Moved to Learn: Dalcroze Applications to Choral Pedagogy and Practice

by

Caron Daley

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

Faculty of Music
University of Toronto

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Abstract

Over a century ago, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950) began experimenting with a pedagogical approach that would give students access to their personal musical voice and a system of technique to express that voice with ease and sensitivity. Music education had lost sight of certain key qualities of exceptional musicianship; qualities such as flow, nuance, imagination, and individuality, so valued in expressive performance, were absent in music pedagogy. According to Jaques-Dalcroze, the antidote to musical arrhythmia (a lack of musical ease and expressivity) lay in the integrated use of the whole body in both musical perception and performance, a coordination he termed eurhythmny. The purpose of this study is to investigate the applications of Dalcroze Eurhythmics to the choral context, including the ways in which the Dalcroze approach shapes the philosophical, pedagogical and musical outcomes of choral pedagogy and practice. More specifically, how do these two areas interact in relationship to the following topics: (1) conductor, chorister and choir as instrument, (2) conductor and chorister score study, (3) conductor and chorister gesture, and (4) choral pedagogy and rehearsal techniques? The original writings of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze provide a framework for the discussion, while interviews with two groups, Dalcroze master-teachers with choral conducting training and/or experience, and Dalcroze-trained choral conductors illustrate the specific
applications of the choral context. Study participants reported the use of the Dalcroze approach for three main purposes in the choral context: (a) to develop choral skills, including vocal skills, aural skills, kinesthetic skills, ensemble skills and music literacy skills; (b) to prepare the whole body for accurate and expressive performance of choral repertoire (conducting and singing); and (c) to develop non-musical outcomes that support choral conducting and singing, including mental acuity, creativity, a contextualized view of self and others, self-confidence and risk-taking, and enjoyment in music making.
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Appendix F – Dalcroze-based Rehearsal Strategies for John Tavener’s The Lamb (1974)
1 Introduction

Over a century ago, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze began experimenting with a pedagogy that would give students access to their personal musical voice and a system of technique to express that voice with ease and sensitivity. According to Jaques-Dalcroze, music education had lost sight of the key qualities of exceptional musicianship; qualities such as flow, nuance, and imagination, so valued in expressive performance, were absent in music pedagogy. He noted this disparity in his solfège students at the Geneva Conservatory. Although these students were technically facile, they struggled to hear or imagine the simplest of musical exercises away from the piano. When confronted with pitch or rhythm problems, they resorted to repetitious practice, a technique that failed to develop their musicianship or interpretive skills. Digital proficiency seemed to have replaced musical feeling, normative behaviors had suppressed individuality, and the goal of performance correctitude had diverted attention away from the communicative potential of music. In 1898, as a young pedagogue, Jaques-Dalcroze asked the question that would frame his entire career:

Is it not folly to teach music without paying the slightest attention to the diversification, gradation, and combination, in all their shades, of the gamut of sensations called into play by the consonance of musical feeling? How has it been possible to carry on a systematic study of music, while utterly ignoring the principal qualification of the musician? (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 4)

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) criticized the music education of his day for its incoherence, specialization, and emphasis on product over process. In a 1905 address to the Association of Swiss Musicians entitled The Reform of Music Education in the School, Jaques-Dalcroze extended his criticisms to the teaching of vocal music in schools, questioning whether the reigning pedagogical approach exposed children to the true nature of music. With a focus on repertoire learning and instrument-specific technique, students received only instruction in music, not an education in music.
It gratifies a certain number of parents to be able to say that their children can sing, and so the schools provide a superficial training calculated to give the appearance of having studied music. It never – unless by chance – awakens in their senses and heart a real love of music; it never makes music live for them. They are trained merely in its external side, and its emotional and really educative qualities remain hidden from them. They are not even taught to listen to music. The only music they hear is that in which they are set to execute (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 30).

Education, by contrast, should target the individual’s specific needs and integrate the mental, emotional, physical and social aspects of music-making: “Education is an active force working upon the will and tending to coordinate the various vital functions” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b, p. 97).

An acute observer of the world around him, Jaques-Dalcroze noticed that all nature, humanity, and art seemed to beat to the pulse of rhythm. From the changing of the seasons, to the tempo of a person’s gait, to the juxtaposition of light and dark in a painting, rhythm was in all things, providing interest, color, dimension, and meaning. One day, while walking with a student through the courtyard at the Geneva Conservatory, Jaques-Dalcroze noticed that although this young student struggled to beat time accurately with his hands in the context of a music lesson (arrhythmy), he was more than able to change the pace of his gait to match his teacher’s quickening and slackening steps (eurhythmy) (Spector, 1990). This discovery led Jaques-Dalcroze to wonder about the role of the body in musical understanding. Could bodily coordination inform musical thinking and action?

He proceeded to carry out a variety of unorthodox experiments at the Geneva Conservatory, giving his solfège students first-hand sensory experiences of musical concepts such as pulse, meter, tempo, and phrase. With the opportunity to feel the weight of a quarter-note, walk the moving trajectory of a melody, and embody the tension of a crescendo, Jaques-Dalcroze’s students began to build an individual repertoire of physical responses related to sound. Dalcroze termed this work rhythmics, and demonstrated that its influence went far beyond the rhythmical
mathematics of music. The study of musical rhythm could convert *arrhythmia*, a lack of musical flow, characterized by inaccurate rhythms and unmusical accentuation, and *errhythmia*, a technically accurate performance, but a lack of musical expressiveness, into *eurhythmia*, a flow among mind, body and spirit, and a musically accurate and expressive performance (Shenenberger, 2008, p. 536).

Jaques-Dalcroze’s work makes substantial commentary on subjects related to the choral art, including singing, conducting, ensemble music-making, the preparation and performance of repertoire, and strategies for teaching and learning. Becknell (1970) states that Jaques-Dalcroze’s pedagogical ideas emerged in part from his own early experiences as a conductor (p. 19). As a young child, Émile surprised both his parents and the audience by sneaking up on stage to shadow-conduct Eduard Strauss, brother of Johann Strauss, during a performance (Becknell, 1970; Spector, 1990). In 1886, he took a position as assistant orchestral conductor at the Théâtre de Nouveautés in Algiers, where “he discovered in his conducting duties the importance and necessity of clear gestures to communicate his musical ideas to the performers, which eventually evolved into the eurhythmic principles of expressive music through bodily movement” (Becknell, 1970, p. 3).

Jaques-Dalcroze often conducted his own compositions, including his large-scale patriotic spectacles and festivals, involving choirs of thousands (Henke, 1993). He worked diligently to have singers exemplify his eurhythmic principles, as expressed in this review of a production of Gluck’s *Orfeo ed Euridice*, conducted by Jaques-Dalcroze in Hellerau, Germany in 1913:

When *Orfeo’s* chorus of furies appeared to the audience to be a perfect circle of heads, a circle which remained so through a long series of maneuvers, it was the intense feeling of the music and of the training that came as a result of it that made the stage realization so impressive. When the chorus, its back to the conductor, made its precise moves without a visual sign from the pit, astonishing as it was, it was the rhythm in the music, the rhythm in the air, the rhythm in the body, that caused the powerful cohesion of effort. The most astonishing effect occurred in periods of rest, either rest in the music or rest in physical
movement. Even in the rests the chorus recognized the continuing rhythmic flow and they sustained its pulses to portray the incredible perfection of movement (Spector, 1990, p. 175).

Conducting itself became an essential component of Jaques-Dalcroze’s pedagogy and a means for students to develop both musicianship (conducting oneself) and musicality (conducting others). In his 1914 essay, *Rhythmic Movement, Solfège, and Improvisation*, Jaques-Dalcroze includes a variety of conducting games and exercises as a part of a core curriculum, while his *Rhythmic Movement Vol. 1/2* introduce a unique system of whole-body conducting, or the Dalcroze armbeats (1920, 1921a, 1921b). In numerous instances, Jaques-Dalcroze names the conductor as the archetypal eurhythmician and exemplar of his approach, in addition to specifically recommending his pedagogical ideas to the training of conductors (1921b, p. 89, p.226). In his 1907 essay, “The Initiation into Rhythm”, Jaques-Dalcroze describes how the conductor models musical eurhythmmy:

Observe the movements by which a conductor of an orchestra [choir], endowed with temperament, represents and transmits rhythm. Does he [she] confine himself [herself] to movements of the arm alone in seeking to convey to the instrumentalists [singers] the image of the rhythm they are to create? By no means. His [her] knees will stiffen, his [her] foot will press against the platform, his [her] back will straighten, his [her] finger and wrist movements harden. His [her] whole body will be seen to cooperate in his [her] representation of the rhythm: each articulation, each muscle, contributing to render the rhythmic impression more intense; the aspect of his [her] whole person becoming, in short, the reflected image of the movement of the music, and animating the executants – his [her] own representation of the rhythm being transmuted to them (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 87).

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the applications of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context, including the ways in which Dalcroze training shapes the philosophical, pedagogical and musical outcomes of choral pedagogy and practice. More specifically, how do these two areas
interact in relationship to the following topics: (1) conductor, chorister and choir as instrument, (2) conductor and chorister score study, (3) conductor and chorister gesture, and (4) choral pedagogy and rehearsal techniques?

Conductors with Dalcroze training, or Dalcroze teachers with conducting experience, have, by nature, inquired into the integration of these two disciplines in their own work. Their study of the Dalcroze approach has informed their personal musical formation, their pedagogical approach, and their performance as conductors. As a teacher of Dalcroze Eurhythmics and a choral conductor, I have informally inquired into the intersection of these two areas for over a decade. My training in the Dalcroze approach (2002-2011, Dalcroze Certificate in 2011) coincided with my graduate study in choral conducting, and the formative stages of my professional choral conducting career (2003-2013). In order to broaden and formalize this inquiry, this study investigates the work of eight practitioners in these two fields, including three Dalcroze master-teachers with choral conducting training and/or experience and five Dalcroze-trained choral conductors.

The following research questions will be explored: (1) What do the original writings of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze reveal about choral pedagogy and practice? (2) What recommendations do Dalcroze master-teachers make regarding the application of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context? (3) How do Dalcroze-trained choral conductors use the Dalcroze approach in the choral context? (4) How can the Dalcroze approach facilitate teaching and learning in the choral context?

1.2 Methodology

As a methodology, the Dalcroze approach focuses on experiential learning, and as such, instructional procedures tend to be passed on from teacher to student, in the context of the classroom, rather than through textbooks (Dale, 1993). Jaques-Dalcroze insisted that participation, not observation, in a Dalcroze class was essential for understanding the approach:
“The minute work of analyzing and constructing rhythms can only be appreciated in the lessons, and then only by persons who are themselves actually taking part with their whole body and mind” (1921b, p. 147). Likewise, any teacher desiring to practice the Dalcroze approach, or integrate it with another discipline, must have a wealth of personal experience and training in the approach (Apfelstadt, 1985; Comeau, 1995; Jaques-Dalcroze, 1920; Landis & Carder, 1972; Rosenstrauch, 1973).

Jaques-Dalcroze wrote a number of methods books, but he encouraged teachers to develop their own exercises, suited to the needs of individual students and contexts (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1920, 1921b; Kerr-Berry, 2001; Spector, 1990; Walker, 2007; Willour, 1969). Despite this orientation, Dalcroze teachers Aronoff (1979b, 1982), Bachmann (1991), Brice (2004), Choksy et al., (1986), Driver (1951), Enders (1941), Findlay (1971), Gell (1949), Landis & Carder (1972), Mead (1994), Pennington (1925), Schnebly-Black & Moore (1997), and Vanderspar (1984) have made significant contributions to the literature on Dalcroze pedagogy in the form of methods books, many of which include lesson plans.

Spector (1990), Dalcroze’s most recent biographer, insists that there are no empirical means of evaluating the Dalcroze method. Jaques-Dalcroze preferred to seek out human exemplars to demonstrate the effects of his approach on a musical education (Spector, 1990, p. 255). Quantitative studies do exist, however, including five research studies testing the impact of the Dalcroze approach on elementary music students’ pitch and rhythmic aptitude (Berger, 1999; Blesedell, 1991; Crumpler, 1982; Joseph, 1982; Rose, 1995). A number of authors have adopted a qualitative research model, including two whose studies investigate Dalcroze instructional procedures with adult students. Stone (1985) argues for the need for more studies examining teaching behaviors and instructional practices in the field of Dalcroze, stating that “in the teaching of Dalcroze Eurhythmics there is virtually no definition at all; what exists is a tradition or mystique about the method which is maintained by the devoted…The method is maintained by disciples and passed from one generation of teachers to another by mentorship.” (pp. 218-219). Her study researches the work of an exemplar Dalcroze teacher, revealing recurrent themes in instructional design and delivery, student perceptions in Dalcroze learning, and the
effect of choice of music on student experience. Alperson’s (1995) study is similar, describing the work of four Dalcroze master-teachers, exploring their teaching strategies, modes of communication, goals, and viewpoints, as well as examining the students’ experiences of participating in Dalcroze training. She notes that although the Dalcroze approach is experiential in nature, this does not preclude a research study; qualitative methods match the qualitative nature of the Dalcroze approach (p. 242).

For the purposes of this study, a qualitative research model, and in particular, narrative inquiry, was deemed most effective. Johnson (2003) suggests that narrative inquiry is a suitable research method for studying somatic or body-based approaches, such as the Dalcroze approach (p. 19). Juntunen (2004) uses a narrative inquiry model to access Dalcroze master-teacher’s pedagogical content-knowledge, sewing the respondents’ stories into a fictive conversation with Jaques-Dalcroze himself. In her 2007 book, Deepening Musical Performance through Movement, Pierce weaves her thoughts through letters between two fictitious music students, Sorelich and Tomás, using narrative voices to illustrate the personal and reflective nature of movement exploration in music.

In the same way that the Dalcroze approach is both personal and contextual, qualitative research aims to represent the lived experience of the participant and the contextually-situated nature of their practice (Bresler & Stake, 1992). The individual practices of Dalcroze teachers, including Dalcroze practitioners in the choral context, are diverse and varied. This study recognizes the multiplicity of manifestations of the Dalcroze approach and respects the various ways in which the ideas of Jaques-Dalcroze are applied by each practitioner.

In order to provide a philosophical and pedagogical grounding for the study, I used the original writings of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze as primary source information on Dalcroze pedagogy and its application to the choral context. These writings comprise scripts from public lectures, methods books, and essays on the applications of his work to dance, theatre, and therapy. His entire
corpus is in French. The following English translations of his writings will be examined:
“Rhythms as a Factor in Education” (1909), “From Lectures and Addresses” (1911-1913), and
“Moving Plastic and Dance” (1916), in The Eurhythmics of Jaques-Dalcroze; “The Influence of
Eurhythmics upon the Development of Movement in Music” (1917-1918) from Proceedings of
the Musical Association, 44th Session; collected essays in Rhythm, Music and Education (1921);
collected essays in Eurhythmics Arts and Education (1930); “Eurhythmics and its Implications”
in The Musical Quarterly (1930); and “Remarks on Arrhythm” (1933) in Music and Letters.
The following methods books will be examined: Rhythmic Movement, Vol. 1/Vol. 2 (1920, 1921);
Ear-training Music and Movement (1939); Sixteen Rhythmic Games for Children and Young People (1939); and Rhythmic Solfège (1994). These materials comprise all of the
available English translations of Jaques-Dalcroze’s original writings.

In order to situate the Dalcroze approach, including the original writings of Jaques-Dalcroze,
with the current practice of its approach in the choral context, I conducted semi-structured
interviews with two groups: (1) Dalcroze master-teachers (defined as holders of the highest
Dalcroze designation, the Diplôme Supérieur) who either have choral conducting training or
have previously worked with choirs or currently work with choirs; and (2) Dalcroze-trained
choral conductors (defined as choral conductors with significant Dalcroze training, including
university-level training or Dalcroze Certificate or Dalcroze License holders) who regularly
incorporate the Dalcroze approach in their work with choirs.

Three master-teachers, labeled Master-teacher A, B, and C, and five choral conductors, labeled
Conductor A, B, C, D, and E, participated in the study. Participants were recruited from the
Dalcroze community, including members of the Dalcroze Society of Canada and the Dalcroze
Society of America, based on their professional reputations and by recommendation from
various Dalcroze teachers. In total, I approached ten potential study participants, three Dalcroze
master-teachers (all of whom agreed to participate) and seven Dalcroze-trained choral
conductors (all of whom agreed to participate). I was unable to schedule interviews with two of
the Dalcroze-trained choral conductors within the desired time frame. Interviews were
conducted between March 2012 and July 2012 (one interview required a quick clarification in
January 2013), via Skype, and/or phone, and/or in-person, and were 60-120 minutes in length, depending on the participants’ level of elaboration and speed of delivery. Interviews were conducted in English. Master-teacher C and Conductor A are native French speakers, using English as a second language. Master-teacher C and Conductors A and D are Canadian, while Master-teachers A and B and Conductors B, C, and E are American.

The study participants represent a cross-section of Dalcroze and choral conducting practitioners. Master-teachers A-C and Conductors A-E teach various ages, children to seniors, and work in a variety of educational contexts, including a community music school, a high school, a summer music camp, a church, and a variety of universities. Master-teachers A-C are internationally known and recognized for their work in Dalcroze teacher-training, and are among a group of only ten Dalcroze Diplomates in North America. Master-teacher A currently conducts two children’s choirs, Master-teacher B has a Masters degree in choral conducting, and Master-teacher C has experience as both a choral and an orchestral conductor. Conductor A is a former Dalcroze teacher who now teaches university-level choirs and conducting. Conductor B is an active Dalcroze teacher who teaches university-level choirs, music education and conducting. Conductor C is not a Dalcroze teacher, but is particularly well known for his over 40 years of using Dalcroze-based approaches with university-level choirs. Conductor D is an active Dalcroze teacher who teaches high-school and church choirs. Conductor E is an active Dalcroze teacher who teaches high-school and university-level choirs and conducting.

1.3 Organization of the Study

The study begins with a review of literature on the use of the Dalcroze approach (and related body-based approaches) in the choral context, presenting sources on choral instructional technique, musical analysis (score study), conductor training and vocal training. Chapter 3 inquires into the educational foundations of the Dalcroze approach, exploring whole-body musical perception, arrhythm and eurhythm, and the notion of a choral body. Chapter 4 examines the applications of the Dalcroze approach to learning musical repertoire, including
score study (chorister and conductor score study), bodily gesture (chorister and conductor gesture), and choral performance (choral singing and conducting). Chapter 5 explores the use of Dalcroze pedagogy in the choral context, including the Dalcroze pedagogical sequence, specific applications of the three common areas of Dalcroze instruction (eurhythmics, solfège, improvisation), issues of integration that arise, and the role of the conductor in a Dalcroze choral paradigm. Appendices A-C include the informed consent form and interview questions. Appendix D presents the interview transcripts. Appendix E leads the reader through a body-based score study sequence of Tomás Luis de Victoria’s *Amicus Meus*, No. 1 from the Tenebrae Responsories (1584). Appendix F offers Dalcroze-based teaching strategies for John Tavener’s *The Lamb* (1974).

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

The goal of this research study is to increase knowledge and awareness about the Dalcroze approach and to suggest a pedagogical and practical framework for its inclusion in the choral context. The findings of this study may be of interest to a variety of musicians and teachers. First, the study aims to enrich the field of choral pedagogy, including choral music educators who currently use Dalcroze approaches in the choral context; choral music educators who use any type of body-based learning in the choral context; choral music educators who are looking to integrate the Dalcroze approach in the choral context; and choral music educators who are not currently using any type of body-based learning in the choral context, but who are interested in learning about the philosophical and pedagogical foundations for this type of approach. Second, this study will be of interest to those in the field of conductor training, offering both choral and instrumental conductors new techniques for score study, gesture, and rehearsal technique. Third, general music educators will find applications to the classroom vocal music context. Fourth, this study adds to the corpus of Dalcroze-based literature regarding the applications of the Dalcroze approach to cognate fields.
1.5 Definition of Terms

Body: The whole-body instrument of musical perception and performance, including the ear, physical body, emotions, mind, voice, and personhood of the musician (Farber & Parker, 1987). The body is defined as the primary instrument of the conductor, chorister and the choir.

Choral context: The choral teaching, learning and performance framework.

Chorister: The choral singer.

Conductor: The choral conductor.

Dalcroze approach: The music education approach established by Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, inclusive of all of his ideas over the course of his lifetime, and the subject-specific areas of eurhythmics, solfège, improvisation, and plastique animée. Synonyms for the Dalcroze approach appear throughout the document as: Dalcroze, eurhythmics, solfège, solfège-rhythmique, improvisation, plastique, and plastique animée.

Dalcroze techniques: Any application of the Dalcroze approach, including rehearsal techniques in the choral context.

Eurhythmics: The primary branch of a Dalcroze education, aimed at developing feeling for bodily rhythm and aural perception of rhythm (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b)

Gesture: Bodily movement (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b).

Improvisation: The tertiary branch of a Dalcroze education, aimed at the integration and spontaneous realization of all of the elements learned in eurhythmics and solfège (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b).

Plastique animée: A related area of the Dalcroze approach aimed at the corporeal representation of musical compositions (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b).

Score study: The process by which the conductor and choral singer gain experience and understanding of a specific piece of choral repertoire.
Solfège: The secondary branch of a Dalcroze education, aimed at developing pitch and tone-relationships through the use of fixed-do solmization (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b).

Whole-body: The integrated usage of the musician’s personal resources, including all physical, emotional, and mental resources.
2 Review of Literature

The cross-applied nature of the Dalcroze approach has inspired research projects in a number of cognate fields. Mathieu (2010) reports that 34 Ph.D. dissertations, six M.A. theses, and 29 scientific articles have been written on Dalcroze between 1966-2006, covering a range of academic fields and areas of study. Jeong (2005) adapts Dalcroze approaches to the Korean music education system, while Phuthego (2005) examines the similarities between Batswana music teaching and learning and the Dalcroze approach. Nalbandian (1994) and Jang (2002) explore the applications of the Dalcroze approach to piano pedagogy. Caldwell (1995) and Schnebly-Black & Moore (2004) offer an extensive look at the applications of the Dalcroze approach to the private lesson setting. Dutoit (1970) and Frego (2008, 2009) investigate its usage in the field of therapy. Bachmann (1991) argues that the Dalcroze approach may be cross-applied to any variety of fields, and she includes both singers and conductors in her list: “Those who have been sufficiently persuaded of the value of Dalcroze Eurhythmics to regard it as indispensable to the development of their own work, or to encourage its adoption in the circles they move in or share their enthusiasm for it with others, will be found in every walk of life. They include theatre people-actors and producers, opera directors and ballet masters, dancers and choreographers; painters, architects and designers, musicians, conductors, composers, singers and instrumentalists; writers, critics, and poets; scientists, doctors, psychiatrists, educationists…the list is endless” (p. 22).

Jaques-Dalcroze encouraged teachers to adapt his approach to a multiplicity of contexts, as he himself demonstrated through his writings on eurhythmics in dance, theatre and therapy (Dutoit 1971; Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, 1930b). In relationship to the choral context, Jaques-Dalcroze suggested that his educational reforms, focused on whole-body pedagogy, would bolster participation in choral societies and help choirs remain on the forefront of pedagogical practice (1921b, p. 17, 1930b, p. 137). Hibbard (1994) notes the central influence of the Dalcroze approach in the development of body movement as a common choral pedagogical tool. Benson (2011) agrees, suggesting that choral conductors have been using movement to build on the work of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze since the 1950s and 1960s (p. 1).
Applications of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context may include any philosophical, pedagogical or musical application to any of area of choral pedagogy and practice (score study, gesture, rehearsal, or performance). The following resources will be reviewed: research studies, methods books, journal articles, a video, and a conference presentation attended by the author. The literature evinces the following themes: (a) the use of the Dalcroze approach, and specifically Dalcroze eurhythmics and solfège, and related body-based approaches, as an instructional technique in the choral context; (b) the use of the Dalcroze approach, and related body-based approaches, in musical analysis; (c) the use of the Dalcroze approach in conductor training; and (d) the use of the Dalcroze approach in vocal training.

2.1 Use of the Dalcroze Approach (and Related Body-based Approaches) as an Instructional Technique in the Choral Context

2.1.1 Research studies

A number of research studies have sought to investigate the use of body movement, including the Dalcroze approach, as a choral instructional technique. McCoy’s 1986 quantitative study measures how the inclusion of body movement affects choral performance proficiency, meter discrimination ability, and attitude of students. Using two test groups, a less advanced and a more advanced high school choir, McCoy asked conductors to use the following movement-based strategies in their preparation of the repertoire: (1) strategies that physicalized pulse and subdivision, (2) strategies aimed at improving sense of meter, and (3) strategies exploring dynamics and phrasing. McCoy’s results indicate that movement as a choral instructional technique benefitted the choirs’ sense of tempo and vocal balance, in addition to positively influencing the attitude of choral singers towards more active participation (p. 61).

Ramona Wis’ 1993 study provides a theoretical rationale for the use of movement in the choral context using Lakoff & Johnson’s (1987) work on physical metaphor. Wis applies the notion of metaphorical mapping to the choral context, where bodily experiences help singers connect the experiential to the abstract (p. 15). A physical metaphor is “any gesture or movement that is able
to get at the essence of the musical idea and involve singers in a concrete, bodily way” (Wis, 1999, p. 25). The author examines the use of gesture and movement in two exemplar conductors, and reports that movement was most commonly used in the warm-up, to teach skills and to encourage concentration, in the rehearsing of the repertoire, and as a corrective solution to a musical or vocal problem (1993, p. 246). Wis likens the metaphorical mapping suggested by Lakoff & Johnson to Dalcroze-type activities, where choristers can physicalize musical concepts in order to improve their understanding (1993, p. 16).

The choral conductor can also capitalize on this metaphorical process “by using what is intimately known - his [her] bodily experience within a physical world - the choral educator can rely on the human’s natural metaphorical thought processes to map or project new or abstract concepts and to increase understanding” (1993, p. 245). For use in the choral context, the conductor should aim for gestures that are both easy to demonstrate and perform and representative of the character and quality of the musical or vocal concept (Wis, 1999, p. 30). Wis catalogues a list of gestures and their vocal/musical analogues for use in the choral setting, incorporating many sports-related gestures. She suggests four main benefits of using physical metaphor in the choral rehearsal: (1) use of gesture promotes singer success, (2) use of gesture promotes singer engagement, (3) use of gesture can act as a quick assessment tool for the conductor, and (4) gestures used in rehearsal can be incorporated into the conductor’s gesture as a physical reminder to the choir (Wis, 1993, p. 32).

Therees Tkach Hibbard’s 1994 dissertation provides a comprehensive overview of existing research on the use of movement in the choral rehearsal, including references to the Dalcroze approach. Her qualitative study examines one exemplar conductor to discover a rationale for using movement and sample techniques for implementation, with the goal of postulating a grounded theory for the effective use of movement in choral instruction (p. 7). Hibbard’s subject, exemplar conductor Professor Smith, uses movement for the following purposes: to coach vocal production, to reinforce musical concepts, and to teach stylistic interpretation. He finds that using movement captivates and motivates his students – the act of doing music physically improves all aspects of choral music-making, notes Smith (p. 261). Hibbard
acknowledges the use of Dalcroze Eurhythmics as a music-through-movement philosophy for use in choral pedagogy, commenting, “Choral educators have discovered that incorporating Dalcroze Eurhythmics into the choral rehearsal enables singers to develop a sensitivity toward musical concepts by physically expressing the rhythms, listening to the music, and concentrating on the different elements of the choral work” (p. 70).

Chagnon’s 2001 study compares the use of movement by five choral conductors working with adult singers, including three whom he interviews and observes, and the two exemplar conductors from Hibbard’s and Wis’ studies. He outlines three major pedagogical themes, and notes the influence of Dalcroze Eurhythmics on musical interpretation in particular: (1) use of gesture to teach vocal/musical concepts and the integration of gestural experiences into the conductor’s gesture, (2) use of movement to teach vocal technique, and (3) use of movement to aid singers in musical interpretation – influenced by Dalcroze Eurhythmics (p. iv). The third conductor named in the study, identified as Conductor Brown, trained with Robert Fountain (a prominent choral conductor using Dalcroze techniques) and Inda Howland (a Dalcroze master-teacher) and incorporates a host of specifically Dalcroziian techniques in the choral context. Conductor Brown uses movement to “help singers comprehend the notation of their part, express the flow of the musical line, visualize the texture, memorize their music and, in general, develop a sense of unity as a singing ensemble” (p. 31). Whole-body movements are emphasized, with the choral rehearsal space resembling more of a dance studio than a traditional rehearsal space. Conductor Brown’s approach “adapts Dalcroze’s philosophy that rhythm is a result of the interrelationship of musical concepts. He perceives music in terms of physical representation and sensation…Much attention is given to the quality of the singers’ movements in relation to its influence on the sound of the choir. Instead of asking singers to alter a particular musical element, Brown often modifies the choir’s singing by suggesting refinements to their physical motion” (pp. 66-67).

Benson’s 2011 study is similar, studying three university-level conductors, Janet Galván, Therees Tkach Hibbard, and Sandra Snow, to determine their philosophical rationale for using movement, their specific movement-based strategies, the effectiveness of movement strategies as
perceived by the conductor and choral singers, and a codified list of specific gestures shared by the three conductors (p. viii). Both Galvan and Hibbard reference Dalcroze training as a formative influence. They use Dalcroze-based activities to teach rhythm or help integrate the music with the singing body (p. 74). Hibbard makes unique use of a Dalcrozeian technique, exploring movement activities to pre-recorded music before singing rehearsals begin (p. 75). Benson categorizes these conductors’ uses of movement into six categories (the same categories put forth by Galván (2008) in her discussion of movement in the choral rehearsal in *The School Music Program: Philosophy, planning, organizing, and teaching*): (1) as an aid to vocal technique, (2) to improve intonation, (3) to improve musical phrasing, (4) for rhythmic internalization and clarification, (5) to lead to understanding of style and cultural context, and (6) to bring music to life (p. 74).

Manganello (2011) inquires into the use of movement and its effect on musical expressivity in middle school choral students. Through observing two choruses conducted by the same conductor, Mrs. H., Manganello investigates the conductor’s rationale for using movement, the development of a movement vocabulary and its musical analogues, and the impact of movement techniques on student’s abilities and experiences. She concludes that both the conductor’s and the students’ use of body movement make a positive impact on independent musical thinking, listening, student assistance and mentoring, and the integration of school and community cultures (p. 155). Using Mrs. H. as a model, she suggests that choral directors may develop their own movement approaches for use with choirs, in addition to studying and applying established movement methodologies, such as the Dalcroze approach (p. 182).

### 2.1.2 Other sources

Wilhelm Ehmann (1968) presents perhaps the most multi-dimensional source on the integration of Dalcroze principles and pedagogy into the choral context in his methods book, *Choral Directing*. Ehmann was a student of Jaques-Dalcroze, and although the name of Dalcroze is used sparingly, Ehmann’s reliance on whole-body movement, mind-body alliance, and somatically-informed musicianship is inimitably Dalcrozian: “In the singing activities and choral
work of our own time we should experience a freeing of the whole person through a harmonious body-soul relationship within ourselves” (p. 2).

Ehmann’s book contains a detailed description of the conductor’s and singer’s bodily participation in the choral art. He calls choral singers “dancers on the spot”, and insists that the entire body become engaged in choral singing, not just the larynx (p. 2). Choral directors should also pay close attention to their bodily posture and deportment in order to facilitate musical communication: “His [her] own posture should be such that his [her] body becomes an instrument which permits all its resonances to come alive” (p. 2). Ehmann names the choral director the “leader of the dance”, and incites the conductor in be in tune with the “rhythmic wave” of the music (p. 78, p. 126).

Like Jaques-Dalcroze, Ehmann adopts a broad definition of rhythm, and recommends its usage in developing ensemble skills for the choir:

Rhythm is the unifying, binding element and the governing principle in music. Rhythm is a stronger factor than sheer sound in unifying individual singers into a close-knit choral unit. Therefore there is no means which is so suitable for thoroughly fusing a group of individualists into a unified musical group as rhythmic training (p. 93).

Ehmann suggests that choirs should undertake athletic exercises outside of rehearsal, such as hiking, swimming, gymnastics, or calisthenics in order to develop bodily coordination for singing. The central problem facing musicians is a lack of body involvement, according to Ehmann: “Our life as well as much of our music making has become static. Today one speaks of a piece of music as being written in ¾ time, when we should really be saying that it moves in ¾ time” (p. 80). A dearth of natural and life-related movement activities results in “grotesque musical results and misinterpretations of musical works”, argues Ehmann, a statement that echoes Jaques-Dalcroze’s sentiments on arrhythm (p. 80).
In the context of the choral rehearsal, movement activities should fall into two categories: stationary and mobile. Stationary activities are movements performed on the spot, such as using hand gestures to represent the movement and direction of a melody or voice part, swaying backward and forward to show the movement of the phrase, or conducting oneself while singing (with an emphasis on musical flow, not time-beating) (pp. 83-85). Mobile activities may include walking the rhythm of the music while singing, freely walking or dancing while singing, or creating a movement choreography to represent the counterpoint or form of the music (pp. 87-90). These movement exercises will transmit directly into the singing voice, states Ehmann: “Through such exercises the singers get a visual concept of the structure of the piece, of the movement, and relationship of the parts to each other; the singers literally experience the music composition in their own bodies, and the acquisition of new concepts and a new grasp of the music is now absorbed and translated into the singing act itself with the result that the music has become more animated and alive” (p. 89).

In the opening to his chapter on choral ear training, Ehmann suggests that too little has been done to adapt the work of Dolcroze [sic] to the choral context, and in particular, the integrated areas of choral ear training, gesture and movement, and rhythmic training (p. 65). To that end, he outlines six goals for this type of training in the choral context, emphasizing the physical, emotional, mental, social and artistic goals of the Dalcroze approach: “(1) To help the individual singer in the choir to relax and to stimulate and develop him [her] musically, (2) To blend the members of the choir into a well-tuned, thoroughly trained musical unit, (3) To strengthen and support the individual processes through listening, gesture, movement and rhythm, (4) To provide practical guides and approaches for grasping musical structure of the works to be sung and to realize this structure in performance, (5) To help the choir to discover and interpret the character and essence of the music which is being sung, and (6) To enable a choral society to find fulfillment in music as a way of life, quite apart from the virtuosic choral techniques of the director who happens to be responsible for its direction at the time” (p. 65).
Gordon (1975) endorses the use of the Dalcroze approach to lead choirs beyond technical proficiency and towards artistic performance (p. 12). He directly references the twenty-two exercise concepts outlined in Jaques-Dalcroze’s 1914 essay, *Rhythmic Movement, Solfège and Improvisation* (1921b), and presents a list of Dalcroze exercises for the choral context, adapted from master-teachers Robert M. Abramson, Wilhelm Ehmann, Elsa Findlay and Jo Pennington. In keeping with Jaques-Dalcroze’s rhythmic curriculum, Gordon’s list organizes exercises under the following topics: meter, tempo, rhythm, dynamics, phrases and phrase endings, structure, and general alertness and self-control. According to Gordon, the Dalcroze approach unifies the choir, and “creates a cohesive interdependence among individuals – a most desirable benefit for performing ensembles” (p. 12).

John Hylton (1987) also connects the Dalcroze approach to the training of musically sensitive choristers: “According to Dalcroze, rhythm is movement, and each of music's basic elements may be internalized by discovering physical movements that parallel musical events. The use of movement to develop sensitivity to choral music is based upon this same idea” (p. 33). Hylton stresses that the quality of the movement will determine the quality of the musical and vocal outcome (p. 33). He suggests the use of ensemble conducting as a means of clarifying the music (use of beat-pattern), or to explore the phrasing and expressive aspects of the music (free-conducting). Body movement should also be used in the choral warm-up, both to prepare the singers for the “dynamic motion” required in vocal coordination, and to help singers develop ensemble unity, including the mental alertness and sensitivity necessary to attend to musical style (p. 32). Body-centric warm-ups may also be used any time during the rehearsal to correct a musical problem or energize the ensemble, states Hylton (p. 33). Apfelstadt (1985) agrees, suggesting the use of movement at any point in the rehearsal when physical energy is lacking (p. 37).

Herbert Henke, a Dalcroze Diplomate, choral conductor, and former professor of Aural Skills at Oberlin College, has contributed three key articles on the application of the Dalcroze approach to choral score study, choral musicianship training and choral rehearsing. In his 1990a article, “Choral musicianship via the Dalcroze approach”, Henke argues that solfège-rhythmique is the
most applicable of the branches of Dalcroze education to the choral setting (p. 226). Solfège-rhythmique trains choral musicians to develop superior musicianship, as Jaques-Dalcroze would define it: “What are fine musicians doing as they perform? They listen to the sounds they are producing and react quickly to make the adjustments their hearing tells them are necessary. They have an inner sense of rhythm which seems to energize their entire physical being. They are concentrating fully on the task at hand” (p. 226). In addition, solfège-rhythmique aids choral singers in mentally imaging pitch and rhythm, critical skills for literacy (Henke, 1984).

Henke offers sample solfège-rhythmique exercises for the choir under three categories (1) aural perception: exercises that develop pitch discrimination, including an emphasis on whole and half steps, inner singing, and canonic singing; (2) rhythmic sensitivity: exercises for developing inner pulse and subdivision; (3) reading ability: singing C-C scales, manipulating sight-read melodies and rhythms with retrograde, canon, and complementary rhythm (1984, p. 13). He advocates extracting a rhythmic or melodic figure from the music to use as a music-learning device. This figure acquaints the ears to the musical material of the repertoire, and acts as a signal throughout the rehearsal, alerting the choir to perform various physical behaviors (stand-up, sit down, etc.) (1990a, p. 227). Henke cautions, “It will be important that the exercise not be carried on too long without a change in tempo, key, dynamics, etc. It is this variety that develops musicianship and makes even the most simple exercise a musical one” (p. 228). A Dalcroze-inspired choral rehearsal has the following characteristics, according to Henke (1990a): (1) musical sensitivity, (2) changing musical material, and (3) whole-body interaction with the music (p. 229). Solfège-rhythmique also invigorates the work of the choral conductor, breaking the routine of constant repetition and animating chorister response in rehearsal (Henke, 1990b, p. 225).

Henke’s 1990b article takes a different tack, exploring specific Dalcroze techniques to prepare a “feelingful” rendition of Mendelssohn’s choral piece, How Lovely are the Messengers (p. 284). Henke suggests the Dalcroze approach to help singers understand and deliver the message of the music. He begins with Dalcroze solfège warm-ups: (1) sing a Bb+ scale on syllables or numbers and alternate between aloud and silent singing, and (2) practice singing whole and half steps in the context of various scale patterns excerpted from the piece. He then catalogues a number of
Dalcroze-based rehearsal techniques for the piece: (1) intone the text while tapping the metrical emphasis, matching syllabic stress to metrical stress; (2) tap the rhythmic complements on rests in the voice parts; (3) link arms and gently sway to one side through the musical phrase; and (4) silently sing certain note values (pp. 285-286).

In their 2003 presentation for the American Choral Director’s Association, entitled, “Dalcroze Eurhythmics for Conductors and Singers”, Frego and Reames outline nine benefits of the use of the Dalcroze approach in the choral context: (1) energizing the body, breath, and tone; (2) internalizing specific rhythmic challenges through movement; (3) internalizing repertoire through visual, aural, and kinesthetic experiences; (4) providing concrete experience for abstract music; (5) assessing learning through an informal visual observation; (6) developing inner hearing through solfège rhythmique; (7) encouraging opportunities for creative movement and improvisation; (8) transferring movement to conducting techniques for singers; and (9) connecting movement to the National Standards, specifically 3, 6, 8 (conference handout). Frego and Reames lead the group through a variety of movement experiences in relationship to three pieces from the choral repertoire. Their handout itemizes a three-part rehearsal sequence for integrating the Dalcroze approach: (1) objectives (musical goals for the chorister); (2) a Dalcroze experience(s) “without the score”; and (3) a Dalcroze experience(s) “with the score” (conference handout).

Frego (2005) further elaborates on the usages of the Dalcroze approach in the choral context in the video, Creating artistry through movement: Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral setting, prepared in conjunction with the Indianapolis Children’s Choir and their conductor, Henry Leck. The use of a video format vividly depicts a variety of choristers and choral conductors participating in eurhythmics classes, including a short segment dedicated to the modified use of eurhythmics in a traditional choral riser formation. Frego demonstrates a variety of games and exercises aimed at developing chorister musicianship, emphasizing the development of personal and group pulse. He also highlights the use of eurhythmics to develop chorister focus, both to sustain active participation throughout a choral piece, and to react quickly to the conductor’s changing gesture. In his demonstration with conductors, Frego teaches a bi-lateral movement
game, linking the experience to the dual role of the conductor’s gesture in keeping tempo and showing expression.

Leck emphasizes the ability of Dalcroze Eurhythmics to develop skills for musical artistry, “because truly what this is all about is not just creating metronomes…not creating exactness…it’s creating techniques that allow you to become artistic” (Leck, 31:42). He encourages music educators to make use of kinesthetic learning as a foundational element in both musicianship training and in musical enjoyment, stating, “because we teach in classrooms often, or on choral risers, we often feel that we don’t really have the room or the inclination to do motor teaching. But it’s really quite essential to their development as musicians, and more than that, it’s essential to their joy of what they are learning” (Leck, 11:30). Both Leck and Frego participate in the video demonstrations, highlighting the fluid connection between a eurhythmic experience and a choral singing/conducting experience.

Crosby (2008) adopts a similar approach to Henke (1990b), giving specific Dalcroze-based strategies for the preparation of Tomás Luis de Victoria’s *O Magnum Mysterium*. For Crosby, the Dalcroze approach is an antidote to the typical sedentary choral rehearsal and a means of connecting desirable vocal results with lived experience: “Singers are constantly expected to demonstrate motion, expression, and energy in their vocal production, but often, these students are not provided with tools that facilitate understanding of rhythmic movement. One music educator who sought to rectify this was Émile Jaques-Dalcroze” (p. 31). Crosby dissects the musical challenges of the Victoria, and suggests Dalcroze-based strategies for three specific aspects of choral learning: rhythmic internalization, breath energy, and phrasing. Rhythmic internalization strategies include free body movement to a recording, an exploration of macro- and micro-beats, and silent singing. Breath energy is explored through physical gestures that mimic the motion and coordination of the vocal mechanism. Crosby’s phrasing exercises help singers achieve an understanding of the legato articulation, imitative counterpoint, and dramatic direction of the piece.
Dalcroze educator Shenberger (2008) links Dalcroze strategies to a variety of choral selections in her article “Using Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral rehearsal” in *The school choral program: Philosophy, planning, organizing and teaching*. Dalcroze techniques may be used to explore the “rhythmic” level of the music, the technical challenges of the music, or the “plastique” level, the time, space, energy, and direction in the music, states Shenberger (p. 539). She stipulates that Dalcroze experiences involve the entire body, and notes that whole-body involvement with the music improves resonance, breathing, body energy, and rhythm-reading skills (p. 538).

### 2.2 Use of the Dalcroze Approach (and Related Body-based Approaches) in Musical Analysis

#### 2.2.1 Research studies

A number of authors have suggested ways to use the Dalcroze approach, and related body-based approaches, to help access a musical score. Moore’s 1992 dissertation presents a uniquely Dalcrozian approach to musical analysis, discussing the two major musical-theoretical models adopted by Jaques-Dalcroze. First, he describes the rules of accentuation, nuance and phrasing as created by Swiss theorist Mathis Lussy (1828-1910) and endorsed by Jaques-Dalcroze in his books on solfège-rhythmique. Second, he explains Jaques-Dalcroze’s schemes for corporal movement, or the plastic realization of music, plastique animée (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1920, 1921b). For each piano piece, Moore applies the rules of accentuation, nuance and phrasing, and develops a plastique animée. Moore’s realizations of the selected piano pieces are highly stylized, but he suggests that this is simply one interpretation. Jaques-Dalcroze’s aim was to help students find an intuitive expression of the music as a result of personal movement and music exploration (p. 144).

Urista’s 2001 study focuses on Lakoff and Johnson’s notion of image schema as a jumping-off point for music analysis and performance. She mentions the Dalcroze approach as a music-to-movement method that successfully links sound to bodily gesture in musical perception and
performance. In particular, Jaques-Dalcroze’s non-stylized movement analogues for various musical rhythmic devices act as a useful music-movement metaphor (p. 194). Conscious movement to music serves as a “temporary exaggeration that pulls out the dynamic possibilities living within the musical structure” (p. 196). Exercising the kinesthetic sense in musical perception and performance is a key component in musical expressivity, according to Urista. The performer’s level of kinesthetic involvement with the music will have an impact on the audience’s ability to empathize with both the sound and the gesture of the music (p. 170).

Theorist Christine Walker’s 2007 study examines the work of four master Music Theory and Aural Skills teachers (including Herbert Henke, Stephen Moore and Diane Urista, mentioned above) incorporating the Dalcroze approach in undergraduate musicianship and literacy training. A Dalcroze approach to teaching music theory activates mind and body simultaneously, helping beginning and advanced students develop an embodied understanding of musical-theoretical concepts (p. 67). More specifically, the Dalcroze approach helps students learn musical theory from the perspective of musical motion. They learn to distinguish rhythm from meter (as separate layers of motion), to measure the distance of intervals (with an emphasis on the use of whole and half steps in scales), and to feel the energy and release of tension in a harmonic progression. Walker presents examples of specific Dalcroze eurhythmics, solfège and improvisation exercises utilized by the teachers to develop tonal retention (tonal memory), interference (developing a strong sense of internal pulse), changing meter, scales as foundations for chords, arrested flow (ability to quickly change musical actions), and antecedent-consequent phrase relationships.

2.2.2 Other sources

Pierce’s 2007 book, *Deepening musical performance through movement*, gives instrumental performers (and by extension, conductors) a number of body-based techniques for developing expressive musical interpretation. Each chapter explores a specific musical parameter (melody, phrase, meter etc.), and suggests simple movement exercises designed to draw the musician into a kinesthetically reflective conversation with the music. Pierce argues that musical interpretation
is more often taught too late in the music-learning process. As a result, it fails to translate into expressive performance:

Those who tell themselves or their student, “Play more passionately” or “Bring out the sadness” are likely to elicit not passion but contrivance. The process of learning a piece often buries intimate sensory experience rather than kindling it. One common snare is the rehearsal approach of getting the notes under control and later figuring out an interpretation. The piece is learned by translating notational signs into sounds without contacting, digesting, and bringing forth their connotations. An outer shell of accuracy may be attained in melodies and rhythms, perhaps even in articulation and dynamics. The performer has done what was asked and feels ready to turn to interpretation. But by now the piece has acquired a curious stability – a way of being played that is difficult to uproot. “Interpretation” has already taken place unawares: a superficial exterior has spread over the piece and with each repetition the covering thickens (Pierce, 2007, p. xiv).

Pierce outlines ten musical elements and their kinesthetic equivalents: cadence, melody, ictus, harmonic rhythm, phrase, climax, musical continuity (Pierce terms this “reverberation”), moments between phrases (“juncture”), character/affect, and tone of voice (p. 4). For example, an exploration of melody may make use of arm contouring musical enactment. Pierce suggests seven stages in developing this relationship between arm contouring and the performance of a melody: (1) sing the melody on a neutral syllable and move your hand in a “pitch ladder” to show lows, highs, and intervals; (2) sing again, and let your arm glide through the pitches in a continuous up and down motion; (3) allow the arm contours to circle back and overlap using more vertical and horizontal space; (4) involve the entire trunk in the arm contouring, engaging the core; (5) sit and listen to the melody, swaying slightly in the spine, and then play your instrument as allowing the spine to sway; (6) focus on small passages and match the sound you are making with the kinesthetic sensations you have in your memory; (7) notice the affective quality of the movements, and name the emotions involved in the melody (pp. 50-60).
Embodiment affects each musician differently, states Pierce. Performance outcomes may visibly reveal the embodiment work, or there may be little or no visible sign (p. 6). The goal is to connect the musician to the music with a sense of immediacy and availability: “The search is for an unfettered (“childlike”) response to a piece that moment by moment calls forth the available technical command and awakens precise hearing of the musical instants that can be grasped both intellectually and imaginatively” (p. 8). She relates this to Jaques-Dalcroze’s term *plasticity*, the process by which the musician becomes the music (p. 6). Pierce also comments on the effects of an embodied approach on the teacher. She notes that the teacher of movement is involved in a reflective process as well, engaging with the music and the students from a joint place of exploration:

The teacher is participating, carrying on parallel research, and thereby modeling with his [her] own movement the guidelines of the process. He [she] is also revealing the look of proprioceptive work, of study being carried on from inside the very things studied—the music, its movement, his [her] own movement. This active, inner engagement has quite a different appearance from that of someone who is giving thought to a topic or who knows the answers already (p. 7).

### 2.3 Use of the Dalcroze Approach in Conductor Training

#### 2.3.1 Research studies

Beyond its use with the choir, Ehmann (1968) also endorses the use of the Dalcroze approach in the training of conductors (p. 81). Henke (1984) and Grau (2009) agree, indicating that eurhythmics study can positively influence conductor preparation. Mather’s 2008 study is the most comprehensive in scope on the topic of the use of the Dalcroze approach in conductor education. It investigates five theories of expressive movement and non-verbal communication useful in the training of expressive conducting: those of Laban, Dalcroze, Delsartes, Alexander, and Feldenkrais. Mather questions why more studies on the relationship of the Dalcroze approach to conducting have not been pursued. He reiterates a point made by Jaques-Dalcroze, stating that the musician’s, and specifically conductor’s, abilities to be musically expressive is dependent on their level of skill in expressive movement (p. 2, Jaques-Dalcroze 1921b).
According to Mather, Dalcroze training enhances expressive conducting by promoting the integration of mind and body, and by representing a process-oriented educational model that can be adopted in the early stages of teaching conducting (p. 108, p. 122).

Mather reviews the available literature on the use of movement methodologies in conductor textbooks, and names James Jordan’s *Evoking Sound* (1996) as the most kinesthetically focused textbook available to date (p. 21). With little exception, the conducting textbooks reviewed by Mather promote the acquisition of conducting technique before they discuss expressive fluency (p. 39). Amongst university-level conductors sampled, “expressive movement activity” ranked as the sixth of nine most popular methods for the teaching of conducting expressivity, after self-observation, observation of other conductors, practice away from the ensemble, conducting class/course/workshop, and discussion with teachers/other students (p. 18).

Mather notes that the Dalcroze approach is uniquely applicable to conductor education with its emphasis on musicianship skill development. Exercises that explore rhythmic pulse, subdivision and arm disassociation are of particular use to conductors, states Mather (p. 104). Dalcroze training aids in the development of a personal conducting vocabulary: “As eurhythmics movements are personal and not prescriptive, they allow conductors to develop their own movement solutions, based on their own bodies and movement patterns” (pp.111-112). The Dalcroze emphasis on proprioception helps conductors convey information back to themselves, which helps synchronize cognitive ideas about the music with conducting gestures (p. 123). Mather describes what a Dalcroze lesson for conductors might look like:

An initial warm-up activity, for example, focuses awareness on breathing and various parts of the body. Using music improvised on the spot, conductors practise moving different parts of their bodies to reflect the beat. Changes to the localisation of the beat should be smooth and instantaneous. Conductors then step the beats, alternating between forward and backward movements. Changes should be smooth and instantaneous, with almost no time to think between the instruction and the reaction. Conductors then practice internalising the beat through sound and silence. When the music stops, conductors should continue to feel the
pulse of the music. As a variation, the conductors silently feel the beat while the music plays, and show the beat in some way when the music stops. Conductors should change the speed of their movements as determined by the pulse of the music heard. They should show different pulses simultaneously in different parts of their bodies. Finally, conductors respond to the music in canonic form, such exercises being particularly challenging for conductors’ proprioceptive sense. Canonic exercises require a relaxed concentration and heightened awareness. They are excellent for sensing movements, and developing fine motor skills within the body. Best of all for conductors, these exercises are all carried out through the medium of music (pp. 124-125).

Mathers includes a 13-week course incorporating all of the movement theories examined (Laban, Dalcroze, Delsartes, Alexander, and Feldenkrais). Dalcroze techniques are represented in activities teaching (1) moving to the beat (week 1); (2) fermata, gestures of syncopation, and canonic exercises (week 5); (3) starting on beats other than 1, subdivisions, and irregular meters (week 6), (4) exercises practicing arm disassociation (week 12), and (5) non-verbal rehearsing (pp. 213-219).

2.3.2 Other sources

Dickson (1992) endorses the Dalcroze approach in conductor training in his article, “The training of conductors through the methodology of kinesthetics”. Kinesthetics is a more musical approach to teaching conducting, suggests Dickson, lamenting that “many conducting programs often limit by teaching only abstract mechanics and techniques of gesture which, in many cases, are divorced from the music-making process. As a result, conducting robots are created who understand the mechanics of gesture, but have little concept of the music itself – its shape, flow, and direction” (p. 15). Kinesthetic learning prevents conductors from disconnecting from the music, or what Jaques-Dalcroze would have called arrhythm: “When movements are in harmony with the flow of the music, conductor, choir, and audience experience a oneness with the music. When movement and music contradict each other, on the other hand, a distorted form of the music is experienced” (p. 20).
Dickson describes conductor training as a process of exposing conductors to the entirety of the kinesthetic learning process, and proposes a three-stage methodology for this purpose. Stage-one prioritizes musical perception, awakening body responses to music through listening and free movement activities. The goal of stage one is to develop a vocabulary of physical responses and to build body concepts of space, time, and motion. Stage-two guides students to form thoughts about their kinesthetic experience and to apply kinesthetic experience to the development of conducting gestures. Stage-three trains conductors to use kinesthetics in the context of the rehearsal as a means to “establish the general character of a piece, discover appropriate phrasing and line shape, and correct a myriad of problems” (p. 19).

