

# Spoken Language Acquisition Analogy and Real Time Generated Music

*«Fyrst må ein apa, så kan ein skapa» (Knut Buen)*

*«First you have to ape, then you can create» (Knut Buen)*

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# Imitation, Copying

- Simple, almost embarrassingly so, but effective, yet challenging
- Not well understood
- Not practiced very much in formal music training
- Why?
  - Too simple? (Banal?)
  - Prejudice? (Fear of loss of identity?)
  - Lack of competence? (Fear of insufficiency?)
  - Taken for granted? (Implicit knowledge ignored?)

# The Method

- Learning music one wants to master from sounding sources of high quality at an appropriate level of challenge.
- Learning through singing and clapping and other body sounds along with the sounding music until it is mastered and the source may gradually be removed.
- Transferred to the instrument (when possible) primarily using one's own memory and imagination. BECOMING THE SOLE SOURCE OF THE MUSIC. Played along the recorded music for verification.
- Finally: The music is notated FROM MEMORY (if desired and/or possible).

# Desired Outcomes

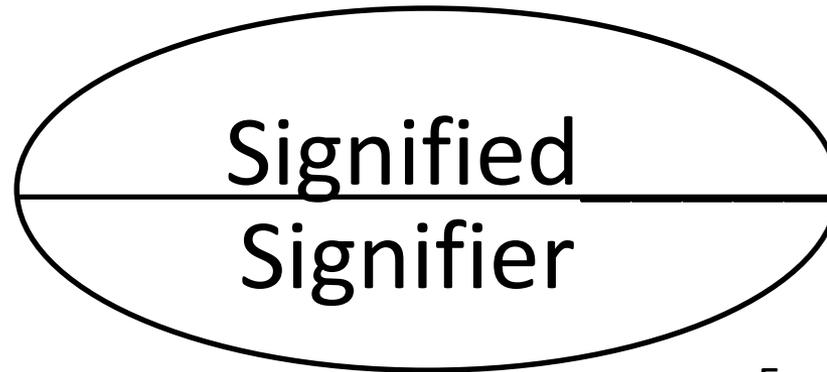
- Music language learning
- Strengthening musical imagination
- Strengthening the comprehension of musical unfolding
- Strengthening the aural capabilities
- Developing real time generative musical capabilities

# The Spoken Language Acquisition Analogy

This analogy has proven useful in understanding the methodology.

- The way children learn their first language (or we best learn foreign languages)
- Strong motivation (desire) and thus focus, a prerequisite for good learning
- Imitation of sounding sources
  - Repetition
  - Playing with sounds and phrases
  - Syntax, grammar and rhetoric is acquired as unintended byproducts, not as theory
- We generate meaningful sentences without thinking about the language or where it takes us. **The language comes to our assistance.**

# Where the language analogy fails



Ferdinand de Saussure

Lacking the signified, musical meaning is not created by pointing to external references but by internal cohesion, a kind of 'pure' language.

# INI and RGM

- Standard pedagogy is geared more towards instrumental command than music learning.
- INI: Instrument, Notation, Interpretation
- RGM: Real Time Generated Music
- Being a good instrumentalist is meaningless if one does not have music to play.
- INI- og RGM-learning are complementary learning methods, not mutually excluding.

# An idiomatic method? Yes

- You cannot learn music in the same way that you cannot learn language. You learn a language.
- The method is "by default" tied in with the copied material's language, but can be used on most musical languages.
- The first level of Meta Learning will largely be limited to the actual music language of the copied material.

# Limitations?

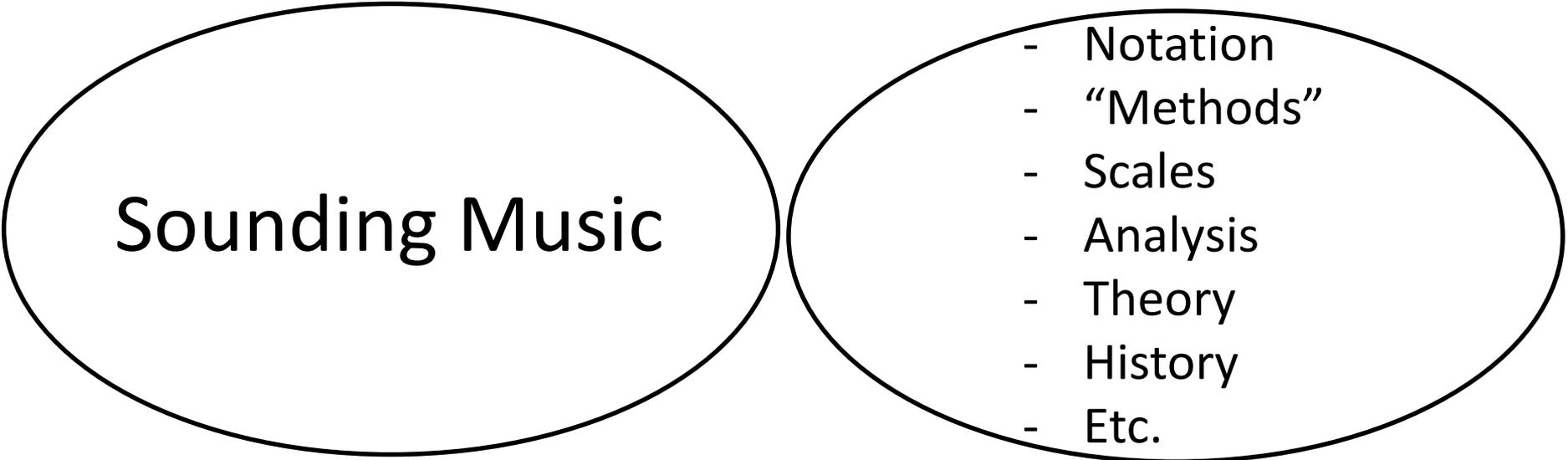
- The method can be used on all traditional musical systems and create good generic knowledge and skills in these systems (and possibly beyond).
- It provides good specific, but less generic learning in constructed systems, and in particular free improvisational musical expressions (soundscapes, sound dramas)
- Still a very effective method in all music learning, and especially in basic training. (Basic training unfortunately often required in HME.)

# An Epistemological Assertion

The role of theory

Primary Knowledge Base

Secondary Knowledge Base



Sounding Music

- Notation
- “Methods”
- Scales
- Analysis
- Theory
- History
- Etc.

Non-transferable knowledge base.  
Can be learned but not taught.

Transferable knowledge base.  
Can never replace the primary  
Knowledge base.

# BUT:

- Music is not Language, and not a Spoken Language
- Music may also be art ("artificial") (The Poetry Analogy?)
- Not a fundamentalist approach. Music Learning takes place in many shapes and forms, but the imitation method is often surprisingly disregarded.