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**THE CANON OR THE KIDS: teachers and the  
recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the  
secondary school curriculum**

**by Graham John McPhail**

**A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree Doctor of Education, The University of Auckland, 2012.**



## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate and explain the ways in which six secondary school music teachers manage the relationship between classical and popular music in their elective teaching programmes. The focus of this research was on the teachers and the influences on their curriculum decision making. Within a wider cultural context dominated by aesthetic relativism there are tremendous challenges and responsibilities for teachers as they act as recontextualising agents in the pedagogic recontextualising field (Bernstein, 2000). Their stories are a rich source of data concerning the values and knowledge they hold as important. Each case provides valuable insights into the influences and processes of music teaching in New Zealand secondary schools, as well as shedding light on the views of students.

This research establishes that the participant teachers identify and utilise popular and classical music as distinct but interrelated forms of knowledge. The central issue is not so much a contestation between styles of music, but the accommodation of a tension between types of knowledge and ways of knowing strongly associated with each style of music - socially acquired informal knowledge and disciplinary knowledge. Teachers legitimate popular music by including it in the curriculum but also by recontextualising practices and knowledge associated with this style to enhance its conceptual reach for the educational context. A key factor in teacher effectiveness therefore is the degree to which links between informal and formal knowledge can be created so that students' understanding and conceptual abilities can be extended across music knowledge boundaries. A significant finding is that the teacher's role is pivotal. It is teachers' knowledge that is significant in maintaining the epistemic integrity of a subject which is strongly 'horizontal' – that is, susceptible to socio-cultural influences. Knowledge displacement brought about by the move to generic curriculum documents increasingly places the responsibility on teachers to manage and balance both the epistemic and social demands of curriculum conception and realisation. Teachers' values, decisions, and actions are pivotal to music education as they interpret and assimilate a multitude of influences with a high degree of autonomy. The questions of what knowledge should be taught, how it should be taught, and how teachers can be effective are all considered in this research and have relevance to the wider field of education.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to the great educators in my life, Vivian Edward Bevan, Sydney Manowitz, and Heather Gummer.

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## **Background to the study – music and types of knowledge**

This thesis seeks to bring increased understanding to the challenges faced by New Zealand secondary school music teachers in relation to the inclusion of western classical and popular music within the classroom curriculum. The research focuses on teachers' management of the complex relationship between these two musical styles and the forms of knowledge associated with each from curriculum conception to realisation. This in turn is a reflection of the perceptions each teacher holds concerning the educational significance and cultural value of these two categories of music. On one level the research is an exploration of the challenge to the traditional emphasis on classical music within education brought about by the ubiquity of western popular music forms. At a deeper level the research identifies tensions between different forms of knowledge, informal and disciplinary, and the role each might contribute to cultural transmission and transformation within the school. Bernstein (2000) described such complex and dynamic processes, where various discourses converge in the classroom, as a process of recontextualisation.

The case studies in this research show how teacher effectiveness is central to the development of students' knowledge in and about music, and this effectiveness is reliant on each teacher's musical and pedagogic knowledge. The role of the teacher is pivotal as they recontextualise theoretical, procedural, and informal musical knowledge with discourses from both music and education contexts. The case studies indicate that the teachers reproduce knowledge boundaries associated with classical and popular music, but the boundaries they establish are varied, dynamic, and permeable. Some approaches appear more effective than others in assisting students to negotiate these boundaries, enabling them to become fluent in both conceptual and procedural aspects of the discipline. Where effectiveness appears high (see for example case studies two and five) elements of popular music practices (a horizontal discourse (Bernstein, 2000) – see chapter two) are adapted for the educational context. Horizontal knowledge is recontextualised to align with the vertical or systemised processes of conceptual learning. Through the linking of contextual (horizontal) knowledge to other knowledge and concepts within the discipline, students' understanding and application of knowledge can be extended. The pivotal factor in this process is the teacher's ability to take segmented and contextualised learning and make the connections across knowledge boundaries. Working with a high degree of autonomy, teachers make judgements of value related to the potential for learning that various styles and forms of music knowledge provide. The inherent tension observed in this research is between knowledge that is structured (a knowledge that is understood because it has been tested against conventions and developed through a process of

collective evaluation over time) and informal, social, or horizontal knowledges (which are to a large degree localised and often more sensory than conceptual). There is a difference between these knowledge types which is significant for the conception of curriculum and pedagogy. One knowledge type is located in experience and the other is located in the collective knowledge of the discipline. Through the emphasis on the identification and development of concepts, disciplinary knowledge is the key to enabling students to move beyond their experience and to have the capacity to participate in the conversations of the field (Wheelahan, 2010b).

## **The teacher as central**

While many influences are brought to bear on curriculum realisation within the field of education, Westbury (2002) suggests that “it is teachers with their priorities and their ambitions ... not curricula or policies, who animate the work of schools” (p. 156). However, we know very little about music teachers’ views of the cultural changes of recent times and how they are being reflected and managed in their curriculum decision-making. There is a great deal of polemic regarding the current state of international music education (Sloboda, 2001; Bowman, 2002; Elliott, 2005b; Walker, 2009; Woodford, 2005) but there is little research on the work of music teachers and very little from New Zealand.

New Zealand teachers have considerable autonomy in the development of curriculum content, and recent debate on the Ministry of Education website musicnet (<http://artsonline2.tki.org.nz/interact/musicnet/>) highlights the on-going concerns that many teachers have regarding approaches to curriculum and pedagogic conception:

Increasingly the very vague curriculum documents seem to lend themselves to simply teaching to students’ particular interests/tastes/preferences and not bothering to educate them more widely into the diverse richness of other music styles and genres. Are we not supposed to be “educators”?? (Hamilton, 2009).

Of course teachers should listen to their students and find out what their students want to learn. It is about the students, their music, their education, not the teachers. By way of metaphor the teacher can be at the centre of an empire, colonising the students - a political model one hopes we have discarded or ... the teacher can participate in a democratic milieu in which everybody gets recognised (Galvin, 2009).

On the one hand teachers are concerned to broaden student experience, but this can be seen as a form of cultural colonisation, usually centred on the musical heritage of western musical art traditions. The other perspective appears to suggest that students’ learning is best facilitated by acknowledgment of their own aspirations and through their ‘own’ music, while a third view, supported by the case studies in this research, suggests teachers attempt to find a balance between

legitimation of informal and social knowledge and the collectively developed conceptual knowledge of the discipline.

It has been my observation in over twenty years of work in music education that secondary school music teaching in New Zealand is strongly influenced by the educational and musical perspectives of its teachers, and that these perspectives are complex, varied, and dynamic. A teacher's frame of reference embodies perspectives which result in operative assumptions consisting of values, beliefs, attitudes, and ideas that in turn influence perception and action. Each individual teacher in fact has multiple perspectives which are the result of various social, professional, and artistic worlds in which they interact. An individual's perspectives may be dynamic. Since perspectives are learned they can be modified and transformed in interaction (Blumer, 1962; Charon, 2004).

The small size of New Zealand's professional music teaching community provides increased scope both for first hand awareness of change and for input into its actuality. It has been my experience that teachers can, and do, influence the shaping of official discourse from the ground up. As well as this, the relative autonomy of music teachers at a local level allows for considerable adaptation and recontextualisation of the generally accepted norms of music teaching. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggest, humans "shape their institutions; they create and change the world around them through action/interaction" (p. 6).

A great deal of the impetus and subsequent detail associated with the significant curriculum changes in the 1990s came from teachers. To include performance and composition in the curriculum was a logical progression. At a deeper level, however, such changes were representative of the growing influence of fundamental shifts in both cultural and educational perspectives: specifically, philosophical moves from the modern to the postmodern, from a structuralist perspective to a poststructuralist perspective, from a colonial perspective to a postcolonial perspective, while also being related to concerns of social justice and inclusivity. Secondary school music education in New Zealand was, and still is, in the process of a shift of an ideational nature, whereby the collective habitus of teachers is changing in response to the dynamic contexts within which education and music are located. As Bernstein has noted, this can be interpreted as "a discursive shift in legitimation from knowledge to knower" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 170).

While a functionalist account of schooling remains dominant within New Zealand education, my experience of curriculum and pedagogic change supports a dynamic rather than a deterministic view. Intermixed with the transmission of accepted knowledge and values is the influence of constructivist models of schooling which conceive of the classroom as a place where cultural knowledge can be negotiated and created rather than simply passed on. There is little doubt that within society at large



a relativistic view of music has largely replaced the modernist account with its emphasis on canonical music and categories of high and low culture, and such changes of value have made their way into the field of education affecting curriculum and pedagogy to varying degrees. This is creating challenges for teachers, many of whom are trained in classical traditions. A resolution to these concerns, which are at the heart of the research problem, is largely provided by the case studies which found that teachers from varied stylistic backgrounds still utilise and value disciplinary knowledge. Recent developments in social realism within the sociology of education also provide a way in which to theorise the importance of disciplinary knowledge, to a large degree resolving the issues accompanying relativism and constructivism. This perspective looks to conceptual knowledge as the key to progressive and inclusive educational futures (Young & Muller, 2010).

## **Personal background**

My experience as a student of music at secondary school in the 1970s was essentially one of initiation into a predetermined world of knowledge populated by the western canon of classical masterworks. The status of these great works set the parameters for the school curriculum, so much so that performance and composition were not part of the assessed programmes but were relegated to a place outside the classroom. The studies I pursued at University were a continuation of this rite of passage into the field of western classical music, a world of seemingly endless treasures awaiting discovery. This process from school to university saw the development of a strong subject loyalty and identity formation with a clear sense of what being a ‘knower’ in this field constituted.

When I began teaching secondary school music in 1987 it was clear to me that I would in turn bring my students into contact with the same canon of works and initiate the same rites of passage for a new generation. In New Zealand in 1993, however, a radically new prescription for assessment in the senior school was introduced and for the first time teachers were able to choose works for study, opening the way for the inclusion of music that might be of more direct interest to them or to their students. Also significant was the impact of the addition of performance and composition. Instrumentalists and singers from diverse musical backgrounds now had the opportunity to gain credit in school qualifications.

During my twenty-one years teaching, the curriculum has in many ways been turned on its head. Music as a subject now has the potential to encompass an enormous array of styles and activities from composing and performing rock music to studying Gregorian plainchant. Jorgensen (2003) has noted that many teachers “are afraid they do not know all they should know. Others fear that what they know and value is no longer relevant in a world that is changing dramatically” (p. x). By 2007 I

found myself teaching an eclectic range of music ranging from a student-centred rock programme (*Musical Futures*) to composition via computerised programmes, with relatively little time given over to the teaching of the western canon. The emphasis had shifted from content, music as a body of works, to student skill-building in an active process of music making; from an emphasis on transmission of knowledge content, to an emphasis on the knower and the development of more varied skills. A paradigm shift had occurred, but as a gradual series of changes.

By the time I left the classroom in 2007 I had generated some questions that were important for me professionally and personally: within the curriculum that my students now experienced, what had been lost and what had been gained? What was most important to include in the curriculum and where was the source of authority for this inclusion? The strong influence of relativism and constructivism within education caused me to question the value of much of the knowledge I regarded as significant within the discipline. This issue is explored in the literature review (chapter two) and in the thesis as a whole.

### **Summary, justification, and parameters of the research**

This research discusses how six teachers from varied musical backgrounds conceive of and manage the complex relationship between the two musical worlds of the classical and popular. The research focuses on the issues and problems facing music teachers in relation to putting curriculum into practice in the classroom, and the challenge to the traditional emphasis on classical music brought about by the ubiquity of popular music. What knowledge do they consider most important? The emphasis is on describing and interpreting their decision making, their theories, philosophies, values, ideologies, and other influences brought to bear on the place they assign to classical and popular music within their teaching programmes. The broad thesis is that teachers act as recontextualising agents (Bernstein, 1990/2003; 2000), as adaptors of the broad official guidelines provided by the state (Ministry of Education, 2007) in interaction with their professional worlds, art worlds (Becker, 1982/2008; Martin, 2006), their reference groups (Charon, 2004), as well as their own values and beliefs. Blumer (1969) suggests that a functioning society is the result of “workable relations” that arise out of people modifying their varied values for particular purposes through compromise, duress, self-interest, common sense and “sheer necessity” (p. 76). Such a perspective would suggest that meanings within the world of music education are the result of a web of factors made increasingly complex as they intersect with both educational and cultural fields.

Finney (2003) suggests that talking to teachers and students is an area largely uncharted by research, and Bresler and Stake (2006, p. 297) note that “perhaps an overly large share of music education research is the psychological study of music skills and knowledge; perhaps too little is the study of

curriculum change and that of music teaching”. Furthermore Green suggests that “sociological methods and concepts within the field of music education represent a goldmine for research” (Green, 2002c, p. 46) and in particular, the views and values of teachers is an area wide open for investigation. This research seeks to redress this imbalance by placing teachers and their decisions about music teaching at the centre of the inquiry. It is focused on the influences brought to bear on teachers’ curriculum decision-making, on what Apple (2002, p. 608) describes as both the “outside-to-inside” and “inside-to-outside” connections that determine curricular, pedagogic, and evaluative principles and practices.

Readers of research projects are bound to ask what the point of this research is, and it is important that the research encourages readers to compare the findings to their own experiences and practice and to consider the implications more broadly. In this way research has the potential to expand the awareness of practice, and to add to the knowledge base for educational development and change, for the benefit of both students and teachers. Stake (1995) reminds researchers that they have great privilege and obligation: “the privilege to pay attention to what they consider worthy of attention and the obligation to make conclusions drawn from those choices meaningful to colleagues and clients” (p. 49). It is hoped that this research will contribute to understanding of New Zealand secondary school music teachers’ work and one of the significant challenges they face. Moreover, it will provide some insight into the interface between teachers’ personal beliefs, educational contexts, and cultural change, and the impact of these aspects on teachers’ approach to curriculum and pedagogy. As Finney (2003; 2007), Green (2002c) and Bresler and Stake (2006) suggest (see above) this is an area largely uncharted in the research literature.

While the influence of multi-culturalism world-wide and within New Zealand society is acknowledged as important and significant, particularly through the music of indigenous Maori and Pacific peoples, it is not the focus here. This research explores the challenge to the traditional emphasis on western classical music in the elective classroom brought about by the prominence of western popular music forms. While the term popular must be acknowledged as culturally and historically fluid, within this study it is broadly defined as music which is widely accessed by young people through commercial media; it is music that derives its essential stylistic characteristics from the developments of twentieth century popular song and rock and roll. The term classical is taken to incorporate not only the works of this broad category of music but also the associated theoretical and conceptual knowledge built up over time within that discipline.

## **Thesis Structure - Overview of Chapters**

Chapters two and three of the thesis provide the contextual foundations of the empirical work presented in the case study stories in chapters five to ten. Chapter two covers matters of methodology, research reflexivity, research design, and data analysis, while chapter three provides an extended overview of music education issues as represented in the literature. A central theme of aesthetic relativism is explored in some detail in this chapter. Chapter four deals with music education developments in New Zealand, showing how discourses of vocationalism and instrumentalism have led to a level of knowledge displacement in the curriculum.

Chapters five to ten comprise the case studies. Each chapter has the same format, first introducing the teacher with musical biographical information, then reporting on the observed classes. This is followed by a discussion centred on the teacher's pedagogic discourse, a summary of the focus groups with students, a discussion of the issue of the relationship between classical and popular music in that setting, and a concluding summary. These chapters give a rich description of each teacher's work, centring in on the specific ways curriculum content and pedagogical approach are managed and realised in relation to classical and popular music.

Chapter eleven presents a cross-case analysis where the themes most significant in the cases are theorised as presenting an analytic story (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The discussion is underpinned with research questions such as "what influences are brought to bear on music curriculum decision making?" and "what alignment is there between teachers' personal conceptions of music, the official curriculum, and the music they teach?" I suggest a core concept: 'finding a balance' in the recontextualisation of music knowledge for learning and development. Central themes of affirmation, legitimation, knowledge differentiation, pragmatism, biography, and contextual influences are discussed in detail. This chapter concludes by suggesting that teachers have an overarching pedagogic orientation identifiable in their work. This orientation relates to the teachers' underlying view of music's epistemological essence as an object, or as process, or as a synthesis of both these dimensions.

The final chapter deals with three central themes of significance for the research: aesthetic relativism, the incorporation of informal knowledge into the curriculum, and teachers' autonomy within the field. Moore's (2010) social realist argument that distinguishes between preferences and judgements is used to argue why it is appropriate, valid, and necessary for teachers to make judgements of aesthetic value within education. I then consider the recontextualisation of aspects of informal knowledge (horizontal discourse) and the way in which it provides a mechanism for both boundary crossing and boundary maintenance (Young & Muller, 2010) and is therefore a significant

aspect of teachers' work. A key aspect for the development of music education is the teacher's ability to take segmented and contextualised learning and to make the connections across knowledge boundaries. This relates to the final area of discussion, teachers' autonomy, and how the structure-agency dialectic is played out as teachers interact with competing influences from various fields. Depending on the level of autonomy experienced by the teacher, and the level of engagement with that autonomy, their interactions can produce a range of pedagogic and curricular realisations.

Unless otherwise stated all quotes from teachers are from the first interview. All teacher and school names are pseudonyms.

## CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

The central aim of this research is to explore the curriculum decision-making of a group of New Zealand secondary school music teachers regarding the inclusion of classical and popular music within the elective curriculum. The research focuses on their management of the complex relationship between these two types of music as demonstrated in their curriculum conception and realisation in elective (option) classes. While the focus is on the teaching of music, more broadly the research explores fundamental educational issues: what knowledge is most important within the curriculum, and in what ways teachers are agents of cultural transmission and transformation. In Bernsteinian terminology the analysis of the cases describes the forms of symbolic control present in the discourses of the teachers, and considers this in relation to cultural reproduction and change.

A sociological perspective provides the underlying theoretical framework for the research. This position recognises the collective and interactive nature of the construction of cultural meaning. Meaning is created within a school setting which is influenced by evolving and dynamic conceptions of education. School music teachers are also part of another field which intersects with education, the field of music. Some commentators (Ross, 1995; Bresler, 1998) have argued that school music is a curious hybrid field of its own, neither authentically musical nor educational. Bernstein (2000) suggests that the discourse of formal learning is inextricably bound up with the recontextualisation of knowledge for didactic purposes through what he describes as the creation of “imaginary” subjects: “Pedagogic discourse ... is a principle which removes (delocates) a discourse from its substantive practice and context, and which relocates that discourse according to its own principle of selective reordering and focusing” (Bernstein, 1990/2003, p. 184). What is significant about this perspective is the recognition of the profound influence that social contexts and structures have on both the meanings people construct and their actions. As Bresler (1998) observes “it is the mutual shaping of contexts that creates the genre of school music” (p. 2). A sociological perspective recognises that educational institutions are a microcosm of wider society and in this way can provide insights into the mechanisms and outcomes of broader social and cultural change (Young, 2010b).

Sociological theories of progressive differentiation, where societies become increasingly more complex and heterogeneous (Martin, 1995), suggest that practice and values within music education in the 21st century are likely to be divergent and contradictory. This research theorises that the traditional content and approach to music teaching has broken down over the last twenty years and that there are likely to be varying views concerning what constitutes music education in New

Zealand. Bunge's (1999) conception of sociological systemism suggests that complementary and co-evolutionary relationships exist between an individual and social forces, between agency and structure, on micro (individual), meso (subsystem), and macro (whole) levels. The field of music education can be seen as responding at the meso level to changes at the macro level within society where values change as the result of "a perpetual process of competition, in which individuals and groups pursue what they believe to be in their interests" (Martin, 1995, p. 11). Within education Moore and Young (2001) describe a dilemma where many commentators argue that "either the curriculum is a given or it is entirely the result of power struggles between groups with competing claims for including and legitimising their knowledge and excluding others" (p. 453). This research aims to shed some light on whether such underlying structural tensions are concerns for teachers in their daily work.

This research sits at the intersection of education and music where the teacher acts as a conduit for how meanings might be constructed and interpreted with influences from various fields. Teachers' curriculum choices may reflect historical or contemporary cultural trends, an official curriculum, a personal vision, or a combination of these. This web of factors is made even more complex by the preferences students bring to the school and the influence this brings to bear on teachers, however this study aims to explore the meanings that teachers currently have concerning the values that underpin their work. The research explores teachers' views concerning cultural change and curriculum implementation, accepting that teachers are part of these wider fields and exhibit a habitus based on ideological constructs of which they may or may not be aware. We know very little about music teachers' views, values, or practice within the field of music education in New Zealand, or about how the cultural changes of recent times have impacted on their work. This research describes, explains and interprets what is happening in six cases, with the intention of bringing increased understanding to the process of music teaching and learning within the secondary school.

### **Reflexivity in the research process**

My training in the classical tradition and professional work as a secondary school music teacher acknowledges a particular participant-researcher status in this research. It is my personal experiences and observations of changing musical educational values that have influenced the conception of the research 'problem' and provided motivation for the research. This dual role requires that theoretical conceptualization of data balances any likelihood of personal value judgements unduly influencing the research process and assertions. The aim has been to achieve a level of reflexivity through a logical sequence in the research process; the research question and sub-questions formed the basis of an interview schedule which guided data collection and provided analytical parameters for initial

interpretation of data through open coding. Focus groups with students provided triangulation of teacher interviews and classroom observations. A second stage of analysis links the data to the theoretical constructs of the influential sociologist of education Basil Bernstein (2000). His work provides key concepts and an analytical language of description that I have utilised to bring conceptual order and consistency to the interpretation of data (see below); nevertheless it has been my aim to ground my conceptual assertions firmly in the empirical data. Interpretation is made plausible by “blending together empirical evidence and abstract concepts (Neuman, 2003, p. 440). In this regard the researcher is “the key instrument, the arbiter of what is important” (Bresler & Stake, 2006) but once conceptualised, the interpretation becomes available for critical scrutiny: “Beliefs and ideas are objectified and scrutinised for their explanatory capability” (Rata, 2002, p. 43).

### **The research question**

In what ways are secondary school music teachers managing the complex relationship between classical and popular music in their elective teaching programmes?

### **Sub-questions**

- What influences are brought to bear on music curriculum decision making?
- In what specific ways are curriculum content and pedagogical approach realised in relation to classical and popular music?
- What alignment is there between teachers’ personal conceptions of music, the official curriculum, and the music they teach?

### **The research paradigm**

Wheelahan (2010b) suggests that the way we theorize the world, our ontological beliefs, have “implications for the methods we use to explore it” (p. 53). Our ontology is what we accept as ‘real’ and therefore researchable (Bresler & Stake, 2006). My ontological belief is that there are social and natural worlds that exist externally to us, independent of our knowledge of them. This ontologically realist position leads to the acceptance that there is a world to know consisting of both phenomena and structures – natural and human. This real world (in critical realism the intransitive) is the object of knowledge which is constructed and located socially in interacting communities (the transitive or knowledge about the real). This ontological view leads to a non-foundationalist epistemology where knowledge can be objectively known, but is always “open to revision” through collective critique over time (Moore, 2007, p. 37). Transitive knowledge is knowledge about the intransitive object and “as our practice leads to better knowledge of the world it also leads to changes in the classification and structures of knowledge” (Wheelahan, 2010b, p. 75). Through this process of review and



critique knowledge can transcend the context in which it was produced: “realism detaches knowledge from knowing by locating it at the level of intellectual fields rather than within the consciousness of the knowing subject” (Moore, 2007, p. 36). In this way judgements can be made about the relative merit of knowledge claims. Because the world is ‘real’ there are limits to the way we can know it, describe it, and understand it.

In practice, research such as this engages elements of empiricism and rationalism, observation and reason. Data is collected from the real world of human interaction and interpreted through a hermeneutic process aimed at increasing our understanding of social action. This interpretative and analytical process includes cognisance of the structural components and generative mechanisms of the social world that work at micro, meso, and macro levels. The aim is to produce knowledge about the object of study – in this case music teaching. The research remains one step removed from music itself yet music’s powers permeate all discourses surrounding it.

Qualitative research methods were chosen for this study because the research question seeks to explore and interpret the response of individual teachers to a problem that results from a web of factors. The qualitative paradigm affords a flexible approach for exploring and deriving meaning from such data, which is likely to contain complex issues (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative enquiry seeks out the views of participants taking account of the context while inductively developing ideas from the particular to the conceptual (Creswell, 2007). Teachers’ perception and management of the relationship between classical and popular music is likely to be the result of a combination of factors such as beliefs and values concerning music, as well as factors more directly associated with schooling and curriculum realisation and the particular context in which they work. My approach has been to emphasise the notion of understanding rather than causality (Roulston, 2006); nevertheless I have placed the cases in the wider context of social and educational change and in this way the interrelationship between micro and macro levels is present – a recognition of structural components as generative mechanisms within the social world. The interplay of educational, cultural, and biographical factors (from micro interactions in the classroom to macro societal factors) creates a complex arena that is most aptly interpreted through the qualitative paradigm. I have taken an initial ideographic approach (concern with the particular) aiming to gain an ‘emic’ or inside perspective in each case which is then placed in the wider context of social and educational change in a cross-case analysis. The use of Bernstein’s theoretical concepts provides a language of description for analysing the various levels of data, particularly the concepts of recontextualising fields, the classification and framing of knowledge, and knowledge structures (see below).

## **Research design, procedures and associated issues**

### ***The case study***

A qualitative case study design was chosen as it provides a structure for in-depth consideration of practices in interaction with contexts through on-site interview and observation. Some scholars consider “the case” a bounded object of study, a noun, an entity (Stake, 1995; 2006), while others consider it a methodology (Merriam, 1998). This research draws on both definitions in that case study protocols provide a mechanism to study particular cases which are clearly bounded by time and place.

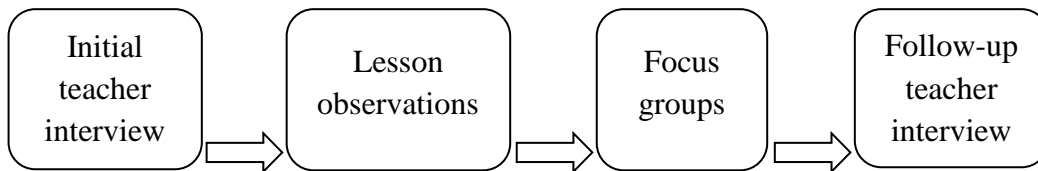
Stake (1995) uses the term ‘instrumental’ to describe the kind of study where the case is used instrumentally to illustrate an issue. In this regard “the focus is on the issue rather than the case as such” (Bassegy, 1999, p. 62). While individual teachers are the focus in this research, they are of interest in relation to a more generic issue. The case is instrumental in that it becomes a means to explore and understand the research issue or problem. Moreover a study is described as ‘collective’ if it is expanded to investigate more than one case (Stake, 1995). Yin (2003) also suggests that multiple studies provide potential for stronger external generalisability as compared to a single case study (p. 53). This research therefore can be termed a collective instrumental case study.

Case studies are a flexible design bringing together particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic foci (Merriam, 1998). The particularistic dimension is achieved through the focus of the case study on a particular site and issue, the descriptive element is realized through utilisation of rich or thick description of the phenomena under study, and the heuristic element is the interpretation and understanding revealed by the research about the area of study. As Stake (2006) suggests “the case researcher needs to generate a picture of the case and then produce a portrayal ... for others to see” (p. 3).

Finally the case study was chosen because it was anticipated that contextual issues would be significant to the phenomenon of study (Yin, 2003). In this research various contextual influences (e.g. educational change at a national level, a particular school culture, a teacher’s musical biographical history) were found to be significant to the teachers’ approaches to the curriculum conception and realisation.

### ***Research design: Overview***

The research was carried out as a series of sequential case studies over a 14-month period following the sequence of data collection indicated below:



An initial teacher interview was carried out in the music department at each school. This was my first introduction to the setting of the case studies. I devised an Interview Schedule (Appendix E) to guide the discussion, although the interviews were semi-structured in that the schedule was a guide to ensure consistent coverage but not necessarily a prescription for the interview. Additional questions were asked to elaborate, probe, and expand the discussions as they developed. A sound recording was made of the interviews and then transferred onto computer for transcription. I then imported the transcripts into N-Vivo for coding (see Data Analysis below). At the conclusion of the first interview with each teacher, lesson observations were arranged, and transcription and analysis of data commenced. The observations of classes in all cases were elective (option) music classes not core music classes. In all cases but one the observation consisted of one lesson with each class. In case study one a revisit was negotiated to observe a more representative balance of curriculum activities. Following the lesson observations a focus group was undertaken with six students from each observed class. After transcription and analysis of the first interview, observation data, and the focus groups, I carried out a follow up interview with the teacher. This provided an opportunity to clarify issues and ask further questions. The inclusion of student perspectives and a follow-up interview with the teacher added elements of triangulation to the core data provided by the first teacher interview and the observations.

### ***Ethics procedures***

Application was made to the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee for permission to undertake the research, and permission was granted on 14 April 2010 for three years, reference Number 2010 / 048. Participant Information Sheets were prepared for the Principal (Appendix A), the Head of Department (or in one case the assistant teacher to be interviewed and observed – Appendix B), the student participants (Appendix D), and parents of any student participants under 16 years of age (Appendix C). Consent forms were provided for students over 16 and assent forms for students under 16 (Appendix D).

### ***Sampling***

Stake (1995) suggests that the first criterion in the selection of cases should be “to maximize what we can learn” (p. 4). Creswell (2007) also suggests that in a collective study the aim should be to “represent diverse cases and to fully describe multiple perspectives” (p. 129). Maxwell (2005) and

Hammersley (1992) suggest identifying dimensions of variation most relevant to the study and then selecting cases that represent the most important dimensions. Moreover, since the aim of qualitative research is increasing understanding of the research issue rather than reporting on a representative sample, I asked the question “do I know of particular teachers who are dealing with the curricular relationship of classical and popular music in particular ways?” With this in mind five teachers (Creswell, 2007; Stake 2006) were considered and approached informally and asked if they would be interested in participating in the study. A formal approach in writing was then made to the school principals. Two teachers who took part in a pilot study focus group study were of particular interest. One of these teachers was classically trained but was championing the development of a popular music programme at her school. A second teacher, trained in popular styles, maintained in the focus group that classical music was more appropriate as a vehicle for learning. It was anticipated that their particular perspectives would bring increased understanding to the research question. Noting the particular characteristics of the first two teachers, two teachers trained in the more recent tertiary pop/rock music programmes were approached, as well as one very experienced teacher known for her eclectic approach to the curriculum. The aim was to provide a variety of perspectives (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1995). After the completion of the research for case study one the teacher left the school and an HOD with a new perspective took over the job. I considered it would be interesting to return to the school a year later to talk again to students and see how the emphasis in the department might have changed. This sixth case is focused on a teacher with a strong classical emphasis. Overall there was also a spread of different career stages across the cases (see table 1 on facing page).

	<b>Training</b>	<b>Years teaching</b>	<b>School type</b>
<b>Case 1 Leah</b>	Classical	38	Integrated* State Boys Decile*:9 Roll:900
<b>Case 2 Beatrice</b>	Classical	10	Independent Co-educational Decile:10 Roll:1,077
<b>Case 3 Miles</b>	(Jazz – no formal music training, but a jazz background)	22	State Co-educational Decile:8 Roll:2,014
<b>Case 4 Lydia</b>	Rock	3	State Co-educational Decile:4 Roll:1,444
<b>Case 5 Robert</b>	Rock	3	State Co-educational Decile:5 Roll:2,359
<b>Case 6 David</b>	Classical	2 (in NZ)	Integrated State Boys Decile:9 Roll:900

**Table 1: Overview of cases**

\* Integrated schools in New Zealand are schools that maintain a “special character” (usually religious) whilst still receiving financial support from the state.

\*\* “A school’s decile indicates the extent to which it draws its students from low socio-economic communities. Decile 1 schools are the 10% of schools with the highest proportion of students from low socio-economic communities. Decile 10 schools are the 10% of schools with the lowest proportion of these students” (Ministry of Education, 2008).

### ***Interviews***

In this research, which was concerned with interpreting the actions and values of individuals, the one-to-one interview provided the primary source of data. In keeping with qualitative research methods the words of participants have been utilized to provide evidence of the perspectives of the study (Creswell, 2007). The interviews were semi-structured (see Appendix E for interview schedule) and this provided an efficient and consistent means of obtaining targeted, focused, and detailed accounts of the participants' views of the research area. Nevertheless it is important to acknowledge that the interviewer does influence the type and quality of data obtained (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 11). Teachers were given the opportunity to view the transcripts and the draft case study chapters and to make any comments regarding both accuracy and interpretation. Four of the participants provided feedback and in two cases minor adjustments were made to increase the accuracy of biographical details.

### ***Observations***

Observation was used as a means to gain an emic perspective of the teacher 'in action'; to draw inferences about stated beliefs and practices by observing the connection or lack of connection between espoused theory and "theory-in-use" (Maxwell, 2005). Observations were framed by interviews enabling clarification and checking for accuracy and the formulation of further questions to occur (Maxwell, 2005).

While observations provided a mechanism for me to obtain a first-hand encounter with the phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 1998) and get a feel for the setting of each case by spending time in the music department it is important to acknowledge that this is not entirely unproblematic (Merriam, 1998, p. 94). There is little doubt that my presence brought some element of change into the classes that were observed; however these effects were judged by me and by the teachers to be minimal. Many of the classes were engaged in active work where my presence seemed to make little difference to the classroom dynamic and levels of interaction. In the more formal lessons I sat and observed, sometimes chatting with students as they arrived and left if the atmosphere was informal. Where students were involved in group activities teachers encouraged me to move around and talk with students. In this regard I assumed a role of observer as participant, a peripheral membership role (Merriam, 1998).

The conceptualisation of the research problem guided my observations and I devised an Observation Rationale and Schedule (Appendix F). An underlying aim was to triangulate the relationship

between the teachers’ aspired aims and approach, as communicated in the first interview, and the realization in action; the experiences and messages students receive in relation to classical and popular idioms. My observations, recorded as field notes, were later written up as a narrative with a minimal degree of analytic interpretation. These insider views form the opening part of each case study chapter, following on from the teacher biographical introduction. As Stake (1995) indicates, the aim was to provide a portion of “relatively uncontested data” (p. 123) which places the case within its context, providing vignettes that bring the reader as close as possible to being in the class and experiencing the essence of the lesson.

***Focus groups***

Six students from each observed class were chosen by the teacher for a focus group with me. This comprised a group at two different year levels in each case study:

	Focus group 1	Focus Group 2
Case 1	Year 10	Year 12
Case 2	Year 9	Year 13
Case 3	Year 11	Year 13
Case 4	Year 11	Year 13
Case 5	Year 11	Year 13
Case 6	Year 11, Year 12	Year 13

**Table 2: Focus groups**

I asked the teacher to choose six students with varying musical backgrounds and interests with the aim of obtaining a variety of viewpoints in relation to the research questions. I developed a Student Interview Schedule (see Appendix G) as a guide for discussion in the focus groups. As in the teacher interview, this schedule was a guide for the semi-structured format. The data from the focus group was transcribed and coded in N-Vivo and was used both to triangulate the aims and actions of the teacher as described in the first teacher interview, and to provide contextual data that was reported on and integrated into the case study report. These transcripts were not viewed by the teachers or students.

### ***Data analysis: processes and methods***

A methodological imperative of the research process was to construct a logical chain of evidence from the data to its interpretation. The generally accepted procedures for open coding, deriving and developing concepts inductively from data, were followed as an initial coding process (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Thomas, 2006). I began by transcribing the interviews using Express Scribe and then exported the text into N-Vivo. In N-Vivo I added commentary (memos) and sorted data electronically into thematic categories as themes emerged from the data (Thomas, 2006). These themes, illustrated by text, were used to construct both the biographical story and the discussion of the teachers' pedagogic discourse. The thematic headings that evolved from the data are listed in Appendix H. N-Vivo was used simply as a convenient sorting device where data could be stored under headings and reports printed in a convenient format (see Appendix I). In this way it was a functional tool and did none of the 'thinking' involved in assigning categories or conceptualising the relationship between the data.

There is a continuum of opinion in the literature regarding the exclusive use of *a priori* or emergent codes (Creswell, 2007). This research began with the influence of some general thematic categorisations derived from the research questions (such as data describing values and beliefs in relation to classical music, popular music, curriculum actions, curriculum influences etc.), but the findings arise inductively from the analysis of the data often with in-vivo themes, rather than from *a priori* expectations or testing of theory. The parameters of the study and the research questions "provide a focus or domain of relevance for conducting the analysis, not a set of expectations about specific findings" (Thomas, 2006, p. 239).

The thematic headings from the first interview were used as 'sorting bins' for the data from subsequent interviews and additional thematic categories were added as they emerged from the new data. N-vivo allows a report to be printed, which contains the coded text under the assigned thematic headings. An example is provided in Appendix I. I used these reports to construct the case stories, reading and re-reading the interview data and using the text to illustrate the main themes in each case. I began by constructing a brief biographical narrative of each teacher from the interview data, believing that their experiences and interests have direct relevance to the conception of music education they attempt to achieve in their work. I then constructed accounts of the lesson observations and assimilated the interview data, the observation data, and the focus groups data into an account of each case. I developed the following structure for each chapter: biographical context, observation accounts, account of the teacher's pedagogic discourse, account of focus group



discussions, account of the management of the relationship between classical and popular music, summary.

The predominant themes or emphasis in each case emerged from the cumulative data as it was transcribed, coded, and analysed by me. Each chapter was checked by each of the teacher participants who also chose a pseudonym for themselves and their school.

The initial division of data into thematic categories was followed by a ‘theoretical’ phase which involved placing the data into a more abstract framework related mostly to prior theory, in this case the theoretical work of Bernstein (1975/2003;1990/2003; 2000). The case study reports therefore move from description of the case within its setting (a response to the research questions by a particular teacher within a certain location and time period) to a more broad conceptualisation (the case as an educational, cultural phenomenon).

Each case was analysed separately (within-case analysis) and then collectively (cross-case analysis). In the context of a collective case study categorical aggregation, where the researcher looks for multiple instances of recurring themes within or across cases, becomes a primary procedure (Stake, 1995). In this process the concept of thematic integration (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was used to subsume minor concepts with shared properties into “top-level categories” (Thomas, 2006) to provide an “analytic story” of the cases overall (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). A central core concept – “finding a balance” – was decided on. These themes are discussed fully in chapter eleven and supported by data from the cases. From this analysis warranted assertions were produced. In conclusion the main thematic outcomes of the cases are considered in relation the broader educational and cultural context. In analysis I was cognisant of looking for rival explanations that might contradict any guiding propositions derived from the research parameters (Yin, 2003) and in fact the teachers provide a range of pedagogic orientations in relation to the research questions.

### ***Reliability and validity***

Varying perspectives exist regarding the importance and significance of validity within qualitative research (Creswell, 2007). Corbin (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) argues for example that the concepts of validity and reliability are not readily applicable to qualitative research and she prefers the term credibility which “indicates that findings are trustworthy and believable in that they reflect the participants’, researchers’, and readers’ experiences with a phenomenon” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 302). Merriam (1998) also suggests that reliability, the extent to which findings can be replicated, is problematic in the social sciences which are concerned with human behaviour which is far from static, particularly within qualitative educational research which is “multifaceted, and highly

contextual” (p. 206). Merriam argues that “achieving reliability in the traditional sense is not only fanciful but impossible” (p. 206). Rather what I have aimed to provide is evidence of internal validity; to show that the assertions made are consistent with the data collected via reflexivity, triangulation, and supervisor and participant checking (Merriam, 1998).

The reliability and validity of social research is limited not only by the research design and processes but also by the reliability of the answers researchers receive (Foddy, 1993; Green, 2008). Researchers cannot assume that respondents’ behaviours are necessarily congruent with their attitudes or stated values and there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that “respondents’ attitudes, beliefs, opinions, habits, [and] interests often seem to be extraordinarily unstable” (Foddy, 1993, p. 4). As the work of Argyris and Schon (1974) has demonstrated, espoused values and values in action are very often not aligned. Within the context of this research this problem has been acknowledged by including observations of teachers and interviews with their students to verify or negate alignment between values and action.

### ***Generalisation and case studies – external validity***

One of the potential problems with interpretative research, and particularly with a study of only six cases, is external validity or the potential for generalization beyond the particular. Stake (2006) suggests that multicase studies are usually studies of particularisation more than generalisation but a researcher can use the studies as “a step towards theory” (p. 8). Yin (2003) suggests that statistical generalisations cannot be made from case studies but that analytical generalisations may be. In other words a “case study uses the logic of analytic instead of enumerative induction” (Neuman, 2003, p. 33). De Vaus (2003) suggests theoretical generalisations can be made from case studies where generalizing is made from a study to a theory, and Bassey (1999) suggests that ‘fuzzy generalisations and ‘fuzzy propositions’ can be made from case studies. A fuzzy generalisation “... arises from studies of singularities and typically claims that it is possible, or likely, or unlikely that what was found in the singularity will be found in similar situations elsewhere: it is a qualitative measure” (Bassey, 1999, p.12, italics in original). Rather than generalising to population, as in quantitative study, the approach here has been to generalise to theory by making a number of warranted assertions (Stake, 1995; Phillips & Burbules, 2000) derived from a cross-case analysis.

Stake (1995) also describes *naturalistic generalisations* where readers are stimulated from the researcher’s description and assertions to generalise in relation to the case from their own knowledge and experience. Merriam (1998) describes this as reader or user generalisability and suggests this is an appropriate concept in relation to the external validity of a case study. The extent to which a study’s findings might apply to other situations is a matter determined by the reader aided

by the provision of robust evidence and detailed, ‘thick’ description to allow valid comparisons to be made. It is anticipated that the details of the cases will resonate with the experiences of many readers, and the contextualisation of the case within a theoretical paradigm, in this case educational sociology, can allow generalisation to theory with the potential for a wide application.

The validity of generalizations made from qualitative data also relies on how the interpretation relates back to the data, or its internal validity (Bryman, 2004). Part of this process is to give rich or thick description as well as a full discussion of methodology and methods (see data analysis section above.)

Overall, the case studies have relied on triangulation of data (teacher interviews) through observations, student focus groups, participant validation, supervisor checks, appropriate sampling, and procedural protocols (e.g. data analysis methods) to ensure its validity (truthfulness) and reliability (consistency).

## **Analytical theoretical framework**

### ***Bernstein theoretical concepts***

A number of theoretical concepts developed by the British sociologist Basil Bernstein (1924-2000) have been utilised in the case study analysis and in chapters eleven and twelve, and these concepts are outlined below to enable the reader to be familiar with them as they appear. Bernstein’s work spanned four decades. His early work focused on language and communication patterns of the home and school; on elaborated and restricted codes and their modalities of realisation. This was extended in his later work to include the search for principles underpinning the organisational, discursive, and transmission practices within pedagogic contexts: “general principles underlying the transformation of knowledge into pedagogic communication” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 25). Sadovnik (1995) suggests Bernstein’s work presents a theory of school knowledge and transmission relating this to social class and the consequences of this for society: “Bernstein has provided a tentative integration of structuralist and conflict approaches within sociology” (p. 20). Bernstein’s theory argues that pedagogic communication is underpinned by power and control relations realised through a complex assemblage of processes and “rules” that Bernstein terms the pedagogic device. Essentially pedagogic discourse is bound by rules of distribution, recontextualisation, and evaluation of knowledge. Distribution includes determining what classes of knowledge are legitimised for transmission (to whom and by whom); recontextualisation is the process of how specific discourses are adapted and reshaped at official and local levels; and evaluation includes the monitoring of the valid acquisition of legitimate knowledge. These pedagogic principles are a mechanism for “the production, reproduction and transformation of culture” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 38) and act as “a

symbolic regulator of consciousness” (p. 37). The development of the theory is a means to consider underlying concerns in relation to democracy and pedagogic rights by asking “whose regulator, what consciousness and for whom?” (p. 37). Wheelahan (2010a) suggests that Bernstein’s key insight was that “the structure of pedagogic discourse and the nature of pedagogic practices carry the message of power as much as the content of pedagogic discourse” (p. 47). Bernstein notes that most theories of cultural reproduction “view education as a carrier of power relations external to education” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 4). Bernstein’s interest was to consider the structure of the relay itself: the structure of pedagogic discourse as a relay for the transmission and acquisition of cultural reproduction. In essence Bernstein’s work suggests that changes in the division of labour have resulted in different meaning systems within education. Through the classification (what) and framing (how) of knowledge unequal power relations are realised (Sadovnik, 1995) and access to the esoteric is mediated (Wheelahan, 2010b).

### ***Recontextualising fields***

Bernstein’s (1990/2003; 2000) concept of pedagogic recontextualisation provides a specific conceptual frame for bringing understanding to the complex processes, influences, and structures through which the curriculum is realised. Bernstein (2000) has argued that a recontextualising principle is fundamental to the discourse through which education produces and reproduces the dominant values and beliefs of society. Furthermore the recontextualisation process “selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses and relates other discourses to constitute its own order” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 33). Recontextualising fields are arenas “of conflict and struggle for dominance” (p. 62) in the “construction, distribution, reproduction and change of pedagogic identities” (p. 62).

The recontextualising process is theorised as occurring in two fields; one is at the level of the state and its agents (the official recontextualising field or ORF) and the other is at the level of pedagogic transmission and acquisition (the pedagogic recontextualising field or PRF, which includes teachers in schools and other educational institutions). Within the official recontextualising field the Official Pedagogic Discourse (OPD) of the state produces dominant principles that generate guidelines “about school organization and management, curricula and evaluation - which reflect the political and scientific background of the agents who constitute this field” (Neves & Morais, 2001a, p. 455). The discourse appropriated in a given educational setting at a particular time is the result of the dynamic interplay between the “dominant ideology in the official recontextualising field (ORF)” and “the relative autonomy of the pedagogic recontextualising field (PRF)” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 53).

Strongly classified subjects with a specialised discrete discourse are termed singulars, and the process of recontextualising these singulars into larger units is described by Bernstein (2000) as

regionalisation. Regionalisation sees previously strongly insulated and introspective subjects increasingly looking outwards towards fields of practice; regions “operate both in the intellectual field of disciplines and in the field of external practice” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 52).

### ***Classification, framing, and recognition and realisation rules***

Bernstein’s concepts of classification and framing provide a means to identify and describe the underlying processes in the structuring of curriculum and pedagogy. Within pedagogic discourse classification and framing refer respectively to the translation of power relations into structural relations, and of procedures of control into principles of communication and pedagogic relations. Classification describes distributive relations between categories and framing interactional relations within categories. While theoretically power and control can be recognised in the discrete modalities of classification and framing Bernstein states that empirically they are “embedded in each other” (2000, p. 5).

Classification can be considered as a distributive structural mechanism creating social divisions of labour or boundaries. It refers to how knowledge is divided up to create distinct knowledge categories, boundaries, specialisations, and agents. Classification may be strong or weak depending on the degree of insulation between boundaries. In the case of strong classification, specialised subject identities and voices are created:

A sense of the sacred, the ‘otherness’ of educational knowledge, I submit does not arise so much out of an ethic for its own sake, but is more a function of socialization into subject loyalty: for it is the subject which becomes the linch-pin of identity. Any attempt to weaken or change classification strength ... may be felt as a threat to one’s identity and may be experienced as a pollution endangering the sacred (Bernstein, 1990/2003, p. 96).

Classification can also be considered at external and internal levels. External refers to boundaries between subjects and between a subject and everyday knowledge. Internal classification can refer to classifications within a subject area, ranging for example from images on the walls which can classify a space, to the relative separation between curriculum components within the subject.

Framing, on the other hand, functions at the interactive or micro level of the classroom. It is ‘the how’ of pedagogic practice. It refers to relations within boundaries and is concerned with aspects of pedagogic recontextualisation and transmission; the rules of selection, sequence, pacing and evaluation, and the type of relationship between teacher and pupil. It is at this interactive level where there is potential for change as “pedagogic discourse and pedagogic practice construct always an arena, a struggle over the nature of symbolic control” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 15). Significantly Bernstein’s theory allows classification and framing to vary in strength within pedagogic interaction.

For example the teacher may allow flexibility in relation to sequence and pacing (weak framing through more apparent control for students) but the criteria for evaluation may be explicit (strongly framed).

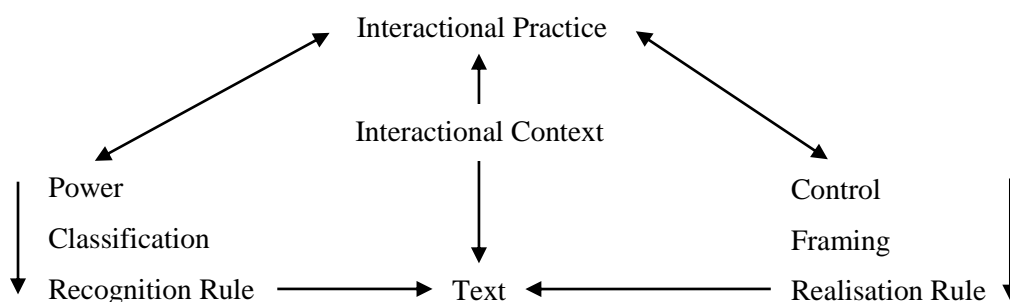
Bernstein identifies two mechanisms or principles used to construct a curriculum; an instructional discourse and a regulative discourse. The instructional discourse includes the ‘what’ or ‘what matters’ in the curriculum (Wheelahan, 2010a). This choice is embedded in a regulative discourse concerned with what values are considered important; rules of social order and projections of certain identities. The instructional discourse comprises the selected knowledge, its organisation through selection, sequence, pacing, and evaluation; and the regulative discourse is concerned with “the moral discourse which creates order, relations and identity” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 32). The regulative discourse functions ideologically in that it generates theories of instruction and a model of the relation between learner and teacher, thus it “not only selects the *what* but also the *how* of the theory of instruction” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 35 italics in original). The dominant principles of society are contained within the regulative discourse of pedagogy (Bernstein, 2000).

The regulative discourse, with its implicit structures of moral conduct, is realised in aspects such as hierarchical relations and “expectations about conduct, character and manner” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 13). Thus a teacher’s validation of student learning will be the result of the influence of components of the regulative discourse as well as the instructional discourse. Rather than being the neutral carrier of certain expectations, the constructs of the regulative discourse are themselves implicated as part of the ideological mechanism inherent in the pedagogic act. In other words, the mechanisms that relay the message (classification, framing, regulative and instructional discourses) are implicated ideologically as much as the message or the material relayed. In such a definition there is no escape from an ideological position. Recognition of the nature of components of pedagogic discourse, its construction and recontextualisation, can highlight how ideologies and values predominate within a discourse. This can provide the potential for evaluation of the discourse against explicit rather than tacit values such as rights of democratic enhancement, inclusion and participation (Bernstein, 2000, p. xxi).

A further component of pedagogic interaction is what Bernstein has termed recognition and realisation rules. These ‘rules’ are also regulated by framing. Students’ success within schools is related to their ability to recognise the codes of school discourse, to accept them or not, and to realise appropriate responses (or to choose to react against them). Recognition comprises recognising and ‘reading’ the particular specialty of the context (e.g. modes of behaviour in a classical concert as compared to a rock concert) and realisation is the active production of

communications appropriate to the context. In chapter five, (see case study one) there are clear examples of students whose recognition and realisation of appropriate ‘texts’ in the area of solo performances were considered inappropriate by their teacher, and therefore not assessable. Over a period of time the teacher made the realisation rules explicit for students via the classification and framing of the pedagogic interactions so students were able to recognise and realise appropriate performances. One student interviewed in this research demonstrated cognisance of the required codes for recognition and realisation but chose not to engage positively with these expectations, exhibiting what could be described as a passive rather than active realisation (Morais & Neves, 2010, p. 24) or an active resistance. In case study six rules of recognition and realisation were in a process of change as the students moved from the junior to the senior curriculum where assessment was becoming a significant factor in what they regarded as valid learning.

The structures discussed so far are summarised in figure 1.



**Figure 1: Transmission context** (Bernstein, 2000, p. 16)

### *Pedagogic modalities and curriculum codes*

Bernstein has noted the emergence of particular pedagogic modalities within education, the most significant of which he terms competence and performance. Recontextualisation of competence theories from the social and psychological sciences into education in the 1960s resulted in the influence of approaches to teaching that exhibited weak classification and framing, and an invisible pedagogy (an integrated curriculum code), particularly in the primary school. Such approaches were derived from a belief in “a universal democracy of acquisition. All are inherently competent ... there are no deficits” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 43). Bernstein (2000) summarises this approach as including an emphasis on the student as self-regulating, and there is a critical, skeptical view of hierarchical relations: “Competence theories have an emancipatory flavor” (p. 43). Competence theories resonated with liberal-progressive, populist, and radical ideologies of the late 1960s: “The liberal-

progressive mode was the basis of cognitive empowerment, the populist mode was the basis of cultural empowerment and the radical mode the basis for political empowerment” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 57). The dominant modality at any given time is a relay for external power relationships and the result of the interplay of the various recontextualising fields (see above).

More recently theories of performance have begun to dominate educational fields, particularly in the secondary school. In this modality strong classification and framing generally produce a collection code of pedagogic transmission, with a visible pedagogy embedded in relatively strong instructional and regulative discourses (i.e. explicit rules regarding conduct, curriculum content, delivery and evaluation). Such performance models of pedagogic practice place the emphasis “upon a specific output of the acquirer, upon a particular text the acquirer is expected to construct and upon the specialised skills necessary to the production of this specific output, text or product” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 44).

### ***Knowledge structures***

Bernstein (2000) argues that the discourses of education are the result of complex processes that recontextualise knowledge from fields of production for didactic purposes. He describes the form that knowledge takes within educational institutions as a vertical discourse: “a Vertical discourse takes the form of a coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure, hierarchically organised as in the sciences, or it takes the form of a series of specialised languages...as in the social sciences and humanities” (2000, p. 157). The vertical discourses of education have traditionally been concerned with conceptual, context-independent knowledge. Students are introduced to the systemized theoretical concepts and content they need to progress to higher-order thinking within various subject boundaries (Young, 2010a).

Bernstein contrasts vertical discourse with the horizontal discourse of everyday knowledge which is “likely to be oral, local, context dependent and specific, tacit, multi-layered” (2000, p. 157). This knowledge is situated and segmented and acquired through *ad hoc* experience rather than cumulative, and it is structured through “systematically related sets of concepts” (Young, 2010a, p. 25). The vertical and horizontal forms of knowledge are often conceptualised as an abstract/concrete, oral/written, informal/formal dichotomy, and are generally heard as oppositional rather than complementary: “one form is often seen as the destruction of the other” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 155). These forms have also been ideologically positioned; the ratiocination of knowledge having led to dominant discourses that have ‘silenced’ or excluded others within education. Until recent times western classical art music has been positioned as a form of sacred knowledge (in Bernstein’s



terms a vertical discourse), and popular music as an expression of the profane (a horizontal discourse).

University music, elective school music, and to a large extent one-to-one instrumental tuition (both within and outside institutions) exhibit the characteristics of vertical discourse, with strong distributive rules regulating access, transmission and evaluation (Bernstein, 2000). On the other hand the world of every-day, self-taught music-making and listening, for example a garage band, can be heard as a form of horizontal discourse where the knowledge is “contextually specific and *context dependent*, embedded in on-going practices, usually with strong affective loading, and directed towards specific, immediate goals, highly relevant to the acquirer in the context of his/her life” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 159, italics in original). Popular music’s pervasive presence and its importance to young people, create a potential tension between the traditional vertical discourse of school music, the processes of informal music learning (horizontal discourse) and the musical values and interests of students (Green, 2008).

