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Music and Cultural Identity: an Ethnically-based Music Program in a Mapuche-Pewenche School

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Abstract | This article describes an ethnically-based music program developed in a Mapuche-Pewenche educational setting and examines its potential effectiveness in the promotion of cultural identity. In order to describe and evaluate this music program, I have adapted certain UNESCO procedures for the analysis of multicultural programs in educational contexts into two new models focused on music. The Mapuche people are an indigenous group which comprises several subgroups spread across Chile and Argentina. This study focuses on the Pewenche subgroup, which is located in the Andes Mountains in south-central Chile. This paper aims to show how a Pewenche community has incorporated the local music into the school activities, discussing the issues regarding the incorporation of Mapuche-Pewenche traditional music into an ethnically-based music program, particularly those associated with the ownership and management of traditional knowledge.

Introduction

In Mapudungun, the language spoken by the Mapuche, there is no word that equates to Western notions of “music” or “musical instrument”; however, individual instruments have names and there are equivalent words for “song” and “singing”.¹ There is also no word to refer to “silence”, but in contrast there are many words for “sound”.² Traditional Mapuche music occurs within a rich blend of singing, praying, speaking, dancing, sounds made on musical instruments, and sounds from the landscape.³ In that context, clear differences are not made between sound and music, or between speaking and singing; indeed, when certain instruments are played it is said that they “speak”.⁴ The sounds from nature also “speak”, mainly about their symbolic meanings.⁵

This article describes an ethnically-based music program developed in a Mapuche-Pewenche educational setting and examines its potential effectiveness in the

¹ Ernesto González, “Vigencias de Instrumentos Musicales Mapuches,” *Revista Musical Chilena* 40, no.166 (1986), 7-10; Jaime Hernández, *The Mapuche-Williche Music of the Maiwe Lake* (Valdivia: Fondo Nacional de Fomento del Libro y la Lectura, 2010), 14-15; José Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche* (Santiago de Chile: Fondo Nacional de Fomento del Libro y la Lectura, 2007), 83.

² Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 70.

³ González, “Vigencias de Instrumentos Musicales Mapuches”, 6; Hernández, *The Mapuche-Williche Music of the Maiwe Lake*, 14-15; Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 83.

⁴ Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 80.

⁵ Lorenzo Aillapan and Ricardo Rozzi, “A Contemporary Mapuche Ethno-ornithology: Winged Poems from the Native Forest of Chile,” *Ornitología Neotropical* 15 (2004), 421-422, 429.

promotion of cultural identity.⁶ The contention underpinning this investigation is that the study of an indigenous group's music within a school setting has the potential to promote cultural identity aspects.⁷ UNESCO points out that cultural identity could be promoted within educational settings through three factors or guidelines. These are identified as relevance, coexistence and inclusion, hereinafter referred to as UNESCO multicultural factors.⁸ This study is grounded in the procedures described in the UNESCO multicultural factors, which I have adapted into two new models designed specifically for a musical context. The two models, "Evaluative Criteria for Intercultural Music-making Activities" and "Guidelines for the Development of Multicultural Music-making Activities", aim to facilitate the enquiry of an ethnically-based music program, guiding the data collection and systematically incorporating the opinions and thoughts of the local community involved.

Applying the two models to this case study, I have been able to provide some answers to some issues related to an ethnically-based music program in an indigenous school setting. I will address the concerns of the local community in relation to the music program, identifying the main pros and cons of the current one. I will also explain some cultural practices and the codes for ownership and management of traditional knowledge, which are directly involved in the ways in which the local music is regarded and incorporated in the school activities.

The Mapuche-Pewenche People

The Mapuche people are an indigenous group, which comprises several subgroups spread across Chile and Argentina. This case study focuses on a Chilean subgroup, the Pewenche. The Mapuche are the largest indigenous group in Chile and the third largest in Latin America, after the Aymara and Kechua.⁹ In the last census carried out

⁶ In the literature about Mapuche culture referred in this article, the Mapuche are labelled as "indigenous people", "Original People", "First Nation", "ethnic group", "ethnic minority" and "minority" among other terms. I believe that the most suitable term to refer to the Mapuche is "Original People", mainly because that term arises in the Chilean context in order to avoid former derogatory names. However, I will also use in this article the terms "indigenous" and "ethnically" to refer to the Mapuche people and culture.

