

***Happy accidents?***  
**Music teacher perceptions of  
curriculum design at Key Stage 3 in  
the English secondary school.**

**Anthony David Anderson**

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Birmingham City University**



**BIRMINGHAM CITY  
University**

“Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.”  
Isaiah 40: 31

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## **Abstract**

Classroom music teachers in English secondary schools, teaching Key Stage 3 (11 – 14 year olds), are required to design their own curriculum. Processes of curriculum design in music embody unacknowledged complexities, and tacit teacher planning practices. A consideration of music curriculum design is largely absent in music education literature, and there is a similar lack of approved curriculum formations in policy documentation. A paucity of discussion of music curriculum design also exists, both in initial teacher training, and in later career development opportunities for classroom music specialists. Teachers are, however, accountable for curricula that they implement, and consequential outcomes that are evident from their selected approaches.

This thesis addresses these problems by seeking to understand music teacher curriculum design processes and their enaction, and to recognise and theorise complex notions within curriculum design models of practice. It makes recommendations for music teachers, senior school leaders and policymakers on curriculum music in the lower English secondary school classroom for future practice, based on research findings.

The study draws on case study research in two pilot and seven main study schools, from the West and East Midlands in England, utilising semi-structured interviews, *think aloud protocols* and documentary analysis. Additional research strands include a questionnaire with 64 respondents, and two elite interviews for elucidation. Analyses of results were facilitated through methodologies of *epistemic ascent*, *radically modified grounded theory* and *activity theory*.

Music teacher perceptions of curriculum design, as revealed through the research project were developed into models: *curriculum progression*, *curriculum activity*,

*curriculum processing* and *curriculum dynamics*. These models illuminate music teachers' curriculum design practices, substantiating observations that these enactments represent more significant processes than 'happy accidents'.

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## **Part 1: Literature Review**

### **1. Introduction and Context**

Secondary school music curricula have always been spheres of fascination for me. During my teaching career in schools, I reflected on potential impacts that classroom music curricula could have in the education of young people, and developed my own notions of characteristics for effective practice. However, I also became aware that many colleagues, whilst no less serious about their classroom music curricula, conceptualized its structure in an entirely different manner. Differences in such practice were considerable, revealing distinctions in musical materials, divisions of content and duration of subsections of musical learning. The musical experience of young people in the classroom was therefore widely differing in pedagogy and content. Investigating diversity of music teacher practices as they formed their own music curricula, and understanding better the reasons for this difference has been the inspiration for my PhD research.

Whilst aspects of musical learning receive attention in music education literature, there is conceptual absence of processes with which secondary music teachers engage when designing their Key Stage 3 curricula. How musical materials are sequenced in units of work, to enable musical progress and development, is an additional area in which discussion appears underdeveloped. This doctoral research has enabled me to peel back some of the layers of music curriculum design, so that it can be better understood. My aspiration is that this research will help music teachers in their important and valuable work of musical development in schools, enrich the experience of learners as they engage in musical education and contribute to research knowledge of music curriculum design practices.

In order to understand current approaches to music curriculum design and its status in educational thinking, it is first necessary to give a context to my work and this is where this thesis begins. In this contextual section I will consider a brief historical overview of music education, before exploring the shape it has taken in the twentieth century. This will be followed by surveying musical pedagogies, and discussing curriculum sequencing. I will then set out my research questions, my identity as a researcher and the structure of the thesis.

### **1.1 Brief Historical Overview**

Music education in England has a long and complex history. As Pitts (2000; 250) observed:

*Perceived through the ages as a civilizing force, music has a fundamental role to play in education.*

Earliest teaching approaches, often built around training of choristers in the church, involved rote learning of note names and attention to psalmody in the context of daily sung worship. By the 1660s specialist teachers of this approach were taking singing classes (Rainbow, 1967) and with the establishment of Charity Schools, Schools in Industry and the development of Grammar Schools and Sunday Schools during the 1780s, music lessons began to broaden to include teacher-led class singing for a range of social classes. In addition to aural awareness and singing, musical notation teaching also formed a part of work in the classroom. An example of a text designed to support this pedagogy is Turner's 1833 *Manual of Instruction in Vocal Music*, which was later described as a "bald series of rules to be committed to memory" (Rainbow, 1967; 32). In assessment terms, testing such knowledge placed great emphasis on musical symbols in isolation and the ability to recall factual features. Such was the landscape of music education when music was adopted as a school curriculum subject with the introduction of compulsory schooling in 1880 (HMSO, 1880; Hallam and Creech, 2010).

## **1. 2 Music Education in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Moving rapidly forward to the twentieth century, music appreciation, listening to the 'great classics' via the medium of the radio or the gramophone, was added to classroom singing activities through the 1920s and on into the 1940s. This placed an emphasis on listening to the music of those considered among the canon of great composers (Goehr, 1992). Teachers began to use recordings and broadcasts as part of their delivery of music appreciation, such practices being primarily teacher-centric. Such an approach was not regarded positively by many, who considered this kind of teaching as poorly conceived and practised, with a 1923 observer noting:

*It is impossible to kindle a fire with an icicle.* (Cox, 2001; 11)

Dissatisfaction with perceived pedagogical inadequacies in music teaching began to lead to teacher restlessness and a desire to liberate the subject, as in the teaching of art, where a new narrative was emerging at this time that allowed space for creativity (Cox, 2001).

## **1. 3 Music Education after World War II**

The emergence of popular music reflected the shifts in popular culture and society, especially notable in the music of the 1960s, with the genesis of British bands such as the Beatles and Rolling Stones. Reflecting this shift, the winds of change also began to blow through music education. One turning point was the publication of *Enquiry 1* (Schools Council, 1968), an investigation into school leavers' attitudes to diverse aspects of their education. This noted that many of the students in schools at the time had become disaffected by classroom music. The report's figures were categorised under headings of subjects that students found to be 'boring' and 'useless'. Music came top of both, with 48% of boys and 34% of girls stating that this was the case for them. Conversely, 20% of boys and 35% of girls stated that pop

music was an important issue for them (Schools Council, 1968). Following this enquiry the Schools Council stated:

*Any approach that claims to make school subjects, including music, relevant to the pupils' lives and emotional experience deserves careful examination.* (HMSO 1972; 29)

This led to projects exploring new musical pedagogies concentrated on enabling the musical development of young people.

As a practical response to the findings of *Enquiry 1*, the Schools Council Secondary Music project of the early 1970s (Paynter, 2008; 51) was at the forefront of a change in musical educational thinking. The director of the Schools Council Music Project, John Paynter, was its significant figure. Paynter's work emphasised an integration of *music-making* activities into classroom practice, delineated in performing, composing and listening. Paynter's 1970 publication *Sound and Silence*, encouraged the use of sound with symbol, rather than symbol alone, and was an innovative approach for its time. Paynter described this new approach as:

*The change of emphasis from children being instructed to children being placed in situations where they can learn for themselves.*

(Paynter, 1970; 7)

This renewed emphasis on music-making practices in the classroom was developed by Swanwick, in his 1970s articles for *Music Teacher* magazine, in which he argued for *purposeful* musical activity for children and young people (Swanwick, 1974).

Swanwick asserted that musical starting points were essential in what Paynter (1979) later called "workshop" style lessons, where students worked in groups, engaged in

composing their own music. It is through the work of both Paynter and Swanwick, that musical learning became linked to creative process, rather than rote learning alone.

#### **1. 4 Policy and Practice background to this thesis**

Developing perspectives of classroom music education, led to greater diversity of practice and a range of disparate planning practices. In terms of school subjects, music remains remarkable for its relative lack of curricula guidance. High profile campaigning led to music's inclusion as a National Curriculum subject in its own right in 1992, which as discussed in chapter 4 has progressed through a number of permutations, with revisions for Music in 1995, 1999, 2007 and 2013. The complete text for Music in the National Curriculum at *Key Stage 3* in use at the time of my research (Department for Education, 2013) is here given in full:

*Pupils should build on their previous knowledge and skills through performing, composing and listening. They should develop their vocal and/or instrumental fluency, accuracy and expressiveness; and understand musical structures, styles, genres and traditions, identifying the expressive use of musical dimensions. They should listen with increasing discrimination and awareness to inform their practice as musicians. They should use technologies appropriately and appreciate and understand a wide range of musical contexts and styles.*

*Pupils should be taught to:*

- *play and perform confidently in a range of solo and ensemble contexts using their voice, playing instruments musically, fluently and with accuracy and expression*
- *improvise and compose; and extend and develop musical ideas by drawing on a range of musical structures, styles, genres and traditions*
- *use staff and other relevant notations appropriately and accurately in a range of musical styles, genres and traditions*
- *identify and use the inter-related dimensions of music expressively and with increasing sophistication, including use of tonalities, different types of scales and other musical devices*
- *listen with increasing discrimination to a wide range of music from great composers and musicians*
- *develop a deepening understanding of the music that they perform and to which they listen, and its history.*

These 203 words are the entirety of the National Curriculum for three years of Key Stage 3 (KS3) Music in secondary schools in England. It is from these that teachers

construct their knowledge base for teaching and learning. This compares with 2,270 words in the previous revision of the KS3 Music curriculum for England in 2007 (QCA, 2007); a 39 page booklet of the curriculum issued in 1999 (QCA, 1999); and a 33 page folder of curriculum orders alongside a 42 page book of Non-Statutory Guidance published together in 1992 (NCC, 1992). There is a lack of recognised consensus in approaches for developing music curriculum structures and sequences of musical learning in policy discourse. It is left to schools to construct their curriculum from the relatively brief guidance. Alongside this condensed curriculum outline, there is a similar lack of commercially published materials. This is instantiated by the small number of textbooks for Key Stage 3 (KS3) music, with those that do exist remaining uncommon in classrooms. Published textbooks contemporaneous with my research data consisted of: *Opus* books 1 - 3 (Blythe and Hobbs, 2007), *Key Stage 3 Listening Tests* books 1 – 2 (Harrison and Laurence, 2009), and *Music Matters* books 1 - 3 (Hiscock and Metcalfe, 1992).

A varied mixture of taught content and practice in the English lower secondary school classroom therefore exists, which is dependent on conceptualisation and practice of music as interpreted by the generalist music teacher. One KS3 study (Fautley 2015) based on data taken from 84 London schools, found that 76 discrete topics were used to facilitate musical learning, of which 41 topics were unique, existing in only one school. This informal custom and practice approach can be viewed as an example of what Bruner (1996; 44) referred to as “folk pedagogy”. In the case of KS3 Music, this is a way of organising and delivering music curricula materials and demonstrates lack of commonality with other practitioners. Music teaching has thus become increasingly fractured and lacking a coherent model. Understanding the role of teachers in curriculum design, not only in music teaching, but musical progress, is the contribution to knowledge that my thesis is seeking to develop.

### 1.5 Musical Pedagogies

Practices in musical pedagogy since the Schools Council Secondary Music Project remain diverse. There continues to be a lack of musical learning models on which there is consensus. Swanwick's CLASP model (1979) delineated five specific musical characteristics for classroom learning: *composition, literature studies, audition, skill acquisition* and *performance*. Swanwick's contribution to the field sparked fresh debate on the nature of learning in the generalist secondary music classroom. The emphasis placed on the CLASP elements, particularly *composing, skill acquisition* and *performing*, did not feature in a singing and musical appreciation pedagogy that had formed dominant practice until this time.

Attempts have consistently been made to establish links between formal and informal learning, although there similarly remains a lack of agreement in this area. Sloboda (1985) made an early attempt to link the two, regarding formal and informal learning as a linear sequential development. His approach places emphasis on musical learning as intuitive and occurring without conscious effort. Swanwick and Tillman's (1986) frequently cited spiral presents another synthesis. Regarding developmental theory as not only progressive layers, but experiential, Swanwick and Tillman consider musical development as a movement through *materials, expression, form* and *value*, which develops from starting points of *play* and *imitation* through to *aesthetic* and *analysis*. Swanwick and Tillman's thinking on musical discourse and their attempts to produce a developmental theory of musical learning, laid the foundation for the emergence of an approach to understanding musical progression in classroom music in general, but especially in composing.

Green (2001) was later to seek to define the differences between *formal, informal* and *non-formal* learning, the areas in which music-making and musical learning occur, and their links to internal and external settings. She asks what it means to be

musically educated and concludes that what she terms “vernacular music practices” (2001; 17) need to be included as a part of formal music teaching. This approach, would later lead to a prevalent pedagogical practice: *Musical Futures* (D’Amore 2010). This underpins responsive practice to musical pedagogy in the classroom and was frequently cited by music teachers in my own research. However, primary conceptualisations of informal pedagogies in music have been challenged: Folkestad (2006) observes that musicians identified by Green as learning *informally*, often instruct *formally* when teaching others in learning institutions. Musical learning practices are thus multi-faceted and difficult to categorise consistently.

### **1. 6 Curriculum sequencing**

Within the wide variance of approaches to music curriculum pedagogy, the sub-set of curriculum sequencing has received little attention. The KS3 music curriculum tends towards topic-based learning, where a musical style, genre or tradition is explored, often in half termly units. As part of teacher training, music specialists receive limited opportunity to develop their thinking in curriculum design or rationale for topic order and relationships between them for progress. As school music departments tend to be staffed by one or two individuals (Daubney, 2017), this often means that teachers lead in the design of the music curriculum relatively early in their careers. There is limited UK-focused literature on which they can draw to facilitate this task.

Mills (2005) suggests a range of questions for musical planning and sequencing. These include evaluating student status, determining the next musical phase, designing a method for enabling progress towards this phase, and evaluating how the teacher will themselves know if they have achieved the intended goal, or in fact learnt something unexpected. Philpott (2007a) states more explicitly that the sequence of learning is crucial for teaching to be effective and that in music:

*Sounds and musical meanings come before written notation and technical analysis.* (Philpott, 2007a; 166)

For the teacher to explicitly consider learning, sequencing is therefore significant if the ordering of musical topics is to avoid being a “Cook’s Tour” (Fautley, 2012; 103) and students are to be able to engage with musical learning activities at the end of a year that has been established in musical development through emerging skills and understanding. In this context, discussion on the sequencing of musical learning is infrequent and under-represented in music education literature.

Guidance on effective music teaching from *Ofsted* suggests that the main direction of individual lessons needs to be clear (Ofsted, 2009; 31). The 2013 report *Music in Schools: what hubs must do* (Ofsted, 2013) frequently discusses how schools should work with their local music hubs to develop musical curricula. (A *hub* is a development from Local Education Authorities, in which music partners work together to create a music education offer for young people in a geographical region (DfE, 2011). Operational from 2012, there were 120 hubs in 2017, each receiving an annual funding grant from the Department for Education, administered through *Arts Council England*.) The *Ofsted* reports do not identify the nature of musical learning or how musical progress can be reflected in sequencing or attempt to define curriculum. In the *National Strategy for Music*, published by the Department for Education and Skills in 2006 there is an emphasis on identifying how students develop understanding and the part that music-making plays in this (Department for Education, 2006; 4). Making links with prior learning is a part of this conceptualisation that is also emphasised (Department for Education, 2006; 3). However, there is no suggestion for sequencing of musical learning as part of these considerations for the generalist music classroom.

There is therefore a gap between curriculum constructs, sequencing hierarchy and classroom practice in music education as manifest in schools. The notion of a considered Programme of Study for music teaching topics across the academic year appears underdeveloped in the literature. This is the wider realisation of what Philpott terms as ordering sounds and musical meaning before “written notations and technical analysis” (Philpott, 2007a; 166). My thesis will seek to explore this gap in greater detail and to interrogate how teacher concepts of progress and development are evidenced in practice.

### **1. 7 Research Questions and overview**

My research questions are therefore focused around two primary areas of secondary classroom music teaching in England:

1. In what ways do secondary classroom music teachers plan musical knowledge for musical learning in their Key Stage 3 music programmes?
2. How and why do music teachers sequence musical learning in the design of their Key Stage 3 curricula?

These considerations lead to a third subsidiary question:

3. To what extent are secondary music teachers enabled in the process of curriculum design in a secondary school context?

This third question considers *enabling* as defined by Webster (1996) as a facilitator of conceptual understanding in the context of *craftsmanship*, in which complex musical knowledge is applied to musical activity. In the context of my research, this includes music curriculum design. My research methods will be outlined in more detail later in this thesis, but consisted of pilot studies in the East and West Midlands. The main study consisted of work with teacher participants in seven schools in

Leicestershire, England. These schools represented a diverse range of school type, teacher practitioner background, social and economic context and curriculum timetabling approach to arts subjects, including music. It is from these nine schools that my research data is drawn and from which the models that appear in the discussion section of this thesis have been developed.

### **1. 8 My identity as researcher**

At the time during which I was engaged in fieldwork with schools (2012 - 2013), I was working as a secondary school Music teacher with Key Stage 4 and 5. This enabled insider understanding of professional teacher practice, from which I was fascinated to explore how and why teachers had made the choices that they did in the process of Key Stage 3 Music curriculum design for their own school contexts. Learners in my own classroom were drawn from a wide variety of musical experience and background and this dichotomy, appeared, informally at least, to influence the way that they conceptualised and understood music in the classroom. I found such differences fascinating and this was what motivated me to explore the manner in which teachers at Key Stage 3 shaped musical experience for these young people in their curriculum design: a field which appeared to contain tacit curriculum practices and notions of acceptable curriculum design behaviours.

I began teaching Music in secondary schools in 2000 and was Subject Leader for Music in my school from 2001. I later became Faculty Leader for Performing Arts, managing Music, Music Technology, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts. I was accredited as an Advanced Skills Teacher in 2006 and as a Lead Facilitator for the National College of Teaching in 2012. I worked as a mentor training Music teachers at my school between 2005 – 2016 and as a Lead Mentor overseeing the training of teachers in other subjects between 2005 and 2015. In all these roles, music curriculum was a main area of focus and one that directly affected my thinking and

practice, but prior to my research and analysis my conceptualisation was largely anecdotal.

My own profile has also been enriched by opportunities to engage with the development of curricula support. This has included work as Lead Regional Subject Advisor during the 2007 revision of the curriculum and Vice-Chair, then Chair of the Expert Subject Advisory Group for Secondary Music for the Department for Education during the 2013 revision of the secondary school Music Curriculum in England. I have also worked developing curriculum models in music education for Channel 4 and the BBC, which has enabled me to extend and develop my thinking. All these experiences have caused me to reflect on the gap that exists between secondary school expectations of their Music Subject Leaders and research on music curriculum design. Designing the music curriculum is a core role for lead qualified teachers, however, space for reflection on this process was absent in the experience of my research participants. My research therefore has the potential to positively support secondary music teachers' professional practice and I hope that my work may help those who have not routinely had the opportunity to reflect on curriculum design to be better equipped to develop it in their context.

### **1. 9 Thesis Structure**

The thesis begins in **chapter 1** by situating secondary music education in England within a broad historical context. It presents the setting for the research project and sets out general considerations of content and rationale.

In order to identify factors that influence teachers in music curriculum design, what follows in **chapter 2**, is a survey of the nature of learning and knowledge as presently understood and the differences between them. These shape diverse notions that come into play in the design of classroom curricula. Critically, this section will also

consider the nature of musical knowledge and learning and how these become manifest in secondary classroom music teacher practices.

My research explores the personal nature of curriculum design, and so teacher identity will be the starting point of discussion in **chapter 3**. This discussion will then consider the intersectionality between identity and creativity in curriculum origination.

In **chapter 4** the nature of curriculum and curriculum design itself within music education will be explored. This chapter also contains my definition of curriculum resulting from analysis of the literature and is a central discussion related to my research questions of musical knowledge, musical learning and their sequencing.

**Chapter 5** begins my methodology section by exploring the place of *epistemic ascent* and *radically modified grounded theory* as foundational research perspectives. The manner in which these frameworks work as a unified whole is also explored.

