

Characteristics of a Hip-Hop Pedagogy Based in Community Music Practices

A Nordic Bildung Perspective

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Abstract *The article examines Swedish Hip-Hop pedagogy in community music practices, particularly within what are known as study associations. The emergence of a local Hip-Hop scene in Sweden has led to the institutionalization of Hip-Hop within study associations. The article aims to outline the characteristics of Swedish Hip-Hop pedagogy and its implications for music education. It also discusses how music teachers can incorporate Hip-Hop in the classroom, even without prior expertise. The article includes an introduction to Swedish Hip-Hop, its educational practices, and its connection to community music perspectives. It concludes by presenting the characteristics of local Swedish Hip-Hop pedagogy, focusing on three educational themes: disciple pedagogy, pedagogy of trust, and cipher pedagogy. The conclusion reflects on the relation of Swedish Hip-Hop pedagogy to community music perspectives and the tradition of Nordic Bildung, and it discusses the implications of this relation for music teaching and overall music education.*

Introduction

In contemporary Sweden, Hip-Hop is part of popular mainstream culture and appeals to young people with different backgrounds—although the public perception of a rapper still tends to be that of a young man with an immigrant background (see Dankic 2019). This cultural image dates back to the emergence of Swedish Hip-Hop as intertwined with the transformation of Sweden from a predominantly homogeneously white nation into a multicultural society (Sernhede/Söderman 2010). Trädgårdh (2018) asserts that since the 1990s, Sweden has become a Nordic version of English-speaking immigrant societies such as the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Hip-Hop music

can be understood as a soundtrack to this change primarily because it allowed Swedish youths with immigrant backgrounds to identify with the experiences of Black Americans depicted in Hip-Hop lyrics and MTV music videos (Sernhede 2002; Söderman 2007; Sernhede/Söderman 2010; Snell/Söderman 2014). For young people residing in Swedish multicultural suburbs, known as “million program areas” (to counteract the housing shortage in the 1960s, the Swedish government decided to build one million apartments, often on the outskirts of major cities, with inspiration from housing construction in Eastern Europe), a clear comparison could be made with American residential areas that were also segregated from the white majority population. In Sernhede’s (2002) account, these multicultural suburbs were described as reservations by the young residents who observed their separation from the white majority population. Through their popular songs, the Swedish Hip-Hop group Latin Kings established new words in the Swedish vocabulary in 1994, derived from the cultural language of the Swedish multicultural suburbs, which incorporated Arabic and Spanish words and influences from other languages. A new sociolect, a type of dialect within a specific socioeconomic group, emerged in the Swedish multicultural suburbs and became known as Immigrant Swedish and/or Kebab Swedish (Kostinas 1998). Therefore, the Swedish interpretation and development of American Hip-Hop are closely tied to how Forman (2004), for instance, depicts Hip-Hop as an extremely localized phenomenon. When young people outside the United States began creating their own Hip-Hop music, they did not merely imitate American Hip-Hop, but rather developed new variations of Hip-Hop with a distinct, local flavor (see Bennett 1999).

In Sweden, Hip-Hop culture has also vitalized music activities in what are called study associations, which are organizations that provide and facilitate nonformal education within after-school or after-work settings for youths and adults. Hip-Hop in study associations has also gradually become a means for reaching out to new groups of youths, such as young people with immigrant backgrounds. In this article, I aim to analytically outline characteristics of Swedish Hip-Hop pedagogy in order to discuss its implications for music education in general. I first present the intersecting field of community music and Swedish Hip-Hop. This is followed by an introduction to the ideals and philosophy of the tradition of Nordic *Bildung*, which leads to a presentation of the characteristics of Swedish Hip-Hop education. I then discuss these characteristics in a way that paves the way for a concluding section centered around lessons for the music classroom drawn from Swedish Hip-Hop education.

