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Developing a Big Band Repertoire based on the Local Folk Songs Melodies for Beginner Level Learners.

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Abstract

The aim of this research was to develop eight big band arrangements for beginner level using local folk songs melodies. Research was conducted in qualitative design which done by analyzing available books and scores of big band ensemble of various arrangers and publishers from overseas. The focus of the analysis was based on the criteria of the musical elements used by the big band's arrangers for beginners which include the selection of melodies and how the arrangement was developed. This research will also look at the usability and suitability of the product developed earlier among experts and experienced secondary music teachers. The result of this research which involved the form of eight big band musical arrangements were expected to enhance the music learning especially in music education field as this type of arrangements at the level stated which used local melodies was not yet being developed.

Keywords: Repertoire, Folk Songs, Big Band, Arrangement For Beginner's Level, Music Educations, Music Ensembles, Instrumental Music, Kssm.

Introduction

The 21st-century learning methods nowadays are more on the trend of accessing learning materials through the internet. However, the resources of existing quality big band compositions for the learning of music education either in schools or higher learning institutions in Malaysia at this time are commonly depending on repertoires from abroad. The repertoire of local song compositions for big bands are very limited and therefore need to be developed. Magnusson (2011) stated that scores are more than just an encoded music. It is also a composition tool that allows composers to express their views into a medium that is visually presented in sonic data.

Repertoires or scores are the main materials that help in the process of learning of how to read music. According to Penttinen (2013), he stated that the ability to read musical notation, though not a prerequisite in most musical genre, at least a good facilitator in terms of performing, training, creating and composing music (Lehman & Kopiez, 2009; Sloboda, 1978), and the teaching of the skills is considered as an important part of music education.

In Malaysia, the use of printed repertoire is very important especially in the learning of music education in schools. According to Loft (2003), the construction of repertoire of certain ensemble depending on several factors such as performing venues, numbers of tour concerts from one place to another or any on-air performances that have been done.

The importance of repertoire in music education in this country can be seen especially among the schools which offering Music Education as a compulsory subject in both their curriculum and co-curricular syllabus such as in orchestras and other ensembles. The repertoire serves as the main reference material for rehearsal activities, performances or preparation for music competitions. For most schools, this repertoire is usually purchased or self-composed by the teachers or music coaches. This has becoming the most important and complex challenge for music educators to select the suitable repertoires to be used in the classroom. This can be supported by Bartolome & Watts, 2012, which stated that finding high quality and relevant material is often a challenging process that requires searching through sources and searching for musical works that will ensure the preservation of students' musical understanding.

Music ensemble practices in schools is still usually depending on the printed score because it is more practical in the learning process which involving the coach's instructions and students' learning of music. Based on the researcher's observations in situations like practices, performances or music competitions, there are teachers or music coaches who use digital master scores such as tablets. However, it is still not used comprehensively and did not involved each student's part score in an ensemble. Here, the use of printed scores is likely more practical and relevant as students are required to jot down notes on the score during music training session about aspects such as interpretation and other conductor instructions. Therefore, the selection of band method books is still used as the main learning material up to this day.

As the result, most band coaches personally recommended several beginner method books in the classroom. This is evidenced through the wide selection of method books that have been listed by the respondents (Stuart, 2012). The learning method books provide references in terms of materials and teaching development to music coaches. Therefore, the development of a particular repertoire of big band songs using local melodies along with teaching and learning framework at the beginner's level will provide a variety selection of materials in the form of scores among teachers or music coaches for music classroom instructions.

The use of folk songs in the curriculum system has been a topic of debate for centuries since humans first learned music. Building the structure of music education using folk songs provides an opportunity to defend and develop a culture as it creates a sense of belonging to a culture, sustainability, and cultural transfer. Therefore, many countries in the world have structured music education models based on such understanding (Ozdek, 2015).

In Malaysian education field, the role of the local folk song melodies in the classroom coincides with the policy of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia through a new curriculum that was first implemented in secondary schools starting in 2017. As in Secondary School Standard Curriculum (KSSM), there are six main purposes of education which is to produce students with six profiles namely knowledge, thinking skills, leadership skills, bilingual skills, ethics and spirituality, and national identity. The sixth profile, "national identity", is seen as relevant to the notion of using the melodies of local folk songs as teaching and learning materials for music education in schools.

