

2024

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Recommended Citation

Iddings, LeAnna B. (2024) "Dalcroze Eurhythmics: Origin, Development, and Considerations for the Choral Program," *Visions of Research in Music Education*: Vol. 46, Article 9.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.lib.uconn.edu/vrme/vol46/iss1/9>

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ABSTRACT

This literature review describes the origin and development of Dalcroze Eurhythmics and the implications of utilizing this approach in the choral rehearsal. This information aims to equip choral directors with knowledge about how Eurhythmics can benefit their pedagogical practices and students' experiences in choir. Émile Jaques-Dalcroze developed Eurhythmics in the late 19th century to facilitate profound musical learning experiences through mind and body integration. Current literature supports that the three Eurhythmics branches (rhythmics, solfège, and improvisation) can be applied to the choral setting and can impact student engagement, enjoyment, and musical achievement in the choral rehearsal (Butke & Frego, 2021; Daley, 2013). I investigated articles and books published since 1915 to establish a chronology of the origin and pedagogical uses of Eurhythmics in the choral environment. Additionally, I conducted a comparative critical review of seven empirical studies to determine the implications of using Eurhythmics in the choral setting. This critical review provides evidence that Eurhythmics-inspired activities can benefit all stages of the choral rehearsal, including musical and non-musical processes. It is also evident that choral conductors can also apply Eurhythmics to improve their curriculum/rehearsal planning, score study, and gesture.

Keywords

eurhythmics, Émile Jaques-Dalcroze, choir, pedagogy, movement, kinesthetic learning, solfège, improvisation, creativity, active learning

Iddings, L. B. (2024). Dalcroze Eurhythmics: Origin, development, and considerations for the choral program. *Visions of Research in Music Education*, 46, 144-164.

INTRODUCTION

Choral teachers and researchers are frequently called to action out of a desire to enhance teacher pedagogy and students' choral experiences. In response to these efforts, creative pedagogical styles, including those that incorporate movement in the choral setting, have become the topic of many research studies over the last thirty years (Daley, 2013; Hibbard, 1994; Liao & Davidson, 2016b). Kilpatrick (2020) suggested that incorporating movement into the choral rehearsal could have positive effects, including increased student engagement, improved musical achievement, improved executive function and cognitive skills, increased performance skills, and more. While many authors have examined the general use of movement as it relates to the choral setting (e.g., Apfelstadt, 1985; Benson, 2011; Bland, 2017; Briggs, 2020; Galván, 2008; Grady & Cook-Cunningham, 2020; Hibbard, 2013; Jost, 2011; Manganello, 2011; McCoy, 1989; Wis, 1999), fewer have examined a specific movement-based approach, such as Dalcroze Eurhythmics, in relation to the choral setting.

In this literature review, I will focus on Dalcroze Eurhythmics due to its universal influence as the oldest, most comprehensive movement approach in music education (Caldwell, 2012; Liao and Davidson, 2016b; Wis, 1993). Extant literature in the field has positioned the Dalcroze approach as directly applicable to improving choral performance (Butke & Frego, 2021; Caldwell, 2012; Crosby, 2008; Daley, 2012, 2013, 2018; Henke, 1984; Hylton, 2020; Liao & Davidson, 2016a, 2016b; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, 2020; Shenenberger, 2008), suggesting noteworthy implications for Eurhythmics as a teaching tool for choral directors. I will explore these implications by noting the origin and development of Eurhythmics, along with the previous connections made between the Dalcroze approach and the middle/secondary school choral rehearsal, as indicated in the existing research. Furthermore, I will examine and compare research-based evidence that utilizes Dalcroze Eurhythmics as a pragmatic, creative rehearsal tool. Through this inquiry, I aim to determine whether Eurhythmics is a beneficial teaching approach to apply to the choral rehearsal. The information provided through the literature advocates for further exploration into Eurhythmics and its potential to enhance choral teacher pedagogy and invite student engagement, enjoyment, and musical achievement to the choral rehearsal.

METHODS

To explore the origin and development of Dalcroze Eurhythmics, along with its connections to choral music education, I considered the following questions to guide my research:

1. What is Dalcroze Eurhythmics?
2. How has Eurhythmics developed since its inception?
3. How has Eurhythmics been applied in choral music education?
4. What are the implications of using Eurhythmics in middle/ secondary school choral music education?

In pursuing these questions, I searched the keywords “Dalcroze,” “Eurhythmics,” AND “choir or choral or chorus or singing,” along with “history,” “pedagogy,” and “high school/middle school.” The following databases queued an array of literature: ERIC, APAPsych, RILM, JSTOR, ProQuest, EBSCOHost, and Google Scholar. I then expanded my list of relevant literature by browsing my sources’ bibliographies. For this review, I only included the sources written in or translated into English and omitted sources that broadly referenced movement or gesture pedagogy without being Dalcroze-specific. Based on this criteria, 48 sources were selected for inclusion.

