

Learning Ornament Signs through Transcriptions of Malaysian Folk Songs in an Applied Music Course

Violetta Ayderova, Wong Huey Yi @ Colleen Wong, Christine Augustine, Suflan Faidzal Arshad

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i5/7209>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i5/7209

Received: 07 March 2020, **Revised:** 12 April 2020, **Accepted:** 29 April 2020

Published Online: 18 May 2020

In-Text Citation: (Ayderova et al., 2020)

To Cite this Article: Ayderova, V., Wong, W. H. Y. @ C., Augustine, C., & Arshad, S. F. (2020). Learning Ornament Signs through Transcriptions of Malaysian Folk Songs in an Applied Music Course. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10(5), 381–393.

Copyright: © 2020 The Author(s)

Published by Human Resource Management Academic Research Society (www.hrmars.com)

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this license may be seen

at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>

Vol. 10, No. 5, 2020, Pg. 381 - 393

<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/IJARBSS>

JOURNAL HOMEPAGE

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/publication-ethics>

Learning Ornament Signs through Transcriptions of Malaysian Folk Songs in an Applied Music Course

Violetta Ayderova, Wong Huey Yi @ Colleen Wong, Christine Augustine, Suflan Faidzal Arshad.

Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia

Abstract

The goal of this study was to investigate intermediate-level viola students' achievements in learning ornament signs using transcriptions of Malaysian folk songs and accompanied exercises for the intermediate viola level. Six Malay, two Chinese and one Indian-Tamil folk songs with incorporated acciaccatura, mordent, trill, glissando, and tremolo Western ornament signs were transcribed and utilised in an Applied Music course as an equivalent supplement to the international educational repertoire. Twelve viola students from the Applied Music course at the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts of the Sultan Idris Education University participated in the study over the course of one semester. The quantitative research method employed the ADDIE model for data collection. The results obtained from the observations during individual lessons and questionnaires indicated that students preferred to learn ornament signs after an audio-visual demonstration. No significant difference was revealed in the students' learning achievements regarding ornament signs except for challenges in sight-reading transcriptions. By learning folk songs, students will develop playing and expressive skills faster. Thus, learning ornament signs through the embellishment of folk songs will strengthen students' skills in reading and executing the ornament signs and help students improve their expressive sense while performing.

Keywords: Folk Songs Transcriptions, Viola Intermediate Level, Ornament Signs, Music Education.

Introduction

Typically, folk songs include various types of embellishments implemented by the singer or composer to express emotions. In 16th century to mid-18th century Europe, ornaments, or grace, were considered parts of improvisation. Scores for classical music were written with ornament signs to indicate varied expressions, with the expectation that the musician had previously learned the separately provided ornament table and was therefore aware of the meaning in order to be able to execute each sign (Wilson, 2011). In contrast, transcriptions of folk songs in Western notation usually displayed a simplified melody without indications of precise ornament signs, leaving any embellishments up to the performer's taste.

A similar approach was seen in the transcriptions of Malaysian folk songs, where the embellishments were not or minimally indicated. At this point in time, folk songs were generally taught in 'oral plus demonstrate' form, and the teacher used their experienced view to add various embellishments to the simple transcribed melody. Over the centuries, Malaysian folk songs have been influenced by and intertwined with multicultural and intercultural music (Irving, 2014). Kartomi described how the Portuguese brought and introduced diverse music genres and ornaments to Malay coastal people in the 16th century (Kartomi, 2012, as cited in Irving, 2014, p. 206). As a result, in subsequent centuries, Malaysian folk songs were adapted to include a wide range of mixed musical elements and began to sound familiar to Western peoples (Irving, 2014).

In the European context, a folk song is a traditional song belonging to people from a particular region (Folk music, 2019) that is passed down through memories and remains a tradition for many generations (Nikolouse, 2018). It is often the work of an unknown musician that has been adapted to the folk culture of the community. Folk songs are transmitted to friends and relatives but not to schools or institutions (Nettl, 2017). Folk songs generally have different versions depending on the nation or community (Folk song, 2019). However, in Malaysia, according to the view set forth by Doraisamy et al. (2008, p. 332), traditional songs are made up of variations of a repeated verse, whereas folk songs include both verse and chorus.