⁷ Regarding the term "cultural identity", I follow Ricardo Hevia and Carolina Hirmas, *Discriminación y Pluralismo Cultural en la Escuela* (Santiago de Chile: OREALC/UNESCO, 2005), 84-85, which relates specifically to the Mapuche context. The authors explain that the Mapuche cultural identity is grounded in the distinctive Mapuche cultural features that are not present in the rest of the Chilean culture, incorporating also some hybrid elements. The authors also mention that in the articulation of Mapuche cultural identity, the perceived discrimination against the Mapuche, as well as notions of domination and subordination, have been key in the loss of some cultural practices and in the creation of a sense of cultural upheaval.

⁸ Ricardo Hevia and Carolina Hirmas, *Discriminación y Pluralismo Cultural en la Escuela*, 17-20; Ricardo Hevia et al., *Políticas Educativas de Atención a la Diversidad Cultural: Brasil, Chile, Colombia, México y Perú* (Santiago de Chile: OREALC/UNESCO, 2005), 18-20; Carolina Hirmas, *Educación y Diversidad Cultural: Lecciones desde la Práctica Innovadora en América Latina* (Santiago de Chile: OREALC/UNESCO, 2008), 19-24.

⁹ María Ester Grebe, *Culturas Indígenas de Chile: un Estudio Preliminar* (Santiago de Chile: Pehuén, 2010), 55.

in 2012, they comprised 8.7% of the total Chilean population; that is, almost 1.5 million people.¹⁰ Mapuche is their self-designated name, by which they are officially recognised as one of the eight “Original Peoples” of Chile.¹¹ The early literature refers to them as Araucanos and their territory as Araucanía.¹² The Mapuche speak a language called Mapudungun which is found in several dialects.¹³ The words Mapuche and Mapudungun translate into English as “people of the land” and “language of the land” respectively, which emphasises the strong connection of this culture with the land and nature.¹⁴ In Chile, the Mapuche nation is composed of four regional families or subgroups: the Mapuche central-subgroup, the Lafkenche, the Williche, and the Pewenche (see Figure 1).¹⁵

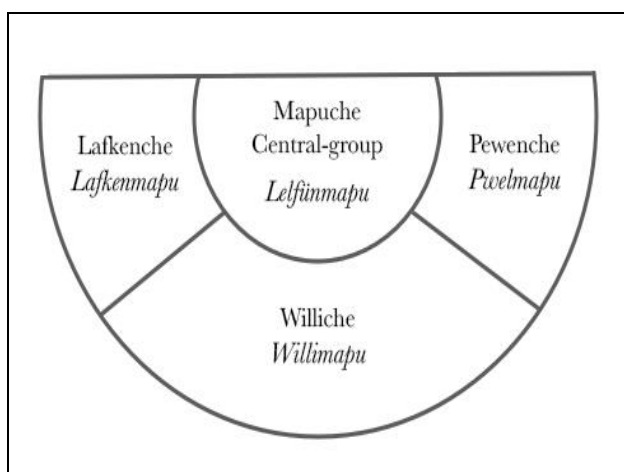


Figure 1 Mapuche subgroups and their respective Mapuche territories¹⁶

¹⁰ Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, *Censo 2012*, Santiago de Chile: INE, 2012.

¹¹ Grebe, *Culturas Indígenas de Chile: un Estudio Preliminar*, 55; Arturo Hernández, Nelly Ramos, and Carlos Cárcamo, *Mapuche. Lengua y Cultura. Diccionario Mapudungun-Español-Inglés* (Santiago de Chile: Pehuén, 2009), 5-6; Ministerio de Planificación y Desarrollo, *Ley N° 19.253 “Ley Indígena,”* Santiago de Chile: Gobierno de Chile, 1993.

¹² David Aagesen, “Indigenous Resource Rights and Conservation of the Monkey-Puzzle Tree,” *Economic Botany* 52, no.2 (1998), 146-147; Beth Aracena, “Viewing the Ethnomusicological Past: Jesuit Influences on Araucanian Music in Colonial Chile,” *Latin American Music Review / Revista de Música Latinoamericana* 18, no.1 (1997), 3; Donald Brand, “A Brief History of Araucanian Studies,” *New Mexico Anthropologist* 5, no.2 (1941), 19-20; André Menard and Jorge Pavez, “El Congreso Araucano. Ley, Raza y Escritura en la Política Mapuche,” *Revista Política* 44 (2005), 211; Ineke Smeets, *A Grammar of Mapuche* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2008), 3-5.

¹³ González, “Vigencias de Instrumentos Musicales Mapuches”, 5-6; Smeets, *A Grammar of Mapuche*, 9-14.

