theory, it would be a bit like having all that theory presented, but in a really interesting way like on a 3D cinema or something like that, it would have the same effect, but it makes it more interesting and makes you more receptive to what it is, a bit like kids going on a field trip, you can talk about something all you want, but if you go and experience it then you have a better understanding of it, it's a bit like that, moving to music' (Jacob)

## Self-consciousness

Some participants reported feeling self-conscious or embarrassed with the physicality involved in the sessions, but also reported that this had lessened over time. Another participant reported feelings of embarrassment due to perceived flaws in his ability being exposed during the sessions:

'In some ways I found some of them a bit for me embarrassing because I knew the stuff in terms of written down on paper, but then being able to recognise it by ear, my ears just weren't switched on' (Naseem)

## Speed of learning

Several participants noted how learning through movement had increased the speed at which they learnt:

'Yeah...it's understanding faster what you are doing or anything...it's a faster way to learn' (Angela)

'A lot of the time I was going away with more than I was hoping to and it sped up my learning of different time signatures' (Billy)



## Body awareness and change

Some participants reported significant changes in their body awareness as a result of taking part in Dalcroze Eurhythmics. In some cases this extended to awareness of themselves outside the sessions as well as reports of improvements to co-ordination and reaction times:

‘O yeah very much, very very much, for example the first session or second the moving separate parts of your body like only your shoulder or only your hip and I was quite amazed what my body could do just moving my shoulder, it was a big movement’ (Angela)

‘I think it’s made me walk more aware’ (Jacob)

‘My co-ordination has definitely improved...we had this exercise with tennis balls where we had to bounce from one hand to the other and then back and swing them and I just went into complete meltdown the first few times we had to do it...[but] just towards the end... when we came back to it after doing some other stuff, I found that I could do it’ (Billy)

## Other positive experiences

Some participants found that participating in Dalcroze Eurhythmics had had a beneficial impact on their confidence and others spoke of physical benefits and positive psychological impacts:

‘I think now I began to feel more confident in myself...it helped me to gain confidence’ (Angela)

‘It’s been quite a stressful year and when you go into this environment it’s really relaxing, to focus on nothing more than sound and movement and purely concentrate on that was really relaxing’ (Billy)

‘once you get into it...things just happen and...you then start to realise ‘OK, what am I doing here?’, erm yeah, it’s actually quite hard to explain really, it’s just something you get into once your mind gets into this, erm, I mean it’s almost kind of out-of-body even though you’re using your body, your mind is into this out-of-body experience because you’re just moving around and you’re almost not thinking about it at first and then afterwards you’re reflecting on what you did...It made me feel free as well, it didn’t really matter what you did or how you moved’ (Simon)

## Theme 4:

# Feasibility of Dalcroze Eurhythmics for composers in Higher Education

This theme has five sub-themes:

- Enjoyment
- Recommendations
- Styles and traditions
- Group work
- Negative aspects

### Enjoyment

All the participants reported enjoying the workshops for various reasons:

'I enjoyed attending and looked forward to it' (Kevin)

'It's been really fun and I've learnt quite a lot and I found since doing it like I do listen to music and hear music a different way...I'd love to do it again' (Connor)

'Yes. I thought some of the exercises were really good fun' (Naseem)

'I felt a lot of happiness and fun' (Simon)

### Recommendations

Participants would generally recommend Dalcroze Eurhythmics, but there were differing views about who would benefit the most. Two thirds would recommend it for undergraduate composition students, especially from the point of view of opening the mind and broadening horizons. Others would recommend Dalcroze Eurhythmics as a way of learning, but think that it would be better if introduced at an earlier age.

'100% I think it should be [embedded within a composition degree]' (Billy)

'I think it's one of the best ways to learn really' (Simon)

'I suppose I would recommend it on the basis that it's a good experience and it opens your mind to things' (Jude)

'It would have been better if it was earlier [in my music education]' (Angela)

'Maybe for people who were interested in classical composition as well, but not for electro-acoustic musicians' (Naseem)

However some participants, whilst they would recommend it to composition students, believed that Dalcroze Eurhythmics would not necessarily be suitable for everybody:

'I would certainly say give it a try, it might not be for everyone, I think you have to have an open mind to do it, but I think most people can probably appreciate its benefits...it's definitely a worthwhile thing to do' (Jacob)

### Styles and traditions

Other responses suggested that participants would be interested in applying Dalcroze Eurhythmics to other musical styles and traditions. One suggested giving classes to already formed groups, such as rock bands:

'I would be interested to see whether it could be tailored towards non-Western music, completely non-Western music that doesn't have recognisable key signature, time signature no recognisable harmony, I'd just be interested to see how that would work' (Naseem)

'I can imagine looking back on what I have done in this project and reflecting on what I learnt and asking myself 'can I apply the skills I have learnt here?' I can imagine myself telling my band about it, whether they will be interested or not I don't know, in fact I often thought that it'd be a really interesting thing for a whole band to do because obviously that's like a sort of an intimate family of musicians, it's one thing just a bunch of people who kind of know each other, but these are my friends, people I know very well, it'd be interesting to see what the project would be like applied to such an intimate group of friends' (Jacob)



## Group work

The importance of interactive group learning was reflected in several participants' comments:

'You never especially, like towards the end and stuff, you never felt embarrassed if you couldn't like get something and there was always support from everyone else, but there it was always a good laugh and just enjoyable to do' (Connor)

'The whole confidence thing is boosted from having done the workshop with these other people' (Simon)

## Negative aspects

Several negative aspects were raised, ranging from the early starts and the absences of group members, to feelings of being rushed and associating some of the activities with previous negative experiences of school sports:

'9am on a Tuesday was a mistake' (Billy)

'I think going back to the whole it-wasn't-compulsory element of that, I think the only negative thing was about attendance of some people...it almost hindered it slightly when you couldn't actually perform it [an activity]...with the same group as you had last week, so I think that the only negative thing really' (Simon)

'I kept coming up against the presuppositions of the deliverer were very strong and whenever questioned... she wasn't able to deliver the information in another way, which sometimes became stressful' (Kevin)

'I did feel rushed and also feel that we could have sort of got a bit deeper into things really to sort of allow us to kind of spend time to really explore a kind of a feeling or an emotional response to things' (Jude)

One participant noted a bias in the music used during the sessions, but also reported that some activities were focused on principles that could be adapted to different approaches to composition:

'I though it was well balanced in terms of what they covered...but then again it was always relating back to, it is within a critical framework of being around that form of music [classical music], so I suppose that's the only negative sort of aspect' (Naseem)

### 3.3 Focus group

For the sake of a comprehensive overview of participant feedback, this section looks at the feedback of the three non-completing participants. It is necessary to note that: these participants did not compose as part of the project, so there is no data relating to the influence of the project on their compositional work; in the interview, one admitted that she didn't write her own music, and thought that the project was an invitation to have a go at composition; the maximum attendance for the non-completing participants was three sessions (the first three). The views represented in the summary below are therefore limited in scope and relate to a brief engagement with the project. The focus group's comments have been organised under themes that emerged from iterative, grounded analysis. Most of these can be cross-referenced to the themes outlined above:

- Enjoyment
- Learning through movement
- Impact
- Starting Dalcroze earlier
- Feasibility of Dalcroze Eurhythmics for composers in Higher Education

#### Enjoyment

Two members of the focus group enjoyed the sessions that they attended:

'I did enjoy it, it was good fun' (Ruth)

'I had no idea that it was gonna be about moving to music, I thought it was more about writing composition and stuff, but it was still fun' (Tomas)

#### Learning through movement

Two of the three participants mentioned their experience of specific movement activities, which they found useful, interesting and fun. Another participant stated that he felt there was a large gap between the group's existing knowledge and its movement knowledge:

'My favourite one was, there was an interval recognition exercise where for each interval you had to do a different shape, you were in pairs and you had to decide on it and I thought that was really good to see the way you were turning an interval into a picture, I thought that was really interesting and it was also fun' (Tomas)

'As opposed to us fitting in the earlier part of Dalcroze, maybe they could have adapted the later parts of it to fit with our levels of learning because...the musicality is up here, but movement to music's down here' (Robert)

The same participant found the movement too restrictive and based in the repertoire of Western art music, whereas another had a different perspective:

'You were supposed to be moving to music, but again it was implicit within the system...it's based on formal traditions, that there was a right way, you could move however you wanted to, as long as you moved in the right way...if I'd got a guy from a jazz tradition, he would have moved completely differently' (Robert)

'I didn't think it was that classical to be honest, well the moving, cos I am a classical singer, I am straightforward classical, I've never really experienced different styles, so coming as a classical musician I would say these movement exercises, you were taught not to just move on a beat, but there would be beat of four and you'd have to step on each beat, but the transition between beats you would still have to move, so it would be one fluid movement rather than rigid steps...I didn't think it was as classical' (Ruth)

## Impact

Two participants, who were on the BA Music Performance, found that Dalcroze Eurhythmics had influenced aspects of their performance, teaching and listening:

'I found that really interesting to think about the space between notes, literally my singing is a movement so I would think about how I would move between different things so I found it really, really eye-opening...the exercises were really interesting, different ways of, like the intervals one I have not thought of doing that, and I do a lot of intervally stuff, and I've never thought of like physical-ising the sound, so I really liked that, I've actually used that in classes since' (Ruth)

'The whole moving to music I was relating all of that to my movement on stage when I'm performing in a band sort of thing, cos I'm not really good at dancing or coordinating so it was kind of good to think about it without the guitar in your hands and on stage, and then take that and then do it' (Tomas)

## Starting Dalcroze earlier

Two of the non-completing participants thought that Dalcroze Eurhythmics would be ideal for children, and one expressed his wish that he had started at an early age:

'I sort of maybe wish I'd got involved in at a younger age cos I feel it would have had more of an impact then than it does now, after 18/19 years of just listening to music how I do, and then having this other way of moving to it and stuff, it would have been better to have that from a young age' (Tomas)

## Feasibility of Dalcroze Eurhythmics for composers in Higher Education

All participants thought that Dalcroze Eurhythmics could be feasibly included in Higher Education and made recommendations to do with the range of traditions that might be studied through Dalcroze and how it might be integrated with more traditional methods of instruction:

'I'd like to see them do this as part of a module, I'd take part in that actually, if it was implemented in that way, especially with like I say with...more of a broader approach to the elements of music...maybe from a world music perspective' (Robert)

'It's an interesting way to approach teaching something which can be potentially very stuffy and boring' (Tomas)

'I don't think it should be the core, there should be your traditional methods of teaching, but it's a good way of engaging other people cos people are different styles of learners, some people really struggle to sit down with a book or to concentrate at a presentation, whereas this is a sort of more hands on approach, I think it is good to mix it up, it's good for everybody' (Ruth)



## 3.4 Summary of results

In response to the principal research question, we can summarise the nine completing participants' responses as follows:

- All participants enjoyed their engagement with Dalcroze Eurhythmics
- Almost half noted direct influence on their compositional work (two thirds of undergraduates, if they are considered separately from the MA students)
- The majority (two thirds) reported indirect influences: improved aural awareness, altered understandings of music or gains in musical knowledge
- The majority (two thirds) identified learning through movement as an eye/ear-opening, engaging and enjoyable experience
- In each of the following areas, at least a third of participants stated that Dalcroze Eurhythmics:
  - Sped up their learning processes
  - Increased their body awareness
  - Had emotional and physical benefits
  - Had a beneficial impact on their confidence
  - Offered helpful and enjoyable group experiences
- All of the undergraduate composition students would recommend Dalcroze Eurhythmics to other composition students in Higher Education
- The postgraduate (MA) students had reservations about the usefulness of the approach either for composition students per se, or for those interested in electro-acoustic work in particular
- The postgraduate (MA) students perceived a bias towards classical music in the sessions
- Some negative aspects were identified, ranging from the early start time and the voluntary nature of the project, to feeling rushed and wanting information to be presented differently
- A third of participants expressed an interest in how Dalcroze Eurhythmics could be applied to a wider variety of musical styles and traditions

# 4. Discussion

This section addresses the themes that emerge from the data and, where possible, discusses them in relation to existing research and theory in Dalcroze Eurhythmics and composition pedagogy. Where there is limited existing theory or literature, the data are interpreted speculatively. The limitations of the research are also outlined, as are recommendations for future research.

## 4.1 Themes and sub-themes

### Theme 1: influence on composition

Within the 'Had an influence' category the project had a variety of direct and indirect impacts on the compositional work of four of the nine completing participants. The range of responses indicates that the experience of learning through Dalcroze Eurhythmics may influence different aspects and stages of compositional practice:

- Inspiration
- Planning
- Complexity (of a piece's 'layers')
- Conceiving the duration and flow of gestures
- Metre (including changing metre)
- Pitch (including microtonality)

These six findings seem to encompass a spectrum from the more general (compositional beginnings and macro-level considerations), via the more specific (complexity of layers, duration and flow of gestures), to local choices (metre and pitch). Clearly though, the list here is minimal; the project was very short and could not address more than a few topics in any detail. Owing to the adaptability of the method (Bachmann 1991; Jaques-Dalcroze 1948) and the range of topics that Dalcroze himself included in his own teaching (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/2000: 150) it is possible to imagine, however, that a future project over a longer time span could extend such a list to include many other aspects of composition, for example: timbre, orchestration, articulation, unmetred music, lyrics, text-setting, electronic manipulation of materials and traditional/more creative approaches to notation, to name a handful.