Historically, the widespread practice of creating transcriptions from composers' works or folk songs into Western notation as ethnographic artefacts for different instruments (mostly for pianoforte) began in the 19th century (Irving, 2014; Miller-Kay, 2018; Teopini Terzetti Casagrande, 2019). Music transcriptions of that time were used to transmit new knowledge, culture, education, music appreciation, and entertainment, similar to the use of video recorders. Transcriptions are necessary for a viola player in transitioning to a solo instrument. Over the centuries, transcriptions have been arranged by composers, such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Ludwig van Beethoven, Johannes Brahms, and Lilian Fuchs, and by prominent violists of the 20th century, such as Lionel Tertis, William Primrose, Paul Doctor, and Milton Katims (Kurys, 2016). Tertis further stated that all viola players must enrich the viola repertoire by transcribing suitable works (Tertis, 1974, as cited in Kurys, 2016, p. 17).

In Malaysia, the Western classical repertoire pieces offered for intermediate viola level occasionally include ornament signs (such as mordent, trill, grace note, and acciaccatura) with no explanations on how to interpret or execute them. Generally, students learn the ornament signs in theory classes. However, during viola classes, students may have a hard time recalling and performing a given sign. As such, Malaysian folk songs were chosen as the medium to facilitate the learning of the ornament signs following the philosophy of prominent composers and educators, such as Shinichi Suzuki, Zoltán Kodály, Béla Bartók, and Ruth Crawford Seeger. These composers and educators implemented folk songs for the fundamental education of students in developing musical skills, such as the ability to play composed works (Howe, 1995; Suchoff, 1961; Watts & Campbell, 2008). This is the approach taken at the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Sultan Idris Education University.

This study aims to investigate intermediate-level viola students' achievements in learning the basic Western ornament signs (mordent, acciaccatura, trill, grace note, and glissando) from transcriptions of Malaysian folk songs. This study was carried out at the Instrumental Department of the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Sultan Idris Education University, where students learn how to play instruments through the Applied Music course. This course includes students with little or no experience of playing an instrument. It is taken by adult students, 18 years old and above, who want

to start learning an instrument. The Faculty strategy is to teach students in four semesters (Applied Music course – I, II, III, IV) to play different genres of music by mixing syllabi repertoire of Western classical with Malaysian traditional or folk music. Students taking the Applied Music-II course are considered intermediate-level viola.

Specifically, the folk song repertoire used for the Applied Music-II course contained Malay, Chinese, and Indian-Tamil folk songs that are designed to be equal to the international boards' repertoire. The well-known syllabi of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), United Kingdom, Trinity College London (TCL), United Kingdom, and the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM), Canada, were analysed to determine the general requirements of intermediate viola proficiency. At intermediate-level viola or grades three and four, students needed to be able to read ornament signs, shift between the first and the third positions on the fingerboard, and play complicated rhythmic patterns. To meet these requirements, exercises in Applied Music-II include practising the notated form of ornament signs, repetition of shifts between positions, and playing complex excerpts from folk songs. In addition to the viola transcriptions, a piano accompaniment score was created.

Method

Twelve viola students from the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts of the Sultan Idris Education University participated in the study. The students were invited directly and confirmed their participation verbally. Written consent was not required as all of the participants were above 18 years of age. The study was carried out across one semester. Viola students from the Diploma (n=6) and Degree (n=6) programs in Applied Music-II (intermediate level) were offered instruction in the ornament signs using the trial version of the exercise and folk song transcriptions.

Study Model

To evaluate the learning of ornament signs based on the learning material for intermediate-level viola using Malaysian folk songs, the ADDIE (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation) model was used (Branch, 2010).