¹⁴ José Bengoa, “La Agricultura y la Población Mapuche” in *Mapuche. Procesos, Políticas Y Culturas en el Chile del Bicentenario*, edited by José Bengoa, 75-112 (Santiago de Chile: Catalonia, 2012), 75; Esteban Erize, *Diccionario Comentado Mapuche-Español*, edited by Universidad Nacional del Sur (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional del Sur, 1960), 11-12.

¹⁵ Grebe, *Culturas Indígenas de Chile: un Estudio Preliminar*, 55; Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 29.

¹⁶ Diagram prepared by author.

The Pewenche or “people of the pine nut”, live in the territory that they call Pwelmapu, located in the Andes Mountains in south-central Chile.¹⁷ The specific Pewenche community involved in this research corresponds to the Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun community who speak a dialect called Chedungun as their first language. This community is located in the extremely isolated Keuko Valley in Alto Bio-Bio, about 80 kilometres from the city of Los Ángeles (see Figure 2).



Figure 2 Location of Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun Community¹⁸

The Context of the Research

My field research took place between July 2009 and February 2011 within the formal educational setting of Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun Boarding School— hereinafter referred

¹⁷ Aagesen, “Indigenous Resource Rights and Conservation of the Monkey-Puzzle Tree”, 148-149; Hernández, Ramos and Cárcamo, *Mapuche. Lengua y Cultura. Diccionario Mapudungun-Español-Inglés*, 126; 129.

¹⁸ Map prepared from templates by author.

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to as Butalelbun School. This boarding school is managed by the Pope John XXIII Foundation which is part of the Catholic Diocese of Los Ángeles. The Foundation manages over ten educational establishments, two of which are located in Alto Bio-Bio providing educational services exclusively for Pewenche students. One establishment, Kauñicu Boarding School, uses the standard Intercultural Program provided by the Chilean Ministry of Education, which includes the teaching of Mapudungun as a second language. The main intercultural goal of Kauñicu Boarding School is to recover Mapudungun language and Chedungun dialect. The Butalelbun School, which is the focus of this study, has its own adaptation of the Intercultural Program that includes the teaching of Chedungun as a first language. This means most of the subjects are taught in Chedungun, including music.

We receive enrolments of boys and girls who are 100% Mapuche-Pewenche and all of them are Chedungun speakers. They [the students] start 1st grade with barely 10% of knowledge about Spanish, they learn first in Chedungun and in 3rd and 4th grade Spanish is incorporated in 50% [in teaching activities]. (Informant 2, personal communication, 2009)

In 1995, the Pope John XXIII Foundation began to administer Butalelbun School, with a clear mission to improve several aspects of the school. One of these aspects was the provision of a culturally pertinent curriculum; a concern addressed in 2000 with the arrival of a group of Misioneras Lauritas. The Misioneras Lauritas, a Catholic organisation known for its work with indigenous people, chose to work with Butalelbun School because of its unique quality as a Chedungun-speaking community. In 2005, Butalelbun School developed its own school-based Intercultural Program that was approved by the Chilean Ministry of Education. At that time, it was one of two schools in Chile where an indigenous language was taught as a first language. This school-based program incorporated all subjects into a culturally pertinent curriculum, including music.

Each culture has its own approach of appreciating beauty. It is important for the students to discover the Mapuche-Pewenche codes of beauty and appreciate how they are expressed. ... [Music and arts] provide the opportunity to approach the aesthetic dimension of this culture, [and also provide] the learning of the value of the arts from other people and cultures ...¹⁹

¹⁹ Excerpt from the school-based curriculum of Butalelbun School

As will be detailed later, this community has preserved many cultural practices. Although the language and cultural practices may contain the “codes of beauty” mentioned in the written program, there is evidence that suggests that certain cultural practices are either barely developed or attract low numbers of participants. Examples include the performance of musical instruments and the practice of music outside Mapuche-Pewenche religious contexts. This may explain the apparent discrepancy regarding a community that has some strong cultural practices, but at the same time, also feels the need to “discover” their “codes of beauty”.

In 2007, the involvement of the Misioneras Lauritas ceased, mainly because their policy limits the period they can commit to a community. In 2010, the boarding school had approximately 100 students and a seven-member teaching staff, comprising of three Mapuche-Pewenche teachers, a Mapuche-Pewenche principal, two non-Mapuche teachers, and a cultural adviser who was the local Pewenche chief. The academic results obtained by the school in the national standards tests have significantly improved in recent years. However, the results still fall below the national average. The school’s administration contends that this result is caused by two factors. First, the standardised tests target an urban population, and second, the test is administered in Spanish, the students’ second language.