Further conceptual approaches and theoretical underpinnings are developed in **chapter 6** of the thesis, which considers *activity theory* as a lens for analysis. This methodology takes the findings from the previous chapter and creates an emergent methodology, which seeks to take into account the dynamic nature of music in curriculum design.

**Chapter 7** in turn considers the methods that my research has employed. It discusses the different strands of fieldwork activity and the rationale for their selection and explains how these were realised in research activity.

In **Chapter 8**, the research findings, analysis and discussion are presented. This includes results of questionnaires, documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews, *think-aloud protocols* exercises and observations both from the pilot and main study (nine teachers in total). It also incorporates elite interviews with two prominent figures influential in discussions relating to secondary music curricula.

Contribution to knowledge and the significance of findings is developed into further discussion in **chapter 9**. This seeks to offer fresh perspectives on what is currently understood about the enactment of the secondary music curriculum. It presents my models for understanding notions of music curriculum design as arising from my research.

**Chapter 10** seeks to draw together the discussion and to reach conclusions about the implications of the research of the thesis for different stakeholders. It considers implications from curriculum planning models and also seeks to make recommendations for future development within the field of the Key Stage 3 school curriculum.

Finally, **chapter 11** reflects on my research journey, considering how my study has impacted me personally, the difference it has made to my understanding of music teacher practices, and significant transformations, which I have experienced as a result of PhD study.

## 2. Knowledge and Learning constructs

Constructs for curriculum design are complex and multi-faceted, but begin by identifying knowledge to be facilitated and learning processes to frame this interaction. Approaches that classroom music teachers at Key Stage 3 (KS3) adopt towards designing their curricula is based upon knowledge discourses, which influence and impinge upon each other. In order to establish the locus of my first research question, which asks how music teachers plan for knowledge, my discussion will begin by exploring natures and substances of these discourses. I will explore how knowledge is communicated and differences between pedagogical knowledge perceptions and musical knowledge, as taught in schools at KS3. Characteristics of *knowledge* and *learning* will then be explored as interlinked and distinct aspects of curriculum design: learning *sui generis* and *musical learning*. This will be followed by a consideration of theoretical contexts of musical development in shaping school curricula by music teachers, and how their curricula sequencing forms KS3 music programmes of study. At present this is an emergent area in music education, in which approaches are only partially theorised. My discussion will identify what is *known* and what is *known* that is *unknown* in curriculum design.

### 2.1 Knowledge Perceptions

Considering moments in which knowledge and learning interact and are intertwined is necessary to frame discussions of curriculum design. Learning, knowledge, skill and understanding are often used interchangeably in discussions of pedagogical practice in teaching literature. In the *Secondary National Strategy for School Improvement* (DfE, 2006), *knowledge* and *understanding* appear as synonyms, but these are, in fact, multiplicitous and complex terms. The model of musical understanding taken from the *Strategy* document and analysed by Rogers (2009), states that musical quality should be central to musical understanding, and that the bringing together of knowledge, practical engagement and contextual awareness in an integrated manner is critical to effective musical pedagogies. However, Rogers'

conceptualisation also presents “understanding of features of musical elements” alongside “knowledge of conventions, processes and devices” (2009; 11) with knowledge supporting musical development and understanding as a hierarchical construct. Questions of knowledge as an epistemological concept and consensus on musical knowledge, and its divergences from general knowledge constructs, are not interrogated by Rogers’ analysis. This section of the thesis will therefore seek to explore how knowledge concepts influence the KS3 music classroom.

### **2.1.1 Knowledge Types**

It is widely accepted that there are different types of knowledge. Webster (1996) discusses three traditional epistemological viewpoints on knowledge, identifying *knowledge by acquaintance*, by which he means knowledge that could not be transferred or understood in any way other than through the senses, as experienced through objects, events, processes, states and persons. He also identifies *knowledge that*, which rests on concepts embodied in proposition and distinct from true belief. Finally, he describes *knowledge how*, in which rules are recognised, followed and evaluated resulting in the development of expertise. How these concepts operate in practice and their precise manifestation has been disputed. Approaches to knowledge types such as these have emerged from extensive debate in the literature. Piaget described knowledge as an ordered process in which one stage inevitably followed another in a sequential construct (Piaget, 1971). Building from this he posited that it was impossible to transfer logico-mathematical knowledge and that this was a knowledge type in which children could only be guided by the teacher, who acted as a consultant, rather than an authority (Phillips, 1969). He thus drew a distinction between mathematical and other knowledge types. Piaget also accepted the possibility that actions themselves could produce knowledge, as long as they were purposeful and content rich (Phillips, 1969). These propositions have been extensively critiqued: for instance, whether knowledge is, or is not, age

dependent realised through a sequence of acquisitions; whether there are distinctions between modality and truth value of knowledge, and whether structuralism is knowledge without history and self (Lourenço and Machado, 1996). How knowledge is acquired and its sequencing significance is discussed in subsequent sections of this thesis. However, it should be noted at this point that interpretations of notions of knowledge and how these are placed into sequences for classroom learners, determines which learning opportunities are present in secondary music classrooms. Piaget's focus on the transmission of knowledge from adult to child has been subject to debate, as this interaction suggests relationships of power in knowledge development (Matusov and Hayes, 2000). What is valued as knowledge and privileged as being so, therefore determines curriculum content. (McPhail, 2017). Despite a lack of consensus around how such privileging of knowledge occurs, later theorists continue to build on the work of Piaget. Kegan (2009), for example, uses assimilative and accommodative processes as a theoretical origin to distinguish between existing knowledge structures and those that change in response to experience. Kegan highlights Piaget's assimilative processes as those in which new experience relates to already existing knowledge and accommodative processes as those in which structures themselves change in response to experience. He argues that transformative language has become too familiar, so losing its metamorphic character. This has potential to impact significantly on pedagogical starting points, depending on whether knowledge perspectives are starting points from which learning emerges or modifying characteristics. There is thus wide variance in theorising arising from Piaget's work on knowledge. Consensus around knowledge types is also, therefore, limited, which makes a typology of knowledge more difficult to develop. Establishing essential characteristics of knowledge and concomitantly developing it in a classroom context is therefore problematic.

Concerning himself with this classroom context, Bruner (1968) stated that any body of knowledge could be presented in a form simple enough for any learner to understand. This view is at variance with Piaget's developmental theories for knowledge acquisition, in that it does not rely on staged perceptions of knowledge progression. Bruner (1996) later identified four knowledge types: *procedural knowledge* (knowing how); *propositional knowledge* (knowing that); what can be summarised as '*perspective knowledge*' (the development of inter-subjective interchange); and '*positional knowledge*' (children distinguishing their own knowledge from wider knowledge). 'Perspective' knowledge is concerned with the development of children as thinkers. According to Bruner (1996) this centres on children understanding what others think and feel, understanding beliefs, promises, intentions and desires of others and what they themselves think about learning. Thus it is ascribing reason arising from critical reflection as an evolving pattern of thought. Such an approach to knowledge types, in the categories Bruner identifies, seek to account for knowledge complexities, which can be observed in different classroom contexts. It seeks to create distinctions of knowledge types from observations of how children interact and experience the world, as distinct from defining a body of knowledge to be transmitted to learners. The knowledge perceptions of Bruner and Piaget are therefore at variance and emanate from different perspectives on knowledge: Piaget's on defined knowledge signifiers, and Bruner's on knowledge creation. These differing approaches to conceptualising knowledge result in alternative framing of classroom activities, and associations between knowledge philosophies and knowledge pedagogies are therefore significant.

Approaches to understanding knowledge have also been described in further complexities of experience and social context, as fluid concepts linked to experience. This develops knowledge types into knowledge modes, introducing further

complexities to definitions of knowledge. Elkjaer (2009) argues that not all experience leads to knowledge, with some experiences remaining in the unconscious mind. Kegan (2009) frames such experience as “*a way of knowing*” a term he borrows from Mezirow (2000). Kegan argues that knowledge linked to experience is not only about knowing *more*, but knowing *differently*. In this sense knowledge is a multi-dimensional model that develops self-awareness. Heron (2009) develops dimensions of knowledge realised in experience as multi-faceted or what he terms the “one-many” (2009; 145). His knowledge types begin to impinge on learning, which will be discussed later in this thesis. Heron does not consider that there is a difference between learning and knowledge, but regards these as inter-related aspects. Heron’s perception is therefore of interacting processes of intelligence, learning and knowing. These modes of knowing offer significantly different perspectives on knowledge from Piaget’s in which knowledge cannot be communicated; Bruner’s in which knowledge is created; or Elkjaer’s in which knowledge represents concepts of human essence. Distinguishing between these variant understandings of knowledge types and modes and combining them into a unified perception of knowledge is therefore a complex and problematic interaction. Conceptualising this further into developing a classroom pedagogy, creates a further layer of realisation, which the classroom teacher is required to integrate.

### **2.1.2 Knowledge and the lived in world**

A unified understanding of the substance of knowledge requires a realised context: knowledge as observed in social interactions. This enables a more complete picture of knowledge as it is conceptualised and appears in practice, facilitating a detailed consideration of its validity. The classroom may be regarded as such an interactive space for social realisation. Lave (2009) regards learning as realised through changes in enacted knowledge (how knowledge perceptions affect behaviour), meaning that knowledge *in practice* is a necessary conduit for learning to occur. In

this context knowledge cannot be merely absorbed as an inert substance to be acquired, and Lave (2009) suggests that it requires continual re-conceptualisation. In line with Bruner's (1996) concepts of knowledge creation and in thinking developed as part of a consideration of the problem of understanding learning in context, Lave suggests that knowledge *consistently* undergoes construction and transformation in use. In this sense a body of knowledge cannot be preserved for transmission, but is uniquely interpreted and applied by those in receipt of it. This social interactionist approach can lead to problems with knowledge philosophies, and knowledge is therefore understood differently by individuals. This is problematic for classroom activity, where teacher interactions function for knowledge validation, which may inhibit knowledge development in learner responses.

In exploring this tension, Wenger (2009) agrees that knowing is about engagement and that knowledge can only be successfully evaluated in praxis, of which the classroom is one valid context. In this sense practical competency is itself an indicator of theoretical knowledge acquisition. It is this "biographical knowledge" (Alheit 2009; 125), also sometimes referred to as "tacit knowledge" (Polanyi, 1958; Cain and Allan, 2017; 4) where contexts are redefined, that for Lave and Wenger make sense of knowing. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that the need for knowledge to be applied and lived-out from within a community of practice (where practice of learning makes sense of learning) is a critical factor in evidencing knowledge awareness. More problematic, is understanding the extent to which participants in such knowledge are in ownership of it. Practices may evidence "legitimate peripheral participation" (Lave and Wenger, 1991), but they could also represent a rote skills base of static know-how. McLellan (1996) critiques the community of practice within which Lave and Wenger consider that knowledge evolves, arguing that it leaves the student/newcomer "impotent" (1996; 93) and considers that this is a barrier to creating new legitimate knowledge. From this

perspective, the balance of power remains the same as with established concepts of knowledge as an inert body. This does little to develop knowledge in the learner in classroom contexts, where the teacher holds the balance of power. Handley *et al.* (2006) emphasise the point further, arguing that in such communities of practice, not all participants press for, or desire full participation. In this sense, the notion of knowledge realised by practice alone is limited by individual responsive action. Knowledge may be lived out in the real world, but knowledge itself co-exists as a measurable set, which inter-relates with practice. This multi-layered complexity has implications for approaches to teacher curriculum design, within which knowledge development is a complex interaction, not only a binary interchange.

Knowledge has also been grounded by its classification as a form of cultural consciousness (Bernstein, 2000). In this analysis, knowledge evidences both vertical and horizontal discourses: vertical representing academic learning, and horizontal embodying experiential aspects. McPhail has characterised such academic learning as “conceptual, context-independent knowledge” (2012; 318) and draws a distinction between strong and weak *musical grammars* with the dominant discourse of “transmission rather than acquisition” (2012; 320) becoming a hegemonic knowledge of power. Such discourses emphasise high-status knowledge, which is not situated in every-day practice. Thus *contexts* of taught knowledge are as significant as *contents* of taught knowledge and their perceived value. This has implications for the origins of curriculum design as practised by teachers in the music classroom. Specifically, this rests on teachers’ ability to reconstruct or ‘recontextualise’ (Bernstein, 2000) knowledge, as they:

*enable different sorts of knowledge to ‘speak’ to each other within an enabling pedagogy. (McPhail, 2015; 17).*

The attributes of musical knowing as realised in pedagogy are therefore significant to its framing (see *characteristics of music knowledge* section below). The challenge for music teachers is therefore to combine both practical and conceptual knowledge into a cohesive music curriculum, which provides opportunities for knowledge development in dual domains.

### **2.1.3 Knowledge and Pedagogy**

Interpreting and understanding knowledge is a significant consideration in curriculum design as proposed in my first research question. Positionality of teachers requires not only a *knowledge of knowledge*: a lens through which subject knowledge is interpreted and filtered; but also a *knowledge of pedagogy*: how to facilitate knowledge development in a generalist music classroom context. Sfard (1998) has suggested that understanding knowledge for learning can be impeded by structures of the concept and what is required is a re-conceptualisation. She regards these approaches to knowledge as metaphors, describing the more traditional approach in which new knowledge determines old knowledge as an *acquisition metaphor* in which the human mind is “a container to be filled” (1998; 5). This relates to the concept of a knowledge epistemology, which is transferred from teacher to student and is a frequent model of classroom knowledge development. Sfard suggests instead that there should be an emphasis on reflection and learning in a community. She considers *knowing* as more prevalent than *knowledge*, a process in which there is no end-point. She describes such a re-imagining of knowledge development as a *participation metaphor*, in which social mechanisms and interactions are given greater prominence. In this conception of knowledge there is no need for knowledge transfer as such, as there are no rigid conceptual boundaries between the known and unknown. Sfard engages with these metaphors as “differing perspectives rather than competing opinions” (1998; 11), with the hope that fragmented coherence will, in time, be developed into a more over-arching theory of teaching and learning.

Such an approach raises fundamental questions regarding pedagogical praxis. Suggestions that knowledge development may be impeded without reflection, and that context may limit knowledge, directly impact aspirations of the generalist classroom practitioner in the design of their curriculum. Whilst pragmatic considerations may determine what is recognised as subject matter in the field, the process of selecting, sequencing, and allowing processing time for learners, demands an altogether different perspective of pedagogical knowledge and this creates cognitive tension. In determining what should be taught as part of the curriculum, power relationships are therefore significant. This “powerful knowledge or knowledge of the powerful” (Rata, 2016; 171) affects pedagogical approaches to curriculum construction and delivery, and curriculum attribution is connected with power relationships (Young, 1971). Such a dynamic can lead to imbalance between learner and teacher interactions, where “inequalities of access to powerful conceptual knowledge” (McPhail, 2015; 10) are a cause of tension in the validation of teacher and learner choices of musical materials. How learners access knowledge, and what is presented to them as knowledge, are therefore key determinants in curriculum assemblage. The notion of power and how it relates to curriculum is a theme that will be returned to later in the thesis in the discussion of curriculum in chapter 4.

Shulman (1986) suggests that pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is required to enact the process of transforming subject knowledge into a classroom modality. He argues for a relationship between content knowledge and pedagogical methods, in which teachers are able to present content in a manner that can be understood by learners in a “learning for teaching” (1986; 8) process. Winch (2013) attributes this as “practical knowledge” emanating from subject expertise (2013; 136). PCK therefore has potential to enable a teacher to present a body of knowledge in

appropriate forms so that any given learner can understand it (Bruner, 1968). Conceptual development has also been connected to essential elements of knowledge. Winch (2013) establishes that knowledge exists not solely in isolated propositions, but is embedded within a conceptual structure. Understanding such concepts early in epistemic ascent (a concept to which I return in my *conceptual perspectives*, chapter 5), forms a significant contribution to pedagogies according to Winch, in which foundational procedures are required to acquire and manage knowledge, before learning how to do something can be introduced:

*At the earlier parts of the acquisition of subject knowledge, the formation of concepts through various methods is likely to be important.*

(Winch, 2012; 141).

He also describes conceptual knowledge as refining discrimination between “good sense and common sense” (Winch *et al*, 2015; 213). Rata was later to build on epistemic ascent in the construction of classroom knowledge which “does not mean adding fact upon fact” (2016; 172), but is a further conceptual development, in which concepts already understood are grown: a progression from that which is experientially known, into that which is unknown. This is distinct from beginning with abstract knowledge concepts, which are then applied to experience.

#### **2.1.4 Perspectives on Musical Knowledge**

Understanding musical knowledge as realised in classroom space is a central focus of this study and is associated with my third research question of musical enabling. However, identifying how musical knowledge operates as a sub-set of knowledge and its distinctive characteristics presents hermeneutical challenges, due to complexities of musical dimensions and realisations of these dimensions through musical interactions. Musical knowledge is therefore varied and intricate, with multi-layered interplay between knowledge types. Spruce (2002) summarises some of the

distinctions between *knowledge* and *musical knowledge* by examining *high status knowledge* and the ranking of Music in education within a hierarchy of school subjects. He argues that subjects that enable restricted modes of assessment (such as Maths and Science), are privileged, and that other subjects whose knowledge is formed from a wider set of modal representations (mainly music and arts based subjects) are “schooled” (2002; 10), that is: transformed in order that they may be assessed within privileged knowledge subject assessment constructs. Musical knowledge is more diverse than such schooling suggests: a well-established example being the music-making format of instrumental graded examinations for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Instrumental proficiency could never be evidenced in a written assessment, unlike proficiency in Mathematics.

*Knowledge* is frequently linked with *Skills* and *Understanding* in classroom music teaching, due in part to intersecting musical competencies of performing, composing and listening (Savage 2012; 7). However, these are distinct and require separate modes of embodiment, assessment and development. Not all musicality can be evidenced in written work, playing from a musical score, aural tests of perception, or extended writing. These areas impinge and overlap, each affecting and determining the other. Thus Fautley (2012) summarises an effective musical education as “understanding, not mere regurgitation” (2012; 105); an argument for avoiding ‘schooling’ (Spruce 2002) and aiming instead for coherence and inter-relativity. McPhail connects some of these difficulties with musical knowledge and curriculum design, highlighting that:

*Multiple discourses, knowledge structures and identities create a problem that may be unique to music within the secondary curriculum. (2015; 8).*

### 2.1.5 Characteristics of Musical Knowing

Recognising musical knowledge as it occurs, and identifying its characteristics, is significant in facilitating musical learning in the classroom, as conceptualised in my first research question. To plan for musical knowledge, the subject of that knowledge must first be understood. Pedagogic constructs concerning musical knowledge and how this is manifest through musical learning activities has continued to develop as a discourse since the introduction of the first National Curriculum orders for Music in 1992. For example, Paynter (1992) regarded the acquisition of musical knowledge as an active, rather than passive and receptive pursuit. His work argued for an interaction with knowledge, in place of isolated knowledge reflection, emphasising active contributions to musical understanding. It is from this that he later drew distinctions between *education* and *instruction* (Paynter, 1994) centred around developments in composing knowledge, which he regarded as different from acquiring facility on a musical instrument. Characteristics of musical knowledge in his arguments therefore embody engaged participation and ownership of musical learning activities.

Swanwick initially considered knowledge in terms of *framing*, with *strong framing* relating to teacher dominated pedagogical practice, and *weak framing* indicative of greater prominence attributed to learner preferences and choices (Swanwick, 1988). Swanwick also described *classification* in terms of curriculum knowledge, where degrees of teacher or learner choices, related to selections of musical material, and consequent musical classroom activities. Savage (2013) regards framing and classification as dynamic processes, within which music teachers make choices about their pedagogical approaches towards classroom music. Therefore, musical knowing requires contextualisation, and is not an inert canon of bounded concepts. Swanwick (1994) was to further develop constructs of musical knowing, arguing that these consist of personal encounters that require temporal development. In

opposition to Paynter, he interpreted the 1992 National Curriculum as equating knowing with curriculum activity. Such an approach, according to Swanwick reduced learning to knowing *about* music rather than knowing *in* music. According to Swanwick, development of musical knowledge requires repeated opportunities to cultivate learning relationships with *reception* rather than *perception* of music (1994; 46). Learners thus need to hear music more than once to interact with it, placing significance on iteration in classroom interactions. Later Swanwick (1996) was to reassert that he did consider musical knowledge to exist, but that such knowledge was about more than processing factual information. He divorced contextual factual knowledge from musical knowing, arguing that music was not a “no knowledge” subject (1996; 29). Following this, Swanwick (1999) asserted that factual knowledge should be used to inform musical understanding in a meta-narrative of musical intentions. According to Swanwick, conceptual knowledge was therefore a starting point, leading to development of musicality, as experienced by learners in classroom music-making.