Analysis Stage

The purpose of the *Analysis* stage was two-fold: 1) to investigate the existing types of embellishments appropriate for conversion to Western notation ornament signs in Malaysian folk songs from the main ethnic groups (Malay, Chinese, and Indian) living in Malaysia; and 2) to determine the requirements for intermediate-level viola from well-known international syllabi. Consequently, the folk songs were chosen according to the existing embellishments that can be transformed into Western ornament types such as mordent, acciaccatura, trill, grace note, and glissando. The well-known syllabi of the ABRSM, TCL, and the RCM were analysed to determine the general requirements of intermediate viola proficiency in reference to the Western classical repertoire. The classical and folk song pieces from grades three and four were considered for their existing ornament types, with additional requirements (e.g., shifts between positions on the fingerboard and playing of complicated rhythmic patterns) applied for the intermediate level.

The pieces listed in the syllabi were analysed from the following books: *More time pieces for viola: Volumes 1 & 2* (Lamb & Meredith, 2015); *Time pieces for viola: Volumes 1 & 2* (Bass & Harris, 2002); *First repertoire for viola: Books 2 & 3* (Wilkinson & Hart, 1992); *Viola level 3* (Rapoport &

Sherwood, 2013); *Solos for young violists: Volumes 1, 3, & 4* (Barber, 2004); and *Suzuki Viola School: Volumes 1, 2, & 3*, revised edition (Suzuki, 2009). In addition, *Malay folksongs from Malaysia for voice and piano* (Greeve, 2018) and *Baba Nyonya Musical Moments* (Yeo, 2018), both recently published in Malaysia, were reviewed as additional material.

Design Stage

The *Design* stage consisted of transcribing the chosen folk songs into the alto clef, suitable tonality, and octave range, and converting the embellishments into ornament signs. Six Malay, two Chinese and one Indian-Tamil folk songs, all well-known and recognisable in Malaysia, were chosen to fulfil the requirements of the international syllabi. Likewise, the questionnaire was designed for further data collection of the students' achievements.

Development Stage

The *Development* stage involved the creation of technical exercises for each chosen folk song, constructed with a focus on notated explanations for learning ornament signs, mastering the problematic excerpts, and shifting between the first and third positions. Questions regarding the learning experience and usefulness were also added to the questionnaire.

Implementation Stage

The *Implementation* stage engaged the twelve viola students who volunteered for the trial and post-trial processes of learning and performing the pilot version of exercises and transcriptions. During the semester, the students learnt ornament signs through the exercises and folk song transcriptions, both in individual lessons guided by the teacher and through independent practice. After the completion of the learning period, the students were given the opportunity to perform a transcribed folk song at the faculty weekly concert practice. Additionally, the string educators were invited to examine the compiled set of exercises and transcriptions.

Evaluation Stage

The *Evaluation* stage of data collection had two components: 1) a formative evaluation characterised by the observation of the students' learning growth charting how they turned weaknesses to strengths; and 2) a summative evaluation that yielded data from the opinions of experts on the value of the proposed educational material together with a questionnaire answered by students on their experience of learning the trial material.

Folk Songs

Students were required to analyse and study the meanings and histories of the folk songs before playing them in the concert performance. Across the 13 states of Malaysia, the Malay ethnic group had various folk songs, each of which highlighted a particular region, but for the Chinese and Tamil population, most of their folksongs were brought over from China and India, respectively, over the centuries. For the students to be able to express the correct emotions while performing, it is necessary to know the origin and history of each folk song so as to create an image of the song. To do this, the synopses of nine folk songs were collected as follows.

The Dabus (A sharp spear), a folk song and dance, mainly represents the state of Perak, although it originated in Sumatra, Indonesia, and was brought to the village district of Pasir Panjang, Perak, as

a martial art (Emily, 2014). The content of *The Dabus* describes heroism in the form of spiritual protection from enemies, fending off attacks, and forcing enemies to flee. During the dance, the dancers hold sharp spears and make movements mimicking the stabbing of their own body and the piercing their own forearms (Sulong et al., 2013, p. 80).

Anak Bocek (Child-fish) symbolises the state of Negeri Sembilan and is sung in the Minang dialect. The song is about a boy who begged his strict parents for bananas but was refused. The boy was disappointed and decided to leave his parents and his home. He jumped into a river and changed into a fish. His parents felt guilty and went to the river to try to find their son. They brought various types of bananas to the riverside in the hope that he would return, but it was too late (R. Zaidi, personal communication, July 10, 2019).