Following Hart’s (2018) “Stages for a Literature Review” framework, I created a spreadsheet database of the selected primary and secondary sources to identify and organize my findings. Then, I completed a detailed reading of each source. This initial exploration allowed me to answer my first two research questions, which I will expand upon in the first sections of this paper. Once I developed an understanding of the origin and development of Eurhythmics, I completed a comparative critical review (Wallace & Wray, 2021) of seven relevant studies to answer my third and fourth research questions. These seven sources are the only existing empirical research studies that have examined Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral environment. Therefore, it is valuable to closely compare the findings, claims, and generalizability to other choral contexts to determine the potential of Eurhythmics as a teaching tool.

EURHYTHMICS ORIGIN

Émile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950) was a Swiss pedagogue, composer, conductor, actor, and pianist (Butke & Frego, 2021; Caldwell, 2012; Daley, 2012). In 1892, Jaques-Dalcroze became employed as the professor of harmony and solfège at the Geneva Conservatory, where he became increasingly opposed to the college’s curriculum and teaching approaches (Butke & Frego, 2021; Juntunen, 2002; Shenenberger, 2008). While his students demonstrated technical accuracy in their musical performances, he found that they did not express sensitivity to the nuances of music, and some even struggled to maintain a steady beat (Butke & Frego, 2021; Shenenberger, 2008; Seitz, 2005). Jaques-Dalcroze found their primary deficiencies tied to rhythmic understanding and expression, and he believed these deficits were due to disharmony between the mind and body during their learning process (Juntunen & Westerlund, 2011; Seitz, 2005). These students, who lacked rhythmic capabilities and awareness of musical flow, inspired Jaques-Dalcroze to create a new teaching approach (Daley, 2012).

Jaques-Dalcroze believed he could aid his students’ skill development through special training “designed to regulate nervous reactions and effect a coordination of muscles and nerves; in short, to [harmonize] mind and body” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921, viii). He created rhythmic movement activities, first by asking his students to maintain a steady beat while moving about the room. Jaques-Dalcroze eventually added other elements, allowing his students to creatively experience music through time (pulse,

tempo, duration), space (contour, shape, form), and energy (speed, nuances, articulation) (Butke & Frego, 2021; Le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009).

Through this process, Jaques-Dalcroze believed that he could instill into his students “a sense of rhythm by making use, not of theoretical explanations, but rather of sensorial experiments” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1930a, p. 358). This study of music through movement was initially called *rhythmic gymnastics* (Crosby, 2008) until Jaques-Dalcroze later adopted the term *Eurhythmics*. This term originated from the Greek root ‘eu’ and ‘rythmos,’ which mean ‘good flow,’ and is still used today to describe Jaques-Dalcroze’s teaching approach (Shenenberger, 2008; Dalcroze Society of America, n.d.).

EURHYTHMICS CHARACTERISTICS

Dalcroze education is an interactive process that develops skills in keen listening, music literacy, analysis, performance, improvisation, composition, and pedagogy. It is the combination of music, improvisation, and discovery-based experiential learning that makes this work joyful, inspiring, and profound. (Dalcroze Society of America, n.d.)

Juntunen (2019) posits that Eurhythmics as we know it today could be considered an approach, a process, a philosophy, or a pedagogy. However, it would not be appropriate to describe Eurhythmics as a *method* because it is not a prescriptive step-by-step sequence (Juntunen, 2019). Instead, Jaques-Dalcroze presented Eurhythmics as a guide for teachers and students to implement freely, limited only by the bounds of their creativity (Caldwell, 2012; Juntunen, 2019; Juntunen & Westerlund, 2001).

In their training manual, the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze (IJD) describes Eurhythmics as a student-centered, active learning approach that simultaneously educates the nervous system, the natural rhythms of the body, and the imagination (2009). Jaques-Dalcroze created Eurhythmics based on the philosophy that rhythm is foundational to music, and that rhythmic integrity is vital in all musical endeavors (Apfelstadt, 1985; Butke & Frego, 2021). In a Eurhythmics lesson, students learn music kinesthetically before approaching it intellectually (Anderson, 2011; Butke & Frego, 2021) so they are not distracted from the aural learning process (Juntunen, 2002). Although Dalcroze’s approach has faced criticism for placing too much emphasis on rhythm and body movement (Seitz, 2005), Juntunen (2002) suggests that this primary pillar facilitates students’ abilities to learn through their bodies as their primary instrument.

After developing the rhythmic component of his approach and finding improvement in his students’ musical development, Jaques-Dalcroze expanded Eurhythmics into three branches: rhythmics, solfège, and improvisation (Le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009). These branches are interrelated and interdependent, and Jaques-Dalcroze maintained the importance of teaching the entire Eurhythmics approach by intermingling each branch (Le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009).

RHYTHMICS

Since Jaques-Dalcroze conceived the rhythmics branch first and consecutively added the solfège and improvisation branches, the term Eurhythmics is often misused in reference to the rhythmics branch (Juntunen, 2016). It is essential to clarify that *Eurhythmics* refers to the entire approach and pedagogical philosophy, while *rhythmics* refers to the activities of the first branch (Le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009; Dalcroze Society of America, n.d.). The IJD (2009) provides the following as goals of the rhythmics branch: (1) to refine the body as the primary instrument through music; (2) to develop and refine the musical imagination; (3) to experience and express music through whole-body movement; and (4) to develop musicianship and musical literacy.