Within vertical discourse Bernstein (2000) identifies two types of knowledge structures, hierarchical and horizontal, which vary according to their degree of verticality. An example of a hierarchical knowledge structure within academic music is music theory, where traditional rules beginning with pitch and duration nomenclature can lead sequentially to facility in advanced concepts such as counterpoint and fugue. This demonstrates a conceptual integrity in which the knowledge progression and integration are pivotal for acquisition. In contrast, within the teaching of composition for example, there exists a series of segmented stylistic languages (e.g. minimalism, 12-bar blues) that are not necessarily reliant on a sequential development of knowledge but more on conceptual awareness of stylistic conventions associated with the chosen ‘voice’.

While Bernstein’s discussion of knowledge structures (2000) was primarily concerned with the production of new knowledge in knowledge-producing fields, these concepts can be extended to curriculum structures within the school; curriculum structures are recontextualized knowledge structures (Maton, 2009). Moreover, within the vertical discourse of the school, subjects, like their parent knowledge structures, vary along a continuum of verticality (or knowledge progression) from hierarchical to horizontal (Muller, 2006; Maton, 2009). Awareness of knowledge structures has significant implications for curriculum conception and specification and for pedagogy (Muller, 2006).

## **Conclusion**

Bernstein has noted that while descriptive research often sets out to map the vicissitudes of a problem “one wants to grasp somehow the underlying principles of the map itself” (Bernstein, 1990/2003, p. 2). The analysis of the cases in this research aims to describe and interpret the micro (individual) and meso (subsystem) level data against the broader macro (whole) context of educational and cultural change. This is an attempt to set the music-specific research problem within the context of wider educational and pedagogical issues; to acknowledge the structural or contextual conditions that influence the nature of problems. Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggest that “any explanation of experience would be *incomplete* without ... locating the experience within the larger conditional frame or context in which it is embedded” (p. 17, italics in original). It is the function of the next two chapters, the literature review and the New Zealand overview, to provide the meso and macro contextual backdrop against which the cases can be more readily understood.

## **CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction and scope**

This chapter provides a broad contextual frame for this research into the dialectic between western high culture and popular culture within education. The research is focused on secondary school music teachers' perceptions of the relationship between classical and popular music within education, and their response to it as manifested in their curriculum decisions and enactment. Within the context of this research 'curriculum' is defined as a multi-dimensional concept encompassing the systemised content of national documents, teachers' interpretations of these documents, their planning, the pedagogic approaches of teachers, and the teaching and learning that is experienced by students. Moreover the curriculum is realised inside and outside the classroom, both explicitly and implicitly, in the instructional and regulative discourse of the school (Bernstein, 2000).

The implementation of the curriculum is complicated by factors such as the school culture, the preferences and expectation of students and families, as well as by the formal components of legislated prescriptions, which include the inherent philosophical assumptions of the curriculum authors. Together, these elements create a web of interweaving factors which are in turn affected more broadly by the wider fields of music, education, and culture. The realisation of a curriculum is therefore a complex process reflecting societal and ideological interests in which the values and decisions of the teacher are pivotal.

The first step in the process of bringing understanding to these issues is to provide an overview of secondary school music education including an outline of the issues currently facing those in the field. These issues are inextricably bound up with music's history, its more recently acquired ubiquity, and its foundation and development as a subject of learning within the field of education. This chapter outlines these areas, and relates them to what can be described as 'culture wars' within western society, thereby providing a broader framework from which the more detailed and specific cases studies can be understood.

Within this framework the questions that focus the literature review are:

- How has music as a subject of learning been realized within education?
- In what ways have recent cultural changes in society influenced, and been manifested in, the music curriculum of the New Zealand secondary school?
- What are the key issues concerning the practice of music education as currently outlined in the literature?

By way of introduction, the opening ‘Prelude’ of the chapter sets out to encapsulate some of the dilemmas faced by secondary music teachers in today’s complex cultural and educational environment: issues of cultural value, relativism, and educational relevance. To a large degree classical music remains the embodiment of modernist ideals of high culture, symbolising tradition, authority, and artistic attainment. On the other hand, popular music seems to embody challenge, change, and an immediacy of appeal as it is carried onto the school site by young people.

Following this ‘setting of the scene’, section one (“Accounts of the meaning of music”) discusses two significant lines of thought that have influenced the conceptualisation of music within western culture and, therefore, the realisation of music as a school subject: that of music as an aesthetic experience, and the conception of music as a sociocultural phenomenon. An awareness of these paradigms is a necessary part of understanding school music’s current dilemmas.

In the second section (“Music and the culture wars”) the review considers significant trends in current cultural ideological debates under the title of ‘culture wars’, or debates which concern the postmodern legitimisation crisis of knowledge. The implications of cultural value, relativism, and educational relevance touched on in the Prelude are considered here in more depth.

In the third section (“Pedagogical themes in classroom music teaching”) a brief historical overview of pedagogical themes in music education is provided, noting the development from utilitarian, through aesthetic, to more recent postmodern praxial conceptions. The modern/postmodern dichotomy is articulated as a contestation between the high culture of the western classics and popular music. This is expressed as competing paradigms conceptualising music as an aesthetic experience or as a culturally situated practice. Within secondary education the question becomes ‘is music primarily a field of knowledge or a field of practice’? The final section (‘Current dilemmas’) considers contemporary problems in school music as outlined in the literature, in particular school music’s apparent disconnection from the music of the ‘outside’ world, and considers some progressive work in the *Musical Futures* programme in the United Kingdom.

## **Prelude**

The gap between the culture acquired spontaneously by the young, and that which, according to Humboldt and Arnold, should be imparted at the university, is so cavernously wide that the teacher is apt to look ridiculous, as he perches on his theatrical pinnacle and beckons youth to cross it. Indeed, it is easier to make the passage the other way, to join your young audience in the enchanted field of popular entertainment, and turn your guns on the stately ruin across the chasm (Scruton, 2000, p. 122).

As an educational endeavour within the secondary school, we might expect music to engage students, to arouse their interest, and to broaden and enrich their view of the world. We might also

expect students to be empowered, in some way, through their encounter with music at school, either in or out of the classroom. More than most other subjects, music is influenced by cultural change (Westbury, 2002) and this is creating immense challenges for teachers: challenges regarding the conceptualisation and realisation of a meaningful and relevant music curriculum (Hargreaves, Marshall, & North, 2003; Jorgensen, 2003; Sloboda, 2001; Walker, 2001). Walker (2007) argues that the role and function of popular music has emerged as the most pressing issue within formal music education the last few decades, and Bowman (2004) suggests that the implications for taking popular music seriously go “to the very heart of music education and curriculum theory” (p. 31). It appears popular music’s pervasive presence outside school, and its apparent importance to young people, creates a tension between the discourse of school music and the musical values and interests of students (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001; Bray, 2000; North, Hargreaves, & O’Neill, 2000; Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall, & Tarrant, 2003). In response to notions of relevance, many music teachers are providing opportunities for students, both inside and outside the classroom, which acknowledge the popular musical culture that is so prevalent beyond the school gates (Green, 2002b). Moreover, at a more pragmatic level, music teachers are aware of the need to secure the often tenuous place of music within the school curriculum by providing students with experiences they are more likely to regard as meaningful. Ironically there is also the risk of alienation by teaching popular music within the school: there is a danger that in the process of legitimising students’ personal musical worlds within the curriculum, these worlds become systemised and recontextualised in order to meet the sociotechnical needs of the educational setting (Ross, 1995; Drummond, 2003), losing some of the ‘counter-culture’ value in the process. Furthermore, the acquiescence to relevance creates the potential for conflict with wider educational ideals, such as the provision of access to aspects of our culture considered less ‘relevant’ (Bowman, 2004) or knowledge considered powerful because of its foundational nature (Young, 2008).

There is great potential for teachers to feel adrift amidst a sea of conflicting challenges, needs, and ideas as they contemplate what might, or should, be taught in both the general and elective music programmes offered in schools (Thwaites, 2009). These challenges are compounded by the fact that all students bring with them to the school site varied musical experiences and, often, a preconceived idea of what significance school music might hold for them. Curriculum documents place some boundaries on the realization of the local music curriculum, but in New Zealand these documents are essentially broad, providing guidance and options rather than detailed prescriptions for curriculum content and method (Ministry of Education, 2000; 2007). A curriculum can be defined in many ways: as a written document, as a process, as what is taught, or as what is actually experienced and learnt by the students (Jorgensen, 2003). Curriculum is defined in this research as a multi-

dimensional concept, curricula in fact, encompassing the systemised content of national documents, teachers' interpretations of these documents, their planning, and the teaching and learning that is experienced by students.

There is no doubt that within western culture a relativistic view of music has largely replaced the view of modernity, with its emphasis on canonical music and categories of high and low culture. In accordance with relativist assertions, Westbury (2002) suggests "we can ask if music education in fact needs a larger vision than the one of a mindful situated and local practice of music in all its forms and manifestations" (p. 156). Nevertheless a 'mindful' practice suggests that an underlying concern remains about how musical practices in schools might be shaped to meet broader educational ends. Bowman (2002; 2005) argues that there is no guarantee that involvement with music automatically leads to positive educational outcomes: "musical engagements are not unconditionally good: they may harm as well as heal, subvert as well as advance the goals of education" (Bowman, 2005, p. 125). Moreover, agreement on what are the goals of education is problematic. Bowman argues from a definition with a broad, ethical perspective, contrasting technicist approaches as training rather than education (Bowman, 2002). Music, perceived as a "fundamentally social activity grounded in sonorous experience" (Bowman, 2002, p. 75), provides certain unique possibilities that are indicative of fulfilling such educational aims. As a form of experiential knowledge, music develops and requires "improvisational resourcefulness and agility" (Bowman, 2002, p. 75). Furthermore "the musically engaged person becomes one with the music .... requiring an attitude of caring and commitment" (p. 75). In this regard music can be a potent tool in the formation of individual and social identity, as well as maintaining cultural vitality (Bowman, 2005). The educational setting, with its unique values and expectations, and its wider musical cultural context (including the experiences and values of teachers and students) forms a dialectic where many influences are brought to bear in constantly changing ways that may or may not provide educational outcomes considered positive by both teachers and students.

Music teachers are part of a shift of cultural values that goes to the very heart of current western educational and philosophical thinking (Jorgensen, 2003). What knowledge should be taught within the curriculum, and what form should this teaching and learning take? Many music teachers have been trained in tertiary institutions that emphasise traditional western classical practices, and a growing tension now exists between this 'traditional' musical training and knowledge and the way in which music in schools now needs to be 'democratised' to the influences of musical plurality. This dialectic is not limited to the formal curriculum and the tension this creates with students' values, but also intersects significantly with the personal values, training, and beliefs of music teachers. Implicit in this dilemma, if largely unspoken, is an acknowledgement of music as a

powerful phenomenon; on a personal level as a manifestation of selfhood (Hargreaves et al., 2003) and on a political level as a means for challenging or perpetuating ideologies (Green, 1999).

## **SECTION ONE: Accounts of the meaning of music**

### *The paradigm of the aesthetic – idealist and formalist themes*

Music has consistently remained a part of philosophical deliberations throughout western history. It is, however, with the idealist writings of Enlightenment philosophers, and the subsequent 19th century Romantic and formalist views, that the modern western account of music emerges. This account suggests music's essence and potential value lies in its conception as an aesthetic object requiring aesthetic contemplation. In Scruton's view, such aesthetic contemplations and encounters with art reveal our values, as well as creating traditions which we have come to call high culture, in which "objects made for aesthetic contemplation renew through their allusive powers the experience of membership" (Scruton, 2000, p. 39). It is generally accepted that the aesthetic account of music acquired canonical status within western culture as it merged with the developing ideology of the bourgeois individual and the musical work in the 18th century (Goehr, 1992; Spruce, 2002; Martin 2006). Concepts associated with high art such as universality, complexity, originality, and autonomy became reified and legitimised, creating an ideology of the aesthetic which points to one essential and universal musical essence based on these ideas (Green, 1999).

It was in 1735 that the German philosopher Baumgarten coined the term 'aesthetics' to account for the "whole region of human perception and sensation, in contrast to the more rarefied domain of conceptual thought" (Eagleton, 1990, p. 13). Subsequently, the concept of aesthetics was adopted to describe both the study of beauty, and the study of the arts as differentiated from natural beauty (Elliott, 1995). The idea of aesthetic reflection or contemplation, which is fundamental to the ideology of aesthetics, can be traced back to Kant's paradigm of aesthetic perception of beauty as essentially disinterested (Kant, 1790/2005). Kant's disinterest should not be mistaken for non-involvement, but is rather a disinterest in any particular ends for the contemplation, not a disinterest in the contemplation itself. An encounter with beauty has value and is an interest of human reason rather than a human need or desire: "A judgement upon an object of our delight may be wholly disinterested but withal very interesting, i.e. it relies on no interest, but it produces one" (Kant, 1790/2005, p. 28).

Philosophers subsequent to Kant, such as Schiller, Hegel, and Schopenhauer, found the significance of music in the effects, feelings, and insights it afforded. As well as this, music was considered a unique mode of knowing that connected listeners with a world beyond itself. Yet such idealist views also regarded the feeling aspect of music as "not so much aroused, evoked, or undergone, but rather

mentally apprehended and contemplated” (Bowman, 1998a, p. 128). Later, formalist views highlighted the significance of music’s inherent components. Philosophers such as Eduard Hanslick (1825-1904) began to emphasise the importance of the cognitive perception of form and pattern in music rather than “giving an account of the feelings which take possession of us when we hear it” (Hanslick, 1891/1986, p. 1). Hanslick’s views have been highly influential in the formation of educational perspectives of music in the twentieth century. His famous description of music as “tonally moving forms” encapsulated the central concept of music as an autonomous, self-contained object (Hanslick, 1891/1986, p. 29). Moreover, Hanslick rejected the view that feelings are significant in an account of musical meaning in favour of arguing that music is “a quasi-syntactical structure: a syntax without semantics” (Kivy, 1990, p. 101). In this regard Hanslick’s view can be seen as legitimizing a particular way of perceiving and listening that has become part of the western aesthetic ideology, one that “provides an intense aesthetic enjoyment that can only be derived from anticipations and confirmations of the music’s pattern as it unfolds in performance” (Gracyk, 2004, p. 55). In this strict formalist view, features of the music that are deemed non-structural are rendered secondary.

While formalist views have greatly influenced the field of academic music study, the idea that music is closely associated with feeling has remained widely accepted. The influence of the American philosopher Susan Langer (1895-1985) can be seen in accounts that recognise music’s importance as being symbolic and representative of human feeling: “The real basis of music appreciation is the same as of music making: the recognition of forms in virtual time, charged with the vital import of all art, the ways of human feeling” (Langer, 1953, p. 148). Such ideas emerged explicitly in the aesthetic paradigm of music education in the United States of America in the 1950s and 1960s (see section three below).

In summary, modernist philosophies of music consider music to be a unitary concept; an autonomous aesthetic object that exists to be perceived via aesthetic contemplation for its formal and expressive dimensions. Idealist views project an account of music as ontologically significant, with music providing a unique means to “reveal reality’s innermost secrets, especially because of its special relationship with the realms of feeling or spirituality” (Bowman, 1998a, p. 12). A more formalist stance considers these ‘secrets’ to be part of the inherent logic and structure of music’s sonorous patterns. In both accounts there is debate over the real and the ideal, between sense and reason, as well as for the potential for music to exert an influence on the development of desirable human qualities.



### *Socio-cultural perspectives*

Historically, the discourse surrounding music as an aesthetic object has resulted in a perception of music as, primarily, a received product. The composer and the performer are secondary to music's major function as art. A strong counter-position has emerged in the socio-cultural perspectives of the twentieth century, which attempts to explain music's value and meaning as a process and social text. Bourdieu suggests the aestheticisation of art has led to its 'sacralisation', creating a disconnection between it and the everyday experience (Bourdieu, 1993). Bourdieu also argues that the aesthetic paradigm serves as an ideology that perpetuates the social differentiation of high and low culture (Bourdieu, 1984). Dewey (1934/2005) also felt that "when artistic objects are separated from both the conditions of origin and operation in experience a wall is built around them that renders almost opaque their general significance with which esthetic theory deals." (p. 2).

Unlike philosophical or aesthetic accounts, sociocultural perspectives look to empirical evidence to inform the development of theories that explain music's significance. The sociocultural perspective places music within its social context and asks questions concerning how music is socially shaped and "how its production, distribution and consumption [are] mediated by the milieux (music worlds) in which these activities take place" (DeNora, 2003b, p. 167). Idealistic views of music consider it a symbol for something beyond itself. Sociocultural accounts, on the other hand, place music firmly in this world, and register its significance as a social, psychological, and political force (Bowman, 1998a).

In the early part of the twentieth century, Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) argued that music has an indisputable relationship to the society of which it is a part, exposing the relationship between ideology and culture. He viewed popular culture as synonymous with mass culture "infecting everything with sameness" (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1944/2002, p. 94). This massification perspective of culture argues that a 'false consciousness' is induced by standardisation, uniformity, and passivity, dulling people's critical awareness and ability to challenge existing social orders, whereas, high art music, particularly that of the modernist school of the early twentieth century, refuses to "capitulate to commercialism and conformity" (Bowman, 1998, p. 306). More recent exploration of the way in which people use music, rather than music using them, suggests Adorno underestimated the potential of popular music as a means to question social norms and values. Views to emerge from cultural studies and sociology suggest music is utilised as "a whole way of life and as a bundle of "rituals of resistance" against the dominant culture" (Mueller, 2002, p. 593). Frith (1996) argues that music "lives" the values of culture and in this way not only reflects values, but also creates them (p. 272).

Since the 1970s, sociologists have become increasingly interested in the way art can function as a mechanism of social exclusion (DeNora, 2003b). Bourdieu's (1984) concept of cultural capital became widely known (Johnson, 2002), and this concept linked cultural taste to socio-economic status, undermining the belief that taste is autonomous, but rather arguing that cultural preferences are clearly linked to matters of habitus – the social attitudes and patterns that reinforce social structures and practices. The influence of Bourdieu is seen in the general acceptance of musical value as socially constructed rather than being located in notions of universal ideal truths.

The sociology of music has also begun to examine the ways in which people utilise music in their everyday lives, and how it is consumed. As music has become available as a potential accompaniment to daily life, it has also been utilised as a means to alter mood, to shape social action, to help define identity, and as a referent for consciousness (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001; DeNora, 2000; DeNora, 2003a; Martin, 2006). DeNora (2003b) argues that the seminal work of Paul Willis (1978/1990) has shown how important music can be: “music can be seen as a referent for the shaping of values and conduct” (DeNora, 2003b, p. 170). Regelski suggests that “sociology alerts us to the value of music ‘in action’ in people’s lives, as opposed to the metaphysical claims of analytical philosophers” (Regelski, as cited in Roberts, 2004, p. 3). As music has become more prominent in everyday life, a disconnection between its new function within western culture and traditional aesthetic views has opened up.

### ***The ideology of high art and ‘high listening’***

One manifestation of the culture wars between modernist and postmodern values is the contestation between high art (and aesthetic listening) and popular art, and the sociocultural explanation of meaning (Johnson, 2002). Heard as dichotomous explanations, the ‘high’ represents the elite, the special, the transcendent and universal, whereas the ‘popular’ is associated with the everyday, the accessible, the visceral, the defiant and the fun (Bowman, 2004, p. 33). Spruce (2002) suggests that the values and structures associated with western high art music had attained the status of traditional authority within western culture by the nineteenth century, where the ideology appears self-evident and pre-ordained by “the sanctity of age-old rules and powers” (Weber, 1922/1978, p. 226). Coupled with the developing aesthetic paradigm and the associated development of the fine arts is the account of music as ‘autonomous’. In this explanation, music is conceived in terms independent of its social context and the concept of music becomes synonymous with the musical work - a finite, perfected object (Goehr, 1992). Music’s conception and production before the nineteenth century was certainly more often realised in pragmatic terms, but the idea of music as a ‘work’ was not unknown, as the history of music publishing attests. Nevertheless, the concept of music as

autonomous, set aside for contemplation and study, separated from a practical social function, was new. As well as being in concord with evolving Romantic artistic concepts, music removed from practical function became used as a tool for social stratification by those seeking ‘refined sensibilities’, the emerging middle classes (Spruce, 2002). In this view, the emergence of the arts as aesthetic experiences can be seen as a means of delineating social status and power. While Martin (2006) suggests that the idea of a direct correlation between music and social class is more complex than often accounted, this division between autonomous music for aesthetic contemplation and music as a functional utilitarian activity is fundamental to the continuing discourse about music’s value within western society and within education. It is this distinction that has formed a dichotomy widely accepted in our culture - that popular music is not intended to be listened to aesthetically, and that, as a result, it is in some way inferior to high art music and not suitable for the purposes of education (Vulliamy, 1977a). Until recent times, the academic study of western music had been underpinned by this paradigm, accepting that the value of music was to be found primarily through the analysis of its inherent formal structures. Furthermore access to this knowledge required a period of indoctrination into high levels of musical literacy through university study.

Popular music, on the other hand, is primarily “created, distributed, and consumed as recorded music .... designed to be readily understood by the average listener, who may have little or no formal music training” (Gracyk, 2004). Gracyk argues that aesthetic conceptions are not necessarily appropriate for the popular idiom. The aesthetic paradigm has perpetuated a distinction between musical hearing and listening, built on the assumption that only the inherent, formal qualities of music are able to reveal music’s value. Such a view “asks us to ignore expressive qualities that are present for non-structural reasons” (Gracyk, 2004, p. 59). Other ways of listening and responding to music are not necessarily inferior manifestations of musical involvement, but such views permeate the way music as a subject became actualized in western education, and account for the way in which music has been conceived as an academic rather than a creative pursuit. Sociocultural perspectives suggest that music is a cultural construct, and as such relies on cultural preconditions of socialization for its comprehension. Meyer (1956) suggested in the 1950s that far from being universal, reactions to musical meanings are learnt through experience and enculturation. Moreover, it is within particular social groups that we become familiar with specific musical stylistic meanings in our culture (Martin, 1995).

### ***The development of verticality in senior school music***

The historical development of music education saw the evolution of distinct classes of musical knowledge. This was manifested as a divide between theoretical and practical dimensions of the

subject, a dissociation between musical text and context which became institutionalised (Tagg, 2002). Historically this division can be seen in the emergence of the European conservatoires after the French revolution, and in the differences in the musical training carried out within these conservatoires compared to the universities. In Oxford in 1870, for example, an examination for the award of a degree in music comprised harmony and counterpoint, fugue, canon, analysis, musical history and the submission of an original composition (Rainbow, 2006). In New Zealand from 1884 until at least the early 1950s the same components made up the curriculum of the bachelor of music degree.

By contrast the emphasis in the European conservatoires was on the applied practice of music performance through instrumental studies, with supporting theoretical, compositional and historical knowledge (Rainbow, 2006). While the teaching of instrumental skills has developed its own verticality of knowledge, it tends to be localised into segmented schools of performance and technical styles. The academic knowledge of the university, in contrast, consists of an induction into structured and sequentially more complex vertical knowledge concepts that are the result of “historically evolved rules of collective evaluation” (Moore, 2010, p.152).

As the senior school curriculum developed in the twentieth century it mirrored the parent structure of the more highly valued knowledge of the university, in that practical elements were rendered secondary to the explicitly cognitive dimensions of analysis, history, and harmony and counterpoint. In this way the subject was able to comply with the hegemonic principles of ratiocination, or verticality of knowledge, which lie at the heart of western scientific method. This recontextualisation of music increased its status and enabled its affiliation with academic school subjects. The preference afforded to classical music over popular, the emphasis given to developing skills in musical literacy over oral or practical fluency, and the ordering of musical knowledge into “sequential learning, prescriptive goals and materials, tests and national examinations” (Drummond, 2003, p. 54) are symptoms of this process of ratiocination.

Historically in elective school music in New Zealand and the United Kingdom an official vertical discourse evolved modelled on the high status musical knowledge structures of the university rather than on the horizontal and local music practices of everyday music making or even on the more vertically developed one-to-one training in instrumental studies. The resulting curricular content and pedagogic practices emphasised a logic of transmission rather than acquisition; an emphasis on “*states* of knowledge rather than *ways* of knowing” (Bernstein, 1990/2003, p. 98, italics in original). The importance of the formation and maintenance of subject identity, where a certain type of ‘gaze’ is required and acquired by the subject’s ‘knowers’ (Maton, 2009), is explained by Bernstein’s

concept of classification: the creation of insulatory boundary spaces that keep subjects apart in what he terms singulars. Although within education rational abstract thinking remains more highly prized than practical skill (Iverson, 2010), such narrow conceptions of musical knowledge are now frequently challenged by the increasing recognition of ‘local’ and ‘real-world’ procedural and situated knowledges or other “ways of knowing” (Elliott, 1995; Westbury, 2002; Drummond, 2003).

## **SECTION TWO: Music and the ‘culture wars’**

### *The essence of cultural change*

In his sociological study of American culture in the 1970s Herbert Gans (1974/1999) described the struggle between diverse populations over cultural power and resources in modern life as ‘culture wars’. In his view, “the culture in these wars expands to fit the battles of the moment” (p. 3) and, in post-war America, the cultural battle was essentially one of supremacy between high culture and popular culture. “In this war, the advocates of high culture attack popular culture as a mass culture that has harmful effects on both individuals consuming it and on society as a whole” (Gans, 1974/1999, p. 3). While the term culture wars is often used generically in the media to describe polarised political positions of the right and left, in this discussion the focus is the debate over social theory in the social sciences and in the humanities, and its resultant effect on the values associated with music and music education. The current culture wars within academia include a sweeping critique of the constructs and values of modernity through the wide acceptance of the theories of French theorists of the 1970s, in particular Derrida, Foucault, and Bourdieu. The critique is not a struggle against political or economic institutions, but against western systems of thought (Windschuttle, 1996). While Elliott (2001) maintains that “we are living in the middle of a tense tug-of-war between two powerful social forces: the end of modernity and the advance of the postmodern world” (Elliott, 2001, p. 33), Rata (2002) has noted that some writers regard postmodernism as part of modernism’s critique of itself. Others see postmodernism as exhibiting counter-enlightenment tendencies, towards “reactionary, anti-egalitarian politics” (Rata, 2002, p. 24). Within the world of academia, this struggle is one that reaches to the very core of western thought, as it concerns the conception of knowledge itself.

The essence of this contestation in western thinking has been summarised by Windschuttle (1996) as comprising three essential themes: the rejection of “those aspects of scientific method of the Enlightenment that were based on observation and inductive argument”, a relativist conception of truth and knowledge, and the idea that we are “locked in a closed system of language and culture” which prevents us from having any direct access to knowing reality (Windschuttle, 1996, p. 36). Windschuttle asserts that such relativist theories trap human thought within the structures of culture,

in contrast to the Enlightenment account of the autonomous, reasoning, and inquiring individual. Rational and empirical concepts of knowledge have certainly been challenged by ideologies of relativism, as postmodern ideas question the possibility of universal cross-cultural truths, proposing instead that all knowledge is subjective and culturally determined (Windschuttle, 1996). Maton (2010) describes these positions as highlighting the “contingent, subjective and arbitrary nature of cultural valuations” (p. 185). Moreover, such relativist accounts argue that knowledge acts ideologically as a form of power, privileging the views of some over others (Green, 1999; Young, 2008). Such views have come to affect the way in which knowledge and learning are viewed, the way in which research is undertaken and, most significantly in relation to the social sciences and the arts, what is now regarded as culturally valuable knowledge. The western Enlightenment ideal of a progressive civilization, as espoused in its academic knowledge and high culture, is now presented as an unacceptable ideological authority. Political and cultural control has been exerted through the reproduction of forms of high status knowledge, to which only the initiated have access (Windschuttle, 2002). In this way, as Bourdieu (1984) suggests, cultural capital is created, and the inequalities of society are maintained.

One of the ways in which the new relativism has been achieved is through a gradual change in the way we understand the term culture. By the late nineteenth century, the concept of western culture was articulated primarily in terms of its achievements. This ‘literary view’, first articulated by Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), was a view of culture that provided the rationale for the teaching of the humanities well into the twentieth century. This account of culture as “the best that has been thought and said” (Arnold, 1869/1960, p. 6) is inextricably bound up with learning, and contrasts with the more broad anthropological definition, which suggests that culture encompasses the common beliefs and practices of a distinct group of people (Wright, 1998). Giroux (2005) suggests that in the literary account “culture is treated as a warehouse filled with the goods of antiquity, waiting patiently to be distributed to each generation” (p. 162). Knowledge becomes ostensibly sacred and removed from ideological intent. Further accounts of culture have developed in the twentieth century, including the ‘massification perspective’, which suggests society is increasingly homogenized by commercialism and the mass media (see Adorno above), and the ‘taste cultures hypothesis’ (Mueller, 2002) which sees culture as intertwined with the expression of personal choices that pervade modern life. These are the ‘taste cultures’ of Gans (1974/1999) that are primarily reflections of socioeconomic hierarchies, yet they also contradict such hierarchies, as people exhibit cultural pluralism by making choices related to more than one taste culture in the wake of social and technological change.

Emerging from the egalitarian views of the New Left in the 1960s, particularly in the influential work of Raymond Williams (1921-1987) and the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in Birmingham, a view of culture as a force for indoctrination saw cultural studies evolve as an academic discipline. Cultural studies aim to expose and deconstruct apparently accepted truths, showing how culture functions ideologically and politically. This perspective rejects any notion of 'art for art's sake' and stresses "how works of culture belong to the larger struggles of their societies" (Jay, 1992, p. 2). The ideology of 'high' and 'low' is rejected in favour of deconstruction where 'good' and 'bad' are defined in political terms rather than as judgements of form and inherent quality.

Such readings of cultural practices and objects can render inherent components irrelevant, with the risk that one ideology will replace another. On the other hand, the deconstruction of hegemonic approaches to knowledge has provided some positive outcomes within western societies. The recognition of education as inherently political, in that it must choose to favour certain materials and ideas over others, choices which lead to cultural legitimation (Spruce, 2002), has allowed more inclusive and democratic views of education to emerge (McEneaney & Meyer, 2000). Furthermore such awareness alerts us to the potentially negative consequences when ideologies are unquestioningly transported into the field of education (Woodford, 2005). Nevertheless the limits of such standpoint theories to offer viable alternatives for education have been questioned in recent social realist accounts (Moore & Young, 2010; Young, 2010a).

Changing definitions of cultural value have resulted in the promotion of several interrelated ideas that have had a significant effect on the world of music and music education. The most significant of these ideas is relativism, both between and within cultures, which has meshed with concepts of political correctness and questions of cultural value. Western countries have been confronted with their colonial pasts and, collectively within western thought, guilt has come to carry a persuasive moral weight in the acceptance of the relativist perspective. Within western thinking, the concept of culture as the stable manifestation of a civilisation has been rejected in favour of an egalitarian concept of culture as a melting pot of diverse human practices. Scruton (2007) points to the great paradox in this new relativism. On the one hand relativism espouses openness to infinite possibilities of cultural value and, on the other, it denies this inclusiveness to western high culture, which is viewed as inherently ethnocentric, racist, and patriarchal. The critique of modernism has taken on a tone of moral outrage under the influences of political correctness which Scruton (2000; 2007) terms the culture of repudiation and Sandall (2001) 'ressentiment'. In this view, elements of western culture such as "universal human rights, individualism and liberalism are regarded merely as

ethnocentric products of Western history” (Windschuttle, 2002, p. 99) to be rejected in favour of an idealised ‘other’; a culture untainted by modernist ideals.

### ***Relativism and value judgements***

The idea that relativism has done away with the potential to make value judgements in relation to aspects of inter- and intra-cultural value is widespread (Bowman, 1998b; Bunge, 1999; Moore, 2010). If we are defined by our individuality, or by our espoused membership of specific groups in society, then no one can argue with our judgements. Relativism in extreme forms can even allow cultural groups to protect themselves from critique through the argument that knowledge is culturally determined (Sandall, 2001; Rata, 2002). A significant shift has occurred, from the modernist idea of knowledge as ‘rationally justified belief’ to one where knowledge need only be culturally justified. An absolutist notion of relativism certainly creates problems for education. In the case of music education, if all music and all opinions regarding music are equally valid, then what are we to teach, and how are we to encourage the development of critical awareness in students? Woodford (2005) argues:

If music is truly only subjective, or only intelligible to members of a particular social or cultural group, then there can be no conversations ... only monologues leading to cultural imposition, increased fragmentation, and a retreat from the wider world and its problems (Woodford, 2005, p. 19).

Massification explanations of cultural value would have all things potentially equal and available for consumption: Reality TV and Shakespeare; Beyoncé and Bach. In mass culture, the forces of commercialism try to persuade us that every product may be of value to us, encouraging a global relativism of tastes. While collectively, to a large degree, we accept the concept of an uncritical cultural populism, in the reality of daily life, through our constant choices in relation to one thing or another, we do not. We constantly make judgements which establish hierarchies of value. It is through such active choices that we create popular culture, or ‘taste cultures’ (Gans, 1974/1999), rather than succumb to the false consciousness of Adorno’s (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002) mindless perception as inculcated through mass culture. In Adorno’s account, we have lost the ability to make judgements of value, and all products are of potentially equal value to us. Martin (2006) summarises this: “the principal function of popular music ... was to ‘affirm’ the values and normative patterns of mass society and thus to reconcile the ‘humming millions’ to their existence as workers and, increasingly, consumers” (Martin, 2006, p. 60).

The influence of market ideology certainly reinforces the idea that value is not an intrinsic concept but one that is predominantly realised in quantitative rather than qualitative terms. However such views underemphasise the importance of intention, function, and judgement in delineating cultural



objects and experiences (Finberg, 2006; Walker, 2007; Moore, 2010). Some cultural products are intended for easy consumption, escapism, and fantasy, and some have an intended purpose that in the modernist view can be described as artistic or aesthetic. This intended function affects the creative conception from the outset. Any object may be put forward as a potential work of art, but it will be judged as good or bad, effective or not, against the traditions of practice on which it draws, as well as its fulfilment of an artistic or aesthetic function; that of engendering reflection and involvement of those who come into contact with it (Finberg, 2006). Some writers have also argued that aesthetic value can be present in the everyday act of consumption, rather than as a quality intrinsic only to form (Storey, 2006). Such grounded aesthetic theories suggest there is an act of meaning-making in the process of reception. Willis (1978/1990) has argued that young people create their symbolic worlds, rather than being passive consumers, by a process of selection, reselection and recomposition: “consumerism now has to be understood as an active, not a passive process” (Willis, 1990, p. 18). In this view, rather than music acting on passive consumers “people may actively use music in the process of establishing and maintaining a distinct sense of self, an identity which, though constantly evolving, provides psychological security and a feeling of belonging to a wider community” (Martin, 2006, p. 69).

Since the nineteenth century, the legitimation of artistic forms has operated according to criteria related to the concept of a creative process, dependent on the unique creative potential of an artist, untainted by commercial motivations (Vulliamy, 1977b; Jones, 2008). Within the field of twentieth century popular music, similar patterns of legitimation can be identified where subcultures vie for status; the authenticity of the creative rock musician claims a higher status than the commercially produced pop recording for example (Jones, 2008). Legitimation need not be a static phenomenon however, and Vulliamy (1977b) asks how and why spheres of legitimacy might change over time. This is particularly visible in the field of popular music, where styles become legitimized as music becomes accepted by higher status groups. The movement of popular music into the field of schooling is an example of this process of legitimation.

Making judgements is central to the legitimation of cultural forms and as Maton and Moore suggest “epistemological relativism does not imply judgemental relativism ... rather, *judgemental rationality* holds that there are rational, intersubjective bases for determining the relative merits of competing knowledge claims” (2010, p. 4, italics in original). Scruton (2007) arguing from the perspective of high culture, and Frith (1996) arguing from the perspective of cultural studies, concur within the realm of aesthetic meaning making. Scruton declares:

It is true that our judgments of works of art are subjective in the sense that they issue from our personal experience, impressions and tastes. But it does not follow that they are subjective in the sense of admitting no argument in their favor, or connecting with no important experiences and emotions which might be tested by life (Scruton, 2007, p. 5).

Frith (1996) suggests:

Part of the pleasure of popular culture is talking about it ... talk which is run through with value judgments. To be engaged with popular culture is to be discriminating .... value arguments aren't simply rituals of "I like/you like" ... they are based in reason, evidence, persuasion (Frith, 1996, p. 4).

The idea of hearing things of value within music is not limited to high culture. Furthermore Frith (1996) argues that there are a number of axes around which we make aesthetic and functional judgements in all cultural spheres: believability, coherence, familiarity, usefulness, and the spiritual (Frith, 1996). Jones (2008), in his book *The Rock Canon* argues that despite anti-establishment agendas rock music has begun the tentative formation of its own canon of significant works. Authenticity of artistic intention is regarded as more important than commercial success; and Jones (2008) lists the following dimensions as significant amongst the criteria for positive reception in the rock music field: originality, authenticity, seriousness, pure artistic motivation and autonomy, complexity, and lasting relevance. These are values common to the classical canons of western high art. Moreover aspects such as "rebellion, sonic originality, authenticity of performance, nihilism, hedonism, image, youth and contemporary relevance" are regarded by Jones as "modern manifestations of traditional canonical values" (Jones, 2008, p. 139).

Recent social realist accounts of knowledge (Maton & Moore, 2010) acknowledge the sociality of knowledge yet argue, in opposition to both absolutism and relativism, that judgements can be made in favour of certain forms of knowledge on epistemological and aesthetic grounds since such knowledge is the product of "historically evolved rules of *collective* evaluation" (Moore, 2010, p. 152, italics added). As distinct from personal preferences, judgements are made according to collective accepted conventions and standards of excellence within a field.

While acknowledging that a universalist eurocentric bias within our multi-cultural and pluralist societies is no longer satisfactory as an ideology for education, Bowman (1998b) argues for the acceptance of a 'responsible relativism': "Relativism need not contend that all criteria ... all assertions of musical worth, are equally defensible" (p. 5) but, rather, judgements of value can be made in relation to the views people find most compelling, "without claiming at the same time that they are ultimate" (p. 6). Similarly, Regelski (2004a) argues that each field of music practice is its own praxis, lending itself to certain ways of engaging people, and that "discrepancies concerning matters of quality may often be disputed within a field" (p. 24). Judgements of value can then be

made according to intended use and according to kind, or put another way, through standards of excellence within a given collective practice, rather than against concepts regarded as universal truths.

There is no doubt that postmodern ideas, coupled with technological advances, have had an enormous positive influence in the field of music. Music is more widely and easily available than ever before, and this has opened up new ways for music to exert a positive influence in the lives of many people, contributing to emotional wellbeing and to a sense of identity (DeNora, 2000). On the other hand, this ubiquity has created a tension between its use in society and its conception within education. Established ideas about the value and authority invested in the classical canon need to be questioned and reshaped for the 21st century, and the potential value of popular culture within education needs to be evaluated against the commercial ideologies which underpin much of its power. The challenge for music education is to deconstruct the apparent dichotomous differences between high culture and popular culture and to “breathe life into the supposedly moribund classics, while at the same time recognizing the educational integrity of the popular” (Bowman, 2004, p. 32). However, matters of value become intertwined with matters of authority, as teachers make decisions about what kinds of knowledge should be taught. What is important is that, in assessing the value of cultural forms, we recognise our frame of reference, and unpack the principles that we use in this process of evaluation, encouraging students to go beyond pressures of the media, their peers and even their teachers (Walker, 2007). Frith (1996) argues that we are using the same evaluative principles when we make judgements in relation to high art or popular art: “The differences lie in the objects at issue (what is culturally interesting to us is socially constructed), in the discourses in which the judgements are cast, and in the circumstances in which they are made” (p. 19). In the postmodern view, there is no absolute categorical difference between high culture and popular culture, but rather standards become contingent on contextual criteria.

### ***Reconsidering musical autonomy***

In providing alternative understandings of music’s meaning and significance within western society, the dominance of sociocultural perspectives has the potential to undermine the significance of the sonic components of music (Covach, 1999; Walker, 2007). In regard to the pervasiveness of sociocultural perspectives, Bowman (1998a) asks “how far can the idea of music as a social phenomenon be extended before it says more about music’s effects than what it is?” (p. 351). As in answer to this question Green (2005) has noted:

To consider the discourse and use surrounding music without taking into account the ways in which the musical text is organized, can altogether miss out the quality of the

very object of consideration, so that in the end it could be food or clothes that are under discussion rather than music with its own peculiar properties (Green, 2005, p. 76).

In agreement with this view, Swanwick (1998) observes that sociological perspectives alone cannot provide an adequate context for the study of music: “although there may be relevant and important ideas in sociology, ethno-musicology and other literatures, the interface between minds and music is the central focus of the study of music” (Swanwick, 1998, p. 12). Green (1988) proposes a theory of musical meaning that attempts to account for the significance of music’s inherent musical components (its ‘text’ or epistemic dimensions), and the social contexts surrounding music’s production and reception (its delineations). Delineations are most often assimilated as a part of people’s social identity, or “worn rather like a piece of clothing, to indicate something about ... class, ethnicity, gender, your sexuality, religions, subculture, political values and so on” (Green, 2002c, p. 45). Green’s theory proposes that all musical experiences include both the sounds of music (inherent meanings), and the non-musical aspects (delineations). The interaction and balance between inherent and delineated meanings are in a dialectic relationship, which can result in alienation, affirmation, or ambiguity in people’s experience of music. Young people often find the delineations associated with classical music negative and they are often aggravated by an inability for its inherent content to communicate meaning to them. The result is alienation. On the other hand, if inherent and delineated meanings correspond then ‘celebration’ is the outcome (Green, 2005). Moreover, if the inherent meanings are in contradiction, or if one meaning overpowers or influences the other, then ambiguity can occur. This can lead to changes in how music is perceived, and ultimately how it affects people.

Green makes a case for not underestimating the potential for music’s inherent dimensions to cross social, cultural, and political contexts (Green, 2006). New delineations can be created, or current ones exposed, particularly if we participate as music makers (Green, 2005; 2006; 2008). This potential for music’s inherent meanings to communicate across social and cultural boundaries constitutes one of music’s most powerful effects. Green argues that music’s potential to enact social change comes in musical moments, when inherent meanings contrast with expected or traditional delineations (e.g. social, gender, or economic) or vice versa. Such realisations or ‘exposure’ can lead, for example, to a shift in the notions of gender roles, or a shift in the cultural expectations in relation to a particular style of music. Similarly, Gracyk (1996) has argued that “the fact that all reception demands cultural capital must be squared with the fact that works of art often survive cultural relocation” (p. 216).

Recognising the power of music’s intrinsic or epistemic character through its autonomy may still be relevant, as such concepts are acknowledged and reshaped within pluralist paradigms, suggesting

that music can sustain significance and meaning across social and cultural boundaries through developing conceptual understandings of inherent meaning and delineations. Not surprisingly, it is often the inherent musical features, of which listeners may have no apparent cultural knowledge, that attract listeners and provide the motivation for music to cross borders (Covach, 1999; Green, 2005; Kramer, 2007; Walker, 2007). In this way, the potential for music to transcend cultural replication and to look towards something more “comprehensive and open” (Swanwick, 1998, p. 4) might be realized. Swanwick (1998) argues that “although musical processes arise within specific social contexts they are not trapped within them. This should not surprise us if we remember that experiences are mediated by interpreting minds” (p. 11).

### **SECTION THREE: Pedagogical themes in classroom music teaching**

#### *Overview*

Several British and North American writers have provided overviews of music education trends in the 20th century, each from the perspective of their own nation (McCarthy & Goble, 2005; Pitts, 2000; Plummeridge, 2001; Spruce, 2002). New Zealand has tended to follow British models rather than American. The broad historical divisions, identified by Plummeridge (2001) and Spruce (2002) in their writings on music education in England, are utilised in this discussion: traditional, progressive, eclectic, and a rational-legal authority model. Both of these British writers note the relationship between conceptions of music in society at large, the way in which music is perceived in a given era, and the effect of this on curriculum conception and realisation. The relationship between the ‘meaning of music’ and its realization within education requires “an implicit agreement between stakeholders ... about what it [music education] is for. The ‘meaning of music’ is a constantly shifting function of the discourses of these diverse groups which coalesce around a ‘dominant ideology’” (Sloboda, 2001, p. 243). At any one time, education may reinforce a dominant ideology, or begin to respond to, or assimilate, challenge, or even create new ideologies, in response to changing cultural influences (Green, 2003).

In the early part of the 20th century, the dominant ideology for music education was described in terms of its potential to promote the socialisation and citizenship values of society. Music within school was regarded as having no further utility than its “desirable cultural influence, its preparation for the profitable use of leisure time, and its development of sensitivity and imagination” (Pitts, 2000, p. 34). The intention was to expose students to the ‘good’ music of the great composers. ‘Good’ music was seen as having a civilising influence on people; it could act as a moral force. As technology enabled recorded music to be played in the school, listening as ‘music appreciation’ became the predominant model of instruction within general education. A more specialised music

curriculum developed after World War II: the ‘traditional’ or rationalist model (Plummeridge, 2001), in which the practices and traditions of high art music were taken as the basis for music instruction. In this conception, the teacher as the musical expert has a clearly defined body of knowledge to impart to students. There is also an underlying humanistic ideal that education should concern itself with the development of “intellectual skills, the preservation of the best of the cultural heritage, and the preparation of students who, as responsible citizens, can contribute to society according to their abilities and interests” (Plummeridge, 2001, p. 26). Moreover, inherent in this view is a hierarchy of knowledge that supports the cultural status quo, and which propagates music as a subject primarily for the talented minority.

The progressive approach, which gained wide acceptance in the 1960s, is characterised by a shift of focus from a particular body of content knowledge to the student; from knowledge to knower. In particular, the aim is to develop certain qualities of mind such as imagination and creativity. The idea that students could work with sound as composers became a fashionable practice. The wide adoption of Orff-Schulwerk, in both the UK and the US, enabled students to participate in group music-making and composing within the classroom environment. The influence of progressive music educators such as Schafer, Paynter, and Self was felt as far away as New Zealand (Thwaites, 2009). In this approach, there is an underlying egalitarian ideal, coupled with an “optimistic view of human nature and children’s abilities” (Plummeridge, 2001, p. 26). Nevertheless the musical content of the curriculum remained centred on western classical art music.

In more recent times, teachers have been able to ‘pick and mix’ in an eclectic fashion between a variety of approaches, drawing on both traditional and progressive models. A guiding principle, that has assumed some orthodoxy, is that students should explore “a wide range of music (or musics) through the modes of performing, composing and listening” (Plummeridge, 2001, p. 27). Influenced by developments in the theory of knowledge, sociology, and cognitive psychology, music is now considered to engender particular ‘ways of knowing’, with a cognitive dimension as valid as other realms of intelligence (Elliott, 1995). As well as these influences, changes in society generally such as advances in technology, globalization and post-colonialism, have exerted pressure on school music to broaden its horizons to include popular and non-western music in the curriculum and in so doing, have challenged the canonisation and superiority of classical music within education (Green, 2003).

In the last decade, the concept of performativity has influenced education as governments have sought to rationalise outcomes through increased prescription and accountability. Many commentators have argued that this move, “the drive for goals to be achieved in ever more efficient

ways” (Koopman, 2005, p. 118), has been motivated by economic rather than educational concerns (Lee, O’Neill & McKenzie, 2004). Educational goals are now expressed in terms of outcomes and standards and are legitimised by what Spruce (2002) describes as a rational-legal authority. Based on Weber’s (1922/1978) concept, rational-legal authority sees governments issue curriculum statements resting “on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands” (Weber, 1922/1978, Vol. 2, p. 215). Despite ideological concerns, in New Zealand these changes appear to have brought about a measure of positive change in music education in regard to curriculum choice for teachers and students (see chapter four).

### ***Music education as aesthetic education***

The practices of western high art music provided the impetus for curriculum content in the UK in its traditional period (Plummeridge, 2001). Subsequently, the leading British theorist and music educator, Keith Swanwick, provided leadership for British teachers via his numerous publications, including his major contribution with Tillman (Swanwick & Tillman, 1986) of a model of musical development based on empirical work with students (see also Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). The central concern of North American music educationalists, on the other hand, was the need to develop a rationale for grounding and justifying music’s place in the curriculum. In the 1960s, a group of music educators turned to philosophy, and aesthetics in particular, to develop such a justification (McCarthy & Goble, 2005). This approach encouraged teachers to consider the value inherent in music itself, and the possibility of aesthetic development primarily through the development of directed listening, and it became known as ‘music education as aesthetic education’ (MEAE). MEAE reflects the cultural dominance of the western classical canon and includes an emphasis on the study of the formal, qualitative, and supposedly universal aspects of musical works. The main proponent of this aesthetic view of music education is Bennett Reimer, whose publications have influenced generations of music teachers in western education (Reimer, 1970; 1989; 2003). The essence of this approach was “the development of sensitivity to the aesthetic qualities of things” (Reimer, 1972, p. 29).

### ***Music education as praxis***

More recently, and in contrast to MEAE, postmodern views of music education have emerged which reflect contemporary pluralist thinking, attempting to “accommodate the values and paradigms of contemporary thinking in critical theory, psychology, sociology, ethnomusicology, and cultural theory” (McCarthy & Goble, p. 38). In this view, music is conceived as action grounded in a sociocultural context rather than as an abstract, intellectual, or aesthetic experience focused on

existing works of music (Small, 1977/1996; 1998). The importance of context *a priori* negates the possibility of musical universals in favour of situated musical ‘truths’, expressed only within distinct musical practices. Within the curriculum, this translates into an exploration of music as a series of diverse practices. These views have been termed ‘praxial’ and the seminal work advocating this account of music education is David Elliott’s *Music Matters*, published in 1995. Elliott’s articulation of a praxial philosophy of music education was influenced by Alperson (1991) who in turn attributed the beginnings of praxial conceptions to essays by Sparshott and Wolterstorff in *What is music? An introduction to the Philosophy of music*, edited by Alperson (1987). In the process of articulating his own account, Alperson (1991) analyses the significance of the western aesthetic paradigm and, rather than rejecting it, as in Elliott’s view, it is retained as one possible approach for understanding music, “alongside other “non-aesthetic” functions that art can serve and has served” (p. 233).

The fully articulated conception of music education as praxis emerges from Elliott’s theory of music as a four-dimensional concept involving a doer (a ‘musicer’), some kind of doing (‘musicing’), something done (music or audible sonic events), and the context in which ‘musickers’ operate (Elliott, 1995). Elliott issued a whole-hearted rejection of the aesthetic experience of music as a foundation for music education, in favour of an account that considers musical growth as the development of musical “thinking-in-action” and “knowing in-action” which must be developed *in situ*. Elliott argued that music in school should consist of a series of progressive musical challenges for the development of musicianship that at the same time provides a unique means for the development of self-growth, self-knowledge, and enjoyment. He rejects historical ideals of aesthetic experience in favour of a cognitive emphasis based on Csikszentmihalyi’s (1990) concept of “flow”, a state of optimal experience when one is fully absorbed in a valued activity.

In addition to Elliott’s perspective, Regelski (1998a; 1998b; 2004a) and Bowman (2002; 2003) have emerged as leading proponents of praxialism, underpinning their views with philosophical conceptions of praxis drawing on the writings of Aristotle. Both argue that general music education (known as core music in New Zealand) has failed to make a difference in the lives of young people. This is largely due to an emphasis on the transmission of ‘good music’ as determined by dominant aesthetic constructs, rather than an approach grounded in personal and transformative models of education. Regelski (2004b) gives a fully-articulated account of what a praxial music education might consist of, guided by the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis*, an ethical reflection in action and of action, which guides the actor towards the best results in a given context. Aristotle explains: “The unqualifiedly good deliberator is the one whose aim accords with rational calculation in pursuit of the best good for a human being that is achievable in action” (Aristotle, 1999, p. 92). In this praxial



view, any music or music practice can be judged 'good' if it fulfills its function in relation to the participants and aims involved; thus, a greater diversity of situated music and musical practices, such as amateur playing and composing, are validated within the curriculum and for life (Regelski, 2004b; 2007). The validation of such an approach is in the value added to students' lives by instruction at school, particularly in the development of personal musical agency (Regelski, 2004b).

The apparent rejection of traditional musical values by Elliott, Regelski, and Bowman has resulted in a great deal of debate and sometimes controversy. Reimer and Elliott have hotly contested the issues surrounding their respective positions and a number of writers have responded to what has become, for some, the central contemporary debate in music education (Heneghan, 2004). Praxialism appears to provide answers to age-old questions – how do we describe the nature of music, and how might this create a philosophy and guiding practice for music education? A number of writers entered the debate, which quickly became one articulated as dichotomous positions: aesthetic versus praxial, modern versus postmodern (Goble, 2003; Plummeridge, 1999; Sundin, 2000). However other writers (Koopman, 1998; Panaiotidi, 2003; Barrett, 2002) determined how these two positions could be seen as complementary rather than competing: "While MEAE tends to concentrate on a phenomenological explanation of musical experience, Elliott highlights the cognitive operations that underlie musical experience. Both approaches are valid, and they should be understood as complementing rather than contradicting each other" (Koopman, 1998, p. 9). The position articulated by Swanwick (1998; 1999) could be described as a 'middle way'. Despite frequent criticism by Elliott (1995; 2002) against a modernist conception, Swanwick's most recent accounts of music education describe the development of students' ability to participate in music as a discourse, fluently and with their own voice, as a means of engendering "significant experience"; "terms such as 'aesthetic experience', 'flow' and 'peak experience' are interchangeable" (Swanwick, 1999, p. 43). Unlike the philosophical polemic of the North American schools of thought, Swanwick can lay claim to views founded on empirical research and practice in the field (see Swanwick & Tillman, 1986).

## **SECTION FOUR: Current dilemmas**

### ***The 'problem' with school music***

Since the publication of Ross's (1995) provocative article "What's wrong with school music?" numerous writers in the UK and elsewhere have highlighted increasing concerns in regard to the dominance and relevance of traditional, modernist content and approaches in music teaching. These approaches, it is argued, have created a cultural dissonance between young people's interest in music, and the musical experiences offered in schools (North, Hargreaves, & O'Neill, 2000). Ross

(1995) has argued that the legitimization of music within education has led to the creation of ‘school music’, which sees the subject “uprooted from actual musical experience and rendered in an abstract form” (p. 195). Moreover, Regelski (1998a, 1998b) and Elliott (1995) have argued that the dominant ideology of music education as aesthetic education has failed to deliver tangible results for the large number of students which general music education aims to benefit, and that this has been the major factor in music’s lack of popularity with students in the USA and the UK. While accounts emerging from North America predominantly take the form of philosophical polemic (see for example Bowman, 2004, and Regelski, 2004a) many of the UK contributions are founded on empirical research. In response to Ross’s (1995) major criticism of school music in the UK, Gammon (1996) attempted to balance what he saw as Ross’s “polemical thrust” with the support of ethnographic data, concluding that while “there is a strong cultural consonance between pupils’ experience out of school and the way that experience is used and valued in school, this is often not the case in music” (p. 110).

The data from two major UK studies supports the hypothesis that there is a problem with school music comprising a fall-off in participation and a general negativity (Sloboda, 2001). This problematic view is also supported by research reported by Harland et al. (2000) which drew on both qualitative and quantitative evidence, including case studies, about art, drama, and music. The study was focused on students aged 15-16 and concluded that, within the arts, music was the most problematic and vulnerable subject, and that “pupil enjoyment, relevance, skill development, creativity and expressive dimensions” were often absent in engagement with the subject (Harland et al., 2000). On the other hand, this view is contradicted by the research of Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall and Tarrant (2003). Their study included a student questionnaire and interviews with heads of music in an initial phase, which was followed by interviews with focus groups of pupils. The results describe a more favourable view of school music from both students and teachers compared to earlier studies (Lamont et al., 2003).