The Music Education's document known as Education and Assessment Standards Document (DSKP) through the new curriculum (KSSM), provides opportunities for the learning of the local folk songs melodies in three out of the five areas namely singing ensemble, musical instrument ensemble and musical appreciation. Furthermore, the school is given the authority in the implementation of KSSM Music Education from the aspect of selecting ensembles and materials such as repertoires. For schools which are equipped with full musical equipment facilities and expert music teachers, developing ensembles such as big bands is a party effort in which schools will be able to provide opportunities for students to develop their talents, interests and acquire various knowledge in music education.

Statement of Problem

Based on the initial survey of researchers on the internet, the repertoire of the song's rearrangement for the big band beginner's level in Malaysia which is mostly developed using the melody of local songs as its main contain is greatly reduced. Thus, this study has developed a material that focuses on the song's rearrangement for the use of big band practices with the content of the local folk song melodies, specifically for the teaching and learning purpose. The material is also aims to help in terms of providing easy access to a variety of teaching materials for coaches and musicians in the process of interaction: (i) teaching and learning or, (ii) learning and facilitation in the classroom.

Research Objectives and Questions

This research will develop a repertoire for big band teaching and learning materials based on the melodies of local folk songs. The objectives of this research are;

1. To collect and select local folk songs as a repertoire for teaching and learning of big band beginner's level.
2. To arrange local folk songs as a repertoire for teaching and learning big band beginner's level.
3. To evaluate the usability of the song's rearrangement of local folk songs as a repertoire for teaching and learning of big band beginner's level.

This research has set the scope of the study based on the following research questions;

1. What are the local folk songs that are suitable as a repertoire for the teaching and learning of the big band beginner's level?
2. How is the music arrangement of local folk songs selected as a repertoire for the big band beginner's level?
3. What is the usability of the music arrangement of selected local folk songs as a repertoire for the big band beginner's level?

Literature Review

The diversity of societies in the world can be represented by the differences in musical backgrounds. By evaluating music from a cultural perspective, we will find that folk songs is considered as one of the importance source of a culture and as a representative of a civilization (Jing, 2017). This song (folk song) was believed not been created by any composer but it is said to have emerged from the folk community itself. It is an original product resulting from the expression of feelings related to local issues (Carlin, 2006). The expression of a culture in lyrics and stories often shows the emotional relationship between the narrator or singer and the listener thus the mood influences in artistic

change (Istre, 2013). In addition, Bartok, as stated in Holtz (2009) considers that folk music and national music are the same things. This opinion states that folk music (of certain groups) is a symbol of a country which means that the peasants and laborers are the populations who are responsible for traditional songs. This leads to the idea that folk music is for the uneducated while the art of music is for the educated. ..."we recognize [folk songs] when we hear them - but we all listen to them in different ways ..." (McGuinness, 2012).

Folk melodies are produced through complex cognitive processes. Chen (2000) states that musical experience is developed and created when musicians master a combination of aural and physical skills, intellectual understanding, and mastery of manipulation concept. Years later, music became the language of communication that convey the feelings and ideas of a performer in a particular culture and genre. Because of that, we can identify that the folk songs are mostly represent the culture of the majority group of people and most likely influenced by the culture in society.

At this point, folk songs has becoming the important instructional materials in the early education of the society. The folk songs that consist moral values is very beneficial in children's learning and because of this they are passed down from one generation to another in order to preserve their local knowledge (Akkhavong, Sapkota and Yoshida, 2017).

Apart of that, these folk songs too are identified as one of the important historical archive. In some places, folk songs became one of the historical sources that show the clash of cultures or hybrids among the classes of society such as masters and servants (Morrison, 2018).

Moreover, the importance of folk songs as an identity for a particular civilization has been debated and academically agreed upon. The collection and publication of folk songs are seen as part of the search for a political background where folk songs as the basis of the identity and meaning of a country. A nation can be defined by a combination of folk song institutions and traditions which have not been influenced by colonialism and external political domination (Silverman, 1989; Peters, 2002).

