

Impact of a professional development program on teacher teams in whole class ensembles in Austria

Background

Research on teaching and learning in Austria has considerably increased over the last two decades, but in music education few empirical studies have been conducted until recently. The purpose of this project is to increase knowledge about music teachers' beliefs and perceptions of team-teaching with an instrumental instructor in whole class ensembles. The theoretical framework draws on outcomes from relevant studies (Bresler 2002, Johnston 2019, Kranefeld 2015, 2016). It additionally includes models of cooperation (Gräsel et al. 2006), teaching quality (Helmke et al. 2011), co-teaching approaches (Cook 2004), planning strategies (Horn et al. 2017) and common patterns of instructional sequences (Franz-Özdemir 2015). The project is funded by a grant from the Austrian Science Fund in the Hertha-Firnberg-Program.

Design

The intervention study includes a one year long professional development program for the teacher teams during the school year 2021-22, the adjacent mixed-methods research will be focused on qualitative data to learn more about teachers' thinking, their collaborations, and the actual classroom activities.

Participants will consist of four teams of two, each including one general music teacher and one instrumental/voice instructor who team-teach whole ensemble classes and take part in the 60-hour training together. Data include teacher interviews, focus groups, audio recorded planning sessions and video recorded lessons at different time points of the intervention, as well as a short survey (EMU) for all participants, and some additional student interviews. Once data collection has started, transcript and analysis will begin, using inductive analysis methods (e.g. Glaser & Strauss 2017).

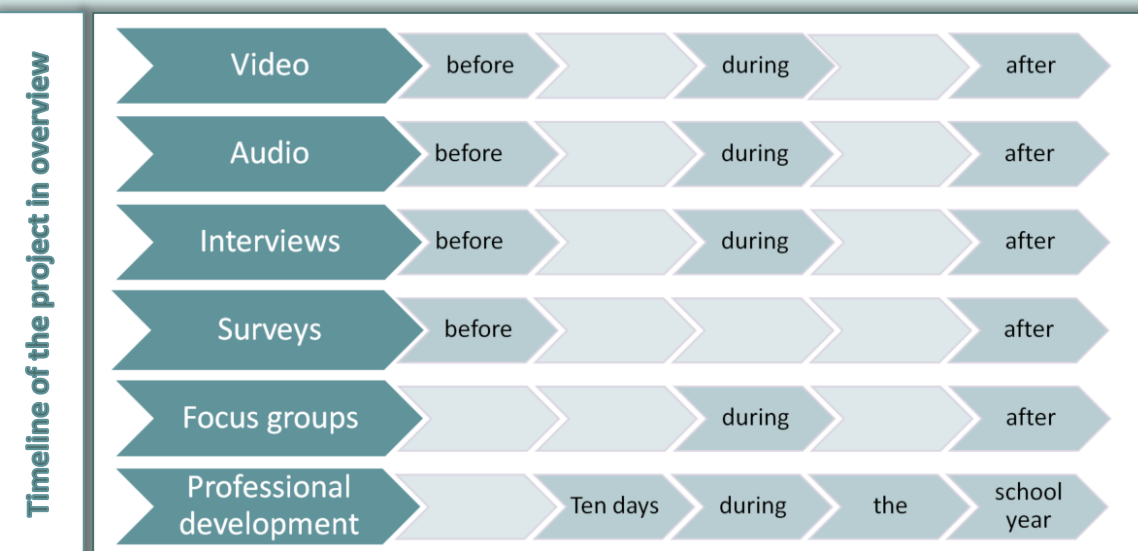
Objectives

The main aim of the intervention study is to understand participants' views and beliefs of their collaboration as they develop as a team. The research will enable description and analysis of the impact of the professional development on the teams' lesson planning, their attention towards student learning as well as their reflections. By triangulating different data such as interviews, video analysis, focus groups and surveys, I hope to unveil and connect influences of the professional development to teacher beliefs, their collaboration and classroom action.

Professional development

In the last decades, considerable international research on effective formats of in-service teacher training has been conducted (Darling-Hammond et al. 2017, Desimone 2009, Lipowsky 2010). Through meta-studies, several measures have been consolidated as effective for designing and implementing professional development: a specialized content focus, active learning, collaboration, models/modeling, coaching or expert support, meaningful feedback and reflection, and sustained duration. Overall, there is scarce empirical knowledge about professional development in Austria (Müller, Kemethofer, Andreitz, Nachbaur & Soukup-Altrichter, 2018), and a literature search of databases such as the KVK or the FPP database on education only yielded a handful of results in music education specifically, most of which stemmed from Germany.

The deliberate and theory-based development of the actual professional development program is an important step in this project. Therefore it is being developed carefully in accordance with current research findings. The professional development will be led by a team of two experts with educational and artistic background.



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