Concerns regarding relevance of traditional approaches to curriculum were also echoed in an international survey of music educators which identified three areas of major concern: the aims and objectives of music education generally; the distinction between general and specialist music curriculums; and the balance between music learning in and out of school (Hargreaves, Marshall, & North, 2003). Underlying these concerns is the issue of the legitimisation of students’ values, which in turn is bound up with aspects such as motivation and identity formation. Lamont (2002) noted that often students did not categorize themselves as musicians if they did not participate in the more formal aspects of school music. This may be the case even though music played a significant part in their lives in ways unknown to their teachers (see Jaffurs, 2004). Teachers’ values can also have a

significant effect on the formation of a positive identification with musical identity for students in school. Lamont (2002) and Jaffurs (2004) found, for example, that students often felt their out-of-school musical identity was not valued within school.

A similar disconnection between school culture and students' culture exists in young people's utilisation of technology: "there is now an extraordinary contrast between the high levels of activity and enthusiasm that characterise children's consumer cultures and the passivity that increasingly suffuses their schooling" (Buckingham, 2005, p. 14). Technology may have an ever increasing emancipatory or democratising role to play in music education. Music-focused technologies are continually opening up alternative ways for students to be engaged with sound and to find personally relevant ways to be creative. Although it may be impossible to replace the somatic in musical experience in this medium, the possibility for meaningful engagement with music cannot be denied. In fact Gouzouasis (2005) argues that the arts need to be leading the way in the utilisation of new technologies for artistic ends. Technologies that free students from the restrictions of music reading, for example, have the potential for a certain level of democratisation in music learning (Airy & Parr, 2001). Without a doubt, the ability of students to compose, arrange, and play along via sequencing technologies has seen a great increase in the level of successful engagement with composition and arranging in classrooms. Software such as GarageBand offers students the possibility of creating sophisticated sound tapestries without keyboard or instrumental skills.

The concept of informal music learning (most often associated with popular music) and its place in the education of both students and teacher trainees has become a prominent theme in the literature in the last few years (Feichas, 2010; Finney & Philpott, 2010; Davis & Blair, 2011; Folkestad, 2006; Green, 2008; Wright & Kanellopoulos, 2010). Campbell (2001) has described informal learning as socially controlled, non-linear, cooperative learning, controlled by a social group rather than by an individual and Davis and Blair (2011) suggest that "process is as the heart of its creation, which revolves chiefly around social activities and reflects the values and attitudes of various groups of people" (p. 126). Folkestad (2006) has also theorised that we should consider the informal and formal not as a dichotomy "but rather as the two poles of a continuum, and that in most learning situations, both these aspects of learning are in various degrees present and interacting in the learning process" (p. 143). The influence of informal learning concepts within music education has occurred particularly through the impact of the *Musical Futures* project (Finney & Philpott, 2010). The issues surrounding informal and formal knowledge and pedagogy emerged as central themes in the case studies and are explored fully in chapters eleven and twelve where they are theorised using Bernstein's concepts of vertical and horizontal discourses.

### *Teachers in the literature*

Music teachers' accounts of their work have seldom been a focus for research (Cox, 1999). An early exception was the seminal work in the sociology of music education, "Music as a case study in the 'new sociology of education'", undertaken by Graham Vulliamy in 1977. In this work he applied a critical lens to the area of music curriculum, which at that time was considered relatively unproblematic. A case study which centred on one school, and the views and practices of three teachers, revealed the valorisation of classical music as high status knowledge, and popular music as knowledge with a low status (Vulliamy, 1977a). While popular music was utilised in co-curricular aspects of the school's programme, within the curriculum popular music assumed a status associated with cultural deprivation and educational failure, linked to the socio-economic and ethnic prejudices of the teachers. Working class students were perceived as less musical and were afforded fewer opportunities than other students for instrumental tuition through the school's music lesson scheme. An underlying assumption that only a limited number of people are inherently musical was prevalent. Vulliamy's empirical study suggested that the curriculum and its practice was far from an objective phenomenon, but one in which teachers' views of what counted as knowledge were grounded in a particular historical and socially constructed conception of knowledge (Vulliamy, 1977a). Student success could only be realised through engagement with music that, in the teacher's view, was considered good music.

Teachers' views about the teaching of classical and non-classical music were the focus of a 1982 survey in the UK. Green (1988) surveyed 61 music teachers, providing an interpretation of their "collective beliefs and values about music and music education" (p. 56). Teachers' views were found to be conservative, not only in relation to non-classical repertoire but also in regard to classical music itself, where Green observed that "the collective consciousness of music teachers in the early 80s, came to an end in about the year 1900" (Green, 1988, p. 72). Given the training paths of most teachers, through institutions that teach the western classical canon almost exclusively, it is hardly surprising that this should be the case (York, 2001, cited in Lamont et al., 2003; Sloboda, 2001). There is a need for reform in the training which music undergraduates receive, to reflect the realities of the diverse musical worlds beyond the university where many graduates find themselves working and contributing as teachers (Emmons, 2004; Jones, 2007; Sarath, 1995).

In 1998 Green (2002a) sent out an almost identical questionnaire and received an identical number of responses. She was able to report that teachers in the United Kingdom had significantly altered their views of the teaching of popular music since her initial enquiry into curriculum content in 1982. She noted that teachers' lessons included far more integration of activities, including

performing, arranging, and composing, in various styles. Classical music was now only one of a variety of styles engaged with in many music classrooms. Teachers had altered their views and their practice: “By the end of the century, teachers’ views of musical value had, overall, shifted radically towards more global perspectives” (Green, 2002a, p. 5).

Two studies cited above, broadly concerned with students’ views of school music, also sought the views of teachers (York, 2001 as cited in Sloboda, 2001; Lamont et al., 2003). Lamont et al., (2003) questioned 42 teachers about “the aims and objectives of music at school and factors preventing and enabling good practice and success” (p. 232). The research highlighted the importance of co-curricular musical activities in the life of many schools, and the opportunities that music-making provided for social interaction. Within the curriculum, teachers noted the increasing tension between the teaching of traditional skills and concepts to those students who may go on to further study in music, and the desirability of providing a broad and inclusive curriculum. Teachers also noted the personal challenge of having to come to terms with a rapidly changing curriculum (Lamont et al., 2003).

Empirical research into music teaching in New Zealand is scarce, and as yet there is no study that has focused exclusively on the beliefs of teachers and the challenges faced by them. The most extensive report on music education in New Zealand was initiated in the late 1960s by the Arts Council of the time, and completed in 1968 by M. J. Tait. There was some controversy surrounding the report, and it was later published by the Music Teachers Registration Board and the Waikato Society of Registered Music Teachers in 1970. The report first called for written submissions, which provided the framework for the development of a questionnaire. The author followed this with a three month field study, visiting schools, universities, private music teachers, and professional musicians, in twelve cities throughout the country. The report presented a number of structural and administrative recommendations, including the formation of private music schools. In matters of curriculum it was forward-thinking, suggesting that music teacher training should “include components of educational psychology, philosophy, and sociology” (Tait, 1970, p. 110). As well as this, Tait noted the impact of popular music on adolescent culture, and challenged the hegemony of one type of music within the field of education:

as long as music of the present remains divorced from music of the past this unfortunate dichotomy is likely to continue. While it is undoubtedly true education should seek to preserve our cultural heritage by transmitting it to new generations, education must also make explicit connections between the past and the present and so build for the future (Tait, 1970, p. 67-8).

In 1996 500 randomly selected children, at each of Year 4 and Year 8 level, completed a questionnaire about their attitudes to school music in New Zealand (Buckton, 1998). While music rated among the top five subjects for popularity, Buckton raises concerns regarding the 16.9% of Year 8 students who expressed negativity towards their school music experiences. While this research has provided some data on students' attitudes, we know very little about the classroom practice and curriculum choices made by New Zealand music teachers. Thwaites (1998) interviewed some secondary teachers about the impact of the profession on their lives and, in doing so, noted that teachers appeared to reproduce the cultural emphasis acquired from their training:

Many music educators are captured by the power of the 'truth' of the grand narratives. Bach, Beethoven and Brahms continue to be models of musical 'truth', while music analysis – the labelling and categorising of music – is seen to provide the necessary academic rigour (Thwaites, 1998, p. 195).

There is a likely tension between the traditional training most music teachers have had and the way in which they must now open their subject beyond their own personal musical experiences. The many itinerant instrumental teachers working in New Zealand schools represent another under-researched area where students may find their interest in music legitimised, side-lined, or even rejected. The values and actions of these teachers are also influential in a curriculum that now includes instrumental performance as part of assessment for qualifications.

Two recent pieces of research undertaken by the New Zealand Ministry of Education consider the impact of the Arts Curriculum introduced in 2000. Holland and O'Connor's (2004) findings suggest that there are unique learning processes in the arts that they describe as 'structured chaos'. They claim the arts provide the potential for negotiated pedagogical relationships, and "co-constructed learning environments in which students and teachers have permission to experiment and learn from each other" (Holland & O'Connor, 2004, p.3). Thwaites, Ferens, and Lines (2007) "investigated the effectiveness of professional development facilitation processes and structures in the arts at national and regional levels and the impact of these on teachers' knowledge and student achievement" (p. 6). Forty-six teachers across the four arts disciplines were interviewed and their findings suggest that the focus and effectiveness of the facilitation interventions were primarily related to practical concerns, helping teachers increase their confidence with hands-on aspects of their work in the arts.

Both Green (2002c) and Finney (2003; 2007) suggest that talking to teachers and students is an area largely uncharted by research: "There is a dearth of investigation into the lived experiences of young people and their music teachers .... researchers have been slow to collaborate with either of these key players" (Finney, 2003, p. 2). The recent work of Wright (2008) continues an

ethnographic investigative approach begun by Vulliamy (1977a) and continued by Green (2008), but as yet it is an area with potential not fully utilised within the research agenda of music education.

## **Conclusion**

This review has provided an overview of the complex history of ideas associated with music and music education. It suggests that the problems facing music education today are manifestations of problems that are being contested in western culture generally. A traditional view of culture is dependent on education as a means of enculturation; a way to bring students into contact with potentially transformative aspects of historical cultural forms. Popular culture, on the other hand, is inextricably linked with potent commercial and entertainment values, and therefore appears to be to some degree incompatible with traditional notions of learning and education. This tension is ongoing as teachers attempt to respond to the changing values of society at large and as they attempt to find ways to accommodate varying views of culture without simply replacing one ideology with another. As Young (2010b) suggests, teachers need to develop a curriculum of engagement rather than compliance without undermining the epistemic power of knowledge by favouring the social.

Music's stylistic multiplicity provides such diverse ways for people to 'be in the world', that it seems as if music is too vast a project for education to contend with. For young people music is a means to advance self-efficacy, an expression of personal authority and difference, and yet at the same time it is an expression of belonging. The challenge is to find a way to frame music education so that it acknowledges the rights of ownership for young people to what is now the dominant culture, popular culture, while still retaining educational ideals of critique, engagement, and empowerment. It may be that the culture of education and popular culture serve such different purposes that there is unlikely to be a common ground where experiences of value can occur. On the other hand, perhaps teachers are already responding to these challenges in diverse and effective ways, creating a curriculum that is reflective of the culture of which it is a part, while also challenging students to look beyond the limitations of a single conception of music.

This review began with the suggestion that within the web of complex factors affecting the curriculum, the influence of the teacher is pivotal. The teacher acts as a conduit, attempting to accommodate personal values, as well as official accounts of what a music curriculum should be, whilst responding to the prevailing local and global values. In New Zealand there has been very little empirical research in the field of music education and almost none centred on the work of teachers. This research asks teachers about their perception of the complex relationship between popular music and classical music. Does it exist for them as a dichotomy, a potentially unbridgeable gap between text and context, or have they found ways to resolve issues of musical quality and the

rights of musical ownership? Is there an alignment between their personal conceptions of music, the official curriculum, and the curriculum their students receive? Ultimately these are questions concerned with the dialectic between teachers' beliefs and the values of the wider world, of which music and education are a part.



## **CHAPTER FOUR: MUSIC EDUCATION – The New Zealand Context**

### **Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to deepen the contextual map drawn in chapter three by focusing on New Zealand. This overview provides further information to underpin the case studies that follow. Bernstein's (2000) theories of knowledge differentiation (vertical and horizontal discourse) and regionalisation are utilised as explanatory concepts while outlining some of the significant changes that have occurred in the senior music curriculum in New Zealand over the last two decades. The chapter also outlines how recent curriculum restructuring has led to diversification of curriculum structure, content, and specification. A current challenge for senior curriculum realisation is the variety of knowledge structures now contained in the subject's varied components (performance, composition, analysis etc.). The components contain not only varying degrees of verticality within a segmented (horizontal) knowledge structure, but also elements of the horizontal discourse of informal music learning which are vying for space. This creates a mix of both principled and procedural knowledge (Gamble, 2006) and therefore presents particular challenges for teachers in the recontextualisation of knowledge. The concept of regionalisation (Bernstein, 2000) is also utilised as a means to consider knowledge displacement (de-differentiation of knowledge) and curriculum 'over-crowding'; senior music has become populated with new knowledge areas, despite the fact that curriculum documents have emptied out much of the knowledge content.

Strongly classified subjects with a specialised discrete discourse are termed singulars, and the process of recontextualising these singulars into larger units is described by Bernstein (2000) as regionalisation. Regionalisation sees previously strongly insulated and introspective subjects increasingly looking outwards towards fields of practice; regions "operate both in the intellectual field of disciplines and in the field of external practice" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 52). I argue that the concept of regionalisation can be applied to the restructuring of music within the New Zealand curriculum: on one level new knowledges have 'regionalised' the traditional singular subject base, and on another level there has been regionalisation as music has been subsumed into a region of arts disciplines. In both instances the classification of the subject and its associated identity constructions are weakened (Bernstein, 2000).

### **The move towards a rational-legal education model and regionalisation**

New Zealand music education trends have mirrored those in the United Kingdom and in education generally (see chapter two). Regulations in 1904 made singing compulsory up to Standard 6, and in

1924, the Department of Education subsidised the purchase of gramophones and gramophone records for use in schools (Thwaites, 1998). The Thomas report in 1944 (Department of Education, 1959) suggested that more time be given to aesthetic pursuits within the school day, but this was later rescinded as a result of the Currie Report (1962), which recommended an emphasis on the three Rs (Thwaites, 1998). In 1945 music first entered the canon of academic subjects with its inclusion in the syllabus for School Certificate, the third-year secondary qualification. The music examination was entirely academic until 1971 when an aural component was introduced. This prescription, almost entirely western classical in its conception, remained in place until 1993 when a radically new system was introduced. This revision included the internal assessment of student instrumental performance and composition, and saw the abolition of the study of centrally-prescribed set works. Politically, these changes opened the door for alternative views of music that might be heard within an educational and qualifications context. These changes facilitated the inclusion of popular music within elective courses, although jazz had already been included in the nationally prescribed set works since the mid-1970s. In 2002, further and more substantial changes were instigated in the national assessment system with the arrival of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) (Ministry of Education, 1999) in which ‘packages’ of skills are assessed in achievement and unit standards. This modularised format offers a wide range of assessment possibilities to support courses that teachers can devise locally to meet the needs and interests of their students.

While ideally the assessment standards can be used to underpin a more broadly conceived course of study derived from the national curriculum statements, the standards more commonly drive the curriculum (Hipkins, 2010; McPhail, 2010). Within the NCEA educational goals are expressed in terms of outcomes and standards, and are legitimised by what Spruce (2002), after Weber, describes as a rational-legal authority. Despite ideological concerns (see O’Neil, Clark, & Openshaw, 2004 for example) these changes appear to have brought about a measure of positive change in regard to increased variety in curriculum content and flexibility of study choices and a steady increase in the number of students enrolling for senior school music in the NCEA (NZQA, 2011b).

Running alongside these assessment changes were developments in national curriculum statements. In 2000 the first national curriculum for the arts was introduced, the last of seven documents comprising the essential learning areas of the national curriculum (English, Maths, Languages, the Arts etc.). The arts document subsumed the formerly separate subject domains of music and the fine arts into a region along with the newly-introduced subjects of drama and dance. Many schools moved to reflect this structural change by creating performing arts departments and reallocating subject hours and staffing. In terms of music content The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2000) provided achievement objectives along with detailed learning

examples structured into four conceptual learning strands - understanding music in context, developing practical knowledge, developing ideas, and communicating and interpreting. The curriculum trichotomy of performing, composing, and listening or, in an earlier manifestation, “create, recreate, and appreciate” (Department of Education, 1989), remains an essential structural guide for music teachers within the four strands of the New Zealand Curriculum.

In 2007 the national curriculum was further reformed with the seven previously separate learning areas, each with a separate document, being combined into one leaner document. Music was re-branded as *Music-Sound Arts* and the four strands remained, but learning examples were reduced to brief generic descriptions of possible activities. The 2007 changes were even more significant, as the essential learning areas (English, Maths, the Arts etc.) were downgraded simply to ‘learning areas’, and formerly generic essential skills became reframed as key competencies and placed at the front end of the document. This signalled an increase in the importance of the key competencies in relation to the learning areas, denoting a significant shift towards what Bernstein (2000) describes as genericism, a particular view of education related to short term trainability and “continuous pedagogic re-formations”. Generic modes are attractive to governments which hope to create citizens with a “flexible transferable potential” (Bernstein, 2000, p.59).

The move to genericism goes hand in hand with what Bernstein (2000) terms regionalisation, the process whereby singulars (strongly classified subjects) are recontextualised into larger fields. Where singulars comprise “a specialised discrete discourse .... protected by strong boundaries and hierarchies” (p.52) looking inwards, regionalisation produces new approaches and identities that “are more likely to face outwards to fields of practice and thus their contents are likely to be dependent on the requirements of these fields” (p.55). Bernstein states that regionalisation has been prominent in higher education but that school knowledge structures remain firmly based in singulars (p.52) however the recontextualisation of curriculum structure in New Zealand in 2000 and 2007 has clearly been a move towards regionalisation. These changes reflect the shift, noted in chapter three, of international moves towards a rational-legal model for education, with an emphasis on quantifiable outcomes, assessment and qualifications. As well as this these changes reflect broader perspectives concerning music curricula and international trends in curriculum content (McEneaney & Meyer, 2000).

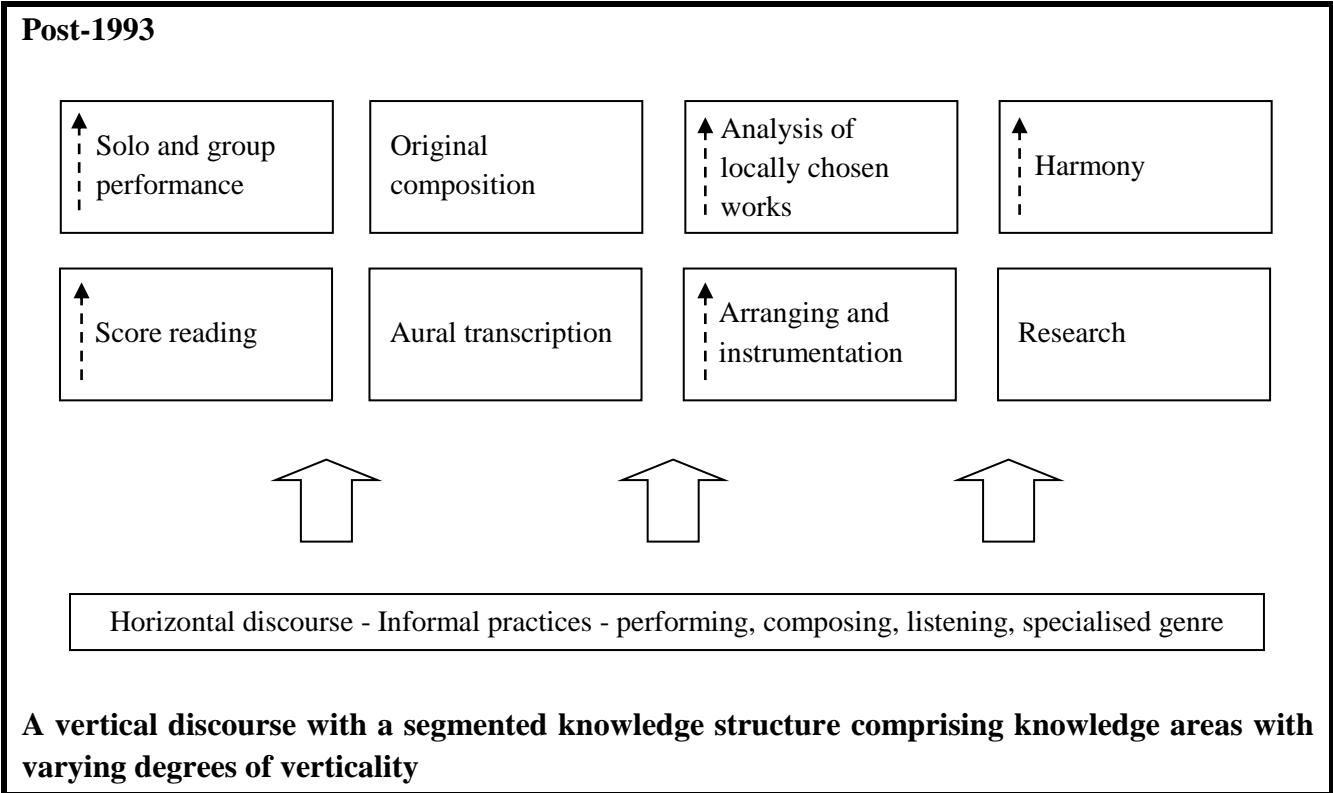
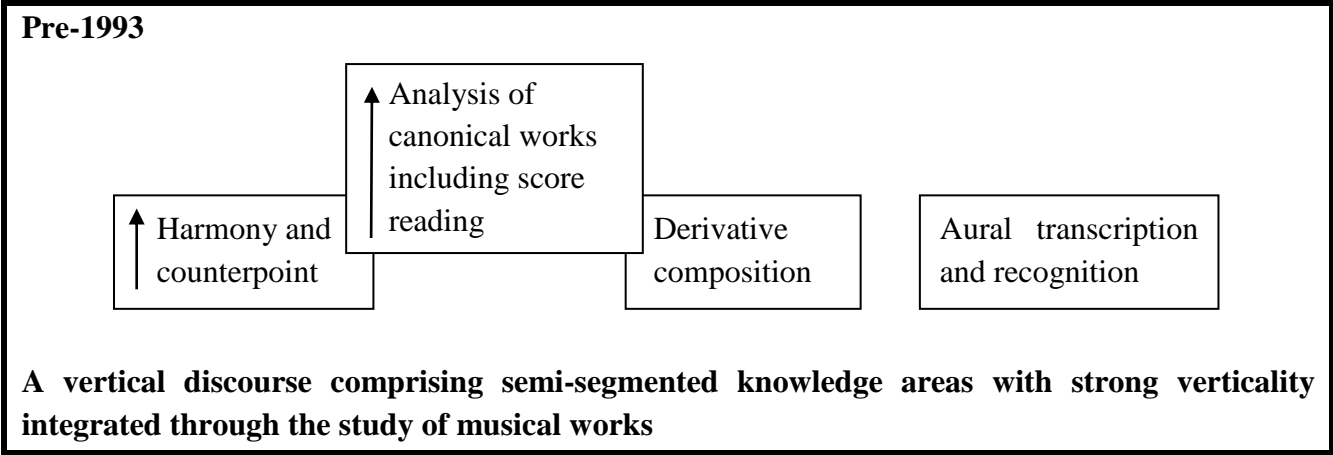
I suggest that the concept of regionalisation can also be applied as an explanatory concept to theorise the process of knowledge development and weakening classification within the subject of music specifically. School music is in transition away from its strongly classified origins as a singular so its classification has become weakened. Music has been ‘regionalised’ by technologies and

diversifying musical knowledges, segmenting into new knowledge areas as it has turned to face outward towards fields of practice traditionally excluded from the curriculum. Where previously the university was the primary field of knowledge production for music, the field has since widened to include the world of informal and commercial music making and technological innovation. Moreover in New Zealand groups of teachers have had direct and significant input into the recent changes in the intellectual field as they have been contracted to create curriculum and assessment documents by the state's official creator of educational discourse, the Ministry of Education. Universities have had no choice but to respond to curriculum changes as students with a lack of traditional knowledge but with new and varied skills undertake tertiary study (Gould, 2010). New knowledge areas and technologies have therefore impacted greatly on the subject's classification and sense of identity at all levels of the sector.

### **Verticality in senior school music**

In New Zealand assessment standards form the basis of curriculum content in the senior school. At each of three levels the assessment standards form the evaluative component of a vertical discourse reflecting subject knowledge structures with varied grammars or degrees of verticality, segmented into discrete learning areas (see chapter three, section one (iv)). In some standards the knowledge content is relatively tacit, and the mode of transmission is likely to be achieved through modelling or developing an appropriate 'voice' or 'gaze', as in composition. In other segments there is a more explicit knowledge progression such as in instrumentation or analysis where vertical integration of theoretical knowledge is required.

Figure 2 (below) outlines the pre-1993 and post-1993 senior music assessment structure utilising Bernstein's constructs of a vertical discourse with horizontal knowledge structures. As indicated some knowledge structures contain a higher degree of verticality than others (represented by an arrow). The horizontal discourse of informal learning is represented in the underlying extended rectangle. This aspect is most usually brought into the school by teacher acknowledgment and accommodation of student interest or their own interests. In the post-1993 structure teachers can construct senior elective courses through which students are eligible for national qualifications by choosing from a variety of achievement standards.



**Figure 2 – Senior music curriculum structures pre-and-post 1993**

The curriculum post-1993 contains both principled and procedural knowledge in a complex relationship: both general theoretical knowledge and knowledge of particular practices (Gamble, 2006). The content is also influenced by the continuing production of new knowledge, as music intersects with the technological developments of the market place, as well as notions students have of what music should represent and offer them. Furthermore music presents particular challenges for teachers, as it contains a diverse mix of knowledge structures in a domain which is at breaking point in terms of its potential content. Unlike the fine arts, which was divided into a series of discrete subjects in the New Zealand curriculum (design, painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture),

music still encompasses such varied dimensions as solo and group performance, composition, aural transcription, score reading, theory, arranging, analysis, and research.

Where discussions regarding the verticality of school knowledge structures generally consider a subject as comprising one predominant type of knowledge structure (Muller, 2006; Ivinson, 2010; Wignell, 2008) in music this is not the case. This variety in knowledge structures and degrees of verticality within the segmented knowledge areas creates challenges for the realisation of appropriate curriculum specification and pedagogy. Bernstein suggests that if “discourses are differently specialised, then they must have a space in which to develop their unique identity, an identity with its own internal rules and special voice” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 6). Multiple knowledge structures and identities create a problem that may be unique to music within the secondary curriculum. With the admission of performance, composition, popular and other music styles into the school curriculum, as well as the influence of new technologies, a number of possible discourses now vie for curricular space, and along with these, new and varied identities are emerging. The subject has challenges as its strength of classification weakens in that it seeks to look in many directions: towards hierarchical theorised knowledge, towards the segmented practices of music-making (where music intersects so significantly with the interests of students), and increasingly towards new technologies and the popular music market.

### **Knowledge displacement in the senior music curriculum**

Changes in curriculum content have been brought about by a shift in emphasis from bodies of knowledge to a focus on assessment and qualifications (the rational-legal model) and by emphasis on increasing the relevance of knowledge to the learner. This has largely occurred through the modularisation of knowledge into assessment packages, or achievement standards and unit standards as they are termed in the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQA, 2011a). Bernstein (2000) suggests that regionalisation is more likely to occur where singulars move from course-based structures to modular formats, as has been the case in the senior curriculum for all subjects in New Zealand. What constitutes musical knowledge (classification) is weakening and the modes of delivery (framing) diversifying as music moves from a strongly-framed singular to a more weakly framed region.

Wheelahan (2010a) provides an overview of the relativisation of knowledge in society and education in western countries, and argues that the official recontextualising field of the state (ORF) is currently dominant over local fields (PRF). This domination began in the 1980s when, as an expression of neo-liberal political philosophies, vocationalism became the preferred principle underpinning educational policy developments. The previous dominance of competence modes

(Bernstein, 2000) (not to be confused with competency-based training), realised in liberal-progressive, populist and radical modes of pedagogy, has largely given way to performance modes focused on the outputs of learners (see chapter two). While many teachers retain elements of competence modes in the form of student-centred ideals, the discourse of the state is vocationalism where “the principle for curricular recontextualisation is instrumentalism and relevance, not systematic access to structures of knowledge” (Wheelahan, 2010b, p. 104). The underlying conception of education is premised on how it “contributes to the formation of human capital ... the commodification of knowledge and the marketization of social relations” (Wheelahan, 2010b, p. 109).

Within a context with a mix of constructivist and instrumentalist educational doctrine, the balance between knowledge and knower has shifted, and there is now little consistency in what might define a music programme in any given school. The New Zealand Curriculum appears to support a conception that favours knowers over knowledge when it suggests “learning is relevant to students’ lives now ... (as opposed to learning relevant only to a limited range of possibilities from the past)” (Ministry of Education, 2009). Many teachers aim to provide a balance across the various knowledge areas covered by the assessment standards; but the ideology of choice, now firmly embedded in the curriculum framework, also allows teachers to avoid assessing, and even teaching, areas that their students may find less relevant or more difficult. Recent social realist critiques warn that the emptying out of the curriculum of significant aspects of knowledge content, in acquiescence to the ideology of relevance and choice, can have unintended consequences (Muller, 2006).

In the pre-1993 curriculum (see figure 1) there was a more holistic approach to teaching and assessment. The study of nationally prescribed musical works tended to provide a thread linking parts of the syllabus together. While the number of content areas has increased since 1993 to more accurately reflect the practices of the field, the segmented assessment structure has given rise to more compartmentalised teaching and knowledge acquisition (Locke, 2005). Figure 1 indicates spaces between the segments in the post-1993 curriculum however the knowledge components are not totally discrete. Ideally musical knowledge and musicianship develop from the cross-fertilization of knowledge from the many segments of the discipline. Where musical knowledge is overly compartmentalised however, there is a danger of a lack of foundational, connective knowledge that can provide students with the concepts they need to understand beyond an immediate context to how music has developed historically and how it functions in western society.

Cognisance of varied knowledge structures within the discipline is likely to assist teachers in providing students with access to the important building blocks of conceptual knowledge. Maton

suggests that different structurings of knowledge possess different affordances – “they lend themselves more to certain forms of pedagogy, evaluation, identity, change over time, and so forth, than others” (Maton, 2009, p. 54). This has direct implications for curriculum structure, content and pedagogy: “the appropriate lesson to be drawn here is that different knowledge structures have different curricular specificatory requirements .... curriculum policy will *distinguish and differentiate* between the structural needs of the different curricular knowledge structures” (Muller, 2006, p. 72, italics in original). This is particularly so for subjects or subject segments with a strong verticality such as music theory and analysis. In these components content sequence and coverage are of paramount importance. This coverage is not only important within each segment but may also provide connective knowledge across music’s segmented curriculum. Where knowledge differentiation and progression are tacit and largely left to the teacher to construct, there can be significant implications for student learning and access to important knowledge (Allais, 2006; Muller, 2006). The recontextualisation of music knowledge at the school level has become a dynamic process of regionalisation but one in which teachers’ knowledge, values and actions play a pivotal role.



## **CHAPTER FIVE: CASE STUDY ONE - LEAH AND MUSIC AT RIVERSIDE SCHOOL**

### **Leah's story - Biographical context**

Leah's professional story is one of extremes over a long and varied career. She tells of professional isolation in teaching secondary music in the 1970s and 80s, of working with difficult students in under-resourced settings, and later of the affirming experience of working with students who received acclaim in the community as music makers. In her current position there is little support for or expectation of out-of-class music-making, so Leah's focus is on running classroom programmes that develop the skills of her students while meeting the expectations of the national requirements for school qualifications.

Leah's early musical life was that of a classical pianist within a family and community that was predominantly interested in popular music:

My brother at high school was the rock star with a rock and roll band and my sisters were crazy rock and roll fiends and in between all that mix in that household bursting with rock and roll music was me practising the piano.

In a small community Leah found herself with the unique identity of being the only classical musician. She achieved advanced results at an early age:

I sat and passed my ATCL at the age of 14 and in a small College ... I was the only piano player and had to do everything; the British Music Society concerts, the school concert, you know I was sort of reasonably blasé about all of that ... I was the only classical musician in [the town] at that time, that I knew of anyway.

When tertiary music study was suggested to Leah by her piano teacher she was unaware of the possibility or what it might involve, eventually falling into it somewhat by chance. She entered the world of tertiary study naive about what it entailed and without a clear motivation for it or knowledge of where it might lead. Unsure of her professional options after completing her music degree, once again somewhat by luck Leah decided to enrol at Teachers' College: "Someone said you can go to training college and get paid to be a teacher and I said, that'll do."

Perhaps the idea of teaching had been germinating in Leah's mind since her involvement with the Yamaha keyboard group tuition system in her second year at University. She talks of this work in very positive terms. It was a significant turning point, indicating an enjoyment of teaching and involvement with kids: "I have to say it was still my favourite job, I loved it, just loved it."

Leah worked for short periods of time in many schools before taking a job at a large multicultural college for girls. This was to become one of the defining positions of her professional life. Leah describes this as ten years of “really, really hard work” developing both physical resources, including appropriate buildings, and the musical profile of her department within the city and country. Some of Leah’s most affirming teaching experiences come from this period in her working life, particularly through the activities of co-curricular music: “Even now when I play the video of their performances I’m still stunned at the musicality of those girls. It’s astonishing”. The environment at this school also enabled Leah to develop close working relationships and friendships with other teaching professionals in her department. Eventually however, a change in school leadership precipitated her moving on and her next significant position was as the leader of the music programme in a large middle school. In this position too Leah found great challenges and rewards in promoting varied and strongly practical music experiences for her students. This position was underpinned with strong support from management:

They put in a keyboard lab, I taught the thing I liked the most which was keyboard teaching, had a wonderful choir, built the jazz band up. I just loved working in the primary sector and it’s so different from secondary, so different. They always loved everything I did.

Eventually Leah returned to secondary teaching and was at the time of this research Head of Department in a 900 student year 7-13, decile nine boys’ college. Her first impressions of the school were not positive and Leah has been disappointed by the structural impediments that have hindered the development of a music programme integrated with the middle school. Nevertheless Leah has built up a course she is proud of: a programme that works at trying to find a balance between the structural expectations of schooling, and expanding student experiences and skills, while incorporating the personal musical interests of her students.

### **Theory Monday at Riverside School**

The class of twenty or so year 10 boys is lively but good natured as they rummage through a large carton on the floor looking for their particular bright yellow folder for this lesson. It is ‘Theory Monday’. The slightly tired looking classroom at Riverside school has an eclectic mix of images on display: guitars, saxophones, and instruments of the orchestra. A dozen keyboards line the outer walls of the generously sized room and a set of guitars is secured in wall hung holders. There is a display wall designated ‘New Zealand Music Month’ and another area displaying assessment and assignment information. Some students take their seats at one of two clusters of tables that face inwards, while other students choose a seat in a row of desks set back from the more sociable

looking clusters. Leah frames the opening of the lesson with an imperative, “You need manuscript, either yours or mine” and with that Theory Monday is underway.

Leah is covering some nuts and bolts, traditional notational material (reading the bass clef, transposition, and aural recognition of intervals) but she takes care to always relate this to sounds by playing the keyboard at the front of the room or by asking the boys to sing the pitches. Before she moves on to chord progressions she sets the aural scene by putting on a recording of the song she has chosen to illustrate the chord sequences for the lesson – *I See Red* by the New Zealand pop/rock band Split Enz. In this lesson one of the students plays the chord progression on guitar for the class to recognize. In a later lesson Leah takes a different tack, utilising the skills of a number of the students as they play (keyboard, guitar and bass guitar) and sing (two students) a well-known song with the aim of understanding the chord progressions.

Before the end of the lesson Leah reminds the students of their upcoming assessment week and the assignment on New Zealand music that is now due. Leah tells me that in the remaining two periods each week the students spend their time playing in groups and composing. The boys seem to accept that this is the one period when the guitars stay fixed in their holders on the wall.

## **Rock on Tuesday**

I arrive early to observe the year 10 class in one of their two weekly practical sessions and walk in on the end of year 12 class and a scene of some aural chaos. From an un-sound-proofed cupboard sized room off Leah’s teaching classroom, the sounds of two guitars and drums are prominent, while over the other side of the room Leah provides a piano accompaniment for a boy who is playing an arrangement of *The Swan* on the violin. I’m not sure how the two of them can focus on what she is saying given the sound leakage from the side room: “see the phrases through with more tone”, she encourages. Meanwhile in another corner of the room a student is working on a composition under headphones. Leah’s description of her music department as “schizophrenic”, jumps into my mind. The remaining members of the class are spread throughout the building. This is a music facility that was certainly not designed with copious and diverse activities in mind.

After the year 12 class disperses the year 10 ten boys begin to wander in, one strumming a guitar as he arrives, and another can’t resist a brief encounter with the drum kit that is set up in the room. As the boys take their seats I notice that the tables are arranged differently today, all facing inwards in clusters. Leah enters with instructions to “leave the guitar, don’t touch the drums” as she hands out the previous week’s exam papers. There is much talking and looking at the papers and amongst the bustle one boy’s paper is propelled onto the floor. Leah eventually calls for order and draws

attention to some aspects she has listed on the board. These things will generate the school reports which are to be written this week. This acts as a brief reminder of the underlying order and purpose of the boys' presence at school. There is no escaping assessment and judgements, even in the less formal environment of this music classroom. One student's good result is noted and acknowledged by the other boys with some applause and Leah moves on to remind them of the task before them today – to prepare for the next week's class concert.

Leah talks about the progress of each group, noting what should be worked on this period, and then assigns each group a space. The largest group remains in the room with her. Leah has thought through the combinations of instruments, skill levels, and personalities which will enable the best results for this task. New Zealand Music Month guides the choice of repertoire and provides some unity to the quite diverse combinations of guitars, keyboards, vocalists, one violinist and a saxophone player.

The motivation levels appear high as I move from group to group. There is music-making underway in every case, as the boys attempt to piece together a recognizable version of their chosen song. In the largest group, and the most diverse in terms of prior musical experience, Leah works at keeping the music-making coordinated. They have the CD of the song as a backing initially to help give a sense of the whole. "Now without the CD, ready?!" and Leah heads off to check on the other groups. The performance falls apart at some point but this seems to not overly concern the group. They swap vocalists and begin with a lead in of "three, two, one, go". I'm impressed by the way these year 10 boys are happy to play and sing with each other without apparent self-consciousness.

Towards the end of the period Leah brings the groups together into the large room and as time allows, some of the groups have a run through in front of each other with mixed results. "We know it's all trial and error" she tells me as the boys pack up and move off to their next class. The last boy leaves the room for the next class; "all good thanks Miss".

### **Leah's pedagogic discourse**

Despite Leah's traditional route into music teaching via a classical music degree, her teaching approach displays a strong affiliation with what she perceives to be the musical interests of her students ("ninety per cent of them are guitarists"), popular music. This is particularly so in the option (elective) classes where active performance of music in small groups is the main medium utilized in over half the curriculum time. Students have a high degree of choice over the music they play in this context. Leah believes this approach engenders motivation and ownership. Leah's open

attitude to including popular music in her teaching no doubt stems from her own eclectic tastes developed in her formative years where classical and popular music coexisted:

I love classical music, I'm classically trained, but I listen to everything, you know, that's just the background I grew up in and I just listen to all sorts of things ... I'm not a purist at all ... my tastes are very wide ranging and I play a lot of wide ranging stuff myself.

Leah's apparent stylistic inclusivity is held in check by clearly articulated expectations concerning students' need to adapt and modify purely personal interests for the context of schooling:

I say to the boys, this is a school, you are wanting credits for qualifications, and music is a subject which crosses over into your personal life, and you have your personal music and you know you have the more professional kinds of decisions you have to make, and so it's less about your personal music and more about what you need to do to get a result.... you're going to learn skills that are going to make you an even better musician for the things that you love, which maybe don't have such a place here.

Furthermore Leah suggests that learning in her music programme is about the development of skills, attitudes, and values associated with a certain projected identity:

I'm saying to them if you go out into the world there as a professional musician you don't turn down a job just because that's not your musical style, you know, you're in this as a musician to gain, to have the best skills, to be as developed as you can as a musician in all ways.

These are strongly articulated values, the regulative discourse (Bernstein, 2000), underpinning what Leah regards as appropriate for the production of legitimate student responses within the particular context of the music programme. Leah speaks in terms of her teaching having developed towards being more "serious" and "structured": "Over the years I've moulded this into a situation where there are some boundaries and they accept it fine and everyone knows where they're going and what they're doing". As soon as she took up the position Leah began articulating boundaries that challenged the more weakly framed attitudes to music learning she found on her arrival in the school thereby bringing about a modification of the recognition and realisation rules (Bernstein, 2000):

...kids standing up there like doing a big lead break out of something. Hello, what was that? Well that's you know, very fancy but what does it mean, I mean this is a performance, where's your beginning, middle and end. You've taken a bit out of a band piece, now how am I supposed to assess that?

Leah is providing a clear indication of what musical formats are appropriate in her view, for the realisation of appropriate student pedagogic texts. In Bernsteinian terms, there is weak classification internally in regard to acceptable types of knowledge, but strong framing in regard to the form for its realisation. Leah's unfamiliarity with and dislike of heavy metal is an exception and leads her to label this music as unsuitable for the school context: "I say sorry guys, not in this department, not

going to happen. It is the one style I can't tolerate because it is so loud, volume and music I think is just noise" (Interview 2). This contradicts her philosophical statement "I just think you've got to respect people's tastes" and that school music should be predominantly concerned with "music for all" (Interview 2). On Leah's terms, most music can enter her department, but evidently not all.

While Leah's educational values place certain restrictions on the students' pursuit of the purely personal horizontal knowledge they bring with them to school (recontextualisation of pedagogic practice at the local level) so too do elements from the official pedagogic recontextualising field (OPRF) in the form of the prescriptions for national assessment. These elements produce significant limits on both teacher and student autonomy as music is recontextualised within the specialised work of education:

For example, no you're not going to play a heavy metal piece of music because you love it because it's not going to make any sense for me to try and assess it, so I present them with choices remembering that this is a school assessment and there are criteria. You want to get an Excellence, so you present material that's going to get you that.

The evaluative rules contained in the assessment standards for higher school qualifications create a default curriculum, and it is these prescriptions along with her own values that create the boundaries for Leah's course structure and content rather than *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007). In fact Leah is sceptical about the underlying sequential and vertical structure of the curriculum document (see discussion in chapter four). It has little meaning or relevance for her when "in one class of thirty year 10 kids' [skill levels] go from primary school right up to university level, there are multi levels in one class" (Interview 2).

Leah exhibits considerable autonomy and takes a pragmatic approach to curriculum decision making, creating a mix that is strongly influenced by the success she has had in an approach that is predominantly practical. Nevertheless she articulates the pressure she feels from students in this regard and notes the strain this can place on energy levels and sustainability:

[the push for practical work] comes from the kids, 'when are we going to do practical', they beat you down, and then sometimes you wonder, when you're verging on madness, now really there is too much of this, and for your sanity you think it would be so nice to do a bit more listening. And I never know when I have a listening lesson, and I really enjoy it and they seem to be compliantly doing the stuff, I never actually know if that's for me or for them (Interview 2).

Leah may have been less clear on enforcing boundaries than she was aware of as one student noted:

I reckon she was a bit lenient with us last year, honestly I feel she used to be. I think she was intimidated by us in a way as she used to let us go to practical a lot. In hindsight if you look at it there was a vast amount of practical (year 12 student).

Leah highlights the ever-present tension between the various components of the curriculum that music teachers are expected to cover, and the tension between various discourses that create expectations for students and teachers alike. In her elective programmes Leah has made a choice to pursue music education predominantly as praxis rather than to emphasise music education as aesthetic education centred on a preconceived canonical skills and musical works (Elliot, 1995). The more formal theory lessons observed demonstrated her approach in taking western musical concepts, such as harmony, and introducing them through popular music. The observed lessons and conversations with students suggest there is certainly a sense of negotiation and accommodation rather than dictatorial intent in this music department, despite Leah's dislike of heavy metal. In Bernsteinian terms the boundaries in relation to selection and pacing are more weakly framed than the dimensions of sequence and evaluation. What is evident is Leah's enjoyment of the interaction with the boys as they negotiate the learning process, attempting to satisfy the demands of the school while bringing their love and enjoyment of music into the more formalised setting. There is an underlying sense of warmth and enjoyment in Leah's interactions with her students which appears more concerned with their development than with judgements related to the particular medium they have chosen to express their musical selves.

### **Talking with students**

Leah's description of her approach to teaching was confirmed by the observation of three lessons at year 10 level and a discussion with two groups of six students from year 10 and year 12. The students chosen by Leah for participation in the two focus groups had varying musical backgrounds and interests. There was a sense of agreement amongst the students that clear boundaries were being set for learning but that within those boundaries students had quite a high level of autonomy to explore the music activities that interested them most. The stylistic medium was predominantly, but not exclusively, popular music, and the mode of this exploration facilitated by Leah and strongly supported by the students, was playing music together in small groups: "I like the fulfillment you get when you put together a piece solidly with a few other people" (year 10 student). At each curriculum level at least three quarters of class time is allotted to group performing. Students seemed to accept and had rationalised the course structure: "I think it's a good balance because usually on Mondays we do the written, but Tuesdays and Wednesdays is really a mix of practical along with a bit of theory" (year 10 student). By year 12, students looked back on the balance between theory and practice with more awareness: "Like now we know, but two years ago, we would have been like – theory?! Why are we doing this" (year 12 student). Not all students were happy with the course balance, however, and one year 10 student in particular expressed a desire to focus solely on playing his own repertoire:

Year 10 student: She doesn't take in our tastes, our preferences in music, like if we were studying our own preferences of music we'd probably be into it more than what she's giving us to study.

Interviewer: But you're not getting a message here that the music you like is not good are you?

Year 10 student: No, she just doesn't take it on board. We are never asked for our opinion of what we want to do.

Most students however accepted the need for balance and a tacit acknowledgment that exposure to new knowledge at school was a positive thing:

Year 10 student: When I was younger I would have thought classical music was boring and stuff, now I've kind of listened to it... it's kind of cool, it's all right.

Many of the students appeared to consider classical music as requiring more work to understand, especially when compared to the immediacy of popular music:

Year 12 student (a): The thing with classical music is that you don't understand it unless you're more exposed to it.

Year 12 student (b): It's a bit more complex than pop music, you need to listen to it and slowly build your liking to it.

Year 10 student (a): You have to have patience listening to it.

Year 10 student (b): Some of the pieces could be too long for some people.

Year 10 student (c): You have to do more than just listen to it, you actually have to understand it, think about it.

Students identified a number of contrasts between classical and popular music that pointed to differences in conception and use. Popular music's essence was heard in the centrality of lyrics, its immediacy, and its social functionality:

Year 10 student: Pop is catchy, got lyrics and stuff, got a good beat, rhythm, you can dance to it, socialising.

Classical music's staying power and sense of deep emotion was cited as significant compared to popular music:

Year 12 student (a): Pop/Rock seems to go out of fashion quite quickly, like in a few months, and classical we are listening to hundreds of years later.

Year 12 student (b): Because its [classical music] got no lyrics they have to try and find like the meaning to it through the notes and stuff. And it's also really emotional, and when you listen to it, you kind of start off wherever you are and then with the climax of the piece of music like you go along with it if you know what I mean.



A central concept in these students' definition of good music was the idea of authenticity (Jones, 2008). In relation to popular music students talked of needing to respect the originality of the singer/song writer before music could be considered 'good'. Moreover the music will have value if it engenders reflection:

Year 12 student: Pop music, for me, it makes me think about myself, and question myself, or question things around me as opposed to classical music, it's just like I wouldn't think about other stuff, I'd just think about the piece of music.

Year 10 student: If there's a song I like it will make me think, trigger to think about a certain thing and songs that have decent lyrics and mean something.

Despite this concern with authenticity of conception some students seemed surprised by the idea that popular music could be a topic for academic study in the classroom:

Year 12 student: I can understand why we study classical music because it's like it's fixed, you can't really study jazz because they go for a ten minute solo sort of thing, and you're probably not studying pop because there is not much to write about.

Leah's choice for senior study of set works by Rodrigo (20th century classical Spanish composer) and Gareth Farr (20th century classical New Zealand composer) to some degree reinforces this impression, though her programme does include an 'academic' study of some New Zealand rock music.

Despite being given a reasonable degree of autonomy over group choice and repertoire choice for playing (particularly at year 12), when initially questioned about the relative importance of classical and popular music within the school a number of students were quick to respond that classical music is given a higher status: Year 12 student (a): "Classical music is more important", Student (c): "Yeah", Student (d): "Yeah", Student (b) "Classical music is most important". When questioned further students were unsure exactly where this message came from particularly given the amount of time allotted to popular music-making within the department. Nevertheless this perception was strongly present: "It's kind of like classical music is the basis of everything else". In response to a question about the need to do music reading and theory, which students seem to associate with the classical paradigm, one year 10 student noted that it is required "because it's in the curriculum, so we can read different types of music, so we can translate it to what is best suited for us". Only one student interviewed felt that Leah's programme did not sufficiently acknowledge his particular area of interest in rock music. Students were unsure when questioned, what Leah's musical preferences might be. This suggests she is not presenting strongly classified values in terms of music selection in this area of her work. Music was seen as an atypical and positive subject to take; "a chilling period" where the more usual formalities of schooling were less prominent.

## **Managing the relationship between classical and popular music**

I think this is quite a schizophrenic music department, you might hear Black Knight in one room and Gymnopedie in another (Leah, Interview 1).

Through interaction and through Leah's conception of her work as centred on affirmation of student interests, elements of student choice impact on the classification boundaries and instructional content ('the what' and 'the how' of the curriculum). However the instructional discourse is influenced by the rules associated with the traditional learning of classical music and its assessment within the specialised educational context and by Leah's desire to give her students space to develop their own interests. In other words the framing of the instructional discourse is strongly influenced by the students as well as by Leah's interpretation of the assessment demands of the external examinations and qualifications systems. The assessment structures are significant in her account of the influences on her teaching programme. She states "in this subject you can use your skills to get an Excellence ... you're going to get that by presenting an assessment which is going to fulfill all the criteria. I can sit there and tick all those boxes". These dimension which classify and frame legitimate pedagogic realisations, are somewhat in tension for Leah.

One of Leah's stated aims in relation to both classical and popular music is to increase student knowledge and awareness of the stylistic meanings: "What is the difference between reggae and hip-hop, and what is the difference between a blues and a ballad ... so it's giving them words and listening experiences". Leah believes that there is an assumption that popular music is more widely understood and consumed by young people than it is: "What you do in class is probably their one and only experience of music". Leah considers it important to develop "intentional listening" embedded in values of openness:

I would like them to listen on a level which is not just an emotional reaction to the music. I'd like them to be able to listen, to be able to learn to listen to anything and intellectualise a little bit like, identify or find something in the music which is interesting even though it's outside their comfort zone (Interview 2).

To a large degree Leah models these values. Her students see her as open and fair. They are not overly aware of her classical training and preference for classical music:

I think I was lucky that I didn't develop any entrenched attitudes [in my upbringing]. I know lots of people who just won't teach music in school because of that, I've had friends who say I don't know how you do it, I couldn't bear listening to that, I say, well you have to listen to it cause that's what's around you .... I don't think your classical musicians are more superior to your rock musicians or your singer-songwriters; it's just an individual thing (Interview 2).

From the listening activities in the middle school classes, including instruments of the orchestra, Leah does try and instil in her students an appreciation of what she describes as “beauty of sound” and “melody”. She talks positively of her most successful units that explore the classical music of Rodrigo and Vivaldi. In exposing students to classical music she has found the ‘secret’ is to include the performance of this music and to relate it and integrate it with other activities such as arranging. In the process of internalising the music and being actively involved in doing, students appear more motivated and open to giving ‘other music’ a go. This is certainly in keeping with the results of Green’s extensive work with students in the UK (Green, 2008):

I said now you’re actually going to make your own arrangement of this ... starting with the chords, and within half an hour they were jamming away. What did they do next time, they went straight in there, jamming away, unbelievable .... You see I do that with the Rodrigo as well, they play it, that’s the secret.

A more radical informal learning pedagogy, often associated with popular music and its genres, is not pre-eminent within the music department although there is certainly a weakening of traditional aspects framing and hierarchical teacher-student relations.

Within the field of music education, the fact that assessment still favours the written over the aural is a remnant of the ascendancy of the classical paradigm and an issue that is hotly discussed amongst music educators. In describing the story of one talented student composer’s struggle with the demands of traditional notation, Leah identified a growing discomfort she has with the requirements of national assessment. On the one hand Leah recognizes an individual talent and ability: “He is an amazing songwriter and performer in his way and has got an endless number of songs in his head that he can sit down and play to you” (Interview 2). On the other hand she acknowledges the potential for restrictive codes of assessment to undermine the potential for some musically able and creative students to succeed in the school system:

I thought you know it’s so unlike the way he learns and probably once he’s [notated] his composition he will never want to do it again because doesn’t see any point and yet there is marvellous skill he has there of memorising all these songs he sits down and plays. So it is the assessment that sometimes doesn’t suit the [learning] style (Interview 2).

Leah is showing some reluctance to reproduce without question some aspects of the educational transmission code that underlies the official pedagogic discourse. As the discourse becomes recontextualised at the local level, realised in personal social interactions, the seeds for change emerge as educators such as Leah begin to question dimensions of that discourse that can bring about a sense of detachment, or even worse, alienation of musical students from school music. In this story, the everyday, informal learning practices of the student are in conflict with demands of the formalised codes of learning:

I would say my passionate rock boys have incredible listening skills. I can't do what they can do, but it's narrow to what they are playing and producing, it's incredible what they can do but it doesn't necessarily mean they are going to be good at aural or writing out a melody for a composition, it just means they're tremendous at picking something up from what they've heard and working it out. It's not something that's very assessable (Interview 2).

There is a tension between the pre-determined knowledge structures of the school's vertical discourse (scholarly or theoretical knowledge embedded in a discourse of assessment) and the informally learned skills students bring to the classroom (horizontal discourse). The tension between the two sorts of knowledge is clear for Leah. The official knowledge given legitimation in the assessment standards does not always reflect the skills many of her students have developed. Her question is how might their skills be recognised and legitimated.

At the micro level, in Bernsteinian terms, there are mixed pedagogic practices in Leah's work (Morais, 2002). The classification of some aspects of the instructional discourse is weak, providing entry points for student-driven choice in musical content and practice ("I think basically it comes from the kids, when are we going to do practical, they beat you down" (Interview 2) but this is counterbalanced by strong framing in terms of the values associated with what is considered a legitimate text in evaluative terms. This is made explicit to students and therefore has strong framing. Strong framing can help students in recognising and realising the appropriate codes of the pedagogic discourse of the teacher and the school. In terms of Leah making the evaluative criteria visible for students this is a positive approach. In Leah's own words "everyone knows where they going and what they're doing". Moreover, as an educator Leah is certainly not intransigent. Her genuine concern for and interest in her students results in an interactive process whereby framing is weakened in terms of hierarchical rules, in terms of some selection and pacing of the learning, and in the classification of knowledge-relations (academic-non-academic, classical-popular). This provides the space where there is generally a sense of clarity and certainly flexibility as the personal in music meets music for learning.