These two approaches adopt a widely differing perspective on musical knowledge. Whilst acknowledging that practical music-making is a part of musical knowing, the priority and hierarchy of this within the process diverges. Swanwick’s (1999) argument is inconsistent in discussing contributions of knowledge to performing and composing, considering these as separate conduits for understanding. He does not make clear at which point knowledge interacts with performing and composing, or how these should be linked in effective classroom teaching. Paynter’s (1994) approach appears similarly underdeveloped, acknowledging that musical knowledge is a necessity for effective composing, but not attempting to define characteristics of such knowledge.

The recognition of musical knowledge, but lack of certainty regarding its nature can be found elsewhere in the literature. Hallam (2006) argues that it is established musical knowledge structures that enable comprehensive learning, as new relates to older retained knowledge. This makes learning that is not built on prior knowledge problematic, as it is not framed within an established context. Policy documentation, such as the *Secondary National Strategy for School Improvement* (DfE, 2006) also fails to define the substance of knowledge and how it is manifest in musical learning. The *Secondary National Strategy* suggests that applying musical knowledge in practical work is problematic, as evidenced through challenges of developing classroom practice. The *Strategy* suggests that problems in musical learning include learners failing to understand musical elements and therefore finding themselves unable to apply musical knowledge to creative practical work. The *Strategy* does not define what it regards as *knowledge*, but describes this as a dependent process (DfE, 2006; unit 5; 7). The nature of this process is not delineated, and the *Strategy* does not define practices in which composing and performing form part of an evidence base for musical *knowledge*.

The nature of musical knowledge is therefore problematic. There is agreement that it is more than factual learning, but methods for discriminating how such musical knowledge is demonstrated in classroom work and at what point this interacts with what the National Curriculum in 2007 described as the *Key Processes of Performing, Composing and Listening*, is not explained. These issues create difficulties for music teachers in their planning when seeking to select topics for study and make decisions about learning sequencing. Ideological positions on whether knowledge is a body to be taught; or an interaction to be interpreted and encouraged from practical music-making, mean that curriculum music will differ in its origination and implementation from classroom to classroom and school to school.

### 2.1.6 Classifying Musical Knowledge

Understanding musical knowledge both conceptually and in praxis is complex, hence my consideration of enabling musical knowledge in my third research question.

Understanding musical knowledge is problematic due, in part, to difficulties in discriminating between knowledge from different musical modes and analysing and interpreting identities and roles of musical knowledge in varying contexts. Despite these intricacies, theorists have endeavoured to synthesize and distinguish knowledge structures in music, in an attempt to realise how musical knowledge is enacted from conceptual understanding. Philpott (2007b) adapts Reid's (1986) knowledge types to identify three types of musical knowledge: knowledge *about* music, knowledge *how* in music and knowledge *of* music. He regards these types of knowledge as distinct and archetypal, with knowledge *about* including facts and musical theory, knowledge *how* consisting of know-how, and knowledge *of* typified in musical activity. Such an approach is relatively atomised, regarding elements as distinct and isolated without interaction. In Philpott's knowledge types, the *know-how* of music does not relate to theoretical aspects and knowledge of doing – the *activity* of music-making – is a separate strata to the *know-how* knowledge set itself. The inter-relation of musical knowledge appears rather more complex than this model might suggest. Philpott's model does not attempt, for instance, to explain how these elements might work in a rhizomic sense (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) and the iteration and inter-relationship of learning in practice. Such an atomised approach to understanding musical knowledge, may lead to atomised classroom teaching, in which there is a lack of integrated approaches to developing musical knowledge in learners. This can be enacted in a sequence of musical topics in which relationships between learning domains appear unconnected. (E.g. emphasis on tonality structures in music from other cultures and traditions, followed by assumptions about diatonic key structures in traditional western musical forms in two successive learning topics in a music *Programme of Study* for KS3).

Musical learning itself has been described as a development of knowledge (Philpott, 2007b), but to identify how knowledge is developing, and from what, it needs first to be delineated, if not defined. Swanwick and Tillman's (1986) spiral of musical development (which I will examine in detail later) attempted to create relationships between knowledge types using categories of: *materials* (knowing how), *expression and form* (knowing this) and *value* (knowing what's what). Such a spiral model helps to understand more complex relationships that exist in knowledge development, but Tillman's research includes projections onto upper age-ranges that were not included in her longitudinal data. Indeed, Philpott (2007b) criticises the spiral for its levels of knowledge approach, questioning the assumption that at each new level learners achieve a greater range of knowledge and complexity. Swanwick (1994) was later to argue that musical knowledge is multi-layered and developed knowledge types from Tillman's doctoral research into *propositional knowledge*, which he described as "first hand knowledge" (1994; 16), *knowing how* (aural discriminations and manipulative control), *knowing by acquaintance* (knowing *this*, such as a song or symphony) and *attitudinal knowledge* (responding to music with varying levels of commitment). These sub-divisions are more tangential than Reid's (1986) knowledge types and levels of development described in Swanwick and Tillman's (1986) original spiral. Their different character is sub-divided, relying largely on anecdotal observation; demonstrating the complexity of creating substantiated and agreed definitions of musical knowledge.

Classifying musical knowledge has continued to be problematic although later attempts have tended to avoid this level of complexity. Rogers (2009) determines knowledge in terms of *conventions*, *processes* and *devices*, arguing that this informs learning in different contexts, which he identifies as *styles*, *genres* and *traditions*. Understanding precise natures and influences of knowledge is not made clear in his arguments, where knowledge is described as the "nuts and bolts of music" (Rogers,

2009; 11). Humberstone (2012) describes a hierarchy of musical knowledge drawing on Reid’s musical knowledge types (1986), and Philpott’s analysis of them (2007b), separating *knowledge about*, *knowledge how* and *knowledge of*. Humberstone regards these as developing musical understanding, demonstrated in differing musical outworkings: *musicianship*, *musicality* and *aesthetic awareness*. This reworking is not a new contribution to musical knowledge, and demonstrates limited development in the field since Reid’s initial constructs were formed. McPhail (2013) also identifies *knowledge in* and *knowledge about*, but associates *knowledge in* with improvisational practises, and composition and *knowledge about* with compositional techniques and harmony. Central to his argument is that “knowledge differentiation is critical for effective curriculum conception” (McPhail, 2013; 46). These serve as examples for how such a distinction might be perceived in classroom practice.

Where a *knowledge about* harmony crosses over to a *knowledge in* melody construction in improvisation, is complexly intertwined and difficult to disentangle, but as Oates (2011) has suggested, accumulation of known information is not the same as knowledge acquisition. Oates refers to this as ‘noise’ and raises questions regarding the extent to which musical *information* leads to musical *meaning* and understanding. Classifying musical knowledge therefore continues to require further study, as musical knowledge types are relatively undeveloped in their form. The table below presents conceptualisations of knowledge followed by the music-specific developments in a more concise form. It compares attempts to present knowledge typologies, binary knowledge poles (knowledge as sets of juxtapositions), knowledge as a synthesis of constructs, and knowledge sets of concepts.

<i>General Perceptions of Knowledge Typology:</i>	
Reid (1986)	Knowledge about, knowledge how, knowledge of
Bruner (1996)	Procedural knowledge (knowledge how), propositional knowledge (knowing that), ‘perspective knowledge’ (intersubjective interchange), ‘propositional knowledge’ (children’s own and wider knowledge)
Webster (1996)	Knowledge by acquaintance, knowledge that, knowledge how

<i>Music Education Perceptions of Knowledge Typology:</i>	
Swanwick (1994)	Knowing about, and knowledge of music; Materials (knowing how), expression, form (knowing this) and value (knowing what's what); First hand knowledge, knowing how, knowing by acquaintance, attitudinal knowledge
Philpott (2007b)	Knowledge about music, knowledge how in music, knowledge about music, knowledge of music
<i>General Perceptions of Knowledge Juxtapositions:</i>	
Sfard (1998)	Knowledge as metaphor: acquisition or participation
Rata (2016)	Powerful knowledge or knowledge of the powerful
<i>Music Education Perceptions of Knowledge Juxtapositions:</i>	
Paynter (1992)	Instrumental proficiency knowledge or musical knowledge
Hallam (2006)	New musical knowledge relates to old musical knowledge
Oates (2011)	Knowledge noise: information about music or knowledge in music
McPhail (2012)	Knowledge in or knowledge about music
<i>General Perceptions of Knowledge Synthesis:</i>	
Heron (2009)	Knowledge is multi-action: the 'one-many'
Lave (2009)	Learning is enacted knowledge which requires a continual re-conceptualisation within a community of practice
Wenger (2009)	Biographical knowledge; Knowledge praxis situated within a community
<i>Music Education Perceptions of Knowledge Synthesis:</i>	
National Strategy for Music, DfE (2006)	Knowledge and understanding discussed as synonyms
Rogers (2009)	Knowledge of conventions, processes and devices
<i>General Perceptions of Knowledge as Concepts:</i>	
Piaget (1971)	Knowledge as a sequential construct in developmental stages
Shulman (1986)	Pedagogical content knowledge
Bernstein (2000)	Knowledge as cultural consciousness; reconceptualising knowledge
Elkjaer (2009)	Knowledge in experience: knowing differently
Kegan (2009)	Knowledge as a modifying characteristic: knowledge structures change in response to experience
Winch (2012)	Knowledge as epistemic ascent
McPhail (2012)	Conceptual knowledge; enabling different kinds of knowledge discourse to 'speak' to each other
<i>Music Education Perceptions of Knowledge as Concepts:</i>	
Paynter (1992)	Acquisition of musical knowledge as an active process
Swanwick (1994)	Knowledge as a personal encounter
Spruce (2002)	Influence of 'schooling' (music's transformation for 'objectified' school assessment) on knowledge
Philpott (2007b)	Knowledge for musical meaning

*Table 1: Knowledge types comparison*

## **2.2 Learning Perceptions**

My first research question seeks to explore processes through which musical knowledge is realised in musical learning in the Key Stage 3 classroom. Following my discussion of literature that addresses issues of *knowledge*, I now begin my consideration of *learning*, seeking to explore how these domains interlink. As with knowledge, learning is a highly complex construct. There is no accepted single unified theory of learning, and what exists instead is a series of accounts and models. Such concepts are often designed for application in specific domains, but are also sometimes part of a more general discussion seeking to define learning. In this section of the thesis I will be dealing with aspects of learning theory that impinge upon the core material of the study: namely learning in the generalist music classroom at the English secondary school.

In order to explore design and sequencing of curricula in secondary school music, there is a need to understand constructs of learning generally, and how musical learning functions as a subset. Understanding *learning* is a necessary precursor to understanding *learning in music*, and so this section begins with an investigation of its most relevant theories. This will be followed by a consideration of learning models and how these have been developed during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. Theories of learning as conceptualised and enacted in the context of the generalist music classroom will be examined, followed by a consideration of how learning has been classified to create learning models.

### **2.2.1 Understanding learning theory**

Strauss (2000) sought to bring conceptual foundations to an undulating landscape of learning constructs in his taxonomy of learning interpretations. In his discussions, he defined classifications of learning theory, and grouped constructs into schools of

thought. He summarised the widely differing interpretations of explanatory learning theory by stating that:

*Notions of learning and development are neither fixed nor agreed upon.*

(Strauss, 2000; 31)

This lack of consensus is an inherent problem in understanding learning. Conflicting narratives are further explored in Strauss' identification of two teacher classifications: the *information processing* teacher, concerned with imparting learning and testing to ascertain learning success; and the *socio-historical teacher* concerned with facilitating social interaction as a learning catalyst. Strauss suggests that these divergent perspectives may not be part of conscious practices, which makes their reconciliation into a united theory of learning problematic. In examining competing ideologies and approaches it becomes clear that there is no one dominant model of learning, but that its multi-layered complexity is evident in a variety of critical dispositions.

### **2.2.2 Behaviourist approaches to learning**

Behaviourist approaches to learning at their most intense enable non-pedagogic discourses concerned with action, reaction and modification of basic behaviour patterns (Skinner, 1974). Such discourses of learning have, in some contexts, developed into classroom processes. These include suggested routines for challenging non-conforming learner behaviours (Child, 2004), in which positive and negative reinforcement cease to be psychological modifiers of external conditions. Skinner's work has also led to the development of curriculum planning models as described by Jordan *et al.* (2008), in which educational objectives and learner behaviours are combined to generate criteria for assessment grades. However, the origins of behaviourism prioritise observable behaviour over human interaction,

particularly evident in a social setting, such as a classroom. This makes it problematic to know if observable learning as understood by behaviourism is, in fact, occurring. Kolb (1984) considered behaviourism to deny the existence of “subjective experience” (1984; 108) and argued that learning is best understood as a process, not only as an outcome.

Where behaviourism has been accepted it is regarded as a useful foundational approach to learning, which is easy to assimilate and incorporate into systems and organisations. Strauss (2000) regards behaviourism as an inductive result of learning environments, in which accessibility, rather than validity takes precedence. Construing learning as observable behaviour therefore impacts sequences of learning activity. Jarvis *et al.* (2005) critique behaviourism for its inclusive claims to represent learning. They argue that:

*Human beings are more complex than just the sum of their behaviours.*

(Jarvis *et al.* 2005; 31)

They assert that behaviourism is methodologically acceptable because of its convenience, easy to analyse outcomes and evidential results. Behaviourism in music educational contexts embodies variant pedagogical practices, and I will return to a consideration of musical behaviours in my discussion of theories of musical development, later in this thesis.

### **2. 2.3 Cognitivist approaches to learning**

Cognitivism and structuralism place emphasis on learning in the brain as an active process. Cognitive development is therefore understood as a lens through which learning may be interpreted. This reveals further complexities and disjunctive thought between interpretations of learning constructs. Klinger (2010) regards cognitivism in

response to behaviourism, as an adaptive process concerned with transmission of knowledge between individuals, stored as internal mental constructs. Analysing these origins indicates influences of Piaget's approach to child development in cognitivist thinking, just as Piaget also influenced thinking on knowledge, as discussed earlier in this thesis. Piaget regarded development as a series of fixed processes: *assimilation*, *accommodation* and *equilibration* (Boyd and Bee, 2014) and considered such processes as taking place in age boundaries of universal developmental periods: *sensorimotor* (0 – 2 years), *pre-operational* (2 – 7 years), *concrete operational* (7 – 11 years) and *formal operational* (11 – 15 years) (Phillips, 1969). His understanding of cognition was based on a series of logic problems and interviews with children about their perceptions and explanations of processes. Piaget was therefore not primarily concerned with *learning*, but with *development*: “how cognitions develop, not with developing cognitions” (Phillips, 1969; 139). To use cognitivism as an exclusive tool to understand learning, is therefore problematic.

Like Piaget, Bruner is concerned with understanding developmental thinking that takes place in children's minds, and initiates learning. He critiqued theories of cultural deprivation, arguing that infants did not inhabit a world of “buzzing, blooming confusion” (Bruner 1996; 72). He also considered experience of emotion as a subset of cognition and construction of self, arguing that these should not be precluded from cognitive psychology. This approach to thinking which regards process as *flux*, is at variance with Piaget's view of pre-determined development. Therefore “thinking about thinking” is critical in any “empowering practice of education” (Bruner 1996; 19).

#### **2.2.4 Rationale for learning models**

Learning is a sophisticated interaction. Bruner (1996) maintains that conceptions by teachers of learners directly affect the learning process and that these assumptions can prevent pedagogical development. Thus, understanding not only *what is to be*

*learned, but how the learner regards what is to be learned, is crucial in processes of learning:*

*I have long argued that explaining what children do is not enough; the new agenda is to determine what they think they are doing and what their reasons are for doing it. (Bruner, 1996; 49).*

Bruner's assertion generates questions regarding learning in essence, and how this process can be accessed and evaluated.

Bruner (2009) considered learning and thinking to be always situated in cultural settings, such as classrooms. He argued that a need to conform to a model of mind created a "folk pedagogy" (1996; 44) of classroom practice, in which conceptualisation of learning, and practice of learning, were unconnected. Achieving a meeting of minds in the classroom, Bruner (1996) suggested, was manifested through teachers pondering, "How do I reach the children?" and by children using phrases such as, "What's he trying to get at?" (1996; 45). He thus extrapolated that however theorists considered learning, there already existed a dominant learning practice, realised by those engaged as teachers. He argued that any innovation in teaching would involve changing the *folk pedagogies* of these professionals. Thus a model of learning orientated towards classroom practice is necessary in learning conceptualisation.

#### **2.2.4 Models of learning**

Defining the process of learning is intensely practical, enabling its recognition in the classroom, but also intensely problematic due to difficulties with accurately evaluating its development. Theorising models and associated definitions of learning have remained elusive and understanding its essential characteristics continues to develop.

Illeris states that learning is a complex concept of which there “is no generally accepted definition” (Illeris, 2009;1). Interpretations of learning continue to develop and are interpreted from vastly differing perspectives: cognitive, biological, pedagogical or identity-centred, for example. Elsewhere, Illeris has created a general definition of learning in his work, considering it as:

*Any process that in living organisms leads to a permanent change and which is not solely due to biological maturation or aging. (Illeris, 2007; 3)*

Illeris considers barriers to learning in his diagrammatic representation for understanding the learning process:

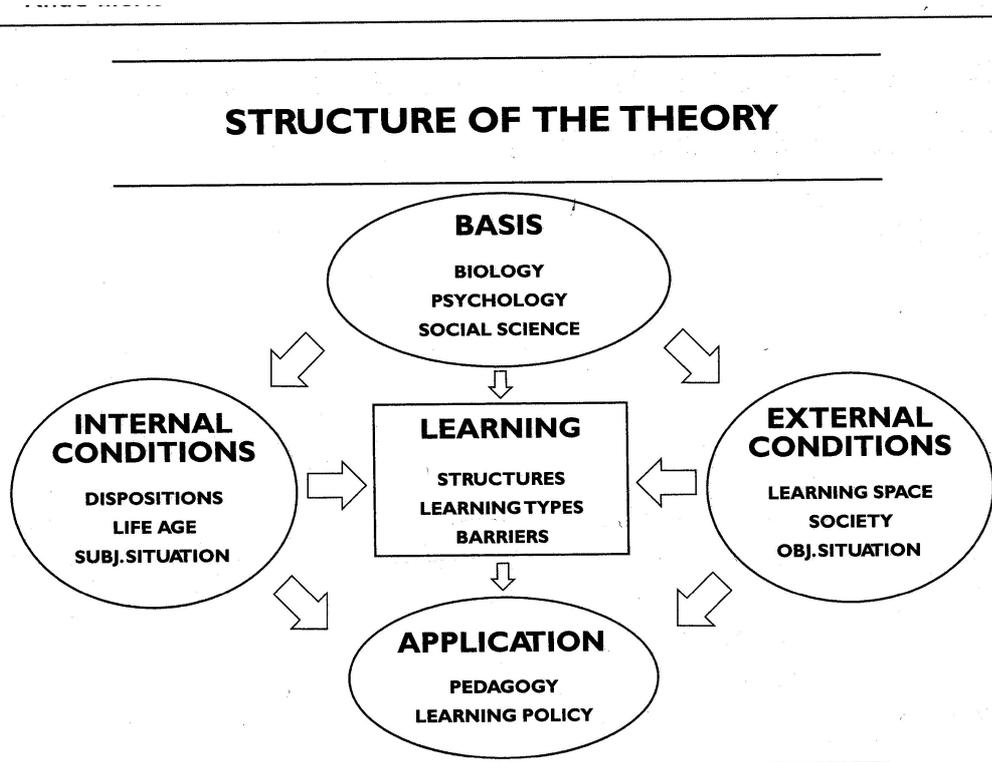
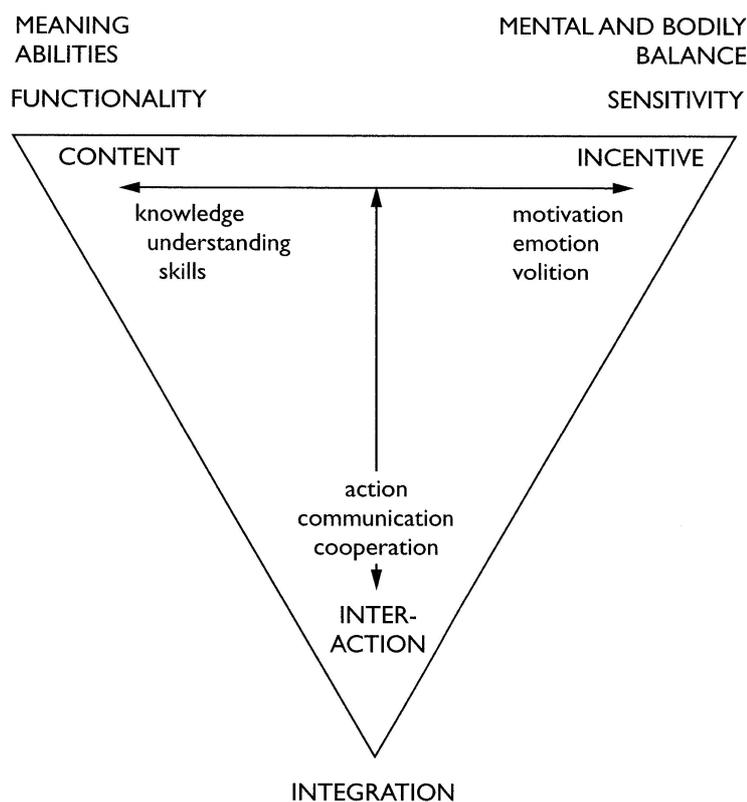


Figure 1: Illeris' Main areas of the understanding of learning, 2009

He also regards learning as a three-dimensional process combining *functionality*, *sensitivity* and *integration* and has represented this in an inverted triangular model.