Rhythmics lessons combine music with locomotor and non-locomotor movements, and published literature offers an abundance of ideas for applying rhythmics to the choral setting (Apfelstadt, 1985; Bland, 2017; Butke & Frego, 2021; Ehmann, 1968; Hylton, 2020). For instance, singers can step or sway to the beat (Briggs, 2011; Gordon, 1975; Juntunen, 2020; Shenenberger, 2008), perform rhythms with body percussion (Shenenberger, 2008), or use various expressive arm movements to represent the musical phrase (Gordon, 1975). These rhythmic movements combined with singing can help choristers internalize musical concepts as *kinesthetic images* and recall them later when reading, improvising, or performing music (Butke & Frego, 2021; Juntunen, 2016).

Since rhythmics is at the core of Dalcroze education, these techniques also apply to the other branches of Eurhythmics, and furthermore, provide the foundation upon which students can build their aural and improvisation skills. Jaques-Dalcroze (1921) explained this process: “After developing the student’s mental hearing and physical expression of *rhythms*, [they] will proceed to train [their] power of hearing, realizing, and creating musical *sounds in rhythm*” (p. 100, emphasis in original). This aural training component is established in the second Eurhythmics branch, solfège.

SOLFÈGE

Jaques-Dalcroze adapted his solfège pedagogy as the second branch of Eurhythmics to enable students to recognize pitches, intervals, and harmonies and provide coordination between the brain, ear, and larynx (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921). He believed aural skills to be a vital component of musicianship, so he prioritized training the ear as soon as possible after laying a foundational rhythmic understanding (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921). The IJD explains that the goals of Dalcroze solfège are to develop aural abilities, inner hearing, knowledge of relationships between pitches, vocal production, and music literacy (Le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009).

Dalcroze solfège exercises are performed rhythmically, which makes the process unique in comparison to other solfège approaches (Butke & Frego, 2021; Caldwell, 2012; Henke, 1984; Le Collège de l'institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009). Through this process, students in Dalcroze solfège classes are “taught to experience rhythms, intervals,

harmonies, and melodies kinesthetically” (Caldwell, 2012, p. 79). Because of its rhythmic movement integration, the solfège branch is often called *sofège rythmique* in the literature. Butke and Frego (2021) explain that the addition of rhythmic movement while students participate in sight-singing “will add a new dimension to the choral teaching paradigm” and strengthen the students’ understanding of melodic concepts (p. 11).

The traditional Dalcroze solfège approach uses the familiar sol-fa syllables (*Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Ti, Do*) with fixed *Do*, which was the leading process of teaching solfège at the time and place of the theory’s origin (Anderson, 2011). However, many educators today choose to adapt Dalcroze teaching to other modernized music reading systems like movable *Do* solfège, letter names, or numbers (Butke & Frego, 2021; Henke, 1984; Juntunen, 2016; Le Collège de l’institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009).

Henke (1984) expressed that “the choral director who gives serious consideration to the expressed purpose of training in Eurhythmics and solfège rythmique will immediately recognize goals common to those which are appropriate for the musically literate chorister” (p. 11). Dalcroze Eurhythmics addresses music literacy by incorporating solfège with interactive movement, conducting, composition, and improvisation (Le Collège de l’institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009). Jaques-Dalcroze believed that students would gain confidence in their improvisation abilities if their rhythmic and aural abilities were strongly internalized through the first two branches of eurhythmics (Anderson, 2011).

IMPROVISATION

Jaques-Dalcroze referred to the improvisation branch as a “synthesis of all the others” (Jaques-Dalcroze, 1921, p. 104). Eurhythmics advocates for a music education style where the rules of harmony and style are so internalized that students can create music freely without constant referral to the theoretical rules (Anderson, 2011). The IJD lists the goals of improvisation as: (a) to produce movement and vocalizations in imaginative, expressive ways; (b) to improvise in various styles; (c) to enhance the musical memory to remember themes and sequences; and (d) to use improvisation as a dialogue within a group (Le Collège de l’institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009).

Although this branch might seem to be most challenging to successfully implement, The Institute’s reference to improvisatory movement with singing suggests that Dalcroze-inspired improvisation activities can be implemented in the choral setting. For example, a Dalcroze improvisation lesson could include games that help students create music with various structures, styles, and moods (Daley, 2013; Le Collège de l’institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009; Mead, 1986). Participation in improvisation lessons can motivate students to express their ideas, develop awareness and creativity, and build confidence in their musical skills (Caldwell, 2012; Juntunen, 2016). Given the proficiency of rhythmic movement and ear training required for improvisation, it becomes clear that sequentially integrating the three Eurhythmics branches is vital for successful improvisation. Anderson (2011) agreed, “In solfège and improvisation, [Dalcroze] encouraged

students to recall what they had learned through their body during Eurhythmics—the interdependence of time, space, and energy” (p. 27).

PLASTIQUE ANIMÉE

In 1919, Jaques-Dalcroze proposed a new method of musical exploration called *Plastique Animée*, or ‘moving plastic’ (Daley, 2018). *Plastique Animée* is considered an *applied branch* of the Dalcroze approach (Le Collège de l’institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009) because the activities take place at the very end of a Dalcroze lesson sequence as a culmination of all of the skills learned (Daley, 2018). In a *Plastique Animée* lesson, the students spontaneously create an interactive composition with the music (Butke & Frego, 2021), which includes physical movements to represent the pitch, harmony, rhythm, form, timbre, articulation, or dynamics (Daley, 2018). These movements are not meant to be applied as choreography but should “emanate directly from the musical movement in the score” (Daley, 2018, p. 27).