Swedish Hip-Hop—Educational and Community Music Perspectives

In the early 2000s, pedagogical and institutional aspects of Swedish Hip-Hop were highlighted by scholars such as Sernhede (2002) and myself (Söderman 2007). At the same time, notable practitioners, including breakdancers, rappers, and DJs, were employed to impart their Hip-Hop skills and knowledge to other young individuals. Throughout Sweden, after-school activities that centered around the elements of Hip-Hop were organized. These activities typically take place within civil society, primarily through study associations. Swedish study associations receive state funding but are also connected to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and popular movements within civil society, such as labor (the biggest study association, the *Arbetarnas Bildningsförbund*, or Workers' Educational Organization, has strong ties to the Social Democratic party), temperance (runs the oldest study association, NBV, formed in 1894 in order to promote sobriety), and evangelical movements (connected to one of the smallest study association, *Bilda*, and related to the struggle for religious freedom from the former Swedish state church). Political parties and churches are also involved as membership organizations in these study associations. For instance, the Social Democratic party, with its connection to labor movement, is still involved in the study association ABE, the Church of Sweden (the former state church) runs the study association *Sensus*, and Muslim organizations operate the study association *Ibn Rushd*. Today, there are ten established study associations in Sweden. These are all national organizations with local branches spread across all parts of the country.

All in all, approximately 800,000 people participate in different forms of cultural and artistic activities organized and funded by study associations, such as dancing, playing music, or visual arts (*Folkbildningsrådet* 2015). In addition, there are 156 folk high schools in which adults can study to acquire various competencies, either aiming toward further formal education or to specialize in a certain field, such as the arts (*ibid.*). These folk high schools are some of the main actors for dealing, in particular, with the long-term unemployed. Study associations are also encouraged by national and local government to engage newly arrived refugees in their activities. Regardless of political affiliation, Swedish politicians over time have tended to agree on the role of *folkbildning* (“public education”) as a means to create a more socially sustainable society and to contribute to a higher national standard of education (*Göransson* 2010). Sweden has a tradition of advocating for holistic ideals of education and learning in which voluntary self-learning by the general

public is an essential part. In the Swedish context, the prefix “folk” (“people” in English) indicates a focus on Bildung of the masses, in contrast to the more elitist traditional education system. One essential component of folkbildning is nonformal ways of learning.

Today, an extensive musical infrastructure consequently exists within study associations in Sweden, consisting of local/community music halls run by various study associations. In the beginning of the 2000s, organized leisure activities connected to Hip-Hop occurred in Swedish study associations. Now, in the 2020s, there are many opportunities for young people interested in Hip-Hop to be creative and develop their skills in different kinds of pedagogical activities which are state funded and therefore free of charge. The Hip-Hop activities of the study associations that take place in young people’s leisure time have an organized form but no strict curriculum, which means that they can be considered a case of nonformal learning (Eshach 2007). Although Hip-Hop activities have a definite framework, there are no definite objectives or policy. Study associations provide many young people with opportunities to be involved in Hip-Hop-related-artistic activities. In these Hip-Hop activities, young people can develop their interests in dancing, writing lyrics, or engaging in music production.

The values present in Hip-Hop culture, primarily the “each one teach one” philosophy, to a large extent tend to parallel the ideology of the Nordic welfare-state model and its folkbildning politics, which has also been criticized for being utopian and related to the strive for social engineering (see Trädgårdh 2010, 2018). Following this type of critique, Ringsager and Madsen take on a critical stance toward “rap programs” from a Danish context (Ringsager/Madsen 2022: 276). In their view, this fostering of education within after-school Hip-Hop activities forms part of a (potentially pernicious) social technology “that involves the risk of reproducing societal marginalization, particularly of racialized youth” (ibid.: 259). Rather than treating Hip-Hop as emancipatory and having intrinsic value, Ringsager and Madsen address the risk of it being reduced to a social measure. It can, however, which this article will argue, be countered that the institutionalization of Hip-Hop can still contribute to the development of a highly valuable interest in teaching and pedagogy for its participants and consequently contribute to personal and lifelong arts learning.

Hip-Hop pedagogical settings within these study associations not only exist within established movements and organizations but are also influenced by the “each one teach one” philosophy, derived from the global origins of Hip-Hop (Chang 2005). The notion of elders teaching younger peers aligns