The findings above refer to participants' views about their compositional practice outside the project (Billy, Simon, Ashley and Connor), not the four set tasks. The research design of *Moving into Composition* did not take into account the composing opportunities that the participants had outside the sessions. Two participants stated that they were composing more for the project than for themselves, one saying that he had not worked enough on compositions since the project for him to notice an impact:

'It's only been a week [since the project ended], so I haven't had a chance to compose yet' (Jacob)

To increase participants' sense of ownership of their work in future research of this sort, a project could be designed that asked participants specifically to consider the influence of Dalcroze Eurhythmics on pieces they were making as part of university coursework requirements or even outside their studies, in more informal settings (Green 2002). The project would need to be longer-term to ensure that all participants could experience and comment on any potential impact, and would also need to be sensitive to the course design and structure of the participants' existing composition tuition in terms of planning the content of the Dalcroze sessions and considering coursework deadlines.

Another, more radical, option would be to invite participants to bring work-in-progress into the Dalcroze class and explore ways to develop it using the three branches of Eurhythmics: movement, improvisation and voice work/aural awareness. Whilst bringing work-in-progress to a compositional tutor for reflective dialogue and formative assessment is an established model from high school onwards (Berkley 2004), such an approach has little precedent in Dalcroze Eurhythmics pedagogy. A similar practice to this imagined scenario does exist, however, in the work of Karin Greenhead (cited in Mayo 2005), a Dalcroze practitioner who works with the repertoire that performers bring into the learning context. Greenhead's technique is called *Dynamic Rehearsal* and works on a cyclical model with distinct but interrelated stages: rehearsal, the memorisation of repertoire, informal performance, the expression of repertoire in movement, and the application of movement-derived knowledge to ongoing rehearsal.

It is possible to imagine a similar model for composers who would bring work-in-progress to a class, explore ways to express it in movement, and then work collaboratively with the teacher and the group to extend the movement work in order to form the basis for the next stages of the compositional process. As one participant noted, a potential benefit of Dalcroze Eurhythmics for composers would be to unlock inspiration, and this could be envisaged in such a learning environment:

'I could see how that [theme and variations] could be inspirational if you really are stuck for ideas' (Naseem)

A development of such an approach for teaching and learning composition would, on the basis of the results of Moving into Composition, seem to be eminently feasible. This is especially true for undergraduate composers, given that all participants on the BA Composition programme recommended the approach to other composition students. Such a transformation of Dalcroze practice would require a great deal of planning on the part of a Dalcroze practitioner and cooperation with lecturing staff, but it would be a prime example of the sort of change to provision that can arise from action research, that is, forming a new situation on the basis of previous research evidence (Bannan 2004; Phillips 2008).

Within the 'Had no influence' category, there were reports of a raised awareness of music, seeing composition differently and the possibility of Eurhythmics as an igniting force for compositional ideas (Angela, Jude and Naseem). Even though these outcomes did not extend to impacts on particular compositional processes, they can nevertheless be interpreted as significant in the wider context of compositional activity. It could be argued, for example, that the awareness-raising aspect of Dalcroze Eurhythmics is an important basis for the compositional process, as a developed musical awareness may be the very ground of inspiration and planning, and may reveal more choices to the composer in question. As Dalcroze himself asserts: 'muscular sensations eventually coalesce with auditory sensations, which, thus reinforced, add to the faculties of appreciation and analysis' (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/2000: 190). From this perspective, Angela and Jude's shifts in insight ('I started to see composition differently', 'It's raised awareness') indicate that this category contains responses that may be interpreted as beneficial outcomes.

## Theme 2: musical understanding and knowledge

Two of the most commonly felt experiences in this theme relate to improved aural awareness and an amplified understanding of metre and duration. The aural acuity, or lack of it, in the students at the Geneva Conservatoire was famously Dalcroze's motivation to begin experimenting with his pedagogical practice, which led him to believe that musicianship began with hearing sensitively, not playing sensitively, the latter being dependent on the former. As such, aural awareness and especially inner hearing are chief goals of Eurhythmics. It might then be expected that participants would report such outcomes as:

'When listening to music, I do think about the way that the notes have been written a little bit more' (Ruth)

As much as inner hearing, Dalcroze Eurhythmics has rhythm at its core and several participants reported new understandings of metre and duration. Rhythmic activity emerges from each element of the theoretical underpinning of time-space-energy: it requires ordered dosages of energy, results in movements in space and takes place over time (Bachmann 1991). Furthermore, the psychophysical basis of musicality forges a deep-rooted connection between movement and rhythm (Phillips-Silver 2009; Phillips-Silver and Trainor 2005, 2007) and it is these mechanisms that form the ground of Dalcroze Eurhythmics (Ping-Cheng Wang 2008; Seitz 2000, 2005b).

Dalcroze Eurhythmics has as one of its central tenets that musical concepts should only be fully explained after they have been experienced somatically (Juntunen and Hyvönen 2004; Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/2000: 63). For example, a child in a typical Dalcroze training would learn to walk the pulse of the music and then subdivide it by jogging before learning the names crotchet and quaver, and before being introduced to the corresponding notational symbols. According to Dalcrozian principles, bodily experience should, wherever possible, precede labeling or abstract thought. However, with adult learners in Higher Education, a great many musical concepts will already have been grasped in some way, even if they may have been poorly taught or only partially understood in some cases. As in this project, students may be aware that 2/4 and 4/4 exist, and understand the mathematical relationship between them, but not fully understand the difference between them as musical phenomena ('I never got 2/4, never understood it'). Or, similarly, a student may know a perfect fifth from what it looks like on the staff, but not be able to recognise one in sound or sing one ('my ears just weren't switched on').

The difference between the pre-reflective and analytical forms of knowing has been characterised as figural versus formal knowledge (Bamberger 1991), or 'know-how' and 'know-that' (Gardner 1993: 110), the first being intuitive, felt and practical, the second being more conceptual, intellectual and analytical. Whilst Gardner (1993: 111) recognises that musical competence would normally require both sorts of knowledge, he warns that:

'Certain important aspects of music that are 'naturally' perceived according to the initial figural mode of processing may be at least temporarily obscured...as an individual attempts to assess and classify everything according to a formal mode of analysis – to superimpose propositional knowledge upon figural intuitions.'

It may be that those participants who reported seeing existing musical knowledge and understanding from a fresh perspective were reporting a process of clarification, which 'unobscured' figural knowledge, and those who made genuine gains in knowledge, musical insight and aural awareness were reporting learning experiences that had led them to newly felt figural knowledge through bodily engagement, which in turn led to formal knowledge through discussion and the use of notation. One or both experiences were reported by Jacob, Angela, Billy, Jude, Connor, Ashley, Simon and Naseem. This may provide evidence that a radically embodied cognition, as in Dalcroze Eurhythmics, can lead to a holistic understanding of music (Juntunen and Westerlund 2001), which includes situated and informal knowing as much as propositional and formal knowing (Berkley 2004; Stubbley 1999).

Some of the experiences reported in this theme also seem to support Clarke's statement that 'what people come to know about the world through representational systems can...be completely at odds with what they discover through a direct perceptual encounter' (2005: 43). Moving into Composition aimed to afford such encounters and to illuminate them with reflection – through drawing, discussion and musical notation – which in turn aimed to help the participants to connect pre-reflective embodied cognition with representations of that cognition in language and musical notation. The findings to do with musical understanding and knowledge also confirm that Dalcroze Eurhythmics can be understood as a praxial philosophy of music education, in which, as Elliott (1995: 68) defines it, musical understanding is equated with musicianship, something practical, procedural and situated, not necessarily formal, verbal or linear. If we consider musicianship and musical knowledge to be essential for composition, then it could be deduced from the results in this theme, that Dalcroze Eurhythmics can play a vital role in the education of composers.