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION

While Jaques-Dalcroze created Eurhythmics to improve his students’ musical abilities, his philosophy equally embraced the learner’s physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development (Juntunen, 2002; Le Collège de l’institut Jaques-Dalcroze, 2009). On this topic, Jaques-Dalcroze (1915) stated:

All modern educationalists are agreed that the first step in a child’s education should be to teach him to know himself, to accustom him to life and to awaken in him sensations, feelings, and emotions... In music, unfortunately the same rule does not hold. Young people are taught to play the compositions of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, before their minds and ears can grasp these works, before they have developed the faculty of being moved by them. (p. 7)

Jaques-Dalcroze’s holistic, experiential music learning approach was ahead of his time (Juntunen, 2019), which caused Eurhythmics to face criticism during its development and dissemination. The early controversy over Jaques-Dalcroze’s experimental teaching and learning approach caused him to leave Geneva in the early 1900s and establish an institute for rhythmic study in Hellerau, Germany (Butke & Frego, 2021; Caldwell, 2012; Jacobi, 2016). The first Eurhythmics course for classroom music teachers was offered in 1906, and soon after, Jaques-Dalcroze began leading performance demonstrations around Europe to help circulate his pedagogy (Caldwell, 2012; Campbell, 1991; Jacobi, 2016; Mead, 1986).

The Hellerau Institute closed at the beginning of World War One, and Jaques-Dalcroze founded the Institut Jaques-Dalcroze (IJD) in Geneva in 1915. The IJD still exists today and holds the primary authority of disseminating the Dalcroze approach through training centers worldwide. The Institute’s development, alongside ongoing performance demonstrations, played vital roles in the spread of Eurhythmics to the United States.

AMERICAN MUSIC EDUCATION AND EURHYTHMICS

American educators gained access to Eurhythmics through European travel and general interest magazines, such as *Good Housekeeping* and *Literary Digest*, as early as 1911 (Campbell, 1991). Beginning in 1913, Placido de Montoliu, a previous assistant to Jaques-Dalcroze at Hellerau, was documented as one of the first Eurhythmics instructors in an American school. Montoliu's influence over Eurhythmics education in the United States is significant, as he is "arguably one of the closest possible correspondents to Jaques-Dalcroze whose work we are able to study through American records" (Jacobi, 2016, p. 109).

Jaques-Dalcroze's seminal writings were translated into English by 1920, making Eurhythmics more accessible for Americans; however, at this time, many American music supervisors still viewed Eurhythmics as a *progressive* educational philosophy (Campbell, 1991; Jacobi, 2016). Campbell (1991) explained that these turn-of-the-century music supervisors were traditionalists who rejected Eurhythmics for other pedagogical techniques that approached music intellectually. As the Deweyan child-centered education model continued to gain a foothold in American education, Eurhythmics was finally included in the Music Educator's National Conference 1936 Standard Course of Study (Campbell, 1991).

CHORAL DEVELOPMENTS

After gaining curricular validation in 1936, almost two more decades passed before choral directors purportedly used Eurhythmics as a rehearsal tool. Benson (2011) reports that choral directors have used movement pedagogy since the 1950s to apply Jaques-Dalcroze's work in the rehearsal setting. Shenenberger (2008) specifically recognizes Robert Fountain and Lawrence Doebler as early advocates for bringing Dalcroze-inspired pedagogy into the choral rehearsal at Oberlin College and Ithaca College, respectively. While the early developments of Eurhythmics in the choral setting are difficult to trace in the literature, more material was published in the latter part of the 20th century, marking increased popularity of the approach.

For instance, Wilhelm Ehmann's (1968) book *Choral Directing* provides a Dalcroze-inspired perspective of choral directing and includes dedicated chapters to body movement and rhythmic training in the rehearsal. The original German version, *Die Chorführung, Bd. 2, Das künstlerische Singen*, was first published in 1949 and is possibly the earliest published work that relates Dalcroze principles to choral music. Years later, in 1975, Lewis W. Gordon wrote the first *Choral Journal* article promoting Eurhythmics, and then the following decades encompassed a surge of scholarly publications connecting Dalcroze Eurhythmics and Choral Music Education (Apfelstadt, 1985; Crosby, 2008; Daley, 2012; Henke, 1984; McCoy, 1994; Mead, 1986; Shenenberger, 2008). The most recent comprehensive guide on this topic, *Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the Choral Classroom*, was written by Butke and Frego in 2021, suggesting that this topic continues to be a matter of interest among the choral community. Each of these sources attest to using

Eurhythmics-inspired exercises and games in the choral setting to reinforce student engagement, enjoyment, and musical achievement (Apfelstadt, 1985; Butke & Frego, 2021; Crosby, 2008; Daley, 2012, 2018; Ehmann, 1968; Gordon, 1975; Henke, 1984; McCoy, 1994; Mead, 1986; Shenenberger, 2008).