well with the Swedish folkbildning ideals of social justice and emancipation through self-directed education. Hip-Hop has been perceived and referred to by scholars as “Folkhemsrap,” in reference to the Swedish word “Folkhem,” which politicians used as a synonym for “the welfare state” during the 1900s (Bredström/Dahlstedt 2002). This metaphor suggests how effectively global Hip-Hop messages resonate with the Nordic welfare state ideology focused on equality and social rights. The educational ideals within this welfare state ideology are considered part of the educational tradition known as “Folkbildning” in Swedish, which can be translated into English as “popular” or “public” education and is also referred to internationally as “Nordic Bildung” (Andersen/Björkman 2017; Brooks 2020). This phrase, in turn, harks back to the German word *Bildung* (education, formation, cultivation) in differentiation from the closely related concept of *Ausbildung* (as a kind of training or professional instruction). Folkbildning in Sweden encompasses and promotes a form of pedagogy that has developed over hundreds of years within Swedish civil society, particularly in study associations and folk high schools, and which has to do with promoting *Bildung* rather than *Ausbildung*. In contemporary Sweden, Folkbildning has, however, evolved into an alternative education sector, which, like the formal education system, receives state funding (Nordic Bildung and Folkbildning are used interchangeably in this chapter). However, Swedish folk high schools, rooted in the tradition of Nordic Bildung, still do not conduct testing or grading of their students. In present-day Sweden, folk high schools are considered an equal and more nonformal alternative to formal education (such as in high school and university programs), the latter being often viewed as more utilitarian and exclusive.

The Tradition of Nordic Bildung

Seen from the perspective of educational philosophy, Bildung differs from education in several aspects: it lacks temporal boundaries and can therefore be seen as an ongoing process throughout one’s life. Moreover, Bildung is noninstrumental in that it cannot be justified solely by generating direct utility. Consequently, the concept of Bildung is built upon the unpredictability of learning and a belief in the pathways of knowledge, as it is impossible to anticipate what will be valued as useful or important in the future. In contrast to upbringing and education, Bildung emphasizes “the individual’s autonomy and responsibility in a lifelong process of learning” in contrast to formal education (Rolle

2014: 34). For individuals, the concept of *Bildung* highlights the significance of pursuing knowledge hand in hand with quality of life, while at the societal level, it can be seen to revolve around safeguarding the kind of creative knowledge environments that foster innovation. This perspective aligns with the views of the American philosopher and educator John Dewey (1997) from the early twentieth century, who argued for the intrinsic value of *Bildung*, asserting that the ultimate purpose of “education” is indeed “education” itself. Hence, there is no need for any utility beyond “education,” meaning that the focus should not be on learning anything specific but on the act of learning or *Bildung* itself. Dewey’s use of the term “education” implies a viewpoint closer to *Bildung* than education, which often implies a clear start and distinct end. The notion of *Bildung* also encompasses ideas about knowledge and learning as a relationship between the familiar and the new, the unknown and the foreign. Human beings break away from the everyday, venture into the unknown, and thereby acquire new experiences. Therefore, the journey serves as a central metaphor for *Bildung*, which in this context can be regarded as a steady process without purpose or end, where the journey itself is the sole objective (Varkøy 2017).

All these perspectives are embedded in the challenging-to-translate concept of *Bildung*, which originated from the philosophical and pedagogical discussions of the late eighteenth century and the German term “*Bildung*.” Immanuel Kant’s ideal of enlightenment, involving humanity’s emancipation from its “self-imposed immaturity,” is central in this context. Kant, the philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder, and the founder of the first modern research university, Wilhelm von Humboldt, were all interested in *Bildung* during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, initially as an academic concept that eventually spread beyond the university setting (see Varkøy 2010). In Sweden, when the discussion of *Bildung* first emerged in the nineteenth century, the term acquired particular significance through the three classical Swedish popular movements: the temperance movement, the revival movement, and the labor movement (Burman/Sundgren 2010). The Swedish translation of *Bildung* (*bildning*) is related to the popular understanding of the term, suggesting that *Bildung* can involve both shaping or creating and serving as a role model (Gustavsson 1996). On one hand, *Bildung* thus encompasses a perspective from below in the sense that individuals shape themselves (collectively and individually). On the other hand, there is also a top-down perspective indicating that there are role models and others who should emulate them. Historically, *Bildung* has primarily been applied to foster the improve-

ment of lower social classes. When discussing the contested and debated nature of the concept of *Bildung*, it relates precisely to the often-unspoken normative assumptions about the knowledge that can be considered part of *Bildung*. This inherent tension is often referred to as the “double function of *Bildung*,” encompassing both emancipatory ideals associated with *Bildung* as part of, for example, social mobility, and a philanthropic ideal where those who have already been elevated promote the importance of *Bildung* for those who do not yet possess it (see Rydbeck 1997).