Initially Dalcroze developed his method for conservatoire students and he became convinced that accomplished musicians could benefit from learning through Eurhythmics (1930/1999: 11). This appears to be borne out not only in the continued presence of Dalcroze classes in university-level programmes around the world (Bachmann 1991: 60-63; Juntunen 2004; Mayo 2005; Spurgeon 2004; Stone 1986), but also in the results of this study that relate to altered compositional practices and improved aural awareness, as well as knowledge clarification and knowledge gains. Juntunen and Hyvönen (2004: 208) describe such outcomes thus:

'in new situations new clusters of meanings are formed through bodily interaction with the world...within Dalcroze practice this means that even accomplished musicians can benefit from experiences that combine music and body movement by attaining a richer or transformed musical understanding and by receiving enriching experiences.'

Kevin, the only participant whose experience did not seem to accord with this assertion, stated that in his case age may have been a factor. Whilst there is no evidence that Dalcroze Eurhythmics is generally less effective for older learners, it may be that some musicians with advanced years and extensive experience may find it less useful. Another explanation for Kevin's response could be that the nature of the topics covered was more appropriate for undergraduates with fewer years of musical experience and less appropriate for a more experienced postgraduate. Such possibilities should be taken into account in the planning stages of similar future applications of Dalcroze Eurhythmics.



retrograde  
of melodic change  
ornaments  
flow / formality  
more or less  
Musical - Logic  
Repetition  
Aptitude/Ability

### Theme 3: learning through movement

This theme contains a rich array of responses, many of which find support in the literature. More than half the participants reported that their musical awareness or insight had improved throughout their engagement with Dalcroze Eurhythmics. Simon, Angela, Jude, Jacob, Ashley and Ruth used the phrases: 'being able to translate', 'gave me the idea', 'made me think about', 'I started to realise', 'changed the way I've composed', 'really, really eye-opening'. These come from participants' accounts of enactive and processual learning during the classes, and describe developments in understanding and self-awareness, which are arguably those that Dalcroze himself sought to effect. In particular, these participants describe mental realisations that came during and after moving to music, including the use of 'props' such as balls. As Seitz (2005b) reminds us, Dalcroze 'was, in essence, arguing that physical movement formed the basis of musical consciousness...He believed that the sensations that movements to music evoked created mental imagery' (422). These findings would seem to support this belief as well as subsequent research on the impact of movement on musicality and music learning (Liao and Davidson 2007; Phillips-Silver 2009; Phillips-Silver and Trainor 2005, 2007; Ping-Cheng Wang 2008; Seitz 2000, 2005a, 2005b).

When asked to consider specifically the relationship between movement and learning, half the participants pointed to particular moments of active learning, or commented generally that movement made the learning experience qualitatively different from other modes of teaching and learning. In terms of the former, participants were encouraged throughout the sessions to reflect on their movement experience and how they related it to the music they were hearing. This element of ongoing reflection is a constant in Dalcroze pedagogy, so it is perhaps unsurprising that participants would be able to remember specific instances of movement as a vehicle of learning. In terms of the latter, the use of space, movement, improvisation and group interaction appears to have offered a vivid and engaging learning experience, characterised by freedom and heightened feeling:

'Moving made me appreciate that kind of difference...more so than if just taught factually' (Jude)



A potential consequence of asking learners in Higher Education to return to some seemingly basic elements of music, such as simple metres and intervals, may be self-consciousness or unexpected emotional reactions (Stone 1986). This was the case in *Moving into Composition*. Within different themes, feelings of frustration and embarrassment (Naseem) on the one hand, and revelation (Angela) on the other were reported. It is important, as Dalcroze recognised, for teachers to acknowledge students' emotional states. Dalcroze Eurhythmics aims to work with the whole human being, and therefore has the potential to be exposing. As a result, the Dalcroze teacher has to be very socially and emotionally aware (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/2000: 102), and to be able to adapt exercises and piano improvisation instantaneously to suit the student's level of ability (Bachmann 1991: 43).

Three participants reported an increase in the speed of their learning. Dalcroze was convinced that accomplished aural skills, improvisational spontaneity and freedom of musical expression followed from being able to respond immediately to the changing musical fabric. As such, 'quick response' exercises to improve response times and mental agility are a staple of the Dalcroze class (Vanderspar 1984: 16). The effects that these participants noted have been found in other participatory research on Dalcroze Eurhythmics (Caldwell 1993; Stone 1986). It must be remembered however that Dalcroze did not place value on reaction times for their own sake, but as a step towards a holistic appreciation and understanding of music: 'the mere recognition and apprehension of sounds does not entitle a person to claim the possession of a good musical ear. External aural sensations should, in addition, create an internal consciousness and state of emotion' (1921/2000: 48). Seen in the light of the results as a whole, although it is impossible to prove causation, it may be that increased reaction times are closely linked to the findings in other themes, such as influence on composition (theme 1) and musical understanding and knowledge (theme 2).



Learning engages the body and leads to embodied cognition, or knowledge through the body (Cook, Mitchell and Goldin-Meadow 2008; Goldin-Meadow 2000; Hannaford 2005). It may also lead to an increased knowledge of the body. Quite apart from musical knowledge and understanding being enhanced during the project, several participants reported increased awareness of the body per se ('I was quite amazed by what my body could do'). That Dalcroze Eurhythmics should afford such awareness is perhaps not surprising when we consider that it radically engages and challenges the whole body in many different ways: balance, reactions, co-ordination, dissociation, kinaesthetic sense, muscle memory, hearing, vision and touch, to name a handful. The co-existent processes of bodily knowing and knowledge of the body have been discussed by Juntunen and Westerlund (2001: 209): 'Movement involved in music making increases also so-called bodily knowledge. Bodily knowledge refers to improved knowing in and through the body, which, in turn, has a direct connection to the senses and bodily awareness as well as to abilities, skills and action'.

The feelings of relaxation and freedom noted by some participants are another outcome of Moving into Composition and have been reported by Stone (1986), who also found that students in Dalcroze classes talked in terms of flow. Flow has been extensively theorised by Csikszentmihalyi (1990) and Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi (1988), and is discussed in relation to music education by Custodero (2005) and Elliott (1995). Elliott writes: 'Dynamic musical practices provide the conditions necessary to attain optimal experience, "flow," or enjoyment... optimal experiences are typically marked by a complete focus of concentration on one's actions...[and] frequently include a loss of self-consciousness' (1995: 116-117). It is such an optimal experience that one participant may have had when he was engaged in movement work:

'it's almost kind of out-of-body even though you're using your body, your mind is into this out-of-body experience because you're just moving around and you're almost not thinking about it at first and then afterwards you're reflecting on what you did' (Simon)

Juntunen and Hyvönen refer to this phenomenon as a 'double belongingness' (2004: 209): 'As my body sees itself seeing, touches itself touching...it analogically also listens to itself listening...this implies that music is simultaneously both heard and felt'. Elliott (1995) also sees self-esteem as a natural outgrowth of flow experience (118-119), and this may help to explain the increases in self-confidence that were also reported (Angela, Billy, Simon). The literature on physical exercise and enhanced psychological health identifies clear links between the two (Folkins and Sime 1981; Plante and Rodin 1990) and this would appear to confirm these interpretations regarding participants' movement experience and its relationship to feelings of relaxation, freedom, flow and confidence.