The stimulus for this research project was my interest in investigating the topic for this study. Indeed, my professional background as a music teacher, combined with my personal interest in indigenous issues and personal experiences with the community of Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun piqued my interest in the project. Although I have worked elsewhere as a music teacher for the Pope John XXIII Foundation, I have not had any formal involvement with Butalelbun School.

In terms of the relationship between Catholicism and the local indigenous belief system, during my time in the community it appeared that the main goals of the Pope John XXIII Foundation related to social aspects not religious ones. This is supported by three facts: first, the incorporation of Mapuche-Pewenche religious activities into the school – which will be explained later – was mainly an idea of the Misioneras Lauritas. It was strongly supported by the local community, and also by the rest of the Catholic members of the Foundation. Second, as noted above, the school principal and most of the teachers are not Catholic; and third, the Mapuche-Pewenche religious activities within the school are strongly supported by the chaplain of the school as well as by the priest who manages the Foundation.

Data and Participants

The data in this study was gathered from curricular documents, questionnaires, personal communications, videos and interviews. The curricular documents provide comprehensive information regarding the national standard curriculum relating to the Intercultural Program and to music education, as well as the entire school-based program of Butalelbun School. Through the administration and distribution of written questionnaires, I have interviewed or otherwise engaged with all teaching staff and

several parents. I have also gathered general information about the school through personal communications with two administrators of the Pope John XXIII Foundation.

In addition, I interviewed two members of the school community and analysed several videos of cultural activities that took place at the school with them. The first was Luis Queupil, an elder in charge of cultural affairs, or *Werken*, in another Pewenche community. He was also the principal of Butalelbun School at the time of my field research. Queupil sings and plays the traditional drum or *kultrun* in the group praying ceremony or *nguillatun* celebrated in his community. The other participant was *Lonko* Elias Pereira, the local chief or *Lonko* of the Pewenche community of Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun and the cultural adviser of Butalelbun School. This community does not have a shaman or *Machi* so *Lonko* Elias leads the group praying ceremony or *nguillatun*.

General Characteristics of Mapuche Music-culture

Present-day traditional Mapuche music retains most of its pre-Columbian characteristics, incorporating only a few European influences, such as the use of modern materials in instrument construction and the performance of music in non-ritual contexts.²⁰ The ritual contexts are the most important settings for the practice of Mapuche music, with the group praying ceremony called *nguillatun* and the healing ceremony called *machitun* being the most significant.²¹ The entire “traditional wisdom” or *kimün* is expressed in these two ceremonies through singing, praying, dancing and performance of musical instruments.²²

The Mapuche music-culture has experienced significant changes since its first encounter with the Europeans in the sixteenth century. Arguably, the most radical changes have occurred in the last 130 years and are related to their coexistence with Chilean society. In the 1880s, in order to annex and control the Mapuche territory, the Chilean state started a process called “The Pacification of the Araucanía”. After three and a half centuries of struggle, first against the Spaniards and then the Chilean army, the Mapuche were finally defeated and relocated into indigenous reservations.²³ In this new situation, the Mapuche culture became an “indigenous minority” with a new need to “explain their culture” to others, and to “articulate a sense of cultural

²⁰ Aracena, “Viewing the Ethnomusicological Past: Jesuit Influences on Araucanian Music in Colonial Chile”, 10; González, “Vigencias de Instrumentos Musicales Mapuches.”, 7-8.

²¹ Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 103-128.

²² González, “Vigencias de Instrumentos Musicales Mapuches”, 6; Hernández, *The Mapuche-Williche Music of the Maiwe Lake*, 72-76; Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 118-128.

²³ José Bengoa, *Historia del Pueblo Mapuche. Siglos XIX y XX* (Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2000), 354-355; José Bengoa, *Orígenes y Desafíos del Conflicto Mapuche*. YouTube video, 43:38, from Mesa de Dialogo El Mostrador TV, August 2012, posted by El Mostrador TV, August 12, 2012, accessed 17 October 2014, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MnyaY4rpw8>; Alejandro Saavedra, *Los Mapuche en la Sociedad Chilena Actual* (Santiago de Chile: LOM Ediciones, 2002), 62-63.

belonging”.²⁴ Aspects of their music, like other elements of Mapuche daily life, became cultural icons in the representation of their culture.²⁵ The opportunities for the practice of traditional music were drastically reduced by the change of lifestyle within the indigenous reservations, mainly to the two rituals previously mentioned, the *nguillatun* and *machitun*.²⁶