By broadening the frameworks of understanding, *Bildung* fosters greater tolerance and openness in society, contributing to both democratic and personal development (Gustavsson 2012). Since *Bildung* can be a slow process, it rarely yields immediate economic rewards, which means it does not harmonize with, or even that it challenges, our current discourse on values such as “efficiency,” “knowledge society,” and “employability.” However, individuals perceived as educated in contemporary social life are considered cultured precisely in contrast to what is perceived as tasteless, narrow-minded, vulgar, or uncivilized in the present time. Investing in *Bildung*, therefore, means planning for learning with highly uncertain outcomes. Swedish advocate of *Bildung*, Sverker Sörlin, defines *Bildung* from a historical perspective as, among other things, a concept that involves “the individual undergoing personal development towards greater knowledge, nobler spiritual faculties, and a certain refinement” (Sörlin 2000: 39). This definition also demonstrates that *Bildung* is about more than just knowledge; instead, it points to a process of constant becoming as a human being. This meaning in the concept of *Bildung* is also shared with the Greek term “*paideia*,” which, like *Bildung*, signifies a comprehensive view of human physical, intellectual, and artistic capacities.

When it comes to Hip-Hop education, grounding it in *Bildung* allows for the recognition and support of different processes in various contexts. For example, music educator Gunnar Hirdman advocated during the mid-twentieth century for *Bildung* to involve critical thinking and for individuals to gain insights rather than simply expressing opinions (Burman/Sundgren 2010). At the same time, Varkøy (2017) cautions against a naive belief in the aesthetic realm, where good art automatically creates better people: just because someone can recite Shakespeare does not automatically mean they have understood, interpreted, or been influenced by the meaning. While cultural *Bildung* can be emancipatory when based on young people’s own interests, there is also a tendency for middle-class parents, for instance, to view cultural engagement as a means to learn self-discipline through playing instruments (Palme 1992).

However, placing Hip-Hop within the tradition of Nordic Bildung implies a foundation in what Brändström, Söderman, and Thorgersen (2012) refer to as musical folkbildning, characterized primarily by a learning process where self-education is central, and music contributes to people's liberation and educational journey. The core of musical folkbildning is self-education that contains informal learning processes. In the following section, I will delve into the characteristics of local Swedish Hip-Hop education and its relation to the tradition of Nordic Bildung.

Characteristics of Local Swedish Hip-Hop Education

In this section, I draw upon my own previous research on Swedish Hip-Hop education conducted over three decades. The cited empirical excerpts, however, stem from interviews and observations (from Lundin/Söderman 2014; Söderman 2018) and have been selected to encapsulate what I have found to be pivotal educational themes and characteristics of Swedish Hip-Hop education. The themes form the basis for concrete advice for the music classroom as well as a concluding discussion.

Disciple Pedagogy

In Söderman (2007) I use the term “disciple pedagogy” to describe an apprentice-based learning or peer learning that derives from Hip-Hop’s “each one teach one” philosophy, which is a key concept in Hip-Hop education. This philosophy emphasizes that experienced individuals within the Hip-Hop community should take on the role of mentors or teachers, passing down knowledge, skills, and cultural values to younger generations. As a pedagogical approach, it is deeply rooted in the traditions of Hip-Hop culture, where learning and artistic development occur through observation, imitation, and practice within a community of practitioners.

In the context of ideals of Nordic Bildung, which emphasize lifelong learning, personal development, and the pursuit of knowledge beyond instrumental utility, disciple pedagogy aligns well with the idea of “each one teach one” and the notion of continuous learning throughout one’s life. The tradition of Nordic Bildung promotes the idea that individuals should take responsibility for their own education and personal growth, while also valuing the role of community and collective knowledge. In Swedish Hip-Hop education, disciple pedagogy

manifests through various practices such as mentorship programs, ciphers, and community-based learning environments. Mentors, who are often more experienced Hip-Hop artists, share their skills and knowledge with aspiring artists, guiding them in areas such as rapping, beatmaking, DJing, graffiti art, and dance. This mentor-student relationship fosters a sense of community, respect, and collaboration within the Hip-Hop culture.