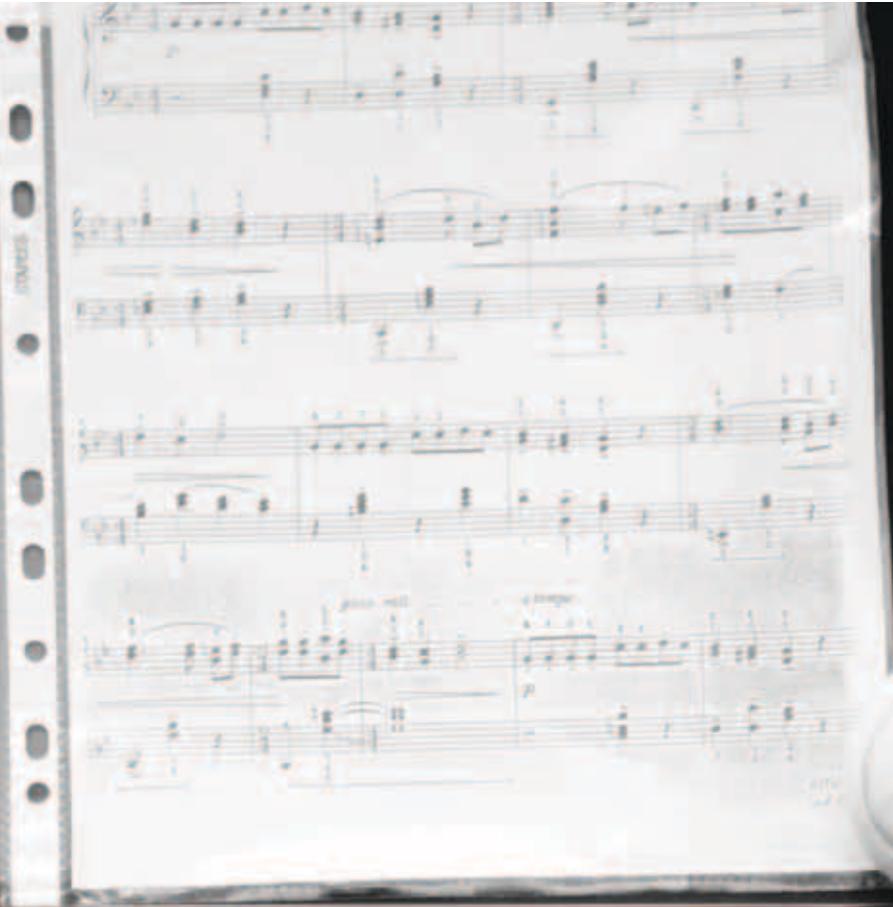
Regarding differing levels of musicianship and movement skill, one respondent noted:

'The musicality is up here, but the movement to music's down here' (Robert)

This seems to indicate a dissonance in the participants' experience between his self-concept as a musician with that of himself as a moving learner in a Dalcroze context. The short time span of the project did not allow for extensive exploration of the body as the main tool of learning and for a postgraduate student it is perhaps no surprise that a resulting inequality between existing musical knowledge and embodied learning practices might be keenly felt. Whilst it is not necessary to develop highly accomplished physical or gymnastic skill in order to benefit from eurhythmics, a certain amount of preliminary work is necessary (Bachmann 1991). This could be easily rectified in future research by planning a longer-term project, so that participants have the opportunity to develop their movement skills over a longer duration.



PAV



Y A M A H A



## Theme 4: Feasibility of Dalcroze Eurhythmics for composers in Higher Education

All participants reported enjoying the project, except one non-completing participant who did not mention enjoyment or its absence. This majority view accords with Dalcroze's own perceptions of rhythmic movement, which he saw as affording joy. He wrote (Jaques Dalcroze 1921/2000: 99):

'This joy is the product of a joint sense of emancipation and responsibility, comprising a vision of our creative potentialities, a balance of natural forces, and a rhythmic harmony of desires and powers. Germinating in the creative faculties...this joy increases in proportion as our powers develop...The gift of self-knowledge, conferred... by an education calculated to cultivate every vital spiritual and physical faculty, will produce a sense of liberation and independence'

In relating joy to other aspects of learning, Dalcroze's description encompasses other categories that have emerged from the data: learning, self-awareness, and freedom. Trehub (2006) notes that the infant's unbridled joy when involved in music can be maintained into formal education: 'Perhaps the greatest challenge for early music educators is to sustain the joy of music and the musical creativity that are so clearly evident in the months or years that precede formal instruction' (44). The data from *Moving into Composition* suggest that it is clearly possible to extend these possibilities into Higher Education.

The results of this theme and those under theme 3 (learning through movement) throw into relief the wider issue of students' emotions and their place in learning. Beard, Clegg and Smith (2007: 235) argue that 'we need richer conceptions of students [in Higher Education] as affective and embodied selves' and that it is crucial for teachers and learners to understand the emotional content of pedagogical encounters. Furthermore, the presence of positive activating emotions (such as enjoyment) and positive deactivating emotions (such as relaxation) may enhance and reinforce academic motivation (Pekrun, Goetz and Titz 2002). Dalcroze was clearly aware of these issues in his own teaching practice and refers often to the centrality of feeling and emotion in Dalcroze Eurhythmics pedagogy (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921/2000).

The two thirds of completing participants who recommended Dalcroze Eurhythmics to other undergraduate composition students were themselves on the BA Music Composition. With such a small sample, it is not possible to generalise, but this may be an indicator that to develop further the adaptation of Dalcroze Eurhythmics to composition pedagogy could begin by focusing at this level. With regard to the two MA students who had reservations about its usefulness, if their whole feedback is taken into account, this finding would seem to support a more critical approach to the differentiation of content and level of difficulty (this is discussed in more detail in the next section). Again, with such a small sample, these responses would not definitively rule out the future exploration of eurhythmics with other MA-level composition students.

Some participants wished they had come into contact with Eurhythmics at a younger age (Angela, Tomas). The sense that the approach might be useful for children is reflected in Dalcroze's own turn towards working with children (1921/2000)<sup>1</sup>, and in the continued and widespread incorporation of Eurhythmics in early years and primary school-age curricula (Bachmann 1991; Brown, Sherrill and Gench 1981; Campbell 1991; Custodero 2005; Liao and Davidson 2007).