Another important change in Mapuche music-culture was caused by the migration of the Mapuche to urban areas from the 1930s onwards. In the rural communities, musical practice was experienced as an everyday event, whereas in the new urban settings it became a tool for affirmative notions of self-identity and cultural identity.²⁷ However, even in rural communities today some members follow traditional activities merely as affirmative notions of identity; indeed, some members do not follow or practice any traditional activity at all. This mainly occurs due to perceived conflicts between traditional activities and Christianity, the belief system adopted by many members of the Mapuche community.²⁸

Educational Policies Regarding the Mapuche People

In 1990, the Chilean Ministry of Education issued a law allowing all schools to develop independent programs, emphasizing the inclusion of the local culture and language in those schools within indigenous educational contexts.²⁹ In 1996, the Intercultural Program was founded with the purpose of promoting educational programs based on indigenous culture.³⁰ In the Mapuche context, this program promotes the teaching of Mapudungun as a second language and the incorporation of Mapuche cultural content into the curriculum.³¹

In a wider context, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean has extensively supported policies and programs to improve multicultural issues in indigenous educational contexts, including the Mapuche. The procedures and methodologies employed in these policies and programs have been analysed and assessed through the three UNESCO multicultural

²⁴ José Bengoa, “Presentación” in *Mapuche. Procesos, Políticas y Culturas en el Chile del Bicentenario*, edited by José Bengoa, 13-22 (Santiago de Chile: Catalonia, 2012), 17.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

²⁶ Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 51.

²⁷ Jorge Martínez, “La Música Indígena y la Identidad: los Espacios Musicales de las Comunidades de Mapuches Urbanos,” *Revista Musical Chilena* 56, no.198 (2002), 27-30.

²⁸ Ignacio Rainman, “El Rol de las Escuelas en la Implementación del Peib: ¿Rol Reproductor o Transformador?” (ARCIS, 2007).

²⁹ Eliseo Cañulef et al., *Aspectos Generales de la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (Eib) y sus Fundamentos* (Santiago de Chile: Gobierno de Chile, Ministerio de Educación, División de Educación General, Programa de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, 2000), 8-9; Ministerio de Educación, *Ley N° 18.962 "Ley Orgánica Constitucional de Enseñanza"*, Santiago de Chile: MINEDUC. Gobierno de Chile, 1990.

³⁰ Mauricio Huircan, “Desarrollo de la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe en Chile.” In *Interculturalidad en Contexto Mapuche*, edited by Daniel Quilaqueo, César Fernández and Segundo Quintriqueo, 19-39 (Neuquén: Editorial de la Universidad Nacional del Comahue, 2010), 21.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 36-38.

factors mentioned previously. Although maintaining a critical approach to them in this case study, the UNESCO's development of these factors nonetheless provides a useful framework for the analysis, evaluation and design of policies and programs, where the participation of the local communities is crucial.³² The UNESCO multicultural factors are summarised as follows:

- *Relevance*: policies and programs should be pertinent and meaningful to the minority group involved. This implies that aspects of cultural identity should be key when evaluating whether something is or is not meaningful.³³
- *Coexistence*: programs should be developed as a tool of communication within the minority group involved and as a link with the wider national culture.³⁴
- *Inclusion*: the minority group involved should be incorporated into the formal educational system. In addition, the minority group should participate in the design and development of the educational programs, as a means to provide a better educational experience.³⁵

A Theoretical Framework Derived from the Literature

As already mentioned, I have developed two new models designed specifically for a musical context, which are based on the UNESCO multicultural factors outlined above, that is, relevance, coexistence and inclusion. Each of the three UNESCO multicultural factors has been adapted into the two new models, thus each of my models has three components or factors as well. I have called the first model an Evaluative Criteria for Intercultural Music-making Activities, and the second one Guidelines for the Development of Multicultural Music-making Activities.

Evaluative Criteria for Intercultural Music-making Activities

This model comprises of a set of questions designed to be used as a guideline for compiling questionnaires, interviews and other means of collecting data. It has three factors, identified as relevance, coexistence and inclusion. In relation to the relevance factor, the questions are:

- 1) Does the music program incorporate content and activities based on the local indigenous culture?

³² Hevia and Hirmas, *Discriminación y Pluralismo Cultural en la Escuela*, 17-20; Hevia et al., *Políticas Educativas de Atención a la Diversidad Cultural: Brasil, Chile, Colombia, México y Perú*, 18-20; Hirmas, *Educación y Diversidad Cultural: Lecciones desde la Práctica Innovadora en América Latina*, 19-24.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

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- 2) Does the school community perceive the development of musical activities based on the local indigenous culture to be important and meaningful?
- 3) Does the school community perceive the development of musical activities based on the local indigenous culture to be an effective means to improve or enhance cultural identity?