McCoy’s 1994 article, “Eurhythmics: Enhancing the music-body-mind connection in conductor training”, directly aligns the goals of eurhythmics study, as outlined by Abramson (Choksy et al., 1986) in *Teaching Music in the 20th Century*, with the conductor’s work. The mental and emotional goals of eurhythmics teach conductors musical sensitivity, concentration, and empathy towards the ensemble. The physical goals of eurhythmics improve the conductor’s ease, accuracy, and expressivity, and connect kinesthetic experiences with specific musical outcomes: “The conductor’s use of time-space-energy-weight-balance is critical to the communication of tempo, articulation, and dynamics. For the conductor, the physical elements of time-space-energy-weight-balance are analogous to the tone produced by the performers. The combination of these elements in gesture provides a kinesthetic experience of the music for the conductor and a visual map through the music for the ensemble” (p. 21).

McCoy provides a number of specific eurhythmics exercises designed to attune the conductor. She recommends the use of continuous canon to improve multi-tasking, replacement games to aid in shifting between internal and external tempo, a partnered drum-game to explore anacrusis and crasis, and a game where partners attempt to discern emotional states from body gestures and attitudes. Whole-body games explore phrasing, ball-pass activities for mixed-meter, and rope-pulls for tension-release round out McCoy’s list of examples, each of which is furnished
with a musical example to accompany the exercise. In conjunction with her discussion on mixed meter, McCoy suggests that preceding score study with a kinesthetic experience can prevent cognitive interference and negative self-talk (p. 27).

2.4 Use of the Dalcroze Approach in Vocal Training

There are no dissertations or theses available on the application of the Dalcroze approach to the voice studio, however, Caldwell’s 1995 book, *Expressive singing: Dalcroze Eurhythmics for voice*, presents a range of applications to the teaching of voice. Caldwell avoids discussing vocal pedagogy, and instead, suggests the benefits of the Dalcroze approach to student learning. Dalcroze techniques teach musical behavior rather than repertoire or concepts, bettering the student’s ability to pay attention, turn attention to concentration, remember, reproduce the performance, change, and automate, all of which are behaviors necessary for effective musical study (p. 63). Apfelstadt (1985) agrees, suggesting that movement-based learning improves transfer and internalization. Singers develop skills through movement activities that affect their overall musical growth (p. 37).

Caldwell advocates the teaching of vocal technique in tandem with the teaching of musicality. Technical problems arise from musical problems, believes Caldwell, specifically a lack of physical coordination, faulty aural perceptions, or a lack of awareness of the harmony or structure of the music (p. 97). Using body motion and gesture also generates genuine affective response to music. Incorporating expressive elements early on in the music learning process develops better sight-reading and builds a more coherent performance, states Caldwell (p. 42). The author suggests a sequence for learning a score musically, based on the principles of Jaques-Dalcroze: (1) begin with the text, noting what emotions and moods are experienced as you read it; (2) listen to multiple recordings of the piece, working away from the score; (3) develop a gestalt/feeling for the entire composition; (4) examine the score, noting all of the composer’s markings; (5) speak the text in a dramatic fashion, noticing breathing, range, and expression; (6) speak the text out of rhythm, using the musical rules (Dalcroze’s adaptation of Mathis Lussy’s rules of expression); (7) speak the text in rhythm, paying attention to phrasing; (8) play or sing
the composition with the score; (9) play the accompaniment in chords out of rhythm while singing the melody; (10) conduct yourself as you sing; (11) improvise a new text as you sing the printed melody; (12) improvise a new melody as you sing the printed text; (13) sing through 4-6 times at a slow tempo while looking at the score; (14) sing through 4-6 times at a slow tempo by memory; (15) sing at tempo looking at the score; (16) sing at tempo from memory; (17) sing 4-6 times faster than normal by memory (pp. 123-134).

In addition to spelling out strategies for students, Caldwell also advises on the role of the teacher. Dalcroze-inspired teaching should “create an environment where students experiment with different skills and attitudes, and leave lessons with not only better skills but enlivened imaginations and a joy of music making” (p. 137). In a Dalcroze-inspired lesson, music should teach music. Teacher-talk reduces the amount of music that can occur. Teachers should view themselves as performing artists, and should model an embodied approach to music: “In an ideal lesson, the teacher becomes the music through the use of voice, face, and gesture, and the environment in the studio becomes a musical environment” (p. 155).

2.5 Summary

In the last forty-five years, there have been a number of investigations into the applications of the Dalcroze approach to a variety of cognate fields, including the choral context. In the last twenty years in particular, there seems to be a surge of interest in the integrated use of body movement as a choral rehearsal technique. Research studies prefer a qualitative approach to this topic, using conductor observation as a primary means of assessing practice. Although the influence of Jaques-Dalcroze is always noted, these studies do not reveal a singularly Dalcroziean approach. A variety of sources do offer specifically Dalcroziean pedagogical techniques for the choral context (often by Dalcroze-trained teachers), including Ehmann (1968), Gordon (1975) Henke (1990a, 1990b, 1993, 1994), Moore (1992), McCoy (1994), Dickson (1995), Frego & Leck (2005), Frego & Reames (2003), Crosby (2008), and Shenenberger (2008). The area of choral instructional technique is most heavily represented in the literature, and specifically, the use of
the body-movement, or eurhythmics, to develop choral skills and the artistic performance of choral repertoire.

To date, there are no sources that specifically address the impact of the integration of Dalcroze approaches on the conductor’s view of self and choristers. Additionally, the author was unable to locate sources on the use of Dalcroze approaches in conductor score study, including the impact of Dalcroze-based score study on choices made for conducting gesture and rehearsal technique. The use of Dalcroze pedagogy in the choral context is also an underrepresented area in the literature, including how choral conductors integrate Dalcroze pedagogical sequencing and which aspects of the Dalcroze methodology (eurhythmics, solfège, improvisation, plastique animée) are most often incorporated. Although literature on the integration of Dalcroze eurhythmics and solfège exists, the author could not find research material on the use of Dalcroze-based improvisation and plastique animée in the choral context. As well, to date, there are also no quantitative or qualitative studies inquiring into the application of the Dalcroze approach in the choral context by solely Dalcroze-trained practitioners.

There is a need for a more in-depth study inquiring into the lived experiences of Dalcroze teachers who are also choral conductors, and choral conductors who are Dalcroze-trained. If the conductor is the archetypal eurhythmician, then it follows that choral conductors who also teach the Dalcroze approach, or Dalcroze teachers who also conduct choirs, may have some very important insights about the integration of the Dalcroze approach into their work. How has their personal study of the Dalcroze approach changed their pedagogy and practice as choral conductors? How do they manifest the principles of the Dalcroze approach through their score study, gesture, and teaching? What aspects of the Dalcroze approach are most applicable to the choral context, and if so, why are the other areas underrepresented? The following chapters explore these questions, with the goal of exposing, in richer detail, how the fields of Dalcroze Eurhythmics and choral conducting can intersect.
3  Body as Instrument: Arrhythm to Eurhythm

Investigating the applications of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context begins with revisiting Jaques-Dalcroze’s ideology of the body and its role in a musical education. Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) envisioned the body as the central conduit for musical thought, action, and expression:

I look forward to a system of musical education in which the body itself shall play the role of intermediary between sounds and thought, becoming in time the direct medium of our feeling – aural sensations being reinforced by all those called into being by the multiple agents of vibration and resonance lying dormant in our bodies; the breathing system punctuating the rhythms of words, muscular dynamics interpreting those dictated by musical emotions. The child will thus be taught at school not only to sing, listen carefully, and keep time, but also to move and think accurately and rhythmically…That would constitute at once instruction in rhythm, and education by rhythm (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, 8).

A suitable pedagogy for this body-instrument should cater to all of the physical, emotional, mental and social parts of the musician. Second, a body-based pedagogy should foster ameliorative practice, resourcing the musician for independent and imaginative functioning. Third, body-based music learning should occur in a stimulating and supportive environment that facilitates both individual and corporate learning. According to Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) educating the body-instrument to be responsive and expressive should be the first and primary goal of music education. All other types of musical education, including instrumental study, should be an outgrowth of this work.

Jaques-Dalcroze imagined an embodied approach for music education, where musicians could both perceive and perform music within the context of first-hand bodily experience. Abramson & Reiser (1994) assert that teaching and learning any new musical skill requires every organ and limb of the body to become involved; musical information that is embodied promotes musical eurhythm (p. 9). Conductors, B, D, and E emphasize “whole-body” learning as a hallmark of
the Dalcroze approach. Conductor B asserts that musicians *become* the music through a whole-body approach:

> Because the body is the instrument, and therefore, people are learning music so kinesthetically that it’s not just like a piano player whose fingers are touching, it’s the entire body. So, that way of understanding it, really *becoming* the music – no other methodology does that.

### 3.1 A Whole-Body Orientation for the Choral Context

The whole-body experiences of the Dalcroze approach begin with somatic inquiry. Thomas Hanna (1995) describes the human soma as “the body as perceived from within by first-person perception” (p. 341). In the context of the classroom, Master-teacher B calls Dalcroze activities “live experiences”, “musical encounters”, and a “real-time relationship” with music (personal communication, May 21, 2012). These live encounters foster sensory experiences of the music from within the musician’s body. Master-teacher A describes the somatic emphasis as foundational to the approach, and distinguishes the use of the body in the Dalcroze context from the use of the body in the dance context:

> We are never, for example, in the Dalcroze world…I have never had the experience of a teacher…the teacher never says, “Beautiful arms”, like they do in ballet class. And, most of the eurhythms classes I have been in don’t provide mirrors because we have to *feel* the movement on the inside, not judge it as to how it looks.

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) insisted that a musical-somatic experience should begin with what the musician hears. His early musical reforms targeted a lack of training in aural perception as the main source of musical arrhythmity. Musical training that was overly focused on instrument-specific techniques could actually impede aural perception, while conversely, the development of acute aural consciousness would aid in the development of instrument-specific technique (Jaques-Dalcroze 1921b, p. 117; Jaques-Dalcroze 1930b, p. 126). In a Dalcroze Eurhythms class, aural perception is immediately connected to body movement. Jaques-Dalcroze (1931b)
believed that the sounds of music aroused spontaneous motor responses in the hearer. Students are asked to respond physically to sound, and to do so in a personalized and instinctive manner. Initial Dalcroze exercises may ask students to “show me what you hear”, as Master-teacher A explains:

One of the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach is the whole person moving. And moving, and here’s the thing, the person moving shows what she hears. And that’s a basic phrase, “Show me what you hear”. So, the student has to show. And, there’s not much interpretation that has to happen. “Show me what you hear” – the student doesn’t have to stop and think how do I show it? It is pretty automatic. And it’s a very interesting equivalent – I’m showing what I hear. Isn’t that interesting? I show what I hear when I move. And that is absolutely basic to the approach.

Master-teacher A suggests that initial musical-aural experiences in the choral context will also inspire a spontaneous movement response:

So, when you are working with students in a choral group, and they’re starting to sing, or you’re introducing a song, some of them will start moving right away, and very often a choral group moves together. They will sway together, or they will, if it’s a jazzy piece, they won’t sway; they’ll do a kind of bouncy, sideways motion, or whatever the general nature of the music evokes in terms of movement. Or, they may not move at all. They are showing you what they hear.

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) termed aural perception consciousness of sound, and its body-based counterpart, kinesthetic perception, consciousness of rhythm: “To be completely musical, a child 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” (p. 79). According to Jaques-Dalcroze, consciousness of sound is the ability to appreciate all of the dimensions of sound internally, without recourse to an instrument, while consciousness of rhythm is the ability to perceive and realize musical rhythms in the body (p. 79).
The development of consciousness of rhythm depends on the body’s integrated use of what Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) termed the “muscular sense”, or as it is known today, proprioception. Proprioception is the body’s subconscious awareness of its position, weight, balance, and direction (Schnebly-Black & Moore, 1997, p. 28). Also called kinesthesia, proprioception is responsible for the body’s measuring of tension and relaxation, the basic action of musical bodily eurhythm, according to Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b). By teaching the muscles to respond accurately and efficiently in all gradations of time (speed), space (direction), and energy (gravity/force/weight), the Dalcroze approach improves bodily accuracy and efficiency of response, and gradually brings muscular response into conscious awareness (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b). Dalcroze training aims to make proprioceptive information available to the musician, turning the body into what Juntunen & Westerland (2001) call a “site of transformation” (p. 209). Dalcroze brings “the perspective towards embodied and transformational agency instead of plain bodily reaction and causal response” (Juntunen & Westerland, 2001, p. 209).

Stewart (1999) calls the whole body a “resonating chamber”, able to meld internal (proprioceptive) and external (aural) sensations (p. 70). According to Schnebly-Black & Moore (1999), the Dalcroze approach’s dual focus on aural and proprioceptive sensation sharpens the musician’s processes of perception, attention, memory and action (p. 24). Master-teacher C explains how the aural and kinesthetic aspects of perception become integrated so that the whole body is involved in musical perception:

Well, I guess eurhythms is an intense aural training, you know, that’s what eurhythms is all about. Everything has to do with how you perceive the music. It’s not just moving for moving. It’s moving in relationship to the sounds that you are perceiving. So, it’s aural training. Eurhythms is aural training. So, the ear is extremely important. It’s like your whole body is an ear! An oreille. Your whole body is that.
Jaques-Dalcroze desired that the ear and body should register much more than the technical parameters of the music. Aural and kinesthetic images should build both musical accuracy and musical expressivity: “The practice of bodily movements awakens images in the mind. The stronger the muscular sensations, the clearer and more precise the images, and thereby the more metrical and rhythmic feeling is developed; for feeling is born of sensation” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 124). The integrated use of aural and kinesthetic images constitute what Jaques-Dalcroze termed the “inner ear”:

I therefore set about devising exercises to enable my pupils to recognize the pitch of sounds, estimate intervals, apprehend harmonies, distinguish the different notes in chords, follow the contrapuntal effects in polyphonic music, distinguish keys, analyze the relations between hearing and vocal sensations, sensitize the ear, and – by means of a new system of gymnastics applied to the nervous system – open up between brain, ear, and larynx the necessary channels to form of the entire organism what one might call the inner ear...

(Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, pp. 4-5).

Dalcroze master-teacher Virginia Mead (1994) describes the inner ear as an internal musical storehouse, a memory bank of aural and kinesthetic images that can be utilized and recalled in any musical performative activity (p. 5). Abramson (1986) calls inner hearing as, “the ability to summon musical sensations and impressions by thinking, reading, and writing music without the aid of an instrument” (p. 30). Conductor C corroborates the use of body movement to develop and exercise the inner ear in the choral context. He makes use of “silent-singing” during opera season in order to reduce singer’s voice usage, and notes that when the choir is moving, they are easily able to track the music mentally:

I try to find ways to have rehearsals where they are not singing all of the time. So, I will have them move the section, and then I will say, “sing”. They will have been moving for fifteen measures, and they are quite amazed when they come in dead on the note, dead on pitch, so I know that their inner ear is working.
Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) believed that the experiential use of the body would also heighten affective response in the musician. Master-teacher A suggests that images generated in movement spur the imagination into action and generate musical ideas, a form of qualitative analysis that bears exploring in the choral classroom:

It’s the imagery that brings us close, and back again to body movement, which I think, often helps us find images when we are moving, all of a sudden we start feeling, “Oh, I’m a butterfly”, or, you know…. All kinds of images emerge with movement. So, I think that when the students are moving, we need to be aware of the fact that we have to address the issue of what does that feel like to you, and what does that bring up for you?

Farber (1999) suggests that the kinesthetic sense has a role in developing the musician’s imagination. She defines three roles for the kinesthetic sense: “The kinesthetic sense gives us a present image of present physical experience, the kinesthetic memory gives us a present image of past physical experience, and the kinesthetic imagination gives us a present experience of a musical reality beyond our physical powers to enact” (p. 5). Ehmann (1968) agrees that concrete bodily exploration is insufficient to represent the laws of motion inherent in music (p. 92). Bowman (2004) suggests that the development of bodily imagination contributes to depth in musical artistry: “A crucial part of what distinguishes highly imaginative musical performances from merely competent ones is a performer’s ability to draw upon bodily and gestural resources outside the “purely” musical realm. Competent or craftsmanlike performance draw on conventional ways of moving, orienting, and behaving, whereas highly musical ones draw deeply on other bodily resources, exploring new ways to move on the instrument, or finding in patterns of other embodied experience novel, imaginative ways to move musically” (p. 42).

According to Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b), the beginnings of musical artistry lie here, in the reawakening of the body in music education. Even the most preliminary music lessons should invoke the aesthetic: “The aesthetic sense should be cultivated contemporaneously with the study of the elementary laws of the art, and, from the first lessons, the child should be made to realize that the training is directed as much to the heart as to the brain, and that he must try to love as
well as to understand” (p. 36). In the study of repertoire too, the primary response to music should be affective: “Young people are taught to play the compositions of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin and Liszt, before their minds and ears can grasp these works, before they have developed the faculty of being moved by them” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1909, p. 14). Master-teacher C describes this as a primary focus in her work with university-level music students. Her goal is to use the Dalcroze approach to reconnect them with instinctual musical feeling:

One thing that I try to do is to connect the students to their own instinct. I feel sometimes when I work with the students studying in music that they lost their musical instinct. It’s not that they lost it. It’s there, but it seems that a lot of emphasis is made on theory and virtuosity and all the technical aspects, it seems, at one point, they tend to disconnect from their own instincts - their own emotion in a certain way. It’s like they don’t allow their instinct and their emotion to participate in what they are doing. So that’s why I’m trying to have them move very spontaneously to music. I don’t impose any movement, and codified movement. I’m trying to make them at ease so that their own natural movement – this idea of the motion of the emotion comes out.

For Conductor A, emotion and motion are synonymous. She describes her musical involvement as a choral conductor as a whole-body experience. She translates her feelings about the music into gesture, and asks that the choristers do the same – translate their feelings about the music into their singing. Her ability to successfully lead the group depends on the entire ensemble’s whole-body involvement:

The principles that I recognize during this kind work is the principle of the body as an instrument. The basis of musical art is human motion. Human emotion, sorry. Human emotion, which could be translated through human movement. Musical ideas can be translated by the body. And, any body movement also can be expressed musically. So, it is always the journey, in the music, in the body, in the music and the body. And, when I conduct, it is exactly what I feel. I just love it. I think it’s the reason why I need that my choirs really sing with all the person, with all the body, with all the love also. I need it to be able to conduct. So, I ask for it, you understand. I need it. If I don’t have this, I cannot conduct. I’m not there! I’m not connected!
Dalcroze experiences do more than simply generate a larger volume or higher quality of sensory input for later cognitive processing. The experience of apprehending music through the body is a sort of “thinking-in-action”. In describing the dancer’s mode of perception while performing a dance improvisation, Sheets-Johnstone (1981) describes a similar phenomenon, suggesting the dancer is thinking in the language of movement, not translating thought into movement (p. 400). Stubley suggests that the act of listening to music is a form of bodily knowing, and a means of inhabiting the sounds that resists cognitive or conceptual analysis (1996, p. 5). Juntunen & Westerland propose that Dalcroze training improves the musician’s ability to “think-in-action”, interacting with music while simultaneously making music (p. 209).

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) envisioned the mind-body as a single entity, without division (p. 310). Master-teacher C explains Jaques-Dalcroze’s position further, emphasizing the indissociability of the mind and body, and the forward-thinking nature of the Dalcroze work:

There is something very authentic about eurhythmics, and in that respect…Dalcroze used to say…“I know and think simply because I feel and experience”. Dalcroze said that. This is a translation…That is very interesting because he was saying that he understands, he knows, he thinks – that means he is becoming aware of something, he understands something, because he has experienced it and he has felt it…So, for him, knowledge is possible because we have an emotion and the feeling of that emotion…So that is interesting because the word that you used, “moved to learn”, that’s the idea of this emotion. To be moved by something – it makes it possible for us to understand that something, otherwise it will not be possible. And the emotion in our system is linked to movement. So, it’s very interesting. What is fascinating to me nowadays is to realize that scientists are demonstrating that Dalcroze was right with his intuition at the time, at the beginning of the 20th century.
3.2 Rhythm: Arrhythm and Eurhythm

According to Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b), rhythm is the foundation of all artistic endeavor, including music:

Rhythm is the basis of all vital, scientific, and artistic phenomena. It produces alike the element of order and measure in movement and the idiosyncrasies of execution. The study of rhythm conduces to the formation of an individuality for all purposes of life – that is, a manner of expressing oneself according to the rhythm most natural and native to one’s being (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 171).

Traditional music education had not only lost sight of the key qualities of superior musicianship, it seemed to have underestimated the power of music to teach eurhythmic coordination. According to Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b), music is the closest art to life, offering endless opportunities for the integration of human action and reflection. Bachmann (1993) explains:

Music already exercises the synthesis he [Jaques-Dalcroze] is looking for: while drawing together the components of personality, it acts as an ever-present model of that final synthesis. For it is in music that tones, timbres, and rhythms, nuances, pauses, accents, tempi, and all the physical and dynamic phenomena of the world of sound, find themselves brought into conjunction, arranged, superimposed, measured, and shaped by the power of creative thought (p. 13).

Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) referenced the Greek notion of music, as “the totality of our sensorial and psychic faculties, the ever-changing symphony of spontaneous feelings created, modified, then refined by the imagination, ordered by rhythm and harmonized by consciousness” (p. 58). As such, music lives inside the person, and the role of music education is to facilitate the connection between the inherent music that lives inside of us, our sentient awareness and action, and the music we learn and perform (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b). Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b)
explains further, saying, “Rhythm is a means, not an end in itself. Its function is to set up the relationship between the music we hear and that we have within ourselves” (p. 116).

Training in the Dalcroze approach aims to develop eurhythmy, the coordinated functioning of the body in the service of the music. The body is understood to be a holistic entity, with no division between the aural, proprioceptive, affective, and cognitive aspects of bodily consciousness.

What is rhythm? Is it spiritual or corporeal? Assuredly it is both. There is no rhythm which is not manifested physically; the rhythm of sounds, for instance, implies the rhythm of breathing or that of those portions of the body which are moved by a musician when playing an instrument. Thus it may be said that no rhythm can take place without the participation of the bodily powers. Neither can any succession of rhythms come about without the collaboration of the mind, for this requires a coordination, a definite sequence, an equal distribution of forces in time and space. Everything rhythmic therefore implies complete union of mind and body, creating the miracle of their close inter-penetration (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b, p. 360)

Music education at the time of Jaques-Dalcroze failed to help musicians coordinate mind and body, resulting in what Jaques-Dalcroze termed arrhythm, the excessive cognitive controlling or interrupting of the natural actions of the body (1921b, p. 101; Juntunen, 2004, p. 202). Arrhythm may manifest itself in a variety of ways, as muscular inflexibility, lack of balance or sense of space, excess intellectual interference, failure to concentrate, or too much or too little self-confidence (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 326). Physiologically, arrhythm is a dis-order, confusion, or resistance in the nervous system, or a stoppage in the communication between brain and body (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 116). Musicians may experience ease with one aspect of music learning, such as hearing rhythms, while experiencing difficulty with another, such as executing those rhythms corporally (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 324).
Applied in the choral context, the Dalcroze approach targets arrhythm in both conductors and choristers. Jordan (1996) suggests that conductors demonstrate arrhythm when they over-think and analyze the sound while conducting the ensemble. This type of cognitive controlling also prevents choristers from spontaneous involvement in music, causing arrhythmic responses in the choir, states Jordan (p. 140). Conductor C agrees, describing his conducting as an activity that requires whole-body eurhythmy. Any disconnect in his mind or body causes a disruption in the flow of information from the composer to the conductor to the choir to the audience. Conductor arrhythm also changes the choir’s sound:

I tell my conducting students, once I start a piece, I do not move my feet, almost as if I am getting the music from the floor, and my whole body is pliable. But I’m not going to move my feet. It’s almost an honor thing with me. I am honoring the music by staying there as if I’m receiving it from the soles of my feet through my body and then out through my hands with the gesture that I want to show. You can come up and try knock me over, and you will not be able to knock me over…The whole body has to be integrated. The whole approach of movement and being integrated and what you’re doing has everything to do with my gesture and my being on the podium. That once I’ve started, I’m grounded, and I am not going to let go of that piece until the end. I think I told you that Dalcroze-teacher I that I worked with at Institution I – she came to my recital, and she nailed every time I left the score. She heard something change in the group. And it was frightening to me. And she was deadly accurate…

For the chorister, arrhythm may manifest itself in inaccuracies in rhythmic and textual execution, problems with intonation, a lack of vitality in the choral sound, or difficulties with maintaining active focus throughout a phrase, a piece, or a rehearsal. Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) describes vocal arrhythm in this 1905 criticism of vocal music in Swiss schools:

What wonder, considering the time that must be lost between the volition and the realization of their movement, that in practicing a song their little larynxes should be unskilled, their vocal chords inflexible and inexact, their breathing ill-regulated, to say nothing of their attempts to punctuate and measure the time, and to emit each note at the right moment! Not only, then should the ear and voice of the child receive adequate training, but, in addition,
every part of his body which contributes to rhythmic movement, every muscular and nervous
element that vibrates, contracts, and relaxes under the pressure of natural impulses” (pp. 7-8).

Caldwell (1995) suggests that vocal technical issues (arrhythm) arise when over-cognition
causes bodily tension. Musical problems are kinesthetic problems, he purports (p. 108).
Integrating the body into vocal training helps singers connect their interior experience of the
music, their affect, with their exterior manifestations of the music, their actions, helping to
reduce over-cognition: “My experience has been that the coordinating process between affect
and body is quick and almost without effort; the effort comes when the brain tries to overcome
the body and redirect its actions…” (p. 109). Conductor D uses the Dalcroze approach to teach
choristers to sing without tension:

I am convinced that much of what goes wrong with amateur singers is the result of tension.
And anything which gives them a reason to move while they are singing is a) likely to solve
vocal issues, and I think b) illuminate for them the difference between free singing and tense,
constricted singing.

McCoy (1986) suggests that singers receive less proprioceptive feedback in the music-learning
process than do instrumentalists. The Dalcroze approach facilitates connections between the
internal functioning of the voice and its externalization. Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) includes
training in voice as an integral part of developing whole-body eurhythm. He suggests a number
of types of exercises that synthesize body movement with the voice, and incites teachers to use
vocal gymnastics to develop the “mechanism of the larynx, the diaphragm, and the lungs, with a
view to the effective production of sound” (p. 3, p. 26). The voice also aids in the development
of aural musicianship, states Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) while correspondingly, aural training
strengthens vocal production.

There is so intimate a connection between the vocal and the aural processes, that the
development of the one virtually involves the development of the other…the efforts
necessary to assure the accuracy of vocal sounds conduce to the steady development of aural
faculties. In other words, while training with the aid of an instrument may tend to develop the hearing, that based on singing is calculated to refine the listening capacities (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 34).

Abramson (1980) points out that coordinating the various resources needed for music-making requires disordination as well, referencing Jaques-Dalcroze’s 1935 volume, Coordination et disordination des mouvements corporels: Exercices pour l’harmonisation des actes moteurs spontanes et volontaires et le developpement de la concentration. Abramson defines disordination as, “Training either side of the body (either brain hemisphere) and any part or parts of the body to articulate dissimilar designs and unequal energy levels” (p. 64). The conductor is an exemplar of the principle of disordination, “using one arm to create strong, assertive sounds while simultaneously gesturing with the opposite arm to bring forth sounds of melting tenderness” (Abramson, 1980, p. 64). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) also names the conductor as a model for bodily disordination, or polyrhythmics and polydynamics: “Who [the conductor] will express violence with one hand and tenderness with the other, and at the same time signalizes rhythms of different durations, and we have a perfect illustration of the combination of polyrhythm with polydynamics. It is essential that the rhythmician should possess absolute freedom of limb” (p. 89).

The notion of disordination may prove helpful in teaching the independence of various mechanisms used in choral singing: for example, do not correct flat intonation with an increase in volume, slower does not mean softer, a higher pitch does not necessitate a raising of the chin, sing the consonants mf and the vowels pp. Conductor C likens the voice to the violin. A violinist can move the bow faster (speed), or put more pressure on the strings (force) in order to alter the dynamic; but neither of these activities necessitates a change in the tempo of the music. Teaching choral singers to disordinate the speed or force of their actions from the tempo of the music is critical, suggests Conductor C. Singers are unaware of how these parameters can coordinate and disordinate to create expressive outcomes, and as a result, sound stagnates (personal communication, June 6/12, 2012).
Master-teacher C describes the singing voice as the closest instrument to body movement (personal communication, May 21, 2012). In her eurhythmics classes, the singing voice is used to help promote whole-body eurhythm. Students come to understand the meaning of “embodiment” through the integrated use of the voice with the body, she remarks. Likewise, the development of an expressive singing voice relies on the coordinated use of the body:

The voice for me is very important, because when I am able to have the people use their voice in a very incarnate way, I feel they really understand what I am talking about when I use the word *embodiment*…I just think that when people are really able to connect, to really connect their voice with their whole body, they really feel what it means when we talk about the connection with the body…For the voice to really be expressive, what you need is to train the body…You know, for the choir, the voice is important, but for the voice to develop, you need to have a body which is able to produce nice sounds, nice vocal sounds. You know, the body is the first instrument, so we always come back to the same thing.

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) advocated for a preliminary ear-voice-body training for all musicians, including singers and conductors whose primary instrument continues to be the body in performance. The sounds of the singing voice and the gestures of the conductor should be an outgrowth of whole-body coordination:

I challenge any singer, be he the greatest genius in the world, to interpret plastically and with rhythmic feeling the simplest music, before he has undergone a special education designed to make his muscular actions correspond with sound movements…This rhythmic training should likewise have a place in the education of conductors…(1921b, p. 266).

Marie-Laure Bachmann comments that “the profession of rhythmician, according to the methods of Jaques-Dalcroze, consists in knowing how to create links” (Brice, 2004, p. 7). Dalcroze teacher, Virginia Mead (1993), describes these links: “Links are constantly being made between the ear that hears, the eye that sees notation, the body that feels, and the mind that comprehends
and sends messages back to the body for a response” (p. 45). Mead names the conductor as a model of this type of integration (p. 45).

Bachmann also notes that the Dalcroze approach builds links between eurhythmics and other areas of musical activity, such as choral conducting. She retells a story of working with choral conductors where she asked them to sing a piece of music silently (in the inner ear) and allow the music to move their bodies through space, across the floor. The activity was aimed at the forging of links, in this case between the inner ear and the body, and “to encourage them [choral conductors]…to observe or to discover what links ought to exist between Eurhythmics and their own particular sphere of activity (1991, p. 40).

3.3 A Choral Body

Authors agree that Jaques-Dalcroze’s century-old reforms seem contemporary in the current discourse on the inclusion of embodied and somatic practices in music education. Juntunen states that arts education ignores embodiment in favor of reason and abstractions (2001, p. 206, 2004b, p. 199). Bresler (2006) argues that the field of music education prefers the visual and textual to the auditory and textural, aspects of experience which are embodied (p. 30). In the choral context in particular, Garnett (2009) argues that embodied teaching is too rare, stating “elements of dance or movement are integral to many choral styles, whether as individual response to a style’s rhythmic character, bodily percussion such as hand-clapping, or explicit choreography. In all cases, an inability to participate fluently in this movement would be seen as a significant skill deficit that has a directly detrimental impact on the performance. Yet principles for good practice in the performance of physical movement and teaching strategies to develop it are markedly absent from the practitioner literature” (p. 71).

Bowman (2010) criticizes efforts made in the field of music education to integrate mind and body as superficial and failing to translate into concrete and ameliorative musical practice. Music education could make itself more relevant by adopting an embodied approach, reflecting
what may be most distinctive about music; its roots in experience and agency, the bodily and the social” (p. 33). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) proposed that a whole-body approach to music teaching and learning should service the individual musician with the mental, emotional, physical, and musical skills for increased accuracy, expressivity and individuality (Choksy, Abramson, Gillespie & Woods, 1986). Music education should have an ameliorative orientation, helping musicians become both independent and imaginative. Jaques-Dalcroze comments, “No mere theoretical instruction can bring about the development in youthful musicians of the desire for beauty, the consciousness of self, the will to act, the power to construct” (1930b, p. 179).

Shusterman (2008), the creator of somaesthetics, the study of the use of the soma in perception and aesthetic development, agrees with Jaques-Dalcroze. Music learning should target sensory involvement with music, and increase creative self-fashioning (p. 2).

It was through discovering that nine out of every ten pupils understand and “live” music so little that I resolved to give all my time to the development of the child’s musical powers, so that he might subsequently be passed on to his instrumental and technical studies under conditions which would enable him to regard this very techniques as a means of asserting himself, of carrying out his personal determination and feelings, instead of allowing it to become a means of slavishly imitating the thoughts and feelings of others (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b, p. 51).

In practical terms, Conductor B notes that her use of the Dalcroze approach in the choral context has made a significant impact on choristers’ level of engagement. Experiencing the music in their own bodies promotes musical decision-making, ownership and independence. She describes the Dalcroze approach as opposite to a “spoon-feeding” approach:

Because their body is making connections to the music if they are listening to a recording, or if they are singing it and they are reacting to it in a certain way, they got to make a decision about how they move their body – the conductor didn’t. So, it gives them a feeling of empowerment, almost. And, then again, there is more buy-in...It’s not you be the teacher
and them being passive. They are more actively engaged. They’re making themselves learn it, you are not just spoon-feeding them notes. You’re not spoon-feeding them rhythms. You’re not spoon-feeding them...even the cognitive - if you have a difficult rhythm and asking them mathematically to figure it out – they don’t own that. Most of the time, they don’t own that until their body has its own...and there’s real learning going on. The engaging, energizing, the active... It’s a whole different ball game...

Conductor B adds that choristers remember the music better from rehearsal to rehearsal when she uses Dalcroze approaches (personal communication, June 6/September 24, 2012). Conductor A agrees that engaging the body in rehearsals embeds musical information much more deeply. She recounts a story when choristers forgot her verbal directives about the music, but were easily able to recall their movement experiences:

I remember one day we were singing Baroque repertoire and there were a lot of hemiole. And, they didn’t feel them at all. The text, the words, were written with the tonic accents and the hemiolas, but they couldn’t do this, so I make them move it this time, and it was incredible! The week after, they came back, and we sang again this part and it was [sticks tongue out and makes a noise], and I said, “Don’t you remember what we did last week?” They looked at me and I said, “I made you move, remember?” So, I told them, “If you are not able to sing with those tonic accents, I will make you dance this week!” ...I just had to show them a little bit what we did, and, “Oh yes, yes!” and they laughed, and I told them, “If you are not able to sing, we will dance!” So they sang, correctly. So, I think it’s interesting, because I think it was embodied. It was embodied.

Conductor C agrees that mental retention and integration of the entire choral score is increased through the use of the Dalcroze approach. He describes an instance where choristers remembered a year-old piece with ease:

Once they’ve done it kinesthetically in their bodies, they will never forget that piece. I think I mentioned, at an ACDA convention, I asked the kids that were in the group the year before
to stand, and I played a C major triad for them, and they immediately danced and moved
Byrd’s *Laudibus in Sanctis*. They hadn’t sung it in a year. It will stay with them forever.
It’s just part of their being. And, it’s integrated more than just their part. They hear the other
parts as well. So, that’s why I use this approach. It’s a meaningful learning experience for
them.

Used in the choral context, Conductors A-E note that the Dalcroze approach aids in developing
individual musical agency as well as the musical agency of the entire choir. Ehmann (1968)
introduces the concept of a “choral body”, a unified entity that emerges from the independent
musicianship of the choristers. The conductor, too, can enter into this choral body, and consider
him/herself a member and at one with the choir (p. 112).

The individual’s awareness of an animated, vibrant body should be transferred to the entire
choir. We speak deliberately of a “choral body”. The different sections should “grow
together” to form this choral entity, becoming “members” of one body. The total choral
body requires its own kind of corporate awareness, so that it can project the music with
animation and vitality” (p. 6).

Similitude of experience is not the goal, but rather an interdependence between the various
participants of the choral ensemble that can both preserve the development of each independent
musician while increasing the expressive potential of the whole ensemble.

Master-teacher B suggests that the Dalcroze approach balances a sense of leadership with a sense
of following (personal communication, May 21, 2012). Master-teacher C agrees that the
Dalcroze approach creates a cooperative learning environment where students learn both from
the teacher (conductor) and from one another. Skills such as watching the conductor are
balanced with skills such as adapting your voice and your energy to other choristers (personal
communication May 21/30, 2012). Conductor C describes the counterpointing of chorister
independence (from the music) with chorister interdependence (as an ensemble) as his primary
goal in incorporating the Dalcroze approach:
That’s my major goal – to get them independent of the notation. And independent from everybody else while being dependent on them as well. That’s the other challenge that I strive for… By that I mean that they are making independent musical choices themselves, while being dependent on everybody else’s choices…

He describes a specific movement exercise, done in pairs, that requires choristers to be both independent and dependent on one another. He notes how this exercise has made a deep impact on the choristers, both in terms of the depth of their musical understanding, and as a means of deepening interpersonal exchange. Simultaneously leading and following, as Conductor C explains, has a transformative influence on choral musicians.

The other that makes a big impact is if I just pair up people. Two people, and they can’t be singing the same part, and they stand facing each other, shoulders down, with hands in front of them, like patty-cake. And your hands are not allowed to touch the other hands of your partner. They are two or three inches away – you can feel the heat of the other person. And you look directly into their eyes…and sing the entire piece while their arms follow and lead each other. So, they are not allowed to touch the palm of the other hand, but that palm follows the opposite palm. So your right hand and left hand might be going up, might be going down, might be going sideways, and around. They determine, each of them determine, where they should move. So, they’re both in charge, and they both have to follow the other person at the same time. And this brings an incredible silence over the group. When it starts, I feel this incredible kinetic energy around the room, when it gets going it’s just silent about each of them. They get so interconnected with each other with their eyes. There’s also a huge afterword. I’ll do this with high school kids that don’t know these kids and have been squirrely during all of our demonstration and then half of them try to move with us, but this one just stops them dead in their tracks. They know what that piece meant when they get done. They have seen it in the eyes of the people they are working with. It’ll bring high school kids to tears without saying a word to them, just singing a song to them and having high school kids follow their arm movements, because they end up leading and following each other. So, that’s an exercise that has been incredibly uplifting. It’s a game-changer.
The Dalcroze approach prioritizes group learning. Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) remarks that the collective learning of music forges links between students and promotes joy:

This joy is evidently also created by the fact that lessons are taken in common, to musical accompaniment. Music forges a link between the pupils. A multiple life animates every organism, constituting a single rhythm traversed by many currents, all differing in expression, though inspired by one will (1930a, p.365).

Master-teacher B also describes “joy” as an outcome of a meaningful ensemble experience, such as the one that may be found in the choral context:

I keep coming back to Dalcroze’s statement that joy is the most powerful of mental stimuli. And the more I work with this, the more profound I find that is, because it’s inherently a joyful thing to be allowed to use all of our abilities. It makes one feel whole, and that’s profoundly joyful. To interact with other people – if it’s done in a way which is useful - leading to something - nobody likes to be part of a crowd. A stampede of humans. But to actually be in an organized, structured event that is creative with other people is very deeply powerful, I think.

Seitz (2005) comments that the Dalcroze approach is embodied on many levels, including socially embodied (p. 422). Juntunen and Westerland (2001) remark that Dalcroze was successful in counterpointing the first-person and third-person in music education, thereby creating learning experiences that are both personally and socially contextualized. Shusterman (2008) agrees, stating that the Dalcroze approach brings musicians a contextualized awareness of self. Master-teacher B asserts that the Dalcroze approach reaches the “musician”, the “human being”, and the “teacher”. She calls the approach “nourishing”, adding that it teaches us about ourselves (personal communication, May 21, 2012).

3.4 Summary

Jaques-Dalcroze’s ultimate goal was for the student of music, be it conductor or chorister, to develop the coordinations necessary for musical eurhythm, which he describes as “An un-
interrupted current between imaginative conceptions and practical results” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930a, p. 364). Used in the choral context, the Dalcroze approach grants a primary educational focus: the development of musical eurhythm through the coordinated usage of the musician’s whole-body. Music education, including choral education, should serve to promote these coordinations, including the coordination of experience and memory, experience and imagination, the automatic and the conscious, and the conscious and the individual’s personality \[temperament and fantasy in the original\] (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 174). Dalcroze techniques give conductors and choirs the means of achieving musical eurhythm through the balance of independent and somatically-informed musicianship with a sense of corporate awareness and teamwork.

Master-teachers A-C and Conductors A-E note this orientation in their work, highlighting in particular the usage of the Dalcroze approach to target vocal coordination (as a function of total body coordination), the usage of the Dalcroze approach to coordinate movement to music with affective response, and the coordination of independent musicianship skills with a sense of heightened participation and ownership in the choral ensemble.
4 Perception to Performance: Dalcroze-based Score Study and Gesture in the Choral Context

In the Dalcroze approach, the body is utilized as an instrument of both the perception and the performance of music (Farber & Parker, 1987, p. 45; Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 79). Dalcroze experiences work to (1) enlarge the field of perception and organize incoming sensorimotor information, and (2) refine bodily response and build a vocabulary of movement for use in music-making. The Dalcroze approach provides for what Marie-Claire Dutoit (1972) calls a “double education”, first sensitizing musical perception, and second, crafting that sensitivity into expressive musical performance (p. 52). Bachmann (1991) explains:

Music assumes two roles in Dalcroziean education. In the first place it acts…as an underlying support of time and energy enabling the maintenance and control of the stability of experienced sensations. In the second, it affords, by reference to various works, an area of application offering many opportunities to put the technique acquired to the test by adapting it to new expressive or formal demands (p. 213).

Master-teacher C asserts that the body and music mutually educate one another. The music develops the body (perception), and then the body develops the musician (performance) (personal communication, May 21/30, 2012). Jaques-Dalcroze desired that a body-based musical education should go beyond the correction of arrhythmity to the development of the musician’s imagination in the service of the repertoire (1921, p. v).

The second result of this education ought to be to put the completely developed faculties of the individual at the service of the interpreters – the human body. For the body can become a marvelous instrument of beauty and harmony when it vibrates in tune with artistic imagination and collaborates with creative thought. It is not enough that, thanks to special exercises, students of music should have corrected their faults and be no longer in danger of spoiling their musical interpretations by their lack of physical skill and harmonious movement; it is necessary in addition that the music which lives within them – artists will understand me – should obtain free and complete development, and that the rhythms which
inspire them should enter into intimate communion with those which animate the works to be interpreted (1909, p. 17).

4.1 Building a Body-based Vocabulary for Choral Performance

In order to facilitate both musical accuracy and expressivity, the Dalcroze approach aims to progressively build the musician’s vocabulary of movement in service of music. For Jaques-Dalcroze, rhythm, including musical rhythm, was synonymous with movement. Musical rhythm inspires human motion and emotion, and likewise, music animates and manifests the natural rhythms of the human body: “From its birth, music has registered the rhythms of the human body of which it is the complete and idealized sound image” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 119; 1930b, p. 7). In his 1907 essay, “The Initiation into Rhythm”, he outlines his principles regarding music and movement as follows:

(1) Rhythm is movement.

(2) Rhythm is essentially physical.

(3) Every movement involves space and time.

(4) Musical consciousness is the result of physical experience.

(5) The perfecting of physical resources results in clarity of perception.

(6) The perfecting of movements in time assures consciousness of musical rhythm.

(7) The perfecting of movement in space assures consciousness of plastic rhythm.

(8) The perfecting of movements in time and space can only be accomplished by exercises in rhythmic movement. (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 83).

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) used the terminology of time-space-energy to describe the correlated movements of the body to the rhythm of the music: “A properly executed rhythm requires, as a
preliminary condition, complete mastery of movements in relation to energy, space, and time” (p. 83). The ability to balance the interrelated use of time, space, and energy would determine the musician’s facility, efficiency and expressivity (Choksy et al., 1986; Landis & Carder, 1972).

Rhythm, like dynamics, depends entirely on movement, and finds its nearest prototype in our muscular system. All the nuances of time – allegro, andante, accelerando, ritenuto – all nuances of energy, forte, piano, crescendo, diminuendo – can be “realized” by our bodies, and the acuteness of our musical feeling will depend on the acuteness of our bodily sensations (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 115).

The time-space-energy equation underpins all musical activity, from the breath of the singer, to the upbeat of the conductor, to the articulation of an accent in the music. Any change in the amount of time effects a change in space and energy and vice-versa (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b; Abramson & Reiser, 1994). Master-teacher C explains how the principles of time-space-energy are manifest in choral singing and conducting:

The thing is that when you sing, the way that you control your breathing, the way that you put more or less energy, the way you attack your sound when you sing, it’s the same thing as when you conduct – the way that you do the gesture through the space. All of these things are based on the same principles. You know very well, Caron, about the “time, space and energy”. So the time, space, energy relationship is always the same. You know, you are breathing, and you have to control it in that respect. How do you manage your energy in respect to the amount of time you have, the space that you will have, you know, for your abdominal muscles to react, you know… It’s the same thing with the conductor, it’s just that it’s not your abdominal gestures that you are using more, but your arms and your whole body.

The Dalcroze approach aims to teach musicians to bring the time-space-energy equation into conscious awareness. This includes providing the body with a range of organized experiences in muscular contraction and relaxation at various degrees of force and speed in relationship to a variety of musics (Dutoit, 1971; Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b; Leonhard & House, 1959). Initial
body-explorations examine the difference between the states of muscular activity and muscular repose, and the preparation for one from the other (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, 1930b). In music, these two states are represented by sound and silence, including the preparation, continuation, and cessation of sound.

Musical rhythm is the art of establishing due proportion between sound movement and static silence, or opposing them, and of preparing for the one by means of the other, according to the laws of contrast and balance on which all style depends (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921, p. 149).

The use of a rest in music represents not inactivity but a transference of external hearing into internal hearing, or the echo of an external sound (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b; Rosenstrauch, 1973). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) believed the rest in music was greatly underutilized, and could be an important contribution to the development of “time-duration” as an expressive element in music. The rest in music gave performers (and composers and audiences) the opportunity to explore musical depth, of the interior/exterior transfer of sound to silence. Ehmann (1968) suggests that when a singer takes a breath, there is no cessation in internal sound: “The singer does not make a new attack into the next phrase but rather “enters into it” on the wave of the frequency of the sound oscillations which have not ceased to vibrate during the rest” (p. 85).

Master-teacher A references Jaques-Dalcroze’s description of the rest as internal vibration as uniquely informative to her understanding and performance of music. She asks her choral students to use rests as moments of preparation, to either listen or to take a breath:

For example, he [Jaques-Dalcroze] describes, just in one sentence, rests as “internal vibration”. And, if you think about that, internal means the energy is happening inside. It’s such a beautiful and short to almost the point of being able to disregard it. “Internal vibration”. I’ve thought of that phrase so much. That has definitely informed my body work. That rest is internal vibration. So, for years and years and years, I would no more have my kids read a rest as “sh”, or say anything, there’s another one, “sa”. What they do when they see a rest is they take a breath. And I tell them – when you see this symbol, it’s
called a rest, but it means *listen*. That’s what it means. And when you see this, and I tell them, professional musicians see a rest, and most often what they do is listen and take a breath. So, we all take a breath when we see a rest. So, that’s how we deal with it. But, that phrase, “internal vibration”, is very important in understanding how our study of music informs all of the parts of the music.

In Jaques-Dalcroze’s (1930b) description of the sequential study of body movement and moving-plastic, he begins with exercises dedicated to the alternation between states of relaxation and states of muscular effort. This work is always coordinated by the breath, which serves to unify the entire bodily organism, upper and lower body, and to direct the character and connection of the body’s motor impulses between its various states of activity. A change in movement may also occur through a shift of bodily balance, or transference of gravity (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b). The starting point for a movement or change in movement is the displacement of the breath or balance.

The trunk being the heaviest limb of the body, and the first influenced by emotion, owing to the action of the diaphragm, it follows that the most important and common instigator of all movements is the breathing (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 280)

According to Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b), developing the body’s sense of rhythm would involve studying the three phases involved in any bodily gesture: “that of setting the gesture in motion, that of the course of the gesture and that of its termination” (p. 69). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) used the following terms to describe these three phases of movement: anacrusis, to denote the preparation for a movement, crusis, to denote the initiation of the movement, and metacrusis, to denote the follow-through of a movement (p. 279; Abramson & Reiser, 1994, p. 33). These three phases, anacrusis, crusis, and metacrusis, comprise musical rhythm. Master-teacher B calls this “timing”, and relates it to the choral context (personal communication, May 21, 2102):

It’s really all about timing. To me, that’s what rhythm is – it’s timing. It’s not a metronomic thing. It’s the sense of the arrival, the take-off, the journey between take-off and arrival, and
all of that is subtly managed. If there are words involved, as there would be in a choral situation – they are managing how the words are said, and what the rhythm of the language is, and how that informs the rhythm of the music.

In the context of ensemble work, Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) suggests that the entire group must work to regulate their gestural points of departure and arrival together, collectively managing the time, space, and energy required for the music. Master-teacher A explains how she practices this skill with her choir, referencing a sense of felt impulse as a form of movement unique to the ensemble setting:

So much of what we do is informed by some shared feeling of pulse. And shared is the operative word here. Because when we are working in a group, we just feel together. Very often I will say to the group, I’ll just sit back, and I’ll say, ok, “You start”. Like my choral group, I’ll sit, and I’ll say, “You begin this, together. Feel the pulse, and see if all of you can begin this absolutely together without me conducting”. Not that I would put them on stage with that, but I think it’s important for them to be able to have that experience, of looking at each other, and feeling that impulse, and knowing how difficult that is. Figuring out, why is it so hard to start, and what do we need to do to make that happen? For example, to prepare, how many beats are we feeling? What’s the process of making this work? And then at the end also, how long are we going to hold this, and the other thing is, they can’t conduct each other. They have to look at each other, and do it just by feeling it, and moving in a way that choral groups move, not adding arms, or anything like that. So, that’s another example of not necessarily a felt beat, but kind of impulses that arise from this, what I said, a global feeling that is informed by beat, and phrase, and when you are talking about a fermata at the end, you are not talking specifically about beats, but about a kind of aesthetic feeling about the length of a note and when you cut off exactly together.

Conductor C works to develop his choir’s sense of anacrusis through the use of large-scale movement exercises on the floor. He advises choristers to maintain a sense of anacrusis as they
continue to perform the music. He likens this to the work of the conductor, who should continually be in a phase of preparation:

I will count them in, and then on the anacrusic beat, or the beat before the anacrusic beat, half of them are not moving, as if they are being pushed into the line, not preparing the line. So, we spend a lot of time observing the fact that they are going to make a full move a beat before they are going to make a sound. And this goes right back into what I do. This is my job as the conductor: I give you the context, I give the speed, and all sorts of information in my first preparation. But, I’m always a beat ahead of you, and that’s what I want to start to impart on that basic level. They are always a beat ahead of where they are. Their gesture shows the next thing that they are singing, not the one that they’re on. And I continue that by saying, “It’s never where you are that’s important. It’s where you’ve been and where you’re going”.

Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) cautioned that the quality of the motor impulse (anacrusis) would determine both the sound and the character of the metacrusis (1930b, p. 71). Likewise, the quality of the movement termination, gradual or sudden, would determine the quality of the next motor impulse. Conductor C references this Dalcrozan principle by asking the choir to use the inhalation (anacrusis) to imagine and pre-plan for the entire musical content of the phrase:

I ask my students to “inhale the phrase”. So, they inhale the phrase, the length of the phrase, the musical high point of the phrase, the diction of the phrase, and how they connect all that together, so, that’s sort of a final goal…

Shenenberger (2008) categorizes Dalcroze experiences for the choir into two areas of body-movement exploration: rhythmics, an exploration of the metrics of the music, and plastique, an exploration of the line and flow of the music (p. 539).
4.1.1 Rhythmics

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) believed that the body possesses an instinctual sense of timing, as evidenced by the heartbeat, the breath mechanism, and natural movements such as walking (pp. 81-82). Walking, in particular, with its rhythmic alternation between equal states of balance, tension, and weight, afforded the musician a basic physical analogue for the study of musical beat, subdivision, tempo, duration, and rhythmic pattern (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, 1930b). Jaques-Dalcroze proposed walking, including establishing regularity of gait, as a primary musical exercise (1921b).

Master-teacher A describes moving the beat and the tempo as preliminary explorations when learning a new choral piece. First, the choristers say what they see on the written score. Then, they immediately begin to move, and tempo is first. Master-teacher A uses these primary movement explorations to help the choristers build strong connections between the musical symbols and sound and feeling (personal communication, March 16, 2012):

> We look at the tempo marking, and we move it right away – it’s the first thing we do...and the students show it – tapping their hand, or moving their head. That’s the beginning, Caron. That is the beginning of the music. So, they have to get the tempo before anything. So, then, meter.