The comments in this theme also relate to possible adaptations of the method for different contexts of composition, such as song writing or the more informal working processes typical of popular music groups. Bradford (2005) and Green (2002) provide first-hand accounts of such compositional contexts and their discussions could provide useful material for future planning of Dalcroze Eurhythmics for composers in Higher Education. Jacob's comment about bringing his band into a Dalcroze course is intriguing as it could offer a way forward for more informal ways of group composition to be explored through the three branches of Dalcroze pedagogy: rhythmics, improvisation and singing/aural skills. The point on which Jacob's suggestion seems to hinge is the intimacy of the band setting ('that's like sort of an intimate family of musicians') and it is possible that this relates to his experience of group work during the project. Dynamic Rehearsal (Mayo 2005) already offers Dalcroze pedagogy for groups of musicians, such as string quartets, but there is no literature extending this to groups of popular musicians.

<sup>1</sup> Within this volume, see especially the essays: *An Essay in the reform of music teaching in Schools* (1905); *Music and the Child* (1912); and *Music, Joy and the School* (1915).

Moving into Composition, as is typical of any Dalcrozian approach (Bachmann 1991; le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, forthcoming) included group work in every session. The impacts and benefits of this were identified by three participants (Connor, Ashley, Simon) as follows: overcoming embarrassment, enjoyment and increased confidence. These responses appear to confirm the importance of group work for the building of self-esteem and satisfaction (Kokotsaki and Hallam 2007). Regarding the collegiate nature of a Dalcrozian learning environment, others (Billy, Tomas) spoke of the importance of seeing others move, for the development of their own understanding ('actually seeing the relationship...helps you to really understand'). This may be due to the activation of mirror neurons, which Clarke (2005: 63) defines as: 'nerve cells in the motor area of the brain that show imitative activity when a perceiver observes another individual performing specific actions...[and which] suggest the possibility of a very deep-seated perception-action coupling'. This possibility seems to have been noted by Dalcroze himself when he wrote in 1919: 'eurhythmicians watching exercises performed by fellow-students do not follow them merely with the eye, but actually with their whole being' (1921/2000: 156).

Some participants raised negative aspects. These remained at the individual level, rather than being shared, except in one area. Three participants reported that there was a bias towards classical music or formal traditions ('it was always relating back to that form of music [classical music]'). A glance at Table 2 (p.15), however, indicates that the perceptions of these participants are at odds with the repertoire used. Why then should there be a perception of bias? There are several possibilities. The first is that the piano is the traditional means of instruction in Dalcroze Eurhythmics (Jaques-Dalcroze 1930/1999) and participants may have equated the sound of the instrument with classical music. Alternatively, it may be that the style of improvisation favoured by the teacher was predominantly 'classical' (using tonal harmony, traditional voicings and typically 'classical' performance practices, for example). If this was the case, the participants may have found themselves moving to what they perceived as 'classical piano', as opposed to, say, 'jazz piano'.

The most likely explanation is perhaps a combination of these because the topics chosen, whilst they were adaptable to a wide range of musical practices, were often modelled at the piano. This, however, still does not seem to account fully for a perception of bias, given the range of recorded examples used. Yet another possibility is that three pieces of music were handed out in score format during the project: Bartók's 'Variations' Mikrokosmos Book 4, Schubert's String Quintet D956, and Tragnala Rumjana. Whilst the first is famously influenced by folk music and the last is a Bulgarian folk song, due to their being presented in traditional western notation, it is understandable that participants might refer to them as classical. It should also be noted that the three participants who made observations regarding bias were all working at MA level. Whilst it is not possible to generalise from such a small sample, this may indicate that Dalcroze provision for composers in Higher Education would need to be more clearly differentiated, in terms of planning and delivery, and separate classes offered to undergraduate and postgraduate learners.

The four set compositional tasks were not specific regarding style or genre (modernist or folk, song-writing or chamber music, for example). However, it was clear that for some participants, certain tasks were more accessible than others, depending on the existing musical practices of the participants. For Naseem, who worked mainly with electro-acoustic composition and preferred unmetred ways of working, the metre task may have felt more restrictive, perhaps providing the basis for his comments on the dominant framework of classical music. On the other hand, an in-class activity based on an improvised movement sequence was open enough for him to sample his own voice, manipulate the files and fashion unmetred electro-acoustic gestures.

It would therefore appear to be beneficial to students that the future application of Dalcroze Eurhythmics in composition pedagogy should take more account of the existing practices of students and current issues facing them as composers, by asking them rather than deciding in advance, even if based on extensive experience of teaching in Higher Education. As Juntunen and Westerlund (2001: 209) put it: 'The challenge for a music educator is not only to continue the tradition, to develop the learner's skills and know-how in relation to a pre-existing practice and cultural information. What educators should be interested in is the lived experience of their students in relation to musical practices.' A period of mutual sharing of musical practices and identities between teachers and learners could be the first stage in a future research project of this sort. The planning of the sessions could then take account of the individuality of the students to a greater degree. There are several possible advantages to this: it could empower the students, increase their motivation to learn and afford a more personal relationship between them and their compositions (see theme 1).



# Changing Meters

Andante

mf

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 1 through 4. The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The first measure has a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The fourth measure has a forte (f) dynamic. The music is in a key with one flat and a 4/4 time signature.

p

Detailed description: This system contains measures 5 through 8. The eighth measure has a piano (p) dynamic. The music continues in the same key and meter.

11

mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 9 through 12. The first measure of this system is marked with a double bar line and the number 11. The fifth measure of this system has a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic.

16

mp

4/4

Detailed description: This system contains measures 13 through 15. The first measure is marked with a double bar line and the number 16. The time signature changes to 4/4. The dynamic is mezzo-piano (mp).

21

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 16 through 18. The first measure is marked with a double bar line and the number 21. The dynamic is forte (f).

DOWN

LEAVING

PIROUETTAS

MAJESTIC

However, when re-reading the results in theme 3 (learning through movement), it may be that a balance needs to be struck. For example, a number of participants reported a transformed understanding of metre, which had in some cases had direct impacts on their composition and performance. This was clearly a significant outcome of the project. And yet, one wonders how many student composers in Higher Education would, when asked, request to learn about the differences between simple metres. It remains to be seen whether students would request such a topic. It would therefore seem reasonable for the Dalcroze practitioner and any compositional lecturers involved to propose topics for learning as well to ask participants for their own ideas. This need for balance has been noted by Berkley (2004: 258), who writes that teaching composition is 'concerned with creating a balance between the promotion of objective knowledge of theory, technique, rules and conventions transmitted by the teacher and the promotion of the student's subjective creativity, authority and ownership'.