This incorporates experience in its elements of action and motivation alongside a consideration of personhood in sensitivity and meaning. Its interaction fork incorporates experience in a lived-out context. Each corner of the triangle impacts the other, resulting in a rotational influenced model of learning.

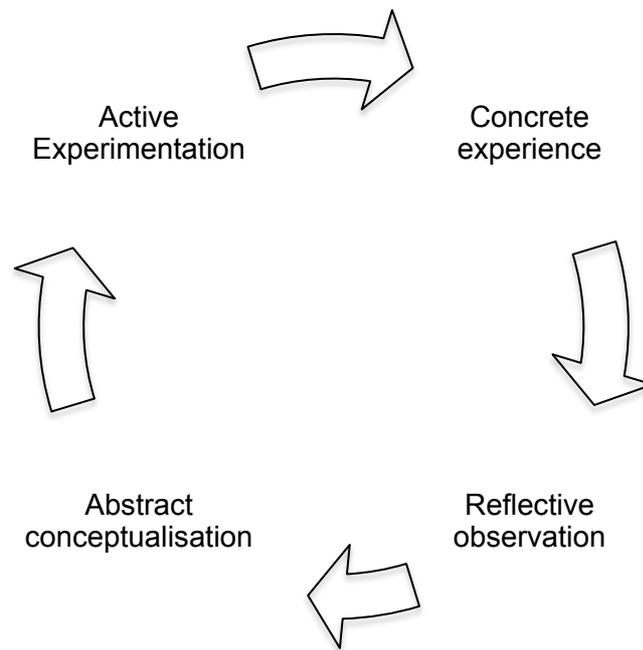


*Figure 2: Illeris' Three dimensions of learning and competence development, 2009*

However, Illeris does not define this model as a descriptive model of learning, but as “the tension field of learning” (2009; 11), demonstrating complexities in ascribing process terminology. How learners regard learning and its context are highlighted as significant factors by Illeris in developing theoretical constructs of learning processes, but this does not equate to a unified model and definition of learning protocols.

Others have also found learning problematic to conceptualise. Kolb’s (1984) model of learning sought to address its essence and define its process. He represented

learning as a cycle in which experimentation and experience led to reflection and concept development.



*Figure 3: Kolb's Learning Cycle, 1984*

This four-stage learning model was based on teachers' observable experiences of learning in a classroom setting, but was critiqued for its simplicity, which did not allow for multiplicitous influences of external factors (Jarvis, 1987). Working from Kolb's 1984 model, Jarvis sought to refine Kolb's ideas, which resulted in a more complex model of learning. Jarvis (1987) considered Kolb's initial model as flawed due to the omission of social interaction, and offered a definition of learning in its place, which included the whole person (body, mind, experience) in a state of continual flux:

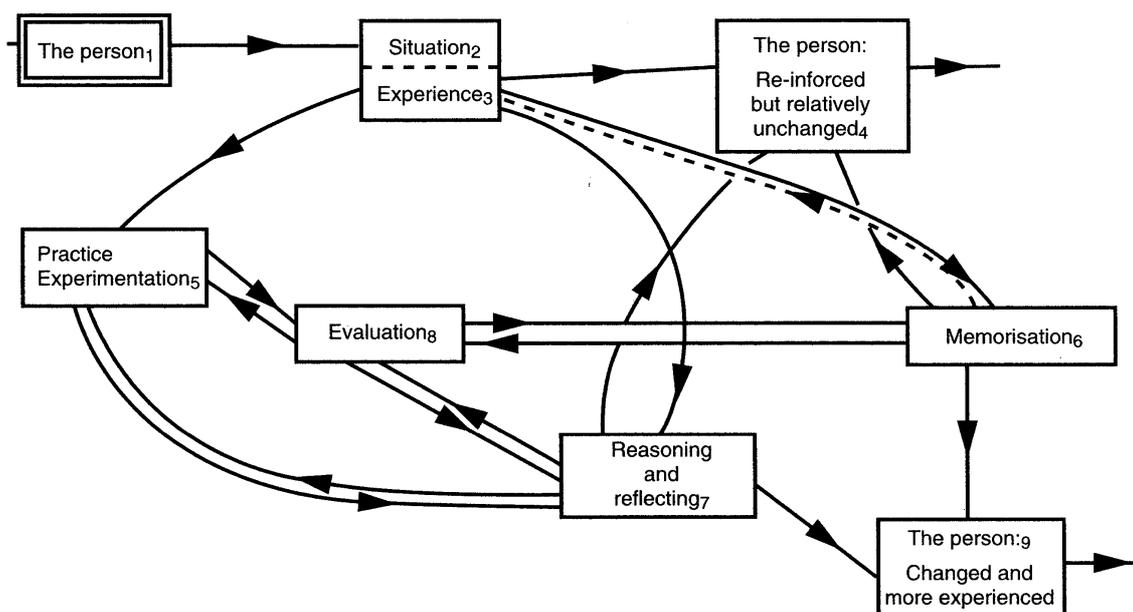


Figure 4: Jarvis Model of Learning 1987

This model places the person at the centre of learning and subdivides processes of learning: *experience* is linked to *context* and *experimentation* to *practice*. Although Jarvis offers a more considered discussion of learning complexities, conceptualisation of *situated learning* (learning in a practice context) remained only partially theorised.

Lave and Wenger's (1991) knowledge constructs have been previously discussed in this thesis, but in addition to their conceptualisation of knowledge, they also developed connects into *situated learning* as "generative social practice in the lived in world" (1991; 35). They trace this learning through practice as a notional idea from apprenticeship, which they argue was in fact a synonym for *situated learning*. In her own work, Lave maintains that to learn, action is necessary:

*There is no such thing as learning sui generis, but only changing participation in the culturally designed settings of everyday life.*

(Lave 2009; 201)

Lave therefore regards learning as not only taking place in the mind of the learner, but in the context of the “lived in world.” (Lave 2009; 202). It is at this point that distinguishing learning theory from learning practice becomes entangled. One clearly impinges on the other, but disentangling the points at which this occurs is notionally difficult. Theories become personified as models, but tracing this moment of metamorphosis can be problematic.

Wenger (2009) addresses this flux by theorising learning theory as social participation: learning takes place in interconnected practice communities. He bases his ideas about learning on a series of assumptions, which include ideas that: we are social beings; knowledge is a matter of *competence* with respect to valued enterprises; knowing is a matter of *active engagement* in the world; *meaning* is ultimately what learning is to produce. These ideas therefore blend learning and knowledge together, but emphasise aspects of engagement and meaning, taking further ideas of personhood outlined by Jarvis (2009).

Ideas and constructs about learning are disputed and differing perspectives exist in the literature. This section of my thesis has sought to elucidate the developmental nature of learning theory in which there is wide variance and lack of agreement in essentials. Understanding the way that this overlaps into musical learning is therefore the next area to consider.

## 2.3 Musical Learning

Following a consideration of conceptualisations of learning and how constructs and exploratory models have developed, it is necessary for my first research question to consider how *musical learning* operates as a subset of *learning*. Discussions of musical learning, have impacted on theories of musical development, and these have influenced music curriculum design and sequencing. Without a consideration of musical learning, understanding the origins of theories of musical development is problematic. Such theories have directly influenced approaches and practices of music teachers in constructions for their KS3 curricula.

### 2.3.1 Types of musical learning

Whilst characteristics of musical learning continue to be debated, types of musical learning have been more extensively researched and these have impacted on classroom music practice. Green (2001) described categories of musical learning, from her study on how popular musicians learn. She distinguished between *formal* and *informal* (also referred to as *non-formal* (D'Amore, 2010)) learning. Green defines *formal* musical learning as a result of training and education in a *formal setting* (such as a school) (2001; 16). She describes informal musical learning as that acquired *outside of formal educational settings* and attributes these as *practices* rather than *methods* (2001;16).

Her study revealed that, musicians who had learned in an informal manner, according to her definition, quickly adopted formal classroom methods (Green 2001; 184) in their own teaching. D'Amore (2010) has since argued that greater complexities of practice exist, in which informal learning is used as a model in school music classrooms (an *informal* learning type within a *formal* learning type), and observed that formal *methods* can be manifest in informal *settings*. The *Musical Futures* project (D'Amore, 2010) is an example of this informal musical learning perspective realised in pedagogy. *Musical Futures* consists of: "a series of models

and approaches” (D’Amore, 2010; 9), based on engaging young people in performance music-making for classroom learning. It begins with learners’ own musical preferences and styles, before seeking to develop this in other genres, in place of beginning with exclusively teacher-selected resources. Within this pedagogy, teachers may still function to select materials, but their classroom interaction is more facilitator than teacher, with learners also acting as peer leaders and mentors.

The validity of distinguishing between formal and informal modes of learning continues to be debated in the literature. McPhail (2013) regards the separation between formal and informal learning in music as pejorative, with the informal considered authentic and the formal as “artificial, boring and bad” (2013; 44). He argues for assimilation, in which links are created between these types of learning, rather than one becoming the dominant narrative. Folkestad (2006) regards the delineations between formal and informal learning as a shift from *teacher* to *learner* centred learning, in which learners enter the formal learning environment pre-educated in music, through informal processes facilitated by technology. For Folkestad there is a distinction to be made not only between formal and informal practices, but between formal and informal methods of learning. He regards it as “false” to describe learning styles as determined primarily by location context (2005; 283).

Musical learning has therefore been discussed as subsuming both formal and informal modes, but identifying cross-over moments when this occurs is problematic due to the complexity and variety of musical learning processes. Philpott (2007b) identifies intentionality of learners as a key indicator for assimilated formal and informal practice, but also identifies a disjuncture between learning approaches and learners’ motivations. There is therefore currently a knowledge gap between

curriculum structure and student learning and engagement, which McPhail refers to as:

*balance between constructing knowledge with students and inducting them into bodies of knowledge. (2015; 12)*

Understanding learning strategies adopted by teachers, is therefore of critical significance in locating musical learning within curriculum design space.

### **2.3.2 Defining Musical Learning**

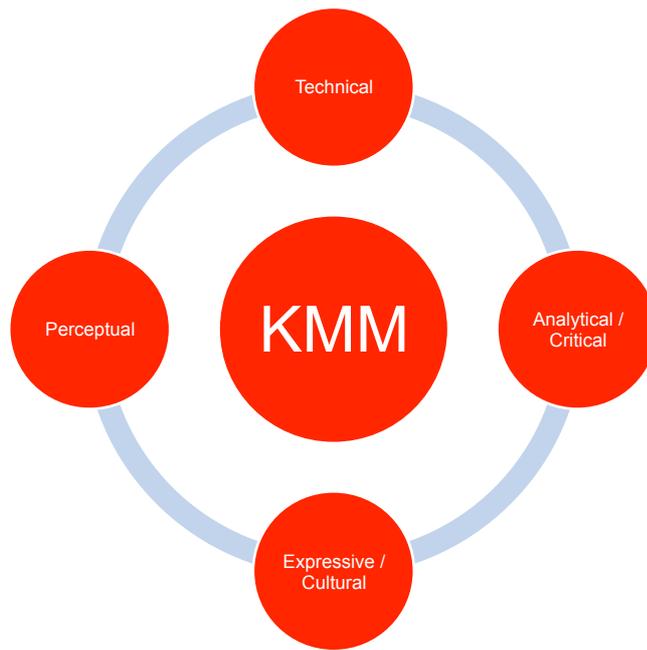
Defining musical learning is problematic due to its internalised structures and lack of agreed models of defining characteristics. The informal nature surrounding processes of musical learning is encapsulated by Sloboda (1985), who has connected cognitive approaches in music psychology to musical learning. He describes musical learning as intuitive, taking place in waves without conscious effort during the early and formative years of life (Sloboda, 1985). In this context he discusses *enculturation*, not only from episodic cultural exposure, but from intense immersion, in which musical learning arises directly from social and cultural environments of early childhood.

In a more formal approach, Hargreaves (1986) argued that musical learning is essentially imitative, rather than creative and that music itself reinforces learning experience. Examining models from Orff, Kodaly and Suzuki, with their emphasis on development of aural skills, he concentrates on structured systems as a method to evaluate the development of musical learning. This construct is at odds with Paynter (1994), who positioned composing at the centre of musical learning. He argued that policymakers exhibit suspicion of creativity in curriculum settings, and that accepting music as valuable because it is *music*, is what needed. In considering how musical learning might be enacted, Swanwick (1999) also argued for composing as: “an educational necessity, not some optional activity when time permits” (1999; 55). His

conceptualisation of musical learning arose from his discussions on the metaphorical function of music, in which he defined musical learning as a three-stage process of transformation: tones into tunes and *gestures*; tunes and gestures into *structures*; and symbolic structures into *significant experience*. According to Swanwick (1999), connection between individuals and reality enabled by musical learning was therefore realised in significant experience.

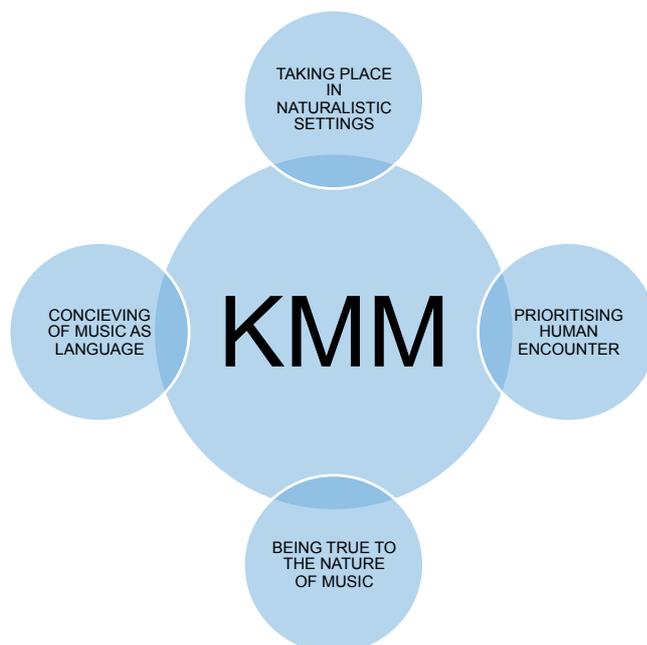
Hallam (2006) considers cognition in musical learning in the context of instrumental tuition and mastery. She highlights the effects of assessment on teaching and learning, describing their unintended consequences as cognitive backwash (Hallam, 2006; 155). Thus progress and how it is evaluated is linked to musical learning in Hallam's discussions. She develops musical learning into a concept of meta-cognition, in which understanding available learning strategies can extend *concentration, planning, monitoring and evaluation*. She considers these attributes as a means of extending musical learning impact. Hallam's approach combines general concepts of musical accumulation with stages of cognition; however, musical learning has been shown to embody further complexities of interaction.

Philpott (2017) has explored intricacies of musical learning in his work. Conflating knowledge and musical learning together, he discusses *knowledge for musical meaning*. This model considers how music functions as a conduit for knowledge development as a language. Within his framework, Philpott posits *technical, analytical/critical, expressive/cultural and perceptual knowledge*, which he represents diagrammatically:



*Figure 5: Philpott's Model of Musical Knowledge for Musical Meaning, 2017*

In Philpott's argument, knowledge for musical meaning underpins all other types of musical knowledge. It builds on earlier thinking, such as Spruce (2013) in which "multiple ways of knowing. . . characterise inclusive music education practices" (Spruce 2013; 29). Such an approach to musical learning engenders a sympathetic assessment system and Philpott suggests the following:



*Figure 6: Philpott's Model of Assessment for Musical Meaning, 2017*

For Philpott the emphasis is therefore upon *evaluating* what is *meaningful*, rather than that which is *easily recorded*. This approach embodies identifying assessment priorities, as Philpott’s model does not suggest how evaluating what is meaningful might be practised, but describes an ethos of musical meaning. Philpott has also suggested that musical knowledge can be described as a continuum of *musical literacies* in a cylindrical or “wrap around” model:

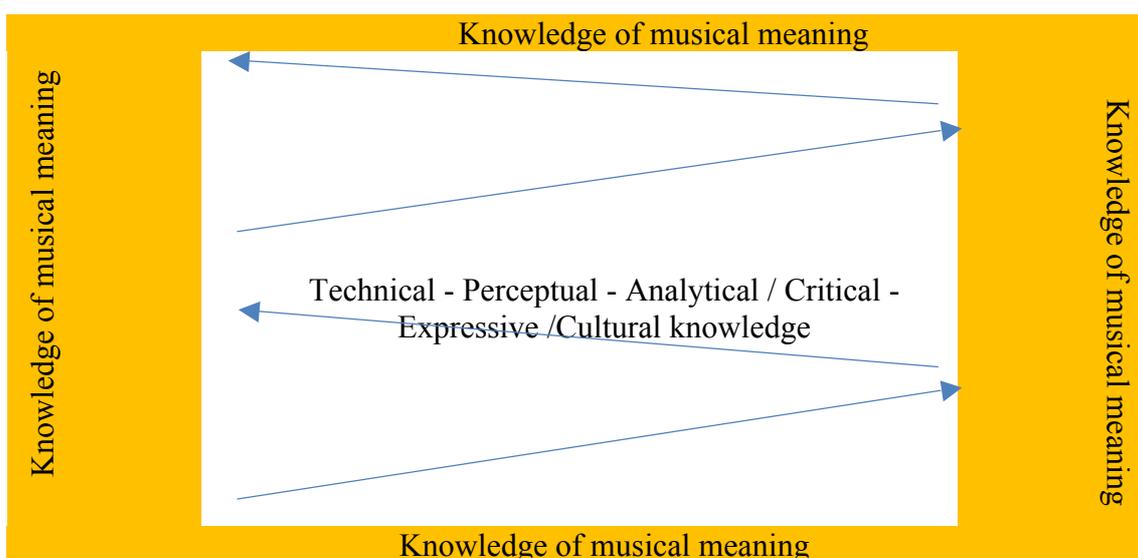


Figure 7: Philpott’s Model of Knowledge for Musical Meaning, 2017

Such a model suggests that musical learning is not linear in structure, but a transverse waveform, along which learner experiences continually oscillate. However, analysing how such stages may appear in musical learning in classroom contexts and identifying their enactment within such practice is more problematic. For example, Philpott (2017) regards technical literacy, which he terms “know-how” as a *formal* aspect of musical learning. Green (2008) regards this as an *informal* practice, which can be gleaned from “aural copying from a recording” (2008; 21). Thus there remain significant areas of dissonance in understanding attributes of musical learning.