In maintaining the preservation of music for culture in the context of its sustainability is an effort of continuous academic awareness. To achieve this, the learning of local melodies should be incorporated in the curriculum. Turner (2013) argues that liturgical constitutions and musical heritage within a community need to be preserved, adopted, and constructed for future purposes. Thus, through the educational process that this cultural sustainability can be acquired.

The use of folk songs as the material in the learning process has been debated academically over times. In music education, folk music should be included in the curriculum by taking into account the current trend. It is because it can help to encourage students to learn and at the same time produce a positive impact to promote and inherit local music culture (He, 2019).

Music educators and other musicians who attended the Tanglewood Symposium had added more material to the curriculum by including all types of music. The participants of the symposium made relevant conclusions which said...

"All-time music, style, form, and culture are embedded in the curriculum including popular teen songs and avant-garde music, American folk music, and music from other cultures."

(Volk, 1998; Culig, 2012)

It is a challenge to maintain the folk songs in local education system. Yang and Welch (2014) through a study conducted in China stated that although traditional music is graded as important as

western music, the students are still choosing the latter. It is said that the western music have better quality rather than the traditional music.

In order to place folk songs as the core learning in the music education, physical and environment factor that lead to the development of it should be emphasized. In western countries, the learning of music are influenced by the origin of their instruments. Western musical instruments such as brass, woodwind and other string instruments are normally used in various level in music education all around the world. It also influenced the instructional materials chosen for the learning of music in this country. This has become a challenging factor to place the folk songs in the learning of music as western instruments are more dominantly used along with western repertoire compared to folk songs. As such, we can see that the folk songs are not been treated fairly (Orhan and Topaloglu, 2018; Lehimler, 2014).

To maintain the sustainability of folk songs, there are efforts taken on modifying the songs to be performed around the world. The songs' modification are aimed for several purposes such as to suit the current community acceptance based on environmental factors, ideas, and social interactions (Nnamani, 2019). This change allows folk songs to gain its status even the times changed, yet preserving its origins, history, and identity of the society (Nnamani, 2019; Cappaletti, 1972).

In Turrowski (2017); Howe (1995), from his own research on Suzuki methods, found related information significant to the learning and teaching of folk songs. In Suzuki's method, the native language are being emphasized in the songs that are learned by the children. He mentioned that teachers will find it easier to use folk songs because they assumed that the children are more familiar with the folk songs due to selection of Suzuki's songs are significant with the culture. However, teachers are expected to help the students to be familiarized with the songs through listening activities before they learn the song by using the instruments. As for Zoltan Kodaly and Carl Orff, they believed that the most suitable approach for music education among children is to first introduce them with musical repetitions based on their experiences during childhood (Calder, 1990; Miller, 2012).

Therefore, the efforts to collect and document the melodies of folk songs are important and this will benefit the field of education. If a musical composition is to be remembered, it must be performed. Music notation is a traditional way of preserving music. It is crucial to ensure that manuscripts and scores printed from a bygone era can be obtained and in good physical condition (Baumann & Holth, 2011).

Methodology

This research used a qualitative approach involving methods such as: (i) document analysis on big band materials available in the market such as song scores through sources in libraries and the internet; (ii) the technique of transcribing or copying selected local melodies which was also implemented by the researcher, and; (iii) in-depth interviews with music experts and teachers aimed at obtaining feedback related to the song's rearrangement of the big band for beginner's level.

Melody transcripts, copying, and notating of local big band rehearsal song's rearrangement were using Sibelius 7 software. This software was chosen because it has several advantages in applications to developed song's rearrangement and print quality specifically for big band repetitions.

Research Framework

The ASSURE instructional model (Analyze, State Objectives, Select Methods, Media, and Materials, Utilize Methods, Media, and Materials, Require Learner Participation and Evaluate & Revise) has been selected to develop repertoire based on folk song melodies.

Figure 1 describes six phases based on the ASSURE Model applied in this study. Phases 1 to 4 involved work between the research team and the environment such as internet reference materials, libraries, and songwriters. While phase 5 involved the interaction between the research team and the targeted individuals as experienced respondents in the field studied. Phase 6 is the last step of the study after the process of "Improvement" - Phase 4 - Phase 5 are completed.