## **Summary**

Leah manages the relationship between classical and popular music by encouraging all her students, and by generally keeping her personal stylistic preferences out of the classroom. She gives a strongly framed indication of the form music making should take within a schooling context which is in turn influenced by the requirements of national assessment. She balances student choice in repertoire and instrumental idioms with 'literacy' requirements such as reading and theory and introduction to styles of music in the study of set works that students would otherwise not come into

contact with. Leah believes there is much to be learnt from both classical and popular music. She espouses an equality of value and respect to both the singer-songwriter and the classical pianist.

There is congruence between Leah's personal musical values and her curriculum conception although there is at times a tension between her values and the discourse of assessment in the official recontextualising field. Her approach could be described as progressive with provisos. The official curriculum document has little influence on her work, although she admits to it having made her bring to the fore in her mind tacit understandings in relation to the key generic competencies. The over-simplified sequential nature of the curriculum levels is largely irrelevant to her daily experience. The assessment prescriptions for national qualifications exert a much stronger and more direct influence on curriculum construction. Aspects of musical meaning that Leah values are emphasized in her teaching – instructional aspects such as listening, stylistic awareness, appreciation of melody and beauty of sound, and an emphasis on group music-making are embedded in regulative values such as the cultivation of an open mind and eclectic tastes. Within her school Leah has a high level of autonomy. Music may not be highly valued in regard to achievement statistics but it can be a subject where students and teachers create learning spaces of considerable personal importance.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CASE STUDY TWO – BEATRICE AND MUSIC AT ST ERASMUS SCHOOL**

### **Beatrice's story - Biographical context**

Beatrice's clear vision and confident musicianship helped her gain the responsibility of running a large music department in one of the country's leading private co-educational schools in only her third year of teaching. Seven years on, Beatrice has expanded the range and quality of musical opportunities offered to students in the school.

Despite there being no history of classical music in her family, Beatrice began receiving violin tuition at the age of seven after persuading her mother this was what she wanted to do. Beatrice had lessons in the Suzuki method, a method which emphasises aural skills, parental involvement, and a sense of community and social networks. Based on the principle of language acquisition, students learn by ear before learning to read. This creates a highly developed aural sense since listening to recordings of the repertoire is an expected daily activity from the start. Beatrice recognises the significance of the social and fun components of her early experiences:

The method of learning that I experienced in classical music was really fun and it had lots of inclusiveness about it and although not everybody has that experience with classical music, and in fact probably more often than not they don't have that experience, that for me was quite important, and still is and it impacts [on the way I work].

Beatrice progressed well and undertook her first violin exam, Grade 5, when she was in year 8, and achieved an internationally recognised performers' certificate in year 11. She notes with some amusement her "classical geek" status as a pre-teen and now finds it somewhat peculiar that she had no interest in popular music until her early teens:

I think I was a real nerd. I was a real classical geek and that's all I knew. I didn't have a circle of friends that listened to that kind of music, my social group was Suzuki .... it's interesting I never listened to the radio, until I was 16. I'd never listened to a lot of popular music except the music that my mother chose to listen to if we went somewhere in the car.

After leaving school Beatrice intended to become a geography teacher but was persuaded at her teacher training interview to pursue music. Undertaking a Bachelor's degree in music was not an option in her home town and resources prevented her from leaving town, so she completed a Bachelor of Arts degree conjointly with education and a teaching diploma over five years. Beatrice was encouraged to apply for the job of music teacher at the middle school where she had been teaching violin part-time, modifying her original plan to teach secondary school music. After only

two and a half years' teaching she was appointed to the position of head of music at St Erasmus school, and two years later took over as head of the performing arts faculty. She describes this as a significant rise through the system:

It was a reasonably meteoric rise over a short period of time, in less than five years I went from being a scale A teacher in an Intermediate school to being a Head of Faculty in an independent school (Interview 2).

The first seeds of musical diversification were sown for Beatrice when she became involved in musical theatre at the age of twelve. She continued to be involved in music theatre during her high school years and this passion is currently a shaping influence on what is offered at her school. Further diversification came when she joined a Celtic band as a violinist while attending university:

That was whole new musical experience for me and I learnt to improvise and learnt a whole different side of music that I'd not experienced because I'd been very classical, very orchestral based, very chamber music, ensembles etc. so that was quite a new musical experience. I played with the band for quite a long time and I guess that's where my desire to be a rock star came from because playing in a band is a whole different field to sitting in an orchestra, and I think probably I enjoyed the exhilaration of the music.

While Beatrice confirms that 'wanting to be rock star' is a rhetorical remark, the importance of this experience is clear in the development of her musical identity:

I remember I would go home from rehearsals and it was like my brain was melting because I had all this repertoire to learn, all these tunes to learn and memorise. Memorisation wasn't hard because being Suzuki it was second nature, but the fact that I had to improvise and I had no idea what I was doing and no one taught me ... I couldn't sleep, I'd go home and I couldn't sleep.

She recalls at an early age her desire to be musically versatile and acknowledges this is part of her motivation for providing diverse experiences for her own students. For her a classical music identity was too restrictive:

I always envied the other kids at school who could do that stuff. There was a student a year older than me and he was great violinist but also a really good guitarist, and I was so jealous (Interview 2).

There is a clear fascination with the 'other' world of popular music:

When I look at people who make it in the pop industry and go, "wow that's awesome I want to be that, that's really impressive", and maybe that's because I haven't moved in that world, it's a different world to have existed in.

Despite this Beatrice considers her classical training fundamental to her sense of musicianship; "I'm conducting musicians, professionals in the orchestra who are really complimentary about my

conducting and my musicality, and I know that hasn't come from any other place but my classical music training". Nevertheless there were some negative experiences in her classical upbringing that have subsequently influenced her approach to teaching, particularly the denial of the importance of the social nature of music-making at her local youth orchestra in her teenage years:

It was Friday night and we weren't allowed to talk to each other, we had to sit down and play and it was so serious and it killed me and I couldn't wait to get to the end of high school so I wouldn't have to go any more. And that's maybe why I take my orchestra rehearsals in such a light hearted fashion. Because I think the kids have to have fun, it can't just be about the music, it has to be holistic (Interview 2).

Beatrice also values highly the emotional involvement music can engender when people are committed to it both as listeners and performers. In describing her enjoyment of her work in the Celtic band and in large classical orchestral works Beatrice talks of the emotion, intensity, exhilaration, and excitement, and the way music creates "an emotional response" and "a connection with you". On another level she describes the transformative potential of exposure to music that is out of one's normal experience:

My oboe and cor anglais player has never played in a show and she has come along and she is having the best time, she is loving it. She is just having a blast, and she's like "I'm a complete show convert, this is awesome".

Beatrice played in the Celtic band for a number of years but her main personal musical outlets out of school currently centre mostly on musical theatre and some violin playing in a cross-over genre with friends as well as a great deal of personal listening to a varied range of music.

## **Senior electives**

A group of ten year 13 students are seated around the spacious modern library as I arrive to observe this senior class. Seven of the students are working on computers and to facilitate discussion a group of three students is working in a glass-walled area in the far corner of the room. These three students are undertaking the International Baccalaureate course rather than the New Zealand National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA), Level 3. The assessment for NCEA is derived from modular achievement standards and at the senior level this provides the possibility of a high degree of student choice. The whole class comes together for the teaching of only one achievement standard, the study of set works. All other work is undertaken by students predominantly on an individual basis.

The class was underway at 8.15am with two of the NCEA students working on compositions and the other five working on research projects. Beatrice takes me to each workstation and introduces the student and their research topic. The range includes punk music, music theatre, the composer Karl



Jenkins, hip hop, and reggae. Beatrice then circulates checking each student's aims for the lesson. There is a relaxed atmosphere but the students are clearly getting on with their tasks. Beatrice sits with one student and questions her on the development of her research question, encouraging her to narrow the focus. She is interrupted by another student wanting to check that the homework sent via email has arrived. Beatrice moves on to check that the two boys with iPods connected are on task. Back with the first student Beatrice suggests a sequence for the work, dealing with context first before moving on to the musical aspects. She is interrupted by a colleague who chats with her and some of the students.

The physical set up and the quality of the exchanges illustrate the student-centred nature of the senior curriculum. With a relatively small class of ten students, individual programmes are possible and productive. While the learning can appear fragmentary the students are all pursuing academic research in areas of significance to them. This class provides evidence of only one dimension of the relationship students have with their teacher and with the music department as a whole. As Beatrice is at pains to make clear, her senior students have particular strengths and involvements in the department as performers in a variety of styles. By also choosing music as an option the students become more connected with a developing musician identity.

The lesson ends as informally as it began. The students pack up and most wander off to other classes while some remain to talk with me in a focus group.

### **Junior song writing**

This class too is carried out in a physical setting that is different from the norm. Beatrice uses the main department rehearsal space which has no desks and chairs. This may symbolize to students that this contemporary music class is different from other classes, even other music classes, which occur in a more formal setting. Nevertheless the 16 students gather in an orderly fashion outside the room. Beatrice is waiting there to greet them and there is no free-for-all rushing in. One boy asks "What are we doing today Miss – theory or fun stuff?"

The eight boys and eight girls find a space on the floor and sit quietly copying down the task for the lesson that Beatrice has printed on the white board. The task consists of forming a group, deciding on a topic for a song, working on the lyrics and then deciding on a chord progression and a tune. Beatrice asks a student to paraphrase the instructions, then asks an open question about what they have learnt about chord progressions. She also reminds them of the work they have done on lyric writing. She states her preference for the students to work with different people from the preceding task. The students manage to form four groups quickly and each has claimed a space and then there

is a lot of boisterous chatter. Beatrice and I wander around the groups listening to their decision-making conversations and checking on their progress.

One group has chosen the theme of ‘standing tall’ for their song. A boy plays a short riff on the guitar to the group and another boy immediately imitates it, playing it back on his guitar, and they begin to cement this musical idea as the other two members of the group look on. The other two students start experimenting with vocal styles and pitches that might link into the key of the riff.

In another group one student has developed a chord progression but the two vocalists are singing in a different key. Beatrice points this out and guides them to improving this, bringing the vocal pitches into line with the chords. One group of girls is well on the way with their song but the fourth group demonstrates less cohesion and I wonder what they will produce for the sharing at the end of the lesson.

After 30 minutes or so Beatrice calls the class back together and reminds them of the expectations in regard to listening and giving feedback. Both Beatrice and the students made useful comments on the short extracts that were performed such as “the variety in the guitar line made it interesting”. Together they come up with some reflection points to end the lesson: the need to work more quickly, to look for agreement in the group, to think whether humour will work, and to be more aware of the relationship between the chords and the melody.

Beatrice dismisses the class and the students head off in good spirits having worked with focus and having moved their collective song writing skills up a notch.

### **Beatrice’s pedagogic discourse**

Beatrice is committed to offering a wide range of musical style experiences for students despite the opportunities a classical training provided for her musical and personal development. She espouses inclusivity with no apparent hierarchy of musical value in relation to classical and popular music: “I don’t think one is better or worse. I think there are different merits in teaching them and I think it is valid to have both forms in your classroom”. Beatrice aims to affirm her students by acknowledging their musical interests: “it’s valuing them and having them feel valued ... everybody should have the right to have their musical interest valued. As a result of this belief Beatrice has created a ‘second pathway’ in the music department’s elective classroom programmes. Called ‘contemporary music’, the emphasis is on popular and rock music conventions and practices, while the established ‘performance’ option class provides the more traditional classical route. Beatrice describes the two courses as covering similar skills but within different musical contexts.

Despite this recognition of musical diversity within the department in both the classroom programmes and the co-curricular ensembles, the sense of classical training as foundational remains a significant influence in curriculum conception and the instructional discourse:

It [classical training] gives a really solid foundation for understanding music, the principles of music and how it's built and how it's made ... understanding modern music is easier if you can understand classical music in lots of ways, I think.

While on the one hand Beatrice suggests both classical and popular music are of equal value, when questioned as to why she includes popular music she suggests "it's an avenue in, and it's a way to make links back to classical stuff, to other forms of music". It seems as if popular music is a means to an end rather than an end in itself as it is used to gain the interest of students and to expand their knowledge: "I think I engage with kids pretty well, but there are a whole bunch of kids that I still think I would lose if I didn't start somewhere that they know". Beatrice hopes to take her students on what she describes as "a journey of further musical understanding" by "opening up" their musical experiences and making connections across stylistic divides:

I'll be teaching in contemporary music and we'll be talking about the chords that we use ... okay now what's this piece of music, Pachelbel Canon, look at that, when was that written.

The foundational or theoretical aspects that Beatrice emphasises are based on knowledge of music's structures, conventions, and vocabularies. In the contemporary course it is primarily the conventions and vocabularies that differ, rather than the essence of musical structures, although Beatrice considers that popular music is less complex when compared to much classical music. She values the potential that knowledge of classical music has for opening students' ears to the creative possibilities in composition and general musical understanding:

It's understanding that not all music has to have two guitars, bass, drums, vocals and then some synth keyboards in there ... you can do so much more than be locked onto three verses, a chorus, a bridge and a build-up.

Beatrice also asserts that classical music is much easier to teach because of the historical traditions that education has developed around the academic teaching of the subject:

There is a huge amount of historical contextual stuff that goes along with it, in lots of ways it's quite an easy thing to teach because it's [got a history] and people have studied it for hundreds of years and so they understand it and there are a whole lot of links.

Beatrice recognises how music reading and theory normally associated more with classical traditions constitute powerful knowledge in that they open up possibilities for students as well as making the task of teaching easier:

Well it's much easier to teach, if you sit down to do a topic with the kids and because you've got a score in front of you, not a piano vocal score that just shows you that they've used the same five chords for the entire song, it's much easier to analyse, much easier to grapple with in a nuts and bolts sense. If you're doing written analysis it's there on the page, whereas if you're doing something that's aural based it's a whole lot harder I think.

These comments highlight a written/aural divide that has become a recurring problematic in recent music education literature and practice. Contemporary music practices are often more aurally based as Green's research has shown (Green, 2002b) and emphasise performance without developed traditions of academic discourse to assist with a transition into the classroom setting. This creates certain problems and challenges as this informal or horizontal discourse is introduced into educative settings where verticality is the predominant structuring principle (Bernstein, 2000, see chapter four).

The contemporary course at St Erasmus draws on some of the practices of informal popular music learning, such as working aurally and in self-selected groups, which are recontextualised with a strongly framed sense of purpose and direction:

It would be really easy to teach song writing and not explain anything about chord sequences .... we talk about, if we move the starting key, the home key, our key centre has changed, if we start on A instead of C then what are our other chords going to be, so thinking about chord progressions, thinking about shape and structure and form. I like to come back to the elements of music all the time. I think that is probably my biggest guiding principle in education.

Beatrice's sense of what is important shapes the contemporary course and although it has some similarities with the work of Green (2008) in the UK (see chapter three), there are striking differences. Beatrice has chosen song writing as the medium for the development of skills whereas Green's *Musical Futures* programme emphasises, at least initially, aurally developed performance skills. Beatrice also maintains a traditional teacher role whereby teacher preferences dominate content, pacing and evaluation. Yet there are elements of student autonomy in relation to the formation of groups, the style of song writing, and the instruments used.

Values of authenticity in relation to popular music are also present in Beatrice's discourse. Popular music chosen for study and performance is less likely to be from the current Top 40 but will exhibit features of some substance; created and performed by 'serious' popular musicians who create music that is "quite experimental and musically complex and satisfying musically. While they're working in a reasonably popular idiom [the music] still pushes the boundaries, so for a musician it's interesting and it's captivating and it's engaging because it has something of musical interest. In this way canonical values concerning what makes music good, such as originality and musical

substance, come into play and are applicable to any music entering the pedagogic context (Jones, 2008). Beatrice makes a distinction between taste and developing judgements and she expects the latter to develop in her students: “[they] need to be able to justify [their preferences] for thoughtful reasons, not just ‘I don’t like it it’s not my style’ ”.

Beatrice’s strong sense of purpose and strength of personality means that external influences on curriculum formation have only a minimal effect. Some staff members are not entirely positive about the developing contemporary emphasis in the department but Beatrice says “they don’t actually verbalise like saying “that’s awful, why are you doing that”, but you get just little remarks and looks and comments. It’s interesting, that’s all right. I just barrel on regardless” (Interview 2).

There is also a pragmatic element (and within the school no doubt a political aspect) to some of the curriculum decision making. Although the espoused motivation for the contemporary course comprised affirmation of musical interest and rights of access to educational pathways, Beatrice also admitted “the motivation initially was purely a numbers game”:

We’d got to the point where our music option numbers were quite low, yet we have all these kids taking guitar lessons, drum lessons, vocal lessons who were just doing other things, music wasn’t considered [an option], that’s just what the geeky violin kids do, they take music ... we’ve got a hundred and fifty students having guitar lessons at school, what are they doing? So let’s cater for them.

In relation to these students Beatrice acknowledges the popular music industry as a consideration in curriculum content:

I want them to have a course that can set them up to go and be an industry musician if that is what they choose ... so that guides me in the kind of experiences and the knowledge that I think they’re going to need to have, say going for a Bachelor of Media Arts in song writing or music production.

Given this acknowledgment it is somewhat notable that Beatrice has chosen not to emphasize music technology such as developing creative skills through use of sequencing software. When questioned about this Beatrice identified resourcing as the issue and that her ideal teaching situation would include this component: “that’s something we’re working on for next year” (Interview 2).

One exception to Beatrice’s apparent autonomy in curriculum conception and orientation is the national prescription for assessment of qualifications which she acknowledges is the default curriculum in the senior school: “I think it would be fair to say that your average teacher teaches to the achievement standards, you have to, we are driven by assessment, it’s awful, I think it’s dreadful”. This influence stands in stark contrast to the national curriculum document, *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), which Beatrice acknowledges has little

knowledge content or influence: “you can do anything that you like. It’s just a document that says your children should play instruments and they probably should listen”. On the positive side “it’s quite broad it gives us a lot of scope, a huge amount of scope, it’s great. I like that it gives me autonomy and I can teach both of my pathways”.

There are mixed approaches in Beatrice’s pedagogic discourse, in the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of teaching music. On the one hand Beatrice espouses a student-centred philosophy that ensures traditional hierarchical rules of the regulative discourse are weak, therefore allowing students to interact informally with her and to question and work together. There is also a weak classification of spaces as students work independently and in groups in a variety of areas not dominated by traditional classroom formats. On the other hand there is a strong classification of knowledge boundaries represented by the two courses. The framing of the instructional elements is also strong, creating a context that communicates clear learning intentions through explicit selection, sequence, pacing, and evaluative criteria (see Junior Song Writing above). In this way there are elements of both competence and performance modalities (Bernstein, 2000).

Competence theories suggest that acquisition entails “active participation on the part of the acquirer” (Bernstein, 1990/2003, p. 90). Competencies are “intrinsically creative and tacitly acquired in informal interactions” (Bernstein, 1990/2003, p. 42) whereas performance models of pedagogic practice place the emphasis “upon a specific output of the acquirer .... and upon the specialised skills necessary to the production of this specific output, text or product” (p. 44). The mixed pedagogic practices exhibited by Beatrice suggest a palette of approaches rather than adherence to a dichotomous progressive/traditional teaching conception. At the meso level the subject classification provides a clear indication of intent and at the micro level the regulative and instructional discourses can be strongly or weakly framed in relation to various components. There is a balance between constructing knowledge with students and inducting them into bodies of knowledge deemed important within the field of music education; a balance between knower and knowledge modalities.

### **Talking with students**

Students in the senior (year 13) focus group demonstrated a remarkably clear awareness of the complexities of their music learning environment. This can only come about where there is strong classification and framing of the pedagogic discourse in the department and the school (Bernstein, 2000). The students had a range of musical interests from classical violin to bass guitar, drums, music theatre, and jazz. These students were able to articulate an awareness of the shifting and quite subtle interactions of musical and educational values and boundaries within the department. For example the students made the following observations about the new contemporary course:

Year 13 student (e): It's giving them reassurance that their musical ability is not that different to those [in the classical course].

Year 13 student (f): It's just as valid.

Year 13 student (b): There is a mind-set that in the past the kids who are doing music are the ones that are largely classically trained but now it's like contemporary music is just as hard.

Year 13 student (f): I think it's important to be taught, but if we are using contemporary music to capture these people, and in the process they learn so much more about the history of music and why they enjoy it and why it's written and how it's written and that sort of thing, of course that's a positive thing and that can open them up to a whole world of music and a whole world of emotional experience that they may not have been open to before.

Year 13 student (b): And it makes the music students more representative of the culture.

What is intriguing about these and other comments, apart from the depth and breadth of understanding, is the congruence with Beatrice's values. In Bernstein's terms the students are conversant with the recognition and realisation rules of the pedagogic discourse of the school and the music department in particular. They are able to recognise the specialty of the context in which they are learning and make astute observations and choices within that context. The underlying regulative discourse related to the purpose of schooling was also clearly indicated:

Year 13 student (c): You learn how to act too, you learn what you are allowed to do and what you are not allowed to do, what's right and what's wrong.

Year 13 student (b): To become a better person and to be well rounded and get lots of different knowledge.

Year 13 student (f): I come to school to learn, to learn.

In relation to music learning and knowledge within the department, the students were aware of both the underlying foundation of classical music as the knowledge base for learning and the move to musical inclusivity:

Year 13 student (b): We get like a broad spectrum of everything in music, you never know quite what we are going to come and find.

Year 13 student (e): At the same time it's quite classically based.

Year 13 student (b): Yeah, a lot of what we do in class is classically based.

Year 13 student (e): Like they've only recently introduced contemporary music into year 9, we didn't have that option when we were younger.

Year 13 student (g): I wouldn't describe it as a bias but there is definitely an undertone of classical music.

Year 13 student (f): I think in terms of this department in teaching in the classroom there is a bias towards classical music, well I wouldn't say bias, there is a focus on classical music and I think that is important because that influences our understanding of music.

The distinction between bias and focus indicated by this student is a significant one. It reflects the underlying importance of musical theoretical knowledge as a base from which experience and study of varied music is encouraged.

Two of the seven students in the focus group were relatively new to the school and this added a comparative dimension that highlighted some differences in the knowledge provided in this school from their earlier schools:

Year 13 student (c): I came from a small country school and all we did was performance, we never learnt theory or anything. I only came here last year.

Year 13 student (a): I came last year as well.

Interviewer: So at your last schools if you were doing music you only played?

Year 13 student (a): That's all we did

Year 13 student (c): In music class all we did was jam on the instruments, that's literally all we did.

Interviewer: In that sense there wasn't much difference from what you might have done at home from what you did at school.

Year 13 student (c): Yeah, pretty much, just more time to have fun.

These students identified a greater emphasis on theory and score reading knowledge components at St Erasmus school and appreciated the chance to come into contact with this knowledge:

Year 13 student (c): It's quite interesting to know why. I never really knew why you play certain notes and certain chords.

Year 13 student (a): I would rather have come here, started off, because you get quite a good variety, both, whereas in my other school it was only performance.

One year 9 student also appreciated having the intricacies of music notation demystified for him in the contemporary class:

Interviewer: In this course, so far, what knowledge have you come into contact with that you didn't know before?

Year 9 student (a): How to do all that writing and stuff, now I know about it, it looked really confusing.



The students were aware of the transient nature of much popular music and considered the stability of classical music as an explanation for its place in the curriculum. As well as this the complexity of classical music was given as a reason for its suitability for academic study:

Year 13 student (g): If you're learning the musical elements and features and things like that, there's not much you can draw out of pop/rock music that you can't draw out, comparatively, of classical music.

Year 13 student (b): Like a modern day pop song that has verses and chorus and maybe a bridge, the elements of that like compared to Stravinsky's work which is so complex and there's a lot more to study in classical music I suppose.

Year 13 student (f): In terms of learning about music, learning about classical music kind of opens more doors in terms of being able to understand, like pop and rock music.

One student was able to articulate the apparent dichotomy between music's visceral pull compared to academic study of music's inherent structures and meanings:

Year 13 student (f): There is a disconnect between the intellectual analysis of music and the emotional, like how it affects you emotionally. For example listening to "I got a feeling", the Black Eyed Peas I find that, I analyse that musically and I hate it, it's awful, but then I listen to it not analysing it and I actually really, really enjoy the song so to be actually able to switch off your musical analysis is also good.

A year 9 student suggested classical music's potential for subjective interpretations was what set it apart from most popular music: "It tells a story without actually saying what it is, like in songs you can kinda pick up on it just from the words but it tells a story without actually telling it" (year 9 student b).

The year 13 students who were deeply involved in music study and music-making were aware of the way in which their out of class instrumental lessons and co-curricular experiences such as shows, choir, band, and orchestra were enriched by the deeper knowledge developed in the classroom programme. The two dimensions appear to go hand in hand:

Year 13 student (f): Music in this department is bigger than just the classroom and I think the performance opportunities we have here and the groups that we can perform in and the music that we perform in those groups is enhanced by what we learn in the classroom.

Beatrice also observed that students involved in more than one stylistic outlet were often high achievers:

Watching kids who I've taught over a period of time and seeing their development I think, musically, the kids who have had the broadest exposure to music come out quite often, being your highest achieving and most well rounded musicians. They've sung in a choir, they've played in an orchestra, they've played in the band, they've played piano

for jazz band .... they have a whole raft of experiences to draw from and so when they come to sit down and discuss music or think about music on an academic level, they've got a whole lot of other things to draw from. They're not only thinking about their half hour piano lesson a week or their guitar lesson.

The message from these students concerning the development of musical knowledge was that they think it's important to study a broad range of music. This message was articulated by one year 9 student even though when questioned about his listening habits he admitted to having heard very little classical music: "I think it's good to be exposed to all types of music so you aren't just shut in a little box listening to the same thing" (year 9 student b). Widening the horizons of listening within the realm of popular music may be an initial step that Beatrice's contemporary class addresses.

The year 13 students identified that there are things common to all types of music but that through studying classical music, which is more structured and has developed over a longer period of time, a broader context and understanding is developed that assists in understanding popular music. However one student ventured to suggest that the "two worlds" were questionable constructs:

Year 13 student (f): I think a lot of things you can say about one you can say about the other, and we make these generalisations about pop music being repetitive and so is classical music and there's kind of two worlds that have been set up and I actually don't think the two worlds exist, between pop music and classical music.

The experience for these students is that the traditional boundaries between popular and classical music have a level of permeability as they move between the many opportunities offered to them in this well-resourced music department:

Year 13 student (g): In terms of musical taste [mine] differs depending which instrument I'm playing. Like currently for vocal music it's classically based but then trombone for example is quite jazz based so, so I've got quite a range of music including classical, to musical theatre to quite eccentric jazz.

These experiences rely on access to qualified teachers within a well-resourced school. One of the students new to the school pointed out that often a lack of interest in classical music can be due to a lack of exposure:

Year 13 student (c): A lot of people don't have access to be able to learn how to play or compose classical music, they don't have access to it, like where I'm from no one listens to it. I'd never heard anything before I came here. Everyone just teaches themselves to play, and when you teach yourself you kind of just start banging out a couple of chords .... even within popular music, there is a lot of music that doesn't get heard unless you look for it.

The students had a high level of respect for Beatrice's skills and enjoyed an informal yet work focused relationship with her which was full of humour and fun. For the younger students the impact

of the teacher on their engagement and enjoyment was clearly significant and one student commented on this: “I think the teacher kind of makes a difference as well, because our teacher is like real cool but she still gets you to get all your work done, so you still get the same amount done but you can still kind of chill out and relax a little bit” (year 9 student c). When questioned about what Beatrice’s personal preferences might be and how this might influence the department one student offered “I think she just loves music on the whole” and another suggested “she knows everything about everything and she knows it too!” The students admired her ability to play a variety of instruments in various styles and the fact that in various contexts she would play with students: “She plays the violin so she’s got that classical background but then she is so appreciative of anything else”.

### **Managing the relationship between classical and popular music**

Beatrice’s words and actions convey the message to students that musical diversity is valued, explored, and promoted within the music department. Her desire to provide a relevant course for the many students interested in popular music indicates an ethical dimension to her work. In many ways Beatrice is aiming to provide what Bernstein (2000) describes as democratic rights of inclusion, enhancement, and participation. Nevertheless the classification of the classroom programmes at the junior elective level presents classical and popular music knowledge as distinct. They are strongly classified in different elective courses, seemingly to keep them apart and to help counteract the impression that elective classroom music is only taken by “the geeky violin kids”. Such a structure appears to validate both the interests of potential learners and particular musician identities (a social relation), and suggests that there is a specialised knowledge content to be transmitted (an epistemic relation) in each case. It remains to be seen as the contemporary course continues to develop how well-prepared students will be when the two courses meet at the senior level where qualifications enter the mix. Many of the current New Zealand Achievement Standards require a level of written musical literacy in terms of music reading and writing that students more interested in popular styles often resist. It also remains to be seen whether, by keeping the two knowledges apart, a sense of divide is perpetuated or if the current permeability and inclusivity exhibited by the senior students continues to remain a feature of the regulative discourse of the music department. Currently at the senior levels students have not come through a dual course structure and Beatrice’s account suggests there are advantages in a class with a mix of interests and skills:

In year 11 we have two singer song writers, and classical musos and a cellist and a flute player and everyone exists very happily and nothing is any better or worse. The kids seem to have a real respect for each other’s different skills but I’m not sure that that is necessarily a musical thing or whether that’s a school culture or maybe not so much a school culture but a performing arts or music department culture, that we are inclusive.

Many students are encouraged to diversify their skills in such an environment and the practical music-making experiences are seen as enriching the potential for reflection and conceptual development in the classroom programmes:

They have a whole raft of experiences to draw from and so when they come to sit down and discuss music or think about music on an academic level, they've got a whole lot of other things to draw from, they're not only thinking about their half hour piano lesson a week or their guitar lesson or whatever.

Beatrice clearly values the development of abstract and specialised music knowledge to complement the performance experiences both in and out of the classroom: "It would be really easy to teach song writing and not explain anything about chord sequences .... I like to come back to the elements of music all the time. I think that is probably my biggest guiding principle in education". There is a body of objective music knowledge considered important, and many of the concepts are common to both classical and popular music ("it's not necessarily different skills but it's a different context for learning"). While the contemporary course contains components of what could be described as horizontal discourse (informal song writing), this is a highly managed introduction into the vertical structure of the educative process (Bernstein, 2000).

Green identifies that informal learning practices alone would fail to introduce students to components considered significant within the field such as "theoretical knowledge of harmony, scales and other pitch relations, rhythm, metre, technical vocabulary, and skills in reading and writing notation" (Green, 2008, p. 181). Green also argues that traditional music education can hinder the development and engagement of many students by imposing technical knowledge too early in the educative process rather than developing aural and experiential understanding and enjoyment of music first. Beatrice appears to be following the latter route by engaging her students in aural experiences from the start alongside the development of awareness of concepts such as structure, form, and expressive content.

Beatrice's values of inclusivity are modelled for students and this has a strong impact on the values exhibited by the students: "I don't think one is better or worse, I think there are different merits in teaching them and I think it is valid to have both forms in your classroom". In this way there is a sense of a respectful acknowledgment of the uniqueness of classical and popular music rather than a sense of contestation. Nevertheless there is a lingering question for Beatrice as to where and how musicianship can be developed; is it innate or learned:

I'm in the middle of musically directing a show that is predominantly a rock show, yet I'm conducting musicians, professionals in the orchestra who are really complimentary about my conducting and my musicality, and I know that hasn't come from any other

place but my classical music training, unless it comes back to the nature/nurture thing. Is that just who I am and would I be that way regardless of what style I played in?

Beatrice's confident and strongly framed approaches to learning music provide clearly defined values for students in which there is a respectful balance between valuing classical and popular music. This is appropriate in a school where a learning culture is the norm and students are expected to make the most of the many and varied opportunities offered to them. Beatrice manages a department that aims to provide a wide palette of experiences that reflect the many musical worlds outside the school.

## **Summary**

Beatrice had a positive experience of classical training as a child and this has resulted in her developing a high level of musicianship. Combined with this she has an outgoing and energetic personality and confidence in her abilities and in her work as an educator. Her personal musical tastes have continued to widen and she utilises technology to access and listen to a wide range of music. In this sense she inhabits a world not too far removed from many of her students and she brings this perspective to her department. Beatrice articulates an underlying ethical concern in recognising the many musical tastes and experiences of her students and she espouses this as a starting point for charting a musical journey for them, bringing them into contact with styles and knowledge of music she considers important such as structure, beauty, creativity and emotion. These instructional components are underpinned by a regulative discourse that emphasises the social and fun aspects of musical learning experiences. On the other hand she also acknowledges the need to increase the number of students opting for courses within the department. In this regard Beatrice balances ideals of inclusion and enhancement for students with developing the success and power of her department within the school by acknowledging a "numbers game".

The music students interviewed have a very clear understanding of the conventions and differences between classical and popular music. They are aware of the historical boundaries built up around these styles but for them the boundaries are permeable. Many students happily move between them or at least are accepting and respectful of the differences. This is a result of the clear values that Beatrice presents. The relationship between students and the values of their teacher is clearly pivotal.

In Bernsteinian terms there is strong classification symbolised by the two courses at the junior level. This helps to legitimise contemporary music as a valid option within the school by creating a space between it and the classical course. This is supported by a difference in framing as well, symbolised by the different physical spaces chosen for teaching the contemporary course, the different

knowledge content, and the different pedagogic approach which establishes “legitimate forms of communication appropriate to the different categories” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 5). More broadly however the regulative and instructional discourse remain constant for Beatrice in her interactions with students. There is a sense of purpose centred on respect for learning, and a linear structure underpinning the curriculum which brings students into contact with carefully-chosen knowledge content and experiences that aim to take students beyond the experiences they arrive with. Despite the introduction of a contemporary course there is still a strong recognition of classical knowledge as foundational: “I definitely think the classical grounding is the way to go but I think it has to be complemented with other stuff” (Interview 2).

There is a strong correlation between Beatrice’s positive experiences of music learning as a child, her affirming experiences with a wide range of music, and the ethos and curriculum she offers for students in her department: “I teach what I believe”. The result is “a broad spectrum of everything in music, you never know quite what we are going to come and find” (year 13 student). Beatrice has an ideal, perhaps the ideal she wished for when she was young:

I guess what I want to give them is the whole lot, and in my perfect world my kids would take both courses – the performance [classical] course and the contemporary course, because they get two quite different approaches, two different contexts. They’d have this broad musical understanding.

Beatrice’s personal values of musical eclecticism are reflected in the diverse range of music that is supported and given space within her department. The school has had a strong classical history in both vocal and string playing traditions and Beatrice has built on and diversified these foundations. From the music found in the classroom programmes to the many private music lessons in all styles, Beatrice aims to encourage it all. She transmits powerful cultural values through her commitment and energy and through her positive and therefore influential relationship with students. She has succeeded in creating a department that looks ‘both ways’: to the ever-changing field of practice beyond the school and also to music’s academic knowledge base. In the words of one year 13 student: “It’s become a diverse department over the past five years”.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: CASE STUDY THREE - MILES AND MUSIC AT SEAVIEW COLLEGE**

### **Miles's story - Biographical context**

Miles's early formal encounters with music included taking piano lessons for a short time at age nine. His parents saw a value in music, his mother plays the piano and sings in choirs, and his brother is now a successful conductor. Miles did not enjoy the piano lessons or the repertoire taught so when the piano lessons were discontinued Miles opted instead to take up an instrument he could play in a group:

At the age of ten it was seen to be a good idea to choose an ensemble instrument and after some demonstrations and things at the local community centre I picked the trombone.

Miles's contact with the piano did not cease after the formal lessons ended however and he continued to explore both classical and popular repertoire by teaching himself:

For the years following the piano lessons I did still play the piano so I would focus in on pieces that I liked ... and I would just learn them, teach myself, learn them until I could play them, but never probably very well.

Through his high school years Miles continued musical explorations in formal settings by playing trombone in bands and taking private trombone lessons, and informally he played drums, keyboard, and bass guitar in various bands at school:

I was self-taught and I didn't have any tuition in those instruments and consequently never became any good.

Early on Miles was drawn to the enjoyment of exploring a variety of musical styles while also recognising the social opportunities music offered:

I don't think I was consciously interested in music in terms of a performer ... after a while I joined a youth symphonic band and through that band I made some good friends, some of whom have turned out to be lifelong friends and I found that it was a really nice social, team work kind of thing to do; to make music together.

It was in his last year at high school that Miles joined a community band and in that ensemble he experienced not only the impact of an inspirational director, but also new repertoire, and the experience of crafting music to a high performance level:

[He] was a very inspirational figure for me and really he opened up a whole side of music I'd never experienced and I became very interested in Big Band music and jazz. I played in that band for the next seven or eight years and went on and joined [another

high profile Big Band] as well and had some good experiences there and backed some really high profile musicians from other places.

Because of a restriction on subject choices Miles was unable to study music at high school and when he left school he undertook a degree in computer science. Always interested in teaching and music however, when he arrived at teachers college after completing his science degree he was able to convince the institutional authorities that he should take music as a second teaching subject even though he did not have a music degree:

I was finishing my computer science degree when I realised it wasn't a strength of mine and that my strengths were more human interface and that through music or music teaching this could be the thing for me so I went to teachers training college under the physics induction and made them agree to allow me to teach music as my second subject.

Despite this Miles was teaching senior music in his first teaching position but he points out this was with the support of his head of department: "He was another very influential figure for me, much better organisational skills than me, but still very good at passing on high expectations to the students and getting results". Even now, many years into his teaching career, Miles acknowledges the ever-present challenges associated with his lack of a music degree:

I felt quite underprepared and so I took it pretty slowly and I often still feel under prepared .... gradually, gradually over the years I have expanded my knowledge base and sought expert help when I didn't feel very confident. I'm still learning.

Miles describes classical music and the world of popular music as "the big two" within his programme, with jazz and world music making entries from time to time. This appears somewhat unusual given that Miles's own efficacious experiences were in the world of jazz. Within his department Miles has chosen not to emphasise the music that has meant the most to him. There is a clear demarcation between his professional musical world and the personal:

I never teach music that I enjoy listening to in my own space .... I wouldn't listen to any of those works outside of the sphere of school because it would be like work and there is more music in the world. I'd much rather listen to my music, maybe it's a gate keeping thing.

Nevertheless there is a big band and a jazz combo at the school as well as an orchestra, concert band, two choirs, and various other ensembles. Miles is currently playing in the band for a community show and on occasion he plays in jazz combos with friends, sometime on drums and sometimes on trombone. He now listens less and less to the music that was of great interest and inspiration to him earlier in his career. He is a dedicated teacher and his work running the music department in a large, co-educational, multicultural college of two thousand students demands his professional focus and energy. Miles had many positive experiences in musical interactions during



his teenage and university years and this motivated him to want to make his ‘contribution’ to giving people positive musical experiences as a teacher.

### **Monday music in context at year 13**

Miles guides me to the music rooms at Seaview College during the morning break. We enter a small enclosed square shaped foyer with a series of tantalizingly closed doors. Miles unlocks the door to the main teaching room which also doubles as a rehearsal space. He sets and resets the tables in this room on a daily basis as the classroom becomes a band room or a rehearsal space for a choir. There are four rows of tables and along one side of the room thirty guitars hang from holders. At the back of the room there is a drum kit and some sound amplification gear and music stands at the ready. Near the front of the room there is an impressive medium-sized grand piano. “Year 10 performance Monday 28th February” and “Renaissance project due Friday 4th March” notices stand out on the board at the front of the room.

This class comprises students at both year 12 and year 13 and this Monday period is structured so Miles can spend time alone with the year 13 students. The year 12 students are allotted this time for solo performance practice and head off to the practice rooms. The nine year 13 students remaining in the room all sit bunched along the front tables leaving the other rows empty. There is little talk and it is clear that Miles has a relaxed but purposeful relationship with this class. Humour is present in his interactions with the students from the outset as he cajoles some of the chattier boys to settle into the first task of the lesson.

Miles has explained to me that this senior class is unique in that only one student has completed the usual pre-requisite of year 12 music. All the students however are very able performers so Miles has designed a course focused on performance, arranging, and the study of set works that will provide sufficient credits for the senior school qualification. Gaps in music knowledge may prove a challenge for some of the students, however, particularly in the study of the set works which includes a focus on score reading and analysis.

In the preceding lessons Miles has introduced the first of two popular music works that will be studied together to enable comparison. To begin the lesson a question sheet is distributed on which students are to write all they can remember about the work. The worksheet elicits information under the headings “shallow” (name of the piece, composer(s)) to “deeper” (contextual information). Miles reminds the students that in the preceding lessons the focus has been on the music’s context, the social and political context of the time as Miles put it “which sets an environment for the composer to be expressive”. Miles prompts a few responses and encourages the students to discuss what they

can remember. There is some quiet discussion but mostly the task is completed in silence and Miles takes in the sheets to read after the class.

Miles moves on to the focus of this lesson which is to introduce the new piece he has chosen for study. The students are issued with a score of the song and Miles goes over some basics of score reading for the students before they listen twice to the piece. One student notices the differing number of sharps in the key signature for the saxophone so a discussion ensues about transposing instruments. Through Miles's management of the discussion the students provide the answers for the initial question. Miles connects up his computer and the song plays through the sound system.

Moving on from listening and score reading Miles assigns the various lines of the score to the instruments available in the class. The students move to their instruments and become a class band comprising two vocalists, two pianists, a drummer, a bass guitarist, a lead guitarist, a clarinetist, and a violinist. With the song playing as a backing they undertake their first attempt at playing the piece by reading from the full score. The vocalists are somewhat reticent, perhaps because of my presence, but the instrumentalists make a fair first run at the song. Miles plays guitar along with one student who is having some trouble following the score, and by the end of the second attempt with the piece beginning to take shape, the period is nearly at an end. The two main tasks in this lesson have been achieved with a minimum of fuss. The students were quietly focused on the challenges the lessons provided.

Miles rounds off the lesson by informing the students that they will continue to deepen their knowledge of the piece by "combining ears, eyes, and action". He also reminds them to sign up for the school house rock bands. As the students amble off one student says "it's catchy" and Miles replies, "but can you tell me why it's catchy?". A year twelve student comes back into the room and asks if he can access a practice room in the mornings "so I come in and teach myself piano?". Miles answers in the affirmative as we head off to another room for the next class.

## **Developing ears and eyes at Year 11**

Around twenty-five year 11 students crowd into the small foyer waiting for permission to enter the music computer lab opposite the main teaching room where I have been observing the year 13 class. They are noisy but appear friendly. The computer room is a tight fit for this many students but is the only room available. Miles has arranged a series of tables at one end of the room forming a communal teaching space to complement the computer work stations that take up most of the room.

Miles ask the students to move into pre-arranged groups for today's lesson. Half the class will disperse in small groups to other spaces to complete one task while the remaining students work

through some notation exercises – reading note names, degrees of the scale, and sight singing. The small group task involves sorting six score extracts into their historical chronological order. Miles explains that the features that last week they were listening for, they will now be looking for in the score. Reading the scores for the information they need to place the pieces in their historical period is a challenging task.

As the lesson gets underway and half the class makes their way out the door the sounds of the year 10 class next door filter through – guitar, keyboard, and percussion strands float past. Focusing on reading and aural skills Miles chooses an example from a workbook and the class proceeds to call out note names, then degrees of the scale, and then they either play or sing the example together. In subsequent examples they work out keys and then clap the rhythms with varying degrees of ensemble success. One student mentions his experiences with the computer game Singstar and Miles questions him about how it works, making connections to the concept of melodic contour included in this lesson. Before we know it it is “time to trade” as Miles says, and the students move out to find their classmates and to undertake the score reading task.

I head off with one of the groups to a practice room to see what they will make of the score reading task. In the first group I visit three boys and a girl are somewhat reticent because of my presence but I question them about what knowledge they may already have to complete this detective work. They look through the scores noting how one uses a larger number of instruments, perhaps then the most recent piece, and how other scores use only voices or only strings. Gradually, through deduction and exclusion, they begin to make some tentative assertions. In the second group I visit two boys and a girl have already got some way to sorting out the scores. A solo piano piece marked “*expressivo*” is giving them some trouble. Suddenly a student appears calling all the groups back to class.

To close the lesson Miles gives students information regarding the upcoming house rock band auditions. In regard to the group score reading tasks he signposts: “Tomorrow I’m going to find out how much or how little was discussed in your groups!”

As we make our way out of the classroom Miles is delayed by repeated requests for information or permission to utilize rooms and instruments. It is lunch time and as I leave the department is abuzz with activity with Miles attending, willingly it seems, to the demands of his students.

### **Miles’s pedagogic discourse**

Music was a hobby and it was never ever meant to be an academic pursuit or a career pursuit.

Miles' route into music teaching, via music as a hobby rather than having completed a music degree, has influenced his approach to music teaching in a number of ways. Most significant is the fact that educational values are paramount for Miles and music is a means of realising these values. Professionally Miles is a teacher first and a musician second. At the centre of his educational philosophy is the aim that all his students should feel affirmed and valued. Education should provide all students with the opportunity to develop their interests and strengths:

In the senior music programme there is a mixture of students with a mixture of backgrounds and a mixture of instruments and a mixture of abilities, and the fact that none of them have felt excluded gives an idea of the type of programme that I hope to try and run ... all of the students should feel that their music, their instrument, and their experiences and their likes are valid.

Miles utilises the potential of the flexible national qualifications system to shape senior courses so they will meet the needs of the greatest number of his students. He chooses appropriate assessment standards and alters the choice of set works for example, depending on the interest of the class from year to year:

This year I'm going to do an orchestral comparison with them as well because there are a couple of quite good orchestral players in the class. I will hold back the musical theatre topic and will do it again next year ... I looked at the musical theatre topic for the current group of students I've got and I don't think that it is right for them but I feel that [it will be for] next year's year 13.

Miles's interest in helping students succeed educationally is seen in the unusual make up of his year 13 class. Only one of the students has the usual pre-requisite for the course. Despite this Miles has welcomed these students into the course and has chosen assessment areas in which they are likely to succeed: "So I've really catered the course to the kids".

In this regard Miles espouses much in common with a pedagogical-progressive ideology (Muller, 2001): a social justice belief in the right of all students to realise their potential through education. The idealised model is one with active learners and a facilitating teacher in what Bernstein has described as a competence modality of pedagogic realisation with its roots in invisible pedagogy practices (Bernstein, 1975/2003). In keeping with this ethos, in the lessons I observed there was appropriately weak framing in terms of hierarchical rules surrounding teacher-student relationships, although expectedly this varied depending on the curriculum level. However, in alignment with the predominance of performance modes in education (Bernstein, 2000) there is a clear sense of the pivotal role of the teacher and teacher knowledge in guiding students to particular learning goals. This was clearly visible in the observed lessons (see above). Moreover in terms of Bernstein's pedagogic modalities (see chapter two) there are elements of both competence ("a preoccupation

with development”, Bernstein, 2000, p. 54) and performance modes (“the acquirer will be made aware of how to recognise and realise the legitimate text”, p. 47). There is weak classification and framing in some aspects of pedagogic interaction and strong classification and framing in others.

An example of weaker framing in the pedagogic discourse is Miles’s concern to shape many of the parameters of learning around the interests and strengths of the students. Miles talked of his experimentation with giving increased student choice within the study of set works:

I’ve tried to give the students an option for the second work, present them with ten scores and a generic set of questions that have to be done and they choose and they can work in groups .... So by having generic sets of questions I’ve tried to give students better engagement because they can choose the work themselves and I feel that it worked quite well in 2007 but not quite so well in 2008 and maybe that’s why I’m a bit nervous about doing it in 2011.

While Miles wants to open up the curriculum, to make it more relevant, he also recognises the possible limitations of a totally knower-centred curriculum. Student choices of music to study may not always lead to appropriate development of conceptual knowledge that Miles regards as valid for learning:

One of the challenges is getting really good quality transcriptions of popular music because the kids often provide their own score, but if they’re off Guitarpro or off the internet then they usually lack a lot of musical information ... often the other musical information is not there so I need to, if I’m going to do that again this year, I need to make sure that I give the students wise choices and the best opportunity for success.

An example of strong framing was Miles’s articulation of specific lesson goals. While the students in both classes were active, with particularly relevant music-making in the year 13 lesson, the selection, sequence, pacing, and evaluative criteria in both classes were clearly under Miles’s control.

The apparent merging of competence and performance modalities is hardly surprising in an educational environment where instrumentalism has placed assessment and accountability at the centre of teachers’ professional work. There is also increasing awareness in the profession of the significance of appropriate teacher interventions for effective learning outcomes (Hattie, 2009). There is no doubt that Miles, to use Muller’s description, “knows the conceptual destination” (2001, p. 65) of the learning he has planned for his students:

If you’re doing renaissance music you expect them to learn about modes and texture and if you are doing a piece of popular music you are expecting them to learn, maybe the relationship between chord I, IV, and V and just how common they are, maybe even how to transpose ... or at senior level the relationship between context, the influences on a composer and the output in their musical work and can you find things in the output

that relate back to the input and if you can make those links then you can understand the context.

Nevertheless Miles constructs this 'map' with his students in mind, not from a totally pre-determined standpoint.

A second central theme in Miles's pedagogic discourse running alongside his 'student centric' approach is his aim to expand students' horizons and to make them "arts literate" through studying a variety of music:

I think that it makes any student arts literate, so it helps them mature. To be arts literate they can experience the arts with a more critical or refined approach and they might even understand more about themselves and why they like or dislike arts.

He talks also of musical styles as a series of languages or "tongues" and suggests it is his job to introduce students to as many styles as is practical and that this will have both broad and specific spin-off effects:

I think that as well as broadening your musical horizons by listening to other tongues, there are spin off effects so that a student who examines a music work, a piece of music that is outside their musical sphere ... it may have a beneficial effect on them ... performance techniques in the music that they can employ in their own music, there might be ideas or structures or ways of looking at things that help them as a composer and then reading, score reading, sight singing.

In this regard Miles sees schooling as providing a function that clearly delineates boundaries between life and school. As part of his belief in developing literacy he expects students from the pop world to learn to read music:

We actually expect them to read music all along and the ones that can't feel inadequate and they either work on it or they sink ... I really value it and I am quite blunt about it. I tell them that it [reading] is the difference between a guitarist and a musician. I've got this sliding scale of guitar holder, guitar owner (the difference is whether you can tune it without a tuner), guitar player, and the guitarist (who can play different styles) and then musician. I never call them a guitar holder to their face but it keeps me sane!

Miles says he has maintained a consistent approach throughout his career in regard to what he believes is most important in teaching. While he has experimented with pedagogical approaches the underlying aim of developing a broad musical knowledge through a combination of conceptual and practical means has remained constant:

It's born out of a combination of my own lack of formal training, so I want to put that in, and acquisition of musical skills through doing.

This combination of theoretical and practical musical experience was clearly seen in the two observed lessons (see reports above).

The move to provide access for students, sometimes at the expense of the development of fundamental skills such as music notation, is of concern to Miles: “I’ve felt that to accommodate students with a popular music bent, the curriculum has in some ways bent too far in their favour”. The generic nature of the New Zealand curriculum, while providing flexibility, also has some negative aspects in terms of providing consistency of knowledge content and resource support for teachers:

It’s good to have flexibility but I think that the curriculum being so broad has led to a real dearth of resources ... I think that the freedom in the curriculum and the breadth of what’s been asked for have created a lot of probably quite successful but highly localised music courses and mine is an example. It’s highly localised. There wouldn’t be any other teachers teaching the exact content, combination, or having the same expectations as me.

Miles’s concern is that while localisation of courses appears logical in enhancing flexibility and making the most of teacher strengths there are risks for students:

I think that the problem is not necessarily that some music departments specialise or follow down one path more than another but that this might create inequities for students. Does it mean that the students from school A have a broad education whereas the student from school B has a real depth of education but in a narrower field?

Miles is concerned to find a balance between the potential empowerment of localised and student-centred education while retaining knowledge components that he describes as engendering valid learning; learning that results in his students being “arts literate”.

## **Talking with students**

One of Miles’s most strongly espoused aims in teaching is inclusivity; the ideal that all his students will feel their musical interests are valued. At both year levels the students confirmed that this was their experience. The students were also convinced that one of the functions of elective music was to broaden their knowledge and increase their capabilities as growing musicians. Exposure to a variety of musical styles was seen as a necessary adjunct to the primary focus of developing their personal area of musical interest:

Year 11 student (a): Music doesn’t just stop at the genre you like.

Year 11 student (b): I reckon its better [to be exposed to different styles] because then you will grow as a musician, you’ll know more.

Year 13 student (e): Exposure is also important because if you can open up somebody’s mind to something else then they might find a whole bunch of things they didn’t know.

Year 11 student (a): It would be easier to do music that you already know because you already kind of know it but you don't get that increased exposure to other genres in music. It doesn't therefore influence your musical path.

Year 13 student (a): There has to be a balance for everything. I mean you learn about the modern society and where it's heading, the future, but you also have to kind of look back to see how far you've come to know where you're going.

Theory and music reading were seen as a necessary part of the more traditional content of musical knowledge:

Year 11 student (c): It would be easier [not to read] but it wouldn't necessarily be best.

Year 13 student (a): When you are writing music how are you going to write the melody and the chords to it if you don't know [how to notate] it and especially if you are doing gigs and they put sheet music in front of you and if you don't know how to read music or know your chords then you'll kind of be screwed. I think that it is really important, it's an asset.

One year 13 student commented that since taking up classroom music again his music reading had improved and this was having a positive effect on his ability to understand his work as a composer:

Year 13 student (f): I've been delving into composition and production at home. The more I've looked at notes and reading notes, the more my work at home has gone better and stronger because I understand like the length of notes better and the feel that they have. Having the knowledge helps heaps.

The place of classical music was recognised as part of foundational knowledge both in a specific sense in terms of providing theoretical and analytical knowledge, and also more broadly as a part of understanding the development of western culture. For one student classical music provided "the foundations, what has set down the ground rules for music" (year 11 student). Other students noted the positive aspects of exposure to classical music in particular, but interestingly all of the students associated 'classical' with the past. There was no acknowledgment of the concept of contemporary classical music:

Year 11 student (d): It's good to understand where it all comes from.

Year 11 student (a): In a way it is relevant to you, if you like popular music you are learning the history of music, like where it started off as classical and then suddenly it forked out into all these different styles.

Year 13 student (f): Even though it's classical and even though it's old, you can still take musical ideas and apply it now ... I think that if we listen to the older stuff we can take things from that that may have been forgotten or overlooked and apply it to modern music to give it a new spin.

While accepting the importance of theoretical knowledge one student reiterated the significance of developing practical skills and being able to develop the ear as well as the eye; "I want to be able to



listen to a piece and be able to play it” (year 11 student). This student felt that the combination of these abilities, (reading, and playing by ear), marked out the difference between a player of an instrument and a musician.

A second key theme to emerge from the year 11 focus group was their awareness of what Green (2005) has termed the inherent and delineated dimensions of music meaning. In relation to popular music, one year 11 student noted “a lot of people are getting attention for what they do and how they dress rather than the music”. As might be expected from students who have elected to take music as an option, there was some awareness of the need to determine the value of some music over others. Jones (2008), in his discussion of popular music reception, terms this ‘authenticity’: articulating aesthetic and artistic strengths and characteristics of the music over those perceived as purely commercial. Students in the focus group noted the following dimensions in terms of what constituted ‘good’ popular music: originality in the harmonic structure (chord progressions), meaningful lyrics, originality, and talent.

