

Structure 2

A strong suggestion of the common pentatonic scale (second inversion) prevails in the second five note structure, with the decorative function being now served by the leading note ti. The first three tones of the structure form the so-me-fa relationship of universal three note children's chants. This is exemplified in the old clapping favourite 'A sailor went to sea sea sea', which contains several important motifs: a stepwise lower so-do progression and the vigorous stating of the minor third:



A sailor went to sea sea sea (1981)

This tune or variations on the same, was recorded 25 times and sung to a wide variety of texts. It was well-known, and mostly sung in tune.

Structure 3

This is common to nursery songs. It consists of the tones do-re-so. The parody 'Jingle Bells' utilizes this formula. It is characterized by many repeated notes, some stepwise movement, and the descending leap of a fifth:



Jingle bells Batman smells (1978)

Other five-note tonal structures found in the data are not necessarily suggestive of common childlike melodies, as they exhibit patterns in extemporization, as illustrated in the following melody, which is based on a lower *ti-fa* stepwise movement. The opening ascent is followed by descending sequential counteraction, resulting in a tightly knit, somewhat predictable melody. The lower leading note *ti* is used as a pivot to rebalance the progression and provide the necessary cadence which proves to end on *me* rather than the expected *do*.

My mother told me (1978)

The image shows a musical score for the song "My mother told me (1978)". It consists of four staves of music. The first three staves contain the melody with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: "My mother to -ld me that she would buy me A rub-ber dol-l - y If I was good, good goo-dy-good good, But when I told her I kissed a so - l - dier, She would not buy me A rub-ber D - O - dou - ble L YI". The fourth staff shows a tonal structure diagram with two horizontal lines and several vertical bars. Below the diagram are the Roman numerals III and IV, indicating the tonal structure of the melody.

CONCLUSIONS

Small tonal clusters are common musical types in children's playlore. It is useful to view them as part of a general continuum of children's music, ranging from casual speech to song. Major modes are more common, and as in most children's play songs, the relationship between text and melody is syllabic.

I have not wavered from my opinion of 1981, that where possible adults should avoid exploiting the privacy of the children's playworld. Too many texts have already been brought from the playground to the classroom. However, there is no reason why the melodic structures themselves should not be utilized, and many teachers seem to be very capable of writing simple but entertaining texts as are the students themselves.

These small melodic structures are part of the 'mother tongue', albeit Western civilization, in an expanding multicultural climate. If we continue to keep our eyes and ears open in the playground there is doubtless much more that our children can teach us.

Those readers wishing to explore the topic of childlike melody further may like to refer to the works of Cullen (1971), Brunton (1976), Clark (1980), and Cooke (1980).

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