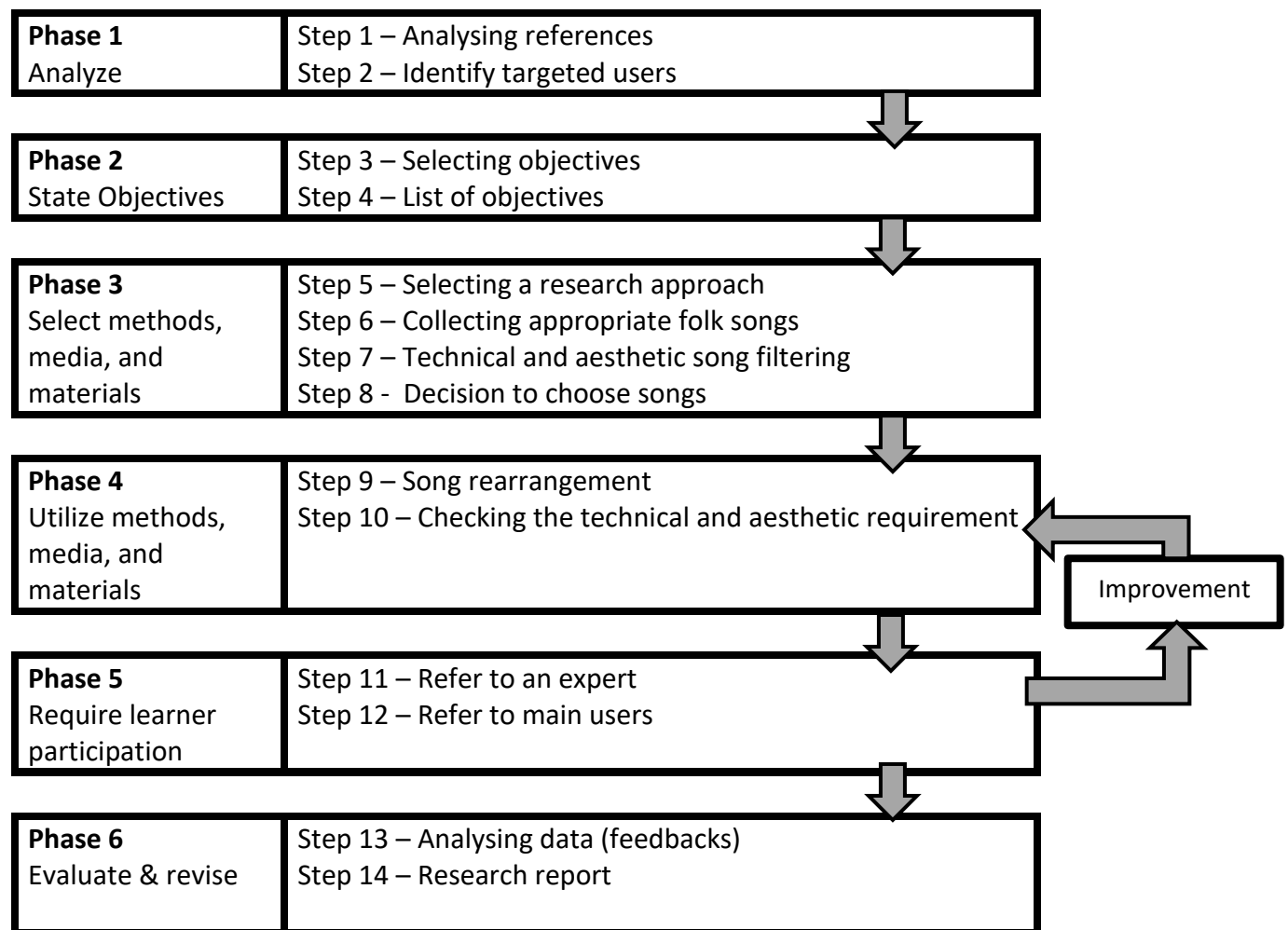


Figure 1. Study framework based on the ASSURE Model.