### 2.3.3 Musical Learning and Musical Skills

The development of musical skills can be considered as a sub-set of musical learning. These two interactions have been described as impinging on each other in their developments. Hargreaves (1986), for example, argues that musical enjoyment is the starting point for skills acquisition, rather than skills for skills sake. He regards the development of musical skills as occurring inductively; integrated within childhood experiential development. Other theorists have identified a more complex taxonomy of skills development in music education. For instance, Hallam (2006) places skills at the centre of musical learning, in the context of learning a musical instrument. She argues that skills learning sub-divides into *cognitive, verbal, motor and associative and autonomous skills learning*. Hallam refers to scaffolding as part of a zone of supported skills learning in which there is freedom and direction, critical features and frustration control. She thus regards musical learning as rotating around an axis of skills, which are, themselves, in a continual state of subordinate or advanced development. Mills (2005) argues that that the learning of notation is paired with the learning of an instrument and that this is often forgotten in classroom music-making. This divorce of function from purpose is an example of the disjunct between skills and musical learning. Ofsted (2012) also regard skills as an element of musical learning, but locate this in the context of progression. Ofsted link a progression in musical skills, to age related expectations, and regard such skills as evidence that musical learning has taken place (2012; 39).

Whether skills development constitutes essential musical learning, or whether it demonstrates abilities to exhibit musical behaviours, is therefore an important distinction. Hargreaves (1986) considers musical behaviours as *verbal, making* (into which he subsumes composing, arranging and notating) and *performing*. Reducing such behaviours to skills is problematic for understanding how they impinge upon each other, and such an approach creates streams of unconnected competencies.

Equating skills with musical learning and treating these terms as synonymous is similarly problematic. Skills may evidence functionality, but this is not necessarily the same as “profound learning” (Coles and Southworth, 2004; 114) required for progress in classroom music. Fautley (2012) argues that in classroom music, learning is not only skills acquisition, but musical understanding. Isolated skills concentration has potential to reproduce characteristics of rote learning, which do not facilitate or enable musical learning.

#### **2.3.4 Music-making and musical learning**

It has been widely recognised that musical learning is, in essence, a practical activity. Hargreaves (1986) observes that students learn by doing, rather than teacher instruction alone, in contexts of integral growth of children’s experiences. This concept was developed by Paynter (1994), who asserted that it was necessary for *musical learning to be musical*. Without this, “there is no point in doing it at all” (1994; 137). Such an approach has also been enshrined in government documentation, as in the previously discussed *Secondary National Strategy for School Improvement* (DfE, 2006). This sets out expectations for learning in practical music-making, suggesting that conventions of varied musics should be explored in practical modes and commenting that although acquiring information about music can aid understanding, musical learning can only be embedded through practical music-making.

Despite changing emphasises in music education, the centrality of practical music-making as a vehicle for learning has been frequently repeated and rarely challenged. Philpott (2007b) emphasises music-making activities within musical learning, assimilating Elliott’s (1995) concept of authentic circumstances for music-making resulting in authentic music production, with Plummeridge’s (1991) reflection that engaging pupils in practical activities through which they learn is the central tenet of music education. Other analysis has argued for active participation in musical

learning, creating *compelling learning experiences* and using the 2007 revision of the National Curriculum as a basis for this (Savage, 2012). I have also argued elsewhere, that practical music-making, including performing is one of the most effective means of learning in music (Anderson, 2012).

Although practical music-making is concurrent with musical learning, understanding the process of musical learning remains to be resolved. The Department for Education obliquely distinguished between content and delivery in a quasi-pedagogical ranking in 1985: “*what* music is taught is only slightly more important than the *way* it is taught” (DES, 1985; 2). There was no accompanying definition of differences between content and process, and how this may impact on the practice of musical learning. Paynter (1994) later sought to distinguish between education (by which he seems to have meant facilitating learning) and instruction, considering how these differences are manifest in teaching practice. He discusses facilitating sensitivity, imagination and personal integrity as part of a learning process aimed at drawing out innate musical abilities of young people. He regards practical music-making (particularly composing) as integral to this, but does not explore how to recognise characteristics of musical learning, instead drawing a distinction between instruction as appropriate for instrumental mastery, and composing as necessary for general musical development. Ofsted require teachers to teach *in*, rather than *about* music, (Ofsted, 2012), but Ofsted does not define these terms or state what is to be understood by this difference. Fautley (2012) draws a distinction from the 2013 version of the National Curriculum between concepts of *doing* from concepts of *learning*. In his argument, he discusses what he terms “separations” (2012; 101) between what is to be learned and processes of musical learning. There is therefore a mixture of perception and practice in which practical music-making is regarded as integral to musical learning, but how to facilitate or evaluate qualities of this process remain undefined.

### **2.3.5 Theories of Musical Development**

In this section of the thesis I will consider explanations of attributes of musical development, how this is linked to understanding music-making in the classroom, and the problems that remain in understanding musical learning. I will link these perceptions of knowledge and learning within music education and consider the pedagogy of *teaching music musically*. This will follow to a consideration of further attempts to explain musical development and the gaps in understanding that remain. These areas are central to my first research question as they synthesise conceptual understandings of knowledge and learning in the context of music education.

Pedagogical praxis in classroom music education has been predicated on understanding how to recognise musical development. Mills regarded this as the overarching aim of music education itself:

*We teach music in school so as to promote the development of music in, and through music. (2009; 91)*

Philpott has also identified the central place of concepts of musical development within music education:

*The main aim of music education is to facilitate children developing musical knowledge and understanding through interpreting, making or recreating musical meaning and that assessment strategies should take account of this. (Philpott, 2017)*

Music in and of itself as manifest in musical activity should therefore be the justification for its place in the curriculum. Its formulation is, however, more complex as the following discussion of musical development indicates.

#### **2.3.5.1 Musical behaviours**

Understanding musical behaviours has been associated with creating coherent models of musical development. Regelski (1975) placed emphasis on cognitive, affective and psychomotor behaviours, which he regarded as influencing how music is perceived, enjoyed, and imitated, following cues. This approach was developed by Hargreaves in the mid 1980s, in the context of contributions of musical development *to intellectual, emotional, sensory-motor and social development*. He divided these aspects of development into *verbal, making and performing* strata, and labelled these classifications as musical behaviours (Hargreaves 1986). Expanding from Paynter's early thinking, Regelski (2005) later returned to developing his conceptualising of musical behaviours, regarding *making* as beyond composing and creating, and also including arranging, rearranging, organising into something new, and notation. These constructs identified perceived stages of development, but did not explain the linkage between milestones when musical manifestations become evident, or consider how such episodes of visible interactions enable musical development.

Paynter and Swanwick considered an expansive theory of musical development emerging from indicators of musical behaviours. Their different approaches within the field of musical development are discussed below and have been widely influential. Swanwick worked with Tillman in the 1980s to develop Tillman's doctoral research into a theory of musical development, and the resulting journal article (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986) became the most frequently cited paper of the *British Journal of Music Education* since it was established in 1984. Constructs for evaluating musical progress have remained an area of debate amongst researchers, with some arguing for musical behaviours in classroom practice (Mills, 2005), whilst

others considering stages of skill learning as essential (Hallam, 2006). The need for a theory of musical development synthesises musical knowledge and learning, as set out in my first research question, but the ability to realise this has been far more problematic.

### **2.3.5.2 Paynter and musical development**

Facilitating musical development through defining aims and purposes of musical education became a central question during the early 1970s. Paynter argued that education was distinct from instruction, the former drawing out innate possibilities and the latter being a received element (Paynter, 1994). His approach focused on assumptions that all children are already musical as part of human nature, and it is not the role of music education to impart this already inherent musicality. A musical education therefore became focused on fanning a flickering flame into a vibrant light (Paynter, 2000). Paynter identified composition as a primary means of enabling a process of musical development, regarding this as a process through which children could express their musicality. His 1970 work *Sound and Silence* suggested a series of projects, which encouraged teachers to explore music-making with children, in which they worked within defined parameters and musical stimuli, but without creative limits. Exploring internal experiences of music, combining music with other creative forms (words, pictures, movement) and experimenting with sounds instruments could produce with only limited instruction, were among the approaches his book suggested. These classroom practices placed an emphasis on learning, in which teachers contributed only to the general education of children (Paynter, 1970) and considered what that contribution might be, and how this interaction might differ from other subjects. Musical development was thus regarded as fundamentally intuitive, with the teacher drawing out this pre-existing element. Paynter began to distinguish between *music* education, *musical* education and *music in* education, which he regarded as distinct (Paynter, 1977). From this, Paynter sought to clarify the role of music education, arguing that it did not exist as an “information subject”

(Paynter, 1977; 38). Literacy and numeracy alone were not enough, he argued; imagination should be added to the palate of educational approaches. (I will discuss the role of imagination in classroom music education further in the creativity section of this thesis).

Although Paynter's approach differed from classroom practice based on exclusive unidirectional instruction, and facilitated pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986), in which teachers responded to learner *ideas* in music, rather than correcting misunderstandings of, for example, music theory; it did not develop a consistent framework for the implementation of musical development. Paynter stated that his projects in *Sound and Silence* were "suggestions for lines of work" (1970; 9), rather than defined *Programmes of Study*, and later he was to argue that music education should be more than just passing on a limited range of skills (Paynter, 1982).

However, he did not define what such skills should be. Paynter's approach to what he termed the "small group workshop" (1979) where students composed on a range of instruments in groups, discussing and refining their work through defined tasks, made a significant contribution to music teacher practice and can still be observed in many KS3 generalist music lessons today. However, such suggestions did not clarify what pathways of musical development should be, or how to recognise them. It lacked agreed detail and milestones, and musical development remained undefined.

#### **2.3.5.3 Swanwick and musical development**

Swanwick presented defined features of musical development in his 1979 work *A*

*Basis for Music Education*. He suggested elements that should form a part of

effective musical development and presented these in his CLASP model:

*Composition, Literature Studies, Audition, Skill Acquisition, and Performance*.

(Swanwick, 1979). This attempt to present a series of essential materials that a musical education should contain, argued that all were needed in all contexts: from performing an orchestral symphony to creating a class composition. This inter-

relationship of themes remains today, and *composition, audition and performance* and their inter-connectivity are most commonly used; for instance in the KS3 National Curriculum where they are conceptualised as *performing, composing and listening*. Taking concepts from Piaget (1926), whose developmental theories have already been discussed in this thesis, Swanwick also proffered suggestions for age-related musical skills. This was an approach he later applied to the *National Curriculum for Music* in its 1992 edition, where he developed very specific criteria that inter-related with the assessment criteria of curriculum realisations (Swanwick, 1994).

Swanwick developed his ideas with Tillman's research data in their 1986 paper: *The Sequence of Musical Development: A Study of Children's Composition* (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986). Tillman's longitudinal study examined 745 compositions from 48 children over four years. Children were asked to compose patterns and pieces using tuned and untuned percussion instruments, which were recorded by Tillman as part of her teaching. An edited tape was then made containing three randomised audio examples of seven children aged three to nine years. This was presented to three 'judges' who were asked to rank the ages of the children from the evidence heard. One judge who was a generalist teacher found the task impossible, but amongst the other two judges, who were music teachers, there was a degree of consensus on the developmental stage of the compositions, based on the "level of mastery and the degree of structural organisation" (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986; 315).

The origins of Swanwick's theories that he applied to the spiral, were Piaget's thinking on development through mastering the environment, imitation (accommodation) and imaginative play (assimilation), the concepts of which I have previously discussed. These were mapped onto a triangle to theorise their inter-relativity. From her fieldwork observations, Tillman developed a spiral of development that emphasised musical development as a helix of continual flow, in

which musical materials were developed as they were revisited in their spiral locus. The Piagetian stages are now translated vertically with each spiralling twist. This three dimensional model of musical development identifies four fundamental levels of transformation: *materials*, *expression*, *form* and *values*. Within these levels, eight progressive developmental modes are identified: *sensory*, *manipulative*, *personal*, *vernacular*, *speculative*, *idiomatic*, *symbolic*, *systematic*. This developmental model is presented in a context of moving towards social sharing. Age ranges are given at each stage of the spiral:

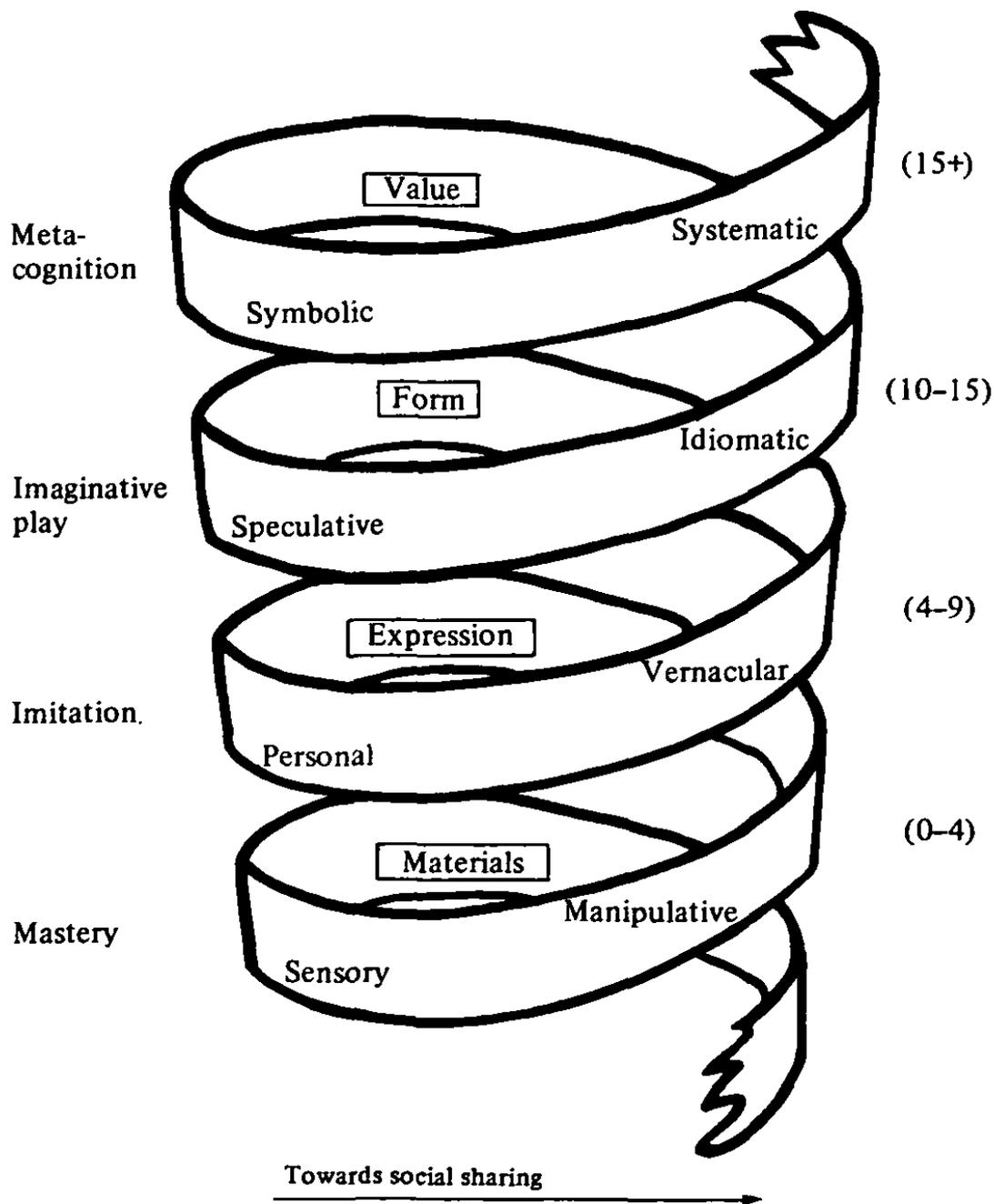


Figure 8: Swanwick Tillman Spiral of Musical Development, 1986

The Swanwick Tillman spiral is a central conceptualisation to discussions of musical development, although questions of validity remain. The research was conducted with 3 – 11 year olds, but the researchers projected their findings upwards onto other age ranges (11 – 15 and 15+ stages of the spiral). The judges' findings were based on a smaller age-range still of 3 – 9 year old children. The tape recordings were judged by the researchers to be "typical", but there is no clear methodology given for the basis on which these judgements were made in their 1986 paper. The analysis itself is reliant on transcriptions and notation approaches, which is at times inexact,

with only approximate pitches being possible. Questions of verification thus exist in the selection of research material and in the categorisation of such material. There are also questions around older generations (judges) making judgements on the frameworks for creativity of younger generations (children participants). This is valid in much the same way as examinations of world musics are framed in detachments from cultural impositions on musical understanding.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff contains a sequence of notes: a dotted quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, an eighth note, and a quarter note. The second staff contains a similar sequence of notes, but with a bracket underneath it labeled "vague tuning". The notes in the second staff are slightly higher or lower than those in the first staff, illustrating the concept of vague tuning.

Figure 9: An example of notation difficulties in Swanwick and Tillman, 1986

Although Swanwick and Tillman’s spiral attempts to represent complexities of multi-faceted interactions within musical learning, it still embodies a sequential and hierarchical understanding of musical development processes, even within fluid spiral movement. Mills questions the extent to which spirals of performing, composing and listening can be superimposed and suggests that the validity of the spiral “remains slender” (2009; 103). Mills also highlights some problematic aspects related to the spiral, such as assessment, arguing that musical learning characteristics are not inherently sequential, and thus the position of a learner on the spiral is not an accurate indicator of musical progress. This has been a repeated criticism of spiral curricula. For instance, Winch (2013) discusses implicit assumptions that learners in lower positions on the spiral, occupy lower levels of ability, whilst this often represents lower levels of complexity, which are outcomes of learning development. Cain (2004) suggests the development of music technologies and their use as musical instruments is fragmenting the spiral model:

*Music technology has also called into question Swanwick and Tillman's (1986) account of the development of musical ability. (2004; 218)*

Tillman's research has also been considered culturally limited:

*The initial observations that led to this particular model were culturally specific. (Lehmann, et al. 2007; 34)*

Swanwick later sought to demonstrate cross-cultural validity of the spiral in his paper *Developmental Theories Revisited* (2001), where he replicated the findings in a Brazilian context. Lamont has also criticised the spiral, arguing that it does not constitute science and "lacks predictive power" (Lamont 1995; 10). A lack of predictive power is problematic in a model postulated to demonstrate development, making the analysis retrospective rather than representative.