Conductors C and E also report the use of stepping in the early learning stages with the choir. Conductor C’s movement exercises begin by having the choir step the basic pulse of the music while singing. He then asks the choir to try one/all of the following in sequence: (a) step the melodic rhythm while singing (vocal part), (b) step the rhythm of the piano part while singing (vocal part), and/or (c) step in canon with the piano part while singing (vocal part). When the vocal parts are in duets, he asks that the choristers step in pairs. These sequential activities develop singer independence and knowledge of the score, including others’ parts, remarks Conductor C (personal communication, June 6/12, 2012).
Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) also advocated for the use of conducting while stepping, to introduce a simultaneous sense of meter (conducting) with beat/pattern (stepping). Conductor E reports using this strategy to help choristers correct a common source of rhythmic problems, the differentiation between the meter of the music and the rhythm of the music (personal communication, July 19, 2012). In Jaques-Dalcroze’s 1920 book, *Rhythmic Movement Vol. 1*, he suggests the use of over-sized upper-body conducting armbeats to articulate meter. These armbeats use the full extension of the arms, in what Jaques-Dalcroze calls lines of movement. The vertical descending line is the strongest, and is reserved for the downbeat of each measure (p. 7). Master-teacher B reports the use of these large armbeats in eurhythmics classes, and compares them with the use of small conducting beats in traditional conducting. Use of armbeats brings structure to the body, suggests Master-teacher B, and facilitates the integration of meter (armbeats) with rhythm (stepping):

> I use the large armbeats as well as small armbeats. Yes, I use the very big ones because I was taught to use them, and I found them incredibly helpful. They structured me rhythmically in a way that small armbeats would not have. There was something that was really physical about stepping a pattern, stepping a canon, with these giant armbeats that involved the whole upper body. It was an extremely important part of what I did as a student. I felt that it structured me musically, rhythmically. So that I knew where I was at all times. Stepping of patterns involving moving of weight around the room in a powerful and musical way. But, the upper body, if we don’t involve the armbeats, is not involved.

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) cautions that metric organization of music must always be subservient to rhythmic impulses, “The metric tradition kills every spontaneous agogic impulse, every artistic expression of emotion by means of time nuances” (p. 314). Findlay (1971) agrees, stating, “*Movement, not counting* (which is the perception of the time division and not time itself), is the secret of developing a real feeling for time” (p. 5). Ehmann (1968) argues that counting is detrimental to music making, and that choral singers are typically encouraged to count the music, arithmetically, but not encouraged to identify the larger rhythmic relationships
that constitute musical motion (p. 94). Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) posits a goal: “To vibrate without metre, then to express oneself in metre” (p. 54).

4.1.2 Plastique

In 1919, Jaques-Dalcroze defined a new area of musical expression, “moving plastic” or “living plastic” (1921b, p. 258). Its goal is to corporally express the specifics of the music. According to Dutoit (1971), “Plastique requires the study of musical structure, the discovery of the music’s message, its emotional force, its style, its form and its whole character” (p. 52). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) offers a list of musical devices and their corporal analogues. Pitch may be represented by the position and direction of gestures in space. Chords may be represented by arresting of associated gestures. Form may be represented by the distribution of movements in time and space (pp. 261-262).

In a typical Dalcroze sequence, stepping and conducting (metrics) are followed by the exploration of phrase and line (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 54). Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) describes the musical phrase/line as a series of connected gestures, driven by a singular emotional impulse (1930b, p. 81). Gestures within a musical phrase/line must be continuous, as with the bow on the violinist’s string, the pianist’s legato line, or the sustained tone of a wind instrument (pp. 66-68). Any interruption or breakage in the series of gesture halts the phrase, or creates a moment of arrival, which must necessarily be followed by another initiation, or anacrusis (1921b, p. 278).

Untimely stops created by reflection, anxiety or fatigue introduce into the rhythmic current resistances which change its form… but these should not compromise the sure progression to the end pursued, and both the mind, on the one hand, and the nervous and muscular systems on the other, should be ready to create connections between the subsidiary currents and to assure the arrival of the principal current at its goal (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b, p. 83).
Conductor C calls these continuous movements “leading on the line” (personal communication, June 6/12, 2012). He relates a story of his early Dalcroze studies where Dalcroze-teacher I was trying to teach the class about musical line:

Our first classes with her, she would play Pablo Casal’s recordings, and she would ask us, “Which way did that note go? Did it move left or right? Did it go fast or slow?” And we had no idea what she was talking about. And then, one day I guessed and said, “It moved to the right”, and she said, “Yes, it did”. What she was after is what he was doing to lead us on the line. And he could change his rate of vibrato, he could change his pressure on his string, he could change the rate of his bow, and we started to learn that that was how he wanted us to follow the music and where it was going to lead us to the next level.

Conductors B, C and E report using plastique-style movement exercises with their choirs, although Conductor E states that he more typically creates a plastique for himself (in score preparation), then adapts it for use with the choir in various movement exercises. Conductors B and C use plastique with the choir as a culminating experience in the teaching process. Conductor B notes that doing a plastique animates the chorister’s understanding and performance of the music. After performing a plastique, they bring a different sensibility to their singing:

And the way to do it is to take a piece that they are working on, and find a recording of it, and let them discover the different musical elements that are in there and bring them to life… To me, that’s the culminating experience. And, then, for them to have the opportunity to sing it after they’ve moved to it, you know, again recognizing the articulation and the dynamics having shown it in their bodies… That’s a totally different experience.

Conductor C uses plastique regularly, as a freely-structured activity. The chorister’s corporal realization of the music reveals what they hear and understand about the music, and inspires the rest of the choir to consider multiple musical interpretations. The choir sings to accompany the movers:
At the end of all of my exercises, we do *tableaux*. Each group will be in charge of creating a tableau and *not* singing. They can do anything with their bodies that describes the music. Sometimes it’s very literal. Sometimes it’s abstract. It’s always incredibly moving and thought-provoking for the rest of us. Two-thirds of the choir will stand in a circle and sing the piece while the other third of the choir act out the piece in a very different way.

Master-teacher B underscores that body technique must be built up in order to facilitate musical expressivity. At times, body work may need to be taught independently of the music in order to service the music (personal communication, May 21, 2012). She echoes this same movement vocabulary sequence described above, highlighting the metrics and plastics phases, for work with the choir. Weight transfer should be the first step, followed by showing the beat, then finding the walking pace of the music and the beat subdivisions. Exploration of the phrase comes last, with exercises like painting the shape of the musical phrase. She cautions that developing a movement vocabulary takes some time (personal communication, May 21, 2012). Conductor E agrees, stating that he is both the choir’s eurhythmics teacher and the choir’s choral conductor. The choir’s movement vocabulary progresses little by little, and in conjunction with the repertoire:

But, when I integrate it, it usually takes the form of my teaching them a movement, and rehearsing the movement, because by and large, I haven’t done the movement vocabulary work with them – there’s just not the time – to where they are going to come up with fitting movements…You teach them the movement vocabulary and they gradually expand and develop it on their own. Um, so when I use it in rehearsals that’s almost always the first thing, let’s learn the movement vocabulary, now let’s apply it to this piece…

### 4.2 Sound and Gesture

In order to facilitate musical perception and performance, Dalcroze training aims to build a reciprocal and informative relationship between the realms of sound and body movement (Findlay, 1971). Music is understood to have originated in movement with any movement of the
body able to be translated into a sound counterpart, and any sound translatable into movement (Caldwell, 1995; Choksy et. al, 1986; Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b; Poch, 1982). Conductor E refers to this notion as “phonomimesis”, the exact representation of sound in gesture and vice versa, although he qualifies that for any given movement there may be a number of suitable musics (personal communication, July 19, 2012). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) describes this reciprocal connection between sound and gesture as the mark of superior musicianship:

It may be noted that there is an intimate connection between rhythm in all its shades and gesture. A complete musician, to mark a sharp, vigorous accentuation, will shoot out his clenched fist; his thumb and first finger will unite to describe a fine, acute touch; his hands will sway apart to indicate an effect of delicacy and softness…His body is an involuntary medium for the expression of thought (p. 85).

Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) cautioned that the use of bodily gesture must arise from personal impulse, and be authentically connected to the emotions or attitudes of the musician. Any gesture that is artificial, unintentional or superfluous will result in a distorted musical expression (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b). Conversely, the use of a fitting gesture will display ease and beauty (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930a). Master-teacher B suggests that a suitable gesture will amplify the meaning of the music, and vice versa, an unsuitable gesture diminishes the meaning of the music (personal communication, May 21, 2012).

They are painting the musical line, or they are showing me, in some way, whether this is a whole step or a half step, or in a di-chord, where’s the feeling, where’s the accent? Embodied in the gesture is the musical feeling. I mean, there are gestures which simply don’t work. And, if you take the gesture away, you’ll find that the sound isn’t working either. And you put the gesture back, and tool it so that it does work, so there’s the right gesture for that particular musical event, and it makes a huge difference.

Used in the choral context, Conductors A and E report a focus on developing bodily gestures that are directly related to the desired choral outcomes. Conductor A pays close attention to the
quality of the chorister’s gestures, insisting that the quality of the movement will determine the quality of their learning:

I ask them to clap rhythms in the hands, or tap on the knees, or draw the phrase with their arms. They cannot move very much because they are so squeezed, but when I ask them to do this, as a Dalcroze teacher, I pay very much attention to the movement quality. I don’t ask them to clap, and if they clap *poof, poof, poof* [demonstrates unmusically] – not musically, I just tell them, “No, no, no”. Or when I ask them to speak a rhythm, I am very, very aware of the sound, of the quality of the movement as a Dalcroze teacher…It’s really important for me. I think that if we ask to add gesture to music so the music is better learned, the movement has to have a good quality, a very good quality, and to be linked with the emotion, but also something very *libre*, free.

Conductor E also develops gestures in relationship to the desired choral sound. He works to refine the quality of the movement first, expanding and tooling the choir’s movement vocabulary, and then he associates the gesture with the desired vocal sound. He suggests that if the choir’s sound is not working, then the gesture needs to be reworked:

To have the gesture have the right shape…for them to find an expressive gesture, an expressive movement that fits that gesture. I don’t usually plan these things, but something comes up, and that’s really a “reach-up” that isn’t fulfilled, and you don’t get to what it is, and rehearsing that motion with them, until they’re really feeling that motion, and then adding the voice on top of that, so that they find it that way…So, look at their motion, and if it’s not how you want them to sound, then fix the motion, and spend the time rehearsing and perfecting the motion until it has all the beauty, all the shape, or all the anger, all the fire that the piece you are working on needs to have. Um, and then you will get all of that in the sound, and it will be ever so much more visceral.
Conductor E underscores the negative results that can occur when the quality of the movement used in the choral rehearsal is not musical. Unmusical movement will result in unmusical choral singing. He warns against the “deadly Dalcroze circle”:

I will say, something that I hate that I have often seen, when choral conductors quote- unquote start using eurhythmics, is they’ll just have all of the singers march around in a circle in time while they sing. I just hate it. I can’t stand it. Because so many times when they are moving in the circle, they are moving in this unmusical, gangly, loafish way, and the point of eurhythmics is to move the music, and if that’s how you are moving, that’s how your music is going to sound. So, the first time I have a choir move across the floor, I will take a good twenty minutes just getting them to walk in a really graceful way, and I will specifically take a piece of music that we can then apply that grace to the singing of it, and I almost never have them go in a circle. If the room’s not big enough, I’ll have half of them stay off to the side, or on the risers, changing directions, in straight lines, changing the direction at the phrases – things like that rather than the “deadly Dalcroze circle”.

Abramson cautions that a eurhythmic approach must develop a sense of kinesthesia, not just a sense of tactility. While marching around the room while singing may develop a sense of rhythmic attack, it may not develop the totality of the movement process, anacrusis, crasis and metacrusis (1986, p. 38). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) concurs, stating, “We will therefore designate as “musical movement,” every movement conforming to the dynamic laws that govern music” (p. 273). Dalcroze teacher, Virginia Mead, agrees, stating that “it IS Eurhythmics whenever I actually SEE MUSIC as something moving in time and space. I see students of all ages taking on the living quality of music” (1995, p. 5).

Conductor C suggests that choral conducting gesture in particular can lose its connection to sound throughout the choral rehearsal process.

And I think what happens is that we as choral people are in front of the group for so long, because of all the things we have to teach with diction, as well as all of the musical elements
in the notation, that gesture becomes less and less important. Everything has been sort of
built into what they are going to sound like. We work on the sound, but we don’t work on
the sound as it relates to our gesture, I think. So, I’m trying to be true to myself and true to
my group in that my gesture shows exactly what I want, all the time. And, I can change that
gesture at any time, and get a different sound.

In order to revivify the connection between gesture and sound, he stops conducting the choir for
a period of time, to allow choristers to focus on their own bodily explorations of the score. The
chorister’s movement to music increases their sensitivity to his conducting gesture, states
Conductor C. Once they have experienced the music in their own bodies, he is free to adapt his
conducting gesture to meet any performance acoustic:

So, often times I am doing so much movement before tour – tour is the last couple of weeks -
they don’t see me conduct at all, they’re doing totally other kinds of exercises. So I must
remember, a couple days before tour, to actually get in front of them again! And conduct.
And then when we go on tour, then I can change anything I want at any time and I know they
are following my gesture, as opposed to something built in. It has greatly to do with
eurhythmics and how the gesture works.

When asked if they use Dalcroze to teach vocal technique, Conductors A, B and E report the use
of body-based approaches to refine vocal intonation, tone, and breathing; however, Conductor A
references Eutonie, not Dalcroze, for this purpose, and Conductors B and E suggest that their use
of movement in vocal training is not always Dalcrozian. Conductor E qualifies that the use of a
spinning motion with the arms to sustain the breath energy necessary to sing a long note in tune
is not a Dalcrozian approach. The energy of the long note is connected to a musical line, and is
more likely a gliding or pressing motion than a freely spinning motion. A Dalcrozian approach
aims to directly manifest the quality of the music through the gesture and vice versa.
4.3 A Dalcroze Approach to Score study and Conducting Gesture

Jaques-Dalcroze envisioned that the study of eurhythmics would affect performance from all angles, including the perspectives of the composer, the performer and the audience-member. The study of musical rhythm would result in the acquisition of a sense of time-duration, an under-explored aspect of music with a range of expressive possibilities equal to that of the range of pitch or dynamics (1921b, p. 160). Eurhythmics would allow performers to meet the demands of contemporary repertoire, and give composers a new palate of musical devices, such as silence, unequal beats, unequal measures, additive rhythms, twice and three times as quickly and slowly, anacrusis, rhythmic plasticity, and agogic accents (1921b, pp. 149-158). A eurhythmic sensibility would also allow the hearer and performer of a work to connect more deeply to the intentions of the composer: “Only the possession of a powerful muscular sense can enable the hearer to substitute for the emotional state of the moment a condition that will respond to the motor sensibility of the composer…the hearer of a work should be able to say: “That is yourself!” [composer]” (1921, p. 193).

The use of body movement represents a form of score study, the goal of which, according to Jaques-Dalcroze, is to discover the musical intentions of the composer. Music education should approach the study of repertoire from this standpoint, inquiring into the expressive intentions of the composer, and the feelings evoked by the experience of moving the music.

The student, by gradually training his body in the dynamic and rhythmic laws of music, becomes more musical generally, and eventually capable of interpreting sincerely and spontaneously the intentions of the great composers…in short, the student will have the music within him [her], and his [her] instrumental [choral] interpretation will become more convincing, spontaneous, vivid, and individual (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 284).

A traditionally visual/aural approach to score study is not sufficient, according to Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b). “Musical thought is the result of a state of emotion, and a musical “score” may [italics added] record this emotion”, comments Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b, p. 105). Dalcroze
Caldwell (1995) calls the musical score, “The physical evidence of a composer’s reactions to sounds which sprung from the inner hearing of the composer” (p. 125). Master-teacher C warns against a singularly visual approach to interpreting musical notation:

> When you are looking at a score, you have to be very careful. Because sometimes what is written on the paper is not the representation of the embodiment of the piece…if you would listen to the music, you might be surprised as to what the characteristic of the music is, how you feel about it.

Master-teacher B agrees, suggesting moving to the music may reveal more than visually studying the musical notation.

> Even music that is well-notated – there’s so much that is left out. We, in the western world, don’t tend to notate things such as color, density of sound, the placement of sound. That’s just not notated at all. We don’t know how to do that. We put an f or a p and what that means is maybe more clearly defined by moving through something. This has to sound as if it’s moving through oil, or it’s moving through honey, or here it’s just moving through air – it’s totally free – those kinds of images. Well, that’s not on the score. There’s no way of putting that on the score. At least, in our scores.

Caldwell (1995) laments that most musicians have become spectators of music rather than creators of music (p. 46). Conductor C agrees that using the Dalcroze approach in the choral context helps choristers move away from notation towards a more spontaneous realization of the music. He also notes that the use of body movement brings the choristers closer to the intentions of the composer.

> So, by Friday, we always have something memorized, and I will choreograph that little bit structurally. And explain it to them, have them do it, and then we’ll talk about it, and they will usually have new insight about how their part integrates with somebody else. And, that’s the beginning of getting away from the notation, and getting back to what I think must have been in the creative mind of the composer. Try to make the choir appear as if they are spontaneously creating everything. They’re creating the text, they’re creating the speed, the
sound, the dynamic, and the music. And not thinking about, “This is a quarter note, oh, I forgot that is a dotted quarter note. This is a half note”. They are *way* beyond that at that point.

In the choral context, both conductor and chorister may become involved in body-based score study. Into performance, this score study is translated inwardly and invisibly for the chorister (as singing), and outwardly and visibly by the conductor (as conducting gesture) (Ehmann, 1968, p. 109).

Conductor A states that four major Dalcrozeian principles directly relate to the conductor’s preparation and to the training of conductors: (1) the kinesthetic sense (body as instrument), (2) internal audiation (the inner ear), (3) automatisms (the ability to layer physical activities, such as the conducting of meter with the conducting of phrase), and (4) time-space-energy, a principle best demonstrated through conducting. Conductor A believes (personal communication, June 1, 2012, January 5, 2013).

Master-teacher C concurs that the Dalcroze approach offers conductors a means of preparing for both the technical and expressive aspects of the art. First, a body-based exploration of the music (in score study) increases the conductor’s creativity, and thus, expands their range of interpretational choices.

If, as the conductor, you really take the risk, or the opportunity, let’s put it in a positive way, of exploring how your body will move to the music, and all the possibilities you have – all the possibilities that your body brings you – if you explore that, you will have a big range of expressive possibilities that you might not have had before if you were only doing the pulsation… But, if you take this opportunity to really explore that, with your whole body, moving through the space, running, and feeling all of the energy that your body can give you, when you conduct, you will have all these representations in your head of all of these expressive bodily qualities that you can use while you are conducting. Obviously you don’t
need to dance and jump while you conduct, but if you have done it with your whole body, you will have explored the specific energy you need for that specific articulation, or that specific nuances which you would like your choir or your orchestra to produce. You will find that energy, even if you don’t have to jump, but your whole…your arms will jump with it. See what I mean? Because you will have felt that much energy you need, that much dynamic, that much lightness, or that much softness you need for that specific thing.

Body-based score exploration also allows the conductor to move beyond the basics of beating a metrical pattern. It alerts the conductor to the technical and musical challenges of the score, and prepares them to better execute these in gesture, facilitating the ensemble’s realization of the music (personal communication, May 21/30, 2012). Embodied score study serves to build kinesthetic empathy between the conductor and the choristers, shares Master-teacher C:

…And also, we were talking about how the vocal aspect is linked to the body? If you have experienced that as a conductor, the singing aspect of it, that vocal gesture that I was talking about, you will be able to feel it through your hands. It’s like your arms will be your abdominal breathing. You will help the people do exactly the movement they have to do – technically sometimes and musically sometimes.

Conductors A- E report the use of body movement in score study to learn the music, prepare teaching strategies, and develop conducting gestures that are directly related to the music. Conductor D describes how his study of the Dalcroze approach has changed the way he looks at the score. Things “leap off the page” for Conductor D. The Dalcroze approach gives him a “visceral feeling” for the music, for example, the 4th degree of the scale now has a colour and a character, versus just a tonal function (personal communication, July 9, 2012). He also notes that the Dalcroze approach has facilitated his leadership of the ensemble, allowing him to be musically in sync with the repertoire and also with the needs of the ensemble.

I was a stiff, unmusical, by-the-book conductor, and very proud of the fact that, you know, I was a minimalist with my gesture…For me, Dalcroze utterly transformed my physical
presence in front of the ensemble. And my approach. I move more freely, I’m more
generous with my gestures, ah, I think I know how to incarnate in my physical presence what
I want from them. So, we were singing a very simple thing – it was a Taizé chant, in which
there was an elaborate solo going on, but the choir had essentially four chords that they had
to sing over and over again. And I conducted it continuously, and with a lot of gesture, not
because they needed it to keep together, but because they were so quick to fall off the kind of
buoyancy that I wanted them to feel, so I was standing there trying to be, and I think
succeeding, buoyancy incarnate for them.

Conductor E creates a solo plastique of the music, an exercise he describes as his “Dalcroze
preparation for teaching a piece” (personal communication, July 19, 2012). He uses this
personal plastique to develop a physical feel for the music and to aurally memorize the score. He
notes that the plastique also informs his choice of movement experiences for the choir, and
provides the outline for his conducting gesture.

I move while I study the score. I move the lines – even sitting still, I’m hearing implied
motion. There was a wonderful point, when I was so immersed in Dalcroze study, especially
when I was studying it here at Institution I, and then going and studying it in the summers as
well, this wonderful point happened, when I would see people gesture, and I would hear the
music for that gesture in my mind. And it was the weirdest sort of kinesthetic experience...
But, I think that’s huge in score study. And, even when I’m not moving, I’m imagining
moving. And then I am moving, because I’m always building a plastique for myself.

Conductor C describes seeing the music as structures that he can choreograph on the floor. Like
Conductor E, he incorporates those same structures into his performance conducting gesture
(personal communication, June 6/12, 2012). Conductor C describes stepping out the rhythmic
patterns of the music in his office. This bodywork helps him to design conducting gestures that
are both evocative of his music intentions and most helpful to the choristers.
I will step them out in my office and make sure that my gesture is then showing what I want. Sometimes it’s a matter of a direction of flow coming out of a beat, or incorporating a move. Let’s say we have in 3/4 a dotted quarter and three eighths, there’s a move that I will move on my second beat that will give the illusion that I’m pulling those three eight notes in a line, around in a circle, and pulling them back to the downbeat. I will actually change the direction of my beat to make that happen. Things like that…I see patterns in music, and then…so like being a choreographer on the floor, I will choreograph that move in my gesture that I think will help them the best.

Master-teacher C references the phrase “show me how the sounds move”, a phrase she uses in eurhythmics classes. She likens this to the work of the conductor, who embodies both meanings of the word “move”:

And when you’re conducting, that’s what you are showing your musicians, your *choristes*. You’re showing them with your body how the sounds move. Or, you are showing them how the sounds *move you*, but it’s the same, isn’t it?

Conductor A applies this sense of “movement” to both the ensemble and the audience. She moves instinctually as she studies the score, a process that translates into her conducting gesture. She reports that non-musicians are able to *see* the music while she conducts, while musicians report that they are able to very clearly understand her musical intentions.

**Conductor A:** It’s in my role as interpreter that the Dalcroze person that I am reveals the fundamental principles of Dalcroze. The skills I integrated in my training appear very clearly when I study the score, for example. Because I *move* when I study the score. Sometimes internally, but often, I move. I move the score, yes, at the beginning of the study.

**CD:** What are you moving, the rhythm, the harmonic changes, or the text?
Conductor A: I move the music! I move the phrases, I move the metric, but not in conducting 2, or 3, or 4, I move the pulse, I move the dynamics, probably the harmonies changing, but I don’t do that consciously. It’s instinctive. I cannot be still when I look at a score. If I have to conduct the score, if I look at it and I have to conduct it, and those principles, we can see - anybody can see those principles in my conducting gestures. I just love to conduct.

CD: What do they see, Conductor A?

Conductor A: Most of the time what people say, often if they are not musicians, they say, “It’s fantastic, I can see the music. She is the music.” And, the musicians tell me that my conducting is so precise. Yes, precise.

Shusterman (2010) extends this notion of kinesthetic empathy to the relationship between the performer [chorister] and the audience. He notes that seeing a performer use their body expressively while they play or sing stimulates the same motor neural pathways involved in performing that motion (p. 103). Likewise, a disconnected body, out of sync with the music, can prevent the audience from a eurhythmic experience of the music, causing what Dickson (1999) calls a distorted version of the music (p. 20). Caldwell (1995) suggests that eurhythmics training achieves expressive performances through the shared engagement of the kinesthetic sense, “The singer has learned the dance of the music and then is able to stand quietly and make the souls of the audience dance and sway” (p. 118).

Conductor E works to establish this connection with his choirs. He asks choristers to come up with movement for the music as a sort of collective score study process. These movements help choristers connect to their own feelings about the music, which then helps them connect more expressively to the audience:
You know, I think it’s really great to have a choir coming up with movements and choreographies to the piece, and really thinking about, what movements does this music inspire in us? And then, to reverse that, and say, in our performance, how can we more strongly inspire that sense of motion in our listeners? So, even if they were sitting still, they would feel that they are moving, or quite literally being moved, in various ways by what we sing.

Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) suggested that the listener should be connected directly to the composer: “The keenly sensitive listener or spectator should on his side recapture sensation by way of emotion, and rediscover the creative thought [of the composer]” (p. 183). Conductor C asks each member of the choir to sing directly at the audience, both as an independent musician, and as a part of a musical collective. He suggests that the choir’s expressive potential hinges on their ability to connect personally to the audience:

I have them look at the audience. They are trying to tell their forty-eight stories about what is going on, and they are independent and dependent at the same time. But, they can still see me peripherally, some see right through me and make eye contact with the audience. We have the lights up in the audience so that we engage them. We do not let them escape what we are doing. They must get what we are doing. Or we haven’t done our job…And at half time, I will ask the choir, “So what’s going on in the audience?” And they will be able to describe in detail people in the audience that are being moved by what we are singing. They are not allowed to just sit there or to watch. They need to be enveloped in us and understand what it is we are trying to do.

4.4 Summary

This chapter explored the dual role of the body in the perception and performance of music. It examined the interrelationship between sound and gesture as a foundational principle in developing musicians’ resources. The integrated use of the body helps musicians develop a vocabulary of gestures that meets the technical demands of the music (rhythmics) in preparation
for exploring the expressive demands of the music (plastique). Jaques-Dalcroze insisted that the metrics of the music should never overshadow the plastique of the music:

Certainly there exist laws which enable the artist to furnish a perfect form for the images recorded by his [her] intuition; there are fundamental principles of ordination of lines, of juxtaposition and coalescence of colours and sounds, but in the completed work, nothing of all this science should be manifest. Alone, the feeling of rhythm - that is, the true, ideal, creative essence, the fundamental harmony of nature - should reveal itself: a direct, spontaneous, and faithful reflection of Beauty (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 190)

Conductors A-E report a reliance on body movement when building a concept for the score, preparing to teach the score, and in conducting the choir. They note the influence of the Dalcroze approach on the level of artistry they can achieve with the choir, both in terms of technical proficiency and in terms of musical and communicative potential. Like Jaques-Dalcroze, they suggest that successful music making is the result of whole-body integration and the continual exploration of bodily experience:

Eurhythmics requires for its ideal manifestation the intimate, whole-hearted collaboration of a great pianist, a great singer, a great master of harmony, a great conductor, and several accomplished instrumentalists – one and all devoting heart and soul to their work. Durable artistic works are not created out of mere intuition: they demand a complete mastery of their art, by the accumulation of experience on experience (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 159).
5 Dalcrozan Pedagogy in the Choral Context: Implications for Rehearsal and Relationship

At the center of the Dalcroze approach is the belief that the kinesthetic, aural, mental and emotional skills necessary for artistic music making are teachable. Jaques-Dalcroze believed all levels of music students, including those who are not deemed “born” musicians, could grow their musical resources through the integrated use of the whole body (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b; Bachmann, 1991). Many more people are musically gifted than is normally accepted; at most, less than 5% of students lacked any capacity for musical training (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, 1930b). The role of music education is to reveal to students their innate capacity to be musical:

It would seem (to adopt somebody’s analogy) that music is regarded as a fortress that has to be assailed on all sides at once. Those in possession extol its magnificence, splendor, and immensity, they insist on the number of wings and annexes that belong to it, and then are surprised to find people fight shy of it, though they themselves have pronounced it accessible only to a highly select few. And yet, it is open to everyone, provided the proper equipment is secured in advance (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 92).

Conductor D notices the influence of this philosophical orientation on his work in the choral context. As a conductor, the Dalcroze approach gives him a “pedagogical structure”, and tools to solve problems in rehearsal, saving him from what he calls “conductor’s crotchettiness”, or the conductor’s own frustration at their inability to solve problems with the choir. He calls the Dalcroze approach an “equalizer”, and remarks that in the context of the choral rehearsal, it brings all levels of musicians together in the common goal of making music. Pedagogically, it teaches aspects of music that are otherwise considered instinctual, such as the notion of “time-space-energy” (personal communication, July 9, 2012). The Dalcroze approach targets areas of music learning that are typically deficient in a musical education, according to Conductor D:

How to keep a tempo. Your standard music teacher’s advice on keeping a tempo if you have a problem is use the metronome. Well, Dalcroze has a better solution for that. The ability to feel harmony. To, you know, a sort of sophisticated appreciation of harmonic tension and movement. You know, that’s something that standard music education thinks if you don’t
have it, they can’t teach it. Well Dalcroze can teach it. Ah, I think the kind of *precision* that Dalcroze inculcates, you know, right from day one…a simple thing like going from a beat to a subdivision…um, you know all that stuff is really *assumed*. I mean, I think that standard music education thinks that if you explain to a student that there are two eighth notes in a quarter note, that you’ve given them all the information they need. And, of course, you haven’t. And we get frustrated with them when they can’t do that “in time”.

5.1 Dalcroze Pedagogical Sequencing

Dalcroze pedagogy aims to take students through a sequential process that equips them for musical accuracy and expressivity (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b). Learning sequences begin at the students’ levels, and then become tailored to meet the students’ needs. Jaques-Dalcroze (1930a) advises “the main thing for the educator is to utilize what ‘is’ in building up what may ‘become’” (p. v). Brice (2004) agrees that the goal of Dalcroze pedagogy is to give the students a means of succeeding (p. 51). Master-teacher C comments that the Dalcroze approach gives musicians a methodological structure that step-by-step leads from experience to analysis (personal communication, May 21/30, 2012).

The goal of the Dalcroze pedagogical sequence is to move the student from musical imitation to musical imagination (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b). Teachers facilitate this process by modeling musical sounds and movements in their own bodies, which the student then assimilates into his or her own embodied version of the music (Bowman, 2010, p. 44). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) advises:

> The teacher, in expounding rhythm by gesture, transposes into movement the representation of his own consciousness, and involuntarily seeks, by this manifestation, to awaken its representation in the pupil, in order that the latter may forthwith transpose it into the form of movement appropriate to him” (p. 86).

Conductor A agrees that her use of physical modeling initiates the Dalcroze exchange, inspiring students to experiment and improvise as well:
When I give my examples in singing or in talking, or with my body, I am a Dalcroze teacher. Do you understand what I mean? So, they see this, they hear this, and so, I think, they integrate this, even if I don’t always ask them to do the same as me… If I wasn’t a Dalcroze teacher, or a Dalcroze person, I couldn’t act…I couldn’t do like this. If I act that a fool in front of them, or go completely “yah!”, they see that it’s possible.

In the Dalcroze setting, students are encouraged to play with the materials of music, and to present individualized and creative responses to musical challenges. Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) suggests, “The best method of teaching is that which, from the start, offers the pupil a problem which neither his [her] memory nor his [her] instinct for imitation can help him [her] solve” (p. 45). Personal research and an attitude of experimentation are tantamount to finding the right answer. Jaques-Dalcroze termed this a “spirit of enquiry”, and admonished teachers to always allow students to do their own investigation of the music, based on personal bodily experience (1930b, p. 129).

Too many imaginative faculties are aroused quite late in life, owing to masters having demanded a mere imitation - first voluntary, later involuntary - of the methods of composition bequeathed to us by predecessors of different temperament, instead of inducing instinctive elementary researches, founded on the consciousness of actual physical and emotional capacities (1921b, p. 187).

Master-teacher A reminds the reader about Jaques-Dalcroze’s (1920) statement concerning experimentation in teaching and learning:

In the forward, in the introduction, Dalcroze refers to his experiments in the classroom, and I think that’s one of the most important statements he makes in the entire book [Rhythm, Music and Education, 1921b]. In other words, we are reading from his words – these are experiments he did. And so, we can conclude that we are also doing experiments.
Ehmann (1968) encourages the choral conductor and chorister to be creative in his/her manipulation of the materials of music in relationship to any given choral piece, stating, “The choir director and singer should devise new rhythms, which of course ought always to be related to the nature and style of the music which is being rehearsed” (p. 98). Conductor B relays a common Dalcroze phrase, “Show me another way…”, that she uses in the choral context. This type of teaching promotes creativity, she adds:

First of all, you have to encourage it [movement] and be supportive, but boy, once they start doing it, the more confident they feel, and the more they can do, so, it kind of takes people out of their comfort zone a little bit, and it’s also creative, so it’s like, “Show me another way to do that…”, “Show me another way to do that rhythm”, and you just keep asking them for different ways and you start to get some real creative things...I think sometimes choral music can be, you know, we’re teaching notes, or the teacher plays it on the piano and they sing it back, and where’s the creativity in that?

5.1.1 Experience: Developing Musical Consciousness

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) believed that the study of any musical concept was arbitrary unless directly connected to human experience. He states, “Everything in music can be related to fundamental physiological laws; how each nuance, each accent has its raison-d’être” (p. 54). In regards to developing a methodology, Jaques-Dalcroze insisted that theoretical analysis must follow experience (1920, 1921b).

The whole method is based on the principle that theory should follow practice, that children should not be taught rules until they have had experience of the facts which have given rise to them, and that the first thing to be taught a child is the use of all his faculties (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 118).

Conductor E adopts this same pedagogical sequence in relationship to rehearsing choral music:
For me, if there’s a problem in the sound, there are any number of ways you can fix it. You can talk about it. You can move it. Those are the two I think of a lot. And so, for any given issue, I try to both physicalize it for the singers, and intellectualize it for the singers, and usually, in that order.

Conductor B notes that she always inserts kinesthetic learning in addition to a cognitive approach [visual analysis], even within the context of rehearsing a single measure of music (personal communication, June 5/September 24, 2012). Choral educator, Shenenberger (2008), suggests that the moments before cognitive intervention are invaluable to the choir’s learning, stating:

We have a golden opportunity to raise the student’s awareness each time we present a new piece by allowing time, even if it is brief, for students to listen, respond, and internalize at least one aspect of the music before approaching it cognitively (p. 533).

The first stage in a Dalcroze pedagogical sequence always invites the body to instinctively or spontaneously respond to sound (Becknell, 1970; Brice, 2004; Comeau, 1995; Dutoit, 1971; Schnebly-Black & Moore, 1997; Vanderspar, 1984). These initial experiences with the music should be accessible to the student, and something they can complete without cognitive control. Additionally, Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) suggests that the task should be useful and translatable to a multiplicity of musical contexts. Master-teacher A describes how this pedagogical sequence is found in all Dalcroze classes:

Another hallmark of this work is that at the beginning of every class I’ve ever seen – an advanced class, a class that’s been together for a five-day workshop, or dance students. The very first exercise is something like, “Take a walk”. Or, “Lie down, and let’s breathe”, and that evolves into getting up and walking and finding a tempo. Every step along the way increases, let us say, the difficulty, or let’s say gets more specific, but each step along the way is doable. So, you don’t give the students a big problem to solve at the beginning. You don’t give them three or four tasks to do that they have to hold in the wrong side of the brain, and then you lose all natural movement because the students are working so hard to tease out a problem that shouldn’t be analytical cognitively. It should be something that they first figure out or work through through movement.
Master-teacher B begins each class by exploring a physical sensation that will later become associated with a musical concept and a specific composition. She describes a lesson exploring the musical concept of 4-against-3 that begins with the notion of “conflict”. Little by little, she introduces increasingly challenging experiences associated with the feeling of 4, the feeling of 3, and the conflict arising from their combination, to create the lesson. She mentions culminating her lessons with a piece of repertoire that reveals that particular musical concept in action (personal communication, May 21, 2012):

So, if we’re going to have a class on 4 against 3, I wouldn’t start right off with a piece that has 4 against 3 – not until everybody learns how to do it. That’s not my idea of the class. I would start with something quite simple that would give the shape of a 4, or the shape of a 3. And we would really live that. Then, they would experience something coming against that. The 3 coming against that. Or, the 4 coming against the 3. So we have the experience of conflict, but they’re really rooted in one [either 4 or 3]. And then it would be the experience of having something conflict with it, or not. The power of that polyrhythmic conflict would be what I want them to learn. Why do we use it? Why is it there?

As a unique aspect of Dalcrozian pedagogy, Dalcroze teachers observe students as they respond to the music. These observations equip the teacher to guide the pedagogical process as it unfolds (Landis & Carter, 1972). Master-teacher C argues that there is always something “good” about the students’ movements, in the sense that the movement reveals the student’s understanding (personal communication, May 21/30, 2012). Conductor D gives his choir movement exercises to determine what choristers are hearing and feeling as they sing:

I will do certain things to a) establish if they have any sense of the goal of the phrase, and then b) if they do, then the degree to which their vision of the phrase is common or whether it’s conflicting. So, things like leaning forward to the climax of a phrase and leaning back towards the end. You can immediately tell visually if they are thinking about the phrase in the same way.
Conductor C has developed a booklet of movement-based activities for the choral context, including a list of what choral conductors should be looking for as they use the exercises with their choirs. He stresses the importance of observing, rather than conducting, while the choristers move. Observation indicates what choristers are hearing/feeling in the music, which in turn shapes his rehearsal choices.

That’s why I said with these exercises have that little caveat there – here’s what you should be looking for. I have students in my graduate conducting program. I have one each year, so there are always two there, and one gets to work with the choir and do a full recital with the choir. It’s fantastic experience for them. And I ask them to run some movement rehearsals, and of course they want to, and then they stand there and they conduct, although people are moving all about the room! Why are you conducting? Nobody is following you! Nobody wants to watch you…They’re in charge of it now, so let them go. You know, someone is playing the piano and giving them a tempo, but I don’t conduct that either. I want to observe and see what’s going on. So I can work with that, see what I like and I don’t like.

Master-teacher A explains how observation of students affects her improvisation at the piano. If she notices the students responding in some unique or interesting way, she changes her music to *accompany* the students. Dale (1997) describes the Dalcroze teacher’s ability to observe and converse through music as a key focus of the pedagogy. The improvisation skills taught in Dalcroze teaching-training function as both a musical skill and a pedagogical tool, states Dale (p. 44). Conductor A emphasizes the impact of her Dalcroze training in improvisation on her pedagogical abilities, and in particular, her sense of creativity and ease of communication with the choir (personal communication, June 1, 2012/January 5, 2013). She notes that her Dalcroze training also allows her to interlink rehearsal activities, and lay out a logical pedagogical sequence for the choir:

I think that, from this way to treat the link between music and body, body movement and music emerge an attitude, a pedagogical attitude, very open to the person, to the group, to the dynamic of the group. The teacher is open to the dynamic of the group, and can lead to great
creativity – at the same time in the pedagogical act and in the content of the course. Creativity in the way we teach music and in the way we give the message. That we link all of the moments of the rehearsal. All those years with this in the body, the link between the music and body, and all the things we did with this, just give me, I feel this, gives me an openness in my pedagogical approach.

As students explore the materials of music through the body, Dalcroze teachers aim to organize learning experiences to quicken student response, maintain concentration, and make conscious the relationship between sound and movement (Brice, 2004; Schnebly-Black & Moore, 1997). The goal is to increase what Dalcroze teacher Farber (2011) calls “anticipatory listening”, or “enlarging the acoustical knife-edge of the immediate musical moment with a presence of the past and an expectation of the future” (p. 13). Conductor B reports using “focus and concentration” exercises at the beginning of her choral rehearsals to raise the chorister’s level of aural, physical and mental acuity. She also notes that these types of exercises/games heighten the student’s awareness of musical detail and nuance when they approach the repertoire (personal communication, June 5, September 24, 2012).

Conductor E references Jaques-Dalcroze’s description of his exercises as games (personal communication, July 19, 2012). According to Jaques-Dalcroze, the music classroom should be a dynamic learning environment that promotes student engagement, stimulation and enjoyment:

The natural qualities which benefit by education of the attention are chiefly memory and concentration; and the best means of training the attention of children is to play intelligently with them. Games should be joy-giving; I look upon joy as the most powerful of all mental stimuli (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930b, p. 100).

Three categories of musical games are regularly used in Dalcroze classes. In a “follow”, students must physically realize a specific musical rhythm, responding instinctively to changes the music. In a “quick reaction”, students must change response at a specific musical or non-
verbal signal. In a “canon”, students must perform what they have already heard while the music is continuous (Aronoff, 1979a; Schnebly-Black & Moore, 1997). Conductor C references his use of canon in the choral context to help choristers develop an awareness of the entire choral score:

I’ll even have them step that in canon sometimes. They listen to the first measure, then the second measure begins, they begin stepping that first measure while listening to the second measure. So, they’re a measure behind. And, then, when they come in with their part they are still singing their part. So I’m asking a lot of them, of their musical brains, to absorb the score in a much more meaningful way than just the tenor part.

### 5.1.2 Analysis: Cognition and Notation

The experiential phase with the music is followed by a phase of identification or analysis (Brice, 2004; Comeau, 1995). This may take the form of reading musical notation or verbally describing an experience with the music. Master-teacher C reiterates the importance of this stage in the learning process. Cognition must be wedded with experience, or teachers are not using the Dalcroze approach. Master-teacher C explains:

In a eurhythmics class, if you ask people to move, but you never asked them what they felt, what meant that movement in regard to the music they were listening to, you are not doing eurhythmics, you are just moving for moving. What eurhythmics aims at is to make the people aware of what is happening – the relationship between the movement and the music. What is that connection there? And if you don’t make them aware of that, then you are not doing eurhythmics.

Master-teacher A agrees, and proposes that the inclusion of a text in choral music introduces an additional layer of meaning that requires qualitative analysis (personal communication, March 16, 2012). Connecting experiences to feelings to language is an essential part of meaning-making in the Dalcroze-inspired choral rehearsal. Master-teacher A notes that this type of qualitative analysis also brings the students into direct contact with the composer and his/her
intentions. She describes an episode in her children’s choir where the students were searching to connect their experience of the music with words:

So, back to my question, to the choir. After they seemed to be really comfortable with this piece, and they really did like it, I did ask them this qualitative question, “how would you describe the music?” You know, and we did talk about the lyrics. And one girl said, “It’s touching. The music is touching”… And, then the kids had already said, it sounds sad in some places and happy in some places, and then one of the children said, “How does Composer G do that? How does he make the music sound that way? What does he do to make it sound sad and touching and happy?” and all this… So they said, because Composer G was teaching in our school at that time, they said, “Could you ask Composer G, how does he do that?” … When you were talking about choral conducting, you were talking about voice, ear, and body, but you have to add, for me, cognition, understanding, and analysis that have to come into this process.

Conductor C always follows-up his choir’s movement exercises with a group discussion. He underscores the importance of accepting all viewpoints concerning the music, and refrains from impressing his opinion about the text onto the group. Choristers should develop independence in musical interpretation, a critical skill for performance, and a transferable skill to their solo work, states Conductor C (personal communication, June 6/12, 2012):

And instead of me telling them what a text means, I ask them what it means to them, and I preface it by saying, “We are going to have a discussion on the composer today”, or, “We’re talking about just this one poem today”, and there’s something about the poet, why they’re writing, when they did… But then, I want to make sure that everything is valid that’s being said. And everybody accepts what somebody else has, even if it’s totally opposite of you believe and think about that. Whereas in my earlier times, I would have just confirmed what somebody said, or, “That’s what I believe too…” I will never let them know what I think about a piece, especially early on. Later, this is what this means to me, for whatever reason. But, I really want them to be as fully in charge of as much as possible of their musical decisions, their intellectual decisions, their poetic decisions…
Master-teacher A and Conductor B emphasize a different analytical skill, music literacy, as an important outcome of incorporating Dalcroze techniques in the choral context. Master-teacher A describes how her current choirs developed out of Sight-singing and Ear-training classes. The students wanted to culminate their musicianship work with performance, so the choir emerged (personal communication, March 16, 2012). Conductor B suggests that sight-singing is an underrepresented benefit of the Dalcroze approach:

The reading skills, and it’s funny that lots of times we don’t usually think of Dalcroze doing much with reading because of all the eurhythmics stuff, when in fact, there’s so much to do with solfège, and I think in the choral classroom, we need to focus and sell this and let people know that there’s so much more to do with that.

Jaques-Dalcroze (1930b) acknowledged the benefits of his approach on sight-reading. Images stored in the body through body-based experiences form the basis for aural and visual images:

Mental hearing depends on sensation and memory, so that the art of sight-reading is based on a good receptive condition, on spontaneity of mind, and on certain powers of creative imagination, for mental hearing enables the pupil to build up intermediate sound-images that serve as bases for reading (p. 107).

Dalcroze educator, Timothy Caldwell, concurs that the Dalcroze approach reinforces sight-singing skills and, secondarily, gives students a means of incorporating expressivity into the early music learning stages: “A goal of Dalcroze teaching is sight-reading that is as musically expressive as possible, so expression is part of the learning process from the beginning. The all-too-typical learning process deals with everything but expression until the dress rehearsal” (1995, p. 42). Conductors A-E note this as a uniqueness of the Dalcroze approach, that it integrates musical expression throughout the music learning process. According to Conductor B, this is an inversion of the typical choral rehearsal sequence. Dalcroze techniques not only
introduce musical expression, they make musical expression an essential component of the rehearsal:

My main goal is to find the most aesthetically expressive way for people to make music…It goes beyond where I think in the choral room, especially middle-schoolers and high-schoolers – high-schoolers are so worried about, “I’ve just got to sing the right notes with the right rhythm”, and then, if we’re lucky, we get to work on blend, and then, that last part, that expression…it takes it to another level that it becomes more of the “this is what *has* to happen”, as opposed to “Gosh, we’re lucky if we get to that point”.

5.1.3 Improvisation/Composition/Performance

The final stages of Dalcroze learning involve students in composing, improvising, or performing the elements of music through their own bodies (Brice, 2004; Comeau, 1995; Dutoit, 1971; Landis & Carter, 1972). Master-teacher B suggests that this phase is characterized by the student’s independence from the teacher. The students are now able to “play” with the materials studied throughout the class (personal communication, May 21, 2012). Abramson (1986) provides a useful summary of the Dalcroze pedagogical sequence which culminates with performance: “Hearing to moving; moving to feeling; feeling to sensing; sensing to analyzing; analyzing to reading; reading to writing; writing to improvising; and improvising to performance (p. 36).

In the choral context, this stage most often manifests as performance. Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) also places the act of conducting at the end of the learning sequence. Exercises in expressive conducting require the musician to synthesize all of their aural and physical training (Driver, 1951). Findlay (1971) describes how this may look in a children’s eurhythmics class:

One of the most creative experiences in eurhythmics is group directing. The term is usually associated with an orchestral body but in the rhythm class it describes a child who uses his whole body expressively in order to stimulate certain rhythmic responses in a group…The creative experiences of directing as well as those of movement and musical improvisations
represent the high point of our rhythm studies. These experiences demand a mastery and understanding of the elements of rhythms toward which all our efforts have been directed (pp. 56-57).

5.2 Dalcroze Eurhythmics, Solfège and Improvisation in the Choral Context

The Dalcroze approach is a tri-partite approach. Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) desired that “consciousness of rhythm” (eurhythmics) be taught first, followed by the development of “consciousness of sound” (solfège) (p. 81, p. 120).

After developing the student’s mental hearing and physical expression of rhythms, he [she] will proceed to train his [her] power of hearing, realizing, and creating musical sounds in rhythm (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 131).

As musicians develop their senses of both rhythm and pitch, the third area of study, improvisation, should also be integrated.

Conductors A - E reference the use of eurhythmics, versus solfège and improvisation, most commonly in the choral context. Eurhythmics approaches manifest themselves as any use of body movement to perceive or perform the music. Jaques-Dalcroze developed a number of specific eurhythmics exercises over his lifetime, and suggested that any of these could be applied to singing:

Teachers can apply many of these rhythmic exercises to singing (i.e., those of control, inhibition, counterpoint, phrasing, twice as fast and slow, etc.). In the exercises for dissociated movements, singing may be substituted for movements of the arms, legs, head, etc. (1920, p. 76)
Abramson (1986) suggests a list of thirty-four rhythmical concepts that may form a sort of curriculum for eurhythmics training. Any or all of these topics may be explored in the choral context: (1) time-space-energy-weight-balance; (2) beat (anacrusis, crasis, metacrusis); (3) tempo; (4) nuances of tempo (accelerando and ritardando); (5) dynamics (energy and weight), (6) nuances of dynamics (crescendo, diminuendo, subito); (7) articulation (staccato, legato, portamento, vibrato); (8) accents (metric, agogic, dynamic, tonic, ornamental, harmonic); (9) measure; (10) rests; (11) duration; (12) subdivision; (13) rhythmic pattern; (14) combination of beat and pattern; (15) phrasing; (16) form; (17) diminution; (18) augmentation; (19) rhythmical counterpoint; (20) syncopation; (21) ostinato; (22) contrapuntal forms; (23) canon (interrupted and continuous); (24) fugue; (25) complementary rhythm; (26) unequal measure; (27) unequal beats; (28) combination of unequal measures and unequal beats; (29) polymeter; (30) polyrhythm; (31) hemiola; (32) rhythmic transformation; (33) divisions of twelve; and (34) rubato (pp. 41-49).

Conductors B, D, and E reference the use of Dalcroze solfège to target choral musicianship (ear training and sight-singing). Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) believed the study of pitch should be undertaken in relationship to various scales, beginning with the study of half and whole steps (Comeau, 1995). Conductor D describes a warm-up he uses which requires choristers to identify the sounds of whole and half steps while using a correlative gesture:

We do a fair bit of work on whole-steps/half-steps where I play and they have to sing it back on those words, “whole-step/half-step” and use the gesture. Later on, I’ll ask them to sing whole-steps and half-steps, and I have a thing I got from Master-teacher A where this is a whole-step ascending [shows gesture], and a half-step ascending [shows gesture], and a half-step descending/whole-step descending [shows gestures].

Whole and half steps combine to form various permutations of the scale; including di-chords, tri-chords, tetra-chords and penta-chords. Conductor E describes a technique of using his hand as a gestural analogue for the first five notes of any given scale:

And there’s a warm-up I use a lot where I’ll take my hands, showing my five fingers, and I use those five fingers to represent five steps in the scale. So, if I’m holding my hand up so
you are looking at the back of my palm, my pinky would be like “do”, and my ring finger would be like “re”, and my middle finger like “mi”, and my pointer finger like “fa”, and my thumb like “so”. But then I set the key, or the distance between them, by if I brought my pinky and ring finger together, and left a space between my ring and middle fingers, that would be like going C Db Eb. I use the distance between my fingers to represent the whole and half steps they are singing. And then I point to various fingers and can create little modulations by changing the distance between my fingers as I do that. Which I think is a very Dalcrozian way to get singers to think about whole and half steps…

Jaques-Dalcroze (1921b) developed the C-C scales, or do-do scales, using a fixed-do system, to allow students the experience of singing all major and minor scales from two fixed points, C to C. This system would help students develop a stronger sense of scalar tonal center, and the ability to modulate easily. Conductor E explains his usage of the Dalcroze solfège in the choral context as a strategy to improve choral intonation and teach about intervals:

And as you dive into the Dalcroze solfège method, it’s really a method of orienting oneself within a key and the ability to quickly change that key and reorient oneself within the new key. And it’s a wonderful way – just the simple study of the whole and half steps – of teaching singers to sing in tune, without them ever realizing that you are teaching them to sing in tune. Because you are teaching them to be aware of the whole and half steps… And so, I do just enormous amounts of that, usually in the warm-ups related to hearing the distance between notes, really the true sense of interval – measuring the distance between them.

Jaques-Dalcroze also proposed exercises that would integrate eurhythmics and solfège, called solfège rhythmique. Abramson’s 1994 translation of his volume, Solfège Rhythmique, requires students to perform various melodic exercises with various rhythmical devices, such as twice-as-fast, timed breathing, and conducting arm-beats. Conductor B confirms that she combines pitch study with movement study to coordinate the whole body in choral rehearsals:
The solfège has typically taken place in the warm-up, as far as a way to increase reading and just to increase the ear-training connection. So…in other words, using a tone-row, having them read it and move their bodies so the body is following the scale. Altering that tone row, using augmentation, diminution, retrograde, so it becomes a sight-singing tool is really what it does. Then taking an extract from a piece of music, and doing the same thing. So they really, instead of just singing the pitches, or even singing them on solfège, they are actually *moving* to them.

Dalcroze teacher, Virginia Mead, (1994) concurs that a combination of pitch and rhythm is particularly useful in the choral context: “Ear-training exercises are always accompanied by movement, gesture, or conducting. Movement helps the ears, eyes and mind ‘attend’ more closely to the task – actually, the movement can mirror the sound being sung…choral directors have found that incorporating solfège-rhythmique techniques into their rehearsals will result in renewed vitality in the singing, more alert minds, ears and bodies, and thus a more musically sensitive performance” (p. 12).

The third prong of the Dalcroze approach is improvisation, which Jaques-Dalcroze viewed as an integrative exercise, combining all of the students’ aural, kinesthetic, and mental resources in spontaneous musical creation (Choksy et. al, 1986, p. 60). In a traditional Dalcroze class, students may be asked to improvise vocally, in the body, at the piano, or with an instrument. Dalcroze teachers regularly improvise from the piano to allow pedagogical freedom and to stimulate and accompany students.