Research Findings

Researchers have analyzed the big band song's rearrangement books level 1 to 2 entitled "Discovery! Jazz Series for Developing Jazz Ensembles "published by Hal Leonard Corporation (see table 1) obtained from Tuanku Bainun Library, Sultan Idris University of Education, Tanjung Malim. The purpose of the analysis was to obtain the selected melody character in constructing the song's rearrangement for the beginner's level stage. The five melodies used in the song's rearrangement

book have been analyzed from pitch elements: range; and rhythm and time signature. The analysis was conducted on the master score of the five song's rearrangement. The findings for the analysis of the five song's rearrangements are as follows:

Table 1

Selected melody analysis in 5 song's rearrangements published by "Discovery! Jazz Series for Developing Jazz Ensembles"

No.	Song title/ Year of Arrangement Publication	Original compose r	Rearrange d by	Level/ Grade	Range of melody	Time signatu re	Rhythm
1.	Blue 'N' Moody (2010)	Micheal Sweeney		1/ None	One octave leading note to leading note	4/4	Semibreve , minim, crotchet, dotted crotchet, quaver
2.	A String Of Pearls (1993)	Jerry Gray	John Berry	1 - 2/ None	One octave tonic to tonic	4/4	Minim, crotchet, dotted crotchet, quaver
3.	Mas Que Nada (2000)	Jorge Ben	Micheal Sweeney	1 - 2/ None	One octave dominant note to dominant note	4/4	Semibreve , minim, crotchet, dotted crotchet, quaver
4.	Route 66 (2004)	Bobby Troup	Paul Murtha	1/ 1.5	One octave dominant note to dominant note	4/4	Semibreve , minim, crotchet, dotted crotchet, quaver
5.	Brazil (2000)	S.K. Russell dan Ary Barroso	Jerry Nowak	1 - 2	One octave dominant note to dominant note	4/4	Semibreve , minim, crotchet, dotted crotchet, quaver

Based on the findings of the analysis of the five songs in the song's rearrangement book "Discovery! Jazz Series for Developing Jazz Ensembles", some local melodies with the similarities such as: (1) ranged no more than 1 octave; and (2) the use of semibreve to semiquaver, researchers have selected 8 local melodies suitable for beginner's level big band arrangements.

The melodies are; (1) Suriram; (2) Enjit-enjit Semut; (3) Wau Bulan; (4) Geylang Si Paku Geylang; (5) Anak Udang; (6) Can Mali Can; (7) Lompat Si Katak Lompat dan (8) Anak Itik Tok Wi.

Song 1: *Suriram*

Song 2: *Enjit-enjit Semut*

Song 3: *Wau Bulan*

Song 4: *Geylang Si Paku Geylang*

Song 5: *Anak Udang (Eb Major)*

Song 6: *Can Mali Can*

Song 7: *Lompat Si Katak Lompat (C minor)*

Skor 8: *Anak Itik Tik Wi*



























Rhythm modification: Two songs will have a melody with the type of crochet triplet rhythm, namely the song *Suriram* (bar 7) and *Geylang Si Paku Geylang* (bars 1 and 2). The rhythm of this triplet will be changed to quaver - crotchet-quaver for the appropriateness of learning the rhythm pattern for the beginning level.

As a guide to developing a big band arrangement for beginner's level, the study has first analyzed the existing selected big band materials. Five big band arrangement books level 1 to 2

“Discovery! Jazz Series for Developing Jazz Ensembles ”published by Hal Leonard Corporation has been analyzed. The five song’s rearrangement are Blue N Moody, A Strings of Pearls, Mas Que Nada, Route 66, and Brazil. The musical elements in the song’s rearrangement analyzed are from the context: (a) range of the instrument; (b) harmony; (c) the use of form; (d) tempo; (e) style; (f) dynamic; (g) articulation and (h) rhythm.

Table 2

(a) The results of the analysis on the use of the instrument's range – instrument's key in the song's rearrangement of the big band beginner's level

Instrument	Blue N Moody (Level 1)	A Strings of Pearls (Level 1-2)	Mas Que Nada (Level 1-2)	Route 66 (Level 1-2/ Grade 1.5)	Brazil (Level 1-2)
a) Flute		<None>	<None>	<None>	<None>
b) E flat alto saxophone					
c) B flat tenor saxophone					
d) B flat baritone saxophone					
e) B flat trumpet					
f) Trombone					

Based on the analysis of the flute, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, trumpet, and trombone, the study found that the flute instrument is not compulsory in the big band repertoire. This can be seen from the results of instrumentation analysis (a) flute used only in Blue N Moody songs. Of the five songs: (b) E flat alto saxophone as a whole ranged between note D4 (not concert tone) to B5; " (d) B flat baritone saxophone ranged between notes C4 to C6; (e) B flat trumpet ranged between note B flet3 to F5 and (f) trombone ranged between note E2 to D4.