Moreover, disciple pedagogy in Hip-Hop education goes beyond traditional educational structures and provides an alternative approach for young people who may have struggled within formal schooling systems. It offers a “second chance” for individuals to engage in meaningful learning experiences that are relevant to their interests, passions, and cultural expressions. In Söderman (2018), an educational leader of Hip-Hop activities within a study association expresses the essence of disciple pedagogy:

We have tried to tell the older ones, “you’re in charge.” Some of the younger are also put in charge, but only for a few days to try it out. They can come in here and try to run the studio. But most importantly is that the older kids are responsible and in charge, because they were here longer. Those who are active, run the place. They basically have the mandate to rule and it affects people. Like one guy he was like “shit, I’m important, I can’t just go about doing anything.” Then others think that they want to be important too. (Söderman 2018: 254)

One participant in the Hip-Hop activities talked about the importance of mentors:

To be honest, I’ve been quite lucky to have mentors around me. Lifestyle has always been in focus and you’ve always been told what hip-hop is really about. (ibid.: 212)

Learning in civil society is often organized by having slightly older youth teach the younger ones. This is evident in the entire sports movement where youth leaders are a natural part. The same applies to the context of churches, where youth leaders are also utilized. It is clear that they serve as role models for the younger ones. In the context of Hip-Hop education, it is natural for slightly older youths to guide the younger ones. Sometimes, age is not the determining factor; rather, it can be based on those who have been involved in Hip-Hop for a longer time teaching those who have just started. As a music teacher, one

can approach students who excel in one of the aesthetic elements of Hip-Hop, such as rapping, producing beats, or dancing. In the classroom, students who engage in one of the elements of Hip-Hop can act as coteachers and older students can visit classes with younger ones and take the lead in dancing, beat-making, or rapping. As a music teacher you then both follow the tradition of Nordic Bildung's more holistic educational ideals and philosophy of "each one teach one."

In summary, a disciple pedagogy is a fundamental aspect of Hip-Hop education and aligns with the ideals of Nordic Bildung, of lifelong learning, personal development, and community engagement. By embracing "each one teach one," Hip-Hop education empowers individuals to become both learners and educators, fostering a sense of responsibility, creativity, and cultural preservation.

Pedagogy of Trust

Pedagogy of trust is an approach to education that emphasizes the establishment of trusting relationships between educators and learners. It recognizes the importance of creating a safe and supportive learning environment where students feel valued, respected, and empowered. This pedagogical approach is particularly relevant in the context of Hip-Hop education, which often draws on the lived experiences, cultural backgrounds, and artistic expressions of the participants. The above-quoted Hip-Hop leader expresses the core of this pedagogy of trust when he explains how the participants "can come in here and try to run the studio" (Söderman 2018). Responsibility and obligation to take care of the Hip-Hop activities are also embedded within the pedagogy of trust:

You need to learn to be considerate of others, avoid damage. It's important so that the activities can continue. If the studios and premises are damaged, or used for selling drugs, we won't be able to continue. That's why there has to be rules. (Lundin/Söderman 2014: 252)

In the ideals of Nordic Bildung, which emphasize personal development, critical thinking, and democratic participation, pedagogy of trust aligns well with the notion of nurturing a supportive learning environment. It recognizes the potential of every individual to learn and grow, and it values their unique perspectives and contributions. In the realm of Hip-Hop education, a pedagogy of trust involves creating spaces where young people can express themselves au-

thetically, explore their creativity, and develop their artistic skills (Söderman 2018). This approach acknowledges the cultural significance of Hip-Hop as a form of self-expression, identity formation, and community building.

To implement pedagogy of trust in Hip-Hop education, educators adopt an inclusive and nonjudgmental attitude, actively listening to the voices and experiences of the participants. They strive to create a sense of belonging and mutual respect, fostering an environment where learners feel comfortable taking risks and engaging in open dialogue. Furthermore, pedagogy of trust in Hip-Hop education recognizes the importance of recognizing and validating students' existing knowledge and cultural backgrounds. It encourages educators to incorporate students' diverse musical preferences, experiences, and cultural references into the learning process. By doing so, it not only enhances students' sense of ownership and engagement but also promotes cultural diversity and inclusivity within the educational setting (Söderman 2018).

When the pedagogy of trust permeates music education in schools, it also emphasizes the role of collaboration and collective learning. It encourages students to work together, share ideas, and engage in meaningful dialogue. This collaborative approach mirrors the cooperative nature of Hip-Hop culture, where artists often come together to create music, dance, and visual art forms. When a music teacher allows (or trusts) the students to use the music classroom outside the lessons or just lends the school's Hip-Hop enthusiasts "keys" to a recording studio room if there is one at the school, a pedagogy of trust is truly being practiced. This can be seen in relation to its opposite, which is often the case in regular school settings.