For most of the students in the year 13 group, popular and classical music were perceived as encompassing quite different sorts of musical knowledge. Popular music was described predominantly as relevant, and classical was somewhat removed from the everyday and therefore perceived as harder to relate to. A number of students commented on the importance of being able to put a lot of themselves into the music-making process. In this regard classical music is perceived as less flexible and less able to generate a connection with the students’ emotional and musical world. The generation of meaning from pop music worked on two levels: firstly through flexibility in performance dimensions such as improvisation and personal choice in the shaping of inherent components of the music and secondly through the experience of connecting emotionally with the music:

Classical music is the type of music that you can appreciate but with popular music you can really feel. For me I just think with classical music you sit there [with the music] in front of you and you play it as is, but with popular music you can really get into it. [A friend] and I were having a jam the other day and we could really get into the songs that we were playing and for me it’s got more meaning than classical music .... You can really put how you feel into the music ... whereas classical music it’s just a piece of music (year 13 student (a)).

Lyrics provided a further dimension in forging this connection for students, and popular music allows the possibility of literally making the music their own by playing it. Relevance and playability emerged as concepts of importance:

Year 13 student (c): I also think nowadays that lyrics play a big part in what we like.

Year 13 student (a): The writers of the songs, they are talking about stuff that is happening in the world so you can really relate to that.

Year 13 student (f): It's not only the lyrics but the playability.

A number of students were able to recognise that the relevance of popular music and the apparent distance of classical music was a matter of exposure:

Year 13 student (c): I think it's just that we don't really understand how classical pieces feel, the idea that the composer is trying to tell us .... I also think that with popular music it is because we have so much publicity with that kind of music, it's all over the media and everything and we hardly hear a classical piece, instrumental or anything like that on the radio.

Year 13 student (e): I think the more exposure you get to it the more you appreciate it.

One student felt that the media was altruistic: "I think that the media is just looking ahead. They appreciate where we come from but they are also looking ahead to where we are going to be" (year 13 student (a)), another student was quick to point out that "it's about making money" (year 13 student (d)).

While classical music was associated with analysis within the school a number of students suggested that there were concepts within popular music that provided the potential for academic study:

Year 13 student (a): You can use pop music in an academic way. I listen to a lot of funk and there's a lot of articulation and timing and stuff that is really important that you have to learn so there is quite a bit of academic in pop music.

Year 13 student (f): I think that the thought that goes into pop music is more than people realise.

A further theme of importance that emerged from the year 11 group was a sense of identity for students who had elected to take music. Music was perceived as "cool", and taking it as an option involved taking a step from an informal interest to accepting the challenges involved in expanding knowledge and experiences:

Year 11 student (a): Some people take it because they think it is the easiest option.

Year 11 student (d): In year 10 I realised music was an NCEA subject and you had to study for it and sit exams.

Year 11 student (a): I'm pretty sure a lot of us were just planning in year 9 to go through music to year 13 and play guitar for the whole time.

Students also noted the positive spin-offs of learning within a class where there are diverse interests. At year 11 students are organised in mixed instrument groups to facilitate learning across genres and styles. Both focus groups gave the impression of a high level of awareness of the advantages of

being exposed to a variety of music with benefits in both knowledge acquisition and affirmation of the musical identity of each student:

Year 13 student (a): Because we are not being forced to listen to a certain type of music or forced to learn a certain type of music, but there is a balance between all the different styles each person has a bit of excitement because people are going to learn about what I do.

### **Managing the relationship between classical and popular music**

Miles begins each year by asking year 9 students what it is that they expect to learn in a music class:

Invariably they say they would expect to be taught notation, theory, and history of music and about instruments and music from other cultures. So the students know, they have a preconception before they arrive of what they expect to be covered and invariably it matches with what the community and the curriculum expect me to cover.

The expectations of the students and the community are realised in Miles's department in that the programmes comprise a balance of classical and popular music. His main reason for including classical music is that he has students interested in it therefore it has a place in his school. However even if there were no students interested in classical music Miles suggests: "I would still try and convince myself and my students that the community expectation would be that they learnt something about art music and classical music". Nevertheless Miles notes the potential for learning from a diverse range of music:

I've tried to impress upon the kids that the process and spin-off benefits of studying any piece of music are the same regardless of what piece of music it is. You've got to look at the context and influences on the composer, you find out what's inside the musical work and if you can reflect the findings back to the influence or what the composer is trying to communicate then you are showing that you understand it.

In Miles's view classical music provides more potential for introduction to important intrinsic music concepts; for more formal learning of compositional procedures. "It would be very hard to find compositional devices like inversion and sequence, really the technical things. It would be very hard to find those things inside popular music. There might be some examples in art rock". Moreover Miles suggests that the academic study of popular music presents a number of problems. Accurate written scores and appropriate resources are difficult to come by if a more formal analysis is the intention. As well as this Miles points out that his choices of popular music will inevitably seem 'old' to students in comparison with the ever-changing world of commercial pop. In this regard it may be that there is little difference between classical and popular music if it is unknown to students:

If I'm focussing on a piece of popular music at the College, the students often haven't listened to it. They might never have heard it. It might come from a time or place they have never even heard of, so I still view it with the same spectacles that I would the other tongues. It is not their mother tongue but there is valid learning to come from it ... even if it's from after 1992 these kids were nine or one or not even born yet, so popular is a bit of a misnomer.

Miles is open to stylistic diversity within education; nevertheless it is the potential for "valid learning" that is paramount in his consideration for music's inclusion within the classroom:

If you said to the kids, what piece of music do you want to study, it would ... probably be by a band I've never heard of and probably by a band that nothing valid has been written about and if you tried to study them again next year they will have dropped off the face of the earth.

Miles uses canonic criteria, choosing works that "have made a contribution. Any of the reasonably well-known super groups from the '60s, '70s, '80s". In Miles's view this is music that has begun to survive the test of time. Moreover, in either style Miles admits a necessary pragmatism: "The other reason I choose music is because there are good resources. If I don't have the energy to make a resource then I'll choose a piece of music that [has one]."

There are clear expectations for his popular music students in the senior programme, including that they succeed in all their areas of study. Students exposed to a broad range of skills may move with fluency from one genre to another more readily:

Last year my top student was a hard out rock guitarist and he's going to university and he's doing composition but he's right in the rock, huge symphonic rock, dream theatre kind of pieces but he's on a path and I think what we've given him is valid and has helped prepare him because he can do the notation stuff and he can sight read.

Miles believes that by maintaining the presence of "the big two" of classical and popular music in his programme he keeps the potential for emotional and educational experiences wide for students.

## **Summary**

Miles's music department is clearly a place where students feel supported in expressing their individual musical interests. They feel comfortable in the department and clearly value each other and support and respect the varied musical interests within the school. This appears to be a reflection of Miles's values of inclusivity, diversity, and placing the students' development at the forefront of his curriculum design and pedagogy. In Bernsteinian terms there is strong classification but weaker framing between classical and popular music in the instructional discourse. While clearly distinguished from one another, the boundaries within learning programmes are inclusive and permeable. In terms of 'popularity' students with an interest in popular music seem to outnumber

those with an interest in classical, yet some power is retained for knowledge associated with classical music. This is most likely to due to Miles's sense that he has missed out on some deeper cultural knowledge himself: "There's a lot missing. There's a lot to be said for a proper education and I don't have one".

Miles has established an environment where students can pursue their areas of musical interest thereby developing an appropriate 'knower' identity, such as that of a funk guitarist or a classical flute player. This involves building knowledge of practices, conventions, and standards of excellence within particular music subfields. Moreover Miles aims to provide theoretical knowledge that crosses the various knower boundaries. By including both popular and classical styles Miles aims to maintain broad emotional and educational experiences.

In terms of pedagogy Miles values both practical and epistemic dimensions of learning for diverse students. The challenges for programme design and implementation with the subject are immense in terms of potential breadth and depth, and align with Maton's (2008) classification of music as comprising an elite code – "where both possessing specialist knowledge and being the right kind of knower are emphasised" (Maton, 2010, p. 181). Students recognised this tension to some extent in their discussion; they accepted the need for specialised theoretical knowledge to underpin their immersion in the practices of the style of music with which they most strongly related. Miles's belief in the importance of the academic, practical, and social dimensions of musical development underpins his recontextualisation of the possible knowledges and practices undertaken in his music department. Miles's lack of an academic degree has influenced his retention of certain academic requirements. His personal music learning path was a practical one with no academic training and a limited exposure to classical music ("I've essentially learned by doing") and this practical dimension to learning is a significant factor in his approach to pedagogy.

Miles maintains a certain professional distance in regard to bringing the music most meaningful to him into the school. He has not made jazz the centre of the department's activities. The programme remains broad and perhaps most strongly influenced by the preferences of the students rather than by Miles's personal musical strengths. Miles maintains a musical balance and direction through clearly articulated educational aims.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT: CASE STUDY FOUR - LYDIA AND MUSIC AT SUMMER HEIGHTS COLLEGE**

### **Lydia's story - Biographical context**

Lydia grew up in a family in which there was “a lot of encouragement and support” to learn about music. Her mother played the piano, her father was a self-taught guitarist and singer, and the family had an interest in folk music in particular: “We went to a lot of folk music events when I was growing up on the west coast of the South Island”. Lydia recalls that her father had “always wished he had been able to read music. He felt that held him back a bit”. Lydia and her brother and sister all learned the piano, but after seeing and hearing an orchestra play in a concert while away from the small town in which the family lived, Lydia decided to learn the violin. She commenced lessons in year 7 and continued these through her high school years. She was also interested in singing and then at high school was attracted to rock music:

I was concentrating on voice and violin for a lot of my high schooling until things like Rockquest came along and I decided I'd like to give that sort of thing a go as well. I had a guitar teacher in the itinerant system and she suggested that I learn bass guitar.

The formation of a three female member band at high school was a pivotal experience for Lydia. The band had considerable success locally and was also selected for the national Rockquest competition: “It was still quite a big deal feeling like we had got through a lot of layers of the competition”.

Lydia made the most of all the music-making opportunities at school and in the community as music was not offered as a subject at her school. This lack of experience with music as a classroom subject was to have some impact for her both as a music student at university and later as a teacher: “When I got to university it meant I had a lot of catching up to do and after that even some insecurities at teachers college”. Her choice not to take western music history papers at university compounded these knowledge gaps. In relation to teaching music works she recalls “in my first year I was completely stumped as to what I was going to choose”. With hindsight Lydia can see how useful the music history papers would have been:

I didn't do music history and I kind of kick myself for not doing that now. I wish that I had more background in that to provide for the students. Maybe if I knew I was going to be a teacher I would have done that.

While at school Lydia enjoyed both classical and popular music:

I appreciated both I guess. I had quite an old violin teacher and she was as inspirational as my young hip guitar teacher. I kind of liked both of those things and was hungry to know more about both.

Lydia felt committed to classical music even in the face of some peer disapproval: “When I had orchestra practice my friends would say ... it wasn’t very cool ... but it didn’t stop me”. She was attracted to both the structure of classical music practices and conventions, and the musical outlet and sense of identity that the rock band gave her:

I [liked] the structure in an orchestra, the music is in front of you and you are interpreting it as opposed to – I guess we went in quite young into original music in the rock bands so there’s a lot more freedom in a way, but there’s a lot more time in the practice room that can be wasted if you’re just jamming. And so I quite liked the focus and discipline of classical music.

A further pivotal time for Lydia was her gap year at the end of high school which she spent in Central America. Her experiences during this year helped crystallise her resolve to study music at university when she returned:

I got involved in a community choir there and played guitar for them and sang and that year was probably the time I decided that I did want to do music at university ... there was music so ingrained in the society there, the culture, it was like no one was really a ‘musician’ but everyone played music so I thought this is something I wanted to be a part of long term.

Lydia was affected by music’s potential to connect people and to enhance the quality of life and to do so in a positive way (Interview 2). Her resolve was to fill her knowledge gaps with university study but at that stage she had no thought of becoming a teacher: “I wanted to get those gaps filled in theory-wise and just education-wise with music ... so I thought university is one way to do it, so I applied and got in.

Lydia undertook a rock music degree course majoring in bass guitar. Because Lydia had not taken music as an elective subject at school she was required to complete an introductory foundation course comprising music theory. The degree course consisted of individual tuition on the main instrument, some group vocal tuition, group performance, studio recording, composition, and analysis of musical works. In the analysis class both rock and classical students were together (“I remember Debussy one week and a Beatles song the next”) and in these interactions Lydia felt some sense of a divide between the classical and popular music students:

I suppose we had pre-conceived ideas that the classical students probably thought we were a bit less academic than them. We would have to do the same papers as them for analysis but maybe sometimes we didn’t do as well as them in those papers, I’m not sure. We thought they were better at that stuff and we thought we were better at relaxing

into an improvisational exercise so there were different strengths I guess from the different types of students, but we did have to do tonal harmony and things like that.

There were limited cross-over interactions during Lydia's years in the course; nevertheless Lydia felt there was mutual respect between the students:

I think by third year it was quite good ... you would get to know people over that time and appreciate their viewpoint ... they would have their own things they were working towards for their performance stuff and they weren't in the same bars as us when we were doing our performance assessments at the university bar. But then sometimes there was the odd student who would be sort of crossover, one violin person who ended up playing on a lot of rock musicians' end-of-year albums.

Lydia was aware of the more stringent competitive technical requirements for entry into the classical course:

I was quite amazed at how good a lot of the classical musicians were, it's probably a much higher level, to get into a performance major on piano say, you know there are a lot of people who would be very, very good and not make the grade.

During her time at university Lydia played a great deal in various bands and eventually realised that, rather than playing constantly, she was interested in more individually creative outlets:

At my busiest at university I was in about five bands at one time and that was a very busy schedule of going to different rehearsals and being at different gigs to play and after a while I found that wasn't exactly what I wanted to be doing ... there was still something in me that wanted to have a voice and expression through song writing so playing bass in my own band that's playing my music, or that I've played a part in creating that music as opposed to coming in like a session musician.

Lydia considered working as a music journalist and began a journalism course but realised this too was not for her. She eventually moved to Auckland and worked in alternative television. She took up a chance offer to work as a bass player in England but this was a short-lived though significant experience. Lydia discovered a world she was not interested in entering:

I went there for a shocking three weeks ... if I had stayed and maybe found some different friends who were in a different industry perhaps it would have turned out differently, but I found [their] world revolved a lot around drinking and drugs and it wasn't quite the world I had imagined myself stepping into ... I suppose my eyes had been opened.

Lydia returned to Auckland and commenced work in another low paid free-to-air television job:

I decided I needed something more in my life and that I did have some knowledge in music that I could pass to some other people. And trying to avoid that [teaching] pathway, thinking that's what my mother did and all this kind of thing, [I needed] to just get over that. I saw the good things that she had got out of that lifestyle such as being valued for what you know more than what you look like, particularly with a lot of that



kind of thing in the TV world. I found it all quite shallow.

So Lydia decided to become a music teacher and undertook the training course. Currently she plays in a band (including backing vocals) and with her partner, also a musician, she composes and records original material for the enjoyment of family and friends. Even though still only in her twenties Lydia notes a change in her attitude towards music in general and a growing interest in listening to music that has stood the test of time:

It's harder for me to get excited about the latest band that's come out and you go to a few gigs and then they've broken up. It's that whole turnaround of rock music, investing time into going to see things that aren't very lasting compared to now getting more into music that has lasted and will last.

### **Introducing Mr Handel**

The music room at Summer Heights College has seen better days and Lydia is looking forward to the completion of the new building which is underway. A gloomy, narrow entrance-way with a few practice rooms each side leads to the main room. It is Monday morning and Lydia was absent from school last Friday so the room is not ready for the year 11 class that is due to arrive. One student is waiting outside so Lydia asks him to help set up the room for class. I lend a hand making space for desks and chairs by removing the band equipment that has been left in place. The room is worn, with stained carpet, old desks, and an assortment of furniture and equipment. The one nod to the twenty-first century is Lydia's data projector which she sets up at the front of the room. Windows along one side look out on to the school courtyard and on the other wall there is a collection of colourful student projects and posters. Amplifiers, percussion gear, and leads are spread around the room. As I take my seat to observe the lessons I have a sense of what it must be like for Lydia to be a young, third-year sole charge teacher in a school where she has told me there is limited support for music both internally and in the wider community. Lydia is remarkably positive and effervescent considering she is on the back foot this morning getting the room and materials organised for the lesson.

Nineteen students are eventually present in this class of twenty-two registered students. Lydia's aim today is to introduce the class to the first of two musical works required for study towards the internally assessed music works achievement standard for the NCEA. Lydia has chosen Handel's Hallelujah Chorus from Messiah and will follow this with a New Zealand popular music unit later in the year. She begins the lesson by reminding the students that this work will be "worth credits, so try and learn as much as you can". Students are still arriving as the lesson gets underway and the door is

left open letting in the sounds of a saxophone. Two itinerant teachers are at work in the small practice rooms off the entrance way.

Lydia hands out a workbook that will guide the students through the knowledge they need to successfully negotiate this work. She asks the class if anyone has heard of Handel or Messiah. One student says he has sung some of it in church. Lydia is busy trying to get the data projector to read her resource file and instructs the students to flick through the booklet while she attempts to sort out the technical problems. She plays a recording of the opening of the piece. The students are well behaved and patient, which suggests to me that they like and respect their teacher. There is no hint of taking advantage of this hold-up in the lesson, but they get increasingly chatty, one boy picking up his guitar and quietly playing, as they wait for the technical problems to be sorted at the front of the classroom.

Lydia asks the students to take turns reading aloud the introductory material in the handbook as she continues to deal with the problematic computer and data projector. One student picks up on the term “recitative” and asks for an explanation. Lydia manages to multi-task and offers an explanation while still wrangling with the technical hitch. Finally the PowerPoint resource springs into life and a portrait of Handel appears on the screen. Lydia begins to explain the principles of score layout and as they listen to some themes they follow shaded parts of the score together. The lesson has segued into score reading. Diving around somewhat Lydia asks “What does Messiah mean?” then it’s back to the score, noting the layout, voice parts, and terms such as soprano, alto, tenor, and bass, and discussion about the instrumentation. Lydia now decides to hand out individual printed scores but discovers there are not enough for everyone. The scores are shared for two subsequent listenings of the whole four-minute piece. One student uses his time waiting for a score to read his science text book. Some students announce success with following the score and are praised, and some have difficulty. Lydia moves around the room helping out where she can. One student asks if they can “have practical tomorrow”.

Without much warning Lydia suggests the students move into their performance groups to discuss and finalise the music they will be playing for their assessment later in the term. They move into their groups and pass the last ten minutes chatting.

As an introduction to Handel and western classical art music, I’m left wondering if this lesson has engaged the students. I’m also wondering if watching Lydia teach popular music I would see a different teacher in action.

I returned a week later to talk to some students. There had been no re-visiting of the Handel work in the intervening week as group practices had taken precedence. While Handel has only a slim chance of competing with the contemporary tastes of the class, the intermittent interaction with this music and its context I suspect makes the task all the more challenging.

### **Developing Year 13 researchers**

Lydia has a relatively large year 13 class of 15 students with varying interests and capabilities. The research assessment standard is a flexible option that Lydia hopes will provide some stimulus for her students. This lesson is their introduction to the requirements of the standard and to the concepts associated with research.

The students wander in gradually, the first student sharing with Lydia his success at creating an electronic version of a song recently heard. “It sounds mean as”, he enthuses. Another male student arrives and asks “Miss are we watching a video?”

Eventually there are sufficient students for the lesson to begin more formally and on the screen at the front of the room Lydia has projected a copy of a research resource. There is also a handout (a framework log) on which students will note their developing research agenda and processes. Lydia begins by outlining how students first need to establish an area of interest and then refine this into a specific research question. One student suggests research into “the benefits of music”. On the screen are examples of topics and questions students have researched in other schools. Lydia then shows the criteria of the standard with its detailed and technical terms and outlines the difference between opinion and research. I wonder how much of this is understood at this early stage but one student offers a cogent explanation when asked what “insightful” means (a descriptor at the Excellence achievement level): “perceptive, giving their own take on it”.

Lydia asks each student in turn if they have an idea of a general area for their research. Some have no ideas as yet, but some offer “the music of Mozart”, “polynesian music”, “the development of drum sticks”. Lydia suggests the students now spend some time considering possible topics and she spends some time talking with each student outlining the expectations for the research log. Some students wander off to a small back room that contains a few computers and start looking at the recent Polyfest results. Perhaps this is a potential research topic. The class quietly disintegrates as the bell sounds.

There is a long journey to be made from idea to research and presentation. It would be interesting to see how far Lydia’s year 13 class travel as apprentice researchers during the year.

## Lydia's pedagogic discourse

Lydia is a sole charge music teacher in her third year of teaching in a school in a low socio economic area where she tells me there is limited support for music both as a subject of study and as a co-curricular pursuit. Despite this Lydia remains optimistic about teaching and clearly has the respect of her students. This is a testament to her strength of personality, and her belief in herself and her students. Lydia is clear about the effect that the school's history, wider community, socio economic status, and management have on the sort of music programme she is able to realise:

Its history has been quite working class. I find it that when I'm in the parent teacher interviews that parents are going, "well it's great that my kid likes learning music but what jobs are out there". There is a huge focus on education being vocational.

Despite this Lydia recognises the musicality of the diverse students in the school, many of whom are from Pacific Island families, and she aims to provide an environment where students can develop personal musical tastes and skills:

The fabulous raw talent and background knowledge that the students bring is very diverse here, there is a lot of cultural music, so I don't like to discount that prior knowledge that the students have by saying alright we're all going to become classical musicians here.

With no year 9 music programme Lydia has felt compelled to try and find a way to make music more accessible to a larger number of students in the school:

I took on these two year 10 half-year courses because the year before I had at least 60 kids wanting to take music and they [senior management] told me you can have a full year course of 30 kids so you will have to whittle those down. I hadn't met a bunch of those students before. I had to do interviews and I felt ethically that's a little bit wrong in terms of a student's right to have a taste of music at school and year 10 seems to be quite young to be saying, well you can't take it because there are too many.

While the two half-year courses mean twice as many students can experience some classroom music and therefore "more students have the opportunity to get through to Level 1, it also means that they know even less by the time they get to Level 1".

Despite Lydia's personal reservations about popular music's transient nature (see biographical section above), within an educational context she sees it as providing an important equitable point of access for students:

The attainability of pop music for every single student in the classroom is there. With classical music on the other hand, even when I say we are going on a class trip to the orchestra, that is basically free but we have to pay for the bus, there will still be some students who say I can't pay for the bus, or it's too hard. There is a barrier for getting exposed to it and I think it's harder for students to value it if they haven't seen it live.

Lydia also recognises the social and psychological importance of popular music for her students' sense of expression and their growing identity:

I think there is value in expression, so if they're expressing themselves through pop music - cool, that may be the style of music they identify with most .... I understand that's a lot to do with their identity development at that age, choosing to not like certain types of music helps them solidify who they are becoming .... If they are getting enjoyment out of it, if it's helping them develop who they are as people, they are expressing themselves, they might be composing, talking about what's important to them through their songs, then that is what I think is important about pop music.

In this regard Lydia espouses ideas in keeping with progressive or invisible forms of pedagogy where "ideally the teacher arranges the context which the child is expected to re-arrange and explore" (Bernstein, 1975/2003, p. 116). One challenge for Lydia is to find ways of aligning this ideal with the requirement for more explicit evaluative requirements of high school assessment.

Despite her own tertiary study Lydia seems ambivalent as to whether formal education can add much value to the natural fluency and rapport so many young people seem to possess in relation to popular music:

A lot of it people know it inherently anyway, so do we need to teach it? .... I'm not sure, I don't know. There were times in studying the type of music that I studied that I wondered what is there about studying this music. I don't know if it's important to study it.

Lydia's approach certainly facilitates the coming together of music makers in the school, and creative songwriting and performance components utilising popular music styles provide the focus within Lydia's classroom programmes. Lydia's experience of music during her gap year appears to have become a motivating ideal: "music so ingrained in the society there, the culture, it was like no one was really a musician but everyone played music so I thought this is something I want to be a part of long term". There is an element of what Regelski (2004b) would describe as music as praxis in this approach: "The value of any music is seen in action, in the present, in terms of what it is "good for"; and that value is always situated, not fixed by the past ... "good music" is music that serves its intended purposes well" (Regelski, 2004, p.289, emphasis in original). In this way a large number of students at Lydia's school regard school music as enhancing their areas of interest. Bernstein (2000) suggests that citizens must experience rights of enhancement, inclusion, and participation in society and that these rights if realised will eventually translate into confidence on an individual level, *communitas* on a social level, and civic discourse on a political level. Moreover he suggests that enhancement is "a condition for experiencing boundaries, be they social, intellectual or personal, not as prisons, or stereotypes, but as tension points condensing the past and possible futures" (p. xx). Lydia identifies such boundaries when she talks of the school's working class

history, the cultural richness of her diverse students, and the need to provide access to knowledge that can take students forward within the educational system:

I don't seem to find that they dislike it when we do other stuff. They're actually interested and hungry to find out more about why people like this stuff .... after my first year I got some feedback from the students and lots of them said the main thing they want to learn in music is actually how to read music. If we go down this cool route of pop music and no one reads but the students themselves are saying 'I can already play, I actually kind of want to come to music class to learn a bit more about styles I don't know about, and about reading which I don't know much about at the moment'.

It seems there is a tension for Lydia between wanting to validate the musical talents and interests of her students (using popular music as the primary means to realise this) and the need to provide access to other sorts of musical knowledge. An example is Lydia's dilemma with the externally assessed standards for NCEA Level 1. These standards require certain levels of music literacy in reading scores and transcribing played music and traditionally the school's success rate in these exams has been poor. Lydia initially took advice from school management to not enter the students for these exams but then she found it difficult to convince students of the importance of this knowledge. Despite some students' apparent desire to learn about such aspects of the music curriculum (see students' comments on music reading below) the absence of the examination and its associated credits is seen as demotivating: "I lost some kids in thinking that theory's not important at all".

For Lydia the boundaries (or tension points) are accentuated by her lack of confidence with some aspects of the knowledge from the traditional discourse of music education such as western art music (see biographical section above). This is compounded by the lack of specification and guidance in national curriculum documents. The lack of specification was particularly challenging for her as a beginning teacher. In relation to the study of music works she noted "in my first year I was completely stumped as to what I was going to choose .... for the Hallelujah Chorus there's a pretty good resource with PowerPoint and I'll just go through that and I'll learn with the students at the same time kind of thing".

Muller (2006) has suggested that under-specification of knowledge content places greater reliance on teachers' awareness and understanding of appropriate knowledge progression within their discipline. His concern is that unacceptable degrees of variance can occur where some teachers do not possess the requisite content knowledge. Lydia acknowledges that she required guidance to establish appropriate study materials for the classical works she wanted to include in her programme. Where there is choice for teachers there is also the possibility that some knowledge collectively considered significant or necessary for sequential development may be omitted or that

the sequence of knowledge may be underspecified. Lydia has found the lack of guidance and support difficult and it may be that her students' exposure to classical music is put at risk as a result: "from day one they've said, here are the resources the last teacher used, you can use those or you can create your own. Do what you like and find your feet".

In the observed lessons Lydia adopted a mixture of pedagogic roles that relayed some ambivalence in relation to the material being presented. While the regulative discourse concerning conduct, character, and manner was weakly framed through quite informal interactions and beginnings and ends of lessons, the instructional components of the lessons utilised a combination of more formal teacher monologue, whole class triadic dialogue (teacher question, student response, teacher evaluation), and student group discussions. Despite this the sequencing and pacing in the transmission of the knowledge was weakly framed. Significantly the evaluative criteria were also weakly framed leading to a lack of clarity in lesson direction and specific learning goals. This may have been due to Lydia's lack of familiarity or comfort with the chosen teaching materials in the year 11 lesson. The absence of clearly articulated learning intentions appeared to lead to some students adopting a subject position of detachment (Bernstein, 1975/2003) rather than engagement in relation to the specific material being introduced. The fact that the students were compliant suggests that there is a positive subject position in other dimensions of their relationship with their teacher and in other dimensions of the course work (e.g. performing). As the students pointed out (see below), the prospect of credits is also a powerful motivator for compliance.

Lydia's overriding values are inclusivity and the utilisation of music as a means of personal expression and identity formation. Her discourse therefore could be described as one centred on expressive ways of knowing rather than one that inducts students into a more academic or vertical discourse of knowledge. The boundaries between school knowledge and the knowledge students bring from outside the school are weakly classified. There are ambiguities concerning both the discourse itself and the means by which the content is carried – the 'what' and the 'how'. Given the lack of a more academic classroom experience in Lydia's own schooling, Lydia is unclear on how the recontextualisation of informal and formal knowledge might best play out for the benefit of her students. Is this benefit to be primarily an expressive one or an instructional academic one? Overall there is weak classification and framing of instructional content and form which appears to be Lydia's response to the needs of her students. If Bernstein (2000) is correct and category relations (classification) are the relay for power relations then collectively the students exercise a high level of influence over the conceptualisation and realisation of the music curriculum in Lydia's classes.

## Talking with students

With a few exceptions the students I spoke to at Lydia's school have had relatively little exposure to classical music. One year 13 student suggested that classical and popular music were from "two different worlds". The year 11 students were not all convinced that looking back at music history through studying classical music was worthwhile. They had a much more pragmatic notion of what schooling was for:

Year 11 student (a): What's the point in going back when in the future you will probably forget about it and you have other stuff to learn?

Year 11 student (b): I guess that's kind of true depending on what you are going to do in your career.

As far as the year 11 students were concerned studying Handel was tolerated simply to gain credits.

The year 13 students had only vague recollections of what classical works they had studied previously at school and their responses to my questions (see Appendix G) were very much centred on the practicalities of their current experiences. When questioned about what constituted 'good' music for them for example, they focused on the lyrics and on delineations such as memories, feelings, the process of performing, and audience response. They appeared to have difficulty conceptualising the possible significance of inherent sonic dimensions such as harmony, rhythm, and timbre, and what might attract them about these dimensions.

One aspect both year groups were unanimous about was the importance of learning to read music. Even though some struggled with this they were clear about its potential as a powerful form of knowledge – often just out of reach. When asked to conceptualise their ideal music programme the year 11 students were concerned to increase their theoretical skills: "More understanding of the notes, reading" (year 11 student (a)). The year 13 students were happy with the division between aspects of the course determined by their musical choices (such as performance) and those where the content was more directed:

Year 13 student (a): Half and half, like it is now, you study but you still have to do performances.

Year 13 student (b): You do what you like but you still have to be aware of the other types of music.

One year 13 student saw the balance between choice and prescription as an important motivating factor: "People are more motivated to come to class because it is something they like". Two other students had a sense of the purpose of learning about music within the educational context:



Year 13 student (b): I think we should embrace music as a whole, not just like little pieces.

Year 13 student (c): You are here to study music.

Both focus groups were clear about the way in which their teacher encouraged them in the pursuit of whatever style of music they were interested in, although it is clear that the face of the department is a contemporary one. Students studying classical instruments are very much in the minority and while there are some classical students in the music programme, Lydia suspects there are other students in the school who are classical musicians but choose not to take music as a subject.

### **Managing the relationship between classical and popular music**

I would like to expose them to some western art music. That's what I'm thinking in what I choose, because that's something I felt like I missed out on. I don't want them to say "we had a rock teacher our whole life at school and that's all we ever heard".

Despite this aim there is limited exposure to classical music within the department. At years 11 and 12 one work from the classical canon is studied (Handel's Hallelujah Chorus at year 11 and the Carnival of the Animals by Saint-Saens in year 12) and there is a possible trip to experience the local professional orchestra in concert. Apart from this the classroom programmes are centred on skill and knowledge development utilising popular music, and the co-curricular programme consists of a funk band, a choir that focuses on popular music, and a number of student-run reggae bands. There is a plan to develop brass playing as Lydia is aware that a number of play brass instruments in their church communities.

The development of theory and music reading skills is associated with the classical paradigm since Lydia doesn't see it as "all that important in pop music"; nevertheless she acknowledges the importance of her own notation skills and what can be gained in the creative process where the ability to notate is developed as well:

I think that there is also a place for working things out theory-wise and knowing those things can stop those frustrations of "where do I go next with a piece"... I think there's a lot of value in [notation] even if there is no need for that score. You don't need to take that to your band when you're practising or anything, but you can get a sense of "well I could play around with those notes there, or maybe do something differently there", once you've seen it on paper.

In this way Lydia believes that both developing notation skills and exposure to classical music have the potential to widen the expressive palette for students as composers and arrangers:

If we listen to a song that's by the latest hip-hop artist it might have all been made on computers ... but actually for them to have a wider palette so they're not just thinking it's going to be a drum beat and vocals is valuable. So when it comes to things like

arranging they're not sitting there using Sibelius and going, "well what's an oboe? Should I add that".

Stemming from her experiences in the popular music world Lydia is critical of the overly commercial emphasis in much popular music:

I get really sick of all the image stuff and the disposable kind of this is the hit of the week this week but then throw it out and next week. It's this stuff and the short attention span of it all.

Lydia's own values and experiences are helping to shape the predominantly popular musical world she is creating in her department. It is a world where the interests of the students and the teacher align and provide the impetus for what is heard and valued within the department, yet Lydia espouses offering her students a range of experiences: "In a school where they have the same teacher year after year I think that it's important to add more than just what I might find important musically at that time in my life".

## **Summary**

Lydia manages the relationship between classical and popular music by focusing on popular music – the music that her students have access to and that has meaning for them. There is limited exposure to classical music and its associated theoretical knowledge. There is an alignment between Lydia's personal musical values and her curriculum conception. She is concerned to provide a means for students to develop their personal musical voice.

As a third-year teacher Lydia feels the pressures of external influences more than a more experienced teacher might. There is not a history of a strong music culture in the school and Lydia feels the senior management are not fully committed to the growth of music: "I don't see how it could grow without [senior management] deciding that that there is more value in students learning music". Lydia also identifies a working class culture and geographical area in which the perceived value of music for many families is somewhat limited. The resulting pedagogic culture in Lydia's department is one that is not yet strongly classified or framed in terms of its identity as Lydia copes with "the bias, shape, stability and economy" of external influences (Bernstein, 2000, p. 23) and the ambiguities of her own sense of what is most important in music education. Lydia's main focus has been to cope with the challenges of working alone and establishing her credentials as a teacher and musician. Although Lydia works in relative isolation as a sole charge teacher, she does receive support when she asks for it. She says she needs to be proactive to seek support and is "still learning how to go about this" (Interview 2). Her aim is to leave the department "in a better state than it is

currently in". Two students have gone on to tertiary music study this year which she concedes is an optimistic sign.

## **CHAPTER NINE: CASE STUDY FIVE - ROBERT AND MUSIC AT MORNINGTON HIGH**

### **Robert's story - Biographical context**

Robert's experiences as a student at high school were pivotal in his musical development. He began music tuition relatively late, in year 9, and experimented with a range of string instruments before settling on the double bass and then focusing on the bass guitar. His move to bass guitar was motivated by his interest in popular music, and the desire to be part of a rock band with his peers. While the bass guitar was to become his main musical interest Robert continued to contribute to his school music department as a string double bass player and singer. In these formative years Robert cites the influence of his high school music teacher as significant: "[He] was the one who put me on the path I'm on today". As a result of this encouragement Robert subsequently went to university to undertake a degree course in contemporary music or 'the rock degree' as it is often termed.

At high school Robert's approach to music exhibited a breadth of interest but he was not overly concerned with building up high levels of executant skill or theoretical knowledge:

I liked playing guitar and picked it up. And through high school I cared about it but it wasn't as though I was really dedicating my time to sitting in my bedroom getting really good at playing and I was always an average theory student .... Being an amazing musician was never as big of a draw card as playing amazing music and the same with composing. I love writing songs but I'm never going to be a great song writer ... So it wasn't so much being a great musician performer or player or anything, it was the whole thing of music, the bigger package that was the enticing thing.

Nevertheless Robert recalls the affirming experience of "taking out Rockquest one year" and coming second the next year, and other experiences of music making:

I was in the choir for four or five years and the symphonic band playing bass and the big band so I was trained in that way as well which was really handy. Not so much with western art music as such apart from in the classroom. That was a world I didn't really know much about and possibly didn't allow myself to really in a way.

Looking back Robert now rejects the idea that theoretical knowledge is not relevant for a contemporary musician even though as a high school student he was somewhat reluctant to engage with the theoretical dimensions of the subject:

Friends learnt piano from a young age and had the theoretical side ... and they would move on to guitar or drums or whatever and they wouldn't have to worry because they could read .... It wasn't until I got to University that I really went "oh, you idiot, you should have really paid a lot more attention".

The university course was structured around the practical application of musical skills supported with theoretical knowledge:

We were put in bands and we'd work in the studio, writing songs. We did covers as well, and recording, and there was a song writing paper. They were the things that held it all together and then we had compulsory papers in music technology, analysis, and aural skills.

While the course content was clearly stimulating for Robert, also significant were the values and pedagogy of the course lecturer who is a contemporary performing music artist with a PhD in academic musicology. The lecturer integrated knowledge from classical and popular worlds in both practical and theoretical dimensions. In this way he symbolised a borderless continuum in relation to musical styles and values.

Despite his respect and appreciation of the classical canon Robert listens to classical music infrequently:

It's rare not because I don't like it. I love listening to baroque music, I love romantic music and listening to it. I get quite absorbed in it because I'm quite new to it, I'm still going this is so cool. I'm listening to what's happening here and it's not a brain off kind of situation, so it forces me to actively listen and actively engage but if you're not in the mood for it and after teaching music all day I just want to go home and blah, you know.

Robert's recreational listening consists mostly of "alternative indie stuff" as well as a lot of "folk and country and I love Bob Dylan. I love the classic rock stuff as well, you know The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, and Queen and those sort of people and nothing that's really, really modern".

Robert recalls a curiosity regarding what he terms "the enticing" bigger picture concerning music and this wider sociological interest seemed to lead naturally to his becoming a teacher rather than a performer: "I was always really interested in what was behind the music, why they wrote these songs and what was happening to make these people write this kind of music. It was always really, really interesting to me". Robert was aware of the inherent sonic qualities of the music but from an early age was more interested in finding out more about music's context of production: "Definitely the emotion that's portrayed and for example, the distorted guitar, is probably what started my interest off, but then why does this music sound so angry or why does it sound like this? 'How' wasn't as important to me then as was the 'why'".

Robert went on to complete a post-graduate diploma after his degree and in doing so has left the door open for further study. He is now in his third year of teaching which he clearly finds stimulating. Because of Robert's training in the popular music field and his fluency with its associated technologies both students and colleagues look to him for guidance in these areas:

I definitely stand out pretty visibly for the kids as the contemporary person and I do the recordings and I do make it obvious that there is a real focus for it but in the same way I will definitely push the other side of it as well.

Robert recalls a positive teacher training year where his resolve to teach was solidified: “It equipped me with some skills I needed ... and I had fantastic mentor teachers on practicum (Interview 2). Robert is the assistant HOD at his school where the HOD is newly appointed. The HOD’s skills are in the area of classical music so the two full time teachers bring complementary skills and areas of expertise to the department in this large state co-educational college of over two thousand students.

### **Exploring the elements of music in Year 9**

As I arrive at the music buildings at Mornington High School to observe the first class of the day, sounds of an electric guitar can be heard coming from one of the practice studios. The music department comprises a number of old prefabricated buildings connected together on a hillside. The main teaching spaces are above with studio spaces below. As I open Robert’s classroom door he is writing some headings on the white board before his class arrives: “Musical Elements, New Element – Rhythm: what it sounds like and what it looks like”. It is clear there is a plan for this lesson. As we wait for the class to arrive Robert explains that this is a year 9 option class. With classes every day for one semester Robert suggests that learning retention and progression is enhanced compared to a full year of less frequent classes.

A boy begins to make his way into the room and Robert asks him to wait outside. Robert moves to the doorway and begins to chat with some students as the class gathers along the external walkway. As Robert talks to the students I look around the room. Twenty-eight students are about to arrive and I am having trouble visualising where they are all going to fit. There are seven large tables which take up most of the room and music keyboards line three of the walls. The room is tired looking but a number of posters liven the atmosphere; David Bowie and Britney Spears are amongst the selection of popular and classical music images on the walls. At the front of the school major construction is underway for a new performing arts centre. Robert tells me that this will provide great rehearsal spaces but that the current music classrooms will remain in service for the foreseeable future.

Robert announces to the students through the doorway that they need to enter the classroom, keep their exercise books closed on the desks, and be ready for a quiz. There is some enthusiastic banter as the girls and boys flood into the room and negotiate for places to sit. These students are about to complete their first term at high school and the uniforms still look fresh and the faces expectant. The noise eventually subsides without Robert having to ask and he introduces me to the students then

commences the lesson: “Welcome to the next chapter in year 9 music”. He begins a series of questions concerning the elements of music that were introduced in the previous day’s lesson, hoping for definitions for the terms melody, timbre, rhythm, tempo, and dynamics.

After the quiz, in which all the correct definitions were eventually forthcoming, Robert introduces the students to more vocabulary through which they will begin to conceptualise and understand how music works. Robert includes sounds as he introduces the concept of harmony, pitch, and structure. Explanations are interspersed with student responses. Robert seems confident with this lesson content and he uses pace and humour to move the lesson along. There is a sense of clarity and direction. The students are with him most of the time, even the gaggle of mischievous looking boys collected together at the back desk.

The main element in focus for this lesson is rhythm and just as I sense the students have had enough teacher talk Robert changes the activity and divides the class into three groups to perform a rhythm piece by echoing Robert and drumming their hands on the tables. Even with this invitation to create noise the class remains mostly focused and on task. Eventually the three rhythmic lines become clear and the students are obviously pleased with the effect. The three parts are moved around the groups and dynamics are added to the last few runs of the piece.

“Hands quiet, books open, and pens up”. Robert now moves to connect sound with symbol and introduces students to the rhythmic notation on the white board. “That rhythm piece used lots of different note values so we are going to see what they look like”. After introducing the main note values, some music-maths exercises ensue as the lesson draws to a close. Robert wanders around the room looking at the music-maths answers as the students work in silence. Robert’s classroom management in the lesson has been largely tacit. His lesson structure seems to work as a positive control mechanism. Perhaps the students sense he is a fair teacher. I suspect they will be happy to return tomorrow for the next chapter.

## **Beethoven at Year 11**

There are 19 students, mostly boys, in Robert’s year 11 class and they gather outside the door and await his permission to enter. There is a crescendo of lively talk as they stream into the room and take their places at the tables around the room. Robert asks how the uniforms are looking and reminds the students there is a “crack-down” currently underway. He moves quickly on to issue instructions for the lesson: “Please get out your scores. Please get out your information sheets on Beethoven”.

Robert has told me that the class is currently part way through a unit of work on Beethoven, focusing on one of his piano concertos. This is the second work they are studying for the music works achievement standard as part of the NCEA, the other being a Bob Dylan song. I agree that Dylan and Beethoven make a good contrast. Robert tells me the class consists mostly of students who are interested in popular music. I am curious to see what levels of engagement there will be with Beethoven and sonata form.

Robert calls the lesson to order by asking some questions concerning information from the preceding lessons. “What is Beethoven’s first name, how old was he when he started to go deaf, what were his three composition periods”. Robert is emphasizing the personal contextual aspects of Beethoven’s story. He compares him with Lady Gaga in terms of pushing boundaries in his late works. The class moves through parts of an information sheet with students taking turns at reading, and then Robert issues a worksheet comprising some research questions and a ‘fill in the gaps’ exercise on sonata form. The first question is to be completed for homework and the other questions are to be completed in class. Robert puts on a recording of the concerto in the background and the students start work. Hearing this piece takes me back thirty-six years to when I studied this piece in year 11. It appears the canon is still in good health and that Bob Dylan has now joined it!

Robert circulates and gives assistance as required. I notice a group of boys at the back of the room near me having an on task conversation, comparing answers and getting the task completed. One boy moves from his desk to help another while Robert quietly and discreetly takes one boy out of the room. I notice one boy moving on to the third task which is about the relationship between keys. He opens a folder and consults a chart showing the cycle of fifths. I think this is intelligent and mature learning behaviour.

Robert draws the class back together to go over some answers and issues instructions concerning deadlines. The bell rings and this straightforward lesson is over. The students have mostly worked well and do not appear at all phased by this quite formal music history lesson.

### **Pedagogic Discourse**

Robert’s university experience of the way in which formal music knowledge can underpin and enhance the practice of music making and composition was a significant one. It has had an impact on the sort of curriculum he espouses, and on his pedagogic practice. Robert talks of the importance of theoretical knowledge in his teaching as a means of enhancing creative and expressive ends. In his brief teaching career so far Robert has attempted to expand students’ awareness of the use of theoretical knowledge through its application in song writing and composition:



Often when writing songs students say, “I’m stuck, I’ve got a great idea for a verse or a chorus, or I’ve got this cool chord progression” and I ask “where can we go from here” and they say “I don’t know”. So I might ask what chords have you used, what chords can we go for from here? Do you want to change the feel? Should we go to the relative, should we go to the dominant, how can we work with this and they go “oh, I see now”. They start to see the point of it. I did it with two kids this year and it took weeks to make that small connection and that was one-on-one stuff.

One of the barriers Robert identifies in relation to students’ reluctance to connect with theoretical knowledge is their already well developed interest in practical music making:

That’s the thing that gets me, kids in music say “Oh I don’t want to learn this; I don’t know how to read music, what are these notes?” Well my answer is “you come to school to learn; you don’t come to school to play what you already know on guitar”. Kids come to music with a certain set of ideas and come to maths with a whole different set of expectations I guess.

In Robert’s view music at school should expand students’ knowledge base, otherwise music is merely “facilitating their practices”. In such a scenario Robert would question the value and point of teaching music at school: “Why are they taking it and why are you teaching them?” Nevertheless the starting point for the pedagogical relationship is the interests and tastes of the students: “You’ve got to respect kids’ tastes even when you don’t agree, turning that side off, being the teacher”. Although the theoretical knowledge Robert identifies as so important is not exclusively the domain of classical music, the perception of most teachers and students is that theory knowledge and musical reading literacy are part of the more formal, traditional and classically-based paradigm.

Robert’s own lack of immersion in theoretical and classical aspects of music knowledge has created challenges in his work as a teacher:

When I was teaching last year, most nights I was studying up on theory because I was getting asked questions I didn’t know about and it was both embarrassing and frightening ... I’m more confident now but I’m teaching year 13 next year and that’s going to be a different challenge. I’m excited about it because the more I learn the more I want to learn, the more I respect the music and the more I can get out of listening to it. I feel so much happier as a person to be able to listen to classical music and ‘get it’. The whole idea is that with the skills you learn from classical music, the whole of music is open to you.

The importance of theoretical knowledge is embedded at the junior level with the aim of making transitions through the curriculum more successful: “We really try with the juniors to make it a really big part of their assessment and a part of their courses, getting the theory...It’s just like learning your times tables”.

Robert describes the programmes overall as “varied”. At year 9 the students come to music every day for one term: “we do basic theory, analysis, basic aural skills, and instruments of the orchestra

type thing”. In year 10 there is a semester course but both a beginners’ and a more advanced option: there is “history of popular music, we do practical guitar, practical keyboard, and get them to a level about grade 1½ theory. We do film music, history of western art music, more theory, more analysis, group performance; you start to work on things like garage band and some song writing. We had two year 11 classes of about mid-twenties this year”. In the senior school the assessment standards provide the structure as students perform, compose, arrange, and study music works from both popular and classical genres.

The connection between theoretical musical knowledge and its use in enhancing the production and understanding of popular music is clear in Robert’s discourse. As well as this he notes the more general cultural significance of classical music. His view is that it has an important place in a music curriculum and can be justified on broad aesthetic and cultural grounds: “The whole idea of knowing where you come from and knowing where music has come from and knowing where what you like has come from .... A cultural thing, it’s marvellous, it’s so beautiful”. Robert also suggests that there is an assumption that students will be familiar with popular music, but however he points out that some popular music may be very unfamiliar to most students. In this regard exposure to either popular or classical music is not so different. Green (2008) observes that “just because [students] identify with and listen to certain music outside the school of course does not mean that they have a critical understanding of it” (p. 14). The curriculum can be a mechanism for both enhancing and deepening student knowledge in relation to what they already know and “leading pupils into unfamiliar territory” (Green, 2010, p. 14). “With year 9 I do different sorts of contemporary music – I do the history of popular music, talking about blues and jazz, content they wouldn’t usually like or get any exposure to”.

Robert’s early interest in music’s context, its bigger picture, provides an underlying sense of purpose in his pedagogic discourse:

I’m personally nigh on obsessed with the marriage of music and popular culture and the idea that music from the 1910s onwards you could argue was the catalyst for societal change .... It’s all so tied up with people and how society reacts and how cultures react.

This sociological perspective may explain Robert’s aim to keep his teaching and learning programme broad. Rather than letting assessment standards dominate the course structure in the senior classes, Robert maintains that it is the national curriculum document that acts as a guide. Robert believes there is a strong alignment between the programmes in the school and the national curriculum. In relation to a specific junior lesson he recalled that the lesson “fulfilled a lot of the things we’re supposed to cover. It was creative, they’re using technology, they’re having a lot of say in what they’re doing, they’re performing to each other”. Moreover “if we are looking to revamp

anything or write a new unit or take one of the assessment standards and mess with it our way, we'll always go back to the curriculum document". Robert recalls using the curriculum document to adjust course designs with colleagues:

We looked at balancing the different kinds of work the students were doing trying to be more even across the board and giving the kids lots of stuff to get interested in, but also giving them a good rounded education (Interview 2).

In the lessons I observed, Robert's music education values were expressed through strong classification and framing of knowledge and through an integration of the regulative with the instructional discourse (Bernstein, 2000). The clarity with which Robert structured the lessons (instructional discourse) provided a strong sense of what was expected in terms of an appropriate pedagogic relationship between teacher and students (regulative discourse). Bernstein has argued that the instructional discourse is embedded in the more dominant regulative discourse which relays expectations concerning social order, relations, and identity (Bernstein, 2000, p. 32). The instructional specifics are embedded in the regulative discourse which is concerned with the development of appropriate processes in which students learn "to work and think in particular ways" in relation to the task, goals, and the evaluation criteria (Christie, 2002, p. 101). In Robert's case he managed this primarily through strong framing of the instructional component which was embedded in the more tacit regulative discourse. This is an example of what Christie (2002) has noted in cases of strong classification and framing where "the regulative register actually appropriates and speaks through the instructional register" (p. 162). This suggests that Robert has a clear underlying conception concerning both the micro and macro elements of his curricular and pedagogical intentions.

In relation to the instructional discourse there was also a sense that the lessons were part of a broader instructional picture, one where the students were being inducted into the knowledge base required for the development of musicianship. The lessons on rhythm and Beethoven were part of a bigger curricular and pedagogical plan. There were clear implications for what Christie (2002) has described as "future pedagogic activity" (p. 96). The particular lessons were part of an overall journey of development underpinned with a sense of progression, development, and purpose. There was also a strong classification between the everyday knowledge that students might bring to school and the specialist concepts being introduced in the lessons. One of Robert's key structuring techniques was the explicit introduction of the specialist technical music language required for the understanding and use of musical concepts. The concept of rhythm was explored through description, sound, and action: in other words there was the development of understanding of an abstract concept through use (Gamble, 2006, p. 90). This process of recontextualisation begins with

some knowledge students already have and moves that knowledge into the realm of conceptual thinking (Young, 2010b). As Christie (2002) has suggested, the development of specialist conceptual knowledge occurs over time and “normally requires the intervention and guidance of a mentor” (p. 96). Robert’s curriculum content and pedagogy provide what Young (2010b) describes as “bridges for learners to move from ‘everyday concepts’”, in this lesson their awareness of beat and rhythm in the music they listen to, “to the ‘theoretical concepts’ associated with different subjects” (p. 27), in this case the concept of rhythm and its notation. The teacher’s own conceptual knowledge is pivotal in the conception and realisation of such learning. Robert gave clear criteria for the students to recognise and realise the expected responses which would enhance the likelihood of educational progress and growth.

### **Talking with students**

I talked with six students from year 11 and six from year 13. Only one student amongst the twelve had begun music study with private instrumental lessons before commencing high school. The students therefore were heavily reliant on the school for their musical opportunities and for the development of their musical outlook. The overriding theme that emerged from these discussions was that of respect for musical diversity, both as a concept and as experienced through contact with their teachers and with each other. The students saw the skills offered by both senior teachers in the department as complementary and advantageous to their development:

Year 13 student (b): We have both of them so we can kind of go to both for help because a lot of us do classical compositions. It is quite cool to switch between the two teachers for whatever you need.

The students described with a positive attitude the wide variety of music experienced within the department. This ranged from the musical choices they made as performers for their solo and group assessments, through to counterpoint studies as grounding for composition, to the rock music, renaissance madrigals, and the 20th century art music they study as set works:

Year 13 student (a): It is interesting to do different stuff that we normally wouldn’t get to know about.

Year 13 student (b): It’s about opening doors, it’s a good way to put it because you are thinking about new things, you’re getting new ideas, and you’re learning more.

Year 13 student (f): Before year 9 or even before high school I don’t think we would have thought we would be doing this kind of stuff – Bartok and Gregorian chant.

The students seemed clear that these experiences translated into quite tangible options in forming an identity as a musician:

Year 11 student (e): We wouldn't be able to explore new things and find out if we liked other things as well; we wouldn't be testing our boundaries or discovering new things about what we liked.

Year 13 student (b): I think it's valuable in the sense of learning yourself as a musician and trying to figure out what you want to become as a musician. So like [student name] for instance, who is really good at composing, he has picked up on all these different things and he can compose in any genre he wants.

This wide palette of knowledge was also a part of being able to imagine a future where students were able to contribute to and take part in conversations about music:

Year 13 student (b): I'd like to be able to go out, if I was a musician, and talk with different musicians in different genres and to be able to have some sort of idea of what their genre was about. I love what I'm into but I would feel really bad if I was to go out and not have any knowledge about other things...it makes you a better musician to know all these different things.

Year 13 student (d): It gives you a new respect for other genres as well. I don't really like metal but I could listen to it just because it opens up different kinds of doors.

These students appeared to be developing a critical musicality (Green, 2008), demonstrating some awareness of the commercial imperatives of much popular music but interested to seek out the different sorts of music that they regarded as more interesting. Classical music was part of this exploration that one student described as being found by going "underground":

Year 13 student (f): It's the way it's promoted that makes the difference between different types of music ... when you go underground you have so many good musicians.

As with nearly all the students interviewed from other schools the Mornington High students had a perception of classical music as comprising foundational theoretical and cultural knowledge that they saw as a co-requisite for wide and inclusive learning:

Year 13 student (b): We are provided with theory mostly through classical music. I think the reason being is to focus on those techniques because they use everything; it is the basis of music.

Another idea that recurred throughout the research was that popular music appears to students to be less complex and therefore not as appropriate for academic study:

Year 13 student (f): I think the reason why classical has the bulk of the theory is because pop music is pretty straightforward, there is nothing that complicated about it that you would need to study.