While generations of authors have claimed that Eurhythmics can provide countless musical and non-musical benefits to the choral rehearsal, little research-based evidence has been presented until the past decade. Daley (2013) suggested that more research is needed on “how choral conductors integrate Dalcroze pedagogical sequencing and which aspects of the Dalcroze methodology (eurhythmics, solfège, improvisation, *plastique animée*) are most often incorporated” (p. 33). This opinion is evidenced by a comprehensive literature search only queuing seven previous research studies examining Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral setting. It is necessary to explore the existing research and compare their findings to determine whether Eurhythmics actually brings these benefits to choristers and choral conductors.

COMPARATIVE REVIEW OF SEVEN STUDIES

To scrutinize the current research and determine whether noteworthy validation exists for the benefits claimed about Eurhythmics in the choral setting, I conducted a Comparative Critical Review of seven empirical studies, according to Wallace and Wray’s (2021) framework. This process incorporates a detailed comparison between various sources, including their purposes, claims, and applicability to other contexts. This review provided vital information for answering my third and fourth research questions, “How has Eurhythmics been applied in choral music education?” and “What are the implications of using Eurhythmics in choral music education?” By analyzing research-based data from these seven studies, I could compare their emergent themes, which supported the benefits that Eurhythmics can bring to the choral setting.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDIES

Daley (2013), Hibbard (1994), Hylton (2020), Liao and Davidson (2016a, 2016b), and Pretorius and van der Merwe (2019, 2020) are the only research studies that have examined Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral setting to date. Accordingly, I selected these studies for inclusion in this comparative review. Studies by Benson (2011), Grady and Cook-Cunningham (2020), McCoy (1989), and Wis (1993) are frequently referenced as notable contributors to movement pedagogy in choral music education. However, they will not be included in this comparison because although their movement exercises resemble Dalcroze principles, these studies do not explicitly examine Eurhythmics in the choral setting.

The selected studies were conducted with various choirs, including an age range of primary school to adult participants, and in multiple countries (Canada, South Africa, Sweden, Taiwan, and the United States). The selected studies also applied various methodologies and methods, including five studies that were conducted qualitatively (Daley,

2013; Hibbard, 1994; Hylton, 2020; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, 2020), and two that were conducted quantitatively (Liao & Davidson, 2016a, 2016b). While each researcher took different approaches, they all developed their studies to examine the role that Dalcroze Eurhythmics played in various aspects of choral teacher pedagogy and student engagement, enjoyment, and musical achievement in the choral rehearsal.

First, Hibbard (1994) qualitatively analyzed an exemplary conductor and his integration of Dalcroze-inspired pedagogy. Through this study, Hibbard aimed to examine the conductor's use of bodily movement as an instructional technique to improve choristers' vocal production, musical expression, and comprehension of musical techniques. Second, Daley's (2013) study is the most comprehensive research that has been conducted so far on the topic, as she interviewed multiple Dalcroze master teachers and choral conductors with Dalcroze training. Daley investigated the applications of Eurhythmics to the choral context, including how the Dalcroze approach "shapes the philosophical, pedagogical, and musical outcomes of choral pedagogy and practice" (p. 4). Next, Hylton (2020) took a unique approach to her study. Instead of observing or interviewing other teachers, she created her own Dalcroze-inspired choral curriculum and embodied the role of conductor-researcher to conduct her study. Stating Daley's (2013) work inspired her process, Hylton's (2020) goal was to examine the use and applicability of Eurhythmics as an approach to teaching choral music from the Renaissance era.

The two quantitative studies by Liao and Davidson (2016a, 2016b) contrasted the other five studies and were much more limited in scope. The study entitled "The Effects of Gesture and Movement Training on the Intonation of Children's Singing in Vocal Warm-up Sessions" examined the effects of specific Dalcroze-based gesture techniques and movement training for beginning children's choirs to develop good intonation (Liao & Davidson, 2016a). Liao and Davidson's (2016b) other study, "Enhancing Gesture Quality in Young Singers," measured the effect of Dalcroze-based movement training on improving singers' gesture quality. For both of these studies, Liao and Davidson conducted a Pre-Test/Post-Test experiment with a control group and measured their data with the Singing Voice Development Measure.

The last two studies that I examined were conducted by Pretorius and van der Merwe (2019, 2020). The initial research was conducted with a Swedish adult choir to "explore the extent to which Dalcroze-inspired activities can facilitate collective learning in a Swedish choir as a community of musical practice (CoMP)" (Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, p.582). This study was inspired by the Swedish choral singing culture and the perceived role that Dalcroze training has played in the Swedish music education system. The same authors later replicated the study with a South African High School Choir (Pretorius and van der Merwe, 2020). The authors hoped to contribute to the field with their sociological approach by suggesting how to implement collective learning within the choral community.

COMPARING RESULTS

The authors of all seven studies claimed numerous noteworthy benefits that Dalcroze Eurhythmics can provide for the choral rehearsal. For instance, Daley's (2013) participants reported that the Dalcroze approach could serve three main purposes in the choral context: (1) to develop choral skills, (2) to prepare the whole body for accurate and expressive choral performance, and (3) to develop non-musical outcomes that support choral conducting and singing. While the other six studies explored Eurhythmics in various ways, they likewise reported positive musical and non-musical outcomes from their experiences, which is unsurprising since Dalcroze Eurhythmics claims to be a holistic learning approach. Numerous themes overlapped between the various studies, so it is most sensible to organize and present the outcomes of these studies in two categories: (1) Musical Outcomes/Benefits and (2) Non-Musical Outcomes/Benefits.