In summary, pedagogy of trust is an approach to education that emphasizes the establishment of trusting relationships and supportive learning environments. In the context of Hip-Hop education, it acknowledges the cultural significance of Hip-Hop as a form of self-expression and community building. Inspired by the ideals of Nordic *Bildung*, pedagogy of trust promotes inclusivity, diversity, and collaboration, while valuing students' voices, experiences, and cultural backgrounds. By embracing this approach, Hip-Hop education, whenever it is practiced in study associations or in music classrooms, empowers young people, fosters their personal development, and promotes democratic values within educational settings.

Cipher Pedagogy

The cipher or circle is highly significant both in overall Hip-Hop culture and in Hip-Hop non-formal activities within Swedish study associations. It is often utilized in dance and Hip-Hop music. Embracing the circle as a pedagogical method is not typical for Hip-Hop overall. But its usage in Swedish Hip-Hop can serve as a model for formal education settings. When general educators approach holistic *Bildung* ideals as alternative to traditional “one-way” communication in the classroom, they tend to find an increase in interactive and mutual learning processes. For instance, within the tradition of Nordic *Bildung* the study circle is used as method to achieve reciprocal learning collaboration in contrast to lectures and traditional lessons. Irizarry (2009) writes that “cipher” in Hip-Hop is used as a verb meaning “to share.” As a participant in a cipher, you share your skills and knowledge with others. It can also help participants to find individual or collective creativity; Rivera (2003) describes the cipher as “the ultimate brainstorming session.”

Cipher pedagogy is something that a music teacher can incorporate and draw inspiration from. It is possible for a music teacher to create a cipher in his classroom and then present a drumbeat (prerecorded or with a human beat box) and then present some sort of a chorus which can be certain rhythmically spoken words or within a melody. Between the chorus, students can be encouraged to improvise rap lyrics. Similarly, this approach can be applied to dance, where the circle serves as a stage for individual performances of dance moves. Cipher pedagogy in Hip-Hop education embodies the principles of collaboration, creativity, and community engagement. It represents a transformative approach to learning and teaching within Hip-Hop culture, emphasizing the importance of collective knowledge construction and self-expression.

In the context of the ideal of Nordic *Bildung*, cipher pedagogy aligns with the notion of lifelong learning and the recognition of the individual's autonomy and responsibility in the learning process. It goes beyond traditional educational settings and offers a space for experiential and participatory learning. Within a cipher, which can refer to a circle of individuals engaging in various elements of Hip-Hop such as rap, dance, and beatboxing, participants take turns showcasing their skills and improvising, creating a supportive and collaborative environment. This pedagogical approach fosters mutual respect, active listening, and appreciation for diverse voices and talents. Cipher pedagogy encourages the sharing of knowledge and skills among participants, with more experienced individuals guiding and mentoring novices. This dynamic

challenges traditional dichotomies of educator and educated, as the roles intertwine and create opportunities for organic learning and the development of teaching abilities.

The pedagogy of trust is central to cipher pedagogy, as participants trust and respect each other's creative contributions. This trust allows individuals to take risks, experiment, and grow as artists and learners. It also fosters a sense of belonging and identity formation within the Hip-Hop community. Cipher pedagogy extends beyond the boundaries of formal education, providing a realistic "second educational chance" for young people who may have struggled within traditional schooling systems. It offers an alternative space where young learners can engage in meaningful and culturally relevant activities, tapping into their passions and talents.

Furthermore, cipher pedagogy often occurs within the realm of Swedish civil society, which is connected to governmental and municipal funding. This support recognizes the educational and societal value of Hip-Hop culture and its potential for empowering marginalized communities. In the music classroom, the cipher method can be used in both rapping and dancing and can be combined with coteachers among the students who can act like leaders for the music activities.

In summary, cipher pedagogy embodies the values of collaboration, creativity, trust, and community in the context of Hip-Hop education. It aligns with the ideals of Nordic *Bildung* by promoting lifelong learning, individual autonomy, and the holistic development of learners. This pedagogical approach offers an inclusive and transformative educational experience that goes beyond traditional classroom settings, fostering personal growth, cultural expression, and social empowerment.

Lessons for the Music Classroom Drawn from Swedish Hip-Hop Education

In this section, I aim to elucidate the implications of knowledge about discipline pedagogy, pedagogy of trust, and cipher pedagogy for the music classroom, extending beyond the Swedish context.

Incorporate elements of discipline pedagogy. While Hip-Hop culture often emphasizes self-expression and freedom, it is essential to instill discipline and structure within the learning process. Set clear expectations, establish routines, and encourage students to take ownership of their musical development.