It may be that students with fluent and well developed musical skills in popular music idioms are less aware of the high level of procedural skill and stylistic fluency they have developed, where

often performance and composition skills are highly integrated. In one sense popular music is their 'first' language. This creates a significant contrast with the more formal and theorised approaches associated with theory and composition. These students were clear that this more theoretical knowledge was of value to them:

Year 13 student (b): If I knew more about the theory and I was good at it, which I'm not, if I had a really really good idea, then I would write a classical piece. I suppose that there are a lot of people out there that don't have that knowledge of theory so much and that is why they are writing easy songs.

Year 13 student (e): I've found that the more I've learnt about theory the easier it has gotten to compose. Like knowing the circle of fifths has made it a whole lot easier.

The celebration of musical diversity and plurality appears to be embedded in a discourse of positivity towards learning in general which the students saw as coming from their teachers:

Year 11 student (e): I think it comes from the teachers because they actually care about what they're teaching and they care if we don't understand. If they weren't interested in teaching us then I probably wouldn't be interested in trying to learn as much

Year 11 student (a): Both are really good teachers.

Year 11 student (b): They [non-music teachers] don't care as much.

Year 11 student (c): They're really into what they're doing.

The structures provided by the national assessment systems also provide a flexible guiding backdrop against which both horizontal and vertical types of knowledge can be balanced. A certain type of regulative discourse can provide the environment for an approach to pedagogy that recognises the importance of building on student interest (a social dimension) while integrating this with knowledge of a more vertical structure (an epistemic dimension) that can take students beyond the confines of what they already know. Just how important both social and personal dimensions are for engaging with learning was made clear by some of the year 13 students. They were surprised to learn that the old curriculum structure for music pre-dating 1993 did not include performance or composition:

Year 13 student (b): I probably wouldn't have taken it because I would have thought I wasn't good enough. Composition and performance are the things that have really given me a chance in music.

## **Managing the relationship between classical and popular music**

Robert states that there is a need to consider “the whole canon to actually understand music”. This belief developed during his time at University and through the realisation that there was considerable knowledge available to him during his secondary schooling that he did not utilise. The limitations of being bound by the context of experience unsupported by knowledge that can inform that experience is a key concept that now guides Robert’s work as a teacher. He describes students as often being stuck in the own “pond” of experience:

A lot of the kids have trouble making the connection between the point of doing the theory stuff and playing. If they can play well, they’re in a good band and people come to their gigs, they win Rockquest, if they are at a certain point, they are almost blind to what that [theoretical knowledge] can offer them and they kind of go, “what do I need that for, I’ve already got this”.

His aim is to widen students’ perspectives and to increase the possibilities for more creative work through the development of theoretical knowledge and exposure to varied musical styles including classical music. Through the contact with classical music and the role modelling of the course lecturer at university Robert developed a respect for classical music: “from the last few years at university and then teaching as well, I’ve found a lot more of a love for western art music definitely, but it’s probably half maturity, probably a lot of things”.

Robert believes engendering a positive attitude to varying styles of music is often a matter of exposure and that playing or singing is a powerful way to increase students’ musical tolerances: “It’s giving them a way to own it and to find some of themselves in the music ... I think if it works for one style it will work for anything. It’s just a matter of finding a way to give some ‘in’”. Robert recalls that the initial exposure to classical music for the contemporary music students at university was through the use of emotionally explicit romantic orchestral music. Robert suggests this was an effective tactic and uses it in his teaching as a way to begin exposure to classical music. The importance of the setting up of this initial encounter for students is implicit in such formulations: “I think a lot of it is how you approach it, how you try and put it across, from that first moment if you mess it up, that first moment, they’re gone”.

Significantly Robert believes that the foundational knowledge of the classical paradigm is the preferable route for learning:

I would argue for a beginning musician, that the classical canon would be of more value than the contemporary ... I just think you can train in that kind of area and move to contemporary if you so wish but it’s bloody hard to do it the other way around ... I wish that I’d learnt piano or something that gave me that full kind of gamut of skills when I was younger but I didn’t and it’s been an uphill struggle and it probably always will be

... If you were to say, what would be better, one or the other, ideally you'd do both, but one or the other I would say classical.

In terms of relevance in teaching however Robert believes that the world of popular music is likely to be the starting point with most students particularly in relation to music's social and political context:

In broader terms I would say popular music is more relevant socially to a lot of these kids. You can discuss the social implications and the social pressures that someone like Mozart or Beethoven had to write under but if you had to talk about slavery with blues you can compare it with poverty in the States or even in parts of New Zealand ... you can make it very relevant and you study a lot about the world through contemporary music.

An important theme in Robert's discourse is 'the voice' that contemporary music can give to social and political issues. This sociological interest provides a philosophical base which underpins Robert's approach to music education, linking the various dimensions of musical knowledge and skill development (see biographical section above).

At the level of specific skill development Robert sees some significant differences between classical and popular musicianship. An essential component of the popular musician's craft is to create music often from minimal written material, relying heavily on the ear whereas for classical players reading and technical assurance take on more significance:

Even the best professional orchestra member possibly couldn't get in a room with four people and just jam whereas great rock musician couldn't go into a room and sight read a concerto. Those two skills are very, very different and very necessary.

Robert does not see classical and popular music as oppositional but believes one can enhance the other and he espouses this as an attitude to be engendered in his students:

Even the most stoic metal heads will come through year 12 and 13 and actually say "yeah, actually, Bach's a pretty mean shredder you know. Pretty mean on the old harpsichord". They realise they do need to know this stuff.

While Robert acts as a role model for popular music in the school he is very aware of the limitations to the place of popular music within the schooling context. Co-curricular groups such as heavy metal bands do not perform in assembly as he believes that it would not be in the best interests of the students nor sit easily with the school culture. Robert is aware of certain preferences of the senior management team, and of the advantages of developing the conventions associated with classical concert-making as part of the department's image:

Well, we know there are certain senior managers that like things done, well like they're going to see the [city orchestra], so for the soiree we made sure the orchestra played



first, we made sure they ambled on in their own time like an orchestra does, we made sure that everyone walked on except the first violin who came in last and then we made sure the conductor walked and shook hands with the violin, all this kind of stuff and afterwards there were comments such as “I loved it how you guys did that, it was like being at a real concert”. They wouldn’t say anything, but they like it when performers play in assembly that they bow and there are certain things that we know that we can’t do. We can’t get a really heavy metal band in assembly because it wouldn’t be appropriate.

Showing awareness and being conversant with such established conventions may create a sense of trust between the music department and the senior management. This is likely to create the space and opportunity for Robert to court the more radical conventions of popular music performance such as metal bands but this is done not in the school hall (the symbolic space for the projection of the school’s unified image) but “down” in the music centre at lunch times: “We instead have Thursdays down in the band room, we get the bands to play and the kids come and go absolutely crazy”.

While aware of the double standard involved, Robert clearly keeps the welfare of his students in mind as he explains why certain performances would not be fair on students if they were to happen in assembly time:

I wouldn’t do it because they wouldn’t want to do it. When they got up there to do it, they would perform at about fifty per cent of what they would do on their own in a more comfortable setting ... it’s nine in the morning, the Principals are there and they can’t be going crazy .... It’s the wrong setting and the kids will either go, poh or it’ll be a little bit of anarchy going on.

For Robert it appears there is an intellectual recognition of classical music’s value. Robert’s efficacious experiences and identity formation were in the world of popular music. Nevertheless he sees the crossover of knowledge from the classical realm as a means to enhance the popular. Moreover he recognises the difference between taste and educational value, between preferences of a personal nature and judgements that can be made in favour of music chosen for educational intent (Moore, 2010): “I think I like one more than the other but I wouldn’t say for a minute that I value one more than the other”. This was confirmed by students in the focus groups: “He’s an all-rounder. I know he prefers other music but he doesn’t think it’s more important” (year 13 student). This distinction between value and taste was also identified by a year 11 student who commented on the Beethoven set work: “I like the music but I prefer to listen to rock music”.

Colleagues in the department also look to Robert for guidance in the assessment of popular music and he models more tolerance and respect across the stylistic divide than he sometimes observes in his colleagues:

The others have had to become a bit more versed in doing the junior guitar lessons, especially NCEA marking. I have to sit in on every performance because they have not been sure how to mark a bass player or a drummer so trying to help them out as well with that .... But when marking metal guitar some colleagues are going, “it’s just noise, not achieve, it’s crap, it’s just noise”, and what the student is actually doing is really difficult and is really good.

For Robert good music is not necessarily in one style or another. The authenticity of its inspiration is the key factor:

It’s got to have that elusive soul to it. I think the best music is written from a place of inspiration ... lots of pop music you can’t believe it. I don’t believe a lot of what these pop people are saying these days. It’s like “you’re a complete fraud, you’re trying to sell records is all your trying to do”.

Robert works tremendously hard in his job managing the huge variety of activities seemingly expected of music teachers:

I run the studio downstairs and I’m a unit holder for performing arts so I am the musical director for the school show and I run arts week which is the school soiree, all the school groups, it is more formal kind of concert and I do the Showcase which is the big, big talent quest type thing and I do all the music for the prize givings and I try to organise a big concert once a term .

## **Summary**

Robert’s confidence and clarity of intention with regard to teaching music results in a strong sense of purpose being communicated to his students. His experiences at school and his subsequent training have resulted in a musical discourse that values many styles, and these musical values are further embedded in a clear educational discourse in which various types of knowledge and experience are considered valuable for students. He manages the relationship between classical and popular music by providing access to both discourses and models the valuing of both. The context in which he is working with a colleague with a complementary skill set appears to be a positive one, in which Robert is forming a strong identity as a teacher with particular specialist skills underpinned by a wide (and widening) musical knowledge base. Robert is convinced that some knowledge of the classical and theoretical dimensions of music is required:

I think everyone needs to know a bit of both anyway, regardless of whether you are a cello player or a drummer. When you start to get into the classical side of it and the theoretical side of it and the analysis side of music you start to appreciate any music more, because you can listen to it with a lot smarter ears.

It was clear that the students regarded their teacher with respect and were very positive concerning the opportunities they were being offered to come into contact with music from a variety of styles. There was a perception that there were advantages in musical diversity, particularly through cross-

fertilization of musical styles, assisting each student to find their own voice. This was underpinned with a clear sense of the value of both procedural and theoretical knowledge.

## **CHAPTER TEN: CASE STUDY SIX - DAVID AND MUSIC AT RIVERSIDE SCHOOL**

### **David's story - Biographical context**

David is now in his second year of teaching secondary school music and in his fifth year living in New Zealand. David is an experienced musician trained in his native country and at post-graduate level in the United States. In his first year teaching at Riverside School David was Leah's assistant (see case study one, chapter five) and on her departure from the school he took over as the head of department. He sees this as a great challenge for a second-year teacher.

David's family had a piano at home but "serious" music study began for him at high school when he took up the french horn. By his last years in high school David was making a significant commitment to music study, making a two hundred kilometres return trip for lessons. On completion of high school he auditioned and gained a place in the bachelor degree course. In his third year he went into military service and worked as a member of the military band. During that time some physical embouchure problems became significant and threatened to make horn playing increasingly difficult so he took up playing the double bass:

The director allowed me to use my practice time to learn double bass. So sometimes I did that at 4 o'clock in the morning, practising for two hours. Everybody had to get up by six o'clock, that's the rule, so I got up a bit earlier to practise double bass.

When he returned to university David re-auditioned to change his instrumental major study and was successful, completing the last year and a half of his degree on double bass. After graduating David left to study for a master's degree in America and when he returned home he spent two years teaching and playing in his home country. This included directing a professional chamber orchestra and teaching at University. David then decided to return to America to obtain yet a further master's degree in conducting and a doctoral degree in double bass performance.

Growing up in the 1980s David recalls that western classical music was seen as a responsible vocation, particularly in comparison to popular music at that time:

When I was at high school 'good boys' did not play guitar. My older brother played and my father broke it. We had a very traditional way, the piano, violin, this was seen as helping your future. Rock music was less appropriate as [the perception was that] rock musicians use drugs and alcohol but classical music, you only hear good things about that.

While David's focus was clearly on western classical traditions, he spoke of his enjoyment of popular music and jazz:

I'm a classical musician but with double bass I played in a combo band and took improvisation for a whole semester, so I have done some jazz and when I was in the police band we played lots of pop music, swing...I don't have any objection to pop music, I love Chicago, I love the Bee-Gees, sometimes with a glass of wine, relaxing and so deep, so many messages, or Air Supply, good messages. I like pop music as well as classical.

Nevertheless it is classical music that David sees as most important within the realms of education. David's initial career hopes were to perform and teach at tertiary level, but as his personal life has brought him to New Zealand he has adapted, because there are limited opportunities for full time employment as a performer. He completed teacher training in New Zealand 2009: "I'm glad I can learn by teaching. I am still a musician; an educator is still a musician".

### **Flexibility at Year 13**

I returned to Riverside School a year after having visited for the first case study (see chapter five). The year 12 students I had spoken to then were now in their final year of school. Many of these boys had grown up under the guidance of Leah over a five or six year period, so I was interested to see how they were finding their new head of department.

I arrive before the class begins and the fourteen boys gradually amble in and take their seats. David frames the lesson with a formal introduction outlining clearly what is expected. He reprimands one student for sitting on the desk rather than a chair. He introduces me and the boys seem to remember me and I recognise some of their faces. Today's period is a flexible one where the students can either work on composing or on rehearsing for their upcoming solo performance recitals. The atmosphere is relaxed and there is no problem with me taking a number of the boys out of class for a short discussion.

The boys tell me they are finding the changes with David quite significant and they speak with maturity and sensitivity about these changes which a number of boys describe as both "good and bad". The overriding impression I get is that the boys are in the early stages of adapting to David's more formal approach. Where Leah encouraged an informal and at times chaotic atmosphere (see chapter five) David prefers a more orderly approach and keeping a respectful distance from the students (Interview 2). He is friendly however, and clearly has their educational development as his primary concern. The boys also notice more structure within the learning activities: "We are working on composition and there are steps and it is quite formulaic". David has provided quite specific compositional devices he wants to see developed by the students. Later in the class I hear

David reinforce this approach: “You can compose in any style you want but show me your skill – composition devices, form, unity, motif”. Furthermore the students suggest the criteria for assessment is a driver for learning expectations. The boys’ perception is that while David respects their right to compose in a popular style, he prefers classical music.

I ask the students if they feel the balance of musical styles has shifted and their perception is that they have begun the year by studying more classical music through listening and analysis than in the past. This does not seem of great concern for this group of mostly rock musicians. They talk of meeting halfway and one student reiterates an idea from last year’s interview: “You use classical as the starting point to expand out”.

### **Baroque knowledge for Year 11**

As I wait for this class to begin there are sounds of a trumpet and a singing lesson merging in the corridor outside the two practice rooms. A year 8 class is also well underway in the other classroom and sounds of classical orchestral music are clearly heard from what appears to be a music appreciation lesson.

The year 11 class consists of only eight students. I recall observing two quite healthy-sized year 10 classes last year so wonder why such a small number have decided to continue at the next level. I make a mental note to raise this with the students in the focus group. David waits until the boys are seated before beginning the lesson: “We had a lesson yesterday about score reading”. He has just begun when the remaining three students arrive. He is somewhat stern with them about their lateness and the boys look suitably contrite.

David begins a series of questions aimed at seeing how much the boys have remembered from yesterday’s lesson on baroque music and its genres and composers. He begins by asking “what is an overture?” As students respond he digs deeper with further questions encouraging them to think more deeply. He moves through a number of key terms introducing the language the students will need to understand the topic – opera, oratorio, aria, chorus, recitative. To illustrate recitative David goes to the piano and plays some chords encouraging students to sing the answer in recitative style. Surprisingly they respond by singing. Perhaps they have experienced this before.

David brings up some audio visual material on Handel and Bach on the white board and shows a YouTube clip of two people playing Bach’s toccata in d minor on a giant foot organ. From this stimulus the lesson moves on to a discussion of texture and instruments and the difference between the harpsichord and piano. As most of the key terms have been covered David directs the students to a workbook to complete some written tasks aimed at reinforcing the comprehension of this material.

The lesson seems to drag a little and I wonder about their level of engagement with this material. There is no doubt that this knowledge is required for understanding the topic, and the information has been given and received.

As the bell rings David asks the students to complete the worksheet for homework and the boys wander off to their next class having had a substantial interchange with this aspect of western music history.

### **David's pedagogic discourse**

David articulates “I have a very clear education philosophy” and highlights two key pillars that he terms “fundamentals” and “discipline”. “Everybody should learn classical as a fundamental so they can step and go higher”. In David's classes this fundamental knowledge comprises music theory (reading, structure and harmony leading to analysis) as the basis for the development of music learning. By discipline David means the reliance of western classical music on the subjugation of the individual to the needs of structures, techniques, and collective aspects of its dimensions including passing on expected conventions for performing:

In classical music we have to follow the tempo, the intonation, as a team, less improvisation. You have to work as a team. In sport one player can still get a goal but in music we need melody and harmony so someone has to provide the support. It's all discipline...so first they learn team work and relating to others and then they can go to pop music or whatever.

David suggests his role is to provide fundamentals which students can then utilise in their own musical development. He describes this role as “maximising their ability. Classical music supports them in the future”. Even in creative work his approach is to work from fundamentals first:

Students are under pressure to compose everything new but this is not really possible ... first they can learn by copying, moderating, changing, and then creating their own [music] but without learning the fundamentals or elements their composition will be very weak. You can maybe do a few pieces but you will compose every piece the same way — fundamentals will help you to broaden your sight.

While this approach appears somewhat didactic David clearly has the interests of his students at heart. His belief is that by providing a core curriculum covering the fundamentals he is in fact empowering his students to more easily follow their own interests. David is aware that he brings some culturally different perspectives to his teaching but believes there is support for what appears to be a more formal and structured approach:

This country has a different background of parental support and in New Zealand I find more freedom for the kids. Of course that helps for the creative mind but it makes it a bit difficult for the fundamentals.

David's observation of the school is that in the past some senior students lobbied to spend a lot of time playing music that was of interest to them. Students have the freedom to choose repertoire for their solo and group performances but the classroom curriculum is under David's firm guidance: "I reduced the practical time and nobody complained. They are doing really well in composition". David's aim is to provide knowledge dimensions that are not readily available in the everyday world of more informal learning: "Guitar players we don't have to teach some aspects, they know more than us. They spend lots of time at home and spend time talking about pop music so I like to support something they don't have".

The classes I observed reflected David's description of his philosophy. Lessons were begun formally and there was a clearly articulated agenda for the lesson. At year 11 the teaching comprised traditional whole class triadic dialogue (teacher question, student response, teacher evaluation). This interactional practice was initially utilised to elicit students' recall of knowledge from the previous day's lesson. A large amount of straightforward knowledge content was covered in the lesson. At the more senior level students were given more autonomy to carry out work under their own management and in independent spaces while David circulated checking on progress and offering advice and instruction. On the whole David's teaching exhibits a strongly framed regulative and instructional discourse where quite traditional hierarchies are in place. The area of some relaxation is in student-teacher relations where, depending on the age of students, more or greater autonomy is provided in the learning context. The framing of the instructional elements is particularly strong, creating a context that communicates clear learning intentions through explicit selection, sequence, pacing, and evaluative criteria. The instructional discourse is underpinned by the clear influence of the criteria and requirements for the achievement standards for national qualifications.

David's discourse aligns well with two areas identified as key in improving outcomes for students (Muller & Gamble, 2010). The first area concerns curricular stipulation. There is strong framing over external selection in that David is clear on the foundational requirements for the development of theoretical knowledge. The second area concerns strong framing of evaluation criteria "which signals to pupils whether they have understood what was expected and have met the criteria for producing an adequate response" (Muller & Gamble, 2010, p. 507). David's discourse aligns less clearly with the other two dimensions cited by Muller & Gamble (2010) as part of an ideal mixed pedagogy: weak framing over pacing, and a personalized attitude to pupils.



David is clear that the purpose of schooling is to provide students with knowledge that they would otherwise find difficult to access or understand, and this underpins his curriculum choices. While some might regard this as a knowledge-centred approach, for David it is student-centred in the sense that he believes access to this knowledge will open doors for students:

We have to provide the fundamentals, broad, not narrowed down. One year 13 student wanted to submit tablature. I said, no, there are no dynamics, no expression, we are missing so many things here. Also I asked him “where did you learn how to read it”. He said from the internet. “See, you don’t need a teacher, you can learn by yourself but here you will learn something new from me” (Interview 2).

## **Talking with students**

### ***Year 11***

The six year 11 boys in the focus group are all members of the classes I observed the previous year at Riverside School. During the discussion it becomes clear that their perspective on learning and what they regard as valid learning has changed due to the fact that they are now preparing for the first level of the senior NCEA. They have a narrower view of learning as an end to succeeding in the assessments and examinations. This shift in perspective is the explanation the boys give for the fact that from a class of over 20 only 8 boys have chosen to continue:

Year 11 student (a): There’s a change from social music, fun, jamming. In year 10 it was like practical everyday as well.

Year 11 student (b): Last year was really hard for the people who didn’t have a background in music. A lot of people were put off by that.

The boys seem aware of the new demands of the music curriculum at this level, what Lamont and Maton (2008) have identified as an elite code, where both specialist musical knowledge and musical dispositions often seen as innate are required: “Not only do the rules of the game change but it also becomes harder to successfully play” (p. 278). One student noted how more demands could be made of the smaller more focused class:

When we had twenty or so people in the class the teacher had to balance it out so that we didn’t leave the less advanced people behind, but now that we have a group of eight people it’s different (year 11 student (b)).

A number of students gave the impression that with hindsight the emphasis on practical work in their earlier years was not always focused on what they now termed ‘learning’: “It was fun but it didn’t really prepare us for this year” (year11 student (c)). Assessment has now become the key for success and validation. The heavy emphasis on practical group music making appropriated into the

vertical discourse of the school is now seen as problematic by the students. It is not ‘academic’, that is, a realisation of vertical discourse (Bernstein, 2000).

The boys I talked to are a diverse group in terms of their musical backgrounds and experiences. Two of the boys have a history of private piano and theory tuition to call on, whereas the other boys are relying primarily on school music to provide the knowledge they need:

This year I’ve been learning a lot about classical music because I don’t have a classical background so people like [student name] bringing it up in class while we are doing things, like the stuff that’s in the curriculum, helps me. I’m absorbing classical now whereas at home I wouldn’t really get it (year 11 student (d)).

While the students seem to listen almost exclusively to popular music outside of school they appear to accept that the curriculum has a different function. I asked one of the rock guitarists how he felt about the lesson I observed where the topic was 18th century genres and forms:

Student c: It’s good to know it I guess but I don’t think I’d use it outside this classroom.

Other students commented:

Year 11 student (e): I find some of it interesting.

Year 11 student (a): I find it interesting.

Year 11 student (f): This stuff is really important if we want to carry on music through school and university and later through life.

Year 11 student (b): I guess what [the teacher] is teaching us gives you a good background. I guess you can’t just jump into modern genres but I reckon it is good to have a bit of perspective.

There was clearly a high level of trust in the teacher as the expert, making sound decisions for the students as to what was appropriate for them to study: “He’s the teacher he knows what’s good for us and what we need to know” (year 11 student (c)).

The students’ perception was that their new teacher had a clear preference for classical music and regarded it as of paramount importance (“[the teacher] appreciates classical music much more so he is trying to bring that more into the music department”, (year 11 student (f)). The boys saw classical music aligned with concepts such as structure and discipline as well as providing a bigger picture: “Classical music is rich in history. It’s where all of today’s music began from” (year 11 student (f)). Nevertheless the students said they felt supported in following their own areas of interest in performance and in composition.

The boys have clearly rationalised the way their teacher is realising the balance between classical and popular music, and are clear that their interests were also important: “The teacher needs to have an interest in us not just how we do...an interest in what we think we need to know as well as what he thinks we need to know” (year 11 student d).

### *Year 12*

The year 12 class consists of only four boys: one bass guitarist, one singer, one pianist, and one boy who plays both acoustic and electric guitar. Their perspective on the shift in the balance between classical and popular music in the music department is an interesting one. They too referred to the large amount of time that was given over to performance in the past and the shift towards more theoretical study:

Year 12 student (a): This year we are focusing more on classical music as well as pop so it's sort of evened out instead of just pop and there is less practical as well, more serious music.

Year 12 student (b): Last year there was a lot more emphasis on the practical part than the theory part, the score reading part. I think this year it's more based around how music is read and what it's trying to tell us and that sort of stuff rather than playing the music itself.

The students identified that this emphasis was occurring through more time being spent on score reading and analysis. Students have also made the connection that knowledge acquired in this context can be transferred to their own work as composers:

Year 12 student (c): He has brought classical into it a lot more through composition and things like that. He brings in a lot of classical examples and plays us classical examples on bass so it's like from all ways it's coming in.

Year 12 student (b): From the score reading we learn compositional techniques and stuff like that. I guess from that you can learn to apply it to your own instrument which is a good thing.

While identifying the changes in curriculum content, students also noted how they felt about these changes. Overall there were responses ranging between commitment and detachment:

Year 12 student (d): Well I don't mind I can just go with the flow and not necessarily find it as a positive or negative thing. I don't mind. I'm here to learn.

Year 12 student (c): I don't enjoy it that much but it is good to learn about that stuff since the techniques can apply to our compositions and the way I sing.

Year 12 student (b): I probably enjoyed last year a lot more, there was more of an emphasis on musicianship...it is not as enjoyable as it was last year.

Year 12 student (a): I don't mind the change because I'm learning more, because we didn't really do anything [last year] we just played around.

As with the year 11 students, there was a lack of recognition of playing and performing as 'learning'. The valuing of academic knowledge above procedural skill is clearly still an ideological value that permeates the discourse of schooling for these students. There was also a general acceptance that the curriculum needed to introduce students to knowledge that would be beneficial for their longer term development and that this would not always align with what they regarded as most fun in learning. The shift in the balance of knowledge from practical to theoretical in the department was summed up by one student: "I think last year the analysis was there to help our playing but now it is the other way around" (year 12 student (b)).

The year 12 students were clear that their new teacher considers classical music as more important within a teaching and learning context:

Year 12 student (c): He has studied classical music a lot and finds a lot of importance in it and so he thinks he has to teach us that. From a year 12 point of view I don't think it is as important as he makes it out to be.

Year 12 student (b): I think he is more preparing us for university than for getting Excellence in level two NCEA.

These students agreed it would also be more motivating for them to utilise some popular music in the development of the more theoretical aspects of the curriculum such as analysis and harmony. Their perceptions of music's value and importance was perceptive and suggested that despite a past emphasis on popular music these boys had a developed sense of utilising criteria in identifying quality in relation to musical value judgements. These boys felt that a great deal of popular music was lacking in substance and musical quality, only deriving its impetus from commercial motivations. 'Good music' was described as having meaning, having been conceived with some degree of effort, originality, and authenticity. As well as this, one student suggested:

Good music transports you away from where you are. I think the main point of music is to take the listener to someplace else. So I define good music as involving the listener into the song. Classical does that greatly but so does some pop music and some other music as well (year 12 student (c)).

### **Managing the relationship between classical and popular music**

David quite clearly believes that classical music provides the best foundation for music learning within education. Although he expresses enjoyment of and respect for popular music, the classical paradigm's emphasis on theoretical concepts and discipline provide David with a clear sense of purpose for curriculum conception and realisation. He defines the foundational knowledge as

follows: “It means music theory and then the understanding of music, structure and analysis could be the next step. Understanding of harmony, cadences”.

Student choice is given in solo and group performance and to a certain degree within composition. In these areas students are free to follow their own stylistic preferences but David is clear that classical music provides the best means for developing other forms of knowledge:

Classical music is the root of music so you should start from here. Classical music teaches how to read music; guitar players come to me to learn music. A bass guitar player came to me to ask for extra lessons in my lunch time. Some students can’t read music. I say “if you want to play in New York in a musical or whatever you will have to read” but audio learners listen first and then copy so you are limited, you cannot maximize your ability.

David does plan to include some popular music in his courses as he settles more into his job. In this respect there is an element of pragmatism as he admits it could be a matter of finding a suitable resource: “I may do pop music next year or I can ask them [what they might like to study] but this year it’s all classical for preparation reasons”. His justification for including popular music includes its pervasive presence in society, but he sees its purpose in the curriculum as a support to learning about classical music, not the other way around: “It is everywhere, and you can see classical elements in pop music. I use pop music to support classical music and then they can make their own music”.

David’s discourse seems to emphasise the structural and analytical aspects of music learning but he also acknowledges, even if mostly implicitly, music’s sonic and emotional aspects and music’s emotional potential to affect society more generally:

Music is really about expression, emotions, and self-expression. Politics comes into popular music. Sometimes we can change the word by singing, and we can touch people’s hearts (Interview 2).

## **Summary**

David presents a very clearly articulated pedagogic discourse for his students. The focus groups confirmed that students are well aware of his values and are on the whole very accepting of the change in emphasis that has resulted in the department since his arrival. David manages the relationship between classical and popular music by making classical music and its associated theoretical knowledge the focus of what he offers students.

As students move through the levels of schooling it seems as if they become able to rationalise the logic of needing to learn certain things at the expense of personal enjoyment or interest. It is

interesting that the boys at this school equate ‘real learning’ with academic work rather than performing or practical work, and that this academic work is most clearly represented in knowledge that is theoretical and that is associated with the classical paradigm. In this regard there is a general alignment between David’s philosophy and what the students expect from education more generally, although two students felt that the emphasis on analysis was somewhat overwhelming, particularly due to the fact that this was a significant change for them from the performance orientation endorsed by Leah (see chapter five). Students observed that a new balance was emerging that brought classical and popular music, and practical and academic activities, more into line with each other. There were varying opinions about the positive and negative aspects of these changes but overall the students interviewed were more positive than negative about these changes. They demonstrated the ability to step beyond the influence of their own preferences and short-term enjoyment, and provide insightful observations concerning their learning experiences in a changing context.

David’s focus in curriculum conception is on what he describes as a holistic approach in combining score reading, analysis, composition and musical appreciation. Performance sits somewhat outside this classroom integration although it is clear David provides direct and clear feedback to students in regard to the assessment requirements of this aspect, even though less class time is allotted to it. It is interesting that David’s training primarily as a performer hasn’t automatically resulted in an emphasis on this aspect within the curriculum. David is expanding the performance opportunities in brass playing, jazz band, and orchestra outside the classroom. The classroom focus is firmly related to what David can offer students that they otherwise might not be able to experience without his guidance. His educational discourse foregrounds epistemological constraints on curriculum design and pedagogy but this structural conservatism should not be confused with the social conservatism where a curriculum is maintained for its own sake (Young & Muller, 2010) although there are elements in his pedagogical discourse that point toward assigning transcendental status to classical music.

# CHAPTER ELEVEN: CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

## Introduction

This penultimate chapter has as its prime purpose the identification and discussion of the most significant themes derived from the six cases in a cross-case analysis. As a way of prefacing the analysis I begin by returning to some key concepts from chapter two (the methodology), briefly considering issues regarding validity (credibility) and the hermeneutical content of thematic analysis.

The process for this chapter involved re-visiting each case by re-reading the transcripts and reports and confirming the frequent, dominant, and significant themes inherent in the data (Thomas, 2006). It also involved creating levels of thematic analysis by subsuming lower-level concepts into the fewer broader thematic categories presented in this chapter (what Corbin & Strauss, 2008, term 'axial' coding). The motivation for a cross-case analysis is to increase the possibility of generalisability, even though this is identified as somewhat problematic within the literature (see chapter two). The purposeful sampling makes it possible to draw from the cases some assertions that may have "relevance or applicability" to the field in general, but more importantly "to deepen explanation and understanding" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 173). I have attempted to do this by identifying prevalent themes that fit the individual cases but that also "build abstractions across cases" (Merriam, 1998).

As Phillips and Burbles (2000) argue from a post-positivist perspective there are a number of possible interpretations that may be derived from any one analysis of human actions. It is the task of the researcher to bring a warranted interpretation of the evidence to light in the form of what Stake (1995) calls 'assertions'. In this research, discussions with teachers were the main method used to obtain data concerning beliefs and educational practices related to the research questions. This data was triangulated by observation of each teacher at work and by discussions with students concerning their experiences in the teacher's class. The teachers also read the case study report and were invited to give feedback concerning its accuracy and resonance for them as the key participant.

Teachers' work within the parameters of this research can be described as a continual search for balance: balance in negotiating boundaries in recontextualising various often apparently conflicting curricular and pedagogic possibilities for meeting the needs and demands of the development of student learning in elective secondary school music. It is clear that complex complementary and co-evolutionary relationships exist between an individual teacher and social forces - between agency and structure - that work on micro (individual), meso (subsystem), and macro (whole) levels

(Bunge, 1999). The theme of relative autonomy and structure and agency, a conceptualisation of the work of a music teacher as a recontextualising agent (Bernstein, 2000), is taken up in the final chapter as teachers' work is also considered within a broader social context. This chapter focuses on the influences teachers identified as significant in their work.

The strongest themes recurring across all six cases have been extracted and are discussed below; they present what Corbin & Strauss (2008) term 'the analytic story'. The themes can be thought of as categories that contain sub-themes and properties, with variations within the category. For example while *affirmation* is recognised as a core theme, its realisation brings into play various other properties such as learner-centredness and acceptance of musical plurality. The main themes may be subsumed into one overarching core concept. How a researcher defines the core concept "depends upon how he or she wants to place the emphasis" (Corbin & Strauss, p. 266). My interpretation sees teachers working as recontextualisers of multiple influences on curriculum construction, constantly seeking to balance varied social and epistemological aims in the conceptualisation of musical learning and development of their students. The core concept derived from the stories is therefore one concerned with "finding a balance" (an in-vivo theme derived from the pilot study, McPhail, 2010) and one that encapsulates the interactive work of teachers as "recontextualising agents" (Bernstein, 2000). Classical music and popular music are utilised in some common and some varying ways by the teachers in this study to realise the musical and educational development of their students. For teachers and students these styles of music are symbolic of deeper meanings concerning identity, culture, and knowledge.

A summary chart is provided below (table 3) which outlines some attribute data for each case. This can be used as a reference point for the thematic discussions that follow. In columns six and seven the relation between classical and popular music discourses is considered in terms of the strength of the internal classification as observed in the lessons. The classification (C+, C-) attempts to summarise the degree of insulation between classical and popular styles or knowledges. With many distinct knowledge segments it is possible for classification and framing to vary from component to component, e.g. weak framing over selection in performance, strong framing over selection in music works (see chapter two for discussion of classification and framing). The emphasis observed in each lesson, in terms of the classical/popular music content and in terms of the theoretical/practical pedagogy, is plotted on figure 3 below. This figure shows that some of the teachers varied their pedagogic orientation from lessons to lesson. For example Leah's first lesson was relatively formal (teacher/student triadic dialogue, see Chapter five) and concerned with theoretical knowledge, even though she chose to introduce the concepts using popular music. In the second observed lesson the



students were working at performing music in various ensembles. The figure can be read in tandem with column six of table 3 and the case study descriptions of the observed lessons.

Case	Musical background	Training	Years teaching	Observed lessons	Curriculum overview (Classification)	Pedagogy overview (Framing)
<b>Leah</b>	Diverse music at home Classical piano lessons	Classical performance degree in piano	30+	i. Year 10 theory (x2) ii. Year 10 practical	Practical work is emphasised, underpinned with theory Stylistic boundaries are quite weakly classified and sometimes integrated C-	selection + sequence – pacing – evaluation ++ hierarchical rules –
<b>Beatrice</b>	No music background at home Violin lessons self-instigated	Education degree with music specialisation International violin diploma	10	i. Year 13 electives, composition, research ii. Year 9 popular music course group song writing	Practical and theoretical knowledge combined but two courses Strong internal and external classification C++	selection + sequence + pacing + evaluation ++ hierarchical rules –
<b>Miles</b>	Music at home Some piano lessons, then trombone	Science degree Semi-professional jazz band	22	i. Year 13 music works study ii. Year 11 reading and score reading skills	Practical and theoretical knowledge combined with some integration C+	selection + sequence + pacing + evaluation + hierarchical rules –
<b>Lydia</b>	Music at home Violin and guitar lessons	BMus in contemporary music	3	i. Year 11 music works study ii. Year 13 research	Practical and creative work emphasised External classification also weak C-	selection – sequence – pacing – evaluation – hierarchical rules –
<b>Robert</b>	No music background at home String lessons at high school	BMus in contemporary music	3	i. Year 9 elements of music ii. Year 11 music works study	Practical and theoretical knowledge moving towards integration of knowledge types C+	selection + sequence + pacing + evaluation + hierarchical rules –
<b>David</b>	Music at home French horn lessons	Performance to Doctoral level in double bass, Masters in conducting	2 in New Zealand	i. Year 13 electives ii. Year 11 music works study	Theoretical and classical discourses predominate C++	selection + - sequence + pacing + evaluation ++ hierarchical rules +

**Table 3 – Summary attribute data**

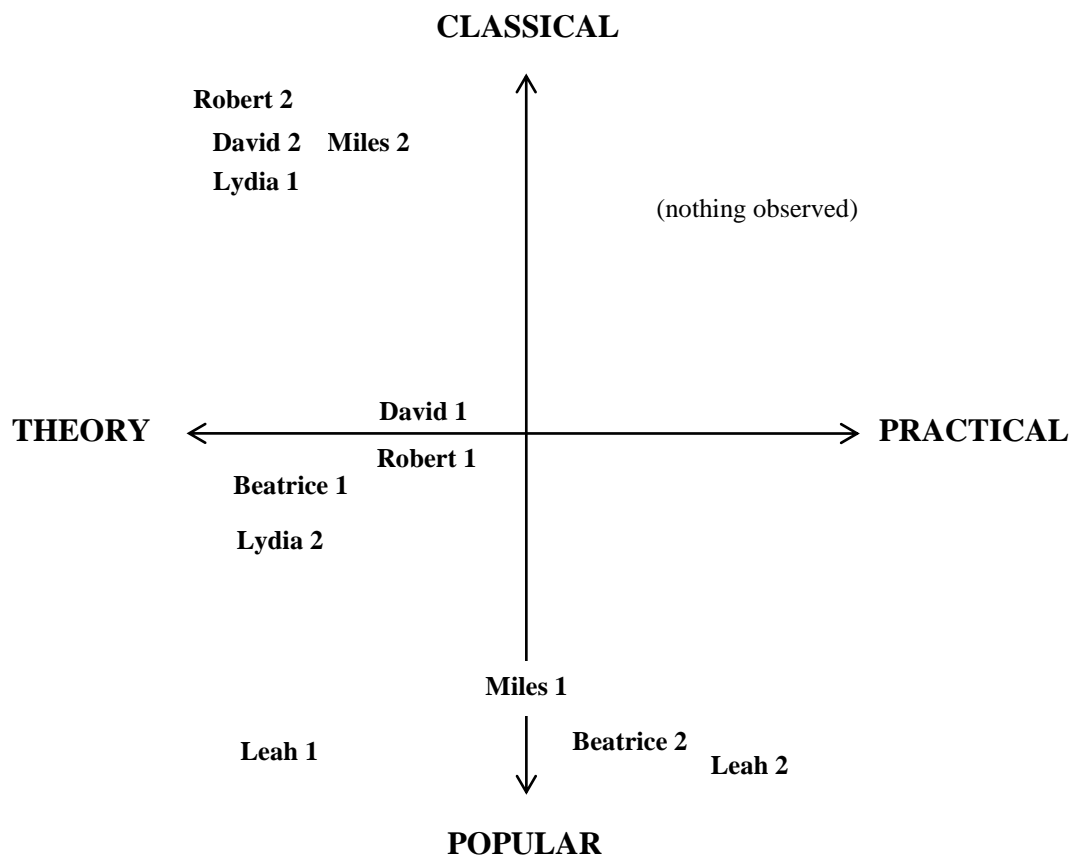
**Explanations of abbreviations used in table 3**

C+: strong classification - knowledge boundaries are explicit, categories insulated from each other

C-: weak classification - knowledge boundaries are blurred or integrated

F+: strong framing - teacher maintains control over selection, sequence, pacing, and evaluation

F- : weak framing - more apparent control by learners over selection, sequence, pacing, and evaluation



**Figure 3: Emphasis in observed lessons**

**Inductive Themes - the analytic story**

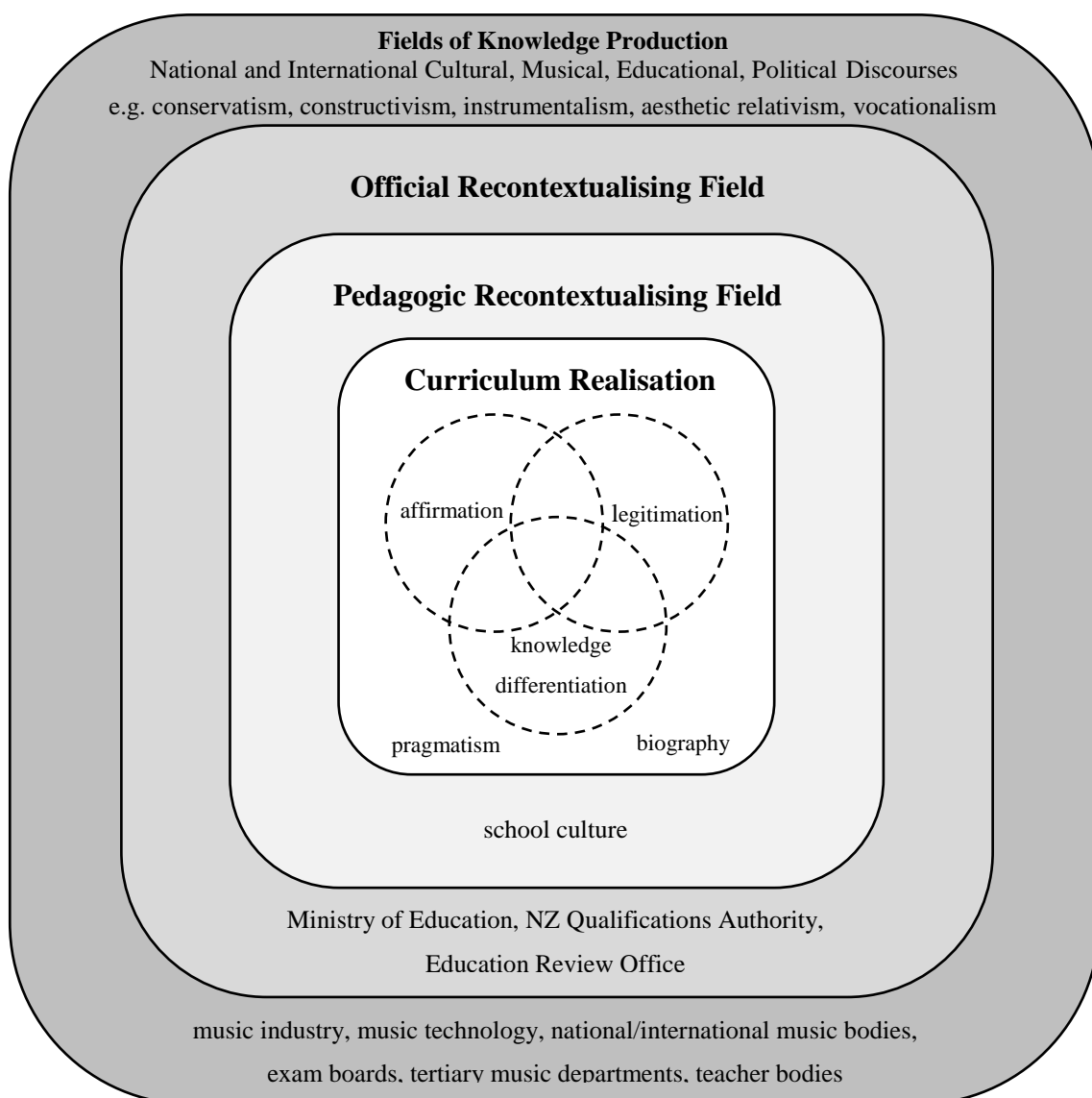
**Core concept** - ‘Finding a balance’ - recontextualisation of music knowledge for learning and development

**Overview**

A prime motivating value for all teachers was their ethical responsibility as an educator, therefore personal musical values became modified to a large degree by educational ones. Strong discourses of student-centred (progressive) learning permeate both the official and pedagogic (local) recontextualising fields, and exert a strong influence on approaches to curriculum and pedagogy in the form of the affirmation and legitimation of what is perceived to be a student-relevant curriculum. In some ways counter to this emphasis on the learner is the knowledge content that teachers regard as foundational and necessary for students to function within the field. On the whole teachers

differentiate between knowledge appropriate to the discourses of schooling and that of the less formalised experience of the outside world. Other themes that affect teachers in the management of musical choice include biographical aspects, and wider contextual influences such as the school culture, and the assessment requirements for national qualifications.

‘Finding a balance’ is not a goal in itself, but a continually dynamic social process that involves the adaptation and reshaping of official and other discourses at the local level. The influence of the following significant discourses, discussed here as themes, are part of the recontextualising process where teachers create workable relations through modifying their various values for educational purposes. Figure 4 provides an overview of the conceptualisation of the recontextualising process with the key inductive themes identified by the teachers at the centre.



**Figure 4: “Finding a balance”:** Curriculum realisation as recontextualisation of multiple influences

## **Affirmation**

All the teachers in this study except David (see chapter ten) spoke explicitly of the importance of recognising and affirming students as individuals with particular interests and needs as music learners. Implicit in this recognition and affirmation is the acceptance of a certain degree of learner-centredness, and an acknowledgment of the existence of musical pluralism. In this regard teachers accept that students bring varied and diverse interests, skills, and levels of commitment to the music classroom, and that students have a democratic right to have those interests acknowledged and developed (Bernstein, 2000). The classroom is then a place with a multiplicity of ideas concerning what music and musical knowledge are of value, as every case in this research demonstrated. Teachers accepted the implications of affirmation affecting curriculum choice and approaches to pedagogy to varying degrees. Miles (chapter seven) most clearly articulates this position:

In the senior music programme there are a mixture of students with a mixture of backgrounds and mixture of instruments and a mixture of abilities, and the fact that none of them have felt excluded gives an idea of the type of programme that I hope to try and run ... all of the students should feel that their music, their instrument and their experiences and their likes are valid (Miles, Interview 1).

Extending this sense of affirmation, Beatrice (chapter six) wanted to provide as many experiences as possible for her students to draw on:

Everybody should have the right to have their musical interest valued. I guess what I want to give them is the whole lot, and in my perfect world my kids would take both courses, the performance [classical] course and the contemporary course (Beatrice, Interview 1).

For Beatrice there is a correlation between varied experiences and musical conceptual development:

They have a whole raft of experiences to draw from and so when they come to sit down and discuss music or think about music on an academic level, they've got a whole lot of other things to draw from (Beatrice, Interview 1).

Affirmation and accommodation of classical and popular music in the cases varied along a continuum with Lydia (chapter four) at one end, where the values affecting her learning programmes and pedagogy focused on student interests and experiences. These interests and experiences were almost exclusively centred on popular music:

The fabulous raw talent and background knowledge that the students bring is very diverse here, there is a lot of cultural music, so I don't like to discount that prior knowledge that the students have by saying alright we're all going to become classical musicians here (Lydia, Interview 1).

Lydia considers popular music the ethical choice as it creates fewer socio-cultural and socio-economic barriers for her students within the context of her school community:

The attainability of pop music for every single student in the classroom is there. With classical music on the other hand, even when I say we are going on a class trip to the orchestra, that is basically free but we have to pay for the bus, there will still be some students who say I can't pay for the bus, or it's too hard. There is a barrier for getting exposed to it and I think it's harder for students to value it if they haven't seen it live (Lydia, Interview 1).

Lydia's overriding values concern the affirmation of students' musical interests and the utilisation of music as a means of personal expression and identity formation, realised primarily through what Bernstein (1975/2003) described as an integrated curriculum code: weak classification and framing and tending towards an invisible pedagogy (see chapter three and Lydia's story, chapter eight). In strong contrast to Lydia, David's educational focus (see chapter ten) was to provide strongly framed access to classical knowledge that students might not otherwise come into contact with ("I'm absorbing classical now whereas at home I wouldn't really get it" Year 11 student (d), case six). The result is an emphasis on knowledge content or a collection code; a visible pedagogy embedded in relatively strong instructional and regulative discourses (i.e. explicit rules regarding conduct, curriculum content, delivery and evaluation). David's argument is that the classical paradigm provides the best foundation for student development, "maximising their ability. Classical music supports them in the future".

If Lydia and David's curriculum conceptions are considered as two contrasting points on a continuum, then the other case study teachers are in the middle areas between them, balancing the particular emphases described in these two cases. Robert (chapter nine) described his curriculum conception process as "*balancing* the different kinds of work the students were doing, trying to be more even across the board and giving the kids lots of stuff to get interested in, but also giving them a good rounded education" (Robert, Interview 2, italics added).

While affirmation was clearly part of the regulative discourse of most of the teachers it was also present at the micro level in the instructional discourse as a teaching strategy, for example where Leah (chapter five) affirmed students' skills by utilising their playing abilities to demonstrate learning concepts within the classroom. As well as this, all the teachers provided opportunities for exploration and development of skills through solo performance and socially oriented group performing with a degree of student choice over repertoire. Teachers saw affirmation as a fundamental part of their work in motivating, caring for, and educating students. Visually symbolic of affirmation and musical plurality were the variety of images in all the classrooms visited and the variety of spaces, instruments, and supporting instrumental teachers made available to students.

The concept of affirmation is to varying degrees held in check at the meso or institutional level by the regulative expectations of the school culture and at the macro level by the official national discourses surrounding evaluation and assessment. Forms of balance are sought between the requirements of the state and the autonomy of the teacher to modify learning experiences for each student. The influence of these factors on teacher management of curriculum conception and realisation are discussed in the ensuing sections.

### **Knowledge differentiation**

While teachers' affirmation recognises the rights of students to have their musical areas of interest acknowledged and developed, teachers also spoke of the need to provide access to knowledge considered by them and by society as culturally significant. It is from the specific ways that curriculum content and pedagogical approaches are realised in the instructional discourse that we gain a clear view of how far affirmation translates into curriculum realisation and experience for students. This is most clearly seen in the knowledge that is regarded as important and significant and how the teachers manage the relationship between classical and popular music knowledge boundaries. Even strongly held values concerning student-centred and pluralistic cultural values are modified and recontextualised as they meet discourses of knowledge value for learning. This second major influence on local pedagogic discourse can be termed knowledge differentiation. Teachers either reproduce classifications or redefine and differentiate types of knowledge. Classification is strong or weak according to the strength of the boundaries and the degree of insulation surrounding the knowledge. This involves the identification of knowledge considered by the teachers as most important for various types of learning within the segments of the official curriculum. Music has been regionalised by diversifying musical knowledges through changes of prescription and classification in the ORF, segmenting the official curriculum into new knowledge areas derived from fields of practice traditionally excluded from the curriculum. Knowledge can also be described in terms of the verticality of its internal structuring principles (knowledge structures - see chapter four) and more broadly distinguished as the knowledge required for academic learning versus the knowledge of everyday learning and experience, termed vertical and horizontal respectively (Bernstein, 2000).

The process of recontextualisation for the case study teachers included a clear differentiation of types of knowledge. This was expressed as comprising 'knowledge about music' or theoretical and historical cultural knowledge mostly associated with the classical paradigm (theory, harmony, analysis, history of western music), as compared to 'music as knowledge' (Tagg, 2002), the socially contextualised procedural knowledge of playing, singing, and song writing, most strongly associated

with popular music. In case study five Robert defined how the essence of classical and popular knowledges were most often realised by performers as procedural knowledge. An essential component of the popular musician's craft is to create music often from minimal written material relying heavily on the ear and skills of improvisation, whereas for classical players interpretation and technical assurance take on more significance. Both are underpinned with varying degrees of theoretical knowledge of the standards and conventions of the sub-fields of practice:

Even the best professional orchestra member possibly couldn't get in a room with four people and just jam whereas great rock musician couldn't go into a room and sight read a concerto. Those two skills are very, very different and very necessary (Robert, Interview 1).

The degree to which underlying conceptual knowledge is made explicit for discussion and evaluation is one of the key differences between the contexts of informal and school learning.

### *Classical music as foundational*

All of the teachers expressed an interest in and enjoyment of popular music yet all the teachers, including those trained in rock and popular genres, regarded classical music and its associated knowledge as foundational and required for a broad musical education even if, as in Lydia's case, it is not particularly emphasised or included:

I would like to expose them to some western art music. That's what I'm thinking in what I choose, because that's something I felt like I missed out on (Lydia, Interview 1).

I definitely think the classical grounding is the way to go but I think it has to be complemented with other stuff (Beatrice, Interview 2).

I would argue for a beginning musician, that the classical canon would be of more value than the contemporary (Robert, Interview 1).

For me it's a beauty of sound for a start, it's exposing kids to what I call beautiful sounds and melody, I want them to really know what a melody is (Leah, Interview 1).

I think that it [classical music] makes any student arts literate, so it helps them mature. To be arts literate they can experience the arts with a slightly more critical or refined approach and they might even understand more about themselves and why they like or dislike arts (Miles, Interview 1).

The majority of students spoken to also suggest that coming into contact with a wide range of music including classical was important for their development as musicians. In case study five for example the students at year 13 were aware of the potential for a varied knowledge base to provide them with skills for participating as knowledgeable citizens beyond school (see chapter nine).

Teachers from all backgrounds in this study legitimate classical music and its associated theoretical knowledge as significant to varying degrees and include it in their teaching programmes. Even for the two teachers who were trained in the rock/popular music degree, the classical paradigm retains a level of epistemological (rather than political) legitimation within musical and educational fields that appears impossible for them to ignore. Of the two teachers trained in contemporary music, Lydia is somewhat ambivalent concerning the knowledge required in her classroom programmes yet Robert believes that classical training provides a more readily adaptable knowledge base. These teachers' own musical experiences are modified by educational influences aimed at providing students with access to a wide palette of knowledge. Classical and popular music were emphasised and legitimated to varying degrees in the cases depending on the teachers' view of empowering knowledge as residing more in one stylistic paradigm or the other. All teachers except Lydia were clear that the theoretical knowledge associated with classical music was more epistemologically significant than that associated with popular music.

### ***Theoretical and procedural knowledge***

Teachers differentiated between knowledge they identified as foundational and theoretical, and the more procedural skills associated with musical performance. The differentiation between theory and practice is to some degree structured into the senior school assessment standards; from the solo and group performance standards, where students have a high degree of autonomy in musical choice, to the standards in theory, aural, and study of set works, where the teacher makes the majority of the decisions regarding curriculum realisation. Standards such as composition and arranging require some balance of both foundational knowledge and personal input. Although not expressed in these terms, a certain degree of verticality was seen as central to learning. Leah however did express some skepticism about the underlying sequential and vertical structure of the curriculum document (see discussion in chapter four). It has little meaning or relevance for her as a guiding teaching principle when "in one class of thirty year 10 kids [skill levels] go from primary school right up to university level, there are multi levels in one class" (Leah, Interview 2).

It would be an over-simplification to suggest that all students aligned themselves unequivocally with popular music; nevertheless, within the focus groups (a total of 75 students) very few expressed a clear preference for classical music or stated that it was of paramount importance to them in a personal way. The majority of the students, however, in alignment with the views of their teachers, did see theoretical knowledge as aligned with the classical paradigm and of particular relevance to them as they progressed through levels of schooling. In Lydia's school (see chapter eight) where



there was little exposure to or value placed on classical music, students were still concerned with learning to read music:

After my first year I got some feedback from the students and lots of them said the main thing they want to learn in music is actually how to read music. If we go down this cool route of pop music and no one reads but the students themselves are saying ‘I can already play, I actually kind of want to come to music class to learn a bit more about styles I don’t know about, and about reading which I don’t know much about at the moment’ (Lydia, Interview 1).