In relation to the coexistence factor, the questions are:

- 1) Have musical activities based on the local indigenous culture been utilised to share musical experiences within the school and in the local indigenous community?
- 2) Have musical activities based on the local indigenous culture represented a bridge between the local indigenous community and other indigenous and non-indigenous communities?
- 3) Does the school community consider it important to share musical activities based on the local indigenous culture within the school, in the local indigenous community and with other indigenous and non-indigenous communities?

In relation to the inclusion factor, the questions are:

- 1) Have the school and the local indigenous community been involved in the design and development of the music program and activities?
- 2) Does the school community consider its participation in the design and development of the music program and activities to be an important factor in the school's development?

Guidelines for the Development of Intercultural Music-making Activities

This model is a set of statements that suggests some general procedures to promote cultural identity in a musical context. Specific procedures and strategies should arise, combining the information gathered through the previous model with these procedures. It has three factors identified as relevance, coexistence and inclusion. In relation to the relevance factor, the statement is:

the music program should incorporate a significant degree of meaningful content and activities related to the local indigenous music. The inclusion factor should be key to determining what is or is not meaningful. Moreover, the music program should promote the local indigenous music as a worthy musical genre.

In relation to the coexistence factor, the statement is:

the music program should encourage the school community to share musical activities based on the local indigenous culture within the school, in the local indigenous community and with other indigenous and non-indigenous communities. Moreover, the music program should develop strategies to promote these activities as a means to exchange cultural and life experiences.

In relation to the inclusion factor, the statement is:

the music program should incorporate in its design and development, the participation of people belonging to the local indigenous community. The purpose of this is the provision of relevant musical activities that match the aesthetic values of the community involved.

Findings

Firstly, I will present the findings in relation to the three factors. Then, I will present the findings related to the particular cultural features of this Pewenche community, and the way in which these cultural features have influenced the introduction of traditional music in the school. Finally, I will discuss how to improve the practice of traditional music in the school, specifically in teaching activities.

The Relevance Factor

The Butalelbun School community considers that there is already a sufficient amount of meaningful Mapuche-Pewenche cultural activities incorporated into the school. Mapuche-Pewenche music is implicitly present in these activities and plays a very important role, mainly because of the strong connection between music and the Mapuche-Pewenche belief system and traditions. A parent said:

[Music] is our language with the Creator. We transmit our needs [through music], therefore [music] cannot be omitted from our children's learning.

The musical activities considered the most meaningful are the singing of prayers and the performance of Mapuche musical instruments, both in the context of the group praying ceremony or *nguillatun*. The school community considers that the playing of Mapuche musical instruments is not sufficiently developed. Thus, the school should aim to improve, in quantity and quality, instrumental performance.

Additionally, the teachers consider that it is necessary to systematise music education content based on Mapuche-Pewenche music, as well as devising appropriate cultural activities and adhering clear educational purposes to them. The teachers consider the current cultural activities within the school to be only “a Pewenche experience” rather than an educational activity. Although the school allocates resources to carry out Mapuche-Pewenche cultural and musical activities, in common with schools throughout Chile, the formal written music program is not yet sufficiently developed.

The Coexistence Factor

The Butalelbun School community considers that the current Mapuche-Pewenche cultural activities are a strong means for sharing the Mapuche-Pewenche “traditional

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wisdom” or *kimün* within the school and in the local Pewenche community. The activities that share the traditional knowledge are considered very important because of the Pewenche understanding of communitarian life. A parent said:

[The school activities] are like everything else. We, the Mapuche-Pewenche people understand the school to be part of the community, as another family... This is our communitarian essence[,] the Pewenche school works in community. That division [between the school and the community] is made by the *winka* [non-Mapuche].

The school community recognises the need to share cultural activities with non-Pewenche people; that is, with non-indigenous and other Mapuche communities. Although these activities are barely developed, mainly due to the isolated location of Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun and the need for more economic resources, the school community claims that these activities are very important and should be carried out more frequently. Three reasons are given. First, the community considers that the discrimination exerted by the *winka*, the non-Mapuche, against the Mapuche-Pewenche, may be the result of the *winka*'s unfamiliarity with Mapuche-Pewenche culture. Therefore, these activities may help to disperse, or at least diminish such discrimination. A parent said:

The school must [provide a] link [between] both cultures... thus we will not be discriminated [against] and then we will have the possibility of integration with the rest of the country... I ask myself, how can they respect us if they do not know us or accept our traditions [?]