MUSICAL OUTCOMES/ BENEFITS

The most cited musical outcome of Dalcroze participation in the choral setting was *enhanced coordination/ kinesthetic skills* (Daley, 2013; Hibbard, 1994; Liao & Davidson, 2016b; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, 2020). While Hibbard (1994), Daley (2013), and Pretorius and van der Merwe (2019, 2020) all came to this theme as a by-product of observations or interviews, Liao and Davidson (2016b) specifically studied whether Eurhythmics training could enhance singer kinesthetic skills (2016b). Their experimental results established that students who received Dalcroze-based training achieved higher body efficiency, mastery of gesture technique, coordination of voice and gesture, and overall gesture quality. Perhaps this frequent theme appeared because "the body and music mutually educate one another" in Dalcroze Eurhythmics (Daley, 2013, p. 55). This prevalent theme is consistent with Jaques-Dalcroze's philosophy of learning through mind-body integration and indicates that his goals from over a century ago are still relevant.

The compared studies also referenced an improvement in *musical expressiveness* (Daley, 2013; Hibbard, 1994; Hylton, 2020), *musical understanding* (Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, 2020), *aural skills* (Daley, 2013; Hylton, 2020), and *music literacy* (Daley, 2013; Hylton, 2020). Hylton's (2020) finding of enhanced music literacy is notable, as she is the only researcher who created a Dalcroze-inspired curriculum to address a specific choral style. Her study focused on grounding students in Renaissance musical traditions through Eurhythmics activities, and after a series of lessons, her students successfully understood and performed these musical nuances in response to their embodied experiences. This finding suggests that the same process could address literacy in other choral styles and traditions. Additionally, this study conveys a real-life scenario to Jaques-Dalcroze's philosophy that experiential learning should precede theoretical learning.

Researchers also noted an increase in *vocal skills*, such as resonance (Hibbard, 1994), breathing techniques (Hibbard, 1994; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2020), and the

development of a natural, tension-free singing technique (Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2020). Additionally, through statistical analysis, Liao and Davidson (2016a) found that their participants who received Dalcroze-based gesture and movement training made more significant improvements in *intonation* than those who did not. Other themes of *creativity* (Daley, 2013) and *rhythmic skills* (Hylton, 2020) also emerged from Dalcroze integration into the choral rehearsal. Considering the entire Dalcroze approach is built on the foundation of rhythm, it is seemingly incongruent for only one study to suggest an increase in rhythmic skills due to Dalcroze participation. However, while rhythmic skills were not considered a primary theme of their study, two participants of Pretorius and van der Merwe's (2019) study reported experiencing improved rhythmic precision and metric internalization.

NON-MUSICAL OUTCOMES/ BENEFITS

Regarding the non-musical outcomes offered by Eurhythmics, Jaques-Dalcroze (1930a) stated: "Education by rhythm is calculated not simply to develop the aesthetic sense—as so many think—but above all to mould [sic] the child's character, to give him courage and make him in love with life" (p. 365). These benefits are all reflected in recent studies. For instance, *enjoyment* (Daley, 2013; Hylton, 2020; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019), *self-confidence/ self-awareness* (Daley, 2013; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, 2020), and *risk-taking* (Daley, 2013; Hylton, 2020) were all cited as benefits of Dalcroze activities in the choral environment, over eighty years after Dalcroze made this statement. On these themes, one of Pretorius and van der Merwe's (2019) participants shared that her experience with Dalcroze-inspired activities in chorus allowed her "to just let go... and just trust that the others will take care of you and love you anyway" (p. 590).

Among these studies, the most prominent non-musical theme I encountered was that participants experienced *social cohesion and teamwork* from their Eurhythmics activities (Daley, 2013; Hibbard, 1994; Hylton, 2020; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, 2020). Pretorius and van der Merwe (2019, 2020) provided a unique perspective on this topic because they are the only researchers to date who have examined Eurhythmics within a choir situated as a Community of Musical Practice (CoMP). The authors defined a CoMP as a "group of people (choristers) who share a concern or a passion for something they do (choir singing) and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly during rehearsals and performances" (Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, p. 583). They posited that the CoMP environment aligns with the Dalcroze-inspired music rehearsal because of the collaborative learning inherent in the Dalcroze approach. Through intensive qualitative inquiry, Pretorius and van der Merwe (2019, 2020) found in both studies that Dalcroze-inspired activities nurtured an environment of collective learning and growth in the choir as a CoMP. Perhaps a by-product of these collaborative learning experiences, Pretorius and van der Merwe's (2019) study also reported an *enhanced learning environment* due to Eurhythmics study.

Another prominent theme between multiple studies was increased *engagement/focus* (Daley, 2013; Hibbard, 1994; Hylton, 2020; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2020). Hylton (2020) reported an observation that her students were intensely engaged in each Eurhythmics activity, as their body language and faces expressed active listening and focused participation. Likely attributed to increased engagement in the rehearsal, other non-musical themes that were presented in the seven studies were an *emotional connection to music* (Pretorius & van der Merwe 2019, 2020), *multi-modal learning* (Hibbard, 1994), and *enhanced cognition* (Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2020).