Master-teacher A and Conductors A-D use a variety of improvisational techniques in the choral context. Master-teacher A and Conductor C use movement improvisation as a means of eurhythmically exploring the choral score. Conductor A references her pedagogical use of improvisation. Conductor D asks choristers to improvise rhythmic drumming patterns on their knees while singing to increase rhythmic vitality. Conductor B uses piano improvisation, and
has tried chorister improvisation, but suggests it is difficult to incorporate into the ensemble context:

Yah, singer improvisation I just started to do a little bit, in fact, Dalcroze-teacher M has given me some really, really cool ideas that I’m going to use this summer, and in fact, the first safe way I would do it is just rhythmic improvisation, where they’re not actually doing anything melodically, but they’re just “scating” rhythms. Then, start to let them, you know, where they are actually doing some melodic improvisation. So, I see that as kind of the steps, the progress, to make that happen. I think, in the choral ensemble, it’s tricky because obviously it’s difficult to have everybody doing it at the same time and have it sound like anything, so it’s not pandemonium. So, I have to keep experimenting with that, but I know I’m going to start with the rhythmic improv, then find some way, once I’ve set up that students feel safe, I can get them to do it in either small groups or solos. But to have 70 people do it at the same time is a little crazy.

Although the three areas of Dalcroze study are taught discretely in the teacher-training context, their adoption in the choral context may be interwoven, both in the conductor’s pedagogical skills and in the rehearsal techniques employed. In 1914, Jaques-Dalcroze proposed a list of exercises for each of the three areas of his approach: eurhythmics, solfège and piano improvisation. Each list contains the same pedagogical content: (1) Exercises in muscular relaxation and breathing; (2) Exercises in metrical division and accentuation; (3) Exercises in metrical memorization; (4) Exercises in rapid conception of bar-time by the eye and ear; (5) Exercises in conception/perception of rhythms and pitch by the muscular sense; (6) Exercises in the development of spontaneous will-power and faculties of inhibition; (7) Exercises in concentration and creation of mental rhythms and sounds; (8) Exercises in corporal balance, continuity and interruption of movement and the association with the voice; (9) Exercises for the acquisition of automatisms and their alternation with spontaneous movements and vocal sounds; (10) Realization of musical note-values in the body and voice; (11) Division of beats in the body and voice; (12) Exercises in the immediate realization by the body and voice of musical rhythm; (13) Exercises in the dissociation of movements; (14) Exercises in the interruptions and repressions of movements; (15) Exercises in double and triple speed and slowness of
movements; (16) Plastic counterpoint; (17) Polyrhythm; (18) Dynamic and agogic nuance; (19) Exercises in the notation of rhythms, melodies, harmonies; (20) Exercises in improvisation; (21) Exercises in conducting rhythms (1921b, pp. 121-142).

5.3 Dalcroze-based Rehearsal Techniques

Interview participants note the use of the Dalcroze approach for two main goals in choral rehearsals: (a) to develop choral musicianship and ensemble skills, and (b) to experience through the whole body aspects of the music that will contribute to accurate and expressive choral performance. These techniques occur in the warm-up and throughout the rehearsal, both as planned activities, generated from score study, and as spontaneous activities, in response to the choir’s needs.

Conductors A, B, D and E report the use of Dalcroze techniques in the choral warm-up. Conductor D mentions that his focus in the warm-up is on brain warm-ups, rather than vocal warm-ups. He uses solfège-rhythmique strategies to target choral musicianship, mentioning the use of do-to-do scales, in particular. Conductor E also uses Dalcroze-based solfège in the choral warm-up to cultivate sight-singing and ear-training skills, stating that he uses 20% of the rehearsal time for this purpose. He suggests that integrating Dalcroze techniques into the warm-up heightens listening skills and conscious awareness of the music. He describes a specific strategy for this purpose:

One of the things I do a lot with them, which I also think of as being very related to Dalcroze, is when we are doing a warm-up, I will often have them switch to singing it on scale degrees, or, I’ll tell them the key, and they have to sing it on letter names. Things that really require them to conceptualize the notes that they are singing.

Conductor B suggests excerpting a specific line or tone-row from a choral piece to read and move in the warm-up sequence. This musical excerpt serves to orient the ear to the pitch demands of the repertoire and to improve choral reading. She asks choristers to manipulate the
musical material in various ways, using the Dalcroze techniques of augmentation, diminution and retrograde, to increase focus and improve choral reading (personal communication, June 5/September 24, 2012).

Conductor A highlights the Dalcroze notion of building links, as described by Bachmann (1991) and Brice (2004), in the choral warm-up. She uses this time to prepare the voice/body for the specific demands of the repertoire, a notion supported by Haasemann & Ehmann (1982). She suggests that her conscious preparation of the warm-up transfers to the choristers’ level of conscious engagement in the music learning process:

I think maybe I could say that I prepare my warm-ups with a lot of consciousness, is that right, is that ok to say? I often prepare my warm-ups in link with the repertoire. This for me is a moment of creation, or improvisation…I give 15-20 minutes to the warm-up. I think it’s really important. And, they really appreciate it. I know because they have to write at the end of the semester, they have to write an evaluation, and most of the students write that they are very happy with the warm-up, and they feel…they see the link – they see and they feel the link between the warm-up and the repertoire, and they appreciate it very much.

Conductors A-E and Master-teacher A report the use of the Dalcroze approach to explore the technical and expressive parameters of the choral repertoire, and name a variety of choral pieces in their examples. According to Dalcroze educator Dale (1993), any type of music may be explored through the Dalcroze approach. Abramson (1986) agrees, and insists that Dalcroze techniques also apply to any musical tradition. He names five worlds of rhythm in the repertoire, including both Western and non-Western traditions: non-metric rhythms, metric rhythms, additive rhythms, unequal measures and unequal beats (pp. 50-51). Juntunen (2002) qualifies that although Dalcroze techniques may be applied to non-Western music, the teacher should be familiar with the music of that culture (p. 87).
Conductor B plans Dalcroze experiences to connect to the specifics of the repertoire. During her score study, she analyzes each aspect of the music, and crafts exercises designed to promote the choristers’ proficiency and independence (personal communication, June 5/September 24, 2012). Master-teacher A and Conductor C also note the use of Dalcroze techniques to build chorister independence with the repertoire, rather than a reliance on the conductor (personal communications March 16, 2012, June 6/12, 2012). Conductor B explains:

When I look at it [score], I am immediately thinking, how can I get them to do it? How can I teach that concept? ...As far as the conducting gesture, again, I am always asking, “What’s another way I can do this to show them?” , but more importantly, it’s the teaching technique of “how are they going to be able to feel it anyway?” So, if I wasn’t there, they could still do it anyways…What exercise can I pull that will help them to really own that music? That’s the most important part of it.

Master-teacher A suggests extracting a specific musical rhythmic device from the choral piece for sensory exploration. She details a lesson where she explores Jaques-Dalcroze’s technique of twice-as-fast vs. twice-as-slow as a means of exploring the alternation between 3/4 and 3/2 in a choral piece (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b, p. 128). Once the choristers gained comfort with the physical sensations associated with the musical concept of twice-as-slow/fast, Master-teacher A returned to the specifics of the choral composition.

We are working on a piece now, working with 5th, 6th, and 7th graders on a piece that changes from 3/4 to 3/2 and it’s a canon. So, I want them first to set a tempo. And once they get a tempo, they get a meter – this is in 3. And on a signal, they change, they go twice as slow. And we experiment with that a lot. They love that, actually. We can actually depart from the 3. We don’t have to stay with the score. Just so they can learn twice as slow, and I guess this is where the experience really takes over, because I don’t only want to teach them this particular piece, I want to teach them the experience of going slower. And then, more and more, getting to the specifics of the piece.

Her goal in using the Dalcroze approach with the repertoire is to help choristers connect their sensory experience of the music with their singing:
I use the Dalcroze techniques to have the kids really understand, inside out, what’s going on in the music, and have them move it, so they can internalize it, and really bring that sensibility into their singing.

Conductor D uses the Dalcroze approach, and specifically whole-body movement, to solve rhythmic inaccuracies with the choir, and in the following example, to fix a problem at the metrical level. He suggests the use of Dalcroze-style clapping [clapping which incorporates continuous movement and use of time-space-energy to indicate duration and style of the music] as a helpful strategy in teaching music with unequal beats:

I was in front of my choir and we were doing a *Hosanna in excelsis* in 7/8 by Composer I, and they *could not* get it, and we were clapping… And suddenly, I remembered the Dalcroze way…and then I thought, let’s try it. So, they were clapping the triple part of the 7/8 with a more expansive gesture, and that solved it *instantly*. I mean, literally, within seconds, Dalcroze clapping had solved the problem…

Master-teacher B and Conductor E describe the use of the Dalcroze approach to address issues in choral diction, as a function of musical and textual rhythm. Master-teacher B suggests that the rhythm of the language informs the rhythm of the music, and likewise, the rhythm of the music may be learned through the imposition of rhythmic language, and specifically nonsense syllables, such as “ba da ba da boo” (personal communication, May 21, 2012). Conductor E breaks choral text down into its phonemes, and then works to rhythmicize the articulation of the phonemes, or uses body percussion to superimpose musical rhythm on textual rhythm:

A lot of diction, especially choral diction is about unifying rhythmically the different parts of a word or words – getting them together. I think right now we are working on Vaughan William’s *Dona Nobis Pacem* here at Institution O. And so, if you take even the first movement, so “beat, beat drum, blow bugles blow…” [sings in rhythm]… If you look at just the words, words that are one syllable, like “drum” end up having to have two syllables to be understood. Or, “blow”, right? With the orchestra doing what they are doing, “drum, blow”
[speaks with one syllable only], you end up totally losing the text... “Da-rum-mih ba-low” to make it work, right? So those two one-syllable words become, “Da-rum-mih ba-low” – 5 different phonemes when you split it up. But splitting it up isn’t enough. As a solo singer, you can be understood, but as a choir singer, you have to do it at the exact same moment as well, so I will often have them put the newly created rhythm into motion, and sometimes into body percussion to make that totally come together.

Conductors A, D and E report using Dalcroze techniques to address issues of musical rhythm that impact interpretation and style in the choral repertoire. Conductor A describes the use of Dalcroze body movement to animate hemiolas in Baroque music. Conductor D relates a story where he asked the choir to get up and waltz the “Hostias” from Mozart’s Requiem in order to establish a feeling of lightness and movement towards beat one (personal communication, July 9, 2012). Conductor E helps choristers develop musical style of their music through the exploration of movement/dance from the same historical period:

Musical style equals movement style in my book. And so, if you’re doing a classical-era Mozart work, that’s entirely different than if you are singing O Fortuna from Carmina Burana, for example. You know, and there’s a particularly, especially in Mozart, and Haydn as well, there’s a certain cleanliness in that style where just putting singers into that posture, and just getting them to walk in that sort of…to walk with their corsets on, and with their big powdered wigs on their heads, they suddenly start singing in a different style as well, and, you know, to put oneself in that time period, and move in the style of that time period…Or, you can go to the opposite extreme with O Fortuna, where you are talking about the beginnings of modern dance where if ballet is by and large about weightlessness and being “up”, modern dance is about weight and downward, and a sense of embracing gravity. And getting students to move with that sort of weight and style is a totally different experience and way of singing and thinking.

Conductors B and C describe the use of Dalcroze rehearsal techniques to help choristers learn the entire score, not just their voice part. Conductor B asks choristers to multi-task as they sing, for
example, tapping or walking someone else’s part (personal communication, June 5/September 24, 2012). Conductor C requires that choristers first memorize their own part, and then he uses a specific movement exercise, tailored to the piece, to help choristers learn the entire score. He describes a specific exercise, the “amoeba”, designed to help the group understand how the vocal parts interact in a specific choral piece:

So, I’ll have these octets form a small group, and this one exercise I call the “amoeba”. They would stand in a circle, hold hands, and then move the…sing the piece, and they’re not moving notation now, but they can move wherever they want to, but every movement that they make is going to be influencing everyone else. If you have what you think is an important part, then you start pulling your partners along to the other side of the circle, or even going under the other side of the circle. But then somebody else thinks their part is important, they will pull you back. You see this sort of live organism in front of you with people deciding, “I’m important now, no, I’m important, no, now I see that we’re important”.

5.4 Issues of Integration

Conductors A-E share a number of issues of integration that arise in their use of Dalcroze techniques in the choral context, including when and where this is done. Conductors C and D include a dedicated Dalcroze time into their rehearsal schedule. For Conductor C, Friday is movement day, and students are expected to have a certain portion of their choral music memorized to facilitate large-scale movement (personal communication, June 6/12, 2012). Conductor D designates a time approximately every second or third rehearsal to solve a problem “on the floor” (personal communication, July 9, 2012).

Conductors A and D report the use of Dalcroze techniques on the spot to fix musical problems as they arise in rehearsal. Conductor D describes the Dalcroze approach as a quick source of pedagogical ideas:

It’s my “go to” thing when we have a problem. I don’t tend to sit down and try and anticipate problems and craft exercises in advance…I tend to do it on the fly, and also, I have
little enough time, that I can usually come up with something to address problems as they happen…It’s left me with the confidence that there is always a solution, and most of the time, I can find it.

Conductor A does the same, improvising specific activities for the choir that target specific vocal pedagogical skills or musical problems in the choir’s repertoire (personal communication, June 1, 2012).

Conductors B and E report integrating Dalcroze techniques into every part of the learning process. Conductor B describes her usage of Dalcroze as “embedded” (personal communication, June 5, 2012). She plans Dalcroze-based experiences for the choir while score studying, choosing an element of music (harmony, dynamics, phrasing) to focus on each week. Her goal is to offer a more comprehensive curriculum of body-based experiences to the choir (personal communication, June 5/September 24, 2012). Conductor E explains his various usages of the Dalcroze approach at various points in the rehearsal:

Every stage. On first reading, we will be conducting as we are reading. And, as it gets better, we will be refining our conducting to also reflect the dynamic we are singing, so our conducting is becoming more and more musical. And then we’ll be working with some of the diction things I mentioned – the word stress and the larger stress of the phrase, and then, you know, as we further refine, working on specific gestural moments within it, or getting ourselves within the body language of the music as well. So, it’s throughout.

A number of authors, including Master-teacher B, contend that the Dalcroze approach increases efficiency in the learning or rehearsal process (Brice, 2004; Ehmann, 1968; Henke, 1993). Conductor A, on the other hand, worries that the integration of more Dalcroze techniques may jeopardize her performance preparation time. She suggests a research project, focused on the usage of the Dalcroze approach with choir, as a more representative metric of its effectiveness. Although she qualifies that over time, the Dalcroze approach may become more and more efficient.
And, it’s sure that I’m a little bit afraid that if I begin to incorporate more Dalcroze techniques during the rehearsals that I will lose time. I know that it’s not lost time for the goal. It’s the reason why I would like to suggest it in a research context. So, everybody know it’s a research context, and we will give at the end of the year what we have done, and you understand me? I’m almost sure that if I would begin to incorporate Dalcroze techniques in the rehearsal, after two, three years, it could become a great thing. But, during the first years, myself, I have to check. I’m not sure.

Conductors A and B agree that the integration of Dalcroze techniques takes time. Conductor A shares that when she taught university-level Dalcroze Eurhythmics classes, she had to be very “rooted” in her beliefs about the approach. Students would take, on average, 1.5-2 months to develop ease and enjoyment with Dalcroze. For choristers, Conductors A and B describe the Dalcroze approach as a brand new way of learning. The fear of bodily interaction with music can prevent meaningful participation early on. As a result, ensuring chorister safety and comfort becomes a key focus (personal communications, (June 1, 4, September 24, 2012, Jan 5, 2013). Conductor B explains:

First of all, the fact that, if you’re starting off with a choir, like a new job, it’s gotta be pretty gradual, because it’s going to be a new thing for them. And to me, the best way is to start with focus and attention [exercises], because they’re usually kind of fun… I found the issue is, and everyone is going to run across this, that it’s not a normal, and that makes it sound negative, this is not a normal choral experience. So like my college kids were going, “What are you doing? Can’t we just sing it?” If you’ve had them for four years, it will look totally different at the end of that four years than it did at the beginning. They just kind of have to get it, and they have to feel comfortable, and yah, feel like they’re in a safe place.

Abramson (1986) agrees, stating, “Comfort, hygiene, and safety are primary concerns to the Eurhythmics teacher” (p. 118). He cautions that movement activities should never be uncomfortable or embarrassing for students (p. 118).
In regards to the use of space, Master-teacher A and Conductors A, B, D and E recognize this as an important issue when integrating Dalcroze approaches into the choral rehearsal. Master-teacher A alternates between the use of chairs and use of the entire space, commenting that she uses space in a variety of ways in the choral rehearsal (personal communication, March 16, 2012). Conductor A states that she does have enough space to do large-scale movement, but she would like to suggest a research project on the use of Dalcroze techniques in the choral context. It should take place in the school’s gymnasium, she states (personal communication, June 1, 2012, January 5, 2013). Conductor D uses an alternate rehearsal space, the church hall, in order to do large-scale movement exercises with his choir. Conductors B and E report using a variety of movement configurations/choral formations in the choral rehearsal. Conductor B suggests that a lack of space for movement can be a deterrent for those wanting to incorporate Dalcroze approaches. However, she encourages that any space can work:

Only to say that whatever the barriers that people have, and typically it’s space, to think outside the box and get creative, because I’ve been in every kind of space situation imaginable like a locker room, you know, I’ve been in a hallway. I’ve been in very small spaces. I’ve been in spaces with tiers. And that there are ways to work around it – you have to be creative.

5.5 Revisiting the Conductor Role

Brice (2004) names the Dalcroze approach a “wordless, non-spoken pedagogy” (p. 63). She notes that the musician already has two built-in conductors, the soul and the mind, a description which conflates the role of the choral conductor with the role of the individual student (p. 14). Master-teachers A, B and C caution that the Dalcroze context and the choral context have key differences. A Dalcroze class emphasizes musical exploration, whereas the choral rehearsal leads to the performance of a pre-composed work (personal communications, Mar 16, May 21, May 30, 2012).
Master-teacher B explains that the Dalcroze approach may inform the conductor’s personal preparation, but the choral rehearsal uses the Dalcroze approach in application, not as a discrete pedagogical approach:

It’s one of the ways you are going to teach yourself what you want to know about the music [through Dalcroze techniques], but a rehearsal, as I said, can be informed by movement, but I don’t think it’s a classroom. People don’t come to a rehearsal expecting to have these rhythmic discoveries, and partner games and all of that that you would have in a eurhythmics class. I think it’s an application to the performance of pieces of music.

Master-teacher C discusses the role of teacher versus the role of the conductor, noting that the conductor makes artistic decisions, whereas the Dalcroze teacher is engaged with helping students develop their own interpretation of the music. The Dalcroze teacher models movements for the students to animate their own interpretation, but the conductor must model his or her interpretation of the music, a key difference, notes Master-teacher C (personal communication, May 21/30, 2012).

You are giving your own interpretation of the music to the musicians that you are working with. It’s not that you are imposing on them all of your way of understanding the music, because, obviously, the music that you are performing, you are performing with them. It’s something that you are constructing together. But you will be making the aesthetic decisions, right? …What is different about the teacher and the conductor is that the teacher is trying to make the students find his or her own interpretation of the music. But, the conductor comes with his or her interpretation of the music and has to share that interpretation with the musicians he [she] is working with.

However, she qualifies that the conductor must be flexible and aware of the needs and abilities of the ensemble. In this way, the conductor and the Dalcroze teacher are the same:

If you want to work with people, you cannot ask them something they cannot do. To be able to be sensitive to what they can bring to the music. And, even if you have a certain interpretation, this interpretation modulates through their skills, through what they are giving
you as performers. So, you have to adapt to that. The capacity or the capability of adaptation is very present both for the teacher and the conductor.

Conductor B indicates that the Dalcroze approach acts as an equalizer between conductor and choristers. A joint focus on the music, and a view of the music as the primary teacher, unites the conductor and chorister in their musical goals (Mead, 1995, 1996; Bachmann, 1991):

First of all, we are all just trying to get engaged into this music. And, they’ll see me moving to music just like they are, and they see us all kind of as equals with the music…That whole thing well, “Gosh, I just need to follow the leader”. I don’t think that’s necessarily the mindset.

She explains further that the Dalcroze approach interrupts the historical notion of the conductor as the sole arbiter of knowledge. Her goal is to establish trust and safety in the choral context, so students can be fostered in their learning:

To me, there’s a lot of philosophical, psychological things that have to happen with this. And, that’s that relationship with the students where they trust you, they know you want them to succeed, as opposed to the old…podium you know, where “I’m the director. You are going to do what I tell you”, and there’s kind of this fear factor, which, you know, some choirs sing well under that, but that to me does not lend itself to a Dalcroze approach at all!

Conductor C agrees that the Dalcroze approach is collaborative. He wants to encourage the student’s own response to the music, and avoids imposing his own interpretation of the music until later in the learning process, after the students have done various movement exercises to the piece. He notes that it can be a challenge for conductors to relinquish some control in these early stages, but that this approach edifies the ensemble and grows the student’s sense of ownership:

I’m a pretty laid back guy, but that was in a time of conductors being dictators [referring to a former conducting teacher]. They dictated everything, and you were absolutely in charge of everything. And, when you give up some of that, it can be a little terrifying that you are
relying on information from other people, but I have learned that that is the only way to go. And instead of me telling them what a text means, I ask them what it means to them…

Conductor E notes that his work as a conductor can either be Dalcrozeian or un-Dalcrozeian. A Dalcrozeian approach generates the nuance from the choir, whereas an un-Dalcrozeian approach imposes nuance. Imposing the nuance works some of the time, he adds, but when the nuance is generated by the choir via the Dalcroze approach, it only has to be done once, and the choir remembers it forever (personal communication, July 19, 2012).

5.6 Summary

All five conductors in this study indicate that they adopt the Dalcroze approach both philosophically and pedagogically in the choral context. They emphasize its usage in teaching musicianship and repertoire, as well as its implications for their view of their role as conductor and their relationship with choristers. In the rehearsal context, Dalcroze approaches are used in the choral warm-up, to both teach musicianship and to prepare the repertoire, to facilitate the performance of a certain aspect of a musical composition, to solve musical problems that arise in rehearsal, and to draw choristers’ awareness to the totality of the musical score as a means of developing ensemble skills.

Conductors A-E report a reliance on Dalcroze pedagogy to inform their teaching in the choral context, including traditional Dalcroze eurhythmics, solfège and improvisation techniques. They note the impact of these techniques on chorister’s musical and non-musical skills. Musically, choristers display a greater sense of technical accuracy (pitch and rhythm), and attention to musical detail and nuance. Non-musically, choristers show an improvement in attention and focus, freedom to experiment with the music, and depth of affective response in learning.
6 Conclusion

This study set out to examine the applications of the Dalcroze approach to choral pedagogy and practice. The original writings of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze provided a philosophical and pedagogical framework for the discussion. Eight interviews connected Jaques-Dalcroze’s original writings with the modern day practice of the approach and its applications to the choral context. Three Dalcroze master-teachers explained their interpretation of Jaques-Dalcroze’s ideology and methodology, in addition to suggesting ways in which the Dalcroze approach may be applied to the choral context based on their experience as choral conductors. Five Dalcroze-trained choral conductors revealed how they integrate the Dalcroze approach into their work as a conductor and with choirs.

At the time of writing, there were no comprehensive studies available on this topic. A number of articles, books, and videos review various applications of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context; however, a study inquiring into the pedagogy and practice of Dalcroze-trained practitioners in the choral context was lacking. In addition, this study introduced a further layer of complexity through its inclusion of the dual perspective of practitioners working primarily in Dalcroze pedagogy and those working primarily in choral conducting.

The following research questions were posed: (1) What do the original writings of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze reveal about choral pedagogy and practice? (2) What recommendations do Dalcroze master-teachers make regarding the application of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context? (3) How do Dalcroze-trained choral conductors use the Dalcroze approach in the choral context? (4) How can the Dalcroze approach facilitate teaching and learning in the choral context?

Jaques-Dalcroze wrote prolifically about his approach, including both philosophical and methodological recommendations for its implementation. His proposed reforms for musical education include commentary that can directly relate to the choral context, with detailed descriptions of the body as instrument (as it is for both choristers and conductor), instructions on
the preparation and delivery of music teaching, the desired learning outcomes for music educational experiences, the use of the voice, ear and body in music education, the interrelated use of sound and gesture (including the conductor’s gesture), and suggestions for the preparation, interpretation and performance of repertoire; in addition, the conductor, and the act of conducting, is frequently mentioned as both an important Dalcroze exercise and as an exemplification of the goals of the Dalcroze approach.

Over the course of the interview process, it became clear that all of the participants in this study adhere to the Dalcroze approach as it is described in Jaques-Dalcroze’s original writings. In addition, their applications of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context highlight the usability and transferability of Jaques-Dalcroze’s ideas. Dalcroze master-teachers A-C contributed insights on the role of the body in music perception and cognition, the integrated use of the ear and voice in Dalcroze training, the development of a body-based vocabulary for choral performance (conductor and chorister), the reciprocal relationship between movement and music and its affect on gesture (including conducting gesture), the crafting of a Dalcroze lesson, including the various uses for pre-composed music, and the role of the conductor versus the role of the Dalcroze teacher. Conductors A-E discussed their use of Dalcroze techniques in all areas of their choral pedagogy and practice. First, they consistently mentioned how their personal Dalcroze training has enhanced their work as a conductor, including their conducting gesture, their pedagogical skill, their score study, their rehearsal technique, and their view of self as conductor. In choral teaching, they preeminently use the Dalcroze approach (1) to develop choral musicianship skills through the coordinated use of the whole body, and (2) to prepare choristers for accurate and expressive performance of the repertoire, reflecting the two major usages of the Dalcroze approach outlined in chapter 4 - perception and performance.

The following specific themes emerged in each chapter. In Chapter 3, the foundational Dalcroze principle of “body as instrument” provided a philosophical and pedagogical orientation to the choral context. Dalcroze approaches prioritize the somatic experience of the musician, stimulating the interrelationship of aural, kinesthetic and affective response to build the inner ear and develop musical cognition. In a Dalcroze paradigm, the coordination of the musician’s
aural, kinesthetic, affective, cognitive and performative actions converts musical arrhythmy to musical eurhythmy. Interviewees described this process as a primary goal, both in their own practice and in their work with choirs. Conductors A and E and Master-teacher C emphasized the Dalcrozan notion of motion as intertwined with emotion, a function of musical eurhythmy. Conductor C described a type of whole-choir eurhythmy; in this, each chorister can develop independence while the group develops interdependence. All of the conductors noted the ameliorative orientation of the Dalcroze approach in facilitating musical development as well as such non-musical outcomes as increased self-confidence, sense of agency, risk-taking, in addition to improved learning habits, including mental attention, concentration, and memory.

Chapter 4 explored the applications of the Dalcroze approach to the performance of music, introducing the notion of phonomimesis\(^1\) as the realization of sounds in gesture and gestures in sound. This relationship underpins the acquisition of a movement vocabulary for use in music-making both for the chorister and the conductor. Conductors A-E described their work in developing a movement vocabulary with the choir, exploring both the metrics of the music (beat, metre, rhythm) and the plastique of the music (activity vs. repose, gestural points of arrival and departure [anacrusis, crusi, metacrusi], and musical line). The choir’s movement vocabulary (with an emphasis on quality of movement) directly affects their choral sound and ability to perform music expressively. Body-based exploration of the music also connects the performer directly to the intentions of the composer. Written musical notation, and by extension, a singularly visual/cognitive approach to score study, is insufficient to establish an enlivened musical interpretation. Conductors A, C, and E described their use of body movement, including plastique animée, in the score study process. Bodily exploration of the score (a) informs their musical interpretive choices, (b) facilitates their memorization of the score, (c) converts into their conducting gesture, and (d) helps develop movement experiences for the choir in rehearsal.

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\(^1\) “phonomimesis” is a term used by Conductor E to describe the reciprocal relationship between sound and gesture. It was originally used by Dalcroze teacher Q.
Chapter 5 introduced the Dalcroze philosophy that music is both teachable and accessible. The role of music education is to cultivate innate musicality and to help musicians progress from imitation to imagination. Master-teachers A-C and Conductors A-E described their ordered use of the Dalcroze pedagogical stages (experience, analysis, and improvisation/composition/performance), highlighting observation and improvisation as important Dalcroze pedagogical strategies. The study participants presented specific applications of the three discrete areas of Dalcroze methodology, eurhythmics, solfège and improvisation, in addition to suggesting ways to rehearse the repertoire with Dalcroze techniques. Master-teacher A and Conductors A-E gave specific recommendations on the use of rehearsal timing and rehearsal space when adopting the Dalcroze approach. Lastly, the study participants revealed their thoughts on the role of the teacher in the Dalcroze approach, including its applicability and non-applicability to the role of the conductor and choral teaching.

The following conclusions about the integration of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context are implied by this study: (1) The Dalcroze approach heightens musical perception, and may be used to develop whole-body eurhythmny, both for the conductor and for the chorister, and to provide a musical education for the whole person; (2) the Dalcroze approach develops a body-based vocabulary (aural, kinesthetic, affective, cognitive) for use in the preparation and performance of repertoire that extends both the technical and the expressive potential of the conductor, the chorister, and the choir; (3) Dalcroze-based teaching in the choral context creates an educational ethos of joint experimentation, improvisation, and enjoyment that changes the conductor’s view of self and approach to choristers; and (4) the Dalcroze approach imparts extra-musical skills associated with choral conducting and choral singing, including skills that develop both the independent musician and the total group: mental acuity, creativity, teamwork and risk-taking.

The applications of the Dalcroze approach to choral performance emerged as a new theme throughout the study, although this topic was not specifically included in the interview questions. The interview questions focused on the teaching and learning applications of the Dalcroze approach, although performance is a regular outcome of these processes. Participants noted the
effect of the Dalcroze approach on their performance conducting, suggesting that Dalcroze approaches facilitate their communication of the music (Conductors A and D) and their ability to modulate their use of gesture in response to the ensemble and the performance space (Conductor C). Conductors C and E also suggest that Dalcroze approaches affect the chorister’s expressive involvement in performance and their ability to connect to the audience.

6.1 Recommendations for Further Research

This particular study relied on narrative interview, and as such, did not include observation of teaching or conducting. Interviews with Master-teachers A, B, and C, and Conductor A were conducted via Skype. Conductor D’s interview was conducted in person. Interviews with Conductors B, C and E were conducted on the phone (in part due to technical limitations). Participants made use of their singing voices and physical gesturing to illustrate some of their ideas, however, the bulk of the communication relied on the participants’ ability to verbally articulate their pedagogical approach. Live observation could bring the researcher more directly into contact with the various musical interactions that occur and are facilitated by Dalcroze techniques. Live observation in conjunction with narrative interviewing could reveal both the intentions and the outcomes of Dalcroze techniques in the choral context.

In lieu of the following, three suggestions for further research emerge from this study: (1) A study observing how Dalcroze practitioners articulate their pedagogical content knowledge in action. How do Dalcroze-trained conductors demonstrate the music through their bodily modeling and conducting gesture? How do they shape the rehearsal of a choral piece, or the entire rehearsal? How is the Dalcroze approach presented and integrated into the fabric of the rehearsal? (2) This use of live observation could also extend to the chorister perspective. To what level do choristers participate in Dalcroze activities? What is the nature of the conductor-chorister interaction? Both of these studies could also include narrative interviewing. How do Dalcroze-trained conductors articulate their teaching practice? How do choristers articulate the effects of the Dalcroze approach on their musical development and performance? Is the
Dalcroze approach an effective approach for the choral context, in the opinion of conductors and choristers?

(3) Master-teachers A-C and Conductors A-E frequently connect the work of the conductor to the aims of the Dalcroze approach. In addition, Jaques-Dalcroze and other authors consistently name the conductor as an exemplar of Dalcroze principles. By extension, a study inquiring into the uses of the Dalcroze approach in conductor training would make a unique contribution to the field. Is the Dalcroze approach an effective way to train conductors, and if so, what pedagogical resources may be recommended for this purpose? This study could take the form of observing conductors (choral, orchestral, band etc.) with Dalcroze training who use the Dalcroze approach in conductor education. Or, it could lead to the development of a curriculum/course by a Dalcroze-trained conductor for use with undergraduate or graduate-level conductors.

The findings of this dissertation confirm that the Dalcroze approach can make significant musical and educational contributions to the choral context. Counterpointing the dual roles of the body as musical perceiver and musical interpreter, the Dalcroze approach both builds and sustains the choral instrument, and does this from a multiplicity of educational angles. For the chorister, it offers a somatically-inspired musical experience, a pedagogical framework, and a sense of joy and community in the choral learning process. For the conductor, it gives a name to our work, intricately describing the things that we do both instinctually and intentionally, while providing a philosophical, pedagogical and musical guide to accurate and expressive performance. And as for music, the Dalcroze approach champions the transformative potential of embodied music-making - that music can course through our beings, moving us and moving others.
References


Appendix A - Informed Consent Form

“Moved to learn: Dalcroze Applications to Choral Pedagogy and Practice”
Caron Daley D.M.A. candidate – University of Toronto

Dear Dalcroze teachers and conductors,

You are invited to participate in my doctoral research project, entitled, “Moved to Learn: Dalcroze Applications to Choral Pedagogy and Practice”. This study involves two groups, a) Dalcroze master-teachers (defined as those individuals who have achieved a Dalcroze Diplôme Supérieur) with experience in the choral context, and b) Dalcroze-trained choral conductors (defined as those individuals with significant Dalcroze training, or the Dalcroze Certificate or License) who and are currently implementing Dalcroze applications on a regular basis in the choral context.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. You are free to answer any part or all of the interview questions.

Interviews will be scheduled May-August 2012, and may be conducted via teleconference or in person (with any additional email communication that facilitates the process). Interviews will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription and quotation (indirect and direct). Audio records of the interviews will be destroyed after the transcription process. All participants will have access to the transcripts, with the option to edit or delete any recorded material. Data collected in the interview process will be used for the publication of this dissertation only.

In order to protect your identity, I will assign you a generic title, such as "Master-teacher A" or "Conductor B." Each participant in the study will remain anonymous in this manner. I will also assign a generic title to all other Dalcroze teachers, conductors, living composers and educational institutions named in the interview.

The collection of this data will be invaluable to the Dalcroze and choral music communities. Thank you.

Please sign below if you are agreement with the parameters of this study.

Signed __________________________

Date __________________________
Appendix B - Interview Questions for Dalcroze Master-teachers

“Moved to Learn: Dalcroze Applications to Choral Pedagogy and Practice”
Caron Daley D.M.A. candidate – University of Toronto

Dear Dalcroze Master-Teacher,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my dissertation research concerning the applications of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context.

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate how the Dalcroze approach can inform the choral conductor’s pedagogy and practice, including the areas of score study, gesture, and rehearsal/teaching techniques. The following research questions will be explored:

1. What do the original writings of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze reveal about choral pedagogy and practice?  
2. What recommendations do Dalcroze master-teachers make regarding the application of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context?  
3. How do Dalcroze-trained choral conductors use the Dalcroze approach in the choral context?  
4. How can the Dalcroze approach facilitate teaching and learning in the choral context?

Interview Questions:

1. In your view, what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach to music education?

2. What are your specific goals for the student (increased musicality, musicianship, musical independence, physical and mental coordination etc.)? Do you teach Dalcroze as an end in itself, or as a tool for application to other musical contexts?

3. What role does the body play in your classes? What role does conducting/gesturing play in your classes?

4. What role does the ear play in your classes?

5. What role does the voice play in your classes?

6. What is your sequence for teaching a new concept?

7. What is the role of the teacher in a Dalcroze class? How does this role compare to the role of the conductor, in your opinion?

8. How would you describe the learning dynamic in your classroom?

9. How do you apply Dalcroze techniques to previously composed music? For example, do you use pre-composed music to explore a particular rhythmic problem, or do you use Dalcroze techniques to explore the musical content in the pre-composed music? Do you
re-annotate musical scores for your students? When choosing a piece of music to explore in a Dalcroze class, what are you looking for, and how do you devise Dalcroze experiences from your study of the score?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add to the discussion regarding the use of the Dalcroze approach in conjunction to the choral context (conducting, singing, reading music, teaching musicianship/musicality etc.)?
Appendix C - Interview Questions for Dalcroze-trained Choral Conductors

“Moved to Learn: Dalcroze Applications to Choral Pedagogy and Practice”
Caron Daley D.M.A. candidate – University of Toronto

Dear Dalcroze-trained Choral Conductor,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my dissertation research concerning the applications of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context.

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate how the Dalcroze approach can inform the choral conductor’s pedagogy and practice, including the areas of score study, gesture, and rehearsal/teaching techniques. The following research questions will be explored:

1. What do the original writings of Émile Jaques-Dalcroze reveal about choral pedagogy and practice?
2. What recommendations do Dalcroze master-teachers make regarding the application of the Dalcroze approach to the choral context?
3. How do Dalcroze-trained choral conductors use the Dalcroze approach in the choral context?
4. How can the Dalcroze approach facilitate teaching and learning in the choral context?

Interview Questions:

1. How did you discover the Dalcroze approach?
2. Describe your current choral context.
3. In your view, what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach to music education?
4. What are your teaching goals when incorporating the Dalcroze approach in the choral context (musicality, musicianship skills, musical independence, physical and mental coordination etc.)? Or, what have you observed as the learning outcomes of incorporating the Dalcroze approach in the choral context?
5. What aspects of the Dalcroze approach do you use in the choral context (eurhythms, solfège-rhythmique, improvisation, plastique animée)?
6. When working with choral repertoire, how do you devise Dalcroze experiences for the choir? Do you create Dalcroze experiences based on your vision for the repertoire, or do you integrate Dalcroze training as a concurrent curriculum to the repertoire, or do you incorporate Dalcroze techniques in response to the choir’s needs while learning the repertoire?
7. Do you use the Dalcroze approach to teach the following?
   - Vocal technique
   - Diction
- Musical style
- Musicianship skills
- Ensemble skills

8. At what point in the learning sequence do you incorporate Dalcroze techniques?

9. How would you describe the learning dynamic in your classroom when Dalcroze techniques are being employed, or as a result of incorporating Dalcroze techniques?

10. How has the inclusion of the Dalcroze approach influenced your view of your role as conductor?

11. How has your personal study of the Dalcroze approach informed your conducting work in relationship to the following:
   - Score study
   - Conducting gesture
   - Rehearsal/teaching techniques

12. Is there anything else you would like to add to the discussion regarding the use of the Dalcroze approach in the choral context (conducting, singing, reading music, teaching musicianship/musicality etc.)?
Appendix D - Interview Transcripts

Master-teacher A

Master-teacher A holds the Dalcroze Diplôme Supérieur. She teaches all levels of Dalcroze and prepares candidates for Dalcroze certification and licensure. Master-teacher A conducts two children’s choirs in a community music school setting.

CD: In your view, what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach, and what distinguishes the Dalcroze approach from other pedagogies, both philosophically and in practice?

Master-teacher A: Ok, those are in a way two different questions, but they lead to similar answers, so let me not go in order, but I’ll get to answer your two questions. I teach Adult Methods, and I think those of us who teach methods and are having to really discourse about Dalcroze have to be sure about our terms, and if we are asked what differentiates Dalcroze from other hands-on approaches, we do need to answer that question. Now, I think one of the definitely unique features of Dalcroze is the improvisation. Now, this doesn’t answer your question directly because I’m not sure how it figures into your choral work, but this is indeed one of the unique features, and I think it’s going to lead to one of the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach. So, when a teacher in rhythmic class improvises for the movements of his or her students, this is something that doesn’t happen in any other approach and it’s very basic. And what is very basic is that there is a beautiful interaction between the teacher and the student through the music. That is, the student is moving to the teacher’s music, and the teacher is observing the student. And as the teacher is observing the student, that visual feedback impacts on what the teacher plays. And, you know, I find when I am playing for a student’s movement, you know, if that student is into it and does something really beautiful, or something interesting, that will impact on my music, and so there’s this ongoing interaction – you are going back and forth. And, one of the people who really spoke to me about this interaction was Dalcroze-teacher F, who also believed improvisation was so unique to Dalcroze, and basic to it. So, it’s this interaction through movement and music that is unique. Now, one of the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach is the whole person moving. And moving, and here’s the thing, the person moving shows what she hears. And that’s a basic phrase, “Show me what you hear”. So the student has to show. And, there’s not much interpretation that has to happen. “Show me what you hear”. The student doesn’t have to stop and think how do I show it? It is pretty automatic. And it’s a very interesting equivalent – I’m showing what I hear. Isn’t that interesting? I show what I hear when I move. And that is absolutely basic to the approach. So, when you are working with students in a choral group, and they’re starting to sing, or you’re introducing a song, some of them will start moving right away, and very often a choral group moves together. They will sway together, or
they will, if it’s a jazzy piece, they won’t sway; they’ll do a kind of bouncy, sideways motion, or whatever the general nature of the music evokes in terms of movement. Or, they may not move at all. They are showing you what they hear. Some of it becomes a kind of behavior, you know, if you tend to move in a certain way while you are conducting, that often projects onto the students, and they will move back. So, that may happen in any choral setting, but if you have a kind of Dalcroze sensibility, you’ll see that, and you can work with that. That’s my answer.

CD: So that interactive environment, does that mean that the students are also informing the process, that it’s not teacher-driven, so much as interactive?

Master-teacher A: I would say, absolutely. It’s basically an interactive approach. Yes, and it’s interactive between the student and the teacher, but it’s also interactive among the students. That is why we can’t have a eurhythmics class with one person. The students work together. They will kind of work on their own while they are moving, but with the whole group moving, it’s kind of felt. The movement is felt. Whereas, in a private studio lesson, teachers of eurhythmics have to be very careful about asking students to get up and move because they can be quite self-conscious if they are the only ones moving and it’s a one-on-one lesson. But, if it’s a group of students moving, they move together. We also ask students to work in pairs very often. We ask students to work in groups of three or four. And, there’s a lot of interaction going on. We might, for example, say to a group of students in a class that have learned a piece, say to them, now, ok, you’ve shown us these rhythms, we’ve clapped them together, you’ve shown us different ways of doing these rhythms, we’ve all copied some of you, we’ve tried out your ways. Now, if you work in a group of three or four, how can you show this piece of music in your group? Do you want to start sitting down, do you want to work in a circle, do you want to be in a line to start? In other words, you have a group working together, and they start in a formation – these are various options in terms of interacting. So, I can let go of the group and just have them work on a piece of music independently.

CD: So, in your estimation, what is the role of the teacher in the Dalcroze context? You were just mentioning that you ask the students to show us what they hear, and so it’s a very interactive approach – involving the students in demonstrations, in musical decision-making. I think sometimes the more traditional model in the choral context is that the conductor makes the decisions and imparts them to the students. And so for me, there’s a difference there, and a Dalcroze approach to the choral context would be involving everybody with that interaction with the music. So my question becomes, what is the role of the teacher, or the conductor?
Master-teacher A: My experience dealing with the choral group is that I have a different goal, different goals, than I do in a eurhythmics class, which is much more open ended. And that is because in the choral context we are preparing for choral performance. We are dealing with a composed work, and we must follow the directives of the composer. So, ah, what I want the students to understand, for example, we are working on a piece now, working with 5th, 6th, and 7th graders on a piece that changes from 3/4 to 3/2 and it’s a canon. So, I want them first to set a tempo. And once they get a tempo, they get a meter – this is in 3. And on a signal, they change, they go twice as slow. And we experiment with that a lot. They love that, actually. We can actually depart from the 3. We don’t have to stay with the score. Just so they can learn twice as slow, and I guess this is where the experience really takes over, because I don’t only want to teach them this particular piece, I want to teach them the experience of going slower. And then, more and more, getting to the specifics of the piece. But, it’s really different, in the choral setting, for me, as a Dalcroze teacher, because I use the Dalcroze techniques to have the kids really understand, inside out, what’s going on in the music, and have them move it, so they can internalize it, and really bring that sensibility into their singing.

CD: Sure. Is that the Composer F “Dona nobis pacem”?

Master Teacher A: Yes, and I’m using an arrangement by Dalcroze-teacher G. It’s absolutely gorgeous.

CD: One of my choirs is performing that tonight! It’s a great piece. Well that’s very neat, Master-teacher A. So, let me see on my list of questions here. Maybe I’ll jump to this one which asks, how do you apply Dalcroze techniques to previously composed music? For example, do you use the pre-composed music to explore a rhythmic problem, or do you use Dalcroze techniques to explore the pre-composed music?

Master Teacher A: Um, both, I would say. Now, in general, I think of Dalcroze this way, um, I am actually thinking about a student I interviewed for my dissertation, and I asked her a question similar to yours, you know, when you think about Dalcroze, what first comes into your mind as a basic? And she said, “Well, we work on a rhythm, or a meter, every way we can. We find different movements for them, we work in different tempi, we do a follow with it, we do some of the classic Dalcroze exercises. All exploring this whatever it is – rhythmic transformation, meter of 3, hemiola, whatever it is”. She said, “We don’t only learn it within the context of the piece, but we explore it every way so that we can do it any way”. So that next time we come to a piece like this, we will know it even better. So, I would say that when we have a rhythmic problem, I don’t stay with literally that rhythm. I go outside the rhythm and explore, right and left, and try different rhythms, and so then when we get back to the specific rhythm, the students are better prepared to deal with that. But, again, one of the
hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach is that we get to a problem, and we try out so many other issues related to that, um, so that we... I think one rule, what I consider to be a rule, is because we are using natural movement – natural movement means movement we do without thinking about it. It’s movement that’s not...we are never, for example, in the Dalcroze world...I have never had the experience of a teacher...the teacher never says, “Beautiful arms”, like they do in ballet class. And, most of the eurhythmics classes I have been in don’t provide mirrors because we have to feel the movement on the inside, not judge it as to how it looks. So, now I’m getting away from this.

CD: It’s good though!

Master-teacher A: Ok, good! You know, we have to explore all of these aspects of whatever it is we are dealing with, and I know, I know, Caron. I wanted to make a very important point which is since we are using natural movement and not thinking about it, we have to at first be asked to do something very easy. And another hallmark of this work is that at the beginning of every class I’ve ever seen – an advanced class, a class that’s been together for a five-day workshop, or dance students. The very first exercise is something like, “Take a walk”. Or, “Lie down, and let’s breathe”, and that evolves into getting up and walking and finding a tempo. Every step along the way increases, let us say, the difficulty, or let’s say gets more specific, but each step along the way is doable. So, you don’t give the students a big problem to solve at the beginning. You don’t give them three or four tasks to do that they have to hold in the wrong side of the brain, and then you lose all natural movement because the students are working so hard to tease out a problem that shouldn’t be analytical cognitively. It should be something that they first figure out or work through through movement. So, every exercise that we do is doable. Back to your question about solving a problem. If there’s a knotty problem, let’s say there are additive rhythms, let’s say like in a Messiaen piece. Not even unequal beats, but additive rhythms, and students are having difficulty with it. We don’t drill them on the rhythms. We go back to just an even pulse. And we work with different rhythms that repeat. Then we add a new rhythm. Then we add another new rhythm. And each step along the way we add one new thing at a time. And that’s one of my rules. One new step at a time and every step is doable. And, it’s in my vocabulary, but I developed my vocabulary from what I see everybody do. I remember observing an incredible class by Dalcroze-teacher H where she had a lesson plan, but right at the beginning a student asked her a question. And she answered the question so beautifully, in real time, trying things out. That answer to that question took that whole class. And it was a beautiful lesson. And she got to her subject the next day. But the students had to work out something much more basic than she had planned. And she worked it through with them. So, in terms of problem solving, we need to attend to the students needs so they continue to do
what Music-teacher F described as the “swing and sway” of natural movement. If the students are working too hard, if they are thinking too hard, their natural movement will no longer “swing and sway”, because they will be using their energy up on the wrong side of the brain.

CD: In terms of your choral work, then, do you find that you try to introduce some of the rhythmic problems before they even look at the score?

Master-teacher A: Well, it depends. It depends on the piece. But I’ll tell you one thing I’ve been doing, um, when we look at meter. When we are looking at a choral score, I have the students tell me everything they see. And, depending on the age, they’ll say, ah, “piano”, ah, “the page is white”. I’ll say, “Page 2, tell me everything on the page”. The really important step we take from getting – when we get from the written symbol to the music is right here – it’s in the time signature. The kids can reel off a dictionary definition of it. “Four beats to a measure, and the bottom is a quarter-note gets a beat”. That’s what they say. But, the bottom number – be it usually 4, sometimes 2, sometimes 8, is going to indicate what the tempo is. Well, I should even go further. We don’t even look at the bottom number. We look at the direction. If it says andante, if it says “slow”, if it says “expressive”, if it says moderato, if it says nothing but has a metronome marking, if there is a metronome marking. So, we say, what note, ah, what note represents the beat? And I try to stay away from 8, which I will get to later. Let’s say it’s 4, which it usually is. We look at the tempo marking, and we move it right away – it’s the first thing we do. So, that beat it is, and the students show it – tapping their hand, or moving their head. That’s the beginning, Caron. That is the beginning of the music. So, they have to get the tempo before anything. So, then, meter. This is one approach I use to getting right into the music. But, getting in through the symbol. And the symbol is not actually a 4, it’s the tempo marking. So, that, and then right away they start moving. So that they know that those symbols mean sound and feeling. It’s going to bring them right into the movement of the music. So, when I start with a score, the first thing we do is we say what we see. But, when we get into the music, the very first thing is the tempo. So, we have our bodies involved, and we are moving already, and we are feeling something, and then we, you know, move on in some way.

CD: That’s great. That’s excellent. A big part of what I am going to explore in the dissertation is how Dalcroze techniques might infuse the score study process. And so, in your own practice, as a pianist, or as a choral conductor, or as a eurhythmics teacher, when it’s just you and the score, before you’ve met with the students or the ensemble, how are you extracting…what are you looking for in the score?

Master-teacher A: Um, well, like I said – I’m repeating a little of what I said first, the very first thing is that tempo. But, I think, you are talking about what process I
use, the very first thing I look for is a piece! And so, in a way, that’s how I can answer your question. Because how I look for a work, what do I look for, that is informed, well, I have to tell you, Caron, every single thing if informed by my Dalcroze training. I can’t separate from that in any way at all because it has so formed my behaviors. So, when I look at a piece of music, I right away start moving the tempo, and I feel the movement of the piece. Of course, working with choral music, we are so blessed to have text that adds so much to the experience of the music. So, recently – there is a choral composer I just love – Composer G. He composes for the Brooklyn Children’s Chorus, and other choruses. He gets a lot of commissions from children’s choruses. And, I looked at a work he wrote, called The Brightening Air. And, um, what I saw first that I loved about this was the melody. I loved the tied notes. Um, because we had been working a lot with tied notes. And the beauty – the way the beat kind of happens while you are still holding the note. Ah, and we had worked on that a lot in another much easier piece. Um, so I liked the text, and I loved the imagery. In fact, I have an interesting anecdote to share with you. This…I don’t know if it relates to your study or not, but um, to continue along the lines you have brought up, but, in this particular piece, because I loved the poem by Yeats, I was very interested in the melody. And I thought it was a beautiful, beautiful melody. It was two parts, and I loved the treatment of the imagery, the melodies and the harmonies were so beautiful. It was a beautiful song, and I thought the children would relate to it, and they did. Very often, my kids don’t like anything new. Um, or they want to do, they always ask me, “Can we do such and such?” – something they already know. But, they kept an open mind about this piece, which is subtle. And, after they got to know it, Caron – it is so beautiful, after they got to know it, and were singing it pretty easily, I asked them, “How would you describe the music?” And, I would say that my Dalcroze training also influences this type of question very much, because Dalcroze is essentially qualitative. It’s all about quality. It’s about meaning. And so, just to backtrack a little bit, one liability of the Dalcroze, not the Dalcroze work or the Dalcroze approach, but one liability in applying this is that we get so oriented towards presenting it as experiential and using body, and doing games, that we – my biggest criticism of Dalcroze classes is that there is no follow-up. There’s no notation, there’s no analysis. And, children need it. They need visual information. They need something on the board that is meaningful. They need to have the work illustrated through other means than the movement. But, this happens after. But I think it needs to happen in every single class. It can’t be that three weeks go by and there’s nothing put on the board. Three classes will go by, and you are almost a month into the material, and the children that don’t have the visual information and don’t have any way to think about it, have lost any understanding of the experience. So, in the choral context, it is very important that we deal with meaning. And, of course, with the lyrics, you have an added layer of meaning. And, then there’s always the question of how the composer
illustrates the lyrics. So, back to my question, to the choir. After they seemed to be really comfortable with this piece, and they really did like it, I did ask them this qualitative question, “How would you describe the music?” You know, and we did talk about the lyrics. And one girl said, “It’s touching. The music is touching”. And, to me, that was exactly right. It…Composer G does not write in too-modern a style, although his rhythm is modern, his use of syncopation and tied notes is modern. But, this was a poem by Yeats, and it was a very Irish sort of sounding tune he used, um, and it was very touching. And, um, I responded to that, and that’s exactly what I would say. And, then the kids had already said, it sounds sad in some places and happy in some places, and then one of the children said, “How does Composer G do that? How does he make the music sound that way? What does he do to make it sound sad and touching and happy…” and all this… So they said, because Composer G was teaching in our school at that time, they said, “Could you ask Composer G, how does he do that?” So, I called him up, and I said, “Composer G, my kids are working on The Brightening Air, and they want to know how you make the music sound happy in place and sad, and touching”. And he said, “Tell them I don’t know. Teach them my favorite word, which is ineffable. But, I have a lot of feelings while I’m writing. And, when it happens, I feel very good about it, and I know when it happens, but I can’t always explain what I do”. So, what I’m getting to here also is – maybe we would call this one of the problems of art and especially a problem in music. Where, when we are analyzing, we look to words to inform us, and we can’t always find them. And, so, we just get as close as we can. But, one of my children once said, “Music is its own language”. And, that’s another quote that I’ve kept, because that means so much. To me, it means, you can’t always find words in our discursive language to say what’s happening in the music. Sometimes the closest you can get, and again, this is from my own dissertation, one of my students said, that when teachers use imagery, that brings her closer to what the music is than any other kind of explanation she can imagine. It’s the imagery that brings us close, and back again to body movement, which I think, often helps us find images when we are moving, all of a sudden we start feeling, “Oh, I’m a butterfly”, or, you know… All kinds of images emerge with movement. So, I think that when the students are moving, we need to be aware of the fact that we have to address the issue of what does that feel like to you, and what does that bring up for you? I don’t mean in terms of psychological terms, but just in terms of ideas.