Second, the community believes that other Mapuche communities are musically more developed than the Pewenche. Therefore, activities with those Mapuche communities may encourage the Butalelbun students to learn and perform Mapuche-Pewenche music. Third, the community believes that the activities with non-indigenous people in a rural or urban context are an important link with the rest of Chilean society, a way to approach and participate in the “global culture”.

The Inclusion Factor

The Butalelbun School community considers that they are already highly involved in the development of cultural activities. This involvement is explained as a natural consequence of their communitarian lifestyle, and also of their duty when the activities are related to the religious “wisdom” or *kimün*. A teacher said:

Family is the expert about this knowledge ... therefore the family should be the main [party] responsible for any activity of this kind.

A parent said:

The whole community is important. May the students [in the school] sing the prayer without the *Lonko* and [without] the [wider local] community [?]. That is not possible, that is not right.

Mapuche-Pewenche cultural activities in the school are considered to be appropriate activities that correlate with the Mapuche-Pewenche aesthetic values. *Lonko* Elias Pereira, who is the local chief and the cultural adviser of the school, seems to be the main person in charge of the design and development of the Mapuche-Pewenche activities within the school and also in the wider Pewenche community of Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun. When religious “wisdom” is said to be part of the school activities, his presence is compulsory. Furthermore, most of the members of the teaching staff belong to the Pewenche community, which means that Mapuche-Pewenche cultural activities in the school are developed by Pewenche teachers for Pewenche students.

Contexts for the Practice of Traditional Music in this Pewenche Community

Traditional Mapuche-Pewenche music performed in this community is restricted almost exclusively to the group praying ceremony or *nguillatun*. In the Keuko Valley, this ceremony is considered very sacred. It lasts two or four days, pictures and videos are not allowed and non-Mapuche people cannot attend. However, mini-*nguillatun* are celebrated within the school in order to show the ceremony to non-Mapuche people and to promote the *nguillatun* within the school and in the wider local Pewenche community. Some participants suggested that because not all of the community participates in the *nguillatun*, thus the mini-*nguillatun* held within the school may help to improve the number of participants.

The Nguillatun and the Sacred Status of Certain Cultural Elements

Generally, a *nguillatun* is led by the shaman or *Machi* and only his/her drum or *kultrun* is considered sacred. However, in communities where there is no *Machi*, the *nguillatun* is led by the local chief or *Lonko* and most of the instruments and other elements of the ceremony are considered sacred.³⁶ In this community there is no *Machi*, thus the *nguillatun* is led by *Lonko* Elias. The musical instruments are made exclusively for the *nguillatun* and they are considered sacred, which means they cannot be played outside this ritual. A singing style called *tayel*, which is performed exclusively in the *nguillatun*, also receives sacred treatment and cannot be sung outside the *nguillatun*. The “rhea dance” or *choyke-purrun* and the “southern lapwing dance” or *tregül-purrun* are generally performed in the *nguillatun* as well as in non-

³⁶ González, “Vigencias de Instrumentos Musicales Mapuches”, 13-15; Hernández, *The Mapuche-Williche Music of the Maiwe Lake*, 72-76; Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 118-128.

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ritual ceremonies. However, in this particular community there are no other social events where these traditional dances could be performed, thus these dances are performed only in the *nguillatun* and are considered sacred too.

The Ül and the Ülkantun

Ül and *ülkantun* mean “song” and “singing” respectively. In the Mapuche tradition, when a person composes an *ül*, that *ül* belongs to that person. An *ül* is the result of a very intimate experience and no one else is allowed to sing that song. Although the singers or *ülkantufe* in other Mapuche communities are aware of this “ancient code”, they have adapted it into a more flexible practice in which others may sing a person’s *ül*. However, the Pewenche community of Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun, strictly follows the “ancient code”.

Traditional Learning of Mapuche-Pewenche Music in this Pewenche Community

The singing or *ülkantun* is learnt by children at home. They listen to their relatives and start to imitate those *ül*. While doing so, they acquire the “wisdom” or *kimün* which allows them to compose their own *ül*. The performance of instruments is also learnt at home. The children become interested in performing musical instruments when an elder, who performs in the *nguillatun*, practices in preparation for a ceremony. The children start to practice with spare instruments and when they decide to play in the *nguillatun*, the learning process is taken more seriously because a “strong” *kimün* is involved. Then, a new instrument is acquired; it receives a sacred treatment and can only be played by its owner.