DISCUSSION OF THE STUDIES

Each of the seven studies presented convincing claims for using Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral setting. Daley's (2013) study provided the most comprehensive examination of this topic and seemed to spearhead much of the research that has taken place in the last decade. However, as compelling as Daley's research was, the studies where the researchers fulfilled more of a participant-observer role with the choir presented more persuasive evidence for the practicality of choral directors implementing Eurhythmics as a rehearsal tool. First, Pretorius was the chorus conductor in her and van der Merwe's 2020 study, which made her a participant-observer. Likewise, Hylton (2020) explained her role as the participant-researcher, taking the role of the conductor. By creating and implementing her own curriculum and observing and collecting data, Hylton's study provides a convincing account of how choral directors can integrate Eurhythmics within their rehearsal space.

Daley (2013) suggested that Dalcroze, being an experiential learning approach, was most appropriately studied through qualitative measures. However, Liao and Davidson (2016a, 2016b) used quantitative methods to reach favorable conclusions about using Eurhythmics training with singing groups. When comparing the seven studies for this review, it became clear that the qualitative studies resulted in a broader range of themes, while these two quantitative studies maintained a tighter focus on measuring one specific theme. Nevertheless, Liao and Davidson's results of improved intonation (2016a) and kinesthetic skills (2016b) provided justification for further quantitative research on Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral rehearsal.

The other qualitative studies conceived of their themes inductively through data analysis. While these studies organized their data to represent a wide variety of musical and non-musical themes, it is valid to revisit the idea that growth in rhythmic skills was not overwhelmingly prevalent in these studies. This inconsistency brings about a thought-provoking question: Is the foundational rhythmic movement of Dalcroze Eurhythmics a means or an end? In other words, is Dalcroze-based rhythmic movement the means by which participants can achieve growth in other areas? Or, can Dalcroze Eurhythmics provoke growth in rhythmic skills due to its foundational nature in the approach? On this topic, Jaques-Dalcroze himself stated: "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” (1930b, p. 116). This quandary is not one that can be solved by mere speculation but should be explored through future research that is designed to measure rhythmic skills in relation to Eurhythmics participation.

While the results of these seven studies are otherwise fundamentally consistent with Dalcroze philosophy and have multiple assertions for their success, the authors also mentioned a caveat to Eurhythmics’s success. Hibbard (1994) claimed that movement seems to be an effective pedagogical technique with choral singers when the following qualifications are met: (a) specific movements are developed that successfully express the interpretational purposes intended by the conductor, (b) they promote rehearsal efficiency and increase time on task, (c) they provide a sense of nonverbal communication on the expressive musical elements, (d) they increase the learning process by employing multimodal instruction, and (e) they are properly performed by the majority of singers.

Daley’s (2013) interviewees presented an opinion in the same vein, claiming that “unmusical movement will result in unmusical choral singing” (p. 69). To avoid this situation, Daley suggested refining the quality of movement first, then associating the gesture with the desired vocal sound. Liao and Davidson (2016b) corroborated these claims about the importance of gesture quality and suggested that a Dalcroze education can enhance gesture effectiveness and expressivity. Considering this limitation, the reviewed studies provide evidence that when properly approached, Eurhythmics-inspired activities can benefit the choral rehearsal both musically and non-musically.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CHORAL MUSIC EDUCATION

If the whole body is the instrument of the choral ensemble, then the ear is as much the instrument as the voice, the voice as much as the heart, and the actions of the toes just might impact the choral sound. Through the engagement of the whole body, Dalcroze techniques promote a teaching and learning environment where expressive and engaging music-making can occur from the first rehearsal all the way to the concert stage. (Daley, 2012, p. 48)

As Daley (2012) claimed, Dalcroze Eurhythmics has potential implications for all stages of the choral rehearsal process. By comparing the seven empirical studies, I determined that Eurhythmics can have positive musical implications (enhanced coordination/kinesthetic skills, expressiveness, understanding, aural skills, music literacy, vocal skills, intonation, creativity, and rhythmic skills) and non-musical implications (enjoyment, self-confidence/self-awareness, risk-taking, social cohesion/teamwork, engagement/focus, emotional connection, multimodal learning, cognition, and an enhanced learning environment) for the choral rehearsal process. In addition to these learning outcomes, the literature provides clear connections to student kinesthetic learning, collaborative learning, and conductor preparation.

First, Eurhythmics provides kinesthetic learning in the choral setting, which supports multimodal learning and musical memory (Liao & Davidson, 2016a). Liao and

Davidson (2016a) suggested that gesture in the choral rehearsal impacts the cognitive processes and execution of vocalization: “Something experienced in the body, through a gesture or movement, is therefore stored in the memory and internalized so that it can be drawn upon at a later time, recalling the physical sensation without the individual actually having to make the gesture” (p. 6). This idea, which other authors term the “kinesthetic imagination” (Juntunen, 2002), “movement vocabulary” (Daley, 2013), or “kinesthetic images” (Mead, 1986) strongly connects Eurhythmics with choral music, especially considering the implication that students could recall a motor memory formed in rehearsal during a performance. On this topic, Shenenberger (2008) explained that using Eurhythmics in the choir rehearsal provides students with an aural memory, a kinesthetic memory, and a visual memory of the music performed.