Table 3

(b) The results of the analysis of harmony in the arrangement of the big band beginner's level

Triads and chords	<i>Blue N Moody</i> (Level 1)	<i>A Strings of Pearls</i> (Level 1-2)	<i>Mas Que Nada</i> (Level 1-2)	<i>Route 66</i> (Level 1-2/ Grade 1.5)	<i>Brazil</i> (Level 1-2)
Basic triads	Triad (1,3,5)	Triad (1,3,5) augmented	<None>	<None>	Triad (1,3,5)
Chords with 7th	7th dan minor 7th	major 7th,	7th, minor 7th, major 7th	7th dan minor 7th	7th, minor 7th & major 7th
Others (tertiary chords)	#5, minor 7th(b5), 7th (b9), minor 6th/9, over chord	6th, 9th, diminished 7th, augmented 7th,	6th, 9th, 7th(#9), 7th(b9)	6th, 9th, 7th(b9), diminished 7th, augmented 7th, over chord,	#5, diminished, minor 6th, over chord

The use of triads and chords in the arrangements analyzed is freely constructed. For starters, the composers are not tied to only the basic triad 1-3-5 but instead often use the 7th chord and other tertiary chords to get the effect of harmonious dissonance sound which is the identity in the song's rearrangement of big band songs.

Table 4

(c) Results of the analysis on the use of Form; (d) tempo; (e) day style; (f) dynamics in beginner's level big band song's rearrangement

Song title	Form	Tempo	Style	Dynamic
<i>Blue N Moody</i> (Level 1)	7 sections with the solo on the 4th section	136 crotchet per minute	Swing	<i>mezzo-forte, fortepiano, forte dan fortissimo</i>
<i>A Strings of Pearls</i> (Level 1-2)	8 sections	138 crotchet per minute	Swing	<i>mezzoforte and forte</i>
<i>Mas Que Nada</i> (Level 1-2)	10 sections with the solo on the 8th section	160 crotchet per minute	Bright Samba	<i>Piano, mezzo-forte and forte</i>
<i>Route 66</i> (Level 1-2/ Grade 1.5)	7 sections with the solo on the 5th section	120 – 128 crotchet per minute	Swing	<i>mezzo-forte, fortepiano and forte</i>
<i>Brazil</i> (Level 1-2)	8 sections with the solo on the 6th section	96 – 104 crotchet per minute	Samba	<i>mezzo-forte and forte</i>

The use of the form as a whole based on the analysis of the five songs is in the range of 7 to 10 sections. The tempo is from medium speed crochet = 96 per minute to crochet = 160 per minute. The selected style used was 3 songs with Swing style and 2 songs with Samba style. While the dynamics used are a minimum of two to four types in a song. The frequency of dynamic use is *mezzo-forte* used in all songs and the *piano* dynamics were the least used, only in Mas Que Nada.

The articulation in the big band arrangements analyzed is the same in all five songs with the frequency of: *staccato*, *accent*, *tenuto*, and *marcato*. The use of rhythm in the song's rearrangement is also the same as the notes starting from semibreve to quaver only for wind and brass instruments. Semiquaver variations are only applied to the rhythm section song's rearrangements.

Based on the analysis of the songs, the big band song's rearrangements for the beginner's level are developed using selected folk songs. Researchers have discussed with the arranger about the selected song. The arranger is a music activist who has more than 30 years of expertise and experience in the field of performance, composition, and song's rearrangement in the national music industry.

Researchers and composers have determined that the song's rearrangements that were developed comply with the criteria based on the analysis of big band songs level 1-2 / grade 1.5 that has been conducted (refer to Table 1, Table 2, and Table 3).