Watimang Landak (Love to Landak) originated in the Hulu Dungun village of Terengganu state. According to Ramli Ibrahim (personal communication, August 1, 2019), the original composer of the song is Wan Abdul Rahman, known in Malaysia as Ayah Ngah. The song is about a man named Muda who fell in love with a woman called Landak. Through the song, Muda described his inner feelings towards the beautiful Landak. He imagined himself as a chained elephant, and felt lost after hearing her sweet voice and seeing her kind nature. Muda thought of Landak all day and night and is optimistic that staying loyal to his love for Landak will help him conquer all of his obstacles or challenges in life.

Puteri Santubong (Princess Santubong) is from the state of Sarawak. The song was composed by Madzhi Johari around 1974–1975, but over the years has been considered a folk song of the Malay people living in Sarawak. It is sung in a local Malay dialect and refers to the historical legend of Princess Santubong and her sister Sejinjang from the mythical kingdom of Kayangan. Both sisters were sent to establish peace between the Pasir Putih and Pasir Kuning villages. Santubong taught one village to make fabrics and Sejinjang taught the other village to grow and harvest rice. The princesses accomplished their mission, but they accidentally fell in love with the crown Prince Mahkota. He asked to marry them both, but the princesses refused and began to fight each other. Sejinjang hit her sister with a thresher, a tool for grinding grain, and Santubong fell. Santubong, in turn, threw her weaving tool at Sejinjang and broke her skull. Disappointed and angry, the King of Kayangan cursed both princesses and transformed them into mountains located in Sarawak (Nadhirah, 2009).

The folk song *Trek Tek Tek* (no translation) represents the Baba Nyonya community of Penang state. The English translation of the lyrics of *Trek tek tek* is borrowed from the book *Baba Nyonya musical moments* (Yeo, 2018). The song is about a woman's devotion to a man, where she compared herself to a moon that would not rise without a sky of stars, the latter referring to her man. The words *Trek tek tek* have no meaning but are considered a conjunction or chorus between the verses (Instant Asia, 1979).

Ala Canggung (Awkward dance) represents the state of Perlis and is sung in an old Malay dialect as a pantun (poem). The song describes the celebration on the paddy field at the end of the harvest season. The song is made up of spontaneously composed jokes and playful rhymes between young women and men who call each other *awkward* during a dance. This song-dance was introduced during an entertainment party for the Japanese army during the occupation in 1941 (Shafian, 2016).

Han Tian Lei (Thunder during drought) is a Cantonese folk song brought to Malaysia from the Guangdong province of China. It was composed by Yan Laolie in the 1860s during the Qing Dynasty (1368–1911) (Wong, 2018). Yingqiao Liu believed that every musical work has its own story and expresses the day-to-day activities of Cantonese farming society life, such as how *Han Tian Lei*

describes the rejoicing from hearing thunder as it heralds the coming rain after a severe drought (Liu, 2018, as cited in Wong, 2018).

The most popular Chinese folk song brought to Malaysia from China is *Mo Li Hua* (Jasmine flower). This song is a symbol of the Jiangsu province of Eastern China, renowned for planting jasmine flowers (Ying, 2019), and dates to the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). In 1804, the British diplomat John Barrow published the book *Travels in China*, which included an English translation of *Mo Li Hua* (ChinaCulture.org, 2014). Barrow's translation described how someone expressed their love by dropping a branch of jasmine flowers at that person's house. The delightful fragrance pleased the receiver. However, while the receiver would want to wear the branch of flowers, they were afraid of arousing the envy of others (ChinaCulture.org, 2014).

Pachai Pachai Kiliye (Green parrot) is a children's folk song and was brought to Malaysia by South Indian people. The song tells the story of a parrot which flew to different places and met three types of birds. In each area, the birds asked whether they could follow the parrot and wear gold jewellery on their legs, wings, and beaks, and if they would be able to fly and eat with gold jewellery on their bodies. The parrot was surprised to hear these questions and flew away without answering them (Pattampoochi, 2018). The content of the song likely referred to the Indian tradition of wearing gold jewellery on one's body.