CD: So, that’s great, thank-you. Part of what I want to tease out in my dissertation is a description of how the Dalcroze work can use the body, how it can use the ear, and how it can use the voice. Do you think about those things separately at all, or are you thinking about the whole unit – trying to zero in on the ear versus the voice, anything like that?
Master-teacher A: Oh, um…I think the reason I am hesitating is that when I am teaching, I’m not thinking about those things, but…hmm…I’m thinking about those things when I do a study. When I’m teaching…maybe it’s just the phrase you are using – I’m not thinking that way. Although I do work on just the voice – I do give warm-ups, warm-ups are very important. I would say that – maybe I’m not answering your question, but one hallmark of the Dalcroze work is that we use rhythm all of the time, or I should say, I do. I very rarely divorce pulse from rhythm – even when we are doing a warm-up – we always have a rhythm going, and it keeps us there, and it keeps things very alive. So, but I do warm-ups for the voice. But I’m not thinking so much of…isn’t that funny? Why am I having trouble with this one?

CD: Well, I’ll give you a quick example of what I do. I’m a singer, so I’m always thinking about building the voice as an instrument. But some of the ways that I do that are through Dalcroze techniques, for example, rhythmic breathing is such a huge part of being a good singer, so I’m trying to incorporate rhythm, as you say, into the vocal training. So, perhaps your comment is very apt, that rhythm is the basis for all of these skill sets we want students to acquire: musicianship, musicality, vocal training, and all of those things. It infuses the process, on every level maybe?

Master-teacher A: I think so. I am thinking about it, and there are some exercises I do that don’t have a specific pulse, they have a more global pulse. But, so much of what we do it informed by some shared feeling of pulse. And shared is the operative word here. Because when we are working in a group, we just feel together. Very often I will say to the group, I’ll just sit back, and I’ll say, ok, “You start”. Like my choral group, I’ll sit, and I’ll say, “You begin this, together. Feel the pulse, and see if all of you can begin this absolutely together without me conducting”. Not that I would put them on stage with that, but I think it’s important for them to be able to have that experience, of looking at each other, and feeling that impulse, and knowing how difficult that is. Figuring out, why is it so hard to start, and what do we need to do to make that happen? For example, to prepare, how many beats are we feeling? What’s the process of making this work? And then at the end also, how long are we going to hold this, and the other thing is, they can’t conduct each other. They have to look at each other, and do it just by feeling it, and moving in a way that choral groups move, not adding arms, or anything like that. So, that’s another example of not necessarily a felt beat, but kind of impulses that arise from this, what I said, a global feeling that is informed by beat, and phrase, and when you are talking about a fermata at the end, you are not talking specifically about beats, but about a kind of aesthetic feeling about the length of a note and when you cut off exactly together. So, I think it’s very important for a group. This is, of course, and older group. I do this with 5th, 6th, 7th graders. I have a younger chorus, and I wouldn’t dare do it with them.
because they couldn’t do it. I have enough trouble trying to get them to all look up at me at the same time, and not be distracted by…like if I say, “Rita, look at me right in my eyes”, and they all look at Rita! The 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders, they have other issues, but they older kids, I find it’s very useful for them, not just in the choral work, but all of the kids I work with are learning instruments. The chorus is part of their musicianship program. So, this is something they apply to their instrumental studies and that is even before they even touch the first note. How are they preparing themselves? So this is a global, very aesthetic, very musical experience when playing and performing.

CD: In the choral context, do you have the students in chairs, or are you using a room that’s more like a Dalcroze room where they are freely moving around?

Master-teacher A: With the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders, they sit on the floor. With the 5th, 6th, and 7th graders, I have some big boys in there, and they are not able to cross their legs easily – it’s not something they do. And, some of the children are not comfortable sitting on the floor for an hour. So, we set up the chairs, and then either we move them back, or I’ll have…well, we do movement during the class. I have 16 children in the chorus – in the older chorus, there are 20 in the younger, and the way we set up the chairs, they can easily move around them. They don’t have the whole floor space, but they do love to do movement exercises, so at a certain point we move the chairs off the floor. We have a very big space. And we do our movement exercises then they come back and sit in a semi-circle. But we don’t do a whole hour. They just can’t sit for a whole hour. But, we do a lot of movement, either around the chairs – we have plenty of space, or then we put the chairs aside so we can have…you know, if we leave the chairs there, then the children won’t have their free movement wherever they want in the center and so on, so we use space in a variety of ways.

CD: Do you do some solfège or ear-training with the choir as well?

Master-teacher A: Um, some. My biggest regret is that I don’t have an extra half hour to do that. In fact, when I started working with these groups years ago, this was a sight-singing and ear training class, but then the kids wanted to perform. And we have two performances a year. I didn’t want to do it – I wasn’t oriented that way. I am not a choral conductor, but I saw how valuable it was for them to work towards performance, and they love performing and sharing what they’ve done. They love it so much! So, I do – one of the goals of the classes is to get the kids to sight-sing. And we do a lot of exercises – I would say the first three months, we are working on pitch, tonality, and intervals. And we get new kids in the chorus every year, so I will not have them perform until the month of March so that we can work on this. I’m finding, unfortunately, that I am not doing solfège with them. I have them once a week. And with the older group, I would do fixed-do,
which is my great love. But, some of them are getting fixed-do, and some of them are getting moveable-do in school — they are doing it every day, so I’m finding more I’m using numbers and letters. Letters are tricky, because if there’s a C#, we have to sing, C#. Also, one of my goals here, as I mentioned to you, they are all taking instruments — they absolutely have to transfer what they learn to their instrumental study. And I love using the do, re, mi — the syllables, but the kids have to be able to use letter systems so that they understand, you know, this transfers to their instrument. So, I’m using numbers and letters, Caron.

CD: You mentioned improvisation as a major hallmark of the approach. Are you integrating improvisation in the choral context?

Master-teacher A: Not much. I would say mainly because of time. The groups are kind of big. Let me see — the improvisation I do with them is movement. We do movement improvisation. But I haven’t done improvisation using vocal stuff very much. Just, there’s so much to do with the score, and it’s so much to do with reading. And, as I’m talking, I’m thinking, I love to do improv — I should do it with them. There’s a big time element here. Mostly, I want them to feel comfortable with the score. And we do do a lot of eurhythmics, and they love it. They love it. I work with them on conducting. I find meter — with all the problems kids have, when I hear kids play or perform, I think, Oh my God, that child has no notion of what meter she is playing in. There’s no sense of meter. There’s no feeling of phrase. And, so, we work a lot on metric stuff — not only conducting, but using props such as rubber balls, and just so the kids feel the meter. And then, of course, in the Composer F, it’s really fun to feel 3/4 going into 3/2 and apply that. I’ll have the kids in groups, one group of 3/4, one group of 3/2 — it’s a lot of fun — they really love it.

CD: So, what would you say is your goal — what are you hoping they’ll come away with? You touched on that a little bit already but…

Master-teacher A: I want them to sing musically. I want them to be able to sight-sing. Some of them stay with me — you know, I have them for five or six years of this, and, the ones who leave can sight-sing. And they’re comfortable — you know, if I say, “Who can take part three?” you know, because we’ll work in three voices, the middle voice, and the bottom — I work with SSA a lot. One of my goals is to get the kids strong enough sight-singers to take the middle voice, or take the bottom voice, and feel comfortable with that, and enjoy it, and feel the meter, and look at dotted rhythms and understand and develop a kind of inner rhythm related to the symbols they are reading. So, those are my main goals.

CD: And for you as a conductor, when you go to perform, and do conducting gestures, are they growing out that process that you have had with the
class? How are you using conducting gesture – as a reminder to the students, or as a representation of the score?

Master-teacher A: A lot of it depends on the piece. Ah, some of them really need… Ah, we did a piece by Purcell – maybe you know *Trip it in a Ring*? Kids loved that – you know, two voices, and lots of sixteenth notes. It’s a cute piece – they wanted to do it again this year. Ah, but that one, I really needed to keep the beat for them, but in some of the pieces, I find I am more conducting phrase. Depends a lot on the piece. Then I’ll give the dynamics in my left hand. We did a really interesting piece, a canon, starting “We cats” by Brown. We had…we did a concert of all classics, from the classical period, and so we did a chromatic canon by Haydn, called *The Snail*, and then we did a canon by R. Brown called…it started with “We cats, when assembled…” And that canon with cats was quite rhythmically tricky. In fact, I have to say, when I picked it out, I did not appreciate how tricky it was until I tried to harmonize it, and realized Brown was playing a lot of tricks. And so, the kids needed me to help them to keep this together. So, I think it depends a lot on the piece itself.

CD: So, it’s been very interesting to hear about your context. I didn’t expect that we would talk about choral conducting as much, so thank you. I want to get back to, just before we finish, to the interpretation of Dalcroze’s original writings. What I will be starting with is sort of a re-visitation of the original writings, and trying to extract what I think is in there in relationship to the conductor’s work. So, perhaps you could refer to that, or even tell me a little bit about…do his original writings influence the way you are teaching? Are you noticing that you are referring to that, or do you think it’s changed a lot since he originally wrote those things?

Master-teacher A: You know, you are asking such good questions. In a way, some of the teaching of Dalcroze, his original teaching, is unrecognizable. That said, I do believe, from my readings, and from my work, and having done training in Switzerland, and with people that trained in Switzerland…I feel that Dalcroze was absolutely an innovator – way ahead of his time. As are all people like Dalcroze who try to advance new ideas and try to bring them into their methodologies without the sense that this is going to go anywhere, even. His book, *Rhythm, Music and Education*, which I think is the text…he wrote *Rhythm, Art and Education*…these are, by the way, collections of essays of lectures that were written a lot before they were put together and originally published. I think some of the writings in this were from 1908, and then it was put together, I forget, I think 1921, by Novello in London. I think this was a collection of some of his writings, but some of the chapters seem very related, for example, chapters 5 and 6, probably were written in sequence and close together. And they are probably the most informative chapters in the book. I know he wrote articles that are very interesting, but I do assign all of my methodology students to read *Rhythm, Music, and Education*. It’s not an easy read, it’s
very dense, and the translation itself makes for difficult reading, but there are some very informative sections of that book, and I think if somebody can read it all the way through, it’s very interesting. In the forward, and I always have my students read the forward of every book they read. Even who is getting thanked here. Look and see who the author is thanking, because there may be some important people, and you’ll say, oh, she worked with so and so. And then you look up that educator. In the forward, in the introduction, Dalcroze refers to his experiments in the classroom, and I think that’s one of the most important statements he makes in the entire book. In other words, we are reading from his words – these are experiments he did. And so, we can conclude that we are also doing experiments. There’s another very interesting phrase, but I don’t think it’s from RME, I think it’s from Vol. 1 of Rhythmic Movement. He has Vol. 1 and Vol. 2. You should probably know that Dalcroze was a prolific writer, not only of compositions, but also of his prose writing – his research, his essays. He left many exercises in solfège. He left tons of notebooks with all his eurhythmics exercises. Most of them were taken by a scribe who was in each of his classes and took his notes. Some of them are in his original hand writing. At the beginning of these books, there’s a statement saying, “Only students of the 3rd year of eurhythmics may look at these books”. So, there was a woman who would come to Geneva and do research for her dissertation, and she was not a eurhythmics student, she was kind of like an Irwin Spector, who got very interested in Dalcroze, and wrote a wonderful biography. This woman’s name was Judy. And she was not allowed to look at these books, and she was shocked, as a researcher. But Dalcroze himself said, “No Judy, you can’t see these ‘til you take year 3”. So, you can look at that in different ways. But, let me get to something else, and then I’ll talk about all this. In his Vol. 1 of Rhythmic Movement, Dalcroze wrote, and I’m not quoting, “I leave no guide for improvising, without which a Dalcoze teacher can’t teach”. So, he leaves us no guide. And, with all the solfège exercises he left, and with all the eurhythmics exercises he left, we have not one essay, nothing about his improv. Zip! No exercises for improvising on the piano. And, he made it clear that he was not leaving a guide. And, he didn’t explain why. So, I find this to be very interesting. Now, if we juxtapose that statement with the statement about only third-year students may look at my lesson plans, and I have to tell you, I was so excited to look at these lesson plans, and they were completely useless. Well, not completely. They were useful in that I looked at them and thought this is not the kind of teaching we are doing today. I’d much rather watch a lesson of Master-teacher B’s than of Dalcroze because his lessons were very disjointed, and they were categorized by materials. One lesson was called “steps”. He had these steps constructed where he would have students do certain exercises on that. And another one was called “ropes” and they did an exercise with that. And they had absolutely wonderful exercises with forty kids, or forty adults doing complex choreographies in space with four different lines going here and there doing a fugue. I mean, they must have been
amazing. But, those exercises were for people that went to school every single day for three years or more studying his work. And, it’s now outdated. Dalcroze himself would probably say, “These were experiments – now you are doing your experiments”. And I also think, having seen the notebooks that they are completely useless for those people who haven’t done eurhythmics, and so Dalcroze follows his own beliefs by saying you can’t learn this unless you are in the classroom. So, he would say, you can’t benefit from reading my lessons unless you are in the classroom, and, therefore, please do not think that you can represent my work from these notebooks. You can’t unless you have been in classes. So that’s how I read it, and I don’t see it as something that doesn’t make any sense. The more interesting statement for me is the one about improv, where we are left to conjecture, well, he wanted us to find our own way, or, I don’t know. We don’t even have any tape recordings of his playing. Nothing. We don’t have any music by him. We can’t hear him improvise. There are films of him, but there’s no sound.

CD: Wow. I have two quick questions that came up from what you just said. Do you think it’s useful to write about and research Dalcroze, or simply to experience it?

Master-teacher A: I think both. Because there is one more piece, and I did want to add this, Caron. When you were talking about choral conducting, you were talking about voice, ear, and body, but you have to add, for me, cognition, understanding, and analysis that have to come into this process. And, I say this now because I think, yes, I am constantly…I have used RME over and over – my book is falling apart. The ways in which Dalcroze phrases things are so subtle. For example, he describes, just in one sentence, rests as “internal vibration”. And, if you think about that, internal means the energy is happening inside. It’s such a beautiful and short to almost the point of being able to disregard it. “Internal vibration”. I’ve thought of that phrase so much. That has definitely informed my body work. That rest is internal vibration. So, for years and years and years, I would no more have my kids read a rest as “sh”, or say anything, there’s another one, “sa”. What they do when they see a rest is they take a breath. And I tell them – when you see this symbol, it’s called a rest, but it means listen. That’s what it means. And when you see this, and I tell them, professional musicians see a rest, and most often what they do is listen and take a breath. So, we all take a breath when we see a rest. So, that’s how we deal with it. But, that phrase, “internal vibration”, is very important in understanding how our study of music informs all of the parts of the music.

CD: And my last question, do you refer to Dalcroze as an approach, as a philosophy, as a methodology? Do you think the terminology there is key?
Master-teacher A: All of the above. I’m really glad...I’ve been able to give a course on Dalcroze methodology at Institution F – I think I’m in my twelfth or thirteenth year doing it, and teaching that has given me the opportunity to analyze this and to try to make a curriculum, which has evaded me, I have to tell you. Curriculum for children I have. But for adults learning Dalcroze methodology, I don’t have a curriculum. It changes every year. I just don’t have one. I do lesson plans every year. I have lesson plans from my whole thirteen years, and they’re always changing. The group I have now, we do a lot of work in the area of improvisation. And I have a clarinetist in there, and everyone in there is teaching private studio lessons, so this year we are talking a lot about using Dalcroze in the private studio lesson. It has to be very practical for them. What I call the course is “Introduction to Dalcroze Methodology: Principles and Practices”. And the “principles” – we spend time discussing exactly what these are. And “practices” is how we put this into practice. And we go back and forth with it. And when we observe a teacher teaching, what principles do these practices reflect? I use all of those terms: approach, methodology, way – I like the word way – but I use all of those terms.

CD: I really like the word “lens”, and have been using that a lot lately.

Master-teacher A: Sure.

CD: This is so amazing, Master-teacher A. Thank you for your input as a researcher of Dalcroze, a Dalcroze teacher-trainer and a choral conductor. Thank you!
Master-teacher B

Master-teacher B holds the Dalcroze Diplôme Supérieur. She teaches all levels of Dalcroze and prepares candidates for Dalcroze certification and licensure. Master-teacher B has a Masters degree in Choral Conducting and has conducted choirs of various ages.

CD:

My first question is very broad. In your view, what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach to music education?

Master-teacher B:

I would say that it’s multi-sensory. That it’s based in experience – movement experience, particularly, but live experience – aural and physical. That, music is at the center. So, I think that one of the hallmarks is its musicality. It’s not drill-based. It’s a musical encounter which leads to musical understanding and experience. It’s spontaneous, and improvisational. I guess those are the main hallmarks as I see them.

CD:

Ah, what are your specific goals for student participation? Do you teach Dalcroze as an end in itself or as a tool for application to other musical contexts?

Master-teacher B:

Well, both. It depends on the population. At Institution G, I am busy training Dalcroze teachers. It’s an end in itself – they are learning to use the materials of movement and improvisation, and all of the Dalcroze learning games. Ideas about learning through different relationships to the music and through participation. By different relationships I mean…for example, in a follow, you are in a real-time relationship with what is happening in the music. Whereas in a canon, it’s about musical memory. So, your relationship differs, but, I would say, most of the time, the follow is the basic activity. And that’s what develops musicality. It’s there in most of the other exercises as well. So, I’m certainly teaching increased musicality, musicianship, musical independence – all of these things. But also – and I think this is what’s unique to Dalcroze – you are also opening up a kind of body/mind experience where the body is being invited into the classroom, and that’s very, very powerful, because it’s where so much musical feeling resides. It’s in the body. It’s that spontaneous physical reaction one has to music that becomes the basis for musical understanding. When I teach seniors, I am primarily interested, actually, in improving their memory, the brain-body connection, allowing them an avenue for creativity – nurturing that part of them, which probably for many years has not been as active. Leadership – passing around leadership, also improving their gait. It’s an incredibly nourishing kind of work, and that’s not only for the seniors – I think that’s for everybody that studies it. You come into the classroom to learn music, but you go out having learned music, but also having learned a great deal about yourself, and nurturing those parts of yourself that become part of you the artist, and you the human being. And, certainly you the teacher. That ability to
really understand the group, and maneuver within the group, to relate to the group, to take leadership, to be able to follow. To coordinate with group activities – the whole ensemble issue I think is discovered in the class – because you are a participant in the class.

CD: And the same with children?

Master-teacher B: Yes, I think so. I have not taught children in a number of years now. But, the goals are the same. I would say that the means are different. The musical materials would be different. Children don’t tend to know – if you start them young enough, about notation and so forth, so you are building those musical skills, and tying the cognitive to the experiential. The cognitive is developed out of the experiential. But, all of those things about leadership, and learning to follow, and nurturing the creativity, and developing the coordination between mind and body – the multi-sensory aspect of it – that’s true for children. That’s true for everybody. I think, in a sense, one of the unique things about Dalcroze is that every classroom has its own needs. Every group of students has its own needs, and this is the world’s most adaptable methodology, because you can really turn it on to anybody. And you adapt it, just as you will adapt it to your choral rehearsal. That’s a specific need, and if one were coaching chamber music, or something like that, the purposes would be music-making/musicality, but the techniques would all be available. They would be the same as any techniques one would use in any classroom, I think. Involving the body in a spontaneous, feelingful way.

CD: That’s what I’ve found – it’s very useful.

Master-teacher B: It’s tremendously useful, and lots of fun. I keep coming back to Dalcroze’s statement that joy is the most powerful of mental stimuli. And the more I work with this, the more profound I find that is, because it’s inherently a joyful thing to be allowed to use all of our abilities. It makes one feel whole, and that’s profoundly joyful. To interact with other people – if it’s done in a way which is useful - leading to something - nobody likes to be part of a crowd. A stampede of humans. But to actually be in an organized, structured event that is creative with other people is very deeply powerful, I think.

CD: I think that’s why people keep coming back to choral experience as well. So, the next three questions go: body, ear, voice, and I’m interested in parsing out, if we can, what exactly the role of the body is, and do you use conducting and gesturing as a part of that, what’s the role of the ear, what’s the role of the voice, and if they are all integrated, that’s fine too, but just trying to sort all of that out.

Master-teacher B: Well, my first reaction upon reading those questions was to say: central. What role does the body play in your classes? It plays the central role.
That’s where the experience lies. That’s where the musicality is – monitored, and analyzed, and synthesized, and understood, and named by the brain. And the language that one applies to various things. But the experience itself is in the body. As is all music making. You can’t play a musical instrument without your body. And that’s that refined, sensitive, physical aspect of experience combined with the aural, of course, which monitors. They work together. But without the body, what can you do? You can’t sing! You can’t play any instrument. It’s a physical thing. So, I think the body is very central to all music making and music learning. And, yes, I do use conducting. I use the large armbeats as well as small armbeats. Yes, I use the very big ones because I was taught to use them, and I found them incredibly helpful. They structured me rhythmically in a way that small armbeats would not have. There was something that was really physical about stepping a pattern, stepping a canon, with these giant armbeats that involved the whole upper body. It was an extremely important part of what I did as a student. I felt that it structured me musically, rhythmically. So that I knew where I was at all times. Stepping of patterns involving moving of weight around the room in a powerful and musical way. But, the upper body, if we don’t involve the armbeats, is not involved. I mean, I really hate to see all of this powerful movement with these little tiny, squirrely armbeats, because, to me, that really doesn’t do it. So, I’m one of the few, I guess, that still does love to use big armbeats. And I use them in eurhythmics classes. I don’t conduct that way. I wouldn’t use them in solfège. I feel they have a unique role in the eurhythmics class. And I know a lot of people have abandoned them, and I understand, I mean, why not – each teacher has to do this his or her own way. But, for me, I have found, that you learn a lot from doing these. Not only structurally and rhythmically, but there’s something about the sense of the timing of getting from one beat to the next. Where the actual beat is, and what happens in between it. And managing that timing has everything to do with the stepping of patterns and the managing of timing generally speaking within a phrase, or as you perform a phrase of music. It’s really all about timing. To me, that’s what rhythm is – it’s timing. It’s not a metronomic thing. It’s the sense of the arrival, the take-off, the journey between take-off and arrival, and all of that is subtly managed. If there are words involved, as there would be in a choral situation – they are managing how the words are said, and what the rhythm of the language is, and how that informs the rhythm of the music. I think, somehow, using the large armbeats contributes to this sense of how you take that particular journey. I have found, a lot of times, when people start doing armbeats they are very wooden, and they are just arrivals, you know, they are just like beating time. Going from that to something that actually has an inside. The beats which have an inside, and the inside is fleshe[d] out and textured, I think, you know, makes them very worthwhile. And I also use gesturing – what I call “musical painting” all the time, all the time.
CD: That would be like a free movement to the music?

Master-teacher B: Yes. I call it musical painting because I’m using it a lot in solfège classes. They are painting the musical line, or they are showing me, in some way, whether this is a whole-step or a half-step, or in a di-chord, where’s the feeling, where’s the accent? Embodied in the gesture is the musical feeling. I mean, there are gestures which simply don’t work. And, if you take the gesture away, you’ll find that the sound isn’t working either. And you put the gesture back, and tool it so that it does work, so there’s the right gesture for that particular musical event, and it makes a huge difference.

CD: So in your solfège classes, are the students always gesturing, doing something physical, while they sing?

Master-teacher B: Not always. If they are sight-singing, they are beating time. We worked a lot this year with penta-chords, and hearing the different functions of various penta-chords, and I found that gestures – these were very personal, but they made a big difference in how one sang the penta-chord, and how one understood the function of the penta-chord and where it was leading. I don’t know if that makes sense to you, but…

CD: So, do you allow the students to develop their own gesture? It’s always a personal gesture?

Master-teacher B: Oh yes! We will sometimes take the time to really look at the various gestures that people will produce. Let’s say a di-chord. Some people will just do this kind of thing [gestures] – it doesn’t tell you much. It just tells you that there are two. Or, this kind of thing [gestures] – it doesn’t tell you a whole lot. We would analyze, what is that gesture telling us? And, what do you want to tell us about a di-chord? What is its musical implication, in a particular setting, let’s say. And I think that could be true of any bit of musical material - that the gesture would tell you something about it. Not just that there were three notes, for example, or two notes. It would want to tell you something about the relationship between those two notes. Which is the stronger of the two? How close are they? How far? Are they part of a continuum, one here, one there? Are they isolated? Something like that. I mean, this could all be reflected in a gesture.

CD: That has so many implications for conducting!

Master-teacher B: It does, I know.

CD: I’m thinking about the ear and the voice. Do the ear and the body always work in tandem? Does one precede the other? Does the voice come after the body and the ear? Is there any type of hierarchy there?
You know, sometimes, I think the body needs to explore its own language. We do a lot at Institution G with just movement training. It’s analogous, I think, to playing an instrument, in the sense that the better you get at your technique, the more expressive you can become. Body awareness, and the comfort of being in the body, and the sense of authenticity of movement, as a part of that language of movement, before it even gets to be at the service of music. It becomes refined, and in that sense the ear is not necessarily involved right away. So, I think it can happen on its own. That you are just developing the movement ability – the sense of weight, of where your weight is coming from, the sense of space, the sense of direction. It happens so much within the context of a class, I mean, it is a music class. There might be moments when you need to stop and deal with a movement issue. Let’s say somebody can’t really release their weight, so they don’t feel a downbeat. You know, that’s a pretty basic kind of a thing. The difference between an upbeat and a downbeat. The sense of releasing into gravity. That’s something that needs to be explored physically maybe before it’s put into a musical context. And, so I would take time out to do that, if I saw that somebody needed it. It might not be everybody that needs it, but just one or two people in the class. So, I would design some type of exercise where we explore that very thing then I would take it back into the musical context. Or, another thing that people tend to have difficulty with is the sense of flow. Flow through space. You know, when they first start to walk, it’s very vertical – it’s not really very directional. So, that’s a movement issue. That’s a physical feeling of moving through space. Feeling the resistance of the invisible in you. That’s very close to conducting as well. When you conduct with resistance that comes from inside you. You conduct in a way that feels like that. So, I think certain things are physical issues which need to be helped, need to be addressed. But, generally, I would say that the ear leads. What the ear hears is leading the body. And where it breaks down is if the body doesn’t know how to follow. It simply is not free enough. That’s the kind of thing I am talking about. You give help to the physical. Because most of us are much more refined in terms of singing, and hearing, and writing and all of those musical skills that we’ve been taught than we are in expressing what we hear. I think that’s the new thing for most people when they come into eurhythmics classes. They think, “Oh my God, I have to move?” I don’t have any awareness of, what do you mean, move? Even walking becomes a refined activity. It isn’t that in the beginning. It’s just walking – it’s utilitarian. But, in the eurhythmics class, it becomes much more than utilitarian. It becomes dynamic and expressive and nuanced.

CD: And then, the singing voice? When do you use it, and how do you use it?

Master-teacher B: I use it a lot. I use it in the eurhythmics class. I use it, of course, in the solfège class. I use it everywhere. I think, basically, that’s the basic instrument. It’s the one that’s closest to movement. Certainly much
closer than the piano. So, I would accompany movement with vocal sound in a very free way. I also, um, would use pieces of music – singing, in the eurhythmics class. I don’t know if that answers your question?

CD: Yes, it does. One of the things I am hoping to address is how in the technique of singing there are so many eurhythmic aspects. And, so I’m trying to figure out, can we teach the singing coordination through the, as you are talking about, the physical coordination or eurhythms?

Master-teacher B: That’s interesting. You know…I’m not…I wish my daughter were here – she’s a trained singer – an opera singer, and she would have a lot of ideas about this. And, she grew up with eurhythmics, so she tends to be very kinesthetic. And the way she teaches is very physical, but I think what she could say about this would be a lot more than what I would be able to say. Certainly I work a lot with breath. I think I work less with breath as a singing technique, but the importance of breath as a musical technique as an element of rhythmic patterns. Where you take the breath – where you breathe shapes the nuance of the whole pattern.

CD: So, it’s taught as anacrusis?

Master-teacher B: It may be an anacrusic breath. Much of the time it is – the breath as an anacrusic breath. But where that would be taken, and whether it would be followed with some type of simulated exhale or just a sung phrase or something. But I am having a hard time articulating this… In moving a rhythmic pattern, where one breathes is very important. If you have [vocalizes rhythms], you really can’t move it without taking that little breath on that eighth note. It’s an anacrusic breath, and then step step step. But without the breath, there’s a moment in there that’s totally dead [she demonstrates non-movement vs. movement versions]. The nuance of it begins to take shape as you breathe.

CD: Sure, sure. That’s a bit like the notion of rests and breathing. Rests being active moments, and what are you using the rests for? The next question is what is your sequence for teaching a new concept?

Master-teacher B: Well, I would start with an experience. Generally through the class, my sense of sequence is that in the beginning, the teacher has a lot of the responsibility. And by the end of the class, the student should be independent of the teacher. And, the student bears the responsibility because of what has happened in the class. So, I tend to start with some kind of aural or physical experience, in which they are moving and responding to what I am giving them. And this would lead to discovery on their part, and analysis, verbalization, internalization. If it’s appropriate, notation would come in there somewhere. So, basically, I’m getting from the experiential to the cognitive, including the cognitive, so that it becomes one. And then, increasingly, the students are doing things
which require more and more independence. And then finally, I would say that improvisation would be the final thing, where again, you would have sort of come full circle, but by this time, the students are able to play with the materials, whatever the concept. Let’s say you are going to teach a class on syncopation. So one concept might be the idea that you are either early or late to the party. That’s one idea. Another would be that they would have to experience that conflict of interest between the norm, the beat, and the musical accent — the agogic weight of the music, which conflicts with what you expect. So you need to have an experience of both. That’s very experiential. To begin to be able to talk about that — to describe how that feels, how they could describe it and so on, and by the end of the class, they would be able to improvise using those elements. They would have internalized them.

**CD:** Do you start with a piece of music, or do you prefer to start with a concept?

**Master-teacher B:** Oh, I think that’s very individual. I tend, myself, to start with a concept and build to a piece of music. I tend to start with an experience of some sort — you’re passing a ball from one side to the other, or something like that. It’s an experience, so it’s quite easy. I don’t throw people into the deep end. So, if we’re going to have a class on 4 against 3, I wouldn’t start right off with a piece that has 4 against 3 — not until everybody learns how to do it. That’s not my idea of the class. I would start with something quite simple that would give the shape of a 4, or the shape of a 3. And we would really live that. Then, they would experience something coming against that. The 3 coming against that. Or, the 4 coming against the 3. So we have the experience of conflict, but they’re really rooted in one. And then it would be the experience of having something conflict with it, or not. The power of that polyrhythmic conflict would be what I want them to learn. Why do we use it? Why is it there? It creates tremendous resistance and power and energy and generally speaking, conflict does, and it is supported by an increase in nuance. You don’t tend to get a 4 against 3 when music is doing a diminuendo. Quite the opposite, you know. And it’s climactic because there so much resistance — swimming upstream against a very strong current. You are forced into being stronger than you would be if you were swimming with the current, when you take away that resistance. So, I tend to start with a concept like that — resistance, or syncopation — is it early is it late? Is there conflict going on?

**CD:** So, you’re talking about musical conflict — one level before the relevant musical concepts, basically…what I hear you saying is one level simpler than a musical concept. So, syncopation, what does it create? It creates conflict, or sense of early-versus-late, and that’s where you are sort of beginning?
Master-teacher B: Yah, I begin with that. I would probably begin with some type of a reaction exercise where they are stepping the beat, and when they hear something that they would not expect, they would react. So, they are reacting to accents, to syncopated accents. They don’t know whether they are early or late, they are just conflicting with the norm. I would introduce it as a new concept, as you said. Rather than let’s teach them [speaks syncopated rhythm], this would be a way of learning the actual thing itself. I would tend not to do it that way. Somebody else might do it that way. Here’s a piece of material, and let’s learn this rhythm and then come to understand it, but, I would tend to come in another way.

CD: So, when you look at a score, I’m thinking about the sort of conductor implications of this… So, sometimes, I’m looking at a score, and for me as a Dalcroze-trained conductor, I’m trying to extract experiences from the music, because a lot of times we are working from a score setting, versus working towards a score. We have a performance, we have scores.

Master-teacher B: I think a rehearsal is very different from a Dalcroze class. You can apply techniques to it, but, basically, as you say, you are working with a score! They already have the music. We don’t have that in the Dalcroze class. But you do, and you’re rehearsing that music, so all of the application of Dalcroze techniques is to make it more musical, to make it more alive, bring awareness to issues of phrase and nuance and rhythm and text and all of the rest of it. You’re applying Dalcroze techniques to your rehearsal, if I’m not mistaken, but you don’t start with nothing, you start with a piece of music! Don’t you?

CD: Yes, absolutely, and I would like to investigate how Dalcroze training may impact how a conductor looks at a score. What about this piece needs to be experienced by the choir in order to make a musically satisfying performance? So I’m interested in the decision-making process of choosing music and choosing what to extract from the music.

Master-teacher B: I would think that there are certain basic things that one might teach a choir to do. And one would be to shift weight on their risers, or if they are sitting down, to use a hand, for the beat. They should be able to find the walking pace of every piece of music. And then they should find some way to feel what are the subdivisions? And, these are kind of basic things – they should find something for the downbeat. This can be applied to any piece of music. So, I would think these things can be applied to any piece of music, the meter, the beat, the subdivision, and then the phrase. I would, you know, have them painting the phrase, but that would take a while yet for them to probably feel that. So, meter, and I would get down and dirty into the subdivisions, the beat, the meter, and then into certain rhythmic patterns. But I would have them physicalize them. This is something we never do. I sing in a wonderful choir, and we never do that. And, I miss it. Everybody is such a good singer, and the conductor is
extremely musical, and really seems to embody the rhythm, but I think we could do a lot more. So that’s just, I mean, it works without it, but I think those kinds of things… You’re talking about choirs of children primarily? You work with all ages?

CD: I teach university now, but I used to teach children and I find that movement is a little more accessible for them sometimes – they’re a little closer to it…

Master-teacher B: Well, did you ever hear of Conductor F? Because he was steeped in eurhythmics with Dalcroze-teacher I at Institution H and he had his choirs come off the risers, step their patterns, you know, move around the room as they were vocalizing. He had them doing amazing things, and it just came together with their singing in a very vital way. So, he was probably the farthest out of any conductor I have ever heard. Actually stepping the rhythmic patterns that they were singing. But I tended to use, and still do actually, a lot of nonsense syllables to learn rhythmic patterns, and then I would go right to the text, but, just things like “ba da ba da boo, ba da da da boo ba ba ba”… You know, just using that kind of thing and then seeing what the text is. But we would rehearse the pattern, but as I do it, I already gesturing anyway. That’s keeping it together, plus it’s so ingrained in me, so I don’t know how I would do it without it. You know, to try to do that “ba da ba da boo” [without gesture] – it just wouldn’t mean the same thing. I would use bounces, and rhythmic words, and nonsense syllables. Maybe if I wanted to do an accent, I would have them tap the person next to them, or they have partner and speak “ba da ba da boo ba ba ba” [and patsch], or something like that so it became very active.

CD: Do you ever re-notate your scores, Master-teacher B? Thinking about the way that it looks not necessarily capturing the way that it’s experienced or heard…

Master-teacher B: Yah, you cold, certainly you could. Certainly some early music has been edited badly. It’s barred badly, and to understand it, you really have to redo it. I re-write some of my piano scores as well – because when you look at a Rachmaninoff prelude and it looks like the left hand has to do everything, when really it’s the right hand that has to take certain notes. And, I find it’s just easier to re-write them. Do you do that, do you re-write your scores?

CD: Well, I’m trying to explore ways to approach score study from a Dalcroze perspective, and one of my thoughts is to look for the movement that’s inherent in the music. So, identifying things like major harmonic shifts, or rhythmic motive - things like that could be pulled out to be experienced with the choir. So, this is sort of my notion, that it’s possible
to do that, but I’m picking people’s brains about how they approach notation.

Master-teacher B: Yah, I mean, notation is a code at best. Even music that is well-notated – there’s so much that is left out. We, in the western world, don’t tend to notate things such as color, density of sound, the placement of sound. That’s just not notated at all. We don’t know how to do that. We put an $f$ or a $p$ and what that means is maybe more clearly defined by moving through something. This has to sound as if it’s moving through oil, or it’s moving through honey, or here it’s just moving through air – it’s totally free – those kinds of images. Well, that’s not on the score. There’s no way of putting that on the score. At least in our scores. Unless you want to paint it or something, but those things, that’s what one does when one rehearses – try to get the right sound for that particular moment and for that particular text. The right use of the voice, and the right relationship to the surrounding resistance of air, and so forth. Is this a Brahms harmony, or a Mozart, or a Stravinsky? They’re all going to sound different.

CD: And, do you discover that through the rehearsal process or through the use of movement? Do you learn more about the music?

Master-teacher B: Well, I think this brings up what the conductor is doing – studying the score the chorus is doing. I think that that kind of information would be what you as a conductor – how you are informing your own self. What you choose to do with the chorus, I don’t think, can’t be quite as explorative. They won’t get it. They want you to be a little more directive. So, what you’re going to do in terms of movement has to be a little more structured. What you do for yourself, in terms of discovering how you want a piece to sound, can be very tied to all kinds of movement imagery and exploration. By the time you get to rehearsal, I think you have certain notions. Then you can say, “While you are singing this, I want you to move your hand as if you were pressing against something, or it’s moving through fog, or it’s just sliding along something very slippery. And you’re singing this…but you’ve already discovered that at home.

CD: So, do you think the role of eurhythmics teacher is different than the role of conductor, or how are they similar or different?

Master-teacher B: Oh, I think they are different. Certainly the rhythmics experience informs the conductor. It’s one of the ways you are going to teach yourself what you want to know about the music, but a rehearsal, as I said, can be informed by movement, but I don’t think it’s a classroom. People don’t come to a rehearsal expecting to have these rhythmic discoveries, and partner games and all of that that you would have in a eurhythmics class. I think it’s an application to the performance of pieces of music. It depends how long you are going to be able to work on a piece of music, and it may be that you take time out to teach a little unit on this particular thing they
are having difficulty with. You work on that particular thing and then you put it back into the rehearsal. But, most people come to rehearsal – it’s an hour and half long, at best, right? Isn’t that about right? How long do you rehearse?

CD: Yah, usually there are some major time constraints. I have found though, often, that the eurhythmics experience expedites the rehearsal process. Like maybe I’ll introduce a piece in week 3 or week 4 because week 1 and 2 were dedicated to exploring some of the concepts that were in the piece, so it can kind of expedite the process…

Master-teacher B: I think this works – you’re in a school, right?

CD: I’m in a university now…

Master-teacher B: So you can actually do that. It’s up to you to design your semester’s work with a particular group in any way that you want. But, for a church choir, these are people coming from all different backgrounds, and they only see you for that particular hour and half and they are going to prepare the music for that particular Sunday, so it has to be a workable situation. I think they’re different, but I certainly agree that eurhythmics expedites the rehearsal process. But, I don’t have any rules about it. I just tend to go where the need is. This is just not happening, what can we do? Then I would get out and work on it. But, if they don’t need it, I wouldn’t work on it.

CD: Right, right, interesting. That’s the spontaneity part. One more question: how would you describe the learning dynamic in your classroom. Is that a relationship that is two ways, or, is that a more vertical relationship, and what’s the relationship between students?

Master-teacher B: No, I think it’s a very dialogic relationship. I don’t see it as top down. Certainly my job as the teacher is to guide the class. I think there’s nothing worse than the teacher that has no plan or no ability to give feedback or guidance or a stage director who say, “Well, I don’t know, what do you guys think?” They don’t have any idea of we need to work on this, this, and that, you know? That’s the role of the teacher – you have to be that kind of a guide. But, I think it needs to be done in a way that is very inclusive. It doesn’t feel like you are giving the orders and they are following orders. I think it’s very dynamic interaction that is taking place, and I think it’s taking place between the students as well. That has to be given a lot of room. A lot of time for student performances, for student feedback, for any kind of active participation on the part of the students. Otherwise, I think the danger is, in eurhythmics, that you can end of feeling like a trained seal. You know, you’ve learned to do all of these things, and “hip” and “hop” and you can do them all, but, so what? I think it’s really important that the students understand what they are working
towards. That’s part of the discussion, and they may have ideas of how best to help that happen. I mean, I’ve certainly come to places in rehearsals and in classes when I’ve said, you know, I’m feeling a little bit stuck right here. What I’m trying to get to is this, but it’s just not happening. What should we do? What do we need here? And then, all of a sudden, it starts getting very lively and there are all kinds of ideas, and I think that does happen, you know? Nobody knows it all. And the students come up with amazing ideas, so I think that sort of shared leadership, as long as you yourself know where you are going, and that you’re able to structure it so that they feel safe. That’s what you are being paid to do. But I wrote down here: a rehearsal leads to a performance and a eurhythmics class does not necessarily lead to a performance. That’s one huge difference. In a rehearsal, you are going to go over things to perfect them so that it will be performance ready, and all of the eurhythmics techniques will contribute to that so that the performance is alive and sparkling and accurate and musical and all of these things. In a eurhythmics class, there isn’t necessarily a performance at the end. There’s more that sense of discovery – that the student has awakened certain parts of themselves and have made discoveries – discoveries musical, discoveries personal, discoveries whatever, but they’ve learned something. It’s a learning situation, it’s about education, whereas the other is a performance situation. I think you can apply eurhythmics to chamber music performance, to solo performance, but remembering that what you are trying to do is get to a performance. You’re trying to make it better, so that it’s performed better. And, the conductor can never let go of that end goal.

CD: Agreed. Is there anything else you would like to contribute to the discussion about Dalcroze in the choral setting?

Master-teacher B: I think that’s it. All I want to add is that I would love to read your dissertation when it’s finished!
Master-teacher C

Master-teacher C holds the Dalcroze Diplôme Supérieur. She teaches all levels of Dalcroze and prepares candidates for Dalcroze certification and licensure. Master-teacher C has experience as a choral and orchestral conductor.

CD: I’ll start with the first question, which is fairly general. In your view, what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach?

Master-teacher C: Well, Dalcroze used to say, in French, he said, “Que votre corps devienne de la musique”. I don’t know if you understand this sentence: “Let your body become music”. Let your body become the music. So, Dalcroze’s original idea was to place body and movement at the core of music education. That was his main idea. For Dalcroze, when he said, “Let your body become music”, it was a way of emphasizing that the body is the first instrument. Obviously for singers, the body is the instrument, but for pianists or flutists, it is not seen as the case in an obvious way, but in fact, the musical instrument (whether it be a piano or a flute) is the extension of the body. So, for Dalcroze, the body was playing a central role in perceiving and realizing (performing) music. For him, it was impossible to be a musician without paying attention to the body. In fact, for Dalcroze, the body was the way to understand the world that was surrounding him, including the musical world. Do you understand what I mean?

CD: Yes.

Master-teacher C: It was the key for understanding music. Not only to perceive music but to understand music. In fact, without the body, it’s impossible to understand music or to make music. And it’s interesting because nowadays the neuroscientists/psychologists have discussed how important the body is for knowledge. Nowadays, the body is not considered separated from the mind, philosophers and researchers are referring to the mind-body entity – the body-mind is seen as one complete organism. I think Dalcroze had this intuition about the role of the body in understanding the world, we could say in understanding the musical world. I guess the fact that he was a composer, as well as a performer – he had this experience of how the body was helping him understand what the music was all about, so I guess this is part of his whole experience – which led him to understand this concept, the fundamental role of the body-mind entity.

CD: I gather he had experience as a conductor himself?

Master-teacher C: He certainly conducted because he did these big Festival, you know, the Festspiele, where he had to conduct orchestras and choirs and he was also doing plastique animée with a lot of people, so obviously he had to conduct himself. For me, the conductor is by essence a Dalcrozian.
Because the conductor has to express with body language what the music is – what his musical intentions are. The conductor has to communicate his musical intentions. And that has to be done through body language, and that’s exactly what Dalcroze’s work is dealing with, you know? Using the body as a musical instrument. That is what the conductor is doing.

CD: There seem to be a lot of links, and I believe Dalcroze suggested that the conductor is the ideal eurhythmician. I’m not sure so far how much people have written about the conductor in that way. It seems to have been written about more often in a technical way, but not so much in a full-body kind of a way.

Master-teacher C: Well, for me, conducting has to do with communication. And, what do you want to communicate? You want to communicate the essence of the music - all the expressive qualities of the music. When you are conducting, you have an understanding of the music, but when I’m talking about understanding…in French we use the word, comprendre la musique. Comprendre, it’s like you take within the music. It’s not something that is standing here in your head. It’s something that you grasp with your whole body and something that you feel, that moves you. It’s interesting, I was looking at the title of your dissertation, “Moved to learn”, and I was thinking that the word “moved”, obviously there is the idea, I don’t know if you would say that in English, but the way I see it when I look at it is there is the sense of movement with the “move”, but don’t we also use the “moved” when we are moved by something, by an emotion?

CD: I’m so glad you caught that! That’s what it means – it has two meanings!

Master-teacher C: Yes, when I read that, I thought, for me, that is very, very important. There is something very authentic about eurhythmics, and in that respect…Dalcroze used to say, and let me find this in some of my papers here…he said, “I know and think simply because I feel and experience”. Dalcroze said that. This is a translation. I think it was translated in a book – a translation of Marie Laure Bachmann book. “I know and think simply because I feel and experience”. That is very interesting because he was saying that he understands, he knows, he thinks – that means he is becoming aware of something, he understands something, because he has experienced it and he has felt it. And that is really interesting that he said that – that was in 1924 he said that. I don’t know if you have heard of this neuroscientist, Damasio? Have you heard of him?

CD: No.

Master-teacher C: He’s an Italian scientist, a neuroscientist. And he showed that all the knowledge that we have stems from emotion. It’s interesting. He will say something – I will quote him so that you understand. He said, “Our
consciou
sness is based on three distinct, although closely related phenomena. An emotion, the feeling of that emotion, and knowing that we have a feeling of that emotion’. So, for him, knowledge is possible because we have an emotion and the feeling of that emotion. It is because of the emotion – through the emotion - that finally we know that we have a feeling of that emotion. So that is interesting because the word that you used, “moved to learn”, that’s the idea of this emotion. To be moved by something – it makes it possible for us to understand that something, otherwise it will not be possible. And the emotion in our system is linked to movement. So, it’s very interesting. What is fascinating to me nowadays is to realize that scientists are demonstrating that Dalcroze was right with his intuition at the time, at the beginning of the 20th century. He said things that nowadays are validated by scientists, which is great for us, in a certain way, to prove that he was right. And the fact that he put so much importance on the body and body movement made a lot of sense because nowadays people are showing that the body is the key attributor of knowledge. That’s how you grasp what is surrounding you. That’s how you understand the world around you, whether that be a musical world or something else.

CD: What are your specific goals for the student when you are teaching a Dalcroze class?

Master-teacher C: That’s an interesting question. I guess the main thing is…I’m working with students – some of the students are performers, others are music educators, others are composers, some of them are interested in musicology. It’s a mixed group of music students. So, I hope that I will develop them as an artist. I guess what I think is most important for them is to become creative artists in their field and to develop their own personality as an artist, as creative artists. Whether they are professors, or performers, or composers. I think, for me, that’s the main thing. That’s the main objective, but obviously there are other objectives. That they become better musicians, that they understand the music better – all of these objectives that could be more specific in a certain way. The main thing for me will be that they develop their own personality, and in doing that, they will become more creative in what they want to do. I would think that if you want to become a conductor, specifically with the conductor, my goal will be to…there are too many things that I want to say! The thing is, with eurhythmics, you are trying to develop the person as a musician. You are using the body to do that, but in doing that, you are also training the body. It’s like the music is training the body, and the body is training the person to become a better musician.

CD: I’m going to quote you – that’s very good!

Master-teacher C: You know, Dalcroze was saying that eurhythmics was an education par et pour la musique. An education through music and for music. Especially
for the conductor, I think that is something very, very important. Well, for everyone, but I think it’s easier to understand when we are thinking about the conductor because the conductor is using his or her body to express and communicate the music. So, the first thing the conductor has to do is to train that instrument. If you train the body so that the body is becoming more sensitive, more creative, is able to adapt itself, more precise, to really express exactly what you want to communicate, then you have achieved your goal as a conductor, right? You obviously have to develop the person as a musician, but you have to develop that body-musician, that is the conductor, to be an instrument of great expression. And that instrument of great expression is the body. Obviously, it’s a thinking body, we understand that. For me, and for Dalcroze, the body is always a mind-body entity. The person is not a disembodied mind, right?

CD: Yes.

Master-teacher C: So, in eurhythmics, the, music trains the body, and the body makes the person understand the music better. That’s why Dalcroze said it was an education par et pour la musique. Through music and for music. What I am trying to say is that one thing that is very important in eurhythmics is to develop the body as an instrument. If musical knowing draws on bodily processes, that means the sensitivity of our body will affect our ability to understand and express musically. So, the better we train the body, the better the body will be able to understand and express music. And I think for the conductor, this is a major point. If the conductor is able to be at ease and able to make his body adapt to any musical situation or any musical expression, that means the body will be the direct transformation of the conductor’s musical intentions. Does that make sense to you?

CD: Yes, absolutely. That makes sense to me. So, you sort of answered number 3, what role does the body play in your classes?

Master-teacher C: Well, it’s central.

CD: And what role does conducting and gesturing play in your classes?

Master-teacher C: Well, it’s always there. I don’t think there’s one class where there’s no conducting. There’s always conducting in my classes.

CD: Yah, and are you using the full armbeats, or are you using more of a conducting gesture?

Master-teacher C: I use both. One thing that I try to do is to connect the students to their own instinct. I feel sometimes when I work with the students studying in music that they lost their musical instinct. It’s not that they lost it. It’s there, but it seems that a lot of emphasis is made on theory and virtuosity and all the technical aspects, it seems, at one point, they tend to disconnect
from their own instincts - their own emotion in a certain way. It’s like they don’t allow their instinct and their emotion to participate in what they are doing. So I’m trying to have them move very spontaneously to music. I don’t impose any movement, and codified movement. I’m trying to make them at ease in using their own natural movement – in asking them to show me in movement the motion and emotion of music. You know, they love music. They are studying in music, so they love music. They are touched by music, so I want them to let their body express that…that emotion that they have about music. And they can see that emotion coming out of their body and of the other people around them. As if the music is inhabiting the space. And in doing that, the students become more confident it brings them more confidence in their own way of understanding and grasping the music. When they do that, they find their own movement, and I try to build on their own movement. For instance, when they move, there is something good about the movement they are doing. “Good” meaning that it is related to how they perceive music. And that is important to start with that. I’m sure that when someone is conducting the music in a very spontaneous way, there is probably something right about it. There might be sometimes, obviously, too much movement, or not enough energy. Obviously, if you want to improve the quality of the movement, there is always work that can be done. But, what I tend to do is work on their own movement, to see what is right in connection to their understanding of the music and to build on that. So that’s what I am trying to do.

CD: And do you ever find that the conducting patterns get in the way for the students, or are they a structure that helps the students be more expressive?

Master-teacher C: That’s an interesting question. The thing is that, it always has to do with how you move. How you use the conducting gesture. For instance, you will always know that the first beat is here [shows], the second beat is in the middle, the third beat is out, and the fourth beat up – you know, they know the conducting gesture. But what is important is the character of the first beat – how you conduct the first beat, which is different than the character of the fourth beat. They might just do the 1, 2, 3, 4, but if there is no difference between the first, second, third, and fourth beat, that’s not music. That just a metronomic thing, you know, it is just a neutral structure which is not what music is all about. So, what we have to work on is what is the quality of that first beat? What is the quality of the pulse that goes from one beat to the other beat to the other one to the other one? What is the quality? That is the more important thing. And I just feel that sometimes, if we do the whole movement… To answer your question, depending on the people, there is not one absolute answer to your question, it depends on the individual. Some people, you feel that this gesture of conducting, it’s too rigid for them, because they haven’t felt the weight of the first beat, for instance. They haven’t felt the quality of the
pulse. Is the pulse a little bit heavy? Has lightness, or has heaviness? What kind of pulse is it? What kind of music is it? What are the qualities of that beat? The beat is not just [tap, tap, tap], it depends how you go from one beat to another – that is what music is all about. When you have the beat, it’s not always the same, it’s not always a metronomic thing when you conduct, sometimes it goes here, and sometimes it goes there. It has a breathing which is different from one beat to another, you know? You take in less air or you take in more air, so it depends on the expression that you want to put in that beat. So, sometimes, with some people, they need to feel that with their whole body. So, I will ask them to forget about the conducting, and let’s move it with the whole body. Let’s dance it. How much energy do you need? Do you need less energy or more energy? And then they can come back to the conducting gesture and they have a better understanding because their whole body had experienced it.

CD: Master-teacher C, what role does the ear play? How do you think about the ear in your classes?

Master-teacher C: Well, I guess eurhythmics is an intense aural training, you know, that’s what eurhythmics is all about. Everything has to do with how you perceive the music. It’s not just moving for moving. It’s moving in relationship to the sounds that you are perceiving. So, it’s aural training. Eurhythmics is aural training. So, the ear is extremely important. It’s like your whole body is an ear! An oreille. Your whole body is that.