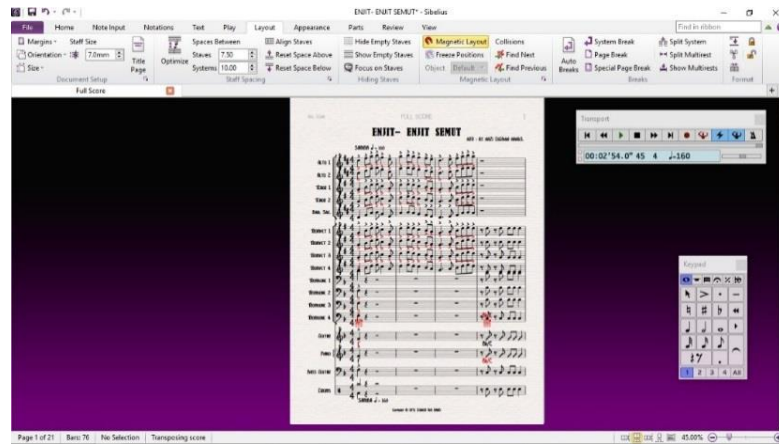


Figure 2a: Example of a big band song's rearrangement at the beginning stage of the song Enjit-enjit Semut using Sibelius software.



Figure 2b: An example of a big band song's rearrangement at the beginning stage of the song Geylang Si Paku Geylang using Sibelius software.

The next study focuses on the usability of the big band song's rearrangement beginner's level books which has been produced through feedback from; (i) jazz music experts, and (ii) targeted users among music teachers in secondary schools. The New Product Development (NPD) process involves several stages, including identifying customer needs, developing product concepts, researching product design, testing, and commercialization (Kazimierska & Grębosz-Krawczyk, 2017).

This section involves Phases 4 and 5 in this study. Feedback includes processes of examining material quality, the accuracy of material concept with big band ensemble, and appropriateness of content involving musical elements. Feedback from music experts and music teachers was used as a guide for researchers to refine and improve the song's rearrangement books.

Through the interviews and discussions that have been conducted, experts and teachers agreed that the material developed was very suitable to be used based on the melody identity of local folk songs. Experts and teachers also agreed that the songs that have been composed can be applied either in school, university or community in the context of big band beginner's level learning process. Teachers also stated the usability of the materials in the KSSM Music Education classroom (Secondary School Standard Curriculum) and co-curricular activities in schools.

Conclusion

This research carried out has developed eight songs arrangements of beginner level big band songs using local melodies. The local melodies used for these arrangements are: (1) Suriram; (2) Enjit-enjit Semut; (3) Wau Bulan; (4) Geylang Si Paku Geylang; (5) Anak Udang; (6) Can Mali Can; (7) Lompat Si Katak Lompat, and; (8) Anak Itik Tok Wi. These songs arrangements were done based on the criteria and elements that have been analyzed, which are (a) range of the instruments; (b) harmony; (c) the use of form; (d) tempo; (e) style; (f) dynamic; (g) articulation and (h) rhythm. The guidelines of these criteria and elements are based on foreign beginner level big band arrangements such as Blue N Moody, A Strings of Pearls, Mas Que Nada, Route 66, and Brazil.

These arrangements are then being identified and determined of their usability by jazz music experts from the local university and experienced music teachers. Both parties have agreed that the arrangements are appropriate for beginner level big bands to use them as rehearsal pieces.

The researcher suggests that further study can be done to develop arrangements for intermediate big bands by using local melodies. It is to be hoped that the benefits of this study can help to expand the repertoires of big band with local melodies for education and music learning activities.

The selection of quality materials is the most important preparatory step in the teaching and learning process. Maisarah and Latifah (2002) in Omar and Mustafa (2019) stated that reading material that contains good content or knowledge able to form good moral behaviour and identity among children and this can be achieved through the exposure of good reading material. Moreover, the selected materials are also able to form a profile of students with patriotic values as emphasized in the Ministry of Education Malaysia. As stated in Form 1 Music Education: Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document (2015), "They show love, support, and respect for the country". The development of big band song's rearrangements based on local melodies that were conducted in this research contributes to the sustainability of songs with local identity that will remain to be known from generation to generation through instrumental activities in schools or universities. Researchers concluded that the product developed achieved its objectives based on positive feedback from respondents which representing the target users of this study.

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