Juntunen and Westerlund have taken a post-modern view of Dalcroze Eurhythmics and styled it a Grand Method (2011). As a consequence, she calls for teachers to develop their cultural metacognition and states that this should encompass 'the moral and ethical aspects of a teacher's thinking' (55). This seems to relate closely to some of participants responses to the Moving into Composition project. One of the challenges for Dalcroze practitioners wishing to move into composition pedagogy in Higher Education, or for lecturers wishing to expand their practices to include movement and improvisation, would be to develop a reflective practice that can take account of musical practices and issues that might be new to them and, indeed, to unlearn certain practices or understandings that have become entrenched. For Juntunen and Westerlund (2011), such reflection is a requirement of all pedagogy, whether learner-centred or related to a particular method. They write that all existing teaching and learning strategies:

'may function as heterogeneous and rich intellectual material for cultural consciousness, constant critical discussion, practical testing of ideas, and, above all, for future teachers' learning. In the reflective community, as a narrative meeting point of ideological discourses, the Grand Methods, as embodying success stories of past times, can sustain their legacy in today's music education' (2011: 56)

In terms of addressing non-western repertoire or 'World music', it should be noted that, even though Dalcroze's approach to music education was incubating during his period of work in Algiers, Dalcroze Eurhythmics as it is practiced today is, from anecdotal evidence, mainly rooted in the European classical tradition and related popular traditions such as folk, pop, rock, jazz and blues. Seen from a more global perspective, the musical elements that the Dalcroze method refers to include: equal temperament, definable metre, periodicity, and standard notation. On the one hand, this might seem a narrow purview and in need of reform. On the other however, the crucial emphasis that Dalcroze Eurhythmics places on movement, improvisation and performance would appear to open many doors to the world's music. As Keil and Feld state: 'the vast majority of cultures around the world have musical styles that are performance-oriented, dance-derived, and at least partially improvised' (1994: 76). There does seem, therefore, to be much fertile ground here for the exploration of a wider repertoire through Dalcroze Eurhythmics. Such an opening out of the repertoire accessed through Dalcroze Eurhythmics would, however, have profound implications for the training of Dalcroze practitioners and could potentially alter the status of the piano as the primary means of instruction. Adapting Eurhythmics in these ways would also demand an engagement with post-colonial studies, if it were to avoid the insensitivity of decontextualising unfamiliar cultures or indiscriminately appropriating their resources (Said 1978, 1994).

Robert, one of the non-completing participants, mentioned the possibility of tradition-specific sorts of movements ('if I'd got a guy from a jazz tradition, he would moved completely differently'). This possibility behoves the Dalcroze practitioner to be aware of the embodiment of movement traditions that may already be present in the learner. It cannot be assumed, for example, that all musical cultures would respond to dissonance with the same sorts of gestures. Indeed, to explore the cultural specificity of movement in different Dalcroze contexts would be a fascinating research project in itself. Juntunen and Hyvönen (2004) stress that imagination is fundamental in the Dalcroze practice and connections between movements and music cannot be specified in advance of the engagement with a particular group of learners. However, Robert's view is partial; completing participants engaged in a lot of improvised movement during Moving into Composition, and he may be referencing the 'follows' exercises, which sometimes require more stylised responses. As Juntunen (2004: 30) reminds us, Dalcroze himself did not promote total uniformity in his pupils' movements: 'He criticized the movement education of his time for limiting itself to repeating automatic movements in the same tempo and of not establishing the relationship between movement and feelings, thinking, or imagination'.

Kevin reported that the teacher did not have a sufficient range of ways in which she delivered information, such as information to do with the premises on which Dalcroze Eurhythmics is based. This has been noted anecdotally elsewhere; Juntunen (2004: 80) tells us that from her personal experience: 'there are numerous excellent Dalcroze teachers whose teaching typify the principles of the approach but who find it difficult, however, to adequately articulate all the theory that supports the practice'. Given that there is now a substantial and growing research literature that provides evidence for the effectiveness of Dalcroze Eurhythmics, as Chapter 1 outlined, this piece of feedback may indicate a need for professional training programmes in Dalcroze to prepare teachers more thoroughly to engage with this literature and to be able to communicate it. It should be borne in mind however that this comment relates only to one practitioner.

In terms of planning and organisation, one participant mentioned feeling let down by the absences of other group members, several noted the difficulty of starting early in the day and one would have preferred more time to compose. The first two of these responses could be easily addressed by altering the project design to include payment as well as, or instead of, finding a later start time. These may well improve attendance and, as a result, reduce participant frustration. With reference to the time needed for composition, Stauffer (2003: 107) states: 'Students get better at composing by composing, and composing takes time'. A similar research project in the future could take place over a longer period with time 'off' to compose, or could reduce the number of pieces relative to the entire duration so, for example, one piece could be worked on over 4 or 6 weeks. This could potentially have the added benefit of allowing students more creative space in which to explore their own creative voices (Lupton and Bruce 2010).

## Summary

The results suggest that Moving into Composition combined teacher-centred and student-centred approaches as it partook of the four themes of Lupton and Bruce's (2010) compositional pedagogical model, outlined in Chapter 1:

1. Learning from the masters
2. Mastery of techniques
3. Exploring ideas
4. Developing voice

Learning from the masters (Theme 1) was present in all the examples of repertoire shown in Table 2 (p.15), which formed the basis of listening and analysis through movement, but only on three occasions included reference to scores. In this case, however, some qualification is needed, as Moving into Composition referred to music from a wide range of styles and genres, not only those more readily associated with the word 'masters'. Clearly, the choice of topics indicated an emphasis on mastery of technique (Theme 2), such as two-part composition or using different metres, and the results show that some participants took their learning experiences into their own work (Billy, Simon, Ashley and Connor).

Exploring ideas (Theme 3) is based on process, trial and error and action learning. Lupton and Bruce (2010: 275) state: 'The stimuli that students draw upon to explore ideas may be the skills and techniques from the previous two themes [learning from the masters and mastery of techniques], but might also be objects, sound samples, literature, visual art and other musical and non-musical stimuli...Students may also be encouraged to draw upon their sense, feelings and intuition'. Almost everything in this list was included in the Dalcroze sessions and the results show that participants were aware of having been stimulated in a range of ways: kinaesthetically, visually, aurally, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Lupton and Bruce's fourth theme focuses on expression and the development of individual voice. This was also present in Moving into Composition, but only in the experiences of four of the nine completing participants. Whilst students were given a range of choices within each topic and encouraged to draw upon their existing compositional practices, it may be that the tasks were perceived as too prescriptive by some participants, that the participants could have been encouraged to reflect more on how the tasks related to their own practice, or that there was not enough time spent on each piece for participants to feel a growing sense of expression and ownership. A longer-term project, which addressed students' current work, as suggested above, would potentially make more room for expression and individual voice to be explored.

## 4.2 Limitations

The project was voluntary and attendance, whilst strongly emphasised, could not be made compulsory. Therefore, some of the participants' comments relate to the experience of only 7 sessions, whereas others' feedback was given from the standpoint of having experienced all 13 sessions. Whilst the data presented in Chapter 3 is detailed, it must be acknowledged that it could have been still more detailed and more comprehensive.

Due to expense, time and accessibility, this project worked with a small sample, which cannot be seen as representative of all student composers at Coventry University, less still of the population of student composers in Higher Education. Thus, the findings cannot be generalised. Nevertheless, the results provide a richness and depth that is still useful for a small pilot study of this sort.