CD: Ha ha! I like that! So the ear comes first, and the body responds later?

Master-teacher C: You know, I think this is simultaneous. When you perceive, your body’s there. You cannot… You need your body to be alive, right? You need the body for the ear to exist, don’t you? So, it just doesn’t make sense to me that the body is not the…I think this thing is simultaneous, it’s holistic. It’s all together, you know? Because even if you don’t move, if you don’t see someone move, there is something moving inside of you.

CD: Ok. Are you talking about kinesthetic empathy? So that if I watch you moving, I feel something?

Master-teacher C: No, no. I’m talking about…in our brain it seems that the auditory and motor systems are indissociable. There is indissociability between the auditory and the motor system. It doesn’t mean that you have to move, but the motor system is activated in your brain when you hear music. That is interesting in regards to eurhythmics, isn’t it??

CD: And what is the function of the voice in your eurhythmics classes?
Master-teacher C: The voice for me is very important, because when I am able to have the people use their voice in a very incarnate way, I feel they really understand what I am talking about when I use the word *embodiment*. The voice needs a gesture, right? The vocal gesture. That’s interesting, the voice phenomenon in relation to movement. I just think that when people are really able to connect, to really connect their voice with their whole body, they really feel what it means when we talk about the connection with the body. You know, like the singer. When you hear a voice that is not really connected in the body, there’s no…it’s like the voice is not full. When it’s really connected to the abdominal, you know, when the voice is really connected to the body and the breathing then you have a very rich sound. So, it is important to work the connection between the voice and movement. For the voice to really be expressive, what you need is to train the body. One way of training the body, obviously, is to do eurhythmics. I remember a singer telling me that you need to warm-up the body before warming-up the voice. Because, if your body is not well prepared, then the voice will not respond properly. I guess this has to be thought of more as a holistic way of learning. You know, for the choir, the voice is important, but for the voice to develop, you need to have a body which is able to produce nice sounds, nice vocal sounds. You know, the body is the first instrument, so we always come back to the same thing. You have to train the body, and to train the body in a holistic way, that is the body that is moved, that is the body that feels, that understands, that thinks…It’s like you are working with all of the faculties – the physical, the emotional, the intellectual faculties of the person, so I think that that is the main thing. In a eurhythmics class, if you ask people to move, but you never asked them what they felt, what meant that movement in regard to the music they were listening to, you are not doing eurhythmics, you are just moving for moving. What eurhythmics aims at is to make the people aware of what is happening – the relationship between the movement and the music. What is that connection there? And if you don’t make them aware of that, then you are not doing eurhythmics. So, in regard to the vocal aspect, it comes to the same thing – you have to make them realize the connection between the movement and the vocal sound. How the body is important to produce the vocal sound that you want. Or how the body is important for them to produce the phrase or the melodic interpretation they want.

CD: Yes. And you used the words “vocal gesture” – what did you mean by that, Master-teacher C?

Master-teacher C: The breathing. Breathing is the vocal gesture. The thing is that when you sing, the way that you control your breathing, the way that you put more or less energy, the way you attack your sound when you sing, it’s the same things as when you conduct – the way that you do the gesture through the space. All of these things are based on the same principles. You know very well, Caron, about the “time, space and energy”. So the time, space,
energy relationship is always the same. You know, you are breathing, and you have to control it in that respect. How do you manage your energy in respect to the amount of time you have, the space that you will have, you know, for your abdominal muscles to react, you know... It’s the same thing with the conductor, it’s just that it’s not your abdominal gestures that you are using more, but your arms and your whole body.

CD: Yes, that’s very interesting. What is your sequence for teaching a new concept?

Master-teacher C: When I elaborate a lesson, a class, usually I have a piece of music in mind. I will use a piece of music, so it’s not like I have a concept like “syncopation”. But, I will have a piece of music, and if there is syncopation in the music, obviously I will talk about syncopation at one point, but I tend to elaborate my lesson around a piece of music.

CD: And how do you choose that music?

Master-teacher C: Ah, that’s an interesting question. I guess the first thing that comes to mind is that when I listen to a piece of music and I am touched by it and I am moved, I will ask myself how can I use this piece in a eurhythmics class so that I can share this music that I like with my students? Yah, I think that’s how I work.

CD: So, you want to share your bodily experience of the music with your students?

Master-teacher C: Not my bodily experience. Just the music, so they will have their own experience.

CD: When you are working with a certain piece of music, or a score, how do you pull out musical experiences for the class?

Master-teacher C: One thing, when you are looking at a score, you have to be very careful. Because sometimes what is written on the paper is not the representation of the embodiment of the piece...if you would listen to the music, you might be surprised as to what the characteristic of the music is, how you feel about it. For instance, sometimes you will have a score...and it’s interesting that question because not long ago I was working with one of my students who is working on her doctoral study, and she wanted to make an application of Dalcroze in listening to a piece of music. She chose a Bartok piece, and she sent me the lesson she constructed around the piece. And the whole lesson was on unequal measures because the Bartok piece was written in 3/4 and 4/4. So the lesson was on that. And, obviously when you look at the score, you see 3/4, 4/4 – you see unequal measures. But, when you play that piece and when you listen to it, it’s not what comes out. It’s not the most important thing about the piece. The
most important part of the piece was the phrasing, the nuances. So sometimes, you have to be very careful about what you see on the paper. Because what you think sometimes – the characteristic parameters that you see on the score - might feel different when you listen to that music. So, I guess, one has to be very careful in analyzing the scores in regard to which exercises one will use in the eurhythmics class.

CD: And, how do you decide? Is it simply by listening that you decide?

Master-teacher C: The music decides. The answer is in the music. This sounds a little bit simple, but I think it’s very important. The answer is in the music. For the conductor, for instance, the conductor will have to focus on what is the most important thing to conduct in that piece to really have what he wants. You see what I mean, it’s not just, oh it’s a 3 and then it’s a 4, and the pulse, it’s not just that, it’s much more than that.

CD: I agree, you could listen to two recordings of the same piece, and one conductor would bring out the phrasing, and one conductor would bring out the unequal beats. So, I think what I want to say is that as a conductor, you have to make a choice about what you want to hear, about what is the most important thing to bring out. And then those are the things you should explore eurhythmically with the choir.

Master-teacher C: It’s very interesting – you are talking about choices. And, for me, if one wants to make choices, one has to be creative. The thing is, the more you explore… But the main thing is, as you said, which I agree with you, the more you explore things about the pieces you are listening to or working with, the more you put yourself in a creative mode of working. For instance, if you play a part on the piano or if you sing it, or if you move its qualities, you might focus on different aspects, aspects that you may not see on the score, you will have a different feeling. The more you explore various parameters in various ways, the more creative you will become. Then, in doing so, you give yourself a wide range of possibilities from which you can choose. How can I say? You allow yourself to be personal in a way. Because you have explored different things, when you choose an interpretation, you know why you chose it. And you also know that you can focus on something else another time to express that piece. A piece is so…you know, a great work of art has many interpretations. You can interpret it in many ways.

CD: This is very interesting. I am going to explore in my dissertation how Dalcroze impacts score study, so…

Master-teacher C: One thing that is important for the conductor… If, as the conductor, you really take the risk, or the opportunity, let’s put it in a positive way, of exploring how your body will move to the music, and all the possibilities you have – all the possibilities that your body brings you – if you explore
that, you will have a big range of expressive possibilities that you might not have had before if you were only doing the pulsation… But, if you take this opportunity to really explore that, with your whole body, moving through the space, running, and feeling all of the energy that your body can give you, when you conduct, you will have all these representations in your head of all of these expressive bodily qualities that you can use while you are conducting. Obviously you don’t need to dance and jump while you conduct, but if you have done it with your whole body, you will have explored the specific energy you need for that specific articulation, or that specific nuances which you would like your choir or your orchestra to produce. You will find that energy, even if you don’t have to jump, but your whole…your arms will jump with it. See what I mean? Because you will have felt that much energy you need, that much dynamic, that much lightness, or that much softness you need for that specific thing. And also, we were talking about how the vocal aspect is linked to the body? If you have experienced that as a conductor, the singing aspect of it, that vocal gesture that I was talking about, you will be able to feel it through your hands. It’s like your arms will be your abdominal breathing. You will help the people do exactly the movement they have to do – technically sometimes and musically sometimes. It’s like, when you are a conductor, sometimes you are working on both dimensions. Does that make sense to you?

CD: Yes, absolutely! So, do you ever re-notate your scores, Master-teacher C?

Master-teacher C: Sometimes I will use some colors to emphasize the phrasing or the articulation. I will ask them to do that, for instance, if we are doing a plastique animée so that we could re-notate, if that is what you mean, what is written by the composer. So it will help us memorize the structure or the main expressive elements of the piece. In that respect sometimes we do that, yes.

CD: So do you ask the students to write down a different version of the musical score?

Master-teacher C: It will not be a different version, but for plastique animée, it will be a spatial version of what it is. Probably the conductor could have a movement version of what he has to do. I remember that when I had to conduct, on the scores, I will have some different cues that I will notate on the score, for me, for my movement and anticipation and things like that. Something that I will write on the score, but for me as a conductor to prepare things… For instance, to know that at this point, that section was more difficult for that section of the orchestra or the choir, I will have a specific sign to help me prepare the movement, so I will help them produce exactly what I want them to do to perform.

CD: Do you think there is movement in the music?
Master-teacher C: Well, the sounds are travelling in the space. The sounds are travelling. One of the things I will ask my students in the first class, I will put on the music and I will tell them, “Show me how the sounds move”. And when you’re conducting, that’s what you are showing your musicians, your choristes. You’re showing them with your body how the sounds move. Or, you are showing them how the sounds move you, but it’s the same, isn’t it?

CD: I think so. What is the role of the teacher in a eurhythmics class and how does this compare to the role of the conductor?

Master-teacher C: Well, it’s a little bit different. There are things that are similar, but I think there are things that are different. As you said earlier, you said you have to make decisions as a conductor. You are giving your own interpretation of the music to the musicians that you are working with. It’s not that you are imposing on them all of your way of understanding the music, because, obviously, the music that you are performing, you are performing with them. It’s something that you are constructing together. But you will be making the aesthetic decisions, right? It’s different when you are teaching – the goals are not the same. Well, it might happen that sometimes during the lesson, you are becoming the conductor, that happens right? But, I don’t know, the situation is not the same. I think they have a similar role, but also something different between the teacher and the conductor. What comes to mind is that they both have to be a communicator. That is the main thing – they have to communicate with other people. They both have to be able to conceptualize. The teacher has to conceptualize a lesson plan, right? What he or she wants to do in a class, and plan it so that the exercises he or she plans will be progressive in a certain way, so that the student will learn. And, the conductor has to plan his rehearsal. He has time...both have a one hour or two hour class, or a two hour rehearsal, so they have to plan that session that they will do the best of it, right? So, they both have to organize, to conceptualize rehearsal in a certain way. And, they both have to make decisions during that period of time. What is different about the teacher and the conductor is that the teacher is trying to make the students find his or her own interpretation of the music. But, the conductor comes with his or her interpretation of the music and has to share that interpretation with the musicians he is working with. So, maybe that will be the main difference in a certain way. So, one has to come with an interpretation, and the other has to open up experiences to guide the students to their own interpretation of the music, understanding of the music. But, both have to justify what they are doing. They have to be able to justify, to share their views of the music. I also think that both are coaching the people that they are working with. Maybe something that is a little different between the teacher and the conductor, the teacher can sometimes be a model for the student. You know, he will show, maybe, how to do a certain exercise. He will help the
students understand, using modeling. For the conductor, it’s a little bit different. He will not be the model for the violinist, because he’s not a violinist, but he will be the model of his own musical interpretation, in a certain way. So, that is a little bit different in a certain way, but I think that is what I see as similar and different between the conductor and the teacher… I don’t know if it makes sense to you?

CD: It does. It’s very clear what you are saying. I think for me sometime I alter my interpretation, or I learn about the music from the students. So, sometimes, it is more like a eurhythmics teacher approach because it’s a bit more back and forth.

Master-teacher C: Well, obviously, as a conductor and a teacher, if you want to work with people, you cannot ask them something they cannot do. To be able to be sensitive to what they can bring to the music. And, even if you have a certain interpretation, this interpretation modulates through their skills, through what they are giving you as performers. So, you have to adapt to that. The capacity or the capability of adaptation is very present both for the teacher and the conductor.

CD: That’s perfect! How would you describe the learning dynamic in your classroom?

Master-teacher C: Well, I think, for me, the class is music-centered. The music is the leader, in a certain way. So, it’s centered on the music, and on the student. That is what I am trying to do. So, I would think that that is the learning dynamic. To be able to center that learning dynamic on the music and on the student. And, it is also a cooperative learning between the students themselves and between the students and the teacher. It’s a group learning experience, so obviously you are learning from the others who are participating in the class. And I think a big emphasis is on being able to react to what the others are doing. We are talking about social integration – being able to relate to the other people. When you are singing in a choir, obviously you have to watch the conductor, but you also have to be receptive to the other singers, to the group. You have to be able to adapt your own energy to the energy of the others. You have to adapt your voice to what is happening around you, to what is surrounding you. So, this receptivity, this adaptability, is something you are learning through cooperative work. So, I would think that that is something that is emphasized in the Dalcroze work.

CD: And, how are you using pre-composed music in your teaching? Are you using pre-composed music to explore a rhythmic problem, or are you exploring a rhythmic problem in the pre-composed music?

Master-teacher C: I would say there’s not a fixed way of doing things… It’s not always the same way. But, what I like to do is to use a piece of music, and ask the
people to react spontaneously to it, and see how they perceive that music spontaneously. For me, it’s very important to see how they perceive that music. I’m saying “to see” because when they move, I see through their movement what in the music is coming to their consciousness. Maybe they are not aware of what they perceive, but at least their body is aware of it. Their body is showing me how they perceive the music. I can then work from this experience, and work on specific parameters that are in the music.

CD: Would you use a recording, or would you play the piece on the piano?

Master-teacher C: It could be both. If it’s a piano piece, I could play it on the piano, if it’s an orchestral work, I prefer to use the recording so that you have the complete orchestra, and the whole thing. But then, after that, I might go to the piano and work on specific parameters.

CD: So, would they move freely through the space, or would you give them a specific task?

Master-teacher C: First I will ask them to move freely. I realize it’s important for them to react very freely first. Because then they are not trying to analyze what’s happening. They are just moved by the music and they’re showing me what they hear about that music. And I think it’s the best way to understand what they hear. And sometimes you see that they hear something but their body is not quite alert to be able to express it completely. So, you see where they have blocages? And then you can work on that afterwards. Sometimes after they move freely, I ask them, how would you describe the music you heard? Or, how would you describe the movement you made? Then they start to make the connections between the music and how they moved. For instance, if they would tell me that there is contrast in the music, I will ask them: how did you move to show this contrast? Then they will start understanding that there is a real connection between the movement and the music. And then we can talk about what kind of contrast there was in the music. Harmonic contrast? Rhythmic contrast? Nuances contrast? You can work on the different parameters. And, then you can decide that you will work on how to express these parameters through the body, and how the body can improve doing these things, you know? So, for instance, the conductor. They could move very freely, but then let’s think about how you could conduct that piece. You will not jump everywhere, but how this jumping, now that it is integrated in the body, how you can find it in your conducting gesture? And, how does the pulse travel? You know, if you want to show the pulse, how does it travel? Does it travel fast, or with weight, or with lightness? And then you can work on more specific things.
Master-teacher C: It can be any piece. You know, I’m working with students, some of them are performers, others are composers, others are music educators, musicologists, so it’s a mixed group of people. Some of them are studying in jazz, others in classical, so I try to have very different music styles and pieces. Let’s say I am working on unequal beats or unequal measures or something like that, I will choose music that I like. For me, it’s important that I like the music. And, I like a lot of different styles of music, so that’s a good thing. Then, I will ask the students if they also know a piece with unequal beats or unequal measures, and they will bring it to me. So, we work with different pieces of music. I remember last time we were working on unequal beats, some people in the jazz department brought some music, and there was a woman playing the organ, and she brought a Messiaen piece so we could look at that. But, we realized that the way we perceive it – the way we can analyze the music – was through the same process. You had to focus on the smallest pulse, and it makes us understand what it is all about. I think one thing that is important is to give them some means to analyze the music. But, first, the process has to do with spontaneity and pleasure of really grasping the music. That is very important, because if it’s not there, there is no total engagement from the person. And I think that is the most important thing you are looking for. You are looking for people to be really engaged with what you are doing. If they are not doing that, they cannot really understand what the music is all about. You have to be engaged. You have to listen, and let your body be moved by the music to really understand the music. That’s the first thing. That’s the first step. And, after that, you have the pleasure of analyzing what’s happened. To give them a methodology, in a certain way, to analyzing the music. And I think, for a conductor, that would be very important too. Because that will also be an indicator to the conductor of how they will conduct the piece. What are the most important things, in terms of movement, that will express the musical intentions? So, that part of the piece, is it important to show the pulse, or is it important to show the pulse and indicate an accent at a specific part of the piece? And also, to know what difficulties are there for the choir, the singers or the instrumentalists. When they have to enter, or when they have to give more. You have to anticipate what will happen, and then you can work on these things technically. But, I think the expressive aspects are very important, and in working on the expressive aspects, sometimes we can fix the technical aspects. If we focus too much on the technical aspects, it becomes boring, and there’s no life in what is happening. It’s like, it’s very nice, it’s very plastic in some ways, but there’s not life. So, I tend to work on the expressive aspects, the expressive experience. That is the most important for me, to make the students expressive. And also to develop their self-confidence. Because I feel sometimes that that is what is lacking the most. They are not self-confident in their own expressive
feelings. They are shy in showing the emotional aspect of the music. First, you have to convince them that they can be expressive and that they have the skills to do so. When they experience that, they develop their own self-confidence. In developing their self-confidence they become expressive and communicative. That would be the main goal you can achieve as a teacher.

CD: Thank you, Master-teacher C, for your wonderful insights!
Conductor A

Conductor A conducts university choirs and teaches undergraduate music education and conducting. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Dalcroze Eurhythmics (equivalent to the Dalcroze License).

CD: How did you discover Dalcroze, Conductor A?

Conductor A: I met Dalcroze, not the person [laughs], at college. Here we call it two years between secondary school and university, and I had Dalcroze classes at this moment. It was very new, because the music program was...it was a new opening...it had just arrived at Institution I. And I was a student, and I had it once or twice a week... It was for...we took Dalcroze classes to replace physical education, ok, you understand? Is that clear? So, I met Dalcroze at this moment. And I just felt in love with this...this approach. I was a guitarist at this moment, and I was very, very interested in making Dalcroze studies during my university. So, I passed some exams, and I had to switch my instrument from guitar to piano. So I worked a lot on my piano. It was great for me to have the possibility to study in eurhythmics at university. So, does it answer your question?

CD: Yes, and then did you do a degree at Institution I in Dalcroze?

Conductor A: Yes. I don’t remember to what degree it corresponds. I think it’s not the highest degree....

CD: The Diplôme is the highest degree.

Conductor A: Yes, so it corresponds to the License.

CD: So, Conductor A, I am very interested in how you use Dalcroze in the choral context.

Conductor A: I think, first, I have to tell you the conditions of my choir conducting practice. I know that you ask for it in the little written thing we have to send to you, but I think, for the interview, it would be better to describe the conditions. So, I conduct the Faculty Choir since 2005. This choir is in the music faculty, so the choristers are musicians, but most of them are pianists, guitarists, lyric singers - classical, drummers, and bass guitar. Every student in the faculty has to make ensemble music, but they have the choice, and most of the wind players and string players go in the orchestra, and it’s ok. So, in the choir, we receive the rest. They are very good, but it’s not their instrument, except the singers, but the singers are en formation. They just begin to learn how to sing as a real singer, if you want. The first year, it was really, really hard for me, because they didn’t want to sing in choir. They were told that is breaks their voice and they cannot sing as they learn in individual lessons. So, it was a little bit hard.
for me during the first two years. Because I have conducted before for twenty years with the amateur choirs. It was so fantastic – everybody want to sing, everybody is happy to be there, everybody appreciate it so much to be able to sing in a choir. So, it is really different. As a musician, I sang in a choir, a semi-professional and professional choir when I was twenty, thirty, and I know what we can do. I really know what we can do when we are musician, so petit à petit, I bring them to understand this. This context, you know, the choir is compulsory, it’s required for those students, and so my first goal is make them love singing and be happy to sing. Every year, there are something like forty or fifty new students in the choir, and there are the same number who go because they obtain their diploma, or they do something else, so there is a big roulement every year. So, every year, I have to do this work of flirting, je dois… do you understand? So, it is hard for me in those conditions. I feel that, even though I taught eurhythmics for almost 10 years at the university as a lecturer, and I liked very much to teach this. Even if I did that, it’s hard for me to decide to really use eurhythmics as a mean, a moyen, as a pedagogical approach. So, I use this, but not very much. Ok, so from this context, I can now answer the questions.

CD: Well, everybody uses it to a different degree, so part of what I am trying to figure out is how people use it at all! So, everything is interesting to me. Let’s start with the first question: what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach?

Conductor A: The first thing that came to my mind is solfège rhythmique. I would like to use it in choir, but in my training at university, we didn’t receive solfège, because we were in the biggest program in the faculty, and there was solfège, so I learned traditional solfège. And, I’m very sad, because sometimes I have done solfège Dalcroze with Dalcroze-teacher J, she’s from France. The first time it was with Dalcroze-teacher J, and I’ve worked also with Dalcroze-teacher K – she’s in Switzerland, and the last time I did Dalcroze solfège, it was with Dalcroze-teacher H and Master-teacher B, and I think it’s a wonderful thing. Really. If I had the time, I would like to do more for myself first, and then try to introduce it in the choir rehearsal. So, for me, this is one of the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach. The other one is improvisation. This development in Dalcroze pedagogy is a major characteristic and it distinguished this approach from other approaches. But, for my part, it is the link between mind and body that is the most important hallmark – for me. In my experience, it is what I like the best. I really feel it. I feel it, I understand it, I live it – it’s wonderful for me, this link between the music and the movement, the body. I think that the philosophy that underscores this concept of the body is what makes Dalcroze Eurhythmics an exceptional and unique pedagogical approach, really, for the teaching, to teach music. And, finally, I think that, from this way to treat the link between music and body, body movement and music emerge an attitude, a pedagogical
attitude, very open to the person, to the group, to the dynamic of the group. The teacher is open to the dynamic of the group, and can lead to great creativity – at the same time in the pedagogical act and in the content of the course. Creativity in the way we teach music and in the way we give the message. That we link all of the moments of the rehearsal. All those years with this in the body, the link between the music and body, and all the things we did with this, just give me, I feel this, gives me an openness in my pedagogical approach.

CD: So, what are you hoping the students will learn, or what do you notice they are learning when you use the Dalcroze approach?

Conductor A: You see, this question is difficult to answer for me because I don’t use it very much. I can talk about…I use it for musicality. I make the students move a little, or I give them examples…how could I say this? When I give my examples in singing or in talking, or with my body, I am a Dalcroze teacher. Do you understand what I mean? So, they see this, they hear this, and so, I think, they integrate this, even if I don’t always ask them to do the same as me. It’s not as efficient as if I asked them to do the same, but I think it has something. If I wasn’t a Dalcroze teacher, or a Dalcroze person, I couldn’t act…I couldn’t do like this. If I act that a fool in front of them, or go completely “yah”, they see that it’s possible. And so, for musicality. Most of the moments this is what I use it for with them – a little bit of Dalcroze. What I didn’t tell you also earlier is that they are eighty-five or a hundred in the choir. It’s big. We have a good room to rehearsal, but it’s not enough large. The space is not enough large to allow us to move like I would them.

CD: What aspects of the Dalcroze approach do you use in the choral classroom? So, maybe your body gestures are like eurhythms, sort of?

Conductor A: Yes, and sometimes I ask them…I don’t do solfège – I explained why, neither improvisation for the moment, but I would like to integrate it a little bit more, and not the plastique animée because of the space. Maybe I would like to work with Master-teacher C once to do something in plastique animée with a choir, I don’t know how, but it’s a project. So, eurhythms, I ask them to clap rhythms in the hands, or tap on the knees, or draw the phrase with their arms. They cannot move very much because they are so squeezed, but when I ask them to do this, as a Dalcroze teacher, I pay very much attention to the movement quality. I ask them to clap, and if they clap poof, poof, poof [demonstrates unmusically] – not musically, I just tell them, “No, no, no”. Or when I ask them to speak a rhythm, I am very, very aware of the sound, of the quality of the movement as a Dalcroze teacher. It’s the best, for the moment, I can do. But, I am very aware of these. It’s really important for me. I think that if we ask to add gesture to music so the music is better learned, the
movement has to have a good quality, a very good quality, and to be linked with the emotion, but also something very *libre*, free.

CD: So, you let them do free movement – you don’t say exactly how to do it – you are just looking for the quality of what they are doing?

Conductor A: Yes. And if the movement is not enough…when I say “free”, I mean not collapsed – something free, something musical!

CD: That makes perfect sense! Alright, number 4: When you are working with choral repertoire, how do you devise Dalcroze experiences for the choir? So, my question is, do you begin with the repertoire and then create Dalcroze experiences for them, or do you use Dalcroze to fix problems you hear?

Conductor A: Yes. I incorporate Dalcroze techniques in response to the choir’s need. For the moment, that’s what I do, yes.

CD: So, when you are studying a score, before you see them, do you ever think, oh, I could use this technique to teach this part of the music?

Conductor A: No, because I don’t use it enough often. For the moment, I don’t think in terms of Dalcroze technique. I think maybe I could say that I prepare my warm-ups with a lot of *consciousness*, is that right, is that ok to say? I often prepare my warm-ups in link with the repertoire. This for me is a moment of creation, or improvisation. And sometimes, when there is a problem in rehearsal, and I hear some things, even if it’s rhythmic, or melodic, or with a quality of the voice, I will think of something, an exercise, or something, that I will ask them to do. So, it’s not exactly with a movement, but all the creativity that I developed during my training years I incorporate it in the rehearsal, but most of the time in the warm-up moment. I give 15-20 minutes to the warm-up. I think it’s really important. And, they really appreciate it. I know because they have to write at the end of the semester, they have to write an evaluation, and most of the students write that they are very happy with the warm-up, and they feel…they see the link – they see and they feel the link between the warm-up and the repertoire, and they appreciate it very much. So, I could say, that in this way, in this way I use a little bit of Dalcroze.

CD: So, that leads us to number five, for what purpose are you using Dalcroze in the rehearsal context?

Conductor A: For musicality. And expressivity. Those are parameters I try to develop with Dalcroze techniques.

CD: Do you ever teach vocal technique or diction through Dalcroze techniques?
Conductor A: Yes, that’s what I said, that’s what I do in the warm-up. I think it’s the moment when I use the most body and movement, during the warm-up and during the vocal technique. And diction, I create some exercises, funny exercises, and I know that all I did in improvisation during my training years just inspire me, and gives me the freeness and *audace*, audacity, confidence to try many things. And, they collaborate!

CD: So, you model freeness and willingness to be creative and the students respond by also being collaborative and willing to create?

Conductor A: Yes, yes. To create, to explore. As an example, I do a, I don’t remember how to say this in English, but I will do this kind of “trrr” [tongue trill up and down]. And I give the example, and it’s really free, and they just follow. They are not shy. I think it helps very much to free the voice and to make them happy and, “Oh yes, you can do this – go ahead!”

CD: Do you notice a difference in their ability to work together as a choir?

Conductor A: I think so. I think so. But, we can never be sure of this. We can never be sure of this, instead, we put them in a lab. There is a very, very good link between them musical and a very good energy. They write this in their auto-evaluation. They like to sing with other people, and it’s a wonderful moment for them. It was not like this when I began. I was probably freezed by the situation!

CD: So, really, the Dalcroze experience that you have as a Dalcroze teacher and in your training has had a big impact on your choirs?

Conductor A: Sure, I’m sure of this. I’m sure of this.

CD: Ok, well number 6. At what point in the learning sequence do you incorporate Dalcroze?

Conductor A: Rhythmic problems, or expressive – when I want them to be more expressive. I remember one day we were singing Baroque repertoire and there were a lot of *hemiola*. And, they didn’t feel them at all. The text, the words, were written with the tonic accents and the hemiolas, but they couldn’t do this, so I make them move it this time, and it was incredible! The week after, they came back, and we sang again this part and it was [sticks tongue out and makes a noise], and I said, “Don’t you remember what we did last week?” They looked at me and I said, “I made you move, remember?” So, I told them, “If you are not able to sing with those tonic accents, I will make you *dance* this week!” So, they could do this – I think they were afraid. They didn’t want to dance – the boys.

CD: But, then they remembered what they had done?
Conductor A: Yes! I just had to show them a little bit what we did, and, “Oh yes, yes!” and they laughed, and I told them, “If you are not able to sing, we will dance!” So they sang, correctly. So, I think it’s interesting, because I think it was embodied. It was embodied.

CD: What about if they have pitch problems?

Conductor A: At this moment, I think I use more Eutonie principles. I bring them more in their bodies. But, it’s a very good question because I am very interested with those intonation problems. And I think I’m not alone. For the moment, I’ve found some ways to get the body movement, or the body consciousness – just tell them…the terminology is…to be more in their bodies – to sing with their bodies. To be conscious of their feet on the floor, and the energy that comes from the floor. I make them swing a little bit. Sometimes they are sitting, and I just remember how they have to be sitting so this part [torso] of the body is in good posture. I work more on the posture in those moments, because I cannot make them move very much. But, with movement, I make them do this kind of thing, “ah------“ [modulates pitch up and down and shakes body and torso], just to free the voice. And after, it helps. But I would be very interested – I know I’m not the first one – I know there are lot of musicians and conductors and music educators that are obsessed by this problem. And I think it would be very interesting to see how Dalcroze, Eutonie, and Alexander could help to make the voice more accurate. I think it’s really possible, but the factors are various. It can be something with the body, it can be the audiation, it can be something in the link between the audiation and the vocal…it can be psychologique – often it is psychologique. And so, I’m really interested in this question of accuracy of the voice. And, I think that some Dalcroze techniques, those which implicate the body, the movement of the body, and the link between the sound we want to make with the movement – as I do in the warm-up. Do you know, you surely know, Conductor G? He does this exercise, “Whoo!” [descends from top to bottom of vocal range and raises extended arms upwards simultaneously] to lancer, to throw the sound. And then, with the other hand…at the beginning you throw the sound with the head-voice [demonstrates], and then, to keep the head-voice when you go down, you use the other hand to stay the sound, and it’s fantastic. And, it is really the link between the body movement and the sound.

CD: And, number 7. How would you describe the learning dynamic in your classroom when Dalcroze approaches are being employed, or as a result of incorporating Dalcroze approaches?

Conductor A: I wrote something in English for this! When I try to make the students move – most of the time I make the students to move before and during the vocal warm-up, and after two or three weeks, they really enter the
game. Except for three or four of them – most of the time they are boys. I cannot understand, I cannot understand, what the boys like so much - is to jump! I make them at the beginning, just those little rebounds [demonstrates], and the once, I think it was two years ago, I really began to make them jump. And they just love it. The boys - they love it, and they want to jump higher, and highest – it’s really fun. So, it is for the beginning of the rehearsal, and for the first and second week, they are, “What’s that, what’s that?” , “We move – ugh!” But, then, they enter the game. But, during the rehearsal, when we work on the repertoire, when we really are in the music practice, when we practice music, we must concentrate, guitarists, pianists [makes exaggerated concentrated face], but during the rehearsal, when we work on the repertoire, from the moment the students move, even if it is very small, and I ask them to move expressively, they become more excited, and it’s harder to keep their attention. They become less focused, and they look at him and they “Ha ha ha”, and they laugh. So, it’s really hard to keep their attention at this moment. But, I think I could make them move more often, as I do at the beginning of the rehearsal with very simple exercises. Simple exercises, simple movements. Not too expressive – something near the sport, do you understand what I mean? More sport than dance, and really I could do that more often, so they become used to move and express the music with their bodies. It could be interesting – I just wrote this a few minutes ago before you skyped me. I thought that it could be interesting to make a research project with this, and instead of focusing most exclusively on the final product – the concert, we could, for one year, as example, give time to integrate systematically Dalcroze approaches, eurhythmics for example, and try to find some exercises that could be done in this space. So, I tell them this, ah, maybe it could be interesting, and maybe just once we could go to a big gymnasium – we have a big sport…it’s incredible – maybe we could go there once and just try something more…just eurhythmics, and moving…I’m thinking of this.

CD: So, do you think the performance aspect of being in a choir gets in the way of doing eurhythmics?

Conductor A: I don’t think, no. No, as I said before, they arrive – there are maybe thirty or forty of them that sang in the choir before, and there are forty-fifty new choristers – young, they come from college and they arrive to university, and they have to sing “Ahhhhh!” [frightened sound]. And I have a lot of people – most of the boys – we have two programs, one in classical and one in jazz/pop, and those from jazz/pop would like to sing in the vocal jazz ensemble, but they cannot all do this because those are small groups, so all the ones that weren’t chosen for vocal jazz come to the choir. I think you can imagine the situation? Young, twenty…and, I love them, it has nothing to do with my love for them, but I have to understand and to take them where they are, and eventually bring them where I would like them. So, I don’t know if that is the concert. But, it’s sure that we have to
make a concert. It has to be great. The greater as it can. And, it’s sure that I’m a little bit afraid that if I begin to incorporate more Dalcroze techniques during the rehearsals that I will lose time. I know that it’s not lost time for the goal. It’s the reason why I would like to suggest it in a research context. So, everybody know it’s a research context, and we will give at the end of the year what we have done, and you understand me?
I’m almost sure that if I would begin to incorporate Dalcroze techniques in the rehearsal, after two, three years, it could become a great thing. But, during the first years, myself, I have to check, I’m not sure. You understand? I’m not sure how they will react… I must have the confidence to try this with them, and accept it could be a disaster. Or, that it won’t work because they are eight-five to a hundred, and maybe it will not work! Because we don’t have enough space, because, you know, all those things… Because I remember, when I was teaching eurhythmics when I was a lecturer between 1980 and 1992, ah… They had one semester of Dalcroze Eurhythmics, something like 3 months, and I exactly remember how I had to be very rooted to my croyants, my faith, my beliefs. Because it took… every semester I had new students, and it took around one month and half to two months before they become a little more open. And, oh! It’s not won, w-o-n, it’s not winner from the beginning. So at a moment, they are ok, this is it, and finally, during the last two weeks, they do something like a plastique animée, or an exam, oh, they are so happy - “Oh, it was wonderful, Conductor A – bravo, bravo!” , and they leave, and new people come. That’s hard, but I became used to this, and I knew that if I go in with this orientation, this direction, it will be ok. I knew that, after two months, most of them will be happy. I taught this so many, many times. So, during the last five years, it was not hard for me. It was not always pleasant, but if I want to incorporate this in the choir rehearsal, they come there to sing, they are, at the beginning… A lot of them don’t really want to sing, you know? It’s not the same milieu as in Anglo-Saxon societies – choral singing is much more developed. We are distinct in many points, and this is one point. This is the one that I don’t like at all. So, I have first to, as I said that at the beginning, I have first to make them confident with their voice, to make them have pleasure to sing, and very slowly I can incorporate movement or Dalcroze techniques, you understand?

CD: I do.

Conductor A: So, you asked me if the concert was in the way? It’s not really in the way. This is not the biggest thing in the way.

CD: Ok. We have two more questions, Conductor A. So, number 8, how has your inclusion of Dalcroze techniques changed your view of your role as conductor?
Conductor A: This question is also difficult for me to answer this question, but I have a similar answer for number 9. I think it’s really in my role as a choir conductor. It’s in my role as interpreter that the Dalcroze person that I am reveals the fundamental principles of Dalcroze. The skills I integrated in my training appear very clearly when I study the score, for example. Because I move when I study the score. Sometimes internally, but often, I move. I move the score, yes, at the beginning of the study.

CD: What are you moving, the rhythm, the harmonic changes, or the text?

Conductor A: I move the music [laughs]! I move the phrases, I move the metric, but not in conducting 2, or 3, or 4. I move the pulse, I move the dynamics, probably the harmonies changing, but I don’t do that consciously. It’s instinctive. I cannot be still when I look at a score. If I have to conduct the score, if I look at it and I have to conduct it, and those principles, we can see - anybody can see those principles in my conducting gestures. I just love to conduct.

CD: What do they see, Conductor A?

Conductor A: Most of the time what people say, often if they are not musicians, they say, “It’s fantastic, I can see the music. She is the music.” And, the musicians tell me that my conducting is so precise. Yes, precise.

CD: And, when you move the score at the beginning, does that help you make decisions about what you want the music to sound like?

Conductor A: Sure. Sure, it leads me. It inspires me. I take notes. The principles that I recognize during this kind work is the principle of the body as an instrument. The basis of musical art is human motion. Human emotion, sorry. Human emotion, which could be translated through human movement. Musical ideas can be translated by the body. And, any body movement also can be expressed musically. So, it is always the journey, in the music, in the body, in the music and the body. And, when I conduct, it is exactly what I feel. I just love it. I think it’s the reason why I need that my choirs really sing with all the person, with all the body, with all the love also. I need it to be able to conduct. So, I ask for it, you understand. I need it. If I don’t have this, I cannot conduct. I’m not there! I’m not connected! It’s interesting. I’m very happy to make this interview with you. So, this is one of the principles. The second one is the development of sense rhythmique – kinesthetic sense. I think that Dalcroze was absolutely visionary with this sense rhythmique. He named this, it was not known at this moment, and finally, it is the kinesthetic sense. This word didn’t exist at this moment. And he discovered it. He named it. And now we are talking about the kinesthetic sense. So, I think it’s one of the principles to develop the kinesthetic sense, the internal audiation also. He talked a lot about this, and when I move the score,
that’s what I am doing. When I study the score, it’s internal audiation that I just transfer in movement. I think the internal audiation that Dalcroze talked of is near Gordon’s audiation. It’s really near Gordon’s audiation. And, finally automatisms. Those are three parameters to develop, and as a conductor, we really have to develop this. So, kinesthetic sense, internal audiation, and automatism – all three…

CD: What do you mean about automatism for conductors?

Conductor A: Do you know the principles of automatism? You have to develop some physical reactions, some movements, that are automatic. So, the conducting pattern had to be automatic if you want to work with expression and the phrase, so it should be… That is one example, but there are a lot of examples of automatisms to develop as a conductor?

CD: Do you teach conducting, Conductor A?

Conductor A: Yes I do.

CD: And, do you use Dalcroze with that group as well?

Conductor A: Not yet, but I will. I want to do this, but how can I say? I didn’t take time. I have so many things to do that I didn’t take time. I do some. They don’t know I am doing it maybe, but I know that I do. But, I would like to be more systematic. You know, I was really, really involved in Dalcroze when I was teaching it at University, when I was a lecturer, but at the beginning of the 90s, they just cut the people who were not…it was hard. So, I just stopped to teach eurhythmics. I tried to teach with children, and to make up some groups, and it didn’t happen. So, I concentrate much more on conducting. I think maybe it is the reason I just took this training for me as a conductor. For ten or fifteen years I conduct choirs, and I couldn’t do any Dalcroze. It was done. For certainly ten years, I just thought, formidable Dalcroze, thank-you, I have been trained, and I can use it in my life, whatever I do. But I will never come back to this.

CD: But it always is there!

Conductor A: Sure, sure. The third principle is time, space, energy – I think it’s a key concept. As a musician, I think that in musical interpretation, there is nothing stronger than conducting to explore, to convey this key concept. I talk about this to my conducting students often. It’s so evident.

CD: I learned a lot from you – thank you so much!!

Conductor A: I was not so sure that it was…because I was so away from Dalcroze Eurhythmics, all the philosophy…but, it’s living in me. So, I’m happy if I could help you, or be utile for your research.
Conductor B

Conductor B conducts university choirs and teaches undergraduate-level music education and conducting. She holds a Dalcroze certificate.

CD: How did you discover Dalcroze?

Conductor B: I heard that there was a eurhythmics class at Institution L, by Dalcroze Teacher L, and somebody had taken it and said it was life-changing. And I said, “Ok!” So, that means I’ve only been doing this…ah…thirteen years. So, that was my first experience with it, and yah, it was life-changing.

CD: And how did you proceed with your training?

Conductor B: So then I took that course, yah, it was a course, and I then went and I saw Dalcroze Teacher I do some workshops, and I think at that point, yes I took the course, went to two workshops, and then I went on to Institution L and spent the three weeks at Institution L, and I knew I wanted to pursue certification, but I didn’t want to complete it there, and Dalcroze Teacher L had said, “You want to go to Institution L”. I skipped a summer, and then I went to Institution L two summers after I went to Institution L.

CD: And you did your certificate there?

Conductor B: Right.

CD: Could you describe your current choral context?

Conductor B: Ok, so this is officially my first year as the Women’s Chorus Director. And I also…I’m not teaching conducting this semester, but I will be teaching choral methods as I have the past several years. But the Women’s Chorus, I’ve already done some Dalcroze work with them. So, I’m already using it, and it’s successful!

CD: And, how often do they rehearse? How big of a group are they?

Conductor B: It’s a group of thirty. They meet twice a week for an hour each, so two hours per week. I worked with this group once on a sabbatical. And then I worked with Chamber Singers, that was two years ago. That’s kind of the top group – that was also a sabbatical replacement. And I did some eurhythmics work with them as well. And before that, I taught middle school and high school choir for nine years. I’ve taught community choir. I’ve taught church choir. I’ve done Children’s Honor Choirs. You know, I’ve done choir stuff for the past thirty years.
In your view, what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach to music education?

I believe this approach is a unique way for people…my input is from a student standpoint, so, you know, I’m not thinking about it from a clinical, or even a dancing, or a…theatrical, because obviously mine is the music-ed and the K-12 students…but what I’m looking at is a unique way to connect and understand music. Because the body is the instrument, and therefore, people are learning music so kinesthetically that it’s not just like a piano player whose fingers are touching, it’s the entire body. So, that way of understanding it, really becoming the music – no other methodology does that. And also, it really, really helps focus concentration, attention…it’s about detail, it’s about nuance. To me the most important thing is the musicality and expression that it really…it calls for, and it just happens if you are attending to the music to that degree. It makes you hear it and understand it in a way that is just unique. And there are lots of things, like plastique, where you are working in a group situation, that sense of ensemble, which you get in performing ensembles, but again, it’s truly unique. And, it’s not dance, so it allows people to use their bodies in a way that they didn’t think they could do before, ‘cause they’ll say, “I’m not a dancer”. Well, it’s not about dance, it’s about your body connecting to the music. And also, from a purely rhythmic standpoint, it leads to rhythmic integrity, and it leads to rhythmic nuance, so once you can keep a steady beat, you can go on and use rubato, and things that make a piece of music much more musical.

What are your teaching goals when you incorporate the Dalcroze approach, and/or what have you observed as the learning outcomes?

My main goal is to find the most aesthetically expressive way for people to make music. So for me, all those things that go into it, the phrasing, dynamics, articulation, that again, it tends to it. It goes beyond where I think in the choral room, especially middle-schoolers and high-schoolers – high-schoolers are so worried about, “I’ve just got to sing the right notes with the right rhythm”, and then, if we’re lucky, we get to work on blend, and then, that last part, that expression, we do, you know, work on, but it takes it to another level that it becomes more of the “This is what has to happen”, as opposed to “Gosh, we’re lucky if we get to that point”. It becomes more natural, so that expression to me, that’s really the most important part of it. But, also with that, confidence comes into gear, that it really becomes a whole ‘nother way for the student to look at the music. They’re going, “Oh, my body gets to participate this as well as my voice”, and sometimes that can make for more confidence. The reading skills, and it’s funny that lots of times we don’t usually think of Dalcroze doing much with reading because of all the eurhythmics stuff, when in fact, there’s so much to do with solfège, and I think in the choral classroom, we need to focus and sell this and let people know that there’s so much more to do...
with that. So obviously it’s going to help with reading. But, for me, the most important thing is the expression, the aesthetic outcome.

CD: It’s funny that you say that, because I think we often do expression last, when really, in a Dalcroze experience, expression comes first.

Conductor B: Right, and to me that’s life-changing. It’s like ah! It’s changed the whole way I think about music and that’s what I want my students to do, to go “Wow! I can be more expressive”. That attention again to detail, to nuance – there’s so much to do when you use your whole body and when you’re hearing a different way.

CD: So, I’ll ask you what different aspects of the approach do you use – you mentioned eurhythmics and solfège. Do you also use improvisation and plastique and how do you use these and when?

Conductor B: The solfège has typically taken place in the warm-up, as far as a way to increase reading and just to increase the ear-training connection. So…in other words, using a tone-row, having them read it and move their bodies so the body is following the scale. Altering that tone row, using augmentation, diminution, retrograde, so it becomes a sight-singing tool is really what it does. Then taking an extract from a piece of music, and doing the same thing. So they really, instead of just singing the pitches, or even singing them on solfège, they are actually moving to them. So, to me, the way I use it was, yah, in a warm-up for sight-reading purposes, or to pull out a section of a piece of music. Eurhythmics, use lots of focus/concentration exercises at the beginning, and then rhythmic reading all the time is done with the body. I almost completely…I shouldn’t say completely…but I do very little clapping. Now everything is using full body or some different way besides clapping. So, they’re reading actual music – their choral music. They’re multi-leveling where they might be patting the bass part, and they might be walking their melodic rhythm of the alto part. So, they’re multi-tasking, they’re aware of other parts going on… And then lots of just eurhythmic warm-up exercises to get them in a rhythmic mode, to get them really to be attuned to rhythmic accuracy, so lots and lots of just warm-ups. And, again, then bringing it back to the piece. Um, the plastique animée, I’ve done a little bit within the choral classroom, but now that that’s really my area of research, I see tons and tons of things… And the way to do it is to take a piece that they are working on, and find a recording of it, and let them discover the different musical elements that are in there and bring them to life. So, like I said, I’ve done a little bit of it already, but now, going around and talking about it and doing it in workshops, and then, when I start my women’s chorus in the fall, I really do plan on seeing how that will all happen. To me, that’s the culminating experience. And, then, for them to have the opportunity to sing it after they’ve moved to it, you know, again recognizing the
articulation and the dynamics having shown it in their bodies… That’s a totally different experience.

CD: So, Conductor B, go back to not clapping for a moment… is that just because you don’t feel enough of the body is involved with clapping?

Conductor B: Right. I feel that they just own it, own it much, much better if they are using their whole bodies. So, if they’re walking in space… And that’s not just from me, Dalcroze was the one who said that walking was much more, what’s the word? It made the learning work much better, but just because it also frees people up. Clapping is safe, and that’s the other non-musical outcome too is that the risk-taking. First of all, you have to encourage it and be supportive, but boy, once they start doing it, the more confident they feel, and the more they can do, so, it kind of takes people out of their comfort zone a little bit, and it’s also creative, so it’s like, “Show me another way to do that…”, “show me another way to do that rhythm”, and you just keep asking them for different ways and you start to get some real creative things. So, the risk-taking and creativity that can come out of this is much much much more… varied. I think sometimes choral music can be, you know, we’re teaching notes, or the teacher plays it on the piano and they sing it back, and where’s the creativity in that? There isn’t any, and then obviously where is the music reading? It isn’t there. This just opens up many, many more ways for them to understand it.

CD: And improvisation, do you use that at all?

Conductor B: As far as my own piano improvisation?

CD: It could be that, or singer improvisation as well…

Conductor B: Yah, singer improvisation I just started to do a little bit, in fact, Dalcroze-teacher M has given me some really, really cool ideas that I’m going to use this summer, and in fact, the first safe way I would do it is just rhythmic improvisation, where they’re not actually doing anything melodically, but they’re just “scatting” rhythms. Then, start to let them, you know, where they are actually doing some melodic improvisation. So, I see that as kind of the steps, the progress, to make that happen. I think, in the choral ensemble, it’s tricky because obviously it’s difficult to have everybody doing it at the same time and have it sound like anything, so it’s not pandemonium. So, I have to keep experimenting with that, but I know I’m going to start with the rhythmic improv, then find some way, once I’ve set up that students feel safe, I can get them to do it in either small groups or solos. But to have 70 people do it at the same time is a little crazy. Piano improv I do all the time, and it frees up the choices of what you can ask them to do because you are not just confined to a recording or even a piano piece that you are playing.
And do you always use plastique or an experience with a recording at the end of the process? Have you ever started with a recording and free movement of a piece that they are about to sing?

Well, I can see doing it all three ways, and in fact, with the same piece, that is actually kind of exciting, is to let them, yah, first hear it, they’ve never practiced the song, and don’t know the piece at all, and they get to listen to it, and they get to start of move and pull out certain things. Then, after they’ve kind of started to learn it, that they have more attention to, you know, specific parts, there will be a different level of understanding, and then, of course, at the end, when they really know the piece, that can be a very wonderful culminating experience, but it’s more about the process rather than the product. So, to me, almost the first step, to do it at the beginning is more exciting.

Yes, yes, well I’m thinking about that idea in relationship to conductor score study, and to try to get to the idea of how to give conductors an experience of the music before they look at the score because so much of what we do is so cognitive, you know? What would it be like if conductors did movement as their first form of analysis of music?

Wow, that’s very exciting. That, to me, is a whole turning it upside-down, but living it first. That really makes your ear work so much more than our eyes – just looking at it on the page. And I’m such a “looking at the page” kind of person, I think a lot of people of a certain age, well, even at that…that’s just how we did it. It’s turning things, going let your ear decide what your body is going to do. And then your eye can look at it afterwards. I think that’s a much more intriguing approach.

It’s funny how much we want conductors to be responsive, spontaneous, expressive - sort of eurhythmicians, but they aren’t trained necessarily to do that…

You’re right, absolutely not! It’s very frustrating. You know, I’ve been teaching conducting for a long time, and fortunately the choral guy and I…I’m a choral person now too, both have the Dalcroze. Our conducting class is, I would say, 60% eurhythmics.

Wow, I need to come see that!! So, my fourth question then, is about how you incorporate Dalcroze, then. Do you devise the Dalcroze experiences at the start, or do you devise them in response to what you hear, or are you running some type of concurrent Dalcroze curriculum to the repertoire curriculum?

I would say I’ve been doing Dalcroze as warm-up activities just for the sake of them being more rhythmically responsible and being more
expressive. Then, I’m taking - and I’m pretty planning for the most part - experiences from the piece of music. So, if I’m working on phrasing that day, I’m going to give them an exercise, first of all that, just perhaps a general phrasing rhythmic exercise, and then connect it to that piece of music. So, I’m pulling stuff out of the music. So, as far as reacting to…if I hear them really mess up and I’m going, is there something I can do with them that eurhythmics-based that might fix it? I’d like to say I do that a lot - that would be a wonderful…that would mean I was totally engrossed in it – I haven’t done that as much. I’m a real planner. I’m always looking ahead to think, how would I solve that problem? Or, if I see an interval that the altos keep missing, and know that they keep missing it, I’ll say, “Ok, we are going to physically move to that tri-tone. Look at the floor and find out how far apart that is”. Or, if there’s a dissonant part, “Push the shoulder of the person next to you”. I tend to pre-plan, as opposed to reacting in the moment. But I like to get to the point where I do that more.

CD: And, how do you choose? Let’s say you are looking at the score for the first time, you’re thinking about what you might offer to the choir in terms of experience, how do you choose? Is it what you think the piece is asking us to bring out, or is it training the choir because you know they have difficulty with phrasing, because you know they have difficulty with phrasing?

Conductor B: Well, it’s probably a little bit of both. But, I’m at the point now where I’ll try to go through every elements of…all the phrasing I’ll go through, all the dynamics I’ll go through, all the harmonic structures, and for each day, or each week. I’ll go, ok, this week, I’m going to work on that. So, really is looking at almost all of the elements. That’s the point that I started to get to with the last choir I was with, and that’s the approach I am going to have. So, the Dalcroze is just totally embedded, but I found the issue is, and everyone is going to run across this, that it’s not a normal, and that makes it sound negative, this is not a normal choral experience. So like my college kids were going, “What are you doing? Can’t we just sing it?” So, it takes a while. I’m like, “No, you don’t understand - this will make you love this more, and you’ll love this!” But it took a while to get to that point. And those kids had had me for eurhythmics, so actually I think they jumped on board sooner. So, I’m really excited to have a choir for a long time now that I have all of this experience, but I know it’s going to take a while. You can’t just go in and completely, unless, you know, it was a brand new choir of people that had never experienced choir before, and that will never happen. Yah, I think the whole integration thing is very important as far as how do we do this, because we don’t want to scare them off and make it super uncomfortable. It’ll be a little uncomfortable, and that’s ok, not super uncomfortable.
So, you’re saying that over the course of the year, you want to be sure that you’ve touched on movement and experiences in respect to harmony and melody and all the different aspects of music?

Right. I do, I do. I don’t want it just to be about rhythm. That’s where Dalcroze lends itself most obviously but the expression part of it, and just the melodic reading…I think there are some things we can do to make that much more meaningful.

So, that brings us to the fifth question. Do you use Dalcroze to teach vocal technique, or diction, or any of the other things on the list there?