Traditional Mapuche-Pewenche Music in the School

Traditional Mapuche-Pewenche music is performed in the school only during the mini-*nguillatun* celebrated several times during the year and in the celebration of the Mapuche New Year or *we tripantü* held in June (see [video 1](#)). The community considers that the traditional music should be included in the classroom in a systematic way in teaching activities. The Misioneras Lauritas created a Pewenche songbook to fulfil this need, but those tunes are not considered by the community to be traditional music. The songbook was made up of mainly Western tunes with lyrics in *Chedungun* (see [video 2](#)). Although the songbook is lost, many tunes are still performed in the school. The lyrics of those tunes vary in scope, from Catholic texts to stories about the community, including some Protestant Pentecostal tunes and lyrics introduced by students and parents.

The absence of traditional Mapuche-Pewenche music in teaching activities is the result of the sacred status of the instruments and the ownership code of the singing. However, the community believes that the singing or *ülkantun* and the performance of musical instruments could be integrated into the teaching activities

only if very specific conditions, outlined below, are in place. These specific conditions are the result of a reinterpretation of the “ancient code” by participants in this study.

Introduction of Traditional Music in Teaching Activities

During interviews with *Lonko* Elias Pereira and *Werken* Luis Queupil, they suggested that, for the introduction of singing or *ülkantun* into teaching activities, a song or *ül* must be composed by a member of the Pewenche community, with the clear intention that it will be performed in the school by members of the school. Thus, this *ül* may not be performed by any other people from outside the school community. However, an *ül* may be performed by people from outside the school community, that is, students from other schools, but only if the *ül* is composed with the intention that it may be performed by outsiders in the context of a cultural meeting. The key factor appears to be the intention that underpins the creation of an *ül*.

To introduce the performance of musical instruments in teaching activities, Pereira and Queupil suggested that the traditional drum or *kultrun* and the traditional natural trumpet or *trutruká* must be taught by an elder who performs those instruments in the *nguillatun*. Students may not play the instruments used in the *nguillatun* because of their sacred status. If a student decides to play an instrument in the *nguillatun*, the learning process may no longer continue at school, but must move to in a place deemed appropriate by the elder. The “intention to play in the *nguillatun*” involves a “strong” *kimün* and the school is not considered to be a suitable setting for that purpose.

Conclusions

The ethnically-based music program being implemented at Butalelbun School correlates with and partially achieves the outcomes suggested in the Guidelines for the Development of Intercultural Music-Making Activities. This school community has actively implemented Mapuche-Pewenche cultural activities, in which music is implicitly present and plays an important role. There is a strong consensus among the school members that Mapuche-Pewenche music should be included in a systematic way in the learning process. Furthermore, by implementing Mapuche-Pewenche cultural activities, it is possible to promote aspects of cultural identity.

As the outcomes suggested in the Guidelines for the Development of Intercultural Music-making Activities are strongly supported by the school community, three further actions are recommended in order to fulfil them. First, more activities that imply the sharing of the “traditional wisdom” or *kimün* with other Mapuche and non-Mapuche communities should be developed. This will require funds to be raised to travel to other communities and cities. Second, Mapuche-Pewenche musical content should be included in a systematic way in teaching activities within the classroom. However, there is a severe lack of sequentially-organised content about

Mapuche music.³⁷ Further research is needed to determine how this need could be fulfilled. Third, the practice of traditional Mapuche-Pewenche music should be included in teaching activities in the classroom. Although the school community believes this should be done, perceived conflicts with the “ancient code” for ownership and management of traditional knowledge have prevented this. However, if the entire community decides to reinterpret the “ancient code” in the way explained above, traditional Mapuche-Pewenche music could be included in teaching activities.

The research presented in this article is aimed at partially addressing a lacuna in what is known about the introduction of indigenous music into the school system in Chile. Further research into this area would provide useful information to address this and other issues related to multicultural policies and programs involving not only Pewenche people, but also other Mapuche communities and other indigenous groups in Chile. The endeavours of the Pewenche community of Trapa-Trapa Butalelbun to deal with a multicultural educational context demonstrates the cultural metamorphosis that many indigenous groups are currently experiencing. While adapting their cultural codes to match the new contexts, the Pewenche also strive to maintain and enhance their sense of cultural identity through a formal educational setting.

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³⁷ González, “Vigencias de Instrumentos Musicales Mapuches”, 32; Pérez de Arce, *Música Mapuche*, 91.

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