The diagram presenting an overview of the research data in the original 1986 paper illuminates the construction process used by Swanwick and Tillman:

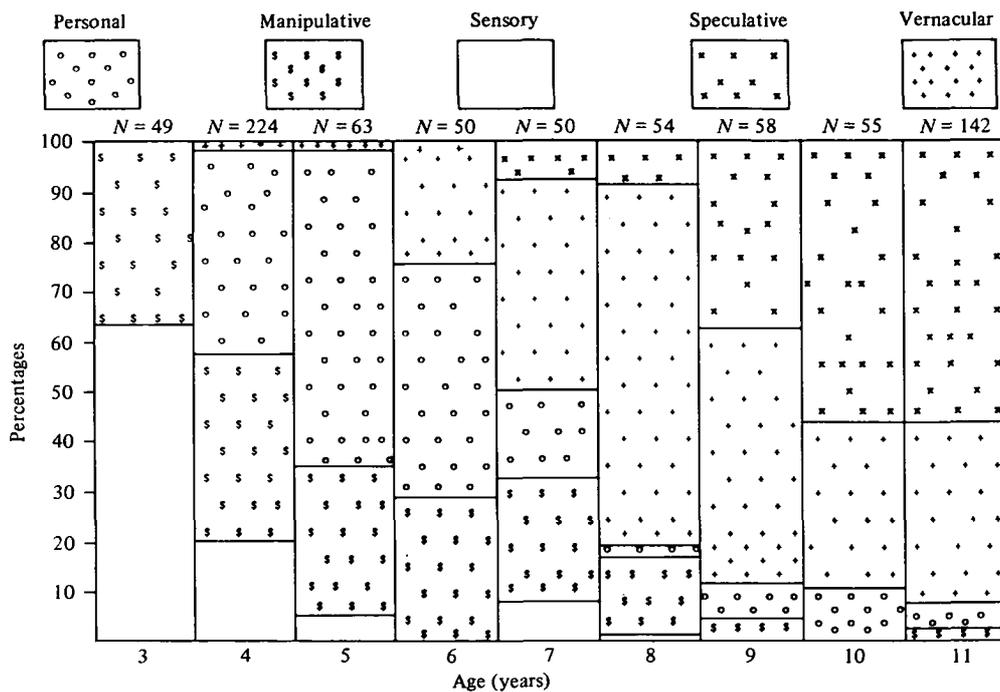


Figure 10: Swanwick and Tillman analysis table, 1986

This table indicates that weighting of compositions is significantly greater at the lower age range (especially at four years old), creating difficulties in defining stages of development. Tillman's data may therefore demonstrate baseline origins more effectively than development, and given the longitudinal nature of the study, continued engagement over time by participants is unclear. Pupils were sometimes recorded individually, sometimes in small groups and the task continued to be developed during data collection. There are thus varying data contexts making compositions difficult to analyse consistently. Methodologies used in applications of typology for analysis to create the table in figure 10 above, is also undocumented by Swanwick and Tillman.

Whilst contributing to knowledge of musical development, Swanwick and Tillman's work has therefore also been critiqued. There have been warnings against aspiring towards an all encompassing model (Mills, 1996), and Swanwick's attempt to develop detailed assessment criteria related to understanding of music education in

the early 1990s, has been considered “disappointing” (Philpott, 2009; 69). Philpott has also commented that the Swanwick model:

*has relatively little to say about the sociological, political and contextual dimensions to musical meaning which have become so crucial in more recent analyses. (Philpott, 2017;3)*

Philpott argues for:

*subtle assessment strategies that are able to ‘capture’ the development of the knowledge and understanding of musical meaning. (2017; 1)*

Seeking to provide definitions for understanding aspirations of classroom music education, has therefore resulted in contradictions and disagreements, in both the nature of musical understanding and how to interpret data of musical learning.

#### **2.3.5.4 Musical development revisited**

Swanwick revisited and revised the spiral that formed Tillman’s doctoral research in his 1994 book *Musical Knowledge: Intuition, Analysis and Music Education*. In his discussions he added further detail to eight modes of development in the spiral, and responded to criticism regarding age related expectations of musical development identified in the original spiral diagram, which he no longer included. He argued that “in general” the age range “shadows the age and experience of the children in the study” (1994; 90). This approach creates a distinction between the spiral and indicators of stages of development as identified by Piaget. Swanwick then sought to build the model further from a spiral of development into a psychological helix. Working on the left hand side from *intuition* to *assimilation*, he added a scale of “the playful dimension of internal motivation” (1994; 87) which included: *aesthetic, imagination, impression, individual things, “Romantic”, subjective, appearance,*

*integration, creation and play.* These are then “extended and nourished” (1994; 87) on the right hand side moving from *analysis* to *accommodation* and include: *artistic, intellect, conceptions, relationships, “Classical”, objective, underlying form, separation, tradition and imitation.* The foundation of these revisions is based on new interpretations of original fieldwork rather than new research, which limits potential developments to data from the context in which it was first gathered.

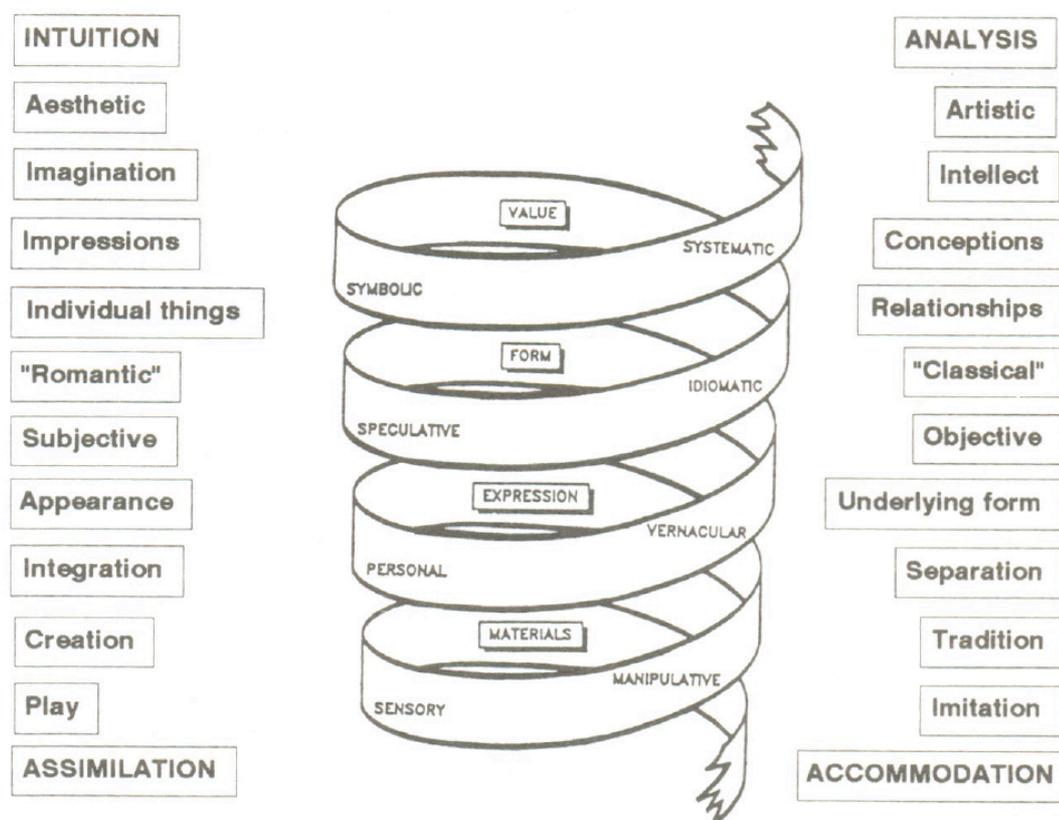


Figure 11: Swanwick Spiral revised, 1994

Later in *Teaching Music Musically* (1999), Swanwick suggested principles of music education that indicate transformative approaches to musical development. Swanwick argued that music functions metaphorically, and as mentioned previously in this thesis, that it is the role of the teacher to enable learners to transform *tones into tunes and gestures, tunes and gestures into structures and symbolic structures into significant experience.* The developmental pathway therefore extends from tones to significance. Although not referring specifically to the Swanwick Tillman

spiral (1986), Swanwick continues to describe metaphorical processes as layers of *materials, expression, form and value* – the original four layers of development included in the helix model. The extent to which these processes are new developments or reinterpretations of the existing spiral model remains ambiguous.

In his presentation and interpretation of characteristics of musical development, Swanwick was subsequently to argue that music itself is a multi-layered human experience, where layers interact vertically as well as laterally (Swanwick, 2001). This phraseology appears to shift from a helical understanding of musical development to a relationship realised through perpendicular axes. Whilst acknowledging limitations of musical phenomena in the original research that developed the spiral, Swanwick discusses the creation of a model of musical development as the aim of the 1986 research, which he considers as a generalisable theory for musical development in all forms. Swanwick has acknowledged problems in some of the original research, including: coding, cultural setting, and age-related conclusions and has sought to replicate the research in other settings (2001). In acknowledging that there remains much work to be done in understanding musical development in contexts of social interaction, Swanwick nevertheless regards the result of Tillman's original research as valid and that comparisons between other research project data are possible. He maintains that we "know quite a lot about musical development" (2001; 241).

Although constructs and understanding of development expand over time, Swanwick's theories are inconsistent. His discussions of layers of development are variously given qualifying explanations, defined as psychological progression or projected in age-related expectations. Forms of development are explained as lateral processes and as three-dimensional interactions. Swanwick's conceptualisation of development is conceptualised as either stratified or fluid,

depending on descriptive contexts. Coding and details of his analysis in replication of Tillman's original research project, remain ambiguous enough to raise questions about reliability of current understandings of musical development, especially as origins for generalising new theories.

### **2.3.5.5 Other frameworks for understanding musical development**

Attempts to establish models of musical development have exhibited historical variance of practice, approaches and conclusions. Although Paynter's structures for musical development have tendencies to summation rather than process, he does suggest a route of musical development within a context of musical progress. Paynter posits a teaching approach which acknowledges learner needs, justifies music in the curriculum for its artistic qualities, and progresses this to musical development through expressive classroom activities, building towards a "sense of progression" (Paynter, 1982; 58). He unifies these concepts via the curriculum perspective of:

*educating aural perception so that all pupils can discover, through active involvement, how sounds can be used musically. (1982; 58)*

Potential enactments of this conceptualisation of musical development are less evident in Paynter's discussions.

A developmentally based research project from 2000 focused on how progress could be evidenced across composing, in the *Creative Dream* (Odam, 2000). This identified types of learning through which progress could be evidenced including *technical, craft, analytical, social and personal skills, building a repertoire, accumulation of experiences and decision-making regarding quality*. The research itself adopted a case study methodology, taken from one year 7 class of 23 pupils

and implemented a problem-solving ethos. Thus although these classifications may have some generalisable attributes (Yin, 2009), their scope is limited by their practice-centred context. Philpott (2007b) suggests further structures for understanding musical development, including *enculturation* and *engagement* of children in their early years with music. However, these understandings relate either to observations of children in early stages of their development or to psychometric testing of what Mills (2009) classifies as tests of aural perception, such as pitch discrimination. These theories rely on tracing how musical understandings develop in differing contexts, rather than proposing a model of musical development, which identifies learning strata and how these unfold through musical learning. They are thus at variance with theories of musical development which seek to identify and classify processes of musical development.

#### **2.3.5.6 Musical development theoretical vacuum**

It is widely agreed that there is a need for a consistent and unifying model of musical development. In discussing musical progress, Rogers (2009) argues that provision for progression has not been well understood, and proposes that there is a need for a development model, in order to understand when progress has occurred and its nature. Van der Schyff *et al.* (2016) present omissions from general constructivist theoretical frameworks in the context of musical learning. They regard Piaget and Vygotsky as lacking sophistication for embodied and emotionally-affected ways of knowing and being that musical development requires (Van der Schyff *et al.* 2016; 93). This presents a problem in understanding musical development as these theoretical approaches are prominently discussed.

Philpott (2007b) argues there is a need for a coherent theory of musical development, contending that such a theory is necessary to recognise what it means to be musical, to understand the state of musical development in individuals, to evaluate the impact of teaching, to help pupils in formative and summative

assessment relationships, and to understand the connections between different knowledge types. Lamont and Meyer (2009) go further:

*Despite a great deal of research interest in the topic, there is still no overarching consensus among researchers on precisely what musical development is. (2009; 44)*

They identify a central problem that development in music does not have clearly defined goals, and is therefore difficult to identify.

In musical development, what exists is a conceptual as well as theoretical vacuum: there is a lack of agreement on characteristics of musical learning, how these can be quantified, how they can be evaluated and consistently evidenced in context. A lack of agreed consensus on the essence of musical development will impact understanding characteristics of musical learning, and consequentially how to design and sequence an effective music curriculum. This is why my first research question has sought to consider musical knowledge and musical learning, which is partially addressed in this discussion of musical development. Focusing on one area of musical development, this thesis will seek to develop models that identify processes of curriculum design and sequencing, identifying how current *pedagogical content knowledge* (PCK) (Shulman, 1986) interacts and intertwines with perceptions of subject knowledge and resultant arrangements of musical knowledge for musical progress. These features reveal tacit processes of curriculum design, indicating complexities of enactments with which music teachers engage.

### **2.3.6 Sequencing**

In this section of my thesis I will be exploring the concept of curriculum sequencing, how this arises from theories of musical learning and development and how it is

interpreted and understood. This addresses my second research question, of how and why music teachers sequence musical learning in the design of their KS3 curricula. I will consider what a meaningful definition of curriculum sequencing might be, and how teachers are known to approach and consider sequencing within their design of the music curriculum in English secondary schools. Further to this, I will consider what is currently known about sequencing in the context of musical education and how this is perceived as manifest in teacher practices. My approach will identify gaps in knowledge and resultant impacts from their music curricula design.

### **2.3.7 Situating Sequencing**

As I have previously discussed, attributes of learning and their development has been extensively debated in educational theory. However, understanding sequencing in this context has not been as extensively researched. Gardner (2009) touches on sequencing, when he suggests that no pedagogical approach will be sufficient to teach the full range of skills for any subject. This, he argues, raises the question of “why one is teaching certain topics” (2009; 112). In the context of the music curriculum, teacher rationales for topic selection raise similar questions. Why music teachers choose the topics they do, is not fully explained in the literature. Beginning this discussion from a wider perspective, Wilson (2009) argues for a learning progression model sequenced with concept maps and levels of thinking in secondary school Science lessons. This approach considers developing learner understanding by determining curriculum design from a temporal context. However, this identification of needs for a model does little to develop its essence. Whilst it is not possible to survey every secondary school subject within the context of this thesis, similar conceptual practices emerge in pedagogical debates. Rata (2016), for instance, argues for pedagogies of conceptual progression in the context of a progressive theory of curriculum knowledge. Rata highlights the case for a considered curriculum in sequencing contexts, with a focus on knowledge

realisations within classroom practices: “what is taught and how it is taught” (Rata 2016: 171). Therefore, although curriculum sequencing is implicit in pedagogical debate, clarifying its distinctive features is more problematic. Clarifying definitions is, however, important to addressing my second research question, which considers sequencing, so I now move to considering its characteristics.

### **2.3.8 Defining Sequencing**

Sequencing is recognised as a significant dynamic in curriculum design. Winch (2013), argues for a management of knowledge in a sequence that compliments requirements of both subject and learner. He develops this construct in contexts of *epistemic ascent* in which he regards the sequencing of teaching within music as a core element in curriculum planning. (Epistemic ascent is a concept to which I will return in my methodology chapters.) For the present discussion on sequencing, it is enough to observe that Winch infers that there is an approved discourse in learning sequences:

*Failure to get. . . sequencing right can have adverse pedagogical consequences.* (Winch, 2012; 134)

Diverse perspectives on the substance of such an approved discourse in learning sequences, however, makes such a perception problematic. In classroom music at KS3, my research and other recent studies (Fautley, 2015; Fautley *et al.* 2018) have demonstrated that teachers deliver classroom music through a series of topics. Such topics enable music teachers to facilitate learning breadth through diverse styles, genres, and traditions, where the teaching of a diverse curriculum is regarded as positive practice in teacher planning guidance. Examples of this in the literature include Rogers (2009), who connects wide-ranging musical activities and traditions to breadth of learning as an approved discourse, and Ofsted (2012), which encourages

schools to recognise “the importance of promoting a diverse range of musical styles” (2012; 4). It is through these topics that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fulfilled, including understanding:

*Musical structures, styles, genres and traditions, identifying the expressive use of musical dimensions.* (DfE, 2013; 2)

In creating curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage 3 learners, teachers therefore have to make decisions about which topics to study to fulfil these requirements and how to sequence them. It is in this sense that I will be considering sequencing in curriculum design.

Curriculum sequencing is congruent with, but not identical to, curriculum mapping. In curriculum mapping, curricula are validated, through the verification of student needs, with teachers functioning as gate-keepers of these processes (Hale, 2008). In curriculum sequencing, in a classroom music context, processes of sequencing are more precisely focused, in that teachers consider the order in which topics are to be placed, to enable the overlapping domains of performing, composing and listening to progress. The question will therefore be not only: “What can students do at the end of the *Key Stage* that they were not able to do before?” but “What can students do at the end of this *topic* that they were not able to do before?” (Fautley, 2009). Teacher perceptions of such understandings will predicate where topics are situated in curriculum programmes.

Curriculum breadth, also described as scope (Hale, 2008) and sequencing are sometimes assimilated in discussion. These are frequently applied in very specific contexts: teaching for gifted and talented students (Maker and Schiever, 1995), generic curriculum frameworks, such as a thinking skills curriculum (Beyer, 1988)

and curriculum leadership (Glatthorn *et al.* 2015), and these curriculum considerations are consistently discussed only in a North American educational context. In England, music curriculum design remains an area that is not well understood in KS3 Music, and in which the literature is very limited. My thesis will demonstrate that this is a significant area requiring further research development.

### **2.3.9 Sequencing in Music Education**

There is a lack on consensus on the nature of curriculum sequencing in music education, where it has been infrequently researched and thinking remains underdeveloped. Much of the literature is of a general nature, lacking specifics for application in planning structures for KS3 classrooms. Rogers (2009) suggests that musical understanding can be defined and presented in progressive stages, within which he locates frameworks for assessment. A curriculum sequence is implied in Rogers' concept of progressive stages, but not fully articulated. General conceptual language is also used by Mills (2005), when discussing how musical development manifests in classroom structures. She describes a "developmental line" (2005; 16) and musical growth, relating this image to the growth of a tree, and maintaining that the teacher who keeps musical development in mind during their planning will ensure that music is taught musically. This approach to curriculum planning does not enable detailed structures but provides an outline of considered practice.

Hallam (2006) suggests that it is easier to learn new information and concepts if they link to "existing knowledge structures" (2006; 95). This implies that effective procedures to build and sequence knowledge and understanding exist, although she does not describe this process precisely. Hallam considers supported skills learning, (scaffolding) as applied to self-regulated learning as a classroom technique.

However, there is no suggested structure or model for how this might be represented, or how it might be incorporated into planning processes.

Policy guidance for teachers in how to plan for classroom delivery is also formed of general constructs. For instance, the *Secondary National Strategy for School Improvement* (DfE, 2006) includes a substantial section on curriculum design, but lacks detail on sequencing. The strategy comments that identifying how students should develop their understanding and apply this to practical work is significant (DfE, 2006; 3), and suggests that students should also understand how their work for lessons links to prior learning. How these expectations should be met and assimilated into a sequenced order with a consistent rationale for musical development is not, however, included in the discussion. A similarly general conceptualisation can be found in the 2012 Ofsted music report *Wider still and Wider*, in which Ofsted identifies school visit data, that demonstrates that students willingly participate in work relating to different styles and traditions, but lack understanding of how musical features of these styles relate to each other (Ofsted, 2012; 29). Ofsted does not offer suggestions for how connections between curriculum content and curriculum sequencing could be generated. However, Ofsted does identify sequencing as an issue within planning for progress, stating that teachers have often not fully considered the curriculum confluence of progression and topic justification:

*Most schools were able to show the different activities or topics that would be covered in each year and key stage, but far fewer were able to articulate a clear rationale for the overall organisation or order of those projects to show how pupils should progress musically.*

(Ofsted, 2012; 48)

Although Ofsted has identified these features as areas for improvement in classroom music practice, my research demonstrates that teacher cognition, although active, is unrecognised by teachers and therefore represents a tacit practice. For some

participants my research presented their first real opportunity to discuss concepts and constructs for curriculum design. This emphasises the problematic nature of reconciling concepts and content, which, although not directly connected to music pedagogy, Winch (2013) has characterised as “the difficulties in reconciling subject specific conceptual schemes developed by experts with those developed by teachers” (Winch 2013; 138). In other words, the frameworks espoused by inspectorates such as Ofsted and practices of classroom teachers in music are at considerable variance.