Results and Discussion

The sequences of the ADDIE model yielded several results.

The analysis of the repertoire books from the syllabi of ABRSM, TCL, and RCM for grades three and four revealed the following. The three boards offered similar books, such as the use of the *First repertoire for viola: Books 2 & 3*, although different pieces were selected. The *Suzuki Viola School: Volumes 1, 2, & 3* (revised version) and *Solos for young violists: Volumes 1 & 4* were included in the ABRSM and RCM boards. *More time pieces for Viola: Volumes 1 & 2*, *Time pieces for viola: Volumes 1 & 2*, and *Solos for the viola player* were used only in the ABRSM, and *Viola level 3* was used in the RCM.

The repertoire books comprised Western traditional and folk songs but did not include Malaysian traditional or folk music. In total, 55 pieces were reviewed for existing ornament signs. Only 11 pieces appeared with acciaccatura, upper mordent or trill signs, or passing notes. In their entirety, only three European traditional tune pieces were included in the reviewed books. Overall, the review indicated that not many pieces were provided to teach viola students the ornament signs at the intermediate level, and not enough traditional or folk music was used in the process of mastering skills in this genre.

The nine folk song transcriptions were designed to provide material to learn ornament signs (Table 1). The students were given nine folk songs in total: six Malay, two Chinese, and one Tamil.

Table 1. List of transcribed folk songs and implemented ornament signs

Title of folk song	Origin	Embellishments in ornament signs
1. <i>Dabus</i>	Perak	acciaccatura, mordent, and trill
2. <i>Anak Bocek</i>	Sembilan	acciaccatura, mordent, tremolo, and passing notes
3. <i>Watimang Landak</i>	Terengganu	acciaccatura and mordent
4. <i>Puteri Santubong</i>	Sarawak	inverted mordent and acciaccatura
5. <i>Trek Tek Tek</i>	Penang	trill, acciaccatura, and passing notes
6. <i>Ala Canggung</i>	Perlis	trill and acciaccatura
7. <i>Han Tian Lei</i>	Guangdong province	mordent, acciaccatura, and grace note with a trill
8. <i>Mo Li Hua</i>	Jiangsu province	glissando, acciaccatura, and tremolo
9. <i>Pachai Kiliye</i>	South India (Tamil)	glissando, acciaccatura, trill, and inverted mordent

The developed exercises were added before each folk song with explanations of the ornament signs in detail, the practice of shifts between the positions, and the intricate rhythmic patterns in each song.

During the semester, viola students (n = 12) from both the Diploma and Degree Applied Music programs learned the proposed exercises and transcriptions. The observation of the learning process occurred during the individual classes. After accomplishing the learned exercise and folk song, the students were asked to fill in the questionnaire based on their experience. A 5-point Likert Scale was used to measure the obtained results (Jamieson, 2017), and the measurement of the eighteen questions ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) (Table 2).

Table 2. Questionnaire results (n =12)

Questions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total	Mean
<i>TRANSCRIPTION OF SONG FOR VIOLA</i>							
1. The folk song I learned was new.	2	2	0	4	4	42	3.5
2. The folk song I learned was familiar.	0	3	4	3	2	40	3.34
3. The transcription of the folk song is similar to the original folk song.	0	0	5	5	2	45	3.75
4. This transcription was easy to sight-read and play.	3	2	4	2	1	32	2.67
<i>ORNAMENT SIGNS</i>							