The timing of the sessions was severely restricted by timetable restrictions and staff availability. The sessions clashed with a first-year class for the BA Music Composition students and thus the project was not accessible to all student composers. The early start time had a generally negative impact on the project, from the point of view of attendance and punctuality. Anecdotally, some students chose not to take part because of the timing of the sessions. Thus, timing and accessibility may have limited the research project's ability to capture as wide a range of views as possible within the population concerned.





## 4.3 Recommendations for future research

We recommend that future research into the adaptation of Dalcroze Eurhythmics for composition pedagogy in Higher Education should:

### Scope

- Explore the possibility of a pilot involving several institutions; this would create a larger sample and a potentially more reliable data set
- Consider limiting the focus to undergraduate composers
- Consider a longer-term project in order to allow increased development of the body's receptivity to learning through movement and more time to compose

### Planning and preparation

- Adopt a more thoroughgoing action research model that includes an initial period of mutual sharing to learn about students' musical practices and identities, and which asks students about those aspects of composition they would like to learn more about
- Contain close liaison with the composition staff at the institution where the research takes place, in order to find the best fit between existing curricula and the Dalcrozian approaches being investigated
- Ensure as far as possible a timetable slot that allows for all student composers at a particular institution to access the course
- Consider payment and/or later start times to ensure attendance, especially for the sake of group work
- Differentiate clearly for postgraduate and undergraduate students, if both are included in the sample

### Content

- Maintain the fundamental principles of Dalcroze Eurhythmics used in Moving into Composition that promoted creativity, awareness, learning, understanding and other emotional and physical benefits
- Build in more time to compose; this could be facilitated by a longer term project, or by incorporating gaps for composition, such as 3 weekly Dalcroze Eurhythmics sessions followed by 3 weeks to compose
- Explore the use of students' own compositions as the basis for Dalcroze classes, potentially in an adaptation of Dynamic Rehearsal techniques
- Explore the incorporation of ready-formed groups of musicians who compose collectively, such as bands
- Investigate teaching and learning strategies that illuminate a wide repertoire, which could extend to non-western music and genres such as electro-acoustic music, as well as alternative tuning systems and different types of rhythmic organisation
- Be prepared to deliver information about Dalcroze Eurhythmics and related theories in a variety of ways for different learning styles

In relation to other aspects of this report, we also recommend that there may be benefits from some more general research into Dalcroze Eurhythmics, in particular:

- A survey of the choice and use of repertoire in Dalcroze sessions
- An exploration of the application of Dalcroze principles to music from non-western traditions
- A mapping of current Dalcroze provision and practice in Higher Education in the UK

# 5. Conclusion

Moving into Composition achieved its primary aim of engaging a group of budding composers in a course of Dalcroze Eurhythmics and finding out about their experiences. The majority of participants found that Dalcroze Eurhythmics had afforded a range of beneficial impacts that extended to many different aspects of their lives: composing, listening, teaching, performing, musical understanding, seeing the world musically, finding inspiration, knowing their own bodies, knowing through the body, as well as feeling more confident, free and relaxed. The results were generally favourable or very favourable and although the project only worked with a small sample, the unanimous recommendation of BA Music Composition students indicates that further research of this sort could be beneficial, especially at undergraduate level.

In their discussion of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze's method Juntunen and Westerlund (2011: 54) state: '**reflection encourages constant responding to new situations and changing conditions**'. Moving into Composition pushed Dalcroze Eurhythmics into a new context and invited composition students to experience and comment on a new learning situation. This report has provided a reflective account of this meeting of musicians. It is hoped that it will offer a helpful basis for the development of new applications of the method in Higher Education and that it might stimulate more research into the pedagogies of Dalcroze Eurhythmics and music composition in general.



# Appendix 1.

## Example of student work

### Changing Meters

Andante

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The piece is in 8/8 time. Measure 1 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. Measure 3 features a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 4 is marked mezzo-piano (*mp*). Measure 5 returns to mezzo-forte (*mf*). The notation includes treble and bass staves with various chords and melodic lines.

Musical notation for measures 6-10. Measure 6 is marked piano (*p*). Measure 7 is marked mezzo-forte (*mf*). The notation shows a change in the bass line and treble accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 11-15. Measure 11 is marked forte (*f*). Measure 12 is marked mezzo-forte (*mf*). The notation continues with complex harmonic structures.

Musical notation for measures 16-20. Measure 16 is marked mezzo-piano (*mp*). Measure 17 is marked mezzo-forte (*mf*). The notation includes rests and complex rhythmic patterns.

Musical notation for measures 21-25. Measure 21 is marked forte (*f*). Measure 24 is marked piano (*p*). The piece concludes with a final cadence.

# Appendix 2.

## Interview Schedule

<b>Before the Project</b>	
What was your motivation for taking part?	
Can you tell me a bit about your musical background?	
Tell me about your compositional background.	
Tell me about your movement experience prior to this project.	
How would you describe how you have learnt composition until now?	
How would you describe how you have been taught composition until now?	
How did you view movement before the project?	
What did you expect before the first session?	
<b>End of Project</b>	
Please describe your most memorable session.	
What were your experiences during this project?	
What have you learnt from participating in the project?	
How did it feel to be moving in the sessions?	
How did learning in a physically active way affect your learning?	
How did learning in an open space affect your learning?	
How did learning in a group/in pairs affect your learning?	
Have you learnt anything about your body as a result of taking part in this project?	
Has your approach to composition changed in any way as a result of taking part in this project?	
Were you aware of how you were learning?	
How did you feel after the first session? (Did that affect your attendance?)	
What feelings and emotions did you have during the sessions?	
How did you feel about composing music in this way?	
How did you feel at the end of the project?	
What musical knowledge have you acquired during this project?	
To what extent did the movement contribute to your musical understanding?	
To what extent did the movement work affect your compositional processes?	
Did you enjoy participating in this project?	
In your opinion how well facilitated was this project?	
<b>Future</b>	
How will your participation in this project affect your compositional work in the future?	
How relevant was this for your current ability level?	
How will your participation in this project affect your career choices?	
What would you like to see happen to this project in the future?	
Would you recommend learning in this way to other composition students?	
How would you feel if you did this project again? (Would you change any aspect of this project?)	
Were there any negative aspects?	
What other aspects of composition would you like to learn about in this way, if you did something like this project again?	
Would you like to continue to learn through this method?	
Is there anything else that you would like to add?	

# Appendix 3.

## Demographic Questions

What instrument do you play? \_\_\_\_\_

What stage of your studies are you in?

Year 1       Year 2       Year 3       MA

What degree are you studying? \_\_\_\_\_

How many sessions did you attend? (Please Circle)

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    11    12    13

What were the main factors affecting your attendance? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you withdrew from the project, could you tell us why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

There were four tasks set during the project:

- i) A two-part composition
- ii) A piece using metric changes (6/8, 2/4 and 5/8)
- iii) A chord sequence with varied bass lines
- iv) Theme and variation

How many of the above did you complete?

All of them       Three       Two       One       None



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