### **2.3.10 Curriculum sequencing in music education**

Sequencing in music education does not have an extensive history of debate. Its characteristics are infrequently articulated and discussion is framed in general discussions, although many agree (Philpott, 2007b, Ofsted, 2012, Winch 2013, Rogers, 2009) that it is an important consideration in developing effective pedagogical practices in music classrooms. There is therefore potential significant impact from my thesis, which will make recommendations for future developments in the field.

Philpott (2007b) reflects on the sequence of development between spoken and written language, making the same connection with music. From this he determines that sequencing is significant and that intuitive responses in music lead sequentially to technical understanding. Philpott affirms a correlation between building musical experience prior to introducing technical vocabulary, developing into sense-making of sound. In this context, sequences of musical learning are preparing the ground for what Swanwick and Tillman (1986,1994) considered as *materials* and *value*. Thus Philpott states that “the sequence of learning is vital to successful teaching” (2007b; 37) and makes the case for a careful consideration of sequencing in curriculum development. Philpott (2017) has placed sequencing in the context of knowledge

development for musical meaning, arguing that sequencing is important when transitioning between these differing knowledge types. He looks at the transfer from intuitive to analytical knowledge as an example, stating that there are “sequential implications” (2017; 5) in moving from one to the other. He therefore regards sequencing as integrated into musical development, but does not develop this into a more detailed model.

Fautley (2012) has designed teacher prompts for assessing musical development in terms of what pupils can: *do, know, articulate and judge aesthetically* at the end of a key stage, unit of work, or term, *that they could not at the beginning*. This raises the questions of topic positioning with a *Programme of Study*, so that developing facility, knowledge and perception are enabled. More explicitly, Fautley also discusses the development of *skills, knowledge and understanding* through how teachers place topics sequentially, so that learning occurs.

In considering the concept of topics in classroom music education, Humberstone (2012) suggests that expectations for developing learners’ musical understanding determines their order. She argues for the creation of a curriculum map, not as previously discussed, in Hale’s (2008) sense of validation, but to establish agreed units of work, which enable musical understanding, through key concepts and key processes: the two subheadings in the 2007 version of the National Curriculum (QCA, 2007). Humberstone argues that this facilitates more detailed planning of topics to become feasible realities. Topics therefore are not ends in themselves Kirkman (2012); musical learning instead flows from key concepts, in which topics are an enabling dynamic.

Sequencing in the music classroom is therefore connected to musical progression and development, as part of music teacher process in curriculum designs and its

implementation varies according to context and realised practices. Music teacher conceptualisation of sequencing suggests that further research is required into how teachers make choices and their rationale for doing so; their processes in evaluating effectiveness of sequenced curricula and pedagogies for evaluating musical development through topics. Reconciling how teachers approach planning and sequencing of their curriculum and processes they adopt to realise their planning requires further research and discussion, and this will be the area this thesis will explore. There is a lack of detail and consensus on definitions and approaches to topic-based learning in music. There therefore remains a significant gap in understanding curriculum design, which, to borrow from Paynter, is *in* as well as *of* music (Paynter 1977).

Conceptualising features of knowledge and learning, and understanding how these are practised within the field of KS3 classroom music education, are influential in curriculum design. Teacher programmes of study that learners follow at KS3, demonstrate significant variance and are intensely personal. Exploring and understanding the influence of individual identity and the space that creativity occupies in planning processes for music curriculum design is therefore of considerable significance. Understanding how these dimensions influence and shape curriculum design is necessary to a comprehensive study of music teacher practice. It is these areas to which I will turn in the following chapter.

### **3. The significance of Identity and Creativity**

Musical identity is a significant influence on music teachers in the design of their KS3 music curricula. Cook (1998) has associated music and identity in a declarative dynamic:

*In today's world, deciding what music to listen to is a significant part of deciding and announcing to people not just who you 'want to be'. . . but who you are. (Cook 1998; 5)*

Decisions regarding music curricula content, structure and sequencing, are indissolubly pinned to individual identity: this is a source of curriculum genesis from which music teachers consistently draw in their personal interpretations of legitimised musical practices. As my first research question considers the framing of musical knowledge for musical learning in curriculum design, the influence of identity and creativity in teacher choices for curricula content are therefore significant. The manner in which such content is arranged and sequenced is the substance of my second research question and therefore also of import in a discussion of creativity as conceptualised within teacher biographies. My third research question, which considers how music teachers are enabled in curriculum design is also relevant, in that teacher background and musical experience facilitates choices and development of music curricula content for secondary classroom contexts. Given that, according to my research findings, few teachers receive continuing professional development in curriculum design (see Findings section), teacher biographies in selecting and sequencing musical materials for classroom activity is therefore an influential motivator. Identity is significant, due to the lack of contextual discourse from which secondary school music teachers are able to draw. Research has demonstrated that Music Subject Leaders are frequently sole practitioners in secondary schools. In a study from Sussex University, this was found to be the case for 30% of practitioners, in 705 schools across England (Daubney and Mackrill, 2017). As a result, the

starting point in enabling musical experiences for school learners depends to a significant extent on identity as expressed through individual teacher ethos and outlook. Identity is therefore an influencing factor in the manner in which Key Stage 3 Music curricula are realised, enacted and evaluated by music teachers. Whilst less of an overt determiner for KS3 music *Programmes of Study*, than conceptualisations of knowledge and learning, identity is nevertheless an inescapable lens through which musical learning is actualised in what Lamont describes as the “overt curriculum” (2002; 46).

Creativity is also important in curriculum bricolage. As Hallam observes:

“Music is both a creative and a performing art” (Hallam 2006; 70). As music-making is situated within this creative sphere, planning for creativity in KS3 classroom music education is a tacit expectation. For example, Webster (1996) identifies strategies for creativity in the classroom, and *teaching creatively* and *teaching for creativity* are common paradigm perspectives (DfE, 1999) in creativity discussions. However, teacher notions of creativity demonstrate wide divergence dependent on individual experience and context. Identity and creativity thus intersect, and necessitate discussion together to reveal their intertwining complexities.

In this section of the thesis, I will begin by briefly considering those areas of identity most pertinent to my study. These will take the form of a consideration of teacher identity, Music teacher identity, and the mediators through which music teacher identity is enacted. In my discussions on identity I will be seeking to adhere to teacher profile as closely as possible and therefore exploring the most apposite features of the field to my study. Although many of the domains of discussion could be extensively expanded, my purpose here is to present most prevalent nodes that descend deep into teacher practice, and which are most felicitous to my research, rather than to complete an exhaustive survey of identity landscapes.

### 3.1 Teacher identity

As in other fields, teacher identity can be interpreted through Bourdieu's notions of *habitus* and *doxa*. *Doxa* embodies understanding of perimeters of pedagogical space, with its tacit structures and expectations (Bourdieu, 1977), and *habitus* operates as a means for structuring perception and action within that field (Bourdieu, 1996). These frameworks locate both individuality of *habitus* identity as biography (Bourdieu, 1990), and illusions of immediacy in understanding that working in a conceptually ordered context provides. Such conceptualisations suggest continuing tensions between manifestations of perceptions of self, as experienced by individual teachers, and their own professional identities. These close connections between teacher identities and teacher pedagogies may be one reason why teachers appear uncertain at times in articulating their planning processes. Bourdieu described the process of "divulging tribal secrets" as painful because it exists as a "kind of public confession" (Bourdieu 2001; 5), and teachers' planning processes can be perceived as intensely personal, as they are intertwined with identity perspectives.

However, teacher identity incorporates more specific considerations than these foundational concepts. Teacher identity is realised within notions of conflict, the resolution of which represents a professional transformation through which identity is formed. Internal and external notions of what it means to be a teacher are part of this development. Hargreaves (2002), for instance, stresses that frames of reference through which humans view themselves, in relation to culturally defined roles, exist in a central locus of conceptually defined identity. Such a construct can cause tensions in what Lamont (2002) describes as *personal identity* (idiosyncratic characteristics) and *social identity* (social characteristics) and how these perceived roles manifest and interact in practice. Therefore, societal perspectives of teaching, and teacher realisations and perspectives of teaching practices, can be at significant variance. An example of such an incongruity, in discussions of validation of pedagogical

models and approaches, is *scripted lessons*, which have been represented as expunging creativity, or enriching learning opportunities. (Didau, 2016; Finney, 2017c; Abrams 2017). Lamont (2002) further sub-divides conflicts between introspection and projection of identities, into *self-understanding* and *self-other understanding*: the dissonance between teacher understanding of self and how this perception of teacher-self relates to others in society.

Archer (2008) discusses the tensions of academic identity, which include teacher roles. She notes that self-governance results in instability and insecurity, another example of identity conflict. This is especially relevant to teacher identity, as teachers seek to work through curriculum design for their subjects in which, although accountable for their learners' outcomes, they have bounded autonomy for lesson structure and delivery. Autonomy is bounded in that teachers work within school contexts, whose demands they are obligated to meet, but in which there remain choices to be made, even in microcosmic areas. It is in working through such poles of conflict that teacher identity is therefore backgrounded and formed.

Conflict in formations of teacher identity has also been conceptualised in more complexity than dualities. Archer (2008) argues that professional identities involving *unbecoming* as well as *becoming*, is part of a disrupted process. She regards conflict as involving *inauthenticity*, *marginalisation* and *exclusion*, and this results in a more complex model of the formation of teacher identity. In Colley and James' (2005) analysis, professional, personal and political identities and their trajectories are themselves inseparable. This intermingling results in conceptualisation of teacher identities that is more liquid or "plastic" (in French, 2014), in their multi-dimensional facets. Identities are thus continually shifting (Hargreaves, 2002), with each development effecting gradual transformation.

### 3.2 Music Teacher Identity

In addition to facets of identity that apply to the profile of classroom teachers, classroom music teachers incorporate further attributes, owing principally to the interactive and multi-dimensional nature of aesthetic learning. Hargreaves *et al.* (2002) suggest that self-esteem and self-image have received most research attention and that self-image includes music teacher profiles. They further refine definitions of identities as *identities in music*: socially defined within cultural roles, and *music in identities*: using music as a resource to develop individual identities. The identity of the classroom Music teacher fits within both areas, but is most visible as an *identity in music*, where music teachers function as facilitators of musical developments for young people. This profile has been further delineated by Lehmann *et al.*, who have developed a typology of music teacher identities, suggesting they are: governed by culture, nationality, and as a shield against assimilation or oppression (Lehmann, 2007).

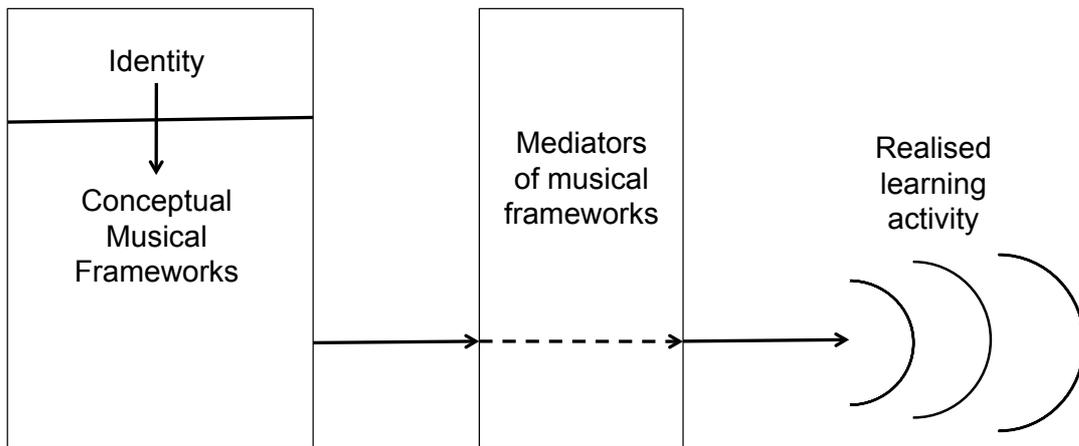
These conceptualisations are important, as it has been suggested that identities of classroom music teachers assimilate otherwise independent identity types. Dalladay (2014) contends that classroom music teachers have a tripartite identity: personal, musician and teacher. Dalladay argues that music teachers think of themselves as musicians first, and that they retain this identity during their development as classroom teachers. This results, he contests, in identities of classroom music teachers becoming “introverted and music-centric” (In Dalladay; 2014; 94). It has also been argued by Sanders (2008) that conceptualisations music teachers have in duplicitous identity is dangerous, as they consider themselves as musicians who teach, rather than teachers who are musicians, thereby resulting in classroom experience which devalues music for learners.

It is not inconceivable that powerful shaping influences that music has on identity leaks into other aspects of teacher practice, including designing musical knowledge for musical learning within curriculum structures, as addressed in my first research question. Hargreaves (2002) has stressed roles that identity plays in enabling learners' musical development "from the inside" (2002; 18) and it seems not implausible that classroom Music teacher identities manifest equally important processes, influencing methodologies within which musical education is both conceptualised, and enacted within secondary school classroom environments.

This powerful dynamic of music may explain why classroom music teachers have frequently been regarded as more than instructors, and rather as educational innovators or facilitators (Savage, 2007). Process is thus at least as important, or perhaps at times, even more important than product. The function of classroom music teacher can therefore be understood to partially fulfil processes of filtering and presenting musical experiences for learners, although this will occur through their own subjective teacher identities. In exploring his subjectivity as a researcher in social science, Peshkin (1988) sought to be more aware of subjective features of his identity and developed his six I's of hidden subjectivity. These included the: *ethnic-maintenance I*, *community-maintenance I*, *E-Pluribus-Unum I*, *justice-seeking I*, *pedagogical-meliorist I*, *non-research human I*. Reflecting on his experiences as a classroom music teacher, Savage (2007) developed his own I's, accessing those hidden aspects of musically subjective teacher identity, the: *Musically Conservative I*, *Musically Radical I*, *Pedagogically Inclusive I*, *Technologically Enthusiastic I*, and *Artistically Appeasing I*. These aspects of classroom music teacher identity frequently remain implicit and unvoiced, but their motivational function in shaping natures of classroom experiences for learners is evident in the research literature (Lamont 2002; Green 2008).

### 3.3 Music Teacher Identity Mediators

Music is a complex classroom interaction, on which teacher identity has a significant impact, and processes of teaching and learning in secondary music classrooms is realised through a variety of mediators. This requires agents that enable conceptual musical frameworks, which the teacher holds as part of their identity, to find a form of musical learning activity:



*Figure 12: Music teacher mediating framework*

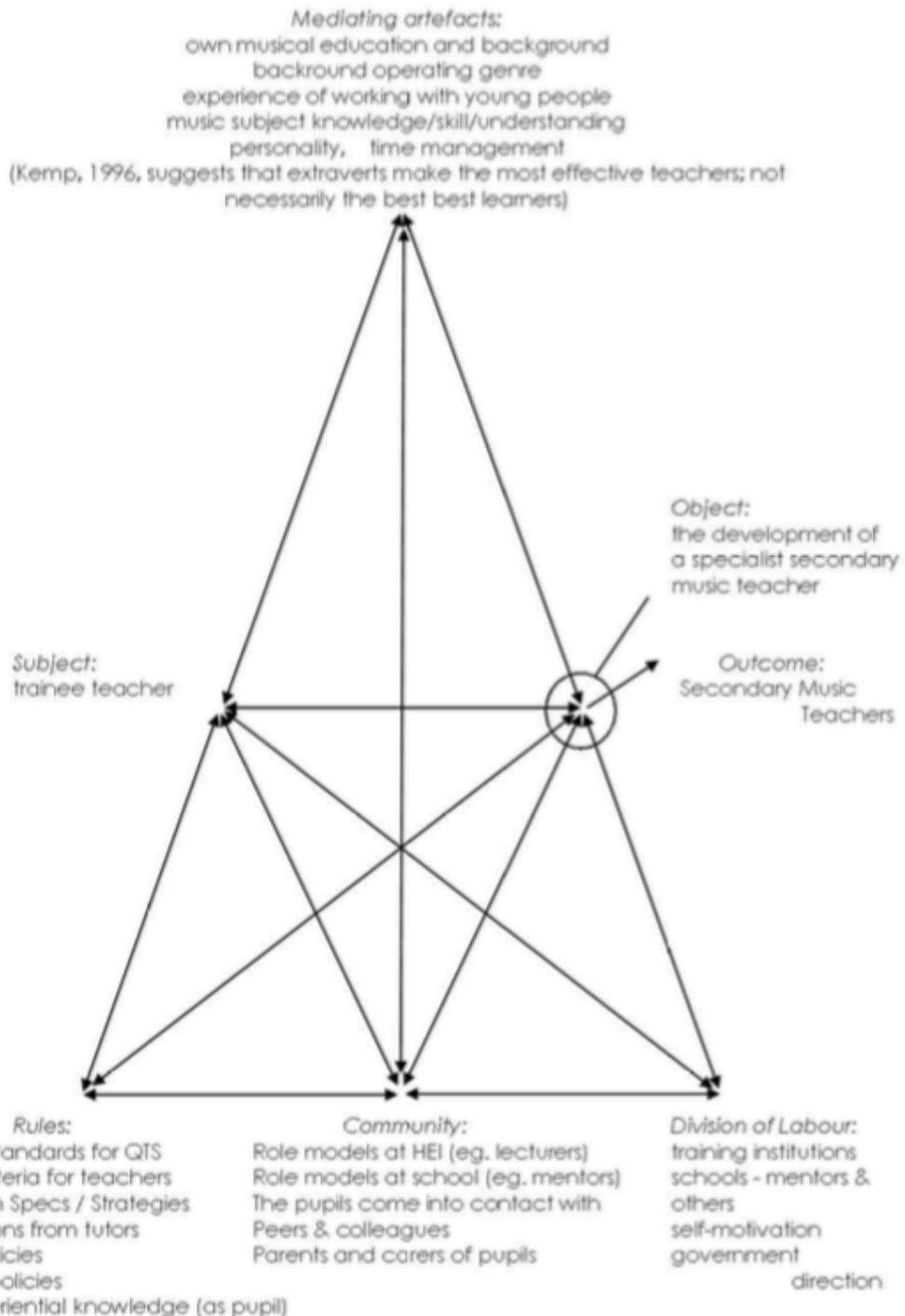
Such mediators are by their nature highly personal, subjective and subject to continual change, just as classroom teacher identities in music grow and transform. However, acknowledging that these interactive processes are occurring and seeking to understand their characteristics assists in profiling processes of music curriculum design in secondary music classrooms.

Savage (2007) discusses origins of musical meaning that teachers use to analyse impacts arising from their music education programmes. Musical preferences are subjective and yet significant in the formulation of spaces to engender teaching and learning. Hargreaves (2002) suggests that musical preferences are linked to value and attitudes of composers and performers, and that music is a means of formulating

and expressing musical identities. Music teachers' preferences influence learning activities in classrooms, and conversely, Lehmann (2007) states that musical activity defines teacher *identity*. Thus the formulation of musical activity, its conceptualisation and introduction into classroom space is a direct mediator of music teacher identity.

Identity is also formed and influenced by a wide range of contextual factors. These include school stipulations for lesson formats and required performativity documentation, restrictions on classroom space or accommodation, available instruments and resources, or teaching patterns within school. To these, Dalladay (2014) also adds: *economic climate, training, continuing professional development, parental and pupil expectations, family, friends, role models and society*. These mediators of music teacher identity, directly influence formulations of *Programmes of Study* and their constitutions in classroom space.