5.	I learned <i>acciaccatura</i> .	0	0	0	6	6	54	4.5
6.	I learned <i>mordent</i> .	1	0	1	4	6	50	4.17
7.	I learned <i>trill</i> .	0	0	2	3	7	53	4.42
8.	I learned <i>grace note</i> .	3	2	1	3	3	47	3.92
<i>FINGERBOARD POSITIONS</i>								
9.	I learned to change positions on the fingerboard.	0	0	1	3	8	55	4.59
10.	I learned I-II-III positions.	0	1	3	4	4	47	4.0
11.	I can understand the necessity of changing positions within the musical score.	0	0	2	5	5	51	4.25
12.	My skill in changing positions on the fingerboard has improved.	0	1	3	2	6	49	4.09
<i>USEFULNESS OF EXERCISE</i>								
13.	In the exercise, the explanation of ornament signs in the notated way was understandable.	0	3	2	2	5	45	3.75
14.	After practising the exercise, the ornament signs became easy to read and play in the song.	0	2	1	2	7	50	4.17
15.	The exercise used repetitions, which is useful for training the finger muscles.	0	0	0	5	7	55	4.59
<i>DEMONSTRATION</i>								
16.	I can read and play the ornamentation signs without a demonstration by the teacher.	3	4	4	0	1	28	2.34
17.	I can change positions without prior demonstration by the teacher.	0	3	5	3	1	38	3.17
18.	I prefer first to hear the transcription demonstrated by the teacher to get an example of an entire folk song.	0	0	0	5	7	55	4.59

According to the first set of questions related to the transcription of the folk songs, most students indicated that the folk song they learnt was new (3.5). However, most of the students were not exactly sure whether the song was familiar to them (3.34). After they listened to a recording of the original folk song and learnt the transcription, most students noted the similarity between the original and transcribed songs (3.75). Most of the students mentioned that the transcription was not easy to sight-read and play immediately (2.67).

The second set of questions regarding the ornament signs revealed that most of the students learnt the trill (4.42), acciaccatura (4.5), and mordent (4.17) signs. Regarding the learning of the grace note, the responses were less positive (3.92).

The third set of questions regarding the fingerboard positions revealed that students were positive in terms of learning the changing positions (4.59), I-II-III range (4.0), clear fingering indication in the music score (4.25), and improvement of skills through practising the exercises and song transcriptions (4.09).

Concerning the fourth set of questions, evaluation of the usefulness of the exercise with regards to the explanation of how to play a particular ornament sign in a notated way indicated a less-than-positive result (3.75). However, after the students practised the exercise, they indicated that it became easier to play the ornament signs in the transcribed folk song (4.17) and that additional repetitions were productive (4.59).

The last set of questions was dedicated to the demonstration and asked whether the students were able to play the ornamentation signs (2.34), changing positions (3.17), and entire folk song transcription (4.59) without the teacher's demonstration. The responses revealed conflicting results and indicated that the students were still struggling and needed prior demonstration by the teacher or a video recording.

Individual classes revealed that five students attempted to read and play the transcriptions by ear, as the song tune was familiar to them. Furthermore, seven students responded that the assigned folk song was unfamiliar and asked for a demonstration to receive a complete understanding of the transcription. Moreover, the meaning of the ornamentation signs in the notated form within the exercise was not always clear to the students, and they asked for a verbal interpretation and the demonstration of a particular sign.

The experts offered some beneficial recommendations to improve the compiled set of transcribed folk songs and exercises. According to the experts, the notated explanations of the ornament signs were clear enough, but the written descriptions of each ornament sign should be added to the beginning of a set of transcriptions. In addition, they recommended that video recordings of the exercises and transcriptions should be created and made available online to provide a visual example for students outside of class. Furthermore, they stated that a few exercises appear somewhat complicated for intermediate-level students (grades three and four) and that it would be useful for students to develop technical skills quickly. The experts mentioned that the transcriptions of *Anak Bocek* and *Han Tian Lei* were more suitable for advanced-level students. One of the experts suggested revising the *Mo Li Hua* transcription due to the imprecise rhythmic patterns that were corrected in the last version of the transcription. Overall, the experts agreed that the compiled material was suitable and useful as teaching and learning material.

Conclusion

This study investigated how intermediate-level viola students can learn ornament signs using transcribed Malaysian folk songs by practicing prior exercises to reach an intermediate level. One should note that before learning and playing ornamentation signs, viola students had little knowledge of how they looked and sounded. In the questionnaire and verbal discussion, the students emphasized the experience and knowledge they received while learning the course material. They indicated that content such as rhythmic patterns, passing notes, and the range of octaves that required the violist to change positions on the fingerboard were complicated and must be demonstrated. However, beyond the improvement of their technical skills, the students mentioned learning that the ornamentation signs could express certain emotions after they observed the teachers' demonstrations. After becoming more technically proficient with the ornament signs, the students noticed its connection with emotional expressions, highlighting the importance of teaching face-to-face. Some students also helped to find and translate certain folk songs that were sung in the local dialect of its state of origin. The students began to perform the songs with more profound musical expression after they acquired a synopsis of the meaning of the song.