The observed lessons at Lydia’s school demonstrated a level of disconnection between students’ desire to learn music reading and the difficulties for them and for the teacher in the realities of the teaching and learning process.

Across all cases practical musical experiences tended to be differentiated from more formal knowledge and were seen as a way of developing specific musical attitudes and dispositions. For example Leah suggests that learning in her music programme is about the development of skills, attitudes, and values associated with a certain projected professional identity:

I’m saying to them if you go out into the world there as a professional musician you don’t turn down a job just because that’s not your musical style, you know, you’re in this as a musician to gain, to have the best skills, to be as developed as you can be as a musician in all ways (Leah, Interview 1).

In case study six the boys at year 11 were more concerned with the way theoretical (classical) knowledge was a means to gain the skills required for assessment. In this case there was a clear differentiation between practical playing (seen with hindsight as “playing around”) and what they now regarded as ‘real learning’. Overriding the previous recognition and realisation rules (see chapter two) of the music department under Leah, the stronger recognition rules of the school and new emphasis in the department under David identified academic learning as the legitimate code for these students.

### *External categorisations of knowledge*

Strong ‘external’ discourses concerned with the form and shape that knowledge might take within the school setting create tensions for teachers in relation to balancing curriculum choices and pedagogy. For example, on one hand Leah (see chapter five) encouraged acceptance of all musical styles in an apparent aesthetic horizontality: “I just think you’ve got to respect people’s tastes”, and thought school music should be predominantly concerned with “music for all” (Interview 2). Yet when certain performances were produced in certain styles and in certain ways she found it unacceptable, particularly in the context of her interpretation of the externally prescribed assessment requirements:

For example, ‘No you’re not going to play a heavy metal piece of music because you love it because it’s not going to make any sense for me to try and assess it’, so I present them with choices remembering that this is a school assessment and there are criteria. You want to get an Excellence, so you present material that’s going to get you that (Leah, Interview 1).

Nevertheless Leah found the more vertical demands of assessment a negative force for some students. In one particular instance, in relation to the requirements for students to notate their compositions, her sense of ambivalence concerning the right path for some students and the structural barriers placed before them was clear: “There is this marvelous skill he has there of memorising all these songs he sits down and plays. So it is the assessment that sometimes doesn’t suit the [learning] style” (Interview 2). It is at the personal level of interaction that teachers may begin to question knowledge classification and begin to frame pedagogy in such a way as to challenge the power inherent in the official system. Performance and composition found their way into the New Zealand curriculum through changing classification of knowledge over time, and it may be that the current tension identified by Leah (and by other teachers in on-going discussions on the New Zealand music teachers website) between written and aural skills and the values associated with each, will again cause modifications to the curriculum in time.

### ***Theoretical knowledge enhances other music learning***

A further recurring dimension within the knowledge differentiation theme was the potential of theoretical knowledge to enhance creative and expressive outcomes particularly by exposing students to models and other ways of conceptualising music’s structure and language in composition:

It’s understanding that not all music has to have two guitars, bass, drums, vocals and then some synth keyboards in there ... you can do so much more than be locked onto three verses, a chorus, a bridge and a build-up (Beatrice, Interview 1).

I think that there is also a place for working things out theory-wise and knowing those things can stop those frustrations of “where do I go next with a piece” (Lydia, Interview 1).

Students are under pressure to compose everything new but this is not really possible ... first they can learn by copying, moderating, changing, and then creating their own [music] but without learning the fundamentals or elements their composition will be very weak (David, Interview 1).

It would be really easy to teach song writing and not explain anything about chord sequences .... we talk about, if we move the starting key, the home key, our key centre has changed, if we start on A instead of C then what are our other chords going to be, so thinking about chord progressions, thinking about shape and structure and form. I like to come back to the elements of music all the time. I think that is probably my biggest guiding principle in education (Beatrice, Interview 1).

Most of the teachers expressed the view that classical music provides more potential for introduction to important musical concepts because of its substance and complexity. Given the apparent importance placed on popular music by most of the teachers it is interesting that it is still seen as less appropriate for academic study by both teachers and students:

It would be very hard to find compositional devices like inversion and sequence, really the technical things. It would be very hard to find those things inside popular music. There might be some examples in art rock (Miles, Interview 1).

Year 12 student case 1 (b): [classical music is] a bit more complex than pop music, you need to listen to it and slowly build your liking to it.

Year 13 student case 2 (g): If you're learning the musical elements and features and things like that, there's not much you can draw out of pop/rock music that you can't draw out, comparatively, of classical music.

Year 13 student case 2 (b): Like a modern day pop song that has verses and chorus and maybe a bridge, the elements of that like compared to Stravinsky's work which is so complex and there's a lot more to study in classical music I suppose.

Year 13 student case 2 (f): In terms of learning about music, learning about classical music kind of opens more doors in terms of being able to understand, like pop and rock music.

Year 13 student case 5 (f): I think the reason why classical has the bulk of the theory is because pop music is pretty straightforward, there is nothing that complicated about it that you would need to study.

Two students at Seaview College held a differing opinion. At this school the students were in the process of studying a pop work in class with Miles (see comment above):

Year 13 student case 3 (a): You can use pop music in an academic way. I listen to a lot of funk and there's a lot of articulation and timing and stuff that is really important that you have to learn so there is quite a bit of academic in pop music.

Year 13 student case 3 (f): I think that the thought that goes into pop music is more than people realise.

Popular music's potential was seen as not so much theoretical but as directly relevant to students:

Classical music is the type of music that you can appreciate but with popular music you can really feel. For me I just think with classical music you sit there [with the music] in front of you and you play it as is, but with popular music you can really get into it. [A friend] and I were having a jam the other day and we could really get into the songs that we were playing and for me it's got more meaning than classical music .... You can really put how you feel into the music ... whereas classical music it's just a piece of music (Year 13 student case 3(a)).

Miles and Robert utilised popular music's potential to draw in social and contextual issues and in this way brought some degree of academic legitimation to popular music's delineations, if not always to its inherent meaning (Green, 2005):

In broader terms I would say popular music is more relevant socially to a lot of these kids. You can discuss the social implications and the social pressures that someone like Mozart or Beethoven had to write under but if you had to talk about slavery with blues you can compare it with poverty in the States or even in parts of New Zealand ... you can make it very relevant and you study a lot about the world through contemporary music (Robert, Interview 1).

### *Music of substance and authenticity*

Another property of knowledge differentiation identified by teachers relates to musical substance and complexity: the expectation that music worthy of study will display certain qualities or have an authenticity in its conception. Both classical and popular music could display these qualities and both teachers and students identified them in discussions. Popular music chosen for study and performance is less likely to be from the current top 40 (see Miles's comment in next section) but will exhibit features of some substance, created and performed by 'serious' popular musicians who compose music with certain qualities:

[The music is] quite experimental and musically complex ... while they're working in a reasonably popular idiom [the music] still pushes the boundaries, so for a musician it's interesting and it's captivating and it's engaging because it has something of musical interest (Beatrice, Interview 1).

A lot of people are getting attention for what they do and how they dress rather than the music (Student, case study three).

It's got to have that elusive soul to it. I think the best music is written from a place of inspiration ... lots of pop music you can't believe it (Robert, interview 1).

This notion of authenticity was a recurring theme in the student focus groups. Good music needs to show qualities such as originality, meaningful lyrics, artistic motivation, and talent.

### *Prior knowledge*

Also related to knowledge differentiation are assumptions concerning students' prior knowledge of popular music, both its intrinsic stylistic features and its contextual/social dimensions. Three of the teachers suggested that it is not at all accurate to assume students have musical or critical understanding of popular music en masse, and the facilitation of critical skills is an important part of music education's project. Given the transient nature of much popular music Miles suggested that most music chosen by teachers for study is seen as from the past: "even if it's from after 1992 these kids were nine or one or not even born yet, so popular is a bit of a misnomer" (Miles, Interview 1).

For Robert (chapter nine) popular music served as a rich source of learning about social history, and for all the teachers except David (chapter ten) popular music was seen as way into learning; a means to motivate and a place to begin the learning journey. Students' prior knowledge can be highly variable comprising for example horizontal knowledge focusing on constructional and receptional competence (playing, creating, and fluency with stylistic conventions) and the vertical knowledge of instrumental instruction often providing knowledge of music theory.

### *Assessment*

The discourse of assessment underpins and has a significant influence on knowledge differentiation in senior elective music. All the teachers acknowledge the effect of assessment (see Leah's dilemma for some students above) and Beatrice suggests "I think it would be fair to say that your average teacher teaches to the achievement standards, you have to, we are driven by assessment, it's awful, I think it's dreadful" (Beatrice, Interview 1). Assessment can also act as a legitimising, motivating, or even a demotivating mechanism as in Lydia's case (see chapter eight). Her problem was whether or not to utilise the external assessments in score reading and aural in which her school had traditionally performed poorly. This involved a tension between needing to provide targets for her students and not wanting to set them up for failure. She found students were demotivated without the external impetus for study.

The effect of the evaluative criteria was also strong for Leah: "I present them with choices remembering that this is a school assessment and there are criteria. You want to get an Excellence, so you present material that's going to get you that" (Leah, Interview 1). In a more positive frame Miles (chapter seven) uses the flexibility inherent in the assessment system to create courses that will maximise the success for students. The assessment standards do not prescribe the style of music that is to be utilised to realise the learning outcomes.

### *Vocational knowledge*

Leah, Beatrice, Lydia, Robert, and David all made mention of the world of the professional musician and the music industry in relation to students having to develop certain skills and attributes, in particular music reading and an ability to be stylistically flexible:

I'm saying to them if you go out into the world there as a professional musician you don't turn down a job just because that's not your musical style, you know, you're in this as a musician to gain, to have the best skills, to be as developed as you can as a musician in all ways (Leah, Interview 1).

I want them to have a course that can set them up to go and be an industry musician if that is what they choose ... so that guides me in the kind of experiences and the

knowledge that I think they're going to need to have, say going for a Bachelor of Media Arts in song writing or music production (Beatrice, Interview 1).

Some students can't read. I say "if you want to play in New York in a musical or whatever you will have to read" (David, Interview 1).

Looking at the music industry from a different angle Lydia aims for a more personal approach to song writing and performing than she often perceives in the popular music world:

I get really sick of all the image stuff and the disposable kind of this is the hit of the week this week but then throw it out next week. It's this stuff and the short attention span of it all (Lydia, Interview 1).

The outside world of the popular music industry also has many musicians who learn on the job and have no training. This fact creates some ambivalence for Lydia about the purpose of education and popular music's place in particular within it:

A lot of it people know it inherently anyway, so do we need to teach it? .... I'm not sure, I don't know. There were times in studying the type of music that I studied that I wondered what is there about studying this music. I don't know if it's important to study it (Lydia, Interview 1).

Through solo and group performance work teachers provide space for students to develop appropriate 'knower' identities associated with their chosen instrument, such as that of a jazz drummer or a classical violin player. This involves building knowledge of practices, conventions, and standards of excellence within particular music subfields. The influence of the itinerant or private instrumental teachers is the primary developmental influence in this regard. But teachers seemed on the whole to regard the musical learning within the school context as not aimed at mirroring real-world contexts. There was a view that students needed to focus on building skills and developing knowledge they will need in the real world by focusing on these aspects out of context.

### *Student perceptions*

For students it appears their perspectives on knowledge differentiation change as they make the transition from junior to senior schooling where assessment becomes a primary focus of their educational endeavours. This was clearly shown in the change of perspective of the students visited in year 10 at Riverside School (chapter five) and then revisited with David one year later in year 11. 'Learning more' was equated with learning what was required to succeed in assessments, and the fun of practical and relatively unstructured music-making of year 10 was seen as not preparing them for what was now required. In this way there is a level of trust that the students place in their teacher to provide them with the knowledge that official discourse suggests is required for success. Personal values concerning what music is of most interest and relevance to students can be held in

rationalised check by the powerful motivation to gain qualifications. There was a general acceptance that the curriculum needed to introduce students to knowledge that would be beneficial for their longer-term development and that this would not always align with what they regarded as most fun to learn. Students may be unaware of the fact that curriculum specifications are largely generic and that hypothetically it would be possible for them to focus only on popular music in all dimensions of the curriculum. In this regard teachers remain the gate-keepers and have control of the forms of consciousness developed by students in their departments.

### **Legitimation - recontextualising the horizontal**

Bernstein (2000) has noted a trend in education towards incorporating aspects of horizontal discourse “to facilitate access” (p. 169) and this was certainly the case for music when performance and composition were added to the curriculum (see chapter four). There is a danger, however, where access is artificially created for particular social groups (often the ‘less able’) that the curriculum is ‘watered-down’, and essential knowledge components can be under-specified or not covered at all (Muller, 2006). In music the inclusion of popular music is clearly “a crucial resource for pedagogic populism in the name of empowering or unsilencing voices to combat the elitism and alleged authoritarianism of Vertical discourse” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 170). Whitty (2010) also suggests “we have an obligation to explore ways of making connections between school and non-school knowledge” (p. 40). If there is a belief in the learning potential of aspects of horizontal discourse then teachers may legitimise it through the recontextualising lens of the regulative and instructional discourse. Affirmation can be formalised through legitimation where certain music or musical practices and areas of interest become authorised or sanctioned within a learning programme as legitimate texts requiring evaluation. If there is scaffolding of learning from the horizontal to the required verticality of school knowledge then the inclusion of aspects of horizontal discourse need not be entirely problematic. This requires strong framing of the evaluation criteria for students (see for example Beatrice’s song writing lesson in chapter six). Where established school recognition and realisation rules are strong students may not accept certain practices as ‘real’ learning, for example in-class group rehearsing and playing (see case study six, chapter ten).

Over the cases it was found that while teachers regard student experience as important and relevant to learning, they recontextualised aspects of this more horizontal discourse substantially for the school setting. In this way affirmation and matters of student identity interact with ideological positions on the adaptation and reframing of horizontal knowledge forms to align more readily with the innately vertical structures of schooling. In one case Beatrice (chapter six) has instigated a separate course for popular music, thereby establishing a view of classical and popular music

knowledge as distinct from each other. The two courses establish strong classification, seemingly to keep these musical genres apart. Such a structure appears to validate both the interests of potential learners and the development of particular musician identities (a social relation), and suggests that there is a specialised knowledge content to be transmitted (an epistemic relation) in each course. This distinct classification sends a clear signal of legitimation to the school's pool of potential popular music learners. Moreover Beatrice clearly values the development of both theoretical and practical music knowledge within the popular music course: "It would be really easy to teach [popular] song writing and not explain anything about chord sequences .... I like to come back to the elements of music all the time. I think that is probably my biggest guiding principle in education" (Beatrice, Interview 1). Beatrice considers that there is a body of objective music knowledge that is important, and that many concepts are common to both classical and popular music ("it's not necessarily different skills but it's a different context for learning" Beatrice, Interview 1). Essentially the contemporary course she runs contains components of horizontal discourse (informal group song writing) where traditional hierarchical rules of student-teacher interaction are relaxed, but Beatrice's approach remains a highly managed introduction of horizontal aspects into the vertical structure of the school as she maintains control over content, sequence, pacing, and evaluation (see chapter six – junior song writing).

There is no structural response to the classification of popular music in Leah's department, but rather student interest and enthusiasm are accommodated within the one course where popular music dominates. Nevertheless the transplanting of horizontal practices into the school setting is seen as somewhat problematic. Leah recalls that in her first year at the school students would present what she considered inappropriate performances for assessment:

Kids [were] standing up there doing a big lead break out of something. Hello, what was that? Well that's very fancy but what does it mean ... this is a performance. Where is your beginning, middle and end? You've taken a bit out of a band piece, now how am I supposed to assess that? (Leah, Interview 1).

Leah is clear in what she regards as appropriate in the production of legitimate responses within the context of assessment: "It's less about your personal music and more about what you need to do to get a result" (Leah, Interview 1). Nevertheless both teachers are attempting to create links between procedural and theoretical knowledge, between horizontal and vertical knowledge, to enable students to make connections from their personal endeavours to the wider bodies of knowledge and fields of practice from which they take their inspiration. The process is a complex one particularly given the constraints of teaching time in which to cover potential learning areas. Moreover in a field where assessment exerts a powerful influence over curriculum realisation, horizontal elements will



always need to comply to some degree with the notion of verticality which is inherent in the structure of pedagogic discourse.

As discourses become recontextualised at the local level and realised in personal social interactions, the seeds for change emerge as educators such as Leah (chapter five) and Lydia (chapter eight) begin to question the dimensions of vertical discourse that can result in a sense of detachment, or even worse, alienation for students in relation to school music. Leah shows some reluctance to reproduce without question aspects of the educational transmission code that underpins the official pedagogic discourse, and finds that for some students the system does not legitimate less traditionally literate approaches (see chapter five). Miles (chapter seven) manages to accept students with varied musical literacy backgrounds into his senior course, adapting the content and standards for assessment to maximise potential success.

## **Pragmatism**

An undercurrent of pragmatism also ran through the stories of the case studies, although this was a less explicit theme. At the local level teachers often make pragmatic decisions in their need to function successfully on a daily basis. At times actions were dictated by consideration of more immediate practical concerns. This does not lessen the sense of ethics or ‘inner calling’, or the valuing of knowledge, as teachers are forced towards more political struggles or manoeuvres. For example Beatrice (chapter six) has utilised student interest in popular music to create a new course and to boost the numbers of enrolments in elective senior music classes:

The motivation initially was purely a numbers game ... we’d got to the point where our music option numbers were quite low, yet we have all these kids taking guitar lessons, drum lessons, vocal lessons who were just doing other things, music wasn’t considered [an option] ... so let’s cater for them (Beatrice, Interview 1).

Bernstein (2000) describes his notion of singulars and the strong identities associated with them as like a coin with two faces – one sacred and one profane - where inner dedications can co-exist with “a finely honed capacity to protect self-interest where necessary” (Beck, 2002, p. 619).

At a more practical level one reason David (chapter ten) gave for not including popular music works for study in his current programme was the availability of resources. Lydia (chapter eight) also relied on what resources were available in her choice of classical music works for study. Miles (chapter seven) identified this as a major factor and concern: “It’s good to have flexibility but I think that the curriculum being so broad has led to a real dearth of resources” (Miles, Interview 1). Leah also identified that often just to make it through the day she would give in to certain pressures and demands of the job:

[The push for practical work] comes from the kids, ‘when are we going to do practical’, they beat you down, and then sometimes you wonder, when you’re verging on madness, now really there is too much of this, and for your sanity you think it would be so nice to do a bit more listening (Leah, Interview 2).

On a return visit to Leah’s school one year on a student noted:

I reckon she was a bit lenient with us last year, honestly I feel she used to be. I think she was intimidated by us in a way as she used to let us go to practical a lot. In hindsight if you look at it there was a vast amount of practical (year 12 student).

Leah’s position exemplifies Wright’s (2008) observation that pragmatic considerations for the teacher cannot be overlooked or regarded as insignificant as teachers work to balance curriculum ideals and teaching realities: “Striking the right balance between musical autonomy and progression and achievement, with attendant issues of classroom management and control is emerging as one of the issues with which music educators will have to grapple in taking music forward as a curriculum subject” (Wright, 2008, p. 396). Resources, spaces, teaching allocations, and human energy levels necessarily impact on the ideals of teaching.

## **Biographical influences**

It was hypothesised in chapters one and two that teachers’ curriculum conception and realisation is likely to be the result of a complex web of factors and that their personal experiences and values will have a strong influence on the curriculum their students experience. The generic nature of curriculum specification has led to a situation where music teachers experience a high level of autonomy, enabling them to respond idiosyncratically at a local level. As Miles suggested in chapter seven:

I think that the freedom in the curriculum and the breadth of what’s been asked for have created a lot of probably quite successful but highly localised music courses and mine is an example. It’s highly localised. There wouldn’t been any other teachers teaching the exact content, combination, or having the same expectations as me (Miles, Interview 1).

Barrett (2009) suggests that “the deep roots” of teachers’ values and practices are found in experience, in the trajectories of their stories as learners and teachers (p. 13). Teachers’ personal histories can see them “perpetuating traditional practices or altering them” (Barrett, 2009, p. 13). Even in altering them, as suggested in chapter three, teachers run the risk of simply replacing one ideology with another if the epistemological implications of the curriculum are not fully and critically considered. For example Allsup (2003) has suggested that “teachers who include popular culture in their classroom may be seen as perpetuating the ideology of the new, commercial ruling class” (p. 8).

The case studies presented varying degrees of alignment between teachers' personal musical values and their curriculum realisation. For some teachers having missed out on certain experiences during their education was a strong motivation for providing that learning for students: "I would like to expose them to some western art music. That's what I'm thinking in what I choose, because that's something I felt like I missed out on" (Lydia, Interview 1). Beatrice (chapter six) is also to some degree making up for experiences she missed as a child by championing popular music within her department:

I always envied the other kids at school who could do that stuff. There was a student a year older than me and he was great violinist but also a really good guitarist and I was so jealous (Beatrice Interview 2).

Beatrice aims to provide her students with the possibility to cross stylistic boundaries as she now does in her own musical life. Beatrice also makes a connection between the positive socially-based and fun music learning experiences she had as a child and some negative experiences as a teenager which together result in her strong belief that music learning should be enjoyable: "I think the kids have to have fun, it can't just be about the music, it has to be holistic" (Beatrice, Interview 2). In Beatrice's case her confidence, clarity of purpose, musicianship, ambition, and sense of fun create a powerful influence on students. The interviews with students revealed a clear alignment between Beatrice's strong vision and the outlook and experiences of her students (see chapter six).

The theme of including what was missing from early experiences was present in both Miles's (chapter seven) and Robert's (chapter ten) discourses as well. They both have as a stated aim the inclusion of content that they missed out on at school, through lack of opportunity in Miles's case and through lack of interest in Robert's:

There's a lot missing. There's a lot to be said for a proper education and I don't have one (Miles, Interview 1).

Friends learnt piano from a young age and had the theoretical side ...and they would move on to guitar or drums or whatever and they wouldn't have to worry because they could read .... It wasn't until I got to University that I really went "oh, you idiot, you should have really paid a lot more attention" (Robert, Interview 1).

Leah's experience (chapter five) of a wide variety of music during her upbringing and her enjoyment of playing clearly influence the stylistic mix and practical emphasis present in her programme. For Lydia (chapter eight) there was an alignment between her identification of the need to find creative and expressive outlets as a musician rather than being a session player, and the resulting emphasis she demonstrates towards helping her students find their own voice:

That wasn't exactly what I wanted to be doing ... there was still something in me that wanted to have a voice and expression through song writing so playing bass in my own band that's playing my music, or that I've played a part in creating that music as opposed to coming in like a session musician (Lydia, Interview 1).

If they are getting enjoyment out of [music at school], if it's helping them develop who they are as people, they are expressing themselves, they might be composing, talking about what's important to them through their songs, then that is what I think is important (Lydia, Interview 1).

Lydia and Miles did not experience classroom music at school and both have responded to this in different ways. Both express concerns about gaps in their own knowledge; but Miles, after twenty-two years of teaching has mostly filled those gaps. For Lydia this background remains problematic (see chapter eight). Miles's own unorthodox route to becoming a musician/educator may be an influence on his decision to include students in his senior classes who do not have the usual prerequisites and his willingness to construct courses based around their strengths. Unusually amongst the teachers Miles chooses to keep his personal and professional tastes in music quite separate, compared to the other case study teachers who tend to champion the music they personally feel strongly about:

I never teach music that I enjoy listening to in my own space .... I wouldn't listen to any of those works outside of the sphere of school because it would be like work and there is more music in the world. I'd much rather listen to my music, maybe it's a gate keeping thing (Miles, Interview 1).

For Miles, whose own musical education occurred mostly in the social context of playing, the most important curriculum realisation principles appear to be a partnership between practice and theory. David too (chapter ten), who trained as a performer and conductor, has chosen a theoretical emphasis in his department somewhat at odds with his own personal training.

Aspects of personality and vision and the teacher's attitude to learning can also be significant factors in the myriad of influences for students in the local experience of a music education. In case study five (Robert, see chapter nine) the students were clear that their music teachers were different from some other teachers. Students felt that their own positive attitude to learning was a reflection of what they saw coming from their teachers:

Year 11 student case five (e): I think it comes from the teachers because they actually care about what they're teaching and they care if we don't understand. If they weren't interested in teaching us then I probably wouldn't be interested in trying to learn as much.

Year 11 student case five (a): Both are really good teachers.

Year 11 student case five (b): They [non-music teachers] don't care as much.

Year 11 student (c): They're really into what they're doing.

## **Context**

Corbin and Strauss (2008) suggest that context “doesn't determine experience or set the course of action, but it does identify the sets of conditions in which problems and/or situations arise and to which persons respond through some form of action/interaction” (p. 88). The broader national educational context has been presented in chapter four and the international and historical cultural contextual features outlined fully in chapter three. The main contextual influences identified by the case study teachers are discussed below.

### ***Influences of the school culture***

School communities and contexts provide more than a backdrop to music programs; they influence what is taught and learned. In vital ways, the music curriculum is constrained by the limitations of schedule, resources and facilities as well as the shared values and expectations of members of the school community (Barrett, 2009, p. 14).

The potential for recontextualisation at the local level is determined by the autonomy of the teacher, which in turn is dependent on the culture of the school and its relation to the official knowledge of the recontextualising field (Bernstein, 2000). In a school with a particular investment in music as cultural and social capital, pressures are likely to be brought to bear on teachers - from management and parents - to include music of a particular type. Bernstein (1990/2003) has suggested that what is reproduced at this level may well be influenced by the power relationships between the school “and the primary cultural context of the acquirer (family/community/peer relations)” (p. 199). In a school where there are few expectations regarding music, either within the curriculum or as a co-curricular endeavour, the teacher may be relatively free to follow personal preferences. Furthermore in schools such as Lydia's which regard music as a subject of relative unimportance, there may be greater insulation from compliance with official pedagogic discourse.

The relative autonomy of the teachers in the case studies varied, but all of them had the power to shape and determine their curriculum content. None of the teachers reported any influence from senior management on their capacity to shape classroom curriculum as they saw fit. Senior managers often regard music as somewhat mystifying and rely on the professionalism of their staff to deliver an appropriate curriculum with a minimum of interference. Bernstein's (1975/2003) comments regarding art's peripheral status within education is equally applicable to music:

The art room is often viewed by the rest of the staff as an area of relaxation or even therapy, rather than a space of crucial production. Because of its strong classification and irrelevance (except at school 'show-off' periods) this space is potentially open to change (p. 138).

Miles (see chapter seven) identified a community influence in regard to the inclusion of classical music in the classroom: “the community expectation would be that they learnt something about art music and classical music” (Miles, Interview 1). The way in which music is or is not valued by the senior management and by the parents and school community at large is beyond the control of teachers, although a successful music programme may in turn influence such values. Lydia expressed her frustration at her school where the value of music is questioned: “I find that when I’m in the parent teacher interviews that parents are going, ‘well it’s great that my kid likes learning music but what jobs are out there’. There is a huge focus on education being vocational” (Lydia, Interview 1). The cultural make-up and socio-economic status of the community is therefore a strong influence on the type of programme that can be realised. The state-funded itinerant instrumental tuition system is a vital link in the chain of support for music departments, as was the case at Robert’s school (see chapter nine) where most of the students’ musical experiences were reliant on what was available at the school.

Leah suggested the growth of music at Riverside School was limited by the fact that the middle and senior schools work on different timetables. For example working with ensembles across curriculum levels was impossible. The influence on teachers’ work, both positive and negative, of music department and other colleagues was also noted, mostly in passing, as another less significant factor.

***“Music is bigger than just the classroom” – co-curricular music as a reflection of the pedagogic discourse***

The importance of the co-curricular life in most music departments is integral to the department’s identity, and success is a significant factor in how the school community and senior management may view and value music overall. Teachers often gain high levels of professional satisfaction from this dimension of their work and the opportunities offered within the school are a clear outward indication of the music that is valued within the school and the school community. Leah (see chapter five) recalls the immense satisfaction of the high achieving girls’ band at her first school: “Even now when I play the video of their performances I’m still stunned at the musicality of those girls. It’s astonishing” (Leah, Interview 1). One part of Lydia’s plan to raise the profile of music in her school involves developing the funk band, a choir that focuses on popular music, and a number of student-run reggae bands. At Beatrice’s school the interplay between the extensive co-curricular programme and the classroom was pivotal for those students in the elective programmes:

Year 13 student case two (f): Music in this department is bigger than just the classroom and I think the performance opportunities we have here and the groups that we can perform in and the music that we perform in those groups is enhanced by what we learn in the classroom.

Robert noted the influence of senior management in relation to the public image of music in the wider school culture. Robert is prepared to meet the expectations of senior management in terms of providing music appropriate for whole school occasions versus music that is more appropriate to the confines of the music centre: “Thursdays down in the band room, we get the bands to play and the kids come and go absolutely crazy” (Robert, Interview 1).

Although not the focus of this research, it was clear that co-curricular activities covering a range of styles were the aim of most of the teachers, but given the limits of staffing and resourcing these were not always possible.

### ***Influences from the Official Recontextualising Field***

As outlined in chapter four, changes in the wider context of education in New Zealand provide an influential backdrop with which teachers interact in the formulation of their local curriculum. Utilising Bernstein’s concept of regionalisation I suggest in that chapter that school music is in transition from its clearly defined origins as a ‘singular’ to its ‘regionalisation’ by new content and knowledges. The strong unitary classification of the subject has changed as new and multiple knowledge contents create a region where boundaries between academic, vocational, and everyday musical knowledge have been considerably weakened. The national curriculum statements are predominantly generic and express curricular content in terms of skills and outcomes, potentially weakening boundaries between subjects and their underlying bodies of knowledge (Young & Muller, 2010). The assessment standards in the senior curriculum encourage a modularised curriculum realisation and an emphasis on assessment and qualifications. Wheelahan (2010b) suggests that the “outcomes of learning need to be specified in advance so ‘purchasers’ can ‘choose’ what they will buy based on the criteria of relevance and utility” (p. 110). She argues this creates a market identity rather than one associated with disciplinary boundaries reflecting the new discourse of vocationalism realised in instrumentalist policies and procedures within education: “the principle for curricular recontextualisation is instrumentalism and relevance, not systematic access to structures of knowledge” (Wheelahan, 2010b, p. 104). Teachers are influenced by these changes no matter what their personal values are concerning a music curriculum. On the positive side, these changes have provided teachers with the opportunity to plan and shape their own courses which can reflect their strengths and the interests of their students. In the section on knowledge differentiation above, the significant influence of the assessment standards on teachers was noted, whereas only one of the case study teachers mentioned that the national curriculum document was utilised as a guide. The de-differentiation of knowledge progression (Muller, 2006) and the varying degrees of verticality within the senior curriculum documents present significant challenges for curriculum

construction and pedagogy. In the case of music where there are no locally produced text books and limited local resources, the relationship between content and appropriate conceptual and skill development is dependent on the understandings of the teacher. There is a concern that unacceptable levels of variance can occur where teachers may not possess the requisite knowledge to choose and convey appropriate content.

The modularised structure of the NCEA achievement standards coupled with student choice has a marked effect on the curriculum structure and pedagogy in the senior years of schooling. Beatrice (chapter six) provided her senior students with a high degree of choice and this led to individualised learning programmes. The observed lesson with David's senior students (chapter ten) also demonstrated considerable autonomy for students as they worked individually on compositions. Such a modularised approach may allow individual students to follow lines of specialization and interest but can result in a lack of any underlying contextual knowledge.

Broadly speaking the influences of the ORF in New Zealand are similar to those in other western countries and comprise a mix of social constructivism and technical instrumentalism (Wheelaan, 2010a). The place of subject-based disciplinary knowledge has been weakened by curriculum changes that move towards outcome specifications and generic skills rather than bodies of knowledge. As Young (2010a; 2010b) has observed, the motivation for such changes is socially laudable in that the aim is to reduce boundaries that are perceived to constrain and limit learning. Such approaches do not always take into account the importance of knowledge structures and the way in which knowledge boundaries can enhance students' chances of developing the conceptual skills to function democratically in society (Young, 2010a; 2010b). The process of recontextualisation for music teachers is made all the more challenging because of these changes:

I think that the freedom in the curriculum and the breadth of what's been asked for have created a lot of probably quite successful but highly localised music courses and mine is an example. It's highly localised. There wouldn't been any other teachers teaching the exact content, combination, or having the same expectations as me (Miles, Interview 1).

## **Summary**

Each case presented its own holistic pedagogic modality which can be expressed through the use of Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing and curriculum codes. The modality is a complex and dynamic outcome of each teacher's classification and framing of knowledge chosen for their curriculum and realised as a pedagogic discourse that recontextualises aspects of vertical and horizontal discourse against the backdrop of varied contextual influences. The instructional discourse (the 'what' of the curriculum) is embedded in the regulative discourse (a teacher's view of why something is important). The regulative discourse, consisting of the teacher's values, therefore



influences the decisions in relation to the instructional discourse (Bernstein, 2000). For example Lydia's strong belief in music as a means of developing an individual's voice and identity results in a pedagogic discourse characterised overall by comparatively weak classification and framing. In all but David's case it was clear that aspects of the horizontal discourse of popular music learning were recontextualised to align with the more vertical requirements of learning and assessment of the school context. In analysing the dynamics of the pedagogic modalities I utilise Moore and Maton's (2001) concept of the epistemic device, a generative principle within knowledge production, as a means to highlight the underlying recontextualisation principles used by teachers. This idea extends Bernstein's concepts of knowledge categories and structures and theorises that in the field of knowledge production knowledge is selected and transformed through underlying principles of legitimation which emphasise modalities of knowledge or knower modes. Due to the high level of autonomy experienced by New Zealand music teachers and the high degree of flexibility in curriculum realisation, a similar process is undertaken within the process of curriculum recontextualisation by teachers as they select most predominantly between classical and popular paradigms. The values within the regulative and instructional discourse of the teacher (itself the result of complex dynamics of influence) results in favoured modalities or orientations to curriculum conception and pedagogy.

Within the recontextualising field of elective secondary school music as described in these case studies I suggest a knowledge orientation is characterised by legitimation and emphasis on theoretical knowledge; music can be an object of study through which conceptual knowledge that is both context-relevant and context independent is developed. This knowledge can be realised through a combination of academic and practical means, each dimension enriching the other (see for example case studies two, three, and five). The learner orientation on the other hand emphasises the musical interests and experiences of the student, regarding these aspects as of paramount importance in the development of the individual's particular expressive and creative 'voice'. This orientation sees curriculum and pedagogy as learner-led and aimed at "opening access, widening participation, and promoting social inclusion" (Young, 2010a, p. 21) (see for example case study four). That the two orientations are not mutually exclusive is made clear by the way in which most of the case study teachers sought a balance between these two orientations in curriculum conception. In this way the cases can be placed on a continuum of emphasis between these two orientations:



dimension of the curriculum the influence of the teacher is pivotal in the creation of a localised curriculum (see for example chapter five).

Music appears more complex than other subjects because of the variety of knowledge structures within its segments (see chapter four) which necessitate varied approaches from segment to segment. The type of pedagogic orientation with its classification and framing of knowledge can also vary according to which segment of the curriculum is being covered, and the degree to which classification of knowledge is locally or externally derived. For example there is often weaker classification and framing in relation to composition, where 'rules' and set concepts are less rigidly enforced than in music theory or analysis. In composition, knowledge classification can therefore be described as weak or more horizontal. In performance, however, while there is a degree of choice, the evaluative rules which constitute part of the framing of pedagogy are often strong, providing a clear indication to students as to what is expected in the realisation of a legitimate text. The conventions and standards of practice in many musical sub-fields provide exemplars and models for emulation and this creates a strong external classification, whereas the flexibility offered to students in repertoire choice creates weak framing. In this way, as Bernstein (2000) suggests, "framing is conceptualised as the locus of control over pedagogic communication ... framing varies according to whether the locus of control is towards the transmitter or towards the acquirer" (p. 179). It is the teacher's musical and educational values that influence the mediation process between competing discourses, creating pedagogic orientations that "are crucial realisations of symbolic control, and thus of the process of cultural production and reproduction" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 201). Teachers make judgements of value when they choose to include something in the curriculum. Their decisions relay not only which discourses and competencies are valued but also which teacher-learner relations are given preference (Neves & Morais, 2001b). Rather than taking for granted a functionalist sociology of schooling, where the transmission of accepted knowledge is seen as unproblematic, these case study teachers acknowledge the increasing need to accommodate varied competing approaches to schooling. They appear to be trying to find a balance, the makeup of which varies from case to case, in accommodating both the knowledge (epistemic) and learner (social) dimensions of curriculum realisation; finding a balance for students, the majority of whom play popular music, between a certain level of learning relevance and autonomy while also providing the generative conceptual knowledge that underpins the discipline. Each teacher's sense of education's primary purpose comes into play to shape how the various influences combine within the discourse.

Classical and popular music were emphasised and legitimated to varying degrees in the cases depending on the teacher's association of empowering knowledge as residing more in one paradigm or another, and this tended to be realised as a learner or knowledge orientation. All teachers except

Lydia held the view that the theoretical knowledge associated with classical music was more epistemologically significant than that of popular music in developing context-independent knowledge. All the teachers considered that music theory knowledge was as important as students' own playing and area of interest, and students also reinforced this view. Music reading in particular was seen as a form of powerful knowledge, often for some students just out of reach. Theoretical and analytical knowledge was almost exclusively conflated with the classical paradigm. Popular music's reliance on comparatively less complex structuring procedures and its comparative lack of history seemed to work against its status as a vehicle for 'serious' academic study. Nevertheless popular music can certainly cross the vertical-horizontal knowledge divide (see chapters six, seven, and nine) and become part of a principled discourse where it is linked to concepts regarded as universal within western music.

Finding a balance between the potential empowerment of localised and student-centred education while retaining knowledge components that are thought to engender wider and context independent learning can be described as the central challenge faced by these teachers. Metaphors of journeys, broadening horizons, opening doors, testing boundaries, influencing pathways, and redefining comfort zones were part of the language both teachers and students used to describe what music at school was for. As Robert described it the central concern of his work was to take students beyond their "pond of experience" (Robert, chapter nine). Teachers' recontextualising principles either tended to emphasise the epistemic, or the social, or to attempt to balance both dimensions. As indicated above, the national assessment structures provide a structural backdrop within the ORF but due to their generic nature and the de-differentiation of knowledge progression, the realisation within the PRF can be highly localised. In each context teachers make decisions bringing into play many influences such as their personal values and experiences, influential educational discourses, the values of the school, the interests of the students, and the pragmatic realities of daily teaching.

This chapter concludes by providing a summary list of the key assertions (Stake, 1995) that can be made from the cross-case analysis.

## Summary of key assertions from the cases

- A prime motivating value for all participants is their ethical responsibility as a teacher, therefore personal musical values to a large degree become modified by educational values.
- Strong discourses of student-centred (progressive) learning permeate both the official and local recontextualising fields and exert a strong influence on approaches to curriculum and pedagogy in the form of the affirmation and legitimation of what is perceived to be a student-relevant curriculum.
- Teachers seek to affirm and validate students' interests and experience but also balance this with knowledge they think is epistemologically important. This knowledge includes classical music and its associated theoretical knowledge.
- Teachers legitimate informal learning (horizontal discourse) by including it and also by recontextualising it to enhance its conceptual content. In this way it aligns more readily with the verticality inherent in the education system.
- The cases show pedagogic orientations that realise pedagogic discourse along an epistemic/social continuum. This can differ for various segments of the curriculum.
- Where there is scaffolding of learning from the horizontal to the required verticality of school knowledge then the inclusion of aspects of horizontal discourse appears to be highly productive at least in terms of attitudes to musical diversity.
- Classical music and popular music are mostly strongly classified as distinct knowledge types but there is a weakening of boundaries as stylistic diversity at the level of interaction acts back on classification, altering the relations of power.
- Teachers consider their task to be that of enhancing musical knowledge through widening student exposure to different types of music.
- Practical or procedural knowledge realised in performing and composing is most strongly associated with popular music as this is the most predominant style utilised in student music-making. Teachers allow students a high degree of autonomy in choosing music for solo and group performance. In other curriculum areas teachers intervene to ensure what they consider to be appropriate development of knowledge and skills utilising a mix of styles.
- The cases demonstrate that teachers utilise knowledge from both the classical and popular paradigms but that classical music is regarded as providing more potential to meet academic learning imperatives.
- Teachers and students associate classical music with foundational theoretical knowledge (the epistemic) and popular music with student voice (the social).
- The majority of students consider exposure to classical music and the theoretical knowledge associated with it as foundational and therefore important to retain in the curriculum.

- The cases show that teachers exert a high level of autonomy in shaping curriculum and pedagogy according to their particular contexts.
- Contextual influences from the official recontextualising field such as regionalisation, modularisation, instrumentalism, and constructivism create additional challenges for teachers within the pedagogic recontextualising field, particularly through the de-differentiation of knowledge.
- The cases show the potential of the assessment standards to provide a structured balance between foundational knowledge that is teacher chosen (e.g. music theory, study of set works), knowledge developed through negotiation of student and teacher input (e.g. compositions) and student voice (e.g. performance). This balance is to some degree undermined by the degree of choice inherent in the national assessment system and the de-differentiation of knowledge progression in the predominantly generic curriculum statements.
- Most of the teachers demonstrated an instructional discourse with mixed modality framing of teaching: strong framing over knowledge selection and evaluation and weaker framing over pacing and hierarchical relations.

# CHAPTER TWELVE: MUSIC CHOICE AS A SYMBOL OF STRUCTURE AND AGENCY IN MUSIC EDUCATION WORLDS

## Introduction

In what ways are secondary school music teachers managing the complex relationship between classical and popular music in their elective teaching programmes?

The purpose of this study has been to explore and describe the ways in which six secondary school music teachers manage the complex relationship between western classical and popular music in their elective teaching programmes. It was found that teachers identify and utilise the two styles of music as representative of distinct but interrelated forms of knowledge pivotal in realising educational ends. Teachers reproduce knowledge boundaries associated with these styles of music, but within the pedagogic recontextualising field the boundaries they create are dynamic and permeable as they work to balance a multitude of influences on curriculum realisation. While the focus of the study has been on classical and popular music it needs to be acknowledged that the conceptualisation of these two styles as polarities is a means to analyse the significance of these most prominent knowledge forms. Intersecting with and influencing these two music worlds and the field of music education are other styles – world music, jazz, folk, and indigenous genres. The case studies suggest that the central issue for teachers is not so much a contestation between styles of music, but the accommodation of a tension between types of knowledge and ways of knowing. This is a musical manifestation of what Tagg (2002) describes as the great epistemological divide in western thought. The metadiscourse surrounding school music has traditionally placed knowledge about western art music at its centre. Recent changes have brought skills in constructional competence to the foreground, or as Tagg (2002) describes it, ‘knowledge *in* music’. In these case studies classical music is most strongly associated with the knowledge ‘*about* music’ and popular music with knowledge *in* music. The rigorous application of the two styles as dichotomised can at times lead to caricatures, for example, that popular music is always associated with horizontal/contextualised discourse when clearly it can become part of an abstract/conceptual discourse depending on how it is epistemologically appropriated. The reality of how classical and popular music are appropriated by each teacher within various contexts (e.g. performance, analysis, harmony, composition) is complex. Teachers realise the epistemological importance of both dimensions despite a strong influence from the Official Recontextualising Field (ORF) to emphasise student choice and to make sure that learning is relevant “to students’ lives now” (Ministry of Education, 2009).

At the forefront of this recontextualisation process is teachers' ethical motivation to affirm their students as learners. In this way music of interest and importance to students and skills students may already possess enter the curriculum. Nevertheless, through the influence of established and accepted knowledge boundaries within the discipline, teachers differentiate knowledge through classification and framing, and legitimate the styles of music in various ways and to varying degrees to enhance student learning. Teachers seek to affirm and validate students' interests and experience (social knowledge) but to balance and enhance this with knowledge and concepts they regard as epistemologically important (western disciplinary knowledge). As Rata (2011) suggests, with social knowledge the world is known subjectively and the authority for this knowledge comes from the group and "must be authorised by someone of status within the group" (p. 3). Disciplinary knowledge on the other hand is scrutinised, criticised, and constantly revised independently of the producer of the knowledge. This creates a level of objectivity and allows for the separation of ideas from their original socio-historical location. They can become shared within the discipline. For all the teachers in this research this disciplinary knowledge was centred on classical music and its associated theoretical concepts, despite the varied musical backgrounds of the teachers. The majority of students interviewed also considered exposure to classical music and the theoretical knowledge associated with it as foundational and therefore important to retain in the curriculum. The cases demonstrate that teachers utilise knowledge from both the classical and popular paradigms, but that classical music is regarded as providing more potential to meet conceptual learning imperatives.

A further aspect of teachers' management of the relationship between classical and popular music is seen in the way that elements of popular music practices (a horizontal discourse) are adapted for the educational context. In this way horizontal knowledge is linked to the more vertical or systemised processes of 'academic' learning and becomes conceptualised and legitimised. By linking the contextual (horizontal) knowledge to other knowledge and concepts within the discipline, students' understanding and application of knowledge can be extended. In an ideal world the process then becomes reversed as "learners draw on their newly acquired theoretical concepts to re-engage with and transform their everyday concepts" (Young, 2010b, p. 16). This is an example of progressive cultural transmission (Young & Muller, 2010). Teachers adapt and modify official discourses and students appear to recognise the value of the knowledge even if it is not always in alignment with what they consider to be of most relevance to them. In other words, rather than a conservative one-way transmission of unquestioned knowledge, concepts are adapted and made meaningful for and by students.

A significant complicating factor in the management of the music curriculum is that often music is already 'owned' by students before they arrive in the classroom, through its ever-present influence



as a means of identity formation. Students will not accept a music curriculum in the way that they would a maths or geography curriculum. One senior student in case study five (chapter nine) made it clear that it was the personalised potential of the performance and composition dimensions in the curriculum that provided the motivation for her to choose music as a subject; a recognition by her of a knower modality within the curriculum structure. She was subsequently inspired and extended by the new knowledge she came into contact with, but had the curriculum structure not provided a means for her 'voice' to be heard she would not have taken the subject. There is therefore an important interrelationship between social knowledge and disciplinary knowledge as resources for curriculum and pedagogy. Social knowledge is utilised as a pedagogical resource rather than as the defining factor in curriculum content (Young, 2010a; Rata, 2011).

This chapter continues by considering three central issues that are significant within the broader context of the research. These are the effect of aesthetic relativism on music education, the effect of popular or horizontal knowledge on the curriculum, and finally the notion of teacher autonomy which affects all other aspects. The influence of relativism within the field of music education was a central concern of the literature review and a major stimulus for the research. This has a direct influence on the 'what' of music teaching, on issues concerning what knowledge might be included and how it is classified. Moore's (2010) social realist argument that distinguishes between preferences and judgements is used to argue why it is appropriate, valid, and necessary for teachers to make judgements of aesthetic value within education. The recontextualisation of aspects of horizontal discourse provides a mechanism for both knowledge boundary crossing and boundary maintenance (Young & Muller, 2010) and is therefore a significant aspect of teachers' work. In relation to this I consider some of the approaches utilised in the *Musical Futures* programme (Green, 2008) as a means to reflect on the potential for the utilisation of popular music's horizontal practices within education. I suggest that teachers are further managing the relationship between classical and popular music through the weakening of boundaries, but not their dissolution. Teachers' work as recontextualising agents with relative autonomy in the field is then considered. Their work is multi-dimensional since musical knowledge within the school must look in many directions – towards the theoretical, practical, social, and vocational - and I suggest that in New Zealand music teachers have a relatively high level of autonomy to construct and shape curriculum. Finally the strengths and limitations of the research are outlined. A coda argues that music education is necessarily a site of both ideological dissonance and consonance.

## **Relativism and aesthetic judgements**

A central concern of the literature review (chapter three) is the influence of musical relativism within western culture and its impact on music education. It was suggested in the review that changing definitions of cultural value have resulted in the prevalence of musical relativism both between and within cultures, which has meshed with concepts of political correctness and questions of cultural value. Within education such influences can be seen in both progressive and instrumentalist ideologies which emphasise concepts of relevance, and rights of access and ownership for students. Within western culture there is little doubt that a relativistic view of music has largely replaced the modernist account with its emphasis on canonical music and categories of high and low culture (Bowman, 1998b; Johnson, 2002). A traditional view of culture is dependent on education as a means of enculturation; a way to bring students into contact with the cultural forms considered as being historically and aesthetically significant (Scruton, 2000; 2007). Popular culture on the other hand is more often now linked with potent commercial and entertainment values, and therefore appears to be largely incompatible with traditional notions of education and learning (Bowman, 2004). While according to many commentators within the sociology of education the acceptance of multiculturalism, constructivism, and relativism (equalising the status of various forms of knowledge and localizing the source and authority of knowledge) appear to work in favour of realising social justice goals such as inclusion, Rata (2011) suggests that the opposite may in fact be the case. She and others argue that it is access to disciplinary knowledge rather than localisation of knowledge that holds the potential for the realisation of social justice goals and the educational potential of students (Maton & Moore, 2010; Wheelahan, 2010b; Young, 2010a).

Nevertheless within the multitude of music worlds that necessarily intersect with contemporary music education in western nation states, there are collective conventions of scholarship and practice that continue to assist educators in the process of curriculum selection and realisation. Such collective knowledge can assign hierarchies of value and this aligns with recent social realist responses to the epistemological dilemma (the apparent dichotomised choice between positivist absolutism on one hand and unbridled constructivist relativism on the other). The social realist position acknowledges the social construction of knowledge but argues that conceptual knowledge, developed over time, that is critiqued and continually modified within specialist communities, although fallible and not absolute, “can be considered more epistemologically powerful in terms of its explanatory power” (Maton & Moore, 2010, p. 3). Young (2008) argues that it is the very social and collective nature of such specialist communities that gives knowledge a level of objectivity. Such knowledge “has the capacity to transcend the social conditions under which it is produced”

(Moore quoted in Maton & Moore, 2010, p. 5) and therefore is not reduced merely to matters of political contestation or personal preference.

The teachers involved in this research indicate that while the influence of cultural change is a significant presence affecting curriculum content and pedagogy (and attitudes towards musical style in general), these forces external to education are recontextualised and adapted to teachers' overriding *educational* values. To varying degrees each teacher in the six studies made judgements of value within their curriculum conception, attempting to balance and accommodate the epistemic and social dimensions associated with music teaching and learning. Teachers spoke of finding works for study that contained sufficient substance to enable learning, and these works were utilised to motivate students in their creative pursuits and not simply as decontextualized exemplars of canonic standards of excellence. This process of curriculum selection involves what Moore (2010) describes as the distinction between preferences and judgements. Whereas aesthetic relativism would have vertical possibilities for evaluating the relative merits of art objects relinquished to matters of personal taste and cultural context (Carey, 2005), teachers need to make judgements of value related to the potential for learning that such objects provide. Often a teacher is faced with pragmatic concerns such as how to maximise the potential for learning within a short amount of curriculum time. In relation to both classical and popular music teachers spoke of authenticity and complexity as characteristics in the music they valued for the learning context. While aspects of the horizontal (personal taste) are present, teachers apply some degree of objectivity in differentiating judgements from personal taste.

Moore suggests that “the root problem has been an assumption that to argue for judgements apart from preferences is to commit to some form of essentialism” (Moore, 2010, p. 132) and to confuse assigning value to certain types of knowledge with the implication that some people are better than others (Moore, 2007; 2010). The teachers in this research were clear that such judgements were necessary to delineate music appropriate for its learning potential as opposed to music more suitable for other purposes. The development of criticality in students might well involve the comparison of such differentiated music. Moreover from a social realist perspective such judgements of value “are less than absolutes in that they acknowledge their fallibility [yet] they are more than preferences in that they submit themselves to historically evolved rules of collective evaluation” (Moore, 2010, p. 152). By utilising their judgements in relation to music collectively considered culturally valuable teachers are linking the past with the present in a dynamic way. Problems can arise where under-specification of curriculum fails to support teachers who lack the requisite knowledge to choose works with the necessary sequential conceptual depth appropriate for study. Both the experience of

the teacher and the curriculum specifications can be found wanting in such instances where the subject becomes under-conceptualised.

Western classical music symbolises retrospective but relevant and adaptable cultural knowledge to these teachers and to many of the students. In Bernsteinian terms classical music remains strongly classified representing powerful epistemic knowledge. A dynamic concept of a canon remains relevant, providing collectively adjudicated exemplars of musical excellence in composition and production of music. Popular music is also seen as powerful knowledge but more particularly socially, as a means of engaging students, affirming identities, and considering music's social and political contexts, but none of the teachers regarded a curriculum comprised only of popular music as sufficient (see discussion of *Musical Futures* below). All the teachers regarded the purpose of their work as being to engage with education's widely accepted "common sense" purpose (Young, 2008): to make accessible to students knowledge that is not already part of their everyday lives; to take students from where they are to enhanced futures. As Bernstein (2000, p. 174) has noted: "it is crucial for students to know and feel that they, the experiences that have shaped them ... are recognised, respected and valued. But this does not mean that this exhausts the pedagogic encounter". The knowledge and experiences regarded as necessary for this journey varied from teacher to teacher and so did the projected destination; nevertheless the making of judgements of aesthetic and educational value was integral to this process.

Green's (2005) call for music's autonomy to be reconsidered (see chapter three) aligns with social realist arguments in favour of recognising an epistemic dimension to knowledge. Both positions move debates beyond a focus on either 'text' or 'context' to consider the interplay or dialectic between both epistemic and social dimensions. Green (2005) argues that music's inherent meanings are logically separable from its social delineations, and in fact the potential for music's inherent meanings to communicate across social and cultural boundaries constitutes one of music's most powerful effects. I suggest it is through the more formalised study of music's inherent properties and structures that an enhanced understanding and language is most likely to be developed, and therefore a means for knowledge-building across contexts. Such knowledge has been and continues to be codified and developed through collective processes in musicological fields in both classical and popular styles.

### **Horizontal and vertical knowledge: crossing the divide**

Music-making appears to align with Bernstein's conception of a horizontal discourse in that the processes and meaning-making in this dimension are often tacit, contextual, and applied, and the development of this procedural knowledge (Gamble, 2006) or constructional competence (Tagg,

2002) has traditionally sat outside formal schooling institutions, segmented by the particular context in which it is realised (Gamble, 2010). The transmission in these practices is also oral rather than written and the learning process involves skill acquisition through ‘concrete’ doing, bringing it close to Martin’s “horizontal discourses of a specialized kind” (Christie, Martin, et al., 2007, p. 241) and Muller and Gamble’s (2010) definition of horizontal discourses as being “understood experientially and through the senses” (p. 505). In relation to popular music Lydia in case study four was even unsure if such practices could or should be taught. On the other hand the knowledge content of classical instrumental learning does exhibit some of the characteristics of a vertical discourse. Unlike the largely tacit and context-bound process of learning folk music or playing in a garage band for example, the ‘curriculum’ for formal instrument learning is most often sequential and underpinned by abstract theoretical concepts which necessitate the explicit guidance of a teacher. Systems of graded examinations such as those offered worldwide by ABRSM and Trinity Guildhall provide international benchmarks, and many teachers have passed through such graded systems themselves. More recently some examination boards and higher education institutions have devised and offered examinations in rock and jazz music, thereby creating a sequential curriculum for popular music modelled on that of the more vertical structure of classical music.