Second, Eurhythmics is intended to be a collaborative learning experience, providing a clear connection to the choral ensemble. Daley (2013) explained that the incorporation of Dalcroze practices in the choral rehearsal can give conductors and choirs the means to achieve their musical goals with a “sense of corporate awareness and teamwork” (p. 54). Eurhythmics activities facilitate social engagement and a heightened sense of community, while learning occurs through the students’ interactions (Kilpatrick, 2020; Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2019, 2020). Through these social interactions, students have the opportunity to navigate social roles and find their identity within the group dynamic (Pretorius & van der Merwe, 2020).

Last, authors have advocated for Eurhythmics to enhance conductor practices, including gesture, score study, and curriculum/rehearsal planning (Daley, 2013, 2018; McCoy, 1994; Shenenberger, 2008). McCoy (1994) credited Eurhythmics training with helping choral conductors internalize, embody, and communicate music more clearly. For instance, conductors can incorporate the movements from Eurhythmics lessons into their conducting pattern (Hibbard, 1994), enabling students to recall kinesthetic images while on stage during a performance. Ehmman (1968) believed that in doing this, “The choir director should imagine himself [or herself] as the leader of the dance” (p. 78).

Shenenberger (2008) posited that conductors who ascribe to the Dalcroze approach would look at the entire choral rehearsal process in a backward order. She stated that they may first approach the repertoire by aurally perceiving the musical essence of the piece before consulting the printed page. Daley’s (2018) writing on this matter is the most detailed account of how to conduct an aural, body-based score study. Daley (2018) suggested bringing *Plastique Animée* into score study since it allows the conductor to experience their score as an immersive musical encounter instead of only an intellectual project. Following Daley’s process outlined in her 2018 article, Hylton (2020) completed a similar score study process, noting an enhanced connection to personal musical interpretation and memorization.

However plentiful the evidence is for Eurhythmics as a positive asset to the choral setting, the choral conductor cannot assume Eurhythmics as an immediate pedagogical solution. Eurhythmics alone will not solve a teacher's misunderstanding of vocal technique or serve as a substitute for score analysis. Rather, Juntunen (2019) urges teachers to realize that the quality of music learning through Eurhythmics is entirely dependent on the teachers' personal musicianship and intentional use of quality lessons. While it may be challenging to transition to a Eurhythmics-integrated rehearsal initially, Henke (1984) encouraged directors not to underestimate the powerful impact that Eurhythmics can have on one's conducting abilities and the chorister's overall experience if approached with care. Research has provided evidence that through Eurhythmics experiences, students can grow in various musical and non-musical skills by learning kinesthetically and collaboratively. These implications for students' personal and musical development support Eurhythmics as an asset to the choral rehearsal environment.

CONCLUSION

Dalcroze Eurhythmics has a rich history of providing joyful, meaningful learning experiences for students across the world. The literature examined for this review validates both the benefits and practicality of applying Dalcroze Eurhythmics to choral music education. Recent research studies have found musical and non-musical advantages from implementing Eurhythmics exercises and games into the rehearsal, and many authors have provided examples for teachers who wish to begin exploring Eurhythmics in their rehearsals. The three branches of rhythmics, solfège, and improvisation create a breadth of learning opportunities to enhance chorister engagement, enjoyment, and holistic musicianship. Additionally, the three branches correspond to the National Core Arts Standards of Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting, solidifying Eurhythmics's place as a curricular integration.

Teachers who wish to begin exploring the benefits that Eurhythmics activities can provide for their choir are suggested to start with Jaques-Dalcroze's primary works (1915, 1921, 1930a, 1930b), Butke and Frego's *Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the Choral Classroom*, and the instructional DVD series *Dalcroze Eurhythmics* with Robert Abramson (Caldwell, 2007). Additionally, considering that Eurhythmics is an experiential learning process, teachers who wish to formally integrate Eurhythmics practices into their rehearsals should experience it personally during an in-person training session. Dalcroze Eurhythmics training is offered in twenty-one locations worldwide, with eight locations in the United States (Institut Jaques-Dalcroze, n.d.).

The literature analyzed for this paper suggests that the ground is fertile for future research on Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral setting. Additionally, more data is needed to provide further support for its success. Other studies have indicated the benefits of Eurhythmics practices for general music (Ginman et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2021; Juntunen, 2020; Sutela et al., 2021; van der Merwe, 2015) and instrumental music (Daly,

2022; Wentick and van der Merwe, 2020), and their results suggest positive implications for choral music education if researchers are to replicate the studies in a choral setting.

Although the incorporation of Eurhythmics in the choral setting is a newer area of research, the connections made over the last decade are promising for a bright future. Generations of choral educators and researchers have laid the foundation for the relevance and effectiveness of Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral setting. It seems that even after a century, there is still much to discover about all Eurhythmics offers to choral music education. While it may be daunting to begin the process, the possibilities in this field are endless once teachers and researchers continue to forge the path that a few brave researchers have already started clearing.

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