Furthermore, two students volunteered to help create piano accompaniments for five of the transcriptions and, in performing the folk songs with the pianist, they exhibited a deeper communication of the ensemble setting. Referring to experts' suggestions, written explanations of each ornamentation sign were added to the beginning of the compiled set of transcriptions help students identify them throughout the transcriptions. Additionally, within the transcriptions, fingerings were added to clarify and remind the students how to play a particular sign.

The obtained results revealed that students in applied music courses can develop technical skills required at an intermediate level after learning Malaysian folk songs' transcriptions and through additional exercises with supporting audio-visual components. The results demonstrated that students could learn ornament signs through folk music and acquire skills necessary for playing Western classical music. The results further demonstrated the necessity of continuing the investigation for the intermediate-advanced level by utilising Malaysian traditional music transcriptions while implementing double stop intervals. This in turn could enrich students' expression abilities and the acquiring of technical skills important for a diverse music repertoire. Training students by combining Western classical music with folk or traditional music will enhance students' self-efficacy and experience. Additionally, learning folk songs connects cultures around us, bridging the gaps between the old and new generations, enabling the discovery of the beauty of culture, values, histories and lifestyles between societies. As children or students are exposed to singing folksongs frequently, playing music instruments is also one significant way of human expression that will maintain traditions forever.

Thus, it is recommended that educators include Malaysian folk song transcriptions in their teaching material, which will help local and foreign students develop their awareness of Malay, Chinese, and Indian musical culture. Overall, the results are expected to contribute to the existing variety of teaching methods for educating students in applied music courses.

Acknowledgements

This research is funded by University Research Grant/ Geran Penyelidikan Universiti (Research Code: 2018-0107-106-01) with a total amount of RM7,600.00 from the Research Management and Innovation Centre (RMIC) under Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Tanjong Malim, Malaysia. During

the research process, the authors presented at the Asia-Pacific Symposium for Music Education Research (APSMER) 2019. We would like to express our gratitude to all experts and students who were involved in the research for their participation and cooperation. We would also like to express our special thanks to the Vice Chancellor of UPSI, Deputy Vice Chancellors of UPSI, and UPSI Research Management and Innovation Centre for their strong support.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

References

- Barber, B. (2004). Solos for young violists: Volume 4. *Summy-Birchard Inc.*
- Barber, B. (2003). Solos for young violists: Volume 1. *Summy-Birchard Inc.*
- Barber, B. (1997). Solos for young violists: Volume 3. *Summy-Birchard Inc.*
- Bagley, K. B. (2009). The Kodaly method: Hungarian music education. *Fulbright Student Conference Papers II*. Fulbright Commission, Budapest.
<http://www.fulbright.hu/book4/katiebrookebagley.pdf>
- Bass, P., & Harris, P. (2002). Time piece for viola (Vol. 1 & 2). *ABRSM Publishing Ltd.*
- Branch, R. M. (2010). Instructional design: The ADDIE approach. *Springer Science+Business Media*.
- ChinaCulture.org. (2014). *Mo li hua*, the first Chinese song widely known overseas [Blog post].
http://en.chinaculture.org/exchange/2014-12/02/content_579602.htm
- Doraisamy, S., Golzari, S., Sulaiman, N. B., Norowi, N. M., & Udzir, N. I. (2008). A study on feature selection and classification techniques for automatic genre classification of traditional Malay music. ISMIR 2008, Session 3, Content-based retrieval, categorization and similarity.
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c592/e2eb4f7cc7665d8812d5b37253f0a5c84afd.pdf>
- Emily. (2014). Perak folk dances [Blog post]. <https://www.emily2u.com/perak-folk-dances/>
- Folk music. (2019). In *Cambridge dictionary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/folk-music>
- Folk song. (2019). In *Collins English dictionary*. Glasgow: HarperCollins.
<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/folk-song>
- Greeve, G. D. (2018). *Malay folksong from Malaysia for voice and piano*. Malaysian Association for Music Education (M.A.M.E).
- Howe, S. W. (1995). Sources of the folk songs in the violin and piano books of Shinichi Suzuki. *The Bulletin of Historical Research in Music Education*, 16(3), 177–193.
- Irving, D. R. M. (2014). Hybridity and harmony: Nineteenth-century British discourse on syncretism and intercultural compatibility in Malay music. *Indonesia and the Malay world*, 42(123), 197–221.
- Instant Asia. (1979). *Trek tek tek* [Vinyl Disc]. Singapore: EMI Pte. Ltd.
<https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/music/Media/PDFs/Album/c2a25c3f-1839-426a-9178-638346af3c19.pdf>
- Jamieson, S. (2017). Likert scale. In *Encyclopædia Britannica*.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Likert-Scale>
- Kurys, J. A. (2016). *The art of transcription and its impact on the development of the viola as a solo instrument*. [Doctoral thesis.] Lincoln, Nebraska. Published by ProQuest LLC 10099951.