You know, the vocal technique part of it is probably again in the warm-up situation. If I want an open sound, they are physically going to move their arms in some way, and that’s a pretty common choral technique anyway, so I guess I don’t think of that as being Dalcroze except they are moving their body. If they’re just trying to do a siren and they’re taking their arm up and over, so that to me is using your body, but I don’t think about that as necessarily Dalcroze. Above and beyond that, I use it a lot in a vocal training kind of way. And, I’m not really using it for diction except to do…like for endings of words, like words that end in “t”, is for them to make a little “flick” with their fingers – to use some kind of little hand motion for that diction. That’s probably all I’ve really done with diction. Musical style, I try to do a lot with it as far as just finding a way to represent what they think stylistically this is. So, if it’s a jazz piece, I might use a whole different piece of music and let them move to that recording, and talk about, is that a swing rhythm, and how can we show that with our body? So, yah, musical style, I definitely approach. And then, the musicianship skills, I always think of that as all the elements and all of the expression – that’s really what I spend the most time on is b). Ensemble skills is letting them do…well there are a couple of things. Making them aware of the other part, so they are again, tapping or walking somebody else’s part. That to me is a real big part of it – realizing what the other groups are doing. So, I do a lot with that. And then, just various small groups, whether it be kind of an icebreaker, I don’t want to say “icebreaker”, but it’s a movement icebreaker, so they get to work with each other. That’s kind of how I view that. That’s how I would work on ensemble skills.

Do you change the formation of your choir or use the space while you are rehearsing?

I change a lot. Now, I had a director who changed for every piece – I don’t go that crazy. But I do think…that to me is kind of Dalcrozian, that they have to be aware of their space, they’ll hear things differently, so to move them around, even just when they’re singing another piece, is really important, so I do like that. And again, as far as teaching the following,
just as far as music reading – I guess it kind of fits in musicianship skills, is making sure that there is some type of sight-singing, and that they’re not just sight-singing, but that they are doing something physical to it.

CD: At what point in the learning sequence do you incorporate Dalcroze approaches?

Conductor B: Ok, there’s a couple things about this. First of all, the fact that, if you’re starting off with a choir, like a new job, it’s gotta be pretty gradual, because it’s going to be a new thing for them. And to me, the best way is to start with focus and attention [exercises], because they’re usually kind of fun. They go, “Ok, I’ll buy into that”. You haven’t messed with the music part of it. So, that part of the learning sequence, lots of times just getting their focus and attention at the beginning of rehearsal. But then it just needs to be embedded in the whole sequence. So, if you’re even trying to teach even a particular measure of music, the way that you do it is through some kind of movement, that they’re moving to it as opposed to just cognitively analyzing it. So, it’s embedded – it just becomes part of it – but, it’s gradual and it depends how long you have had those choirs and students. If you’ve had them for four years, it will look totally different at the end of that four years than it did at the beginning. They just kind of have to get it, and they have to feel comfortable, and yah, feel like they’re in a safe place. And of course the space – that always is an issue too – how they deal with the space. You have to get creative with that. There are so many people that put these walls in front of it anyway. But it really needs to be…to me, it should be the first part of the learning sequence. The first time they are learning a melodic line, a rhythmic line – that’s the first thing you do is something Dalcroze with it.

CD: How would you describe the learning dynamics in your class when Dalcroze approaches are being employed, or as a result of employing Dalcroze approaches?

Conductor B: Ok, I think students become extremely engaged. Once you get past the “This is weird…”, “I’m scared…”, “blah, blah, blah, blah, blah…” Once you’re really doing it, and it’s been part of the curriculum, and it’s really happening, it’s a very invigorating, engaging, energizing… Um, it’s a whole different way… It’s not you be the teacher and them being passive. They are more actively engaged. They’re making themselves learn it, you are not just spoon-feeding them notes. You’re not spoon-feeding them rhythms. You’re not spoon-feeding them…even the cognitive - if you have a difficult rhythm and asking them mathematically to figure it out – they don’t own that. Most of them time, they don’t own that until their body has its own…and there’s real learning going on. The engaging, energizing, the active… It’s a whole different ball game. And, for students who have a hard time paying attention, have a hard time being engaged… You now my students, if I’m working with the altos, I’m
asking the tenors, “You should be tapping the beat, or tapping their rhythm…” It’s really a way to get them much, much more engaged in the rehearsal rather than losing time. To me…the more I do it, the more I am finding so many more positives with using it.

CD: You used the word “own”, and earlier, the word “confidence”. Does that manifest itself in other non-musical ways as well?

Conductor B: Absolutely. The students feel better about the fact that they remembered the music better – that’s the best way to say it. When they come back to rehearsal next time, they go, ok, “I own that piece of music because I physically did something to it”, so it’s set in their bodies. And therefore, they are more excited about it, they feel more confident about it, they’re willing to try things that maybe before they thought was too difficult – were too difficult. It enables you to push the choir farther because they’re able to do what you ask them, and they retain it, because they know it in a different way. They know it besides cognitive, and they know it even besides aural, because they know it kinesthetically.

CD: I think a lot about the word imagination and trying to grow the imagination of the choir.

Conductor B: Right, so therefore they have their own picture in their head as to what the music sounds like and what’s the overall…whether it be the overall form of it, or what the melody means to them. Yah, it is very imaginative – creative. Where else do students in a day get to use that part of their brain?

CD: Yes. Agreed. Now, this relates to your own experience. How has the inclusion of the Dalcroze approach influenced your view of your role as conductor?

Conductor B: Wow. Huge, huge. I’m much less mechanical. Much more expressive. You know, patterns are important… It depends on the age of the students too, and their ability, but, I can take more risks with my own conducting, and I can let my conducting gesture be more pictorial. And I’m not like really crazy conductor where there’s no pattern and you have no idea what I’m doing, but it’s freed me up to be more holistic. I was always a “rule-follower”, you know, in the box, where’s my 4-pattern? And I think that it enables me to take some risks. It’s made me, I think, be much more rhythmically accurate, and be able to show affective nuances, where I feel really comfortable with that. Um, and I also feel like it’s not so much me being the sole person making the music happen, where now have we’ve got this relationship. They can probably do it almost without me. I’ve done a little bit of research on that…where, you know, you’ve worked on this piece of music, and then they can do it without you. So, sometimes, I think that that is the best way of looking at it – they don’t even need us to
be the conductor, except maybe to start them, and not necessarily even to end them. So, it’s really changed just what I think is the absolute, the textbook, “Now, this is how you do the patterns”, and, “You better not turn your wrist a certain way”… It’s taken me out of the box a little bit. Some people would look at me and say, “You’re still pretty in the box”, but not nearly as much as I was.

CD: And in terms of a power differential between you and the students, how do you think about that through a Dalcroze lens?

Conductor B: Yah, it’s totally changed. Totally changed. Because there’s a new comfort level. First of all, we are all just trying to get engaged into this music. And, they’ll see me moving to music just like they are, and they see us all kind of as equals with the music. Because their body is making connections to the music if they are listening to a recording, or if they are singing it and they are reacting to it in a certain way, they got to make a decision about how they move their body – the conductor didn’t. So, it gives them a feeling of empowerment, almost. And, then again, there is more buy-in. That whole thing well, “Gosh, I just need to follow the leader”. I don’t think that’s necessarily the mindset. I’m working with older people at the point. I’m not working with a sixth-grader, and I’m not sure how that would translate as much.

CD: I just finished four years at a Choir School where I taught Grade 5 and 6 boys, and I was just amazed how much they took ownership of things themselves. I mean, they still needed structure and leadership from me, but even with younger students, I was pretty amazed how much ownership and leadership musically they were able to take on.

Conductor B: That’s so exciting, that really is. There are many people that go into our field because they kind of like that “power” thing that happens with the podium, but let me tell you, that’s really not what it’s supposed to be about. But that’s a big philosophical debate! They do have the ability to make some pretty good decisions and have some thoughts about things.

CD: Two more questions. Number 9, how has your personal study of Dalcroze informed your conducting work in terms of your personal score study, gesture, and rehearsal techniques?

Conductor B: Well, score study, I’ve always been pretty good at looking for every single detail. But, when I look at it, I am immediately thinking, how can I get them to do it? How can I teach that concept? So, it’s a more invigorating, exciting way. I always like to do it anyway, but now it’s more fun. It’s creative for me, so it’s going to keep me obviously wanting to do my job. As far as the conducting gesture, again, I am always asking, “What’s another way I can do this to show them?”, but more importantly, it’s the teaching technique of “How are they going to be able to feel it anyway?”
So, if I wasn’t there, they could still do it anyways. So, they’re all kind of connected, but to me it all goes to what teaching technique, what exercise can I pull that will help them to really own that music? That’s the most important part of it.

CD:

So, in conjunction to number four, what are you looking for when you choose repertoire? Are you also working from the stance of what it might bring experientially to the choir?

Conductor B:

Yah, well I think there’s some standard repertoire that depending on the age level and the experience level, they should know. But usually within those, because they are standards and the ones that you hear, there’s meat in them, there’s something important. So, you look at the piece and go, what is it that the students will learn from it, and what will they be able to experience? What’s the other stuff? And, it’s usually, it’s something that’s rhythmically challenging for them, so I tend to look for that, and I tend to look for what is expressive. I mean, I’m just a real sucker for something that’s got gorgeous melody lines and beautiful phrasing and expressive dynamics. So, it’s kind of altered how I pick music a little bit. And then I worry about my agenda – that’s so much power! Which is kind of scary if that’s the only piece they get to learn – the pieces I pick out. So, yah, looking for things that can teach them something and it will be musical. I just don’t want things that are repetitive or boring and there’s nothing interesting happening. Even if it’s for a younger group. I get bored really easily with certain pieces of music – I’m like, I’m not doing that, it’s stupid and too repetitive. So, yah, it has altered how I pick out repertoire.

CD:

Well, great! I’ll just finish up asking, is there anything you would like to add regarding the use of Dalcroze in the choral context?

Conductor B:

Only to say that whatever the barriers that people have, and typically it’s space, to think outside the box and get creative, because I’ve been in every kind of space situation imaginable like a locker room, you know, I’ve been in a hallway. I’ve been in very small spaces. I’ve been in spaces with tiers. And that there are ways to work around it – you have to be creative. You have to just be dedicated and fully believe that what you are doing makes a difference. And, you have to do it over time. And you have to be able to take some risks that students at first may not like it, or feel comfortable. You have to be really encouraging, and let them feel, ok, we are all going to do this together and there’s not really a right or a wrong for at least some of the things that are going to happen, in terms of how they move their bodies. To me, there’s a lot of philosophical, psychological things that have to happen with this. And, that’s that relationship with the students where they trust you, they know you want them to succeed, as opposed to the old…podium you know, where “I’m the director. You are going to do what I tell you”, and there’s kind of this
fear factor, which, you know, some choirs sing well under that, but that to me does not lend itself to a Dalcroze approach at all! Yah, I think that’s enough to add... It’s fun to get to talk about, because there aren’t a lot of people who, especially in the choral world that know a lot about this.

CD: Well, yah, and as I do my survey of the literature, as I said, it’s clear that some people have made these connections, but for me, as you said, it’s also philosophical and psychological, and potentially more of an inversion of the process than just some ways to incorporate it here and there. So, that sort of got me thinking, I want to explore this and see how far it can go.

Conductor B: Exactly, exactly. And, this is the way to get it out there. So, I’m so glad you are doing this, because I think it will have a really big impact. And, isn’t that what you want? For me, I just think research has to do something to change, because so much of research is over such goofy things, you know, that really doesn’t change anything. This has the ability to change. And that’s what’s exciting.

CD: Thank you, Conductor B. It’s been great to talk to you, and hear about your thoughts and experience with Dalcroze in the choral context.
Conductor C

Conductor C conducts university choirs and teaches undergraduate and graduate-level conducting. He received significant Dalcroze training in his undergraduate music education.

CD: What type of training did you receive in Dalcroze?

Conductor C: At Institution H, Dalcroze-teacher I. And she was intimidating, and awesome. Our first classes with her, she would play Pablo Casals recordings, and she would ask us, ‘Which way did that note go? Did it move left of right? Did it go fast or slow?’ And we had no idea what she was talking about. And then, one day I guessed and said, “It moved to the right”, and she said, “Yes, it did”. What she was after is what he was doing to lead us on the line. And he could change his rate of vibrato, he could change his pressure on his string, he could change the rate of his bow, and we started to learn that that was how he wanted us to follow the music and where it was going to lead us to the next level. My piano teacher at Institution H, the same sort of thing. I would play a chord, and he would say, “How long do you want that to be heard?” And again, I was thinking analytical, which was three beats, you know, that’s how long it’s going to last. Then he sat down and played it, and I heard it differently. So all of that, and I took violin all through high school, and I had a terrific teacher from the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. If you played a good lesson, he would play duets with you at the end. And it always sounded better, and he never talked about it, but it was the same thing. It was this sense of line, and how do you get the listener to know where you want to go and where you’ve been? So, I started to incorporate all of that. We had two classes in eurhythmics with Dalcroze-teacher I. The second was an advanced class, and we studied…if you were an oboist, you played the oboe in class, and then she worked with you. At that point too we were listening to a string quartet, and I would be the cello, and I would have to interpret, through movement, what the cello was doing and how it interacted with the other parts in an artistic way and in a very structural way too. But I was a conducting major. I was the first conducting major in that program with Conductor F. And she came to my recital, and she could tell every time my mind went out of the music for just a second. She could just say, “Now, you broke the line here, and you broke it over there”. It’s amazing, and I can think back, that was when an outside thought came in. It was frightening. A bit of my gesture would change, and it would change the sound of the group, and she heard it.

CD: And Conductor F was also using Dalcroze techniques with you?

Conductor C: Yes. We moved in rehearsals. Our movement there was very basic. We stepped the pulse and we stepped the notation. Nothing really further than that. I began to do a lot more when I was at Institution N where I was experimenting with that type of movement but also adding text into it and
how they could express the text. I think I have maybe eighteen to twenty exercises that I’ve developed or enhanced over the years that I use all the time in my choir, again to get them off the notation – as if they were creating the music spontaneously. It incorporates eye contact with one another… Um, so I’ve choreographed pieces that would show the audience the exact structure of the piece. If it’s fugal or canon, people are actually following one another, if it’s a duet, they would have to come up and move side by side, if it’s a retrograde, they would actually move backwards, if it’s an ensemble where four move together then four people would move together… So that somebody is seeing it as a small child, or as somebody who plays in a symphony orchestra… They all got that it was the structure, but it was also depicting the text. And then the interconnectedness from part to part. That’s what we’re trying to get especially singers to do. They have a full score in front of them, but they don’t always use it. So a tenor could be singing the same notation as a soprano but not paying any attention to that at all. So, when I get them on the floor, then they have to move that together. I do exercises where they step the piano part, if we’re doing something like *Fern Hill*, Corgliano, then listen to the piano part and begin to step the piano part. Sometimes I’ll have them do a Dalcroze exercise where the piano will start, and they will step that measure while the piano plays the next measure. Trying to separate their - I call it the different channels in their brain. And then, still come in and sing their part, so, it integrates the whole piece to the singer, so they are not just singing their own part in the end. I would be very upset if that was all they got.

CD: And what do you think distinguishes the Dalcroze approach?

Conductor C: Yah, ok, I think it’s…for me, it’s about teaching the students about line, the musical line. That’s sort of the bottom line I guess. How things get connected, and then independence from the score itself is something that I use all the time. That’s my major goal – to get them independent of the notation. And independent from everybody else while being dependent on them as well. That’s the other challenge that I strive for.

CD: Can you say a little bit more about “independent while being dependent”?

Conductor C: Yes. Most of the exercises that I devise - that is the goal for each of those. By that I mean that they are making independent musical choices themselves, while being dependent on everybody else’s choices, because I love contradictions. Ah, a simple exercise that I do with high school kids, and my kids too, just to teach a little bit of uh…this has to do with speed and tempo. It’s a vocal exercise that I do, and then I turn it into a physical exercise, and then I ask half of the group to go twice as fast as they just did at the same tempo. They say, “What?” and I repeat it several times, and then I ask them to come up with a gesture that makes that happen. And, of course, my kids are there too and now they know what’s going on,
and so they usually help them. It’s a matter of speed of the anacrusis. Like throwing Frisbees, they wind up, and then they fire them faster than before, and then with a resistance motion just after that. The sound in the one that travels faster, but, it also just takes the same amount of time as the rest of the group. So, I have half the group do the fast motion and half the group do the slow motion that they started with. And what always happens obviously, is the people doing the faster motion, are done faster, and then they realize it’s the resistance after that initial thrust that they need to incorporate into their movement. And then I say much like a waterfall coming down into a lake. To see that surge of water coming in, soon it dissipates, but it still accepts that surge. And, I say it’s like a violin, a violinist’s bow. She can move the bow faster and still be going at the same tempo. She can also put more pressure on it to get it louder or to change the sound, but it can also go fast or slow. And then you have the rate of vibrato that you can move your fingers with. We have all of those at our disposal as a singer as well. But, they don’t think about that, so sound often, to me, stagnates. People start a phrase, it stagnates in the middle, and maybe they recapture it at the end and they just kind of fizzle out. I ask my students to “inhale the phrase”. So, they inhale the phrase, the length of the phrase, the musical high point of the phrase, the diction of the phrase, and how they connect all that together, so, that’s sort of a final goal of each phrase.

CD: When you say, “inhale a phrase”, does that mean they are conceiving of it mentally before they sing it?

Conductor C: Yes. This is way down the line. We’ve learned the pieces, we’ve done movement with them, they’ve become independent, they know how their part syncs with another part, and then, instead of just an inhalation to get the phrase started, I ask them to actually hear the entire phrase as they breathe. If they get to that level, then we really have something going.

CD: So, perhaps that leads to number 2. What are your teaching goals when you incorporate the Dalcroze approach?

Conductor C: Yes, obviously musicality. Musicianship skills and listening skills. And then, the musical independence is probably the most important one. But again, depending on other people. So, if you have a line that’s moving in whatever notation you have, then if someone else has that same notation, and they’re moving, those two people should be moving side by side. And then, their ears are looking for the next event that happen that is different than that. So they might sync up with another part. I help them out with this by actually choreographing pieces – ah, this comes up later in another question, so I’ll stop there with that. And then, mental coordination as well. Mental coordination and physical coordination. If we are doing a piece that has orchestra accompaniment and or might a pianist playing, I ask them to listen to the piano part and the step that part. Step all of the
rhythms that they hear, not just the pulse. Usually the melodic is what they will choose to step. I’ll even have them step that in canon sometimes. They listen to the first measure, then the second measure begins, they begin stepping that first measure while listening to the second measure. So, they’re a measure behind. And, then, when they come in with their part they are still singing their part. So I’m asking a lot of them, of their musical brains, to absorb the score in a much more meaningful way than just the tenor part.

CD: And, the second part of that question. What have you observed as the learning outcomes?

Conductor C: I would say pretty stunning in what they remember of the piece. Once they’ve done it kinesthetically in their bodies, they will never forget that piece. I think I mentioned, at an ACDA convention, I asked the kids that were in the group the year before to stand, and I played a C major triad for them, and they immediately danced and moved Byrd’s *Laudibus in Sanctis*. They hadn’t sung it in a year. It will stay with them forever. It’s just part of their being. And, it’s integrated more than just their part. They hear the other parts as well. So, that’s why I use this approach. It’s a meaningful learning experience for them. About half of them are going to be teachers, and the other half hope to be performers. I have a former student that is at the Met right now, she’s been in Europe for quite a few years – big career over there. And, the directors always ask her, “You’re a natural dancer, did you study dance?” And she said, “No, I had choir.” And then they want to know how that does that happen?? You simply move in choir. So, that’s a pretty good validation of what we do.

CD: I agree, I agree. So, number 3, what aspects of the Dalcroze approach do you use in the choral context?

Conductor C: Clearly the eurhythmics part of it, and again, you have to...because I just had two courses in eurhythmics, I’m not sure...of what you might not really consider that to be Dalcroze, but this is what I do, so you can sort of intersect where you have to. So, obviously eurhythmics, and we use it from the beginning. I think the next question answers a lot of that. But we do use that all the time. I do use solfège all the time. I’m not sure how Dalcroze differs, but we use moveable-do. I have them solfège in whatever key their part...would be most helpful to them. The altos say, “We don’t like B♭ here, we are going to stay in E♭”. “Sure, go ahead”.

The tenors may be in D. When we’re doing Penderecki, or Schoenberg, I often have people in different keys, maybe up to three keys simultaneously. But, it solves the problem. I used to try to teach that without any solfège, and it’s like, “No, that’s a tri-tone. That’s a major third, but you’re not singing it correctly”. And, that just didn’t work as well as once they put it in context. But, I’m sure how that’s different than...I don’t know what solfège rhythmique is. We used to teach that
here, and our sight-reading was taught through Dalcroze. The plastique animée, I actually use that...when I look at a score, I see choreography. I see the structure of the piece, and I immediately see how I would put that on the floor. I'll talk a bit more about that in the next question. At the end of all of my exercises, we do tableaux. Each group will be in charge of creating a tableau and not singing. They can do anything with their bodies that describes the music. Sometimes it's very literal. Sometimes it's abstract. It's always incredibly moving and thought-provoking for the rest of us. Two-thirds of the choir will stand in a circle and sing the piece while the other third of the choir act out the piece in a very different way.

CD: And again, that's at the end of the learning process?

Conductor C: Yes, that's sort of the next to the last step.

CD: Let's just go back to sight-reading for a moment. Are you finding that your movement and eurhythmics exercises are also making an impact on their ability to sight-read?

Conductor C: I don't know. I wouldn't be able to quantify that. The steps we usually use, we begin with solfège, count-singing, learning the music, and then we move on to movement exercises after that because they memorize as they go along. They have memory checks every day on maybe two or three pieces. And maybe only eight or ten measures in each one. It's just a habit for them. As soon as they get off-book, then I can begin to move those pieces.

CD: And what about improvisation, do you use that at all?

Conductor C: Not really. Through their movement, yes, at times, what I call “free movement”. But not actually anything with notes. Basically because of the literature I use is virtually all classic, classical and spirituals – that's kind of my repertoire, and it's always been. New music to old music, but, basically mainstream.

CD: And when you say “free movement”, is that closer to the beginning of the process? That they might just show you what they hear?

Conductor C: No. I keep it pretty structured. Again, I'll go through the sort of sequence I use. Ah, free movement comes basically before they start on the tableaux. And then they are literally free to do anything they want. And I've done workshops with this. Do you know...Conductor H has taken lessons with me, and then I've worked with his groups. I think they were doing Fern Hill. I had done some structure things with them, and they had it memorized pretty much. We did a lot of movement with them over the couple of days...Then I said, ok, “It's free movement, and you can do anything you want, and I mean anything”. So, you have the people that
are almost being silly, they don’t quite get it and are literally just running around. Other people are in these incredible little tableaux where they’ve gone off by themselves. Other people are working together. But he was very nervous. He wanted to stop the people that were horsing around. But I said, “No, that’s what they are thinking right now, so it’s ok. I did say they could do anything they want”. So, they have to be able to put up with that too. They will see other things going on and next time they do it, they might do something different. I’ve had people describe the “Stopping by a woods on a snowy evening”, the Robert Frost poetry, and I was doing a piece by Composer H a free form piece with this text on it. So we discussed what was going on in the piece and some people thought it was about suicide. And one guy, it reminded him of the Clydesdale horses in the Budweiser beer commercials. That’s the gamut of things that were going on. So, I choose to accept everybody, and that’s part of their independence too.

CD: Sure. So, we’ll go on to number 4 and you can tell me a bit more about how you work with the repertoire…

Conductor C: Again, as I said, when I’m looking at pieces, I actually see them as structures that I could put on the floor. I try to put that same structure in my gesture, so it influences my gesture in the end. And we start simply by stepping the pulse of the piece. Even when we they are doing just the pulse, I ask them to look in the mirror – I have mirrors on one side of my walls – to make sure they are not just stepping up and down, but that they are stepping smoothly, sort of sinking into their bodies, so it’s not just walking. And then we add line to that by stepping their musical notation. And this is when I start to get on them about the preparation. I will count them in, because I’m not trying to conduct. I’m just trying to observe what they do. I will count them in, and then on the anacrusic beat, or the beat before the anacrusic beat, half of them are not moving, as if they are being pushed into the line, not preparing the line. So, we spend a lot of time observing the fact that they are going to make a full move a beat before they are going to make a sound. And this goes right back into what I do. This is my job as the conductor: I give you the context, I give the speed, and all sorts of information in my first preparation. But, I’m always a beat ahead of you, and that’s what I want to start to impart on that basic level. They are always a beat ahead of where they are. Their gesture shows the next thing that they are singing, not the one that they’re on. And I continue that by saying, “It’s never where you are that’s important. It’s where you’ve been and where you’re going”. So, if it’s a rest, it has to hook into the phrase, and then begin the next phrase. If it’s a quarter-rest, it happens right away, if it’s a longer rest, then they have to begin the process all over. So, that’s the first thing we do. Then I begin to do what’s important in the piece. If it’s an antiphonal piece, I will have Choir 1 stand in a one on one side, and Choir 2 stand across from them, about six feet away. And this is sort of the inhaling the phrase part. I will
ask them to breathe in, and that they shift their weight from back to front, and keep their hips still grounded, and they reach out with their arms, and start to pull as in a rope-pull, and pull the sound that they are singing. And what happens is most people pull quickly and they get right back over their hip’s center, and there’s nowhere to go. And I say, “Try that again, and now inhale, and you only needed four beats, and you’ve got sixteen, so start to space that out.” Now, Choir 2 is facing Choir 1 and Choir 1 has started to pull their line, and Choir 2 goes out and is pulled by them. So you can see one row pulling, and the other row is being pulled by them. And then the antiphonal part comes and Choir 2 then begins to pull their line and Choir 1 rises. You have to watch that shoulders are down, that it’s a very grounded motion, and it’s not tense. You get young kids, especially guys, who think it’s an actual rope-pull, and they physically tense up, and that’s not the point at all. I’m really aware…I should have brought the booklet (booklet of Dalcroze-based exercises used by Conductor C), but I put here’s the exercises, and I put a little caveat at the bottom with what to watch for – both good and bad – that might be going wrong with that. So, that’s an exercise that teaches them the length of phrase and also how it integrates with the other choir. And it’s all fine in a Jakub Handl piece where one choir is twelve beats here, and the other choir is twelve beats there, and then they come to a phrase that is twelve beats long. The same thing happens. They pull like it’s going to be a twelve-beat phrase. And then they’re done. If you’re listening to a choir, the sound changes at that point, the sound is kind of squeezed because they know that have to go further, but they didn’t really prepare for it. So this exercise really changes that perception. The first time they did that, they were like, “Aha!” They actually had the piece memorized, but that hadn’t synthesized into their bodies or into their conscious thought. So then next time they encounter a longer phrase, they have to use a longer gesture, and when they’re half-way through the phrase, they should be half-way through the gesture. If there’s a part, as I mentioned before, say that the altos and tenors are doing the same notation, then I will choreograph it so that altos and tenors move together at that point. So, I will actually choreograph a small section of a piece. Friday is our movement day. So, by Friday, we always have something memorized, and I will choreograph that little bit structurally. And explain it to them, have them do it, and then we’ll talk about it, and they will usually have new insight about how their part integrates with somebody else. And, that’s the beginning of getting away from the notation, and getting back to what I think must have been in the creative mind of the composer. Try to make the choir appear as if they are spontaneously creating everything. They’re creating the text, they’re creating the speed, the sound, the dynamic, and the music. And not thinking about, “This is a quarter-note, oh, I forgot that is a dotted quarter note. This is a half note.” They are way beyond that at that point. So, I will choreograph things really pretty decisively for them. If it’s a sound we are all singing together, maybe softly at the beginning, and then it expands, I’ll put them in a clump.
They’ll be really tight looking in at each other. And, maybe, the basses have the next movement, so they will move out of that clump, and then begin to move around in a line. In the beginning, when they are moving notation, I will have them move in their part. So, first basses are moving together, second basses are moving together. This simply helps them memorize, because if you step out of line, then clearly you didn’t have it memorized. You’re off by yourself, seeing that you don’t have it right. I’ll choose a leader and they’ll move in a line. All over the room. I usually do 1st and 2nds just so the lines don’t get too long.

CD: So, just to go back to the first two steps, when they step the pulse, and then they step the notation. Are they singing as they are doing this?

Conductor C: Yes, always. Well not…sometimes when we get later in the progression, I will have them be stepping a part, and maybe this is in February, when the opera is going full tilt, and all of my kids are the top singers, so most of them are in the opera… I try to find ways to have rehearsals where they are not singing all of the time. So, I will have them move the section, and then I will say, “Sing”. They will have been moving for fifteen measures, and they are quite amazed when they come in dead on the note, dead on pitch, so I know that their inner ear is working.

CD: Can I go back? You said you see music as “structures”. How did you get to that point? Or, how did you train yourself to do that, I guess…

Conductor C: I don’t know. You know how there are different learners that we all know? Which is something I didn’t know when I started out teaching. When I auditioned people, I always gave more credibility to people who could read. And then I realized there are a lot of singers that hadn’t learned to read yet, but they just had the voice, maybe in high school. They had the voice, but they had no skills. The oboe player that had been playing for ten years could read anything. I didn’t realize how important those people who didn’t read, how advanced their ears were, because they didn’t read. So I do exercises that are strictly for ears when I’m doing auditions too, so I have a more balanced approach in how I choose people now. So I say that to say how I see pieces. I immediately see how I could put this on the floor. You’re too young probably to remember probably the “June Taylor Dancers” and a guy named Jackie Gleason – a famous comic and arranger of pieces, and he had the “Jackie Gleason Show”. It was a talent show, essentially. The “June Taylor Dancers” were the dancers that were on his show. And at the beginning of every show, they filmed them from above, and they were on the floor doing crazy things with their legs and arms, that made shapes, like a kaleidoscope. When you’re looking at a kaleidoscope, you see patterns and colors change. I use this a lot with my choir - that’s how I see color as well, and pattern and certain progression I see almost as colors. I have a student in my choir the last four years – he actually sees colors. He’s a brilliant guy. He
will smile at me and we are ecstatically in tune with the piece because he sees colors around me, I don’t know what color it is, and there’s some scientific credence to that. But, anyways, I see that, and I see how I’m going to conduct the piece. I see my gesture…it’s architecturally influenced. If you’re singing in a cathedral that has a peaked ceiling as opposed to a more domed shape, my conducting gesture will change. One will be slightly more angular – still full of line, but it may change the shape of it. If you were looking at me from their point of view, things would look more triangular. It would be a reflection of whatever the architecture is above me. If it’s a domed place, my gesture at the top would be rounder. I would be giving lower, more rounded gestures. I change my…this is maybe a little off topic, but it comes up later…my gesture, I change from, Conductor F that I studied with, his was incredibly, almost *muscularly* eurhythmic. I just *loved* how he went from point to point. But he did a traditional pattern. “1” comes down the center, “2” is to the left, “3” is to the right, and it’s all about, for all of us, what we do on that anacrusic part of the beat. The end of the beat shows us where it’s going – shows what we want to hear next. I saw a demonstration of a guy on a computer years ago, where he put the ictus in the same place all the time. I looked at it – it was on a little Mac computer on an 8” screen, one of those early computers – and I thought it looked dorky and weird, but then I started messing with it to see if I could still have that same eurhythmic beat or motion/pattern, but change my actual pattern to what I call a “vector” pattern, where everything comes to the center beat and pulls out of it. Conductor F used to have us conduct with a little piece of elastic and put it around our foot. And every time you’re pulling up, there’s resistance to pull it back down. And that set up a fantastic *elastic* beat that I kept from him. Just an incredible sense of *line* that is never broken, no place was it ever broken, it was always connected. I began to change, and experimented when I had an orchestra in front of me with the traditional pattern, and I noticed when I did my 2\textsuperscript{nd} beat over toward the violins, that the celli were just perceptively, slightly off. Just slightly. So, I said, “Just do that again”, and I didn’t tell them what I was doing, and I went to this other pattern, the vector pattern, and they were *exactly* together. Then I moved to my right to the traditional third beat, then the celli were together and the violins were just slightly behind it. And again, I would say, “Let’s do that again”. So, I started to change and it took me a long time to change, and all of my beats go in to the same place. So, no matter where you are in the orchestra or the choir, you see the beat happen in the same place all the time. So, people that are watching peripherally still see that it’s not moving around, it’s not dancing around. And I totally changed, and I teach this method now, and one of my biggest pet peeves are “hitches”, which especially choral conductors get in their pattern where they will “hitch” at the bottom of the beat, where they come out of the beat faster than they went into it. And, I often wonder…if you look without sound, and looked at the gesture, you would say, “Oh, the choir should be doing this”. And then you turn the sound on,
and they are actually singing very legato. And looking at the gesture, you think, how did they do that? And I think what happens is that we as choral people are in front of the group for so long, because of all the things we have to teach with diction, as well as all of the musical elements in the notation, that gesture becomes less and less important. Everything has been sort of built into what they are going to sound like. We work on the sound, but we don’t work on the sound as it relates to our gesture, I think. So, I’m trying to be true to myself and true to my group in that my gesture shows exactly what I want, all the time. And, I can change that gesture at any time, and get a different sound. So, often times I am doing so much movement before tour – tour is the last couple of weeks - they don’t see me conduct at all, they’re doing totally other kinds of exercises. So I must remember, a couple days before tour, to actually get in front of them again! And conduct. And then when we go on tour, then I can change anything I want at any time and I know they are following my gesture, as opposed to something built in. It has greatly to do with eurhythmics and how the gesture works. With extraneous movements that mean nothing to the central line. I think that with conductors a lot of time we wait for the sound after our initial gesture, and there’s a bit of scrambling, sometimes almost imperceptibly, but we know that it’s not quite together for a couple of measures, and then they get settles in. Early in my career, I had a student that said, “Do you always want us to sing behind your beat?” I said, “Well ah, I don’t know, ah, hmm…” I didn’t realize that was what was going on, but, in fact, it was. You come to where you think your ictus is and they’re not there – they don’t quite sing it – so we go down a little but more, or make a curly-q, and by the second of third beat, we are all kind of together. The next time you need to change something, that same thing is going to happen.

CD: So are you saying that the impressions they gather through movement facilitate your ability to conduct them, basically?

Conductor C: Yes. Yes. They are so independent then of the score then that they will do anything that I ask them to do through my gesture. That’s when I know that my gesture is working, and it’s not something that we built in together. He always does this there – that’s how we sound. And I may decide based on the sound I’m hearing in the room we are singing in that night, that I need to do something drastically different to get them to sing when and how I want them to sing. If the room is really wet, or architecturally something is going on that I’m really excited about, and I decide to do something totally different with tempo in a certain place, and this is the other thing, I have them look at the audience. They are trying to tell their forty-eight stories about what is going on, and they are independent and dependent at the same time. But, they can still see me peripherally, some see right through me and make eye contact with the audience. We have the lights up in the audience so that we engage them. We do not let them escape what we are doing. They must get what we are
doing. Or we haven’t done our job. But, I can still change dramatically. I can change the tempo, I can hold a note longer, I can cut off with absolute trust that they will follow what I want to do. Or, I can stop conducting all together, and they would be pretty darn good. They can do this by themselves.

CD: Great! Let’s move on to number 5. Do you use Dalcroze to teach vocal technique, or diction, or any of the other things on that list?

Conductor C: Just the style, musicianship skills and ensemble skills, definitely. Musicianship skills, the listening skills, especially. Ensemble skills – there’s an exercise I developed this year – I told you I try to get people to step with people who share their notation, so they are actively seeking out the things that they hear, but they don’t – my group was really good – but they don’t quite get that. I’ll see a few kids that actually do it. This is after really explaining to them what it is that I want them to do. They’re still…some of them are kind of lost in figuring out what’s next for them. They haven’t figured it out. So, I have octets formation – I have three choirs, a centre choir, a left choir, and a right choir. And, there are sixteen voices in each of those choirs, and perfectly balanced. If I put choir right and choir left facing each other, they’ll be the mirror image of each other, so that the audience hears equal voicing all of the time no matter where they are seated. So, I’ll have these octets form a small group, and this one exercise I call the “amoeba”. They would stand in a circle, hold hands, and then move the…sing the piece, and they’re not moving notation now, but they can move wherever they want to, but every movement that they make is going to be influencing everyone else. If you have what you think is an important part, then you start pulling your partners along to the other side of the circle, or even going under the other side of the circle. But then somebody else thinks their part is important, they will pull you back. You see this sort of live organism in front of you with people deciding, “I’m important now, no, I’m important, no, now I see that we’re important”. They love doing it. This is also teaching them to be dependent and independent. So, now I’ve decided, ok, I love that exercise, but I want to do something that connects them in a different way. So, I’ll have that octet start off together, facing each other in the circle. And now, I if I have an independent part, say I have a bit of a counterpoint going on, and the tenors take off. They leave home…of their eight people, and move about the room. Now, granted, there are seven other groups in the room doing the same exercise. So they are going to be passing through each other. And the only caveat is that they can’t take their eyes off anybody in their group. So, as you see one person move away. And then if another if person answers that, they would move where that person just moved. And the rest of them would stay home until they get to move out. And it was incredible! You have people moving backwards, and always stay in sort of elastic eye-contact, and musical contact with the rest of the people in their home. And what happens every time is that when they get back to
the end of a major cadence, or a major structural part of the piece, they are always back together again. Without really having to figure it out…they just know that that’s where they need to be at that point. So, that shows me that they really know the structure, and they really know the other parts and how they affect their part, and how they coordinate with it. The last exercise - I just started doing it this year – I just tried it. And after we do an exercise like that, new to them too, then we sit down and discuss it. Clearly that’s the one that makes a huge impact on them. The other that makes a big impact is if I just pair up people. Two people, and they can’t be singing the same part, and they stand facing each other, shoulders down, with hands in front of them, like patty-cake. And your hands are not allowed to touch the other hands of your partner. They are two or three inches away – you can feel the heat of the other person. And you look directly into their eyes. You are not allowed to lose eye contact. I actually have a few people in my choir this year, and two things they can’t do. One thing is to make eye-contact with anybody else and keep it, it’s just who they are, it’s something in their fabric. And the other is, one person said, “I can’t touch another person”. When we do this exercise where we hold hands – “I won’t do that. I’ll move, and do everything else, but I won’t be able to do that”. In a year she could. She had never been able to do that in her life. Anyway, this exercise, they look straight into each other’s eyes and sing the entire piece while their arms follow and lead each other. So, they are not allowed to touch the palm of the other hand, but that palm follows the opposite palm. So your right hand and left hand might be going up, might be going down, might be going sideways, and around. They determine, each of them determine, where they should move. So, they’re both in charge, and they both have to follow the other person at the same time. And this brings an incredible silence over the group. When it starts, I feel this incredible kinetic energy around the room, when it gets going it’s just silent about each of them. They get so interconnected with each other with their eyes. There’s also a hug afterword. I’ll do this with high school kids that don’t know these kids and have been squirrely during all of our demonstration and then half of them try to move with us, but this one just stops them dead in their tracks. They know what that piece meant when they get done. They have seen it in the eyes of the people they are working with. It’ll being high school kids to tears without saying a word to them, just singing a song to them and having high school kids follow their arm movements, because they end up leading an following each other. So, that’s an exercise that has been incredibly uplifting. It’s a game-changer.

CD: That’s really neat. So, you talked about this a little bit already, but here’s number 6. At what point in the learning sequence do you incorporate eurhythmic approaches?

Conductor C: Almost from the beginning. I, again, will usually start with count-singing and solfège to get them started, but within a couple days of starting a
piece, I’ll start to move. Again, just the basics. By the end of that week we will try some of these other more advanced activities.

CD: Are they looking at the music before they’ve moved?

Conductor C: Yes. My rehearsals…I call these “manageable bits”…I may have four things that I am going to do in a rehearsal. Four or five things, and I have the minutes divided up, how long it’s going to take. I will learn and begin to memorize a section of a piece, and then move to something else in another piece. And by the end of that week, I may have maybe four pieces that I can do eight to ten measures that I can do from each one of those that would be memorized to the point – they might not think it’s memorized – I have memory checks every day. Those sixteen voices, in that formation of three choirs, they have to come down and sing it. And if they mess up, they know they’ve let the group down. They just do it. They cheer each other on. When one group does a really fantastic job, it gets really nice applause from them. Only occasionally do they fail, and they look at each other, and we don’t say anything. We just go back, and the next time they do a memory check, they’re dead on. And that works really well. So, by the end of the week, we have things pretty well memorized, and then, with a little bit of movement, totally memorized very quickly. If it’s in their bodies, they’ve got it.

CD: How would you describe the learning dynamic in your classroom?

Conductor C: It’s amazing. Once we get going, they hate risers. They see the risers are down, as each one comes in, “We’re moving today??” They just love it. And what gets me now, some of them try to do it right away, start to do the movement. I think in the last 15 years, I’ve spent more time explaining these exercises, and telling them what to look for and hear, so they’re not just participating, they’re beginning to think, “If I do this someday, I will understand how to do it”. A lot of them get out there and say, “I want to do movement today”, and the kids go, “What’s that??”, and they don’t know how to make it effective right away. So then they give up. Other kids…I just got an email from…she’s teaching 4th grade, and she said, “I had movement day with them Friday, and they were wild with excitement about what they did”. She asked them, much as you asked earlier, they listened to the piece, and she had them just put it on the floor, just describe what you heard, and you get to move it. And she had a discussion with them afterwards. This is with 4th graders. She was just beside herself. A lot of them do go out, and sometimes they’ll call me and say, “Will you do a session with me?” And I say, “Sure”, and they see their kids really get it. Sometimes the kids just need reinforcement from someone else. Oh, I have this crazy guy at Institution M we did this stuff with. And then the crazy guy comes and does it with them, and they say, “Hey, this is really cool”. They get something out of it. So, that’s sort of
been my goal more lately, to do more teaching of the teachers that are going so they can see how to progress this...how to start this anyways.

CD: Number 8, how has the inclusion of eurhythmics influenced your view of your role as conductor?

Conductor C: Um, a lot. Again, it has to do with the gesture that I use and trying to be really true to my art as a conductor and true to the musical score. I tell my conducting students, once I start a piece, I do not move my feet, almost as if I am getting the music from the floor, and my whole body is pliable. But I’m not going to move my feet. It’s almost an honor thing with me. I am honoring the music by staying there as if I’m receiving it from the soles of my feet through my body and then out through my hands with the gesture that I want to show. You can come up and try knock me over, and you will not be able to knock me over. It’s an athletic endeavor that we do both as conductors, I think, and especially as singers. The whole body has to be integrated. The whole approach of movement and being integrated and what you’re doing has everything to do with my gesture and my being on the podium. That once I’ve started, I’m grounded, and I am not going to let go of that piece until the end. I think I told you that Dalcroze-teacher I that I worked with at Institution H – she came to my recital, and she nailed every time I left the score. She heard something change in the group. And it was frightening to me. And she was deadly accurate, because I remember what I was thinking each of the times that she heard that. We didn’t have video at that time to see what my gesture did at the time, but something happened to the sense of line in her ear. And, of course, my mind did go away for a moment, as I was thinking, “Oh this is going really well”. And once I thought about my girlfriend, who is now my wife of forty-five years. She came to the concert, and I thought about her at one point. Dalcroze-teacher I nailed that one too. It kind of frightened me. It also was a great lesson.

CD: Conductor C, when you’re studying the score before you bring it to the choir, do you find yourself moving in order to figure out where the music is going?

Conductor C: I do. Especially with sort of rhythmic things, I will step them out in my office and make sure that my gesture is then showing what I want. Sometimes it’s a matter of a direction of flow coming out of a beat, or incorporating a move. Let’s say we have in 3/4 a dotted quarter and three eighths, there’s a move that I will move on my second beat that will give the illusion that I’m pulling those three eight notes in a line, around in a circle, and pulling them back to the downbeat. I will actually change the direction of my beat to make that happen. Things like that...I see patterns in music, and then...so like being a choreographer on the floor, I will choreograph that move in my gesture that I think will help them the best. It’s the musical line that I want to be heard by them.
CD: Wow.

Conductor C: That’s the thing too. I won’t give that gesture away necessarily as we are learning the piece – they’re not watching anyway, at the beginning. And then, as I said, I will go away from conducting sometime quite a bit before the concert. It allows me to be quite a bit more free to give some other kind of gesture that I know will make a difference in how they sing the piece, how they deliver the piece. And it’s not something that has been built in.

CD: Do you ever find that in the rehearsal process you discover something about the music by watching the students that you can then incorporate into your own gesture for performance?

Conductor C: Yah that does happen sometimes. They’re insightful kids. When I studied with Conductor F, the one thing he told me that I didn’t like was that I needed to be more of a dictator. I’m a pretty laid back guy, but that was in a time of conductors being dictators. They dictated everything, and you were absolutely in charge of everything. And, when you give up some of that, it can be a little terrifying that you are relying on information from other people, but I have learned that that is the only way to go. And instead of me telling them what a text means, I ask them what it means to them, and I preface it by saying, “We are going to have a discussion on the composer today”, or, “We’re talking about just this one poem today”, and there’s something about the poet, why they’re writing, when they did… But then, I want to make sure that everything is valid that’s being said. And everybody accepts what somebody else has, even if it’s totally opposite of you believe and think about that. Whereas in my earlier times, I would have just confirmed what somebody said, or, “That’s what I believe too…” I will never let them know what I think about a piece, especially early on. Later, this is what this means to me, for whatever reason. But, I really want them to be as fully in charge of as much as possible of their musical decisions, their intellectual decisions, their poetic decisions… And I try to equate what they are doing in the ensemble with what they’ll do on stage when they give their recital – that they take this manner, they will pull the audience in. If not, I don’t really care about hearing the rest of their recital. So what we’re doing when we are on stage is looking out at the audience, and getting the audience to understand what it is we are telling them. And at half time, I will ask the choir, “So what’s going on in the audience?” And they will be able to describe in detail people in the audience that are being moved by what we are singing. They are not allowed to just sit there or to watch. They need to be enveloped in us and understand what it is we are trying to do.

CD: Wow. The last question: how has your personal study of Dalcroze effected your conducting score study, gesture, and rehearsal technique?
Conductor C: Yes, I think all of those.

CD: Is there anything else that you would like to add to the conversation about the use of Dalcroze in the choral context?

Conductor C: No, I think I’ve…what I can do when I get back to Institution M, if you want me to send you that booklet that I’ve written. It’s in the old part of the old computer. Then you can try some of the exercises I have developed, and there have been more since then as well.

CD: That would be great. I was very interested in what you said about using exercises as a structure so that students…you know, that you give them a tool that they can continue to use. And I think that is one of the sort of mystical things about Dalcroze and the way that it’s taught. Sometimes it’s sort of…I don’t know, an apprenticeship model where the teacher has all this movement experience, but doesn’t sort of package it in a way that’s students can take it away.

Conductor C: Right, yah, I agree. That’s why I said with these exercises have that little caveat there – here’s what you should be looking for. I have students in my graduate conducting program. I have one each year, so there are always two there, and one gets to work with the choir and do a full recital with the choir. It’s fantastic experience for them. And I ask them to run some movement rehearsals, and of course they want to, and then they stand there and they conduct, although people are moving all about the room! Why are you conducting? Nobody is following you! Nobody wants to watch you. The point of this is you watch them and direct their movement on thing that you see them not doing. As opposed to just letting them move about. And some people are craning their necks as they walk away from the conductor, trying to stay with their beat, and that has nothing to do with what you are supposed to be doing. They’re in charge of it now, so let them go. You know, someone is playing the piano and giving them a tempo, but I don’t conduct that either. I want to observe and see what’s going on. So I can work with that, see what I like and I don’t like. Some people are incredible. This is what they do – they move. And so the rest of them can learn from them. It’s their outlet to express themselves in a way that they don’t normally get to.

CD: Do you use the word Dalcroze, or do you always call it “movement” class?

Conductor C: I use the word Dalcroze. The only caveat there is not having studied it fully…I call it movement based on Dalcroze.

CD: Does Institution M offer a class in Dalcroze that students may have already taken?
Conductor C: No. We don’t have any Dalcroze here anymore. Students are now trying to see if that could happen.

CD: Well, I don’t know of a lot of people in our field that are approaching things from this perspective, so that’s why it’s been so interesting for me to talk to all of these different conductors, you know? Well, thank you so much, Conductor C!
Conductor D

Conductor D conducts church and high-school choirs. He holds a Dalcroze certificate.

CD: So, how did you discover the Dalcroze approach?

Conductor D: I took some piano lessons with Dalcroze-teacher N, and I remember, many years before, at Institution O, I did a conducting course with Conductor I, and he said then, “You should all take a Dalcroze course”. And then every time I heard anything about Dalcroze after that, it was something for little kids. And I could never figure out what did he mean. Did he mean to take a class with six year-olds, or what? It wasn’t until I talked to Dalcroze-teacher N and sort of figured out how it worked. And so I then took the first…the introductory course at the conservatory, and would have taken the second level course, but they never offered it again. And so, I went off to Institution L and did my work there. Did my certificate exams all in a bunch at the first possible opportunity after two years, and then, I mean it was like six years later before I felt ready to take the…to get the certificate. I held off on all of the other requirements. Because I really didn’t feel I knew how to teach the stuff, I mean I knew how to do the stuff well enough to pass the exams. But I think Institution L has been revamping its pedagogy work and it needed to, because basically at that time they left you to figure it out on your own, and I finally did, but it was a slow process.

CD: And did it at any time ever overlap with any conducting training?

Conductor D: Only that in Dalcroze-teacher O did a workshop on Dalcroze for conductors, which I took a couple of times. I mean, it’s a short…it’s a, you know, one-afternoon session of an hour, hour and a half, something like that. And he’s got some great ideas…but that’s it. No, Dalcroze was a hugely important corrective for all the bad things I learned in formal conducting study. I was a stiff, unmusical, by-the-book conductor, and very proud of the fact that, you know, I was a minimalist with my gesture… And at a certain point, I got a repetitive strain injury, probably from playing, but which my conducting technique at the time didn’t help at all. So, Dalcroze probably saved my professional life…

CD: And would you describe your current choral context – or where you might be using any Dalcroze techniques?

Conductor D: Yah, I have a…I’ve just moved churches, so I have a new church choir. It’s an SATB choir of thirty-five, when they are all there, with four professionals. And at school, I have a TTBB choir, purely extra-curricular – they meet twice a week, and I’m lucky to get 25 minutes a week with them, and that’s high school boys at Institution P. So that’s it…
CD: In your view, what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach to music education?

Conductor D: Well, obviously the classic is “experience before theory”. In terms of practical music-making, I think perhaps the most important is the “whole body” approach - a generously, freely physical approach to making music of any kind. And, I think the fact that it’s both very slow and very deep. It’s not going to win any prizes for speed when judged against traditional music education, but it’s so deep by comparison. Also, it teaches a whole lot of things that standard music education tends to feel you either have or you don’t. Whereas, Dalcroze has found ways to teach all of those things, so, it’s a great equalizer between the people that are ordinarily gifted and the people who are much more gifted. Because it teaches you the stuff that really gifted people know…by instinct.

CD: What is that stuff?

Conductor D: Um, well basic stuff, like how to keep a tempo. Your standard music teacher’s advice on keeping a tempo if you have a problem is use the metronome. Well, Dalcroze has a better solution for that. The ability to feel harmony. To, you know, a sort of sophisticated appreciation of harmonic tension and movement. You know, that’s something that standard music education thinks if you don’t have it, they can’t teach it. Well Dalcroze can teach it. Ah, I think the kind of precision that Dalcroze inculcates, you know, right from day one…a simple thing like going from a beat to a subdivision…um, you know all that stuff is really assumed. I mean, I think that standard music education thinks that if you explain to a student that there are two eighth notes in a quarter-note, that you’ve given them all the information they need. And, of course, you haven’t. And we get frustrated with them when they can’t do that “in time”. Musicality! I think people have concerns sometimes about the kind of “rule-based” language that’s used with…you, know, the Dalcroze rules of nuance, and rules of accent. But, they are a systematic, teachable approach to musical expressiveness, which again, I think, is usually assumed. If a student can’t make expressive music, they just have a tin ear for it and they’ll never be able to do it. Well, Dalcroze can take people who maybe aren’t perhaps very musical by nature and get them there. So, I mean, I think a whole bunch of things like that.

CD: So, what are your goals in incorporating the Dalcroze approach in the choral context? Musicality, musicianship, ensemble skills, etc. Or, what have you observed as the outcomes of using the approach?

Conductor D: Well, one striking outcome was that it got me my present church job, I think! Well, not really – I think I kind of had it going in to the audition. But, I kind of had to sell myself to the choir, and I told them about Dalcroze, and if I went there, they were going to get some of that in their
rehearsals. And if so, you might as well know what it’s like, and so we did variations on *Frère Jacques*. And they came out saying to other people that they had so much fun doing that and they just loved doing that. So, my goals in doing it… I have very little time with my high school boys, and relative to the amount of repertoire we have to get through, little time with my church choir as well. So, what I have tended to do is, instead of the rather fuller vocal warm-up I used to do, I have a very sort of short, stereotyped set of vocal exercises that I do that covers it. But, I no longer invest much effort in trying to be being creative or imaginative about group vocal technique, which is a loss in a way, but the time for the people that I work with is much better spent on training their sort of musical minds. And so, Dalcroze-teacher O in his workshop said that the greater need is for *brain* warm-ups, not vocal warm-ups. So, I do a short warm-up, and then I do a chunk of Dalcroze. And I may take 10 or even 15 minutes on that. And it’s obviously more focused on solfège rhythmique than eurhythmics, although…I have to rehearse in two spaces with my church choir, and when we’re in the church hall, I actually do have the luxury of getting them on their feet and moving, and we do some… One of the particular problems of this choir is tempo. They’re smart musically, but they tend to want to sing at any tempo they find comfortable. And so, I’ve done a lot of basic eurhythmics exercises, on the floor, to get them to have a stronger sense of tempo and a greater…a more intense commitment to it. Um, but most of it is still solfège rhythmique.