Whitty (2010) argues that educators “have an obligation to explore ways of making connections between school and non-school knowledge” (p. 40) and in this section I consider some of the approaches utilised in the *Musical Futures* programme and in the case studies as a means to reflect on the potential for making connections between informal learning and experiential learning, such as playing music (horizontal discourses), and school knowledge (vertical discourses). If, as Young and Muller (2010) suggest, it is necessary for curriculum and pedagogy to differentiate knowledge boundaries prior to developing boundary crossing then this is a central concern for music teachers where both procedural and principled knowledge are crucial for the development of a holistic musicianship; a musicianship where practice is enhanced and informed by a wide and deep knowledge of the significant musical concepts and histories of the field.

Practical musical skills seem to sit in stark contrast to the conceptual knowledge of music theory, harmony, and analysis, or metamusical knowledge – knowledge about music (Tagg, 2002) - yet it is highly likely, as social realists argue (Maton & Moore, 2010), that contextual knowledge (performance or song writing for example) can be enhanced where teachers are able to make connections for students between their experiences and the concepts developed by others before them. This is generally agreed to be one of the key functions of schooling. As David put it in case study six: “I like to support something they don’t have”.

Elliott (1995) argues that music performance, or ‘musicing’ as he terms it, is first and foremost a form of procedural knowledge that is in essence non-verbal. He suggests that the relationship between formal concepts and procedural knowledge (what he terms “knowing-in-action”) can be highly variable. Furthermore he argues that more formal knowledge concepts are:

neither a necessary prerequisite nor a sufficient corequisite for achieving competent, proficient, or expert levels of musicianship. True, many brilliant performers (improvisers, conductors) talk and write eloquently about music and musical artistry. But many others do not. In sum, the acquisition of formal musical knowledge is a proper but secondary goal of music education (Elliott, 1995, p. 62).

Nevertheless an inability to communicate musical concepts could be a limiting factor developmentally for many students. As Wheelahan (2010b) suggests “a focus on ‘knowledge in use’ may result in students being given access to contextually specific applications of disciplinary knowledge but not the system of meaning in which it is embedded and made meaningful” (p. 119). Where skill-based ‘doing’ is underpinned with conceptual ideas and processes that have transferable potential beyond the specific context of the interaction then students can be empowered. Robert (see case study nine) spoke of theoretical knowledge as significant in providing the means for students ‘stuck’ in their composition work to move on. In performing, the development of musical concepts such as pulse, metre, pitch, rhythmic structure, form, shape, sound, expressivity, and particular performance practices, although realised in a sonic medium, carries the potential to take students’ thinking and conceptual awareness and development well beyond the specific bounded context of a contextual horizontal discourse. Instances of conceptual transference could include recontextualising concepts to other music-making situations and applying them to non-musical learning. It appears that much instrumental teaching crosses the horizontal-vertical knowledge divide in much the same way as Gamble (2010) argues for craft knowledge, a knowledge form that also contains both conceptual and procedural components. As a discourse, instrumental learning and playing can also be described as “embodied principled knowledge”, the term Gamble (2010) uses to describe craft. It is the degree to which knowledge concepts are made explicit that differentiates horizontal and vertical knowledge. In the educational context it is the role of the teacher to use forms of visible pedagogy to ensure awareness of boundaries and to enable boundary crossing. Unlike authentic horizontal transmission practices, which are largely tacit, the development of concepts through language enables the horizontal-vertical boundary to be crossed (Gamble, 2010).

Such a conception of the curriculum as knowledge based on both concepts and procedural progression suggests limits on the level of autonomy possible within the pedagogic context, whether the content is classical or popular. The trajectory of learning has in-built verticality that requires the explicit guidance of a teacher who is familiar with the learning components. This does not, however,

exclude teachers from taking cognisance of pedagogical approaches such as those found in Green's research (see below).

The work of Green and her associates (Green, 2008) in the *Musical Futures* programme in the UK ([www.musicalfutures.org.uk](http://www.musicalfutures.org.uk)) is a significant and rapidly growing phenomenon (see also [www.learningfutures.org](http://www.learningfutures.org)) where aspects of informal learning, or in Bernstein's terminology, horizontal discourse, have been appropriated to the school setting. This programme was trialled in the UK and is now being utilised worldwide. It realises calls for relevance and empowerment in music education by undertaking a radical form of curriculum and pedagogy utilising the horizontal knowledge and learning practices of popular musicians (Green, 2002b) within the school context. Green (2008, p. 10) identifies five underlying principles in the *Musical Futures* project:

- Student choice in selection of initial learning material
- Learning by ear rather than reading music
- Learning and self-teaching instruments in friendship groups
- No pre-determined sequence of skill development within tasks (learning may appear unstructured and haphazard as students essentially teach themselves the instruments and songs)
- Integration of listening, performing, improvising and composing into holistic student directed activities

The conception of the *Musical Futures* curriculum is one of an enacted and negotiated experience realised through informal learning processes grounded in student autonomy rather than one of received knowledge. As well as this, a significant change in the role of the teacher is required to that of observer/facilitator. Although the programme apparently turns the traditional approach to curriculum and pedagogy on its head, at the meso level there is an internal structure - a logic, rationale, and sequence to the programme (see Green, 2008, p. 23ff). At the micro level, however, any sense of structure is minimised by the guiding principles listed above. As a result of the programme significant developments in students' skills and attitudes have been observed. Not only did students enjoy classroom music more, they also altered their views of classical music which had been largely unknown to them or of which they had negative opinions. As mentioned in the previous section, understanding of the inherent and delineated meanings of music of both popular and classical styles becomes altered:

When pupils' listening experiences are meaningfully connected to some amount of social action, which is both autonomous and co-operative, and when these experiences also involve the direct production of musical inter-sonic meanings in a way which can 'flow' and which can be playful, and when pupils are stimulated by whole pieces of

‘real’ music, then their musical awareness and response, or ‘critical musicality’, seem to open up (Green, 2008, p. 180).

This appears to be similar to Bernstein’s ‘discursive gap’ where he argues that esoteric knowledge is the site of the ‘unthinkable’ and ‘yet to be thought’ in that it has the potential to challenge the social distribution of power (Bernstein, 2000). If Green’s research with students is correct then it appears musical experiences, which are non-verbal and not necessarily concept-based at this level, had the power to cross the discursive gap and alter students’ preconceptions towards the ‘unthinkable’. The contextualised experience with music’s inherent sonic components can be separated from the social context and conditions of their production to communicate afresh once certain conditions are set in motion. These conditions involve the holistic, student-driven social action described by Green in the quote above. Nevertheless within the context of education Young (2008) suggests that a further step is required for experiential knowledge to become potentially even more powerful. Knowledge must become context-independent so it “can provide a basis for generalisations and explanations that go beyond specific cases ... and it allows those who acquire it to develop the capacity to imagine alternatives” (p. 166). Such distinctions could be used to differentiate general music approaches from those appropriate in elective programmes.

It would appear that Green’s work may hold the key to solving a central dilemma for those educators who look to both emancipatory and historical views of culture, the dialectic between “perceived artistic quality and the rights of ownership” (Allsup, 2003, p. 7) or in social realist terms between the social and the epistemic (Maton & Moore, 2010). Through the validation of student experience, a space may be opened up whereby exchanges of cultural meaning are more likely to occur between present and past, popular and ‘other’. Students’ informal and socially acquired knowledge then becomes a valuable pedagogic tool. However as Green herself points out “if school pupils were to follow the [*Musical Futures*] project and nothing else, they would be likely to miss out on what most people would agree are some essential aspects of the music curriculum” (Green, 2008, p. 182). The inclusion of informal learning practices is a means to increased participation and motivation that ideally would lead to further music education possibilities for students:

Through adopting and adapting such learning practices in the classroom, not as a substitute, but as a complement to more formal teaching methods, we are making the autonomy of the learner into a *means* to becoming educated, not necessarily an *end* of education (Green, 2008, p. 117, italics in original).

Green (2008) makes it clear that the educational aim is to “invoke a notion of ‘critical musicality’... and address it to pupils’ own music as much as to any other” (p. 14). Green’s important point is not that formal and theoretical knowledge shouldn’t be introduced at all, but that in more traditional curriculum constructions it has perhaps been introduced too early. Moreover Green (2008) suggests



that while both content and pedagogy are significant factors in increasing levels of student engagement within classroom music, pedagogy has the greater impact. Within the *Musical Futures* programme students chose popular music as the focus for their musical explorations, nevertheless when the pedagogical approach was extended to classical music there was a positive shift in the way students viewed classical music (Green, 2008, chapter seven). This has led Green to suggest that “those aspects of the ‘normal curriculum’ which pupils found unhelpful were not so much to do with curriculum content as with pedagogy” (Green, 2008, p. 176, emphasis in original). Young (2010b) too suggests that the conceptual distinction between curriculum and pedagogy is a significant one: “the curriculum needs to be seen as having a purpose of its own: the intellectual development of students” (p. 24), whereas pedagogy “refers to the activities of teachers in motivating students and to helping them engage with the curriculum” (p. 23). The *Musical Futures* programme is certainly a significant development in how music education might be undertaken in its initial stages, particularly for young teenage students, but it remains to be seen whether the success of the programme in the early years of secondary schooling will be sustained into later years, for example in the uptake of elective courses.

While Green’s work shows a radical reversal of received practice concerning pedagogy and curriculum, the case studies in this research also demonstrate other approaches, where teachers successfully integrate and scaffold aspects of horizontal discourse into the more vertical structures of the school. While to focus exclusively on horizontal knowledge or on a social orientation to curriculum may be highly advantageous as a ‘way in’ to music learning, the teachers and students in this research suggest this in itself would be insufficient for a music education. The pedagogic encounters in these case studies include access to abstract theoretical knowledge. This ranges from seeing theoretical knowledge as an adjunct to music-making through to it being considered foundational. The danger in the rush to respond to the call for relevance in the curriculum may result, ironically, in continued imbalances of access to knowledge that is powerful and empowering (Rata, 2011; Young, 2010b). A curriculum centred only on student interest and that emphasised, for example, performance, may not provide students with all the knowledge they need to become fully critical members of the field in which they wish to participate and contribute (see for example Robert’s biographical story, chapter nine). The distinction between a music curriculum for all and elective music may need to be carefully drawn within an educational context to ensure access to knowledge is not limited. The challenges in the realisation of programmes that balance both social and epistemic concerns within the constraints of school structures are complex, but the teacher in each of the case studies presented here made such decisions with a resulting accommodation and shifting balance between theoretical and procedural knowledge. A key aspect for the development of

music education is the teacher's ability to take segmented and contextualised learning and make the connections across knowledge boundaries.

### **Teacher autonomy within recontextualising fields**

Bernstein's concepts are a way to consider teachers' utilisation of classical and popular music as representative of wider issues of symbolic control and cultural production, reproduction, and change and I return to these powerful concepts to draw the components of the research together in this final section. Of particular significance within the context of this research is teachers' autonomy as curriculum developers and the consequences of this for their students. Bernstein (2000) suggests that symbolic control is materialised through what he terms the pedagogic device. The device comprises rules pertaining to knowledge distribution, recontextualisation, and evaluation that give rise to three arenas. Recontextualisation functions within fields at various levels comprising agents of the state through to pedagogues in schools and other educational institutions (see figure 2, chapter eleven). The recontextualising fields create areas "of conflict and struggle for dominance" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 62). The recontextualisation process "selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses and relates other discourses to constitute its own order" (p. 33). These discourses include knowledge from many domains such as subject knowledge, socio-cultural theories of learning, wider cultural values, and political policy directives. Within the official recontextualising field the official pedagogic discourse of the state produces dominant principles that generate guidelines "about school organization and management, curricula and evaluation - which reflect the political and scientific background of the agents who constitute this field" (Neves & Morais, 2001a, p. 455). The discourse appropriated in a given educational setting at a particular time is the result of the dynamic interplay between the "dominant ideology in the official recontextualising field (ORF)" and "the relative autonomy of the pedagogic recontextualising field (PRF)" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 53). The relative autonomy of pedagogic discourse can be defined as the extent to which the PRF is "permitted to exist and affect official pedagogic practice" (Bernstein, 1990/2003, p. 198).

Of particular significance to this research is the way in which the official pedagogic discourse of the state, which itself is subject to continual changes in bias and focus at the generative level, can also undergo transformation in transmission in the PRF depending on the influences of the school, the community, and the pedagogic practice of the teacher (Neves & Morais, 2001a). The PRF therefore "has a crucial function in creating the fundamental autonomy of education" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 33). As Iverson (2010) suggests "subjects are dynamic: active constructions and reconstructions that are formed between teachers and students in every day practice" (p. 89). Significant in this study is the relative autonomy of teachers as recontextualising agents within their schools. The structure-agency

dialectic is played out as teachers interact with competing influences from various fields. Depending on the level of autonomy experienced by the teacher, and the level of engagement with that autonomy, their interactions can produce a range of pedagogic and curricular realisations.

In New Zealand the national curriculum is produced by the state's chief recontextualising agent, the Ministry of Education. Despite its official status *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) appears to exert minimal influence over specific music curriculum enactment in the secondary school except by default, in that it provides teachers with the opportunity to appropriate their own contents and approaches at a local level. Essentially the document is presented as a guide rather than a prescription, leaving the way open for teachers to develop localised programmes: "The New Zealand Curriculum sets the direction for teaching and learning ... but it is a framework rather than a detailed plan ... schools have considerable flexibility when determining the detail" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 37).

The national achievement standard documents provide some specific information in relation to skill and concept development, but give little specific signposting of knowledge progression that should be developed from one curriculum level to the next. This leaves the relationship between content and appropriate skill development to the discretion of the teacher. This can lead to variance in the knowledge content and the skill levels expected from school to school (see Miles's comments in chapter seven), and validates Muller's (2006) concern that unacceptable levels of variance can occur where teachers may not possess the requisite knowledge to choose appropriate content (p. 78). The autonomy experienced by teachers carries with it the expectation that they will be competent in the discipline and able to make such judgements. Where knowledge differentiation and progression are not explicit and are largely left to the teacher to construct, as is most often the case in music, there can be significant implications for student learning and access to important knowledge (Allias, 2006; Muller, 2006; see also chapter eight). Nevertheless the evaluation criteria in the standards are explicit, reflecting a performance mode approach to pedagogy (Bernstein, 2000). There is a tension between the more invisible competence mode conception of the national curriculum document and the prescriptive performance mode assessment system.

In any given instance curriculum choices define what counts as valid knowledge through inclusion or exclusion. Furthermore pedagogy defines what counts as a valid means for the transmission of knowledge (Bernstein, 2003/1975). The curriculum is therefore representative of deeper societal patterns of value and authority and acts as a form of symbolic control. Teachers are making judgements of value when they choose to include something in the curriculum. Their decisions relay not only which discourses and competencies are valued but also which teacher-learning relations are

given preference (Neves & Morais, 2001b). Moreover “every time a discourse moves, there is space for ideology to play” (Bernstein, 2000, p. 9). Structural influences from the ORF most strongly influencing teacher curriculum conception and realisation are genericism, modularisation, student choice, and assessment. The ORF and the PRF are ideologically dominated by instrumentalist and constructivist approaches in New Zealand but as the cases have demonstrated the reality is complex and varied. The cases show approaches to pedagogy from somewhat conservative to constructivist, but they are all embedded in the instrumentalist and managerial discourses of the state (see chapter four). This leads to what Bernstein (2000) has described as a “mixed pedagogic palette” (p. 56). This was most often seen in the cases where, as Bernstein (2000) describes it, various competence modes are inserted into an economic mode. In these cases this is seen as tension between affirmation realised in student-centred approaches and legitimation where recontextualisation of horizontal knowledge is required to comply with pre-determined assessment outcomes.

The influence of the official curriculum on the decision-making of teachers in the case studies was weak, except for Robert who made explicit note of utilising it to assist in balancing content in curriculum planning. Exerting a more consistent influence are the assessment standards for higher school qualifications. Despite teachers’ best efforts, qualifications prescriptions tend to produce a top down effect on the curriculum, and there is a danger that by default the prescriptions “become the curriculum” rather than “promoting accountability or “quality control” for curriculum” (Regelski, 2004, p. 256, emphasis in original).

Through the influence of a teacher’s regulative and instructional discourses, which are the cumulative and dynamic result of a multitude of influences (see figure 4, chapter eleven), various modalities of classification and framing are realised in knowledge (epistemic) or knower (social) orientations and varying degrees of visible to invisible pedagogy (Bernstein, 2000). Within these case studies the knowledge orientation was most often associated with theoretical and classical music knowledge and the learner orientation with popular music, although not exclusively. In reality the realisation of pedagogic discourse is particularly complex as there are various types of knowledge (conceptual and procedural) with varied structures (vertical and horizontal) that intrinsically emphasise these dimensions to different degrees. In these case studies the dualism between theory and practice was worked out with some degree of synthesis between epistemological conceptions of music as an object and as a process. This might result in quite varied orientations from one dimension of the curriculum to another (see figure three, chapter eleven).

The opportunity for teacher autonomy is also enhanced because of music’s status within the academy of subjects. As a result of this somewhat peripheral status there is limited control over the

production of an official pedagogic discourse for music. Teachers are able to shape curriculum and pedagogy with a level of flexibility not always enjoyed by teachers of other subjects. Music teachers often work alone and exert a significant influence on the pedagogic discourse their students experience as music knowledge is appropriated and recontextualised at the local level. Teachers in this research largely sought to balance these knowledge dimensions within their work, demonstrating considerable agency in choosing content and moving strategically between various modes of pedagogic practice (Feez, 2011).

The changing of emphasis in and control of the epistemic device (see chapter eleven), and the resultant formation of curriculum and pedagogy as the result of a degree of teacher autonomy, is a complex process in which teachers can struggle with their own values and with those of the official and pedagogic recontextualising fields. Bunge's (1999) rejection of both holism and individualism in favour of a systemic perspective on agency and structure resonates with this complexity and with Bernstein's (2000) concept of dynamic fields where there is the potential for framing (control within a pedagogic context) to act back on classification of knowledge (the translation of power relations into structural relations). Figure 4 in chapter eleven attempts to represent the way in which the actions of individual teachers interact with social systems and structures at various levels. Such structures are the result of "the set of all social relations in a given society" (Bunge, 1999, p. 64). Bunge argues that structure and agency or "system and component – go hand in hand. Social action is the ultimate source of social structure, and it occurs in some system or other endowed with a definite if changing structure" (Bunge, p. 65). Teachers of course are never fully free as they are constrained by social and environmental forces in fields of interaction and influence taking into account the actual and potential actions of others and results of their actions: "in sum, individual actions are not mutually independent but interdependent" (Bunge, p. 65).

### **Finding a knowledge balance**

While on the one hand teachers may want to validate and legitimate the voices of their students, they are also aware of the collective knowledge of the discipline that they regard as requisite for students' active participation within the field as knowledgeable musicians. This is particularly significant in elective programmes where students are more likely to be destined for tertiary study. This management of the relationship between knowledges is made even more complex by the context in which teachers must operate, such as adapting to the multiple changes brought about by regionalisation (see chapter four) as new forms of knowledge emerge and find legitimation. Through technology for example, new ways of being musical and realising musicality are emerging, shifting the power of the epistemic device towards the knower and commercial fields of practice (Vakeva,

2010). Of significance is the way in which the pedagogic identities of the teacher and students interact with the changing classification of the subject. Previously strong commitments to the subject, based on the premise of the value of its intrinsic knowledge, have diversified as teachers and curriculum writers have responded to calls for inclusivity and relevance, and as graduates of new tertiary courses in popular music and jazz have begun to move into secondary school teaching.

In the introduction to this thesis two teachers were quoted to illustrate two dichotomous positions in relation to knowledge in music education. One used the metaphor of colonisation of students to make his point, while the other spoke of the need to educate widely. Bernstein (2000) has suggested that at the micro level of the classroom relations can take colonising, complementary, privileging, or marginalising realisations according to the way in which the influences play out in the recontextualising arena. In none of the case studies was there evidence of colonising or marginalising. Rather teachers' overall concern was to affirm, legitimate, and accommodate varying influences (most significantly the interests of their students) through the lens of educational values. It is at this level that symbolic control, mediated through Bernstein's concept of the pedagogic device, where knowledge is classified and framed, has the potential to engender change and "point away from determining systems" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 125). Bernstein (2000, p. 125) suggests that framing relations can lead to a change in classificatory relations: "the outcome of framing in interaction has the potential for changing classification".

Teachers' discomfort at an interactive, local, or micro level can lead to a weakening of the subject's traditional boundaries within the instructional discourse and even to a relativism of aesthetic values. This weakening of classification may be justified as a mechanism for inclusion, but such ethical motivations can also be in tension with teachers' sense of what is epistemologically important. Leah's struggle to find a balance between the demands of students and the inclusion of other sorts of knowledge she considers important exemplifies a tension between structure and agency at the micro level. This struggle was further complicated by the need to consider significant pragmatic concerns in regard to her energy levels and the sustainability of the individual or the chosen system:

[The push for practical work] comes from the kids, 'when are we going to do practical', they beat you down, and then sometimes you wonder, when you're verging on madness, now really there is too much of this, and for your sanity you think it would be so nice to do a bit more listening. And I never know when I have a listening lesson, and I really enjoy it and they seem to be compliantly doing the stuff, I never actually know if that's for me or for them (Leah, Interview 2).

In this way the music curriculum in Leah's school (case study one) was greatly influenced by the world of popular and commercial music. She was prepared to give way to the pressure from her students in giving a great deal of time for them to 'play'. The classification of what types of music

were regarded as legitimate was changed within the school, and to a large degree the power was shared with the students. Nevertheless the structures and requirements for assessment exerted a similar pressure resulting in modification to students' preferences and the production of texts considered legitimate for the educational context. Interestingly in the same school (case study six) the power had been reclaimed somewhat by David, whose recontextualising principles place greater emphasis on theoretical knowledge. This is what he considers as most important for the development of his students.

What the cases show is varying degrees of power (classification) and control (framing) in terms of how classical music and popular music are utilised as the means for developing musical knowledge. In no case was there an either/or dichotomy, rather there were varying degrees of accommodation and balance along a continuum (see chapter eleven). Similar to the scenario described by Wright (2008) in her case study of one school, the teachers in this research had ultimate ownership and responsibility for the curriculum; but unlike the teacher in Wright's study these teachers were able to share the ownership through various means according to the contextual influences of the setting. The structural framework of assessment allowing for student choice in certain areas of the curriculum is a strong force for ensuring students have some voice in their choice of music. Nevertheless in the remaining curriculum areas teachers responded to personal and collective notions of what music education should include in conceptualising and realising a curriculum for the students in their elective classes.

At the political and policy level secondary school music's transition from a strongly classified singular towards regionalisation is well underway (see chapter four), and this creates particular challenges for curriculum realisation in senior school music in New Zealand. This regionalisation has resulted in changes to both the degree of insulation from new discourses (a weakening classification with segmented curriculum content) and to the variety of knowledge structures present within the subject (varying degrees of knowledge progression or verticality). Combined with the connection with the horizontal knowledge of popular music this produces challenges for music's realisation as a subject. Knowledge segmentation and varying degrees of verticality across music's segments increase music's complexity and create challenges for curriculum planning and pedagogy particularly as curriculum documents remain generic. Knowledge displacement, brought about by the move to generic curriculum documents, increasingly places the responsibility on teachers to manage and balance the epistemic and social demands of curriculum realisation.

In the case of senior school music in New Zealand, the reshaping of the subject over the last two decades has been far-reaching. A curriculum of cultural transmission centred on classical traditions

has largely given way to alternative relativist conceptions focussed on popular music and student rights of ownership. The resulting aesthetic relativism presents tremendous challenges and responsibilities for teachers as they act as recontextualising agents in the pedagogic recontextualising field (Bernstein, 2000). Who now says what music knowledge and knowing are? Who has the authority to be the author of the content? Given the unlikely possibility for one music teacher or even one music department to provide expertise in every music sub-field, a more realistic aim for music education may be for teachers to model musical expertise and musicianship in a particular style while taking on the responsibility for providing the 'connective' and foundational conceptual knowledge to enable students to participate with confidence in their chosen area of interest. As Sloboda (2001) suggests, one of the key functions of music departments of the future may be to act as a sorting house, directing students to where the particular expertise exists within the wider community, while Small (2010) suggests the teaching of music should be taken out of school altogether. For now the question of knowledge content remains paramount.

### **Strengths and limitations of the current study**

In considering the significance of this study, a number of strengths and limitations can be identified. One strength is the unique place of the research in the New Zealand context. This is a contribution to a very small amount of research concerning secondary school music education. The focus of this research, which is to some degree exploratory, was the teachers and the influences on their decision-making in relation to the place of western classical and popular music in the curriculum conception. Their stories provide a rich source of data concerning the values and knowledge they hold important. Each case provides valuable insights into the influences and process of music teaching in the New Zealand secondary school, as well as shedding light on the views of students. There is potential for reader generalisability and Stake's (1995) naturalistic generalisations where readers are stimulated from the researcher's description and assertions to generalise in relation to the cases from their own knowledge and experience. This is aided by the provision of extensive quotes and detailed description to allow valid comparisons to be made. The link between the data as reported in the case study chapters and the inductive analysis of chapter eleven allows the reader to assess the credibility of the analysis. Most importantly there is the potential relevance of music education's problems to the wider discussion of knowledge within the sociology of education and education generally. The questions of what knowledge should be taught, how it should be taught, and how teachers can be effective are all considered in this research and have relevance to the wider field.

In limiting the research parameters to western classical and popular music there is the potential to under represent the influence of multi-culturalism and musical plurality within music education (see



for example Drummond, 2010). Nevertheless the reality is that western music within the education system in New Zealand comprises the bulk of curriculum content and the problematising of teachers as euro-centric in outlook was not the focus of this research.

There are also some limitations in terms of the comprehensiveness of data collected over six case studies and the subsequent potential to generate an accurate overview of each teacher's pedagogic discourse. The initial interviews were lengthy however, (ranging from 1 to 1¾ hours), and the use of a follow up interview, observations, and focus groups with students (a total of 75) provided multiple data sources for triangulation. Other limitations of the research include the possible effect of my presence during data gathering (the observations) and the influence of my questions in the interviews and focus groups.

The issue of my reflexivity within the research process was discussed in chapter two. My background as a secondary school music teacher and as a classical musician trained in western traditions could lead to bias; however the links made from data, to analysis, and to the assertions, point towards a credibility which "indicates that findings are trustworthy and believable in that they reflect the participants', researchers', and readers' experiences with a phenomenon" (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 302).

### **Coda - Music education as a discourse of affirmation and dissonance**

Since Ross's (1995) criticism concerning school music's apparent disconnection from 'real' musical values and contexts, the content and practice of much secondary school music education has moved on. It is clear that a paradigm shift has occurred in music curriculum content and enactment in New Zealand in the last two decades. Significant changes in society generally have been reflected in changing ideologies and practices within education. Within music education, the contestation of high culture and popular culture has manifested itself largely as a debate over what music should be taught (what knowledge is most valuable), but also, significantly, how it should be taught – viewing music either as an object of knowledge or as a process to be experienced. This has required many music teachers to re-evaluate their approach to teaching their subject with a view to being less focused on a one-way transmission of western high culture, and more on the active involvement of students as music learners (Jorgensen, 2003). The content of classroom music lessons is likely to be far more diverse than ever before, and with higher levels of active student participation in music-making (Green, 2002a). This is congruent with world-wide trends in curriculum development that have seen "... more expansive, participatory, and broadened conceptions of knowledge, involving the development and interests of the student rather than the authority of received knowledge" (McEneaney & Meyer, 2000, p. 204). These trends were visible in the case studies in this research.

Both conceptions of music mentioned above, music as object and as process, were present in the discourses of the teachers and experiences of students. Both were seen as necessary for establishing boundaries for knowledge development and the utilisation of knowledge to cross stylistic and conceptual borders.

Thwaites (2008) has suggested that music education needs to acknowledge hybridity rather than one dominant identity over another, as it attempts to reshape itself in the 21st century: “If the Western canon is to survive it must be prepared to be interrogated and deconstructed through a range of perspectives and interpretations. We do not all hear the world in the same way” (Thwaites, 2008 p. 4). Nevertheless, it is the collectively developed canon of western culture and the conceptual knowledge associated with it, both classical and popular, to which educators most often look to enrich educative encounters. What is required is a flexibly evolving and context independent ‘canon’ that teachers use to guide students to a critical awareness of the musicing judged most compelling within given musical practices and genres. Jones (2008) suggests “canons exist somewhere between imagination and reality” and can be a fluid construction: “The postmodern state of coexisting possibilities allows canons to exist but denies them a degree of their former authority” (p. 139).

Music education may need to be a site of both affirmation and dissonance; in the former, teachers will aim to develop skills of musical experience that are embodied by students in socially meaningful ways, and in the latter, teachers will challenge narrow and comfortable accounts of what students believe counts as music and bring students into contact with conceptual knowledge that is collectively regarded as foundational and powerful within the field. Music may be a force with the potential to disrupt or alter the habitus of young people and their teachers, undermining determinist concepts of cultural and social reproduction. Such an approach holds the potential to demystify the cultural ‘codes’ of music’s inherent meaning, be it popular or classical, as it is embodied in social action that is meaningful to students and teachers (Green, 2008). The ethical concern to affirm students so strongly articulated in the case studies and the resulting effect on curriculum conception and practice may be a feature unique to involvement in the arts where the object of study is in itself often highly relevant in a personalised way, for teacher and student, as well as being affective in essence (Elliott, 2005a).

The teachers involved in this research were less concerned with a dichotomised contestation between high and low culture and more focused on finding a balance between enculturation and student-centred learning. In this way they were avoiding both the narrow cultural reproduction of neo-conservative traditionalism, where all knowledge is considered a given, and the total acquiescence to the preferences and tastes of the learner espoused by extreme relativist post-modern

theories. As a result there is the potential for students to take part in music programmes where any tension between classical and popular music is minimised. Central to teachers' work was a dynamic interplay between forms of knowledge and pedagogic practice that acknowledged both epistemic and social dimensions of learning. In this way students are able to recognise themselves and their aspirations while also recognising the potential and power of the foundational knowledge of the discipline. The central concern of teachers was less about validating styles of music (classical and popular) and more about developing types of knowledge, both experiential and conceptual, albeit to varying degrees.

In case study two, one year 13 student who was new to her school commented on the differences in the approach to knowledge compared to her previous school:

I came from a small country school and all we did was performance, we never learnt theory or anything. I only came here last year. In music class all we did was jam on the instruments, that's literally all we did. ... just more time to have fun.

At the student's previous school there was apparently little distinction between the horizontal discourse of informal learning and the experience at school; school was simply a bigger place in which to play. In such instances where the content appears highly relevant to students' lives now, the result may in fact be restricted access to powerful knowledge. In case study five one year 13 student made it clear she regarded the function of school as providing her with the knowledge to participate in life beyond school:

I'd like to be able to go out, if I was a musician, and talk with different musicians in different genres and to be able to have some sort of idea of what their genre was about. I love what I'm into but I would feel really bad if I was to go out and not have any knowledge about other things ... it makes you a better musician to know all these different things.

The negotiations and interactions involved in curriculum realisation are the result of a complex web of influences. Present within this web of interaction and recontextualisation is the potential for dialogue and change as teachers and students interact with the intangible power of music itself, and as classification of music knowledge changes. Through the increased legitimation of the student voice a space has been opened up whereby exchanges of cultural meaning and values are more likely between present and past, popular and classical, student and teacher. As Bernstein (2000) has noted the pedagogic relation can be a dynamic one in which the particular knowledge realisation and meanings "can feed back on the interactional practice ... the text itself, under certain conditions, can change the interactional practice ... [and bring] change in classification and framing values" (p. 18). Transformation may occur for the teacher as much as for the student. As recontextualising agents

teachers have the potential to be curriculum constructors in partnership with their students, rather than technocratic agents of reproduction. The challenge for teachers is to find a pedagogy that engages students with diverse interests and experience while retaining their own personal belief informed by their education in music's concepts in what curriculum knowledge is most important to provide.

It is my overriding view that matters of epistemology are pivotal in the arguments and developments concerning the accessibility of knowledge and its form and place in educational institutions worldwide. The inherent tension observed in this research is between knowledge that is structured - a knowledge that is understood because it has been tested against conventions and developed through a process of collective evaluation over time - versus new horizontal knowledges which are to a large degree localised and often more sensory than conceptual. It is not that one form is 'good' and one is 'bad' but an acknowledgement that a conceptual difference exists between them. One is located in experience and the other may be able to take the student beyond their experience. Popular music can certainly cross the vertical-horizontal divide and become part of a principled discourse while conversely the development of executant or theoretical skills via classical music can be context bound and devoid of educational intent. The significant point is that the teacher has a central role to play, acting as a conduit for how musical knowledge (both theoretical and procedural) and meanings from various sources (musical and educational) will be selected, interpreted, structured, and constructed with students. As boundaries in the classification of knowledge shift, teachers must continually ask themselves whose interests are being served by the newly emerging forms of consciousness and identity. What may have been lost and what has been gained? Music teachers grapple with the continuing discursive shift from knowledge to knower, working as they do at the boundaries between discourses in what Bernstein (2000) describes as a place of tension "between the past and possible futures" (p. xiii). Given the vast range of music available for inclusion within education, the challenge remains to negotiate through collective judgements what is of most value for students to learn in the 21st century educational context. Educational environments need to provide both the dissonance required to inspire learning and the consonance required for students to recognise themselves as of value within the acoustic of the school. In other words there is a place for both the canon *and* the kids.



**APPENDICES**

## Appendix A: Participant information sheet and consent form for Principals



Epsom Campus  
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Auckland, New Zealand  
Telephone 64 9 623 8899  
Facsimile 64 9 623 8898  
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The University of Auckland  
Private Bag 92601, Symonds Street  
Auckland 1035, New Zealand

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET: Principal

**Project Title:** The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

**Researcher:** Graham McPhail

**Degree:** Doctor of Education

Dear

My name is Graham McPhail and I am seeking permission to include the HOD music and two small groups of six students from your school in my doctoral research. I am undertaking this research in partial fulfilment of the Doctorate of Education at the University of Auckland. This research aims to examine a number of cases of music teaching in New Zealand secondary schools. It will examine how teachers are managing the relationship between classical and popular music in the curriculum. The research would involve me spending some time in the music department. The research design includes a pre and post observation interview with the Head of Department of around one hour each, observation of two lessons taught by the HOD at different year levels, and a group interview of around one hour's duration, with a selection of six students from the observed classes. The HOD is the focus of my research and the aim of the student interview is to compare the student views and experiences with the values and aims of the teacher. Depending on the negotiated details of the visit, particularly concerning the observation of appropriate classes and some group interviews with students, I may need to be present in the department for one or two days or intermittently.

With the participants' permission the interviews will be recorded. Subsequently they will be transcribed by me. As well as this, field notes will be taken during my observations. During the HOD interviews the recorder will be turned off if requested. In the group interview with students the recorder cannot be stopped but students may leave the interview or refrain from answering should they feel it necessary to do so. A group interview cannot be confidential however the transcript will not be seen by any teachers in the school. The reporting in my thesis or any subsequent publication of information will be done in a way that does not identify the school or participants as the source.

Participants have the right to withdraw from the research at any time but information that they provide cannot be withdrawn once transcription of the data has begun (this will begin within 24 hours after the first interview). The audio file and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet within the University premises for a period of six years for the purpose of further research. The consent forms will be stored in my principal supervisor's office on the campus. After the six year period the information provided will be destroyed.

If you are able to give permission for me to gain access to the HOD and students in the music department in this research, I would appreciate it if you could sign the consent form. Should you give approval I would appreciate you giving an assurance to any teachers that should they choose not to participate that this will not affect their standing in the school in any way. Similarly I would request that you assure any parents and students approached for participation who choose not to participate that this will not affect their learning, assessment, or standing within the school in any way.

Thank you very much for your time and help in making this study possible. If you have any queries or wish to know more, please phone me at the numbers provided below or email me at [barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz).

Contacts:

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09 849 7976 [barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz) Mobile 021 259 6781

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**For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 extn. 83711.**

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Auckland 1035, New Zealand

## **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM: Principal**

### **THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS.**

Project Title The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

Researcher: Graham McPhail

I have been given and understand the Participant Information Sheets for this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered.

I understand that I may withdraw approval at any time up to the day before the arranged visit, without giving a reason.

I am granting the researcher permission to spend some time in the school in the music department.

I understand that neither the participants nor the schools will be identifiable in any written report or oral presentation arising from this project however in the case of the student interviews I understand that that anonymity and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

I give an assurance that neither the HOD nor any students will be disadvantaged by participation or non-participation in this research.

I give permission for this research to be carried out as outlined in the participant information sheets.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ [Please print carefully]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 14-April, 2010 for (3) years. Reference Number 2010 / 048**

## Appendix B: Participant information sheet and consent form for teachers



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Auckland 1035, New Zealand

### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET: Head of Department**

**Title:** The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

**Researcher:** Graham McPhail

This research aims to examine a number of cases of music teaching in New Zealand secondary schools and is being undertaken in partial fulfilment for the Doctorate of Education degree at the University of Auckland. I will examine how teachers are managing the relationship between classical and popular music in the curriculum and I would like to invite you to be part of my research. The research design includes a pre and post observation interview with you of around of around 1 hour each, observation of two of your lessons as negotiated (perhaps at year 9 and year 11), and a group interview of around one hour's duration with a selection of six students from the observed classes. Depending on the negotiated details of the visit, particularly concerning the observation of appropriate classes and some group interviews with students, I may need to be present in the department for one or two days or intermittently. A group interview cannot be confidential and to assist with students feeling comfortable the transcript will not be seen by you or any teachers in the school. The reporting in my thesis, or any subsequent publication of information, will be done in a way that does not identify the school or participants as the source.

With your permission the interviews with you will be recorded and subsequently transcribed by me and field notes will be taken during my observations. During the interviews the recorder will be turned off should you request that to happen. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time but information that you provide cannot be withdrawn once transcription has begun (this will begin within 24 hours after the first interview). If you wish, I can provide a copy of the transcript so you can check for accuracy and make any additional comments or clarifications.

The audio file and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet within the University premises for a period of six years for the purpose of further research. The consent forms will be stored in my principal supervisor's office on the campus. After the six year period the information provided will be destroyed.

I would also request your assistance in approaching appropriate students from the observed classes for the group interview and in obtaining appropriate permission from the parents/guardians of any students aged less than 16 years of age (a separate information sheet and consent form has been prepared for this purpose) and a place and time for the interview.

If you are interested and able to participate in this research, I would appreciate it if you could fill in the consent form (attached).

In appreciation of your assistance for my project I would like to offer you a gift voucher. As well as this I would be happy to talk to you or your department about my research once it has been completed. Thank you very much for your time and help in making this study possible. I am hopeful that your contribution will assist in the development of professional knowledge concerning secondary music teaching within New Zealand. If you have any queries or wish to know more, please phone me at the numbers provided below or email me at [barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz).

Contacts:

Principal Investigator: Graham McPhail  
[barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz) Mobile 021 259 6781

Principal Supervisor: Associate Professor Elizabeth Rata  
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## **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM: Head of Department**

### **THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS.**

Project Title The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

Researcher: Graham McPhail

I have been given and understand the Participant Information Sheet for this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

I understand the interviews will involve a time commitment of approximately two hours.

I understand that I may withdraw at any time but information that I have already provided cannot be withdrawn once transcription has begun (this will begin within 24 hours after the first interview).

I agree that the interviews will be recorded and understand that the recorder will be turned off during the interviews should I request that to happen.

I understand that the researcher will observe some of my classes by negotiation with me and that he will make field notes during those observations.

I understand that I will assist the researcher in approaching and facilitating a group interview with six students from each observed class.

I understand that I will not be present at the student interviews and will not have the right to check the student interview transcripts.

I understand that if the information I provide is reported/published, this will be done in a way that does not identify me or my school as its source.

Depending on the negotiated details of the visit of the researcher, particularly concerning the observation of appropriate classes and the group interview with students, I understand that he may be present in the department for one or two days or intermittently.

I understand that the audio files will be kept for a period of six years and then destroyed.

I wish/do not wish to have the chance to check the transcripts of the interviews.

I agree to take part in this research as outlined in the participant information sheet.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ [please print carefully]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS  
COMMITTEE ON 14-April, 2010 for (3) years. Reference Number 2010 / 048**

## Appendix C: Participant information sheet and consent form for parents



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The University of Auckland  
Private Bag 92601, Symonds Street  
Auckland 1035, New Zealand

### Letter of introduction for Parents/Guardian

Dear Parent/Guardian

My name is Graham McPhail and I am writing to you to seek permission to include your son/daughter in an interview that is part of my Doctoral research at the University of Auckland. The research is looking at the way teachers include classical and popular music in music classes. More details are outlined in the Participant Information Sheet (attached). Please discuss this request for permission with your son/daughter. Should your child progress with participation even during the interview they have the right to withdraw should they feel the need to do so.

Thank you very much for your time in considering this request. If you have any queries or wish to know more, please phone me at the number provided below or e-mail me [barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz)

Yours sincerely

Graham McPhail

## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET: Parents/Guardian**

**Title:** The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

**Researcher:** Graham McPhail

This research aims to examine a number of cases of music teaching in New Zealand secondary schools. In particular I wish to examine how teachers are managing the relationship between classical and popular music in the curriculum. The research includes a group interview with six students of around one hour's duration.

The interviews will be recorded and later transcribed by me. A group interview cannot be confidential however the transcript will not be seen by any teachers in the school. The reporting in my thesis or any subsequent publication will be done in a way that does not identify the participants or the school.

Participation in this study is voluntary and students have the right to withdraw from the project at any time. Due to the nature of a group interview however, the audio recording cannot be stopped but if a student feels uncomfortable they may choose not to answer questions or leave the room. In this way students can withdraw from the research but any information that they provide before this cannot be withdrawn. Please be assured that non-participation will not have any effect on your child's learning, assessment, or standing within the music department or school.

The audio file and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet within the University premises for a period of six years for the purpose of further research. The consent forms will be stored in my principal supervisor's office on the campus. After the six year period the information provided will be destroyed.

If you are willing to give permission for participation in this research, I would appreciate it if you could let me know by filling in the consent form [attached] and sending it back to me in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope.

Thank you very much for your time and help in making this study possible. If you have any queries or wish to know more, please phone me at the numbers provided below or email me at [barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz).

Contacts:

Principal Investigator: Graham McPhail  
[barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz)    Mobile 021 259 6781

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## PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM – PARENT (For students under 16 years of age)



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Auckland 1035, New Zealand

### **THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS**

Project Title The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

Researcher: Graham McPhail

I have been given and understand the Participant Information Sheet for this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

I understand the interview for my son/daughter will involve a time commitment of approximately one hour and that it will be recorded.

I understand that I may withdraw permission for my son/daughter to participate at any time up until the interview is underway without giving a reason. I understand that if my son/daughter feels uncomfortable in the group interview she/he can choose not to answer questions or leave the interview however due to the nature of a group interview I realise that the recording cannot be stopped and that any information that has already been provided at this point cannot be withdrawn.

I understand that neither the participants nor the schools will be identifiable in any written report or oral presentation arising from this project but because of the nature of a group interview confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

I understand that the audio files will be kept for a period of six years and then destroyed.

I give permission for my son/daughter to take part in this research as outlined in the participant information sheet.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ [please print carefully]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS  
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## Appendix D: Participant information sheet and consent/assent forms for students



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Auckland 1035, New Zealand

### Letter of introduction to student

Dear

My name is Graham McPhail and I am writing to you to ask you to take part in a group interview along with five other members of your music class. The interview is part of my research being carried out through the University of Auckland for a Doctor of Education degree. The research is looking at the way teachers include classical and popular music in music classes. More details are outlined in the Participant Information Sheet (see over). **If you are less than 16 years of age then please discuss this request with your parents/guardian and provide them with the Parent/Guardian Information Sheet and Consent Form.**

Thank you very much for your time in considering this request. If you have any queries or wish to know more, please phone me at the number provided below or e-mail me [barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz)

Yours sincerely

Graham McPhail

## **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET: Student**

**Research Project Title:** The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

**Researcher:** Graham McPhail

In this research I am going to talk to teachers and students from a number of different secondary schools about the music used for teaching. In particular I want to know more about how teachers decide between classical and popular music and what students think about these choices.

I would like to interview you in a group situation with five of your classmates. The interview should take around one hour. The interview will be recorded and later transcribed by me. I would ask you to keep what is said in the interview confidential and can assure you that the transcript will not be seen by any teachers in your school. The reporting in my thesis or any subsequent publication will be done in a way that does not identify you or your school.

You can withdraw from the research at any time however you will not be able to withdraw any information you have already provided. You can withdraw from the interview even once it has started but due to the nature of a group interview the recording cannot be stopped. If you feel uncomfortable for some reason then you can choose not to answer questions or leave the room. If you change your mind about participating or leave the room this will not have any effect on your school work or your standing within the music department or school.

The audio file and transcripts will be stored in a locked cabinet within the University premises for a period of six years for the purpose of further research. The assent form will be stored in my principal supervisor's office on the campus. After the six year period the information provided will be destroyed.

If you are over 16 years of age and willing to participate in this research, then please fill in the assent form [attached]. If you are under 16 years of age you will need to have your parents read the parent/guardian Participant Information Sheet and have the parent/guardian consent form signed. Please bring all forms back to the HOD music at school.

Thank you very much for your time and help in making this study possible. If you have any queries or wish to know more, please phone me at the numbers provided below or email me at [barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz).

Contacts:

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[barok@ihug.co.nz](mailto:barok@ihug.co.nz)     Mobile 021 259 6781

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**Student Participant Assent Form (for students under 16 years of age)**



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Auckland 1035, New Zealand

**THIS ASSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS.**

Project Title The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

Researcher: Graham McPhail

I have been given and understand the Participant Information Sheet for this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

I understand the interview will involve a time commitment of approximately one hour and that it will be recorded.

I understand that I may withdraw at any time without giving a reason. I understand that if I feel uncomfortable in the group interview I can choose not to answer questions or leave the interview but due to the nature of a group interview I realise that the recording cannot be stopped and that I cannot withdraw any information that has already been provided.

I understand that neither the participants nor the schools will be identifiable in any written report or oral presentation arising from this project but because of the nature of a group interview confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

I understand that the audio files will be kept for a period of six years and then destroyed.

I agree to take part in this research as outlined in the participant information sheet.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ [please print carefully]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 14-April, 2010 for (3) years. Reference Number 2010 / 048**

## Student Participant Consent Form (for students over 16 years of age)



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### **THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS.**

Project Title The canon or the kids? Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

Researcher: Graham McPhail

I have been given and understand the Participant Information Sheet for this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

I understand the interview will involve a time commitment of approximately one hour and that it will be recorded.

I understand that I may withdraw at any time without giving a reason. I understand that if I feel uncomfortable in the group interview I can choose not to answer questions or leave the interview but due to the nature of a group interview I realise that the recording cannot be stopped and that I cannot withdraw any information that has already been provided.

I understand that neither the participants nor the schools will be identifiable in any written report or oral presentation arising from this project but because of the nature of a group interview confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

I understand that the audio files will be kept for a period of six years and then destroyed.

I agree to take part in this research as outlined in the participant information sheet.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ [please print carefully]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 14-April, 2010 for (3) years. Reference Number 2010 / 048**

## **Appendix E: Teacher interview guide**

**Title:** ‘The canon or the kids’. Teachers and the recontextualisation of classical and popular music in the secondary school curriculum

### **The research question:**

In what ways are secondary school music teachers managing the complex relationship between classical and popular music in their elective teaching programmes?

### **Sub questions:**

What influences are brought to bear on music curriculum decision making?

In what specific ways is curriculum content and pedagogical approach realised in relation to classical and popular music?

What alignment is there between teachers’ personal conceptions of music, the official curriculum, and the music they teach?

The interview questions provide a framework for consistency in the case study interviews however their detail does not imply that spontaneous lines of conversation will not be followed as appropriate to each interview.

### **Opening questions:**

Can you tell me about your personal background as a musician, your early interests, your training, and then the sorts of music involvement you have currently?

What sorts of music do you listen to at home/in your leisure time?

In what sort of school do you currently work and how would describe the music programme you run there?

### **Focusing question:**

What are your views about the place/role of classical and popular music within the curriculum?

### **Beliefs as personal constructs**

#### ***Classical music***

Do you think there is inherent value in studying classical music? If so, what is this value?

Can you describe the properties of classical music that you think make it important or significant?

How do think young people relate to classical music?

#### ***Popular music***

Do you think there is inherent value in studying popular music? If so, what is this value?

Can you describe the properties of popular music that you think make it important or significant?

How do think young people relate to popular music?



Do you think there are any essential differences between classical and popular music, particularly in terms of the value you hold for each?

How do you think classical and popular music are perceived in our culture?

How are these perceptions manifested in education?

### **Beliefs as curriculum actions**

#### *Classical music*

Should schooling include exposing students to classical music?

In what ways does this happen in your school?

What sorts of skills are you trying to develop through the study of this music and why do you think they are important?

#### *Popular music*

Should schooling include exposing students to popular music?

In what ways does this happen in your school?

What sorts of skills are you trying to develop through the study of this music and why do you think they are important?

How much choice do students get in regard to music they play and/or study?

Roughly how much time is given over to the study and performance of each of these types of music?

Do you approach the teaching of these musics in different ways?

Can you describe the relationship between classical and popular music within music education and in the 'real world'?

What do you think makes 'good music'? Is this the music most appropriate for education?

Some teachers I have talked with describe trying to find a balance between these two musics as important? What points would you make in regards to this idea of finding a balance?

What does finding a balance look like and who is the balance primarily for - you, student, school, state?

What influences are there on the development of your programmes both core and option? How do you balance these influences?

Can you explain the choices you make in relation to repertoire studied and the means through which you study it?

Do you reframe your personal values of what is valuable in music for the school setting? In what ways?

How have your views about what is most important/valuable to teach changed at all over your teaching career so far?

## **Teacher Interview Two**

The focus of the follow-up interview will be threefold:

- to consider, discuss and clarify the key concepts and analysis of the first interview
- to discuss and compare the espoused values and teaching aims from the first interview with the observed lessons
- to discuss the espoused values and teaching aims with the student perception of the musical teaching and learning

Questions cannot be predetermined and will be developed in relation to the preceding data analysis.

Issues covered could include teacher impressions of the lessons, typicality of the aspects covered, underlying ideological positions, and aspects of student response and engagement.

How are actions and potential meanings altered as a result of interactions with the various influences on curriculum realisation?

## **Appendix F: Observation Rationale and Schedule**

The primary purpose of the observations is to triangulate data from the interviews with HODs, to compare espoused theory with teaching in action.

Field notes will consist of a considerable amount of description for relatively incontestable data (Stake, 1995) under the general categories given below (Merriam, 1998) as well as the beginnings of interpretative inferences and analytic observations in memos.

Data will be filtered through the conceptual framework as per the focusing questions (see below). The observations will be looking for key actions and interactions in which various meanings are expressed, shared, and altered in the teaching/learning process.

### **Focussing questions**

How is the teacher managing the relationship between classical and popular music in this lesson?

What influences have been and are brought to bear on the pedagogy expressed in this particular lesson?

In what specific ways is curriculum content and pedagogical approach realised in relation to the chosen music(s)?

What messages do students receive, either explicitly or implicitly, concerning the style of music contained in the lesson?

### **Observational categories**

**The physical setting** - classroom layout, what behaviour is implied by the setting, visual images, feel of room, physical resources.

**The participants** - year level, number, musical backgrounds and abilities.

**Activities and interactions** - lesson level, lesson type (practical, listening etc).

What is going on? Lesson structure, sequence of events, key activities, musical style content, student responses and engagement, conversations (content).

**Subtle factors** - teacher projection of values and meanings (regulative and instructional discourses), hidden curriculum, null curriculum, choice and use of language.

**My role** - *observer as participant*, a peripheral membership role. The general purpose of the researcher's observation is known to the group and some interaction is possible if appropriate within the observation of lessons; how does my presence affect the lesson?

## **Appendix G: Student interview guide**

### **Student Interview Schedule**

The interview questions provide a framework for consistency in the case study interviews however their detail does not imply that spontaneous lines of conversation will not be followed as appropriate to each interview.

What sorts of music do you like to listen to most when you are on your own?

Can you give me some words to describe how you feel about classical music and pop/rock music?

Can you describe any experiences you have had involving classical music?

What makes music good in your opinion?

Why do you think some people like popular music?

Why do you think some people like classical music?

What do you think it is in particular about this style of music (classical) that people like?

How do you think people come to like or dislike a particular style of music?

Why is it do you think that people like such different types of music?

Can you tell me about the sort of music you have been studying and/or playing in class?

Is there music that you would rather been doing in class? Why would you want to include this music?

Do you think it is good to study and play music that you are not familiar with? Can you explain why or why not?

Do you think one style of music is more important than another? Can you explain why or why not?

Do you think your teacher thinks one type of music is more important than another? Can you explain why or why not?

Imagine a music class where all you did was what you were into, like you could come and just play all day and that was it. Would that be good?

What do you think the purpose of coming to school is? What are schools for?

## **Appendix H: Coding headings**

Affirming experiences  
Attitudes to teaching and learning  
Authenticity (teacher)  
Authenticity in Pop (student)  
C&P compared (teacher)  
C&P compared (student)  
Classical classroom  
Contestation  
Course Structure  
Cross-over experience  
Exposure  
External influences  
Hybridity advantages  
Inequality  
Localised  
Locating the musical self  
Locating the teacher self  
Making connections  
Multicultural dilemma  
Music Knowledge  
Music meaning (student)  
Music meaning (teacher)  
Music the subject  
Official Discourse  
Pedagogy  
Philosophical views  
Popular classroom  
Pragmatic choices  
Professional Isolation  
Schooling purpose (student)  
Schooling purpose (teacher)  
Significant influences  
Student centred  
Student rationalisation  
Student tastes  
Teacher influence (student)  
Technology  
Tolerance  
Valuing diversity  
What is good music (student)  
What is good music (teacher)  
Works choices

## Appendix I: Coding Summary Report

**Project:** The canon or the kids

**Generated:** 7/04/2011 11:46 a.m.

### Coding By

<u>Name</u>	<u>Initials</u>
Graham	GJMCP

**Total Users** 1

### Robert Interview 1 Document

<u>Node Coding</u>	<u>References</u>	<u>Coverage</u>
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<b>Free Nodes \ Affirming experiences</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.46%</b>
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Reference 1	Coverage 0.29%	Character Range 9527 – 9675
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I was there, in the sixth and seventh form, there was another couple of bands and we took out rock quest one year and came second the year following

Reference 2	Coverage 0.18%	Character Range 10467 – 10558
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I think through analysis and through again the guidance and role modelling of [name removed]

<u>Node Coding</u>	<u>References</u>	<u>Coverage</u>
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<b>Free Nodes \ Attitudes to teaching and learning</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6.71%</b>
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Reference 1	Coverage 2.90%	Character Range 5043 – 6535
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It wasn't until I got to University that I really went "oh, you idiot, you should have really paid a lot more attention". A lot of the kids have trouble making the connection between the point of doing the theory stuff and playing. If they can play well, they're in a good band and people come to their gigs, they win Rockquest, if they are at a certain point, they are almost blind to what that can offer them and they kind of go, "what do I need that for, I've already got this. I mean there's a whole other side but I don't need it because I'm already doing so well. But they're doing so well in their small little pond.

Reference 2	Coverage 0.18%	Character Range 10467 - 10558
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