- Lamb, M., & Meredith, R. (2015). More time pieces for viola (Vol. 1 & 2). *ABRSM (Publishing) Ltd.*
- Nadhirah, M. (2009). Malaysian myth and legends [Blog post].
<http://malaysiastories.blogspot.com/search/label/Malaysian%20Myth%20and%20Legends>
- Miller-Kay, E. (2018). Four-hand piano transcriptions and the reception of symphonic repertoire in nineteenth-century Europe. *Malaysian Journal of Music*, 7, 195–207.
- Nettl, B. (2017). Folk music. In *Encyclopædia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/art/folk-music>
- Nikolouse. (2018). Top music genres and their origins. <https://twilitebroadcasters.com/top-music-genres-and-their-origins/>
- Pattampoochi. (2018). Pachai pachai kiliye. Tamil folk song for children. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kv0irQnnKhU&t=80s>
- Rapoport, K., & Sherwood, C. (2013). Viola level 3 repertoire. *Viola series 2013*. The Frederick Harris Music Co.
- Shafian, M. S. A. (2016). Tarian canggung. [Blog post].
<https://warisanpelbagaikaumcom.wordpress.com/2016/04/20/tarian-canggung/>
- Sulong, M. A., Saidon, Z. L., & Hashim N. S. N. (2013). *Muzik tradisi tari rakyat Perak: Suatu pendekatan etnomuzikologi* (Music tradition in Perak traditional dances: An ethnomusicological approach). *Malaysian Journal of Music*, 2(1), 72–105.
- Suchoff, B. (1961). Béla Bartók's contributions to music education. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 9(1), 3–9.
- Suzuki, S. (2009). *Suzuki viola school: Volume 3, Revised edition*. Alfred Music Publishing Co., Inc.
- Teopini Terzetti Casagrande, F. (2019). Investigating nineteenth-century transcriptions through history of opera and music publishing: Mauro Giuliani's sources for two themes in *Le Rossiniane* No. 2, Op. 120, and No. 3, Op. 121. *Malaysian Journal of Music*, 8, 19–51.
- Watts, S. H., & Campbell, P. S. (2008). American folk songs for children: Ruth Crawford Seeger's contributions to music education. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 56(3), 238–254.
- Wilkinson, M., & Hart, K. (1992). *First repertoire for viola: Books 2 & 3*. Faber Music.
- Wilson, N. (2011). Baroque ornamentation. *Journal of the American Viola Society*, 27, 52–71.
- Wong, K. (2018). Cantonese folk music-township music spreading across the globe. *NEWS GD.com*.
http://www.newsgd.com/video/2018-09/11/content_183275102.htm
- Ying, Z. (2019). China's flora tour: How did the jasmine flower become the symbol of Jiangsu Province? *China Global Television Network (CGTN)*.
<https://news.cgtn.com/news/3d3d414e3267444d35457a6333566d54/index.html>
- Yeo, H. (2018). Baba Nyonya musical moments: Five piano solos. *Rhythm MP Ltd.*