Teach them the importance of respecting history, taking care of equipment, and adhering to ethical practices in music production.

Foster a pedagogy of trust. Create a classroom environment where students feel safe to take risks, express themselves, and explore their creativity. Build trust by actively listening to students, valuing their perspectives, and providing constructive feedback. Encourage open dialogue, respect diverse backgrounds and experiences, and create a space where students feel empowered to share their thoughts and ideas freely.

Embrace the principles of cipher pedagogy. Cipher pedagogy, rooted in Hip-Hop culture, emphasizes the collaborative and participatory nature of learning. Encourage students to engage in group activities, such as freestyle sessions or ciphers, where they can collectively create music, share ideas, and build upon each other's skills. This approach fosters a sense of community, collaboration, and mutual respect among students.

Connect with the cultural heritage of Hip-Hop. Teach students about the historical and cultural roots of Hip-Hop, including its origins in African American and local communities. Explore the sociopolitical context that gave rise to Hip-Hop and discuss its impact on society. By understanding the cultural significance of Hip-Hop, students can develop a deeper appreciation for the music and its message.

Encourage critical thinking and social consciousness. Hip-Hop has long been a vehicle for social and political commentary. Encourage students to explore the themes of justice, inequality, and identity through their music. Help them develop critical thinking skills by analyzing and discussing lyrics, exploring different perspectives, and challenging societal norms. Empower students to use their music as a platform for advocating positive change in their communities.

Seek partnerships and funding opportunities. Collaborate with local Hip-Hop organizations, community centers, and cultural institutions to enhance the learning experience. Seek out funding opportunities to support resources, equipment, and guest artists or educators who can provide unique perspectives and expertise in Hip-Hop music. By forging partnerships, music educators can create a broader network of support and enrich their students' learning journey.

By following these pieces of advice, music teachers can create a learning environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking, cultural awareness, and personal growth. By integrating ideals of Bildung with influences from Hip-Hop-based education, they can empower students, nurture their musical tal-

ents, and prepare them to become active and engaged citizens in both the musical and broader societal contexts.

Conclusions

In conclusion, music teachers can effectively base their teaching on ideals of (Nordic) *Bildung* and incorporate influences from Swedish and international Hip-Hop-based education by embracing the principles of disciple pedagogy, pedagogy of trust, and cipher pedagogy. When combined with the rich cultural heritage and democratic ethos prevalent in ideals of Nordic *Bildung*, these approaches can create a unique and empowering type of Hip-Hop education. Nordic *Bildung*, deeply ingrained in Nordic and Scandinavian forms of self-perception, offers a specific perspective on the learning process. While its institutions may vary across countries, the underlying idea and philosophy remain consistent. This tradition aligns closely with the concept of empowerment and encompasses comprehensive educational ideals rather than narrow views that focus solely on employability. The study association structure within the Hip-Hop community serves as a platform for imparting these values. Active members act in accordance with the principles of respect for history and equipment, establishing rules that contribute to a sense of discipline and responsibility. The philosophy of “each one teach one” within the association-based learning environment aligns well with the tradition of Nordic *Bildung*, blurring the lines between educators and learners.

This educational alternative provides a realistic “second chance” for young individuals who have faced difficulties in traditional schools. By intertwining the roles of experienced individuals as teachers and novices as learners, the educational process organically develops the skills of both parties. Moreover, these endeavors often receive support from Swedish civil society, including government and municipal funding, highlighting the significance and recognition of such educational initiatives. By incorporating elements of cipher pedagogy, pedagogy of trust, and disciple pedagogy into their teaching practices, music teachers can create a learning environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and personal growth. They can engage students in active participation, encourage them to express themselves through music and lyrics, and nurture a sense of trust and respect among students and teachers. Through this intersection of Hip-Hop culture and Nordic *Bildung* heritage, music teachers have the opportunity to shape a unique type of education that

empowers students, cultivates their musical talents, and prepares them for active participation in society. By embracing these principles and ideals, music teachers can create transformative educational experiences that go beyond vocational training, emphasizing holistic growth and the development of responsible, engaged citizens. In conclusion, music educators who wish to base their teaching on ideals of Bildung and Hip-Hop-based education can take several distinct pieces of advice to create a meaningful and transformative learning environment which is presented in this article as final lessons for a music teacher.

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