**CD:** Are you working with fixed-do?

**Conductor D:** Oh dear… No, I don’t insist on that. Partly because I’ve now had to change back and forth three times, and I’m driven completely crazy by it. And I’ve now finally realized that to go further [in Dalcroze training], I simply have to use fixed-do. And they have a little bit of moveable-do, so I don’t want to mess with that. When it’s possible, I will give them the option of using moveable-do, or numbers. And when we do something where moveable-do would really get in the way, than I just have them sing on numbers. We do do-to-do scales, but I don’t have them sing it on fixed-do syllables.

**CD:** How do they sing it, can you demonstrate?

**Conductor D:** I have printed out the scales with the half-steps wherever they occur – the notes are placed close – so they get an immediate image of where the half steps are. And I have a standard half-step/whole-step gesture where a flat hand is a whole-step and a flat hand leading to a fist, up or down, is a half-step. Between physicalizing it and having a kind of graphic notation of it…and I don’t…we will do one or two in a session. I don’t…I’m not all that systematic about it. And, of course, I play the relevant version of the dominant underneath too to help them feel it. We do a fair bit of work on
whole-steps/half-steps where I play and they have to sing it back on those words, “whole-step/half-step” and use the gesture. Later on, I’ll ask them to sing whole-steps and half-steps, and I have a thing I got from Master-teacher A where this is a whole-step ascending [shows gesture], and a half-step ascending [shows gesture], and a half-step descending/whole-step descending [shows gestures]. Um, and we sing chords, we use variations on Frère Jacques, we do variations on interrupted eighths, we’ll use interrupted canon…

CD: Do you clap it or sing it?

Conductor D: I do both. I had never done it singing until Dalcroze-teacher P did it a year or two ago, and I thought, what an obvious thing to do, so we do that sometimes. And sometimes I’ll play and they’ll clap or I’ll play and they’ll step. So, you know, it’s not by any means a systematic Dalcroze education – I don’t have the luxury of time for that. But I can, I think, really develop their ears, and their sight-singing abilities, and their general choral musicianship with Dalcroze. So, that’s pretty much what I am trying to do.

CD: Great. So, what aspects of the Dalcroze approach do you use in the choral context: eurhythmics, solfège rhythmique, improvisation, or plastique animée?

Conductor D: Not plastique. Not really improvisation. Although in very simple ways, one of the things I’ve done, with some success with this choir, is have the women sing their part, and have the men improvise drumming patterns underneath, just to a) set a relentless kind under the women, and vice versa, of course, but also to give them a sense of vitality and buoyancy and even fun about rhythm. But no, not much. I will improvise, in the way that a Dalcroze teacher does, but not for them. So, as I said, it’s mostly solfège rhythmique, but we do have the luxury of space to move, so we will do that probably every other, or every three rehearsals, we will take as much as ten minutes to try to solve a problem on the floor. And, frankly, even before I did Dalcroze, I was completely convinced about the need for choirs to move. So, I remember rehearsing my last church choir on the Hostias from the Mozart Requiem, and it was plodding and dull, so I said, “On your feet. You are going to waltz”. And so they waltzed, and instantly they sang it beautifully. In fact, I should tell you that the very first…after one Dalcroze class, I was in front of my choir and we were doing a Hosanna in excelsis in 7/8 by Composer I, and they could not get it, and we were clapping… And suddenly, I remembered the Dalcroze way. And I said, almost with mockery, “You know, Dalcroze, which I’m studying, has a special way to clap”, and then I thought, let’s try it. So, they were clapping the triple part of the 7/8 with a more expansive gesture, and that solved it instantly. I mean, literally, within seconds, Dalcroze clapping had solved the problem, and it was at that point that I realized
what a powerful tool it could be. And they were astounded. It was one of those moments where the choir thinks you are really quite the magician because you’ve solved what seemed like a difficult problem easily.

CD: When working with the repertoire, how do you devise Dalcroze experiences for the choir? Do you create Dalcroze experiences based on your vision for the repertoire, or do you integrate Dalcroze training as a concurrent curriculum to the repertoire, or do you incorporate Dalcroze techniques in response to the choir’s need while learning the repertoire?

Conductor D: All three. I tend, as I said, to have a Dalcroze component by way of moving along their choral skills, and their musical skills in general. And then, I will…it’s my “go to” thing when we have a problem. I don’t tend to sit down and try and anticipate problems and craft exercises in advance. I probably did more of that when I was younger. I tend to do it on the fly, and also, I have little enough time, that I can usually come up with something to address problems as they happen.

CD: So, it’s not a part of your score study?

Conductor D: Ha! Score study? You know, with like three and four jobs! I do score study when I’m working on a major piece of repertoire, you know, if I’m doing the Mozart Requiem, then I’m doing some score study. But, you know, for the standard Sunday by Sunday repertoire for the church, or the standard rehearsal by rehearsal repertoire for the kids at school, I frankly, by now – although it would be nice to be able to sit down with the scores in advance – I don’t have the time for it, and frankly, I don’t think I need it after this long in the game. But maybe I’m just fooling myself, who knows?

CD: Do you use the Dalcroze approach to teach the following: vocal technique, diction, style, musicianship, ensemble skills, others?

Conductor D: Musicianship absolutely, probably preeminently. What came after that?

CD: We can go one by one. Do you use it to teach vocal technique at all?

Conductor D: Um, only in the sense that I am convinced that much of what goes wrong with amateur singers is the result of tension. And anything which gives them a reason to move while they are singing is a) likely to solve vocal issues, and I think b) illuminate for them the difference between free singing and tense, constricted singing. Diction? Um, not that I can think of except in terms of syllable weight. I will often have them physicalize differing syllable weights in various ways. Do people do that? Do you have a way of teaching diction with Dalcroze? Tell me all about it sometime – I’m very curious…
CD: I use gesturing more than anything…

Conductor D: Their gestures of your gestures?

CD: Our gestures. We create gestures in order to capture the movement qualities in the text.

Conductor D: Yah. Yes, yes.

CD: Especially in foreign language diction, where there are sounds that we don’t have in English, but I have also used it for syllable weight, or where we think the phrase is going in terms of text, or exploring the meaning of the text. So, I guess I mean “diction” in any relationship to the text.

Conductor D: Certainly phrase. I will do certain things to a) establish if they have any sense of the goal of the phrase, and then b) if they do, then the degree to which their vision of the phrase is common or whether it’s conflicting. So, things like leaning forward to the climax of a phrase and leaning back towards the end. You can immediately tell visually if they are thinking about the phrase in the same way. Things like pulling on an imaginary elastic band – I do stuff like that. There are some kinds of accents I will have them making “stabbing” gestures for, like a series of accents, you know, stabbing gestures with an index finger can be a great way for them to feel that. Or, a dotted rhythm, if I want a particular energy for a dotted rhythm, I’ll have them slam the heel of their hand against an imaginary wall and bounce off it – that’s very effective for getting them to do that. So all that kind of stuff, sure. Style? I think the answer is yes, and what I said earlier about “waltzing” for the Hostias is an example of that. Oh, one thing I love to do for phrases, I haven’t done this in a while, is have the choir pair off the choir and push palm-to-palm towards the climax, and that’s something you can do in a regular choir configuration. I’m not sure I’m going to be very intelligent about how I use it for style, but I think…my gut tells me I do a fair bit.

CD: And one last one, which is ensemble skills.

Conductor D: Well, to the degree that at the moment my choir’s main ensemble challenge if rhythmic, sure. I tend to assume with amateur choirs that they will assume that the notes are the problem. And I tend to assume that if you get the rhythms really solid, the pitches more often than not will follow with apparent ease. So I will often try to solve rhythmic problems first. Even just having them read the text on rhythm is something I do a fair bit. But, as I said, everything I am doing with this choir right now is designed to convince them that a pulse is not optional once the conductor establishes it. But, beyond that, that it’s not just a relentless “tick”, but that it’s something that has vibrancy and vitality. And I think the other piece of that, of course, is gradually convincing them that beats have
different functions. Give them a sense of anacrusis. That’s the one…I seldom get beyond that to worry about metacrusis. But amateurs have no idea about anacrusis, and if you can give them that, you’ve solved a multitude of problems right there. I used to wonder why Conductor I insisted in his four-gesture that the final beat, which I was always taught was a small gesture at the top of the pattern, was in fact this great big offering, this great big scooping from below. And I realized it was just his way of forcing on his choirs a sense of anacrusis.

CD: At what point in the learning sequence do you incorporate Dalcroze approaches?

Conductor D: Well…given that the learning sequence we are talking about is just the rehearsal?

CD: Could be the learning sequence of a piece over the course of 2 weeks, or 9 weeks, or just 15 minutes…

Conductor D: Well, as I said, it’s a kind of invariable part of typically the beginning of my rehearsals, and then it’s just introduced to solve problems. I think it’s as simple as that.

CD: Sure. How would you describe the learning dynamic when Dalcroze approaches are being employed, or as a result of incorporating Dalcroze approaches?

Conductor D: People have fun. I inherited a church choir which was very, very serious - this recent one - and people did not smile very much. And did not laugh hardly at all. And, when I first asked them to move, said, “We are Presbyterians, you know…” And Dalcroze has been, as much as anything, a vehicle for convincing them that making music can be joyful. And, if it does nothing else, I think it’s worth the whole thing there, because I think, so often, music-making is hard, un-joyful, dry work, and it’s almost a wonder that people put up with it. I’m in awe of their commitment to the art, that they will do it under those circumstances. But how much better if it can be something that, you know, gives fun, and joy, and lightness to their life. So, that’s what happens…all of the things that I think we will hope will happen also happen. They have the musical experience through Dalcroze which they then readily transfer to their singing, and all of that happens. But for me, the crucial one is that it makes working together in the choir a joyful experience.

CD: And people are expressive of that?

Conductor D: Oh yah, absolutely. And I can just…even if they hadn’t, I’ve seen it. I’ve seen them get visibly lighter and smile.
How has the...the following questions are a little bit more about you as a conductor...how has the inclusion of Dalcroze approaches influenced your view of your role as conductor?

Conductor D: Well, I've always thought my role as conductor was primarily a teaching role. Um, because I'm always...I seldom have the luxury of conducting professionals exclusively, almost never...I'm always dealing with a mixture of amateurs and professionals, at most. So, there are always people there that love to sing, but may not have particularly well-developed skills. And so, I always see myself in front of the choir first and foremost as a teacher. But, what Dalcroze has done is given me a) a sort of core philosophy about how to do that. I mean, I'm not just trying to pluck things out of the dim and distant past, I have a kind of rationale for what I do and a systematic way of thinking about it, so it gives me a kind of pedagogical structure which I find really helpful.

How do you mix together the sort of pedagogical structure it gives you with the notion of conductor?

Conductor D: For me, Dalcroze utterly transformed my physical presence in front of the ensemble. And my approach. I move more freely, I'm more generous with my gestures, ah, I think I know how to incarnate in my physical presence what I want from them. So, we were singing a very simple thing—it was a Taizé chant, in which there was an elaborate solo going on, but the choir had essentially four chords that they had to sing over and over again. And I conducted it continuously, and with a lot of gesture, not because they needed it to keep together, but because they were so quick to fall off the kind of buoyancy that I wanted them to feel, so I was standing there trying to be, and I think succeeding, buoyancy incarnate for them. And I think it kind of worked. So, a lot about how I hold myself and how I move and how I conduct and just how I am as a physical presence in front of the choir has been completely changed and transformed by Dalcroze.

Has is changed the way you think about the choir as an instrument?

Conductor D: Yes, because it's given me the tools to lead them to do most of what I want them to do. Whereas before I think there were whole areas of choral work I knew they weren't doing well, but I didn't have a way of leading them to do that. And I think now, almost anything that I can imagine could happen in the music, Dalcroze will give me some way of getting there.

So, one last question, how has your personal study of the Dalcroze approach informed your conducting work in relationship to your score study, gesture, and rehearsal technique. You said in our last question, “Dalcroze has given you a means to do anything that you imagine could
happen in the music”. How do develop that imagination for pieces you haven’t seen before? Are you tapping into your Dalcroze training to imagine what that piece could sound like?

Conductor D: Yes sure, I think that’s absolutely true. I mean, my score study is probably mostly just playing it through and living with it for a little while, but I think it’s so deep inside me now that it informs everything I do. If I had half an hour to sit down and study a piece, it’s at play there because I see everything now through that lens.

CD: And what is it that you hear? What is it that you see in the music?

Conductor D: Well, I think it gives one a clarity and an intensity about the phrase which I think is often not there in the absence of Dalcroze. I think the whole business about the different function of the beats and scale degrees, you know, you see music in a different way when you realize that beat 4 has a different function than beat 3. And when you realize that the 4th scale degree has a very distinct character and color, and feel, and drive… I mean, I think at a certain point, anyone who’s been to university understands that the 7th degree of the scale has a tendency to rise to the tonic and the 4th degree has a tendency to fall to the median… But, you know, what Dalcroze does is gives you a sort of visceral feeling of that so those things kind of leap off the page and influence how you hear the music in your head, and how you teach it.

CD: And gesture? We talked about how this transformed your gesture already a bit…

Conductor D: Absolutely. And in the deepest possible way. I went from being a conductor that used as little gesture as possible and thought that clarity and a lack of kind of showiness was the hallmark of really fine conducting. And, it’s not that I’ve become particularly flamboyant even now, but I’m free. The whole body is involved all of the time. And, when necessary, that may mean much more extravagant gestures, not all the time… The other thing, now that I think of it, was conducting slow tempi was something I learned from Dalcroze. And I think it was specifically time-space-energy that allowed me to get over the habits that were allowing conducting to contribute to my repetitive strain injury. I don’t think anybody ever said that the way to get good, fast gestures is to make them smaller. I was teaching that to three year-olds today. And, you know, I had some pretty good conducting teachers. And, either they didn’t make it clear to me, or I managed to miss that lesson. I think time-space-energy is a huge, huge area in which again standard music education knows nothing about, I mean, the geniuses do it by instinct, and the rest of us just don’t figure it out. Dalcroze actually makes that clear to ordinary mortals.
CD: And lastly, how has your study of Dalcroze impacted the way you approach rehearsal technique?

Conductor D: It’s left me with the confidence that there is always a solution, and most of the time, I can find it. And I think a lot of conductors, perhaps not at the kind of level you are thinking of at university with doctorates, but I think a lot of people that conduct church choirs think there are all these problems that they just haven’t a clue how to solve. And I think, first and foremost, that Dalcroze has given me the confidence that I can figure it out. I have all these new tools, new to me, tools at my disposal, and I don’t ever need to be the kind of conductor that gets nasty with choirs because I’m frustrated with my inability to solve a problem. So, that whole business of saving me from kind of conductor’s *crotchetiness*… But beyond that, it puts me in a different space, and it puts choirs in a different space, again because of that sense that…you know, it’s not for nothing that Dalcroze calls all of his methods *games*. It restores a sense of fun and fun and playfulness, you know, and even childlikness to what we do together. So, it’s just a more positive and *humane* kind of experience. I’m sure there’s other things, but that’s the core of it.

CD: Yes. Is there anything else you would like to add to the conversation about Dalcroze in the choral context?

Conductor D: I think that about covers it.

CD: Thank you, Conductor D. It’s been a great experience talking with you!
Conductor E

Conductor E conducts university and high-school choirs and teaches undergraduate-level conducting. He holds a Dalcroze License.

CD: How did you discover Dalcroze?

Conductor E: When I was at Institution H, I had a wonderful Russian piano teacher that mid-way through my sophomore year said to me – she would ask these wonderfully direct questions – she looked at me and went, “Why are you so uncoordinated?” And then she sort of looked at me and said, “You need to take Dalcroze and you need to take modern dance”. I just never disobeyed her because you just didn’t disobey Piano-teacher G, so that summer I went, and I researched all I could, and figured out that the most Dalcroze I could get would be three weeks at Institution G with Master-teacher B, and then I did three weeks directly after that at Institution K with Dalcroze-teacher Q. So, six weeks there that summer, and then when I came back to Institution H in the fall, I started playing about eight measures for Piano-teacher W, and she stopped me, and said, “What happened? Your tension is all gone”. So, from then on, I was pretty much hooked on eurhythmics.

CD: And you mentioned that you went forward and studied in other programs after Institutions G and J?

Conductor E: Yah, at Institution H, Dalcroze-teacher P was teaching, so I was able to take several winter term eurhythmics classes with him, and Dalcroze-teacher O was there as well – he taught in those winter terms classes. And then they also brought in Dalcroze-teacher S one winter term. Those were sort of my main teachers. I did my certificate with Dalcroze teacher P at Dalcroze training institution K, and then I did my license with Master-teacher B and Dalcroze-teacher H at Institution G.

CD: Can you describe your current choral context?

Conductor E: Sure. I’m the Director of Choirs at Institution Q, and there I direct the large mixed choir and the small chamber choir as well. And in the summers, I teach at Institution Q, and there I direct the women’s chorus, the high school women’s chorus, and I also teach eurhythmics for all of the voice majors.

CD: In your view, what are the hallmarks of the Dalcroze approach to music education?

Conductor E: That it connects movement to sound and sound to movement. Um, and I think there are any number of ways of getting there. Dalcroze-teacher Q used to use the term “phonomimesis” a lot, and he saw it in a very literal
way – for any *given* sound, there is a *given* movement, for any *given* movement, there is a *specific* sound. He was very exact and literal, and I think, you know, in reality, for any given movement there are a number of fitting musics. And probably for any music, there are a number of fitting movements as well. But, anything that calls itself Dalcroze is about connecting the body’s movement to music in a very exact way and a literal way, such that the expressivity of the music will also show in the expressivity of the body, and vice versa.

**CD:** Great. So, what are your goals when you incorporate the Dalcroze approach in the choral context (musicality, musicianship skills, musical independence, physical and mental coordination etc.)? Or, what have you observed as the learning outcomes of incorporating the Dalcroze approach?

**Conductor E:** I think, for me, how I learned music was so connected to the Dalcroze method that it’s difficult for me to think about any one goal. I use it for all of those. For me, if there’s a problem in the sound, there are any number of ways you can fix it. You can talk about it. You can move it. Those are the two I think of a lot. And so, for any given issue, I try to both physicalize it for the singers, and intellectualize it for the singers, and usually, in that order. So, let’s think about the common issues that come up in a choral rehearsal, starting with warm-ups, and getting the breath moving… I will almost always have my singers move in such a way as to reflect the movement of the breath, or the shape of the line we are singing in the warm-up, or even the shape of the vowel that the mouth is doing in the warm-up. Things to externalize the internal experience of the music. Rhythmic things. Dalcroze, especially if you read his *rhythmique* books…so much is done while conducting. So, when I’m dealing with rhythmic issues, which is probably the first thing I took from Dalcroze, is that most rhythmic issues are related to not being able to keep clearly in one’s mind the rhythm and its relationship to the meter. And, different conductors have solved that in different ways. Of course, Conductor U had his choirs famously constantly “count-singing”, ah, which is a way of applying the meter to the rhythm, subdividing the rhythm into the metric subdivisions. I very frequently have my choirs conducting while they are singing, or conducting while they are stepping, or various things to somehow physicalize the meter or physicalize the rhythm. Um, ok, so that’s simple rhythmic issues. Issues of the shape of the line, or a gesture, right…to have the gesture have the right shape…for them to find an expressive gesture, an expressive movement that fits that gesture. I don’t usually plan these things, but something comes up, and that’s really a “reach-up” that isn’t fulfilled, and you don’t get to what it is, and rehearsing that motion with them, until they’re really feeling that motion, and then adding the voice on top of that, so that they find it that way. Even issues of intonation. I took so much from Dalcroze’s *solfège* approach with the do-to-do scales. And there’s a warm-up I use a lot
where I’ll take my hands, showing my five fingers, and I use those five fingers to represent five steps in the scale. So, if I’m holding my hand up so you are looking at the back of my palm, my pinky would be like “do”, and my ring finger would be like “re”, and my middle finger like “mi”, and my pointer finger like “fa”, and my thumb like “so”. But then I set the key, or the distance between them, by if I brought my pinky and ring finger together, and left a space between my ring and middle fingers, that would be like going C Db Eb. I use the distance between my fingers to represent the whole and half steps they are singing. And then I point to various fingers and can create little modulations by changing the distance between my fingers as I do that. Which I think is a very Dalcrozian way to get singers to think about whole and half steps. That’s not of my own creation. I learned that from Conductor K, who taught for a long time at Institution S. And he credited it to Conductor L, who I think was at Institution T for a long time with coming up with that exercise. In any case, it’s a classic Dalcrozian way of doing that. I spend a lot of time with my singers, especially at Institution Q, a good 20% of every rehearsal, doing various sight-singing and ear-training things. Being in an educational setting, I think that is so…they’re not as good at sight-singing as they need to be, so that’s a huge part of it. But, also, applying sight-singing to the choral rehearsal teaches them to listen to their music in a different way, and to be much more conscious of the notes they are singing. One of the other things I do a lot with them, which I also think of as being very related to Dalcroze, is when we are doing a warm-up, I will often have them switch to singing it on scale degrees, or, I’ll tell them the key, and they have to sing it on letter names. Things that really require them to conceptualize the notes that they are singing. For any choral problem, I can usually think of a physical or Dalcrozian solution to it. For me, that’s how I learned to solve those issues for myself, so that’s how I tend to solve them when I’m working with a choir.

CD: Sure. So, the third question. What aspects of the Dalcroze approach do you tend to use in the choral context: eurhythmics, solfège rhythmique, improvisation, or plastique animée?

Conductor E: I don’t use much improvisation. I could maybe use more. It invites so much creativity, and I wish I incorporated that more. Eurhythmics, certainly. In terms of moving gesture and moving lines, both in place and moving around the room as well. I will say, something that hate that I have often seen, when choral conductors quote unquote start using eurhythmics, is they’ll just have all of the singers march around in a circle in time while they sing. I just hate it. I can’t stand it…because so many times when they are moving in the circle, they are moving in this unmusical, gangly, loafish way, and the point of eurhythmics is to move the music, and if that’s how you are moving, that’s how your music is going to sound. So, the first time I have a choir move across the floor, I will take a good twenty minutes just getting them to walk in a really
graceful way, and I will specifically take a piece of music that we can then apply that grace to the singing of it, and I almost never have them go in a circle. If the room’s not big enough, I’ll have half of them stay off to the side, or on the risers, changing directions, in straight lines, changing the direction at the phrases – things like that rather than the “deadly Dalcroze circle”. Plastique animée I use less frequently than I would like. I use it a lot in my own score preparation – for me, I’ll have chosen music, and one of the early stages of learning the piece for me, if there’s a good recording of it, I will often prepare a solo plastique for myself to the music. It’s just a quick way for me to basically aurally memorize the music and get a sense of physically how the score feels. It’s not me doing a plastique with them, but it’s that preparation that then lets me pull things from that plastique as needed, and teach those motions for the choir. I have on occasion, but rarely, done plastiques with choirs, and I think that’s a wonderful thing to do. When I choose easy enough music that actually allows enough time to explore all of the music. You know, I think it’s really great to have a choir coming up with movements and choreographies to the piece, and really thinking about, what movements does this music inspire in us? And then, to reverse that, and say, in our performance, how can we more strongly inspire that sense of motion in our listeners? So, even if they were sitting still, they would feel that they are moving, or quite literally being moved, in various ways by what we sing. And I’ll often do that on a phrase level, with particular phrases, but it’s rare, and I wish I did more, it’s rare that I will do that for an entire piece or movement. I don’t use plastique nearly as much as I would like. You know, the Dalcroze solfège method, a lot of people call solfège-rhythmique. But I really think that’s a misnomer. He wrote one little book, called a “Preparation for Rhythmic Solfège” – it’s like 40 or 50 pages, and it’s tiny, and I really think it’s secondary to his solfège method. A lot of people think that book because Dalcroze-teacher Q translated it, and sold for a number of years a translation of it. Originally, Dalcroze wrote three volumes of Les gammes et les tonalités, and that’s really the heart of his solfège method. And then he also, just prior to that, 1898 if I recall, he has one little, honestly 14-page volume, which is a volume on intonation for singers, and I forget the title, but I have a Dalcroze bibliography I can pull that from… And all that is is an explanation of the do-to-do scales. And I do, I use the do-to-do scales a lot in choral warm-ups with them. At Institution Q, we use moveable-do solfège. So when we do them, we will either sing them on moveable-do, or on note names, with or without the accidentals. And as you dive into the Dalcroze solfège method, it’s really a method of orienting oneself within a key and the ability to quickly change that key and reorient oneself within the new key. And it’s a wonderful way – just the simple study of the whole and half steps – of teaching singers to sing in tune, without them ever realizing that you are teaching them to sing in tune. Because you are teaching them to be aware of the whole and half steps. Unlike a pianist who sees the missing half steps between the whole steps, a singer doesn’t, and so often,
you’ll have them sing a major scale, and you’ll find the mi is a little bit flat. It’s like they try and change the whole-half at the beginning of the scale to be like these equal subdivisions of a perfect fifth, which of course they are not. That awareness of half and whole steps is the main thing that intonation is about. And so, I do just enormous amounts of that, usually in the warm-ups related to hearing the distance between notes, really the true sense of interval – measuring the distance between them.

CD: Cool. Let’s see, number 4. When working with the repertoire, how do you devise Dalcroze experiences for the choir? Do you create Dalcroze experiences based on your vision for the repertoire, or do you introduce Dalcroze as a concurrent curriculum to the repertoire, or do you incorporate Dalcroze techniques in response to the choir while learning the repertoire?

Conductor E: Mostly the third. As I said, I learn the piece in plastique before I get in front of the choir. And so, that’s my Dalcroze preparation to teach a piece. But, for instance, here at Institution R, I have the fortunate experience of teaching all of the singers eurhythmics. They see me three days a week for an hour each for eurhythmics and I see them in choir. So, I’m lucky in the sense that I can be working on their physical technique on a regular basis. So, then I do a lot more integration of eurhythmics into the rehearsal here, just because I’m not starting from scratch with the singers. I don’t have to teach them how to move in different qualities of motion because I get them three days a week in the morning, and I have the luxury to respond to different qualities of music with different qualities of motion. And, to build in different rhythmic challenges in their movement as well, and that, that is the ideal, and we don’t often get that. Um, lots of people talk very fondly about when Conductor F was conducting the choirs at Institution H, and Dalcroze-teacher I was teaching eurhythmics there at the same time. And he studied eurhythmics with her. She taught a faculty eurhythmics class, and I think the reason it worked so well when he integrated eurhythmics in the choral rehearsal was because his students were already doing it with her. And so, there was this understanding about what it was about…and how to move… Um, and I actually think you can do harm if you do it wrong. Like the “deadly Dalcroze circle”…I always think about it in that sense – when they don’t have the concurrent eurhythmics training, if you are going to incorporate it into the choral rehearsal, then you are both their choral teacher and their eurhythmics teacher. And you have to do both… I taught at Institution U for their summer choral conducting program, and the thing I always emphasized there is: how they move is how they sing. So, look at their motion, and if it’s not how you want them to sound, then fix the motion, and spending the time rehearsing and perfecting the motion until it has all the beauty, all the shape, or all the anger, all the fire that the piece you are working on needs to have. Um, and then you will get all of that in the sound, and it will be ever so much more visceral. So yah, when I do it
here at Institution R, it’s concurrent, and I love that, and it’s a dream, and I wish I had that at Institution Q - where I had them all for movement! But, when I integrate it, it usually takes the form of my teaching them a movement, and rehearsing the movement, because by and large, I haven’t done the movement vocabulary work with them – there’s just not the time – to where they are going to come up with fitting movements. Some of them will. I mean, Dalcroze said this himself, some people don’t need eurhythmics – they just feel it and do it. And that’s great. But, by and large…and Dalcroze-teacher T did it at the national conference, he said something about that too with the adolescent demonstration class, it was just wonderful, he said, um, “They don’t start with a movement vocabulary – you have to teach them a movement vocabulary”. And, it’s absolutely true. You teach them the movement vocabulary and they gradually expand and develop it on their own. Um, so when I use it in rehearsals that’s almost always the first thing, let’s learn the movement vocabulary, now let’s apply it to this piece.

CD: Mm hmm. Very interesting. Let’s move on to number 5. Do you use the Dalcroze technique…and you may have highlighted some of these already…to teach the following: vocal technique, diction, musical style, musicianship skills, ensemble skills. We can go one by one if you like?

Conductor E: Sure. Vocal technique was first, right? It’s worth saying that movement to teach vocal technique is sometimes Dalcrozan in that it connects to sound, and it’s sometimes not Dalcrozan at all in that you’re making external the sense of internal motion. A classic example of that is having someone spin their arms in front of them to get the feeling of breath flow. Um, that’s great, it definitely gives a sense of motion, but the musical line may just be a held note, and there may be a sense of motion, but probably not free spinning motion like that, but more of a sustained glide or even a pressing motion to it. So, I use movement a lot to teach vocal technique, but I wouldn’t say that it’s exactly Dalcrozan, or it’s certainly not always Dalcrozan. Sometimes it is.

CD: And just to be clear about that, Conductor E, it’s Dalcrozan when it’s a representation of the music in the movement?

Conductor E: Yes, exactly. And otherwise, it’s movement to teach vocal technique, which is wonderful. But there’s not necessarily anything particularly Dalcrozan about that.

CD: Sure. Ok, and what about diction?

Conductor E: Diction, yes, somewhat. A lot of diction, especially choral diction is about unifying rhythmically the different part of a word or words – getting them together. I think right now we are working on Vaughan William’s Dona Nobis Pacem here at Institution R. And so, if you take even the first
movement, so “beat, beat drum, blow bugles blow…” [sings in rhythm]… If you look at just the words, words that are one syllable, like “drum” end up having to have two syllables to be understood. Or, “blow”, right? With the orchestra doing what they are doing, “drum, blow” [speaks with one syllable only], you end up totally losing the text… “Da-rum-mih ba-low” make it work, right? So those two one-syllable words become, “Da-rum-mih ba-low” – 5 different phonemes when you split it up. But splitting it up isn’t enough. As a solo singer, you can be understood, but as a choir singer, you have to do it at the exact same moment as well, so I will often have them put the newly created rhythm into motion, and sometimes into body percussion to make that totally come together. There are other elements of diction I use it a lot for. The word stress – I talk a lot with my choirs about stresses at different levels. About… I say “microscopic” and “macroscopic” stresses. If we are talking about the word stress of the phrase, to actually move, to be gesturing the word stress of the multiple-syllable words – the scansion, as it were. Um, the poetic scansion. And then zooming out to look at the more macro level, to look at the macro level of the phrase…and then to move both at once. To, say, with the body move on the floor shaping the phrase – speeding up and slowing down with the shape of the phrase, while showing with the arms the microscopic word stresses as well. So the two…the shape of the microscopic has to happen within the shape of the macro. I think it’s Thomas Grubb in his book that speaks about the different levels of diction, where the first level is just being able to pronounce every sound of every word correctly, and then the second level is to pronounce the sound of every words correctly within the right rhythm and stress of the language, and then the third level is to have all that and to also understand the larger meaning and the shaping of the poetry. So, I think movement is a great way to integrate all of that. Ah, yah, that’s sort of how I use it for diction.

CD: Ah, musical style?

Conductor E: Musical style, that’s huge. Musical style equals movement style in my book. And so, if you’re doing a classical-era Mozart work, that’s entirely different than if you are singing O Fortuna from Carmina Burana, for example. You know, and there’s a particularly, especially in Mozart, and Haydn as well, there’s a certain cleanliness in that style where just putting singers into that posture, and just getting them to walk in that sort of…to walk with their corsets on, and with their big powdered wigs on their heads, they suddenly start singing in a different style as well, and, you know, to put oneself in that time period, and move in the style of that time period…and I’ll show pictures from dance textbooks from different eras as well so that they can even copy the posture of different time periods. Ah, I think is just a delightful way to get students into different styles. Or, you can go to the opposite extreme with O Fortuna, where you are talking about the beginnings of modern dance where if ballet is by and large about weightlessness and being “up”, modern dance is about weight and
downward, and a sense of embracing gravity. And getting students to move with that sort of weight and style is a totally different experience and way of singing and thinking. And then the weightless moments within the piece are so special and unique because they are different, you know? I think of the *Dulcissime*, that wonderful soprano solo in *Carmina* – *Carmina* is on my mind because there’s a band next door that is playing an arrangement of movements from it – but that *Dulcissime*, which is a perfect example of that utterly weightless motion, and it has that moment where she gives herself over to him, of course it’s not a choral movement, it’s for soprano, but you know, to have those varieties of movement – they correspond so exactly to what I mean about style. And if you can get students into the physical character of the time, and of the piece, it changes so wonderfully the sound with which they sing. Suddenly they sing in that style without your ever having to go into, “Ok, this is classical era style singing…” It’s all there – intuitive. If you move that way, you can’t help but sing that way.

CD: Mmm. Wow. The next one is musicianship skills – we may have already addressed that? And the last one is ensemble skills.

Conductor E: Ensemble skills, yah, I should do it more with ensemble skills. When we talk about ensemble skills, I’m very scientific about it. There’s rhythm, intonation, balance, and diction are the four I consider ensemble skills. And, um, rhythm, I use conducting and various other movements, so, fine. Intonation I mainly address with the do-to-do scales and things like that. But we also use some exercises from Conductor M, which are not Dalcroze-related, but which are just delightful. And balance, well huh, take a Bach chorale, I love to torture students by going like one quarter tempo through a Bach choral, and having them sing not on solfège, not on words, but on what part of the chord they are on. So, if you’re on the third of the chord, you sing “third”. If you’re on the fifth, sing “fifth”, and so on and so forth. If you’re on a non-harmonic tone, label it “pass” for passing, “neighb” for neighbor, and we talk a lot about tuning of chord, equal temperament versus tuning closer to the overtone series. That’s not really Dalcrozan, but it’s a way I address balance. And, oh, I said rhythm, I said balance, and diction? We talked a little bit about diction – vowel shape is huge. I do frequently, in warm-ups, I do a lot of hand shapes representing vowel shapes and I have them do that in various ways, and doing a lot of shaping with their hand to show me the shape of their tongue. And that borders Dalcrozan, but again, I think it comes back to that’s movement to help vocal technique, not necessarily actually connected to the sound, so I wouldn’t put that in my Dalcroze handbag, just in my tricks handbag.

CD: Sure. So, number 6. At what point in the learning sequence do you incorporate Dalcroze experiences?
Conductor E: Every stage. On first reading, we will be conducting as we are reading. And, as it gets better, we will be refining our conducting to also reflect the dynamic we are singing, so our conducting is becoming more and more musical. And then we’ll be working with some of the diction things I mentioned – the word stress and the larger stress of the phrase, and then, you know, as we further refine, working on specific gestural moments within it, or getting ourselves within the body language of the music as well. So, it’s throughout.

CD: Great! How would you describe the learning dynamic in your classes when you use Dalcroze approaches, or as a result of incorporating Dalcroze approaches?

Conductor E: I think it entirely depends on how successfully I present the Dalcroze approach. I’ve had things backfire on me, and students be totally shy and reluctant to move, and just created a tense dynamic instead of freeing things up, and that was when I first started incorporating Dalcroze into choral rehearsals, and thinking, surely they’ll move just the way I move, because doesn’t everyone move just the way I move? No, of course, they don’t. And I didn’t either. And it made me go back and think about after my second summer doing six weeks of Dalcroze, I came back into my first senior year – I was five years at Institution H, and my friends were all saying things to me like, “You move differently”, “You’re so much more relaxed”. My Dalcroze training was transformative for me in that sense. So, and yah… So, now when I do it, I remember that, and I start with something they can do, and gradually expand to things that are less like their normal day-to-day body motion, and would feel strange, if we hadn’t gotten there gradually, but they don’t realize it’s not part of their normal motion. But, I think, by and large, when you let them move and keep them moving, they love to move. People have to sit still for so much of their lives and their bodies just aren’t built for that. There’s great joy in moving. So, by and large, yah, it brings joy into the rehearsal. Once you get over that initial fear of, “Wait, you want me to move?” Ah, yah!

CD: Great! Ah, how has the inclusion of Dalcroze approaches influenced your view of your role as conductor?

Conductor E: Ah, not as much as it should have. There’s a wonderful line in Dalcroze’s introduction to his first volume, *Les gammes et les tonalités*, where he says, um, what is the line? “Oh, the tyranny of nuance forced upon the singers by the conductor!” He was very big, especially early in his career, on teaching the rules of nuance. The idea that the musicians would learn to find the nuance themselves rather than having it imposed on them. Um, boy I wish I were always like that. But there are times when I simply say, “Measure 14, crescendo, measure 17, decrescendo”. Where I go with expediency rather than helping them find the physical “why” of that crescendo. What is that really about? When I am at my most Dalcrozan
as a conductor, it’s about having the singers experience the physical implications of the piece and translating them into sound so that they are ever more apparent. And Dalcroze has really helped me get better at that. I am still a bit of a scientist, and when I am at my least Dalcrozian, I am still a tyrant imposing the nuance on the choir. And sometimes that works, but if it comes from them and they do it physically, you only have to do it once and they remember it forever. There’s another line from that introduction that I think is just wonderful, Dalcroze quotes a philosopher, and I’m not going to remember the philosopher, but he says, um, something like, “The music has to become more than just painted on the soul, but attached to the soul”. When the nuance and the rhythm comes from their own physical being, it’s already attached to them, and it sticks. I think the Dalcroze study has mainly influenced me in that I see an ideal goal where all the music is coming out of this shared physical experience, and I don’t always, I would even say rarely, sadly, do I get there always with a piece of music with the choir. But, it stands there as a utopian, sort of ideal to strive for. And it certainly makes our rehearsals more musical and more musically and emotionally satisfying when I actively work towards that.

CD: How has your personal study of the Dalcroze approach influenced your approach to the following: score study, gesture, and rehearsal technique?

Conductor E: Score study, I move while I study the score. I move the lines – even sitting still, I’m hearing implied motion. There was a wonderful point, when I was so immersed in Dalcroze study, especially when I was studying it there at Institution H, and then going and studying it in the summers as well, this wonderful point happened, when I would see people gesture, and I would hear the music for that gesture in my mind. And it was the weirdest sort of kinesthetic experience. And I still get that a bit, but I’m not doing Dalcroze every moment of my life anymore, sadly. But, I think that’s huge in score study. And, even when I’m not moving, I’m imagining moving. And then I am moving, because I’m always building a plastique for myself. What was the next thing?

CD: Conducting gesture.

Conductor E: Right, well that becomes the conducting gesture! Your plastique – put it in the shape of a pattern, and you have your conducting gesture. All the conductor’s gesture is is where you have to be at a certain time, but how you get there, that’s what the music is about. And so, that’s straight from plastique. And the, yah, rehearsal technique, that’s sort of everything we’ve been talking about so far.

CD: Is there anything else you would like to add to the discussion regarding the use of the Dalcroze approach in the choral context?
Conductor E: No. Well, I think what’s unique about me is that I work primarily as a choral conductor, but I’m one of the few choral conductors I know that also does a lot of Dalcroze teaching, and so I do it differently. I mentioned to one of my friends here at Institution R about your dissertation, and that we were going to be talking, and she said, “Yah, I went to a New York state music education conference and someone was giving a presentation on eurhythmics in the choral rehearsal, and they were having people trudge around the room while singing”, and my friend said, “Having been in a few of your eurhythmics classes, I just sat there wanting to scream, this isn’t eurhythmics, this isn’t what it’s about!” Um, on the one hand, I’m always so excited when someone wants to use Eurhythmics, but on the other hand, it drives me nuts when I see it used, when people think they are doing eurhythmics, and it’s instead some type of terribly unmusical movement. That’s just always my…I get nervous when I hear about conductors using eurhythmics when they maybe don’t have any eurhythmics experience themselves.

CD: Thank you Conductor E. I really appreciate your perspective and your sharing your experience, as both a Dalcroze teacher and choral conductor!
Appendix E - A Dalcroze-based Score Study Sequence for Conductors - Tomás Luis de Victoria’s Amicus Meus, No. 1 from the Tenebrae Responsories (1584)

This exercise is based on a presentation given at the Dalcroze Society of America national conference in Seattle, WA on June 18, 2012. As a practical and perhaps underexplored aspect of the Dalcroze approach in application to the conductor’s work, this presentation was designed to demonstrate how conductors may incorporate bodily exploration into score study. Inspiration for this presentation came from three sources: (1) Timothy Caldwell’s “Suggestions for learning a score musically” from his book, Expressive singing: Dalcroze Eurhythmics for voice (1995, pp. 166-167), (2) Jaques-Dalcroze’s statement, “Musical thought is the result of a state of emotion, and a musical “score” may record this emotion” (1921b, p. 105), and (3) the researcher’s own experimentation with a body-based type of score study, including the preparation of Tomás Luis de Victoria’s Amicus Meus for a conducting audition in June 2012.

This Dalcroze-based score study sequence aims to follow the same pedagogical sequence found in a typical Dalcroze Eurhythmics class, beginning with sensory experience (aural and kinesthetic), and leading to affective response, cognitive analysis (including visual analysis), and finally, the preparation of conducting gestures and rehearsal strategies. It was created to address the following questions: How can the kinesthetic sense become involved in conductor score study? What strategies can help the conductor build a personally-informed and musically accurate and expressive vision for the music? How can the conductor bridge the gap between aural/visual analysis of the score and the use of conducting gesture? What score study strategies prepare the conductor to develop movement-based rehearsal exercises for the choir?

Score study sequence:

1. Choose a quality recording(s) of the piece. Find a space where your whole body can move freely. Listen to the recording, and as you do, respond in movement to the sounds that you hear. Allow the music to dictate your body’s motion. Avoid applying gesture to the music, or attempting to choreograph its motion. Instead, simply respond
spontaneously to sound. Move the whole body, or any part of it, as you feel lead, including your breath, limbs, torso, head etc.

2. Listen again. Do you hear something different this time? Notice how the music is moving you. Are you responding to the sound by moving in lines, in circles, by floating, or by stomping? Are you responding to the music’s color, meter, rhythmic patterns, dynamics, phrase, harmonic motion?

3. Listen a third time, but listen in a seated posture, translating your whole-body movement into a more internalized sense of motion. Work to aurally memorize the score. Can you hear ahead to anticipate the next section or entrance? Develop a “gestalt” for the score, a feeling for the entire composition (Caldwell, 1995, p. 124).

4. List some of your impressions. How does the music moving through your body make you feel? How did you move? Which parts of the music did you embody? What are the physical sensations associated with the music? List some of the affective qualities of the music.

5. List what you know about the music based on your whole-body explorations (a basic analysis of the music without referencing the score). Here are some ideas of what you may already know:
   a. Tonality: major/minor/atonal?
   b. Voicing: male/female voices, number of parts, divisi?
   c. Texture: monophonic/homophonic/polyphonic?
   d. Form/Design: repetition vs. contrast/number of sections?
   e. Meter/Rhythm: time signature/rhythmic patterns/use of rhythmic devices/polyrhythmic?
   f. Other identifiable compositional devices: use of harmony, use of melody, use of phrasing, use of dynamics, use of articulation, use of time-duration?

6. Read the text of the music without referencing the score. What affective response does the text evoke? What is the relationship between the text and the music? Does the composer use the music to reveal the text, and if so, how?

   The sign by which my friend betrayed me was a kiss:
   He whom I kiss, that is he: hold him fast.
   He who committed murder by a kiss gave this wicked sign.
   The unhappy wretch repaid the price of blood and in the end hanged himself.
   It had been better for that man if he had never been born.
7. Listen again with the text in mind.

8. Look at the written score. How does the notation compare to your experience and impressions of the music? In what ways does the notation capture your experience of the music? In what ways does the notation fail to capture your experience for the music? Connect the translation to the music notation (word for note).

9. Avoid marking the score. Continue your conversation with the music by selecting a short portion or line in the music. Move while you speak/sing the line. How would you like to articulate or shape the line? Connect the notation with your movement and your vocal sounds.

10. Practice integrating your movement-musical intentions into a conducting pattern, but do not be constricted by the pattern. Traditional conducting patterns emphasize beat-quality and meter. Experiment with ways to show line and shape. How do the “rhythmics” of the music interact with the “plastique” of the music (Shenenberger, 2008)? In the case of polyphonic music, as in the Victoria, how can you indicate the shapes of the lines while also meeting the technical demands of the music (cuing parts, maintaining steady tactus), for example, in the following passage?
11. Develop score-marking strategies that reflect the motion/emotion of the music.

12. Develop a personal choreography for the music as a memorization tool (plastique animée).

13. Develop Dalcroze rehearsal techniques under the following categories:
   a. Mental/aural challenges in the score: Develop Dalcroze exercises/games to aid choristers to develop the necessary awareness, concentration, and ensemble skills required by the score.

   b. Musical challenges ("rhythmic" and "plastique") in the score: Develop Dalcroze exercises to aid choristers to meet the specific technical and musical challenges of the music.

   c. Develop a choral plastique or large-scale movement exercise to help choristers learn the entire score.
Amicus meus

Respensorio de Tinieblas nº 1

Edición de 1585

Tomás Luis de Victoria

Cantus

Amicus meus osculi me tradidit si-

Altus

Amicus meus osculi me tradidit si-

Tenor

Amicus meus osculi me tradidit si-

Bassus

Amicus meus osculi me tradidit si-

Cognito:

ipse est te ne te eum: hoc malum

gno:

ipse est te ne te eum: hoc malum fecit si-

gno: quem osculatus fui ero, ipse est te ne te eum:

Basso

gno: quem osculatus fui ero, ipse est te ne te eum: hoc malum fecit si-

gno: quem osculatus fui ero, ipse est te ne te eum: fecit signum, qui per osculum ad implevit homici-dium.
Inflexum prætermissit prætiuum sanguinis, et in fine laqueo se suspensit. Bonum erat e-i, si natus non fuisse homo ille.

FINE
Solo
Appendix F - Dalcroze Rehearsal Techniques for John Tavener’s The Lamb (1974)

This rehearsal sequence is an adaptation of various Dalcroze-based exercises that were both pre-prepared and developed during rehearsals with the Trinity Western University Chamber Singers in the Fall of 2012.

Dalcroze rehearsal activities are designed to answer the following question: What skills and experiences are necessary to create an accurate and expressive performance of this piece? These activities were developed (1) in the score study process, as a means of targeting areas of technical and musical challenge, and (2) in rehearsals, as a means of fixing technical and musical challenges as they arose.

The following areas were defined as areas of technical and musical challenges in John Tavener’s *The Lamb*.

A. Use of atonality, including retrograde and inversion of a tone row.
B. Use of the rhythmic device “twice-as-slow” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b).
C. Use of linear melodic motion (atonal) vs. vertical harmonic motion (tonal).
D. Use of non-metrical motion in the poetic shaping of text, including the use of tenuti, agogic accents, and free tempo.

A. Atonality

Tavener employs a 7-note tone row as the main musical material in the A section of *The Lamb*. This tone row is also presented in retrograde, in inversion, and in retrograde of the inversion:

Tone row original:

\[ \text{Gave thee clothing of delight,} \]

\[ \text{F} \text{A} \text{C} \text{E} \text{B} \text{D} \text{G} \]

\[ \text{G} \text{B} \text{D} \text{G} \text{E} \text{B} \text{F} \text{A} \]
Retrograde:

\[ \begin{array}{cccccc}
\flat \& \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\end{array} \]

Soft-est cloth-ing, wool-ly, bright;

Inversion:

\[ \begin{array}{cccccc}
\sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp \\
\sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp \\
\sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp \\
\sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp \\
\sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp & \sharp \\
\end{array} \]

Gave thee cloth-ing of de-light.

Retrograde of the inversion:

\[ \begin{array}{cccccc}
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat & \flat \\
\end{array} \]

Soft-est cloth-ing, wool-ly, bright;

Objectives:

1. To develop G as a pitch-centre.
2. To teach the Dalcroze concept of intervals as measured distance.
3. To develop accuracy with measuring intervals up to the major third above and below the pitch-centre of G.

Dalcroze Techniques:

1. Work to develop a strong sense of pitch memory for G. Beginning warm-ups on G. Ask choristers to hum G at the beginning of the warm-up or at various points during rehearsal.
3. Walk forward as you sing an ascending chromatic scale, taking small steps. Walk backwards as you sing a descending chromatic scale, taking small steps.
4. Walk forward as you sing an ascending whole-tone scale, taking larger steps. Walk backwards as you sing a descending whole-tone scale, taking larger steps.
5. In order to combine the tone row in its original and inverted forms, stand in an inward-facing circle. Voice parts may be mixed. Sing mm. 15-16 (on text or on note name) and step inwards if the note ascends and outwards if the note descends. Return to the circle when singing G. Measure the size of the step based on the size of the interval. Make eye
contact with another chorister while you sing the phrase, preferably with the opposite voice part.

B. Twice-as-slow

In mm. 9-10 and mm. 19-20, Tavener makes use of twice-as-slow, or augmentation, doubling the value of each note.

Objectives:
1. To switch easily between original tempo and twice-as-slow.
2. To acquire a sense of time-duration as an expressive parameter of music (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921b)

Dalcroze Techniques:
1. Stand in a circle and establish a common pulse at quarter-note = 80. Have choir clap this pulse with a medium-sized circular clap. On a signal, switch to twice as slow, quarter-note = 40. Clap size should be twice as large. Alternate. Combine both.
2. Step the pulse of the music (improvised at piano) at quarter-note = 80. Step twice as slow as the piano, stepping every other note. When the piano switches to twice-as-slow, step twice-as-fast as the piano, stepping twice for every note. Alternate, stepping the opposite of the piano. Or, when the piano plays twice-as-slow, step the slow pulse, and clap the off-beat.
3. Sing m. 9-10, stepping eighth-notes.
4. Sing mm. 9-10, stepping each note value. Insert eighth-note complements (clapping) if note values are inaccurate.
C. Linear melodic motion (atonal) vs. vertical harmonic motion (tonal)

Mm. 1-6 employ 1 and 2-voice linear melodic motion (monophony). Mm. 7-10 employ 4-voice vertical harmonic motion (homophony). Mm. 1-6 are atonal and do not imply a strong sense of harmonic motion (tension and release). Mm. 7-10 are tonal, making use of functional harmony and a sense of tension and release.

Objectives:
1. To distinguish the qualities of linear melodic motion (atonal) and vertical harmonic motion (tonal).

Dalcroze Techniques:
1. Play a game with body shapes/hand shapes. Play chord clusters at the piano (chord clusters may repeat on a pulse). With each changing cluster, create a different body/hand shape. Make shapes in pairs or in threes.
2. Stand in an inward-facing circle, raise hands, and touch palms with adjacent choristers. Sing m. 7, pressing into the palm of adjacent choristers towards the dissonance on the third note, “such”. Gradually release the tension in the palms as the phrase dissipates towards “voice” at the end of the measure. Repeat for m. 8.

3. Step and sing mm. 1-6, taking your own path as you sing. By the end of the last note of m. 6, “bright”, arrive in a line formation. On the downbeat of m. 7, walk as a choir in one single direction.

D. Use of non-metrical motion in the poetic shaping of text, including the use of tenuti, agogic accents, and free tempo

Tavener writes the music without a time signature, indicating to sing with flexibility, guided by the stress of the words. He also stipulates that the music should be sung with “extreme tenderness”.

\[ \text{[} \text{j = c.} \, 40 \text{]} \]

With extreme tenderness – flexible – always guided by the words

Objectives:
1. To reflect on the meaning of the text and the composer’s choices in the musical setting of the text.
2. To develop an affective response to the music.
3. To convert affective response into musically accurate and expressive choral performance.

Dalcroze Techniques:
1. Read the text aloud. Have one person read the first stanza, as the question, and another person read the second stanza, as the answer to the question. Discuss affective response to the poem. How does the composer capture the text in the music? For example, in m. 11, why does the music move ahead in tempo?
2. Expressively speak a line from the piece. Connect this expressive delivery with free conducting of the music (non-metrical conducting). What shape is in the music?

3. Sing while using free conducting or free movement.

4. Develop a plastique animée for the music, or alternatively, ask choristers to develop their own plastique. Perform the plastiques and discuss how the choristers embodied the music.

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**THE LAMB**

Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?
Gave thee life, & bid thee feed
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb.
He is meek, & he is mild;
He became a little child.
I, a child, & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb, God bless thee!
Little Lamb, God bless thee!

William Blake
(1757–1827)
for Simon's 3rd birthday

WILLIAM BLAKE

THE LAMB

JOHN TAVENER

\[ j = c.40 \]

With extreme tenderness – flexible – always guided by the words

S

Little Lamb, who made thee?

Dost thou know who made thee?

A


T

Dost thou know who made thee?

B

Piano
(for rehearsal only)

With extreme tenderness – flexible – always guided by the words

[moving forward]

S

Gave thee life, and bid thee feed

By the stream and o'er the mead;

A


T


B

[moving forward]

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Gave thee clothing of delight, Softest clothing, woolly, bright;

Gave thee clothing of delight, Softest clothing, woolly, bright;

Poco meno mosso

Gave thee such a tender voice, Making all the vales rejoice?

Gave thee such a tender voice, Making all the vales rejoice?

Gave thee such a tender voice, Making all the vales rejoice?

Poco meno mosso

Gave thee such a tender voice, Making all the vales rejoice?
Little Lamb, who made thee? Dost thou know who made thee?

A tempo — moving forward

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee; Little Lamb, I'll tell thee;
He is called by thy name, For he calls himself a Lamb.

He is called by thy name, For he calls himself a Lamb.

He is called by thy name, For he calls himself a Lamb.

He is called by thy name, For he calls himself a Lamb.

He is meek, and he is mild, He became a little child.

He is meek, and he is mild, He became a little child.

He is meek, and he is mild, He became a little child.

He is meek, and he is mild, He became a little child.
Poco meno mosso

I, a child, and thou a lamb, We are called by his name.

Little lamb, God bless thee! Little lamb, God bless thee!

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