

Flowchart or Decision Tree

How to make a qualified and explicit choice of method

The premise for using the flowchart is that you can answer a motivated YES to the question: "Is the analysis of musical material, musical meaning and/or musical processes/interaction relevant for me in this specific context (study, documentation, EBP)?"

The choice of analytical methods depends on the answers to the following questions:

1. The trace:

Is a recording of the music available? (Type)?

If not: what then is the trace?

Are verbal comments from client(s)/therapist/other(s) included/available?

2. The scope:

Does the analysis address one short segment, some segments or many segments?

Does the analysis cover part of one session, a whole session, or a series of sessions?

If segments are selected, what criteria will the selection be based on?

3. Focus and purpose

Is a description/analysis/interpretation of the music needed? (cf. Nattiez' model)

Does the analysis focus on sound, syntax, semantics, pragmatics? (cf. Ruud's model)?

Is the focus on the music, on the musical experience, on musical interactions, or on the relationship between the music and the experience?

Do you have any analytical or theoretical assumptions to guide you? Is a specific theoretical frame necessary and helpful?

4. The representation

Is a visual representation of the music necessary?

If no: How then will the analysis refer to the music in detail? If description is sufficient: What kind of description is appropriate?

If yes: Is a representation available (e.g. score, sheet music), or will you have to produce it?

If you must produce the representation yourself: What type of representation is relevant and possible: midi file, score, transcription, graphic notation, verbal description, waveform, intensity profile, other?

5. The presentation (could also be step 1!)

Is it an oral or a written presentation?

Who is the audience/target group and what is the purpose of the presentation?

What types of auditive and visual documentations are relevant and appropriate in the context?

An overview of available methods of analysis¹ is presented in Bonde, L.O. (2005c):

Researching the Music. In Wheeler, B. (ed.) *Music Therapy Research*, 2nd Ed. Barcelona

In the next section the flowchart is transformed into a step-by-step guide to inform the choice of analytical procedures. Each question will be answered a) in a general way, indicating types of answers and consequences, b) in a specific way, namely illustrated to the two examples.

¹ The only method mentioned here and not in Bonde (2005c) is Mia. An introduction follows below.