Dalladay (2014) conducted doctoral research examining teacher biographies. This included a discussion of Vygotsky's Activity Theory (1978) as modified by Engeström (1987), which is discussed as a conceptual framework in *section 6.5* of the methodology section of this thesis. It was Dalladay's intention to "illustrate the range of factors which contribute to the development of teacher identity" (in Dalladay, 2014; 89):



**Figure 13: Dalladay's Activity system of the development of a secondary music teacher**

This activity system is complex and contains multiple superimposed systems in one model. (For example, the multi-dimensional nature of the 'community' node on the triangular model, in which Dalladay refers to conflicting perspectives between school mentors and university lecturers). Although complexities of activity of secondary music teacher identities in this model could be developed into further levels of

complexity, Dalladay's work reveals multi-agency nature of formations of music teacher identity. Whilst some nodes reveal documentary signifiers: *teacher standards, exam specs, government direction, National Curriculum*; others have less quantifiable characteristics: *expectations from tutors, role models, self-motivation and personality*. Music teacher identities are thus determined from a spectrum of mediators and their variety and emphasis in the practices of music teachers, will be part of profiles that determine how musical knowledge for musical learning occurs in classroom contexts.

In seeking to make these interactions more visible, Dalladay (2014) has developed a model of Music Teacher identity (See *Figure 14* below). In this model, Dalladay represents interactions between *music teacher identity, musical identity and self-identity* over time, examining multiplicities of dissonance and consonance between motivators and how they manifest in behaviour. Such an analysis draws to the surface multiple mediating factors through which music teacher identities are realised including: *background and personal relationships, formal and informal musical activity and professional competency pathways*. How classroom music education is enacted and realised will be influenced by these ganglionic factors, which contain further complexity than Dalladay articulates within his model. The limits of my study with its focus on curriculum, precludes further analysis of this field. Music teacher identity is, however, part of a complex matrix through which musical learning for young people is formulated within secondary school classroom space.

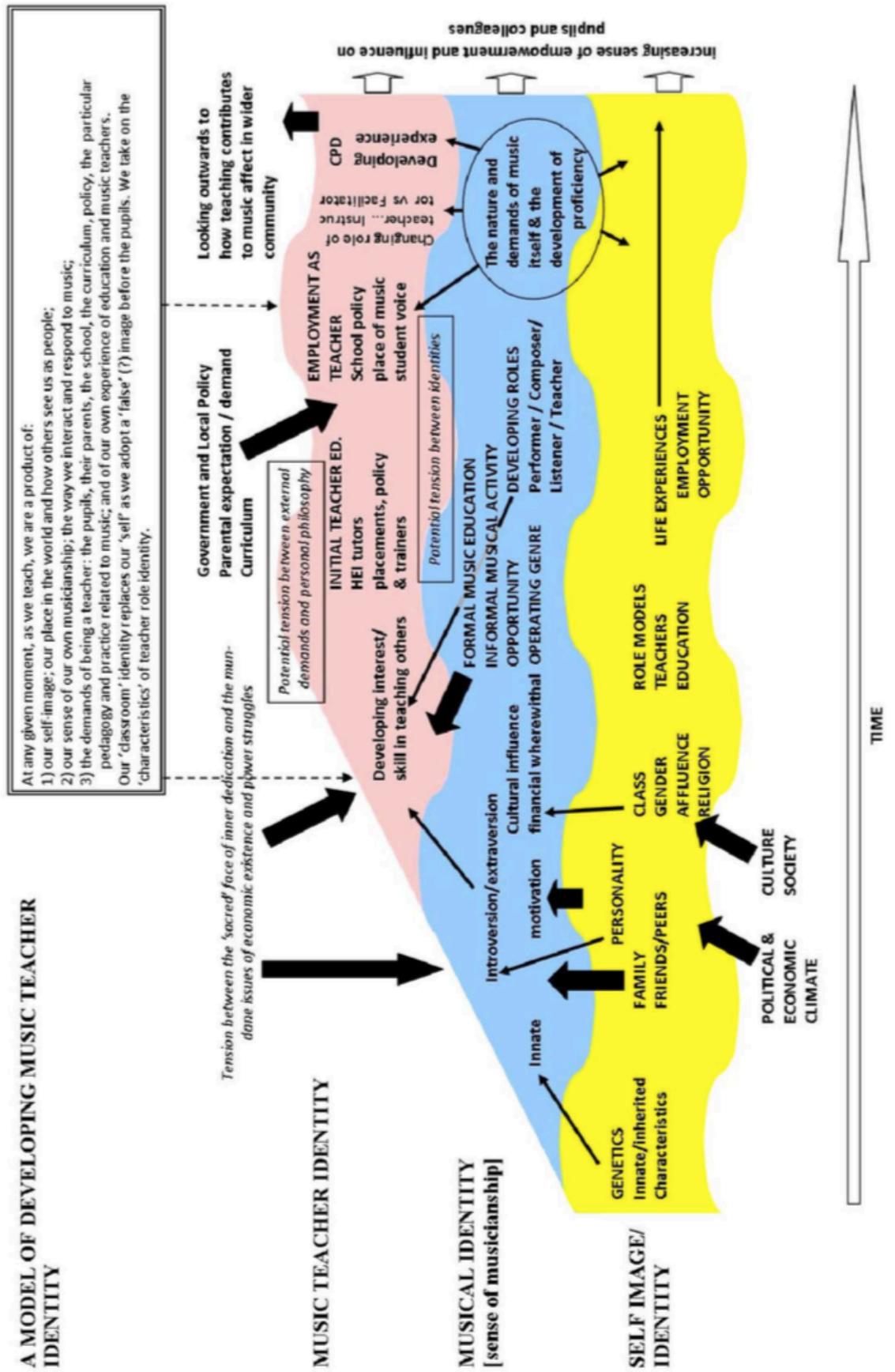


Figure 14: Dalladay's Model of developing music teacher identity

### **3.5 Creativity in curriculum music**

The essential nature of music in its empirical outworking and theoretical underpinning is incontrovertibly creative. As well as Hallam's (2006) assertion that music is a creative art, Barnes (2001) also argues that music is creative in its essence. As music is therefore intrinsically associated with creative thought, realised in musical activity, music education as enacted in secondary classrooms impinges upon my research questions of musical knowledge, sequencing and the enabling of these processes. This section of the thesis will therefore seek to explore influences of creativity in curriculum design. Beginning by defining creativity and identifying problems with distinguishing its essential features and associated conceptual hurdles, there will then follow a discussion of how creativity intersects with imagination. This is a necessary first step in understanding and defining models from which music curricula are generated. In considering how to outline pedagogical perceptions of creativity in classroom practice, theories of creativity models, including concepts of teacher agency will then follow. Understanding approaches to facilitating musical creativities, will then be discussed, and impacts upon KS3 music programmes of study as generated by teachers, will then be considered.

### **3.6 Defining Creativity**

Whilst agreement about distinctives of creativity concepts continues to be debated (Odena, 2016), there are areas of consensus. It is generally accepted (Craft, 2005; Burnard and Murphy, 2013) that creativity is the generation of something novel, although the extent to which this is necessary is disputed. Koestler (1964), for instance regards creativity as uncovering and synthesising existing concepts. This acknowledges creativity, but establishes boundaries to its authenticity. Boden (1990) describes creativity in sub-sets: *P-creativity* (Psychological creativity) and *H-creativity* (Historical creativity). She locates *P-creativity* within spheres for individuals, where creative discoveries may occur and be realised as creative for that person alone. *H-*

*creativity* is concerned with wider impacts than the individual, and is therefore recognised as creative in a more holistic sense. Boden describes this as realising the significance of an idea, in addition to generating the concept. She regards creativity as developing within the mind, and fundamentally linked with intuition and inner spark. Boden therefore contends that creativity is required to distinguish the truly creative from the mundane, with genuine creativity consisting of more than just the essence of novelty.

Following from these notions, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) began to define creativity in terms of variance from domains of accepted thought following symbolic rules and procedures. Any transformation of domains, or establishment of new domains, he regarded as necessitating a creative act. This conceptualisation suggested characteristics of creativity, but identifying boundaries of creativity domains and evaluating when domains have been developed remains perceptively problematic. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) highlighted difficulties with such delineations when considering creative scientific theory:

*To say that the theory of relativity was created by Einstein is like saying that it is the spark that is responsible for the fire.*

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; 7)

Domain-based approaches to understanding creativity have also been developed into collusion, where domains combine together to create synthesis. Craft (2005) suggested that generating an amalgam of two previously distinct discipline-specific ideas, to generate new knowledge constituted creativity. Deciding when creative thought occurs, and how to validate it, remains problematic for creativity discrimination. For example, Savage (2012) has suggested that using existing

knowledge and skills, in new contexts, for new purposes constitutes creativity. Creativity in this realisation therefore embodies transformation of content or purpose.

Prescribed policy definitions of creativity, such as the NACCCE report, *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education* (Department for Education and Employment, 1999), do not always reflect interchanges between what has been variously described as *concepts*, *disciplines* or *domains* (Koestler, 1964; Craft, 2005; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). The NACCCE report's definition of creativity is: "imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value" (Department for Education and Employment, 1999; 29). Barnes (2001) considers the NACCCE report to balance *process* and *product*, and offers a more succinct definition: creativity is a way to make sense of life (Barnes, 2001; 95). Divergent views of substances of creativity appear to reside in understanding how creativity appears in praxis as an active process (Fautley and Savage, 2007) and how changes in its status can be assessed. These difficulties arise from central problems of ethereal natures of creativity as a concept.

Understanding the essential features of creativity is therefore fraught with problems. It is "slippery" in nature (Philpott, 2007b; 120) and there is considerable debate about its distinguishing characteristics. Hargreaves (1986) described the lack of co-ordination that existed between definitions of creativity, arguing that its rapid growth as a research area has not been in any way organised or systematic, due to the manner in which researchers view creativity as a convenient shorthand term, without first establishing its foundational features. Hargreaves was also to reflect on the extent to which creativity was realised and ignited in his discussion. Hargreaves (1986) suggested that there is usually a mix of perspiration and inspiration in the creative process, and that in this sense it is simultaneously both rational and irrational. His suggestion is that whilst creativity is unlikely to be uninspired, it also

demands a working out from first principles, requiring considerable effort. Understanding the variance of this interactive dynamic is problematic, not least because of the complexities of gathering data on creativity. Ghiselin (1952) describes the artist composer as following an obligatory impulse, concluding that asking such individuals for autonomous descriptions and definitions is not an easy task. Nevertheless, before considering suggested models of creativity, it is helpful to expand on foundational definitions of creativity, and in doing so to acknowledge the conceptual hurdles which lie between creativity in definition and in realised and enacted encounter. This following discussion therefore seeks to explore the complexities of recognising creativity in *activity* and not only *conceptually*.

### **3.7 Hurdles to conceptual creativity**

Defining creativity is inherently problematic and evaluating creativity is no less complex. It is generally agreed that creativity is difficult to test (Shuter, 1968; Hargreaves 1986; Webster, 1996) and such tests by their responsive nature provide limited insight. Shuter (1968) discusses questions that have been used, such as “How many uses can you think of for a brick?” and the problems with such approaches failing to fully engage participants through their commonplace subject matter. This approach relies on a problem-solving frame of reference and as creative thought can take this conduit, but can also follow an infinite variety of others, this makes such tests of limited scope. Hargreaves (1986) has also explored the difficulties surrounding testing, by suggesting that creativity is also difficult to observe and identify in process. He suggests that behaviourism (as previously discussed in this thesis) is therefore not an appropriate model.

It can also be difficult to distinguish the differences between creativity and knowledge. Paynter (1972) states that it is possible to be creative *in* music without knowledge of *past* music, and in this sense, knowledge context is not essential. Webster (1996) also suggests a dichotomy, in which he separates subject knowledge

(which he calls conceptual understanding) and the application of that knowledge (which he terms craftsmanship). Craft (2005) also distinguishes between knowledge and creativity, but regards knowledge as necessary to fully evaluate and provide critical scrutiny of creative originality. These differences are at the core of a conceptual understanding of creativity, with each taking an alternative view of knowledge and thus also of creativity characteristics.

Differing creativity perspectives present further conceptual hurdles. Boden (1990) compares musical creativity to memory and identifies problems with reliability where introspective accounts are in actuality retrospective accounts. Identifying Mozart's incredible memory and ability to write down "entire cantatas after hearing them only once" (Boden, 1990; 250), she equates with creativity. However, reproduction alone does not constitute creativity. Reconceptualisation is necessary for novel and original thought, and recall does not uniquely reflect this characteristic. Burnard (2013) regards both creativity and musical ability as human potential and therefore not the preserve of a gifted few. She also regards individualised practices as core perceptions for understanding creativity. She describes these as historical practices resulting in different conceptions of *creativities* (plural) rather than *creativity* (singular). Selecting, developing and synthesising creativity profiles is highly complex and these central conceptual difficulties make defining, recognising and assessing creativity even more multiplicitous.

### **3.8 Creativity and Imagination**

Creativity does not appear *ex-nihilo*, but arises from imaginative processes.

Vygotsky (2004) regarded imagination as the basis of all creative activity, with human society in its entirety, emanating from imagination realised in creative actions.

Vygotsky described culture as: "The product of human imagination and of creation based on this imagination" (2004; 10). Finney (2009) was later to adopt congruent

origins, arguing that there is much talk of *creativity*, but little of *imagination*. He regards productive imagination as initiating creative processes, and in this construct creativity is drawn from imagination. In a similar manner, Barnes (2001) regards imagination as a sub-set of creativity. He considers creativity to be a blend of *imagination, originality, activity, product* and *value*.

Considering conceptual boundaries of imagination are therefore significant as starting points that develop into creativity. In the Department for Education and Employment's 1999 report *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education*, imagination is defined as "a form of mental play" (Department for Education, 1999; 29). Imagination has long been linked to mental state in this way, with Dewey describing imaginative thought as "plastic to our mood" (Dewey, 1910; 5). This observation focuses on imagination as confined by emotional state, within which a catalyst is required to unlock creative mechanisms. Although forms of emotion and their influence remain unclear (Shuter, (1968), for instance, was later to consider flashes between the conscious and unconscious mind as arising from mental processes of *appreciation, incubation, inspiration and elaboration* and therefore not relying on emotional condition); the place of imagination in art forms such as music, is thought to stem from internal processes of the mind (Paynter, 1982; Webster, 1996). Paynter identified this as part of the *Schools Council Project for Music* in the Secondary School Curriculum, when he referred to "inward imaginative models" (Paynter, 1982; 94), from which learners could draw to generate creative music in independent thought. He argued that such models were based on personal experience, but enabled new external developments as lateral thinking in music was realised. He was later to consider imagination alongside *origination, invention, interpretation* and *personalised imitation* (emphasising an internal mental schema) as key elements in generating creative thought (Paynter, 1992). Webster (1996) discusses imagination in music, developing Paynter's conceptualisation into

divergent thought, where creating requires more than processing facts and developing skills: “Exciting the imagination of our children about music is what it is all about” (Webster, 1996; 97). The process of thinking is therefore inseparable from imagination in music-making. In the context of discussing improvisation processes for jazz musicians, Johnson-Laird (2002) states that imagination is more than calculation. Creativity therefore requires imagination as an interactive mental process, and this requires more than logical sequencing.

### **3.9 Models of Creativity**

Models of creativity, which seek to represent creative processes, demonstrate a range of complex derivations. Some are well established in the literature, and more recent thinking around creativity develops and reworks these accepted constructs. Some of the earliest types of stratification placed creativity into subject classifications including: literature, science, sport, music, art, and asserted that creativity was an inherited ability or trait (Galton, 1869). This notion considered creativity as a category of genius that was distinguished only by subject discipline. Wallas (1926) was later to begin to explore subdivisions of creative processes and identified four phases of creativity: *preparation*, *incubation*, *illumination* and *verification*. These suggest that there is more to creativity than only ‘eureka!’ moments (what Wallas terms *illumination*) and that there is a staged process followed by a moment for evaluation, which verifies scopes of creative discovery. Taylor (1959) later analysed definitions of creativity to conclude a five level creativity model. This began with *expressive clarity* before moving to *productive creativity*, *inventive discovery*, *innovative creativity* and *emergentive creativity*. These levels are regarded as hierarchical, with only those most able in creative fields able to access the highest plane.

Such an exclusivist approach, in which some areas of creativity are inaccessible, has been questioned as models have developed further. Hargreaves (1986) considers

whether creativity consists of *person*, *product* or *process*. The creative process in this model is attainable by all, whilst the notion of a creative person may not be, depending on how features of individuals are defined.

Convergent and divergent thinking on creative attributes were considered by Guilford in his *structure of intellect* model (1967). This arises from his assertion that a “creative act is an instance of learning” (Guilford, 1950; 446) and in his research, Guilford included open questions, which allowed for analysis of convergent and divergent thinking (in Kinsella, 2014). Webster (1996) seeks to synthesise models in music education contexts, and bases his model on convergent and divergent thinking together with Wallas’ (1926) *preparation*, *incubation*, *illumination* and *verification* at the centre. This model (see *figure 15* below) is significant, as it places not only divergent thinking in a creative mould, but also regards convergent thinking with the same facility. Within this, product intentions and the creative product become synonymous. Webster argues that enabling skills and conditions facilitate creativity. In this manner creativity is an accessible state and process for all, even though the multi-dimensional development of skills may not have an endpoint.

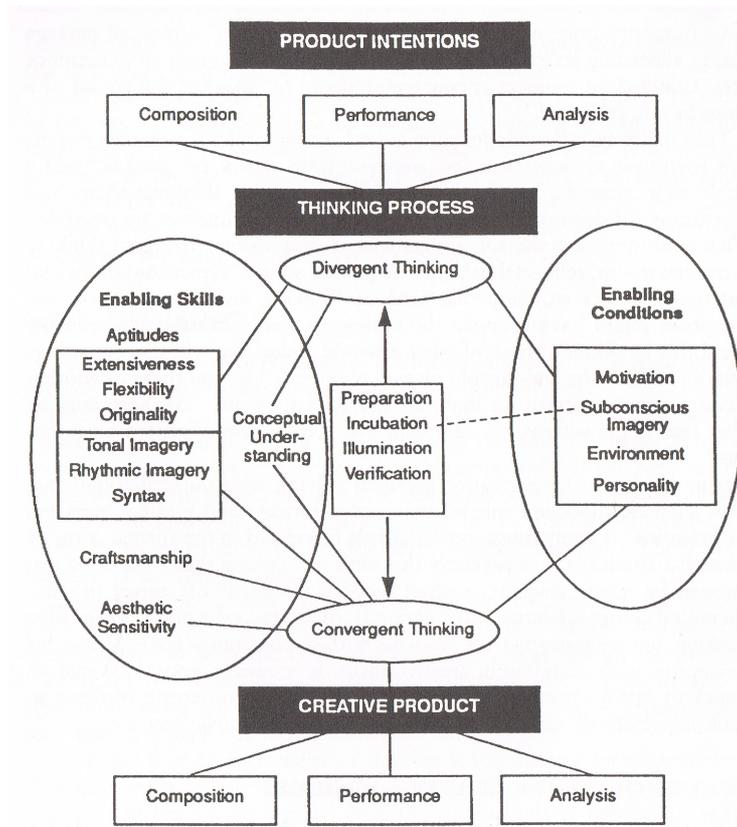


Figure 15: Webster's Model of creative thinking in music, 1996

Contemporaneously with Webster, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) outlined his concept of *flow* when in the most intense phase of autotelic creativity. His model of creativity describes nine characteristics: *clear goals, immediate feedback, balance between challenges and skills, merging of action and awareness, exclusion of distractions, no worry of failure, lack of self-consciousness, distortion of sense of time and the autotelic nature of the task*. For Csikszentmihalyi, creativity requires systematising features which include *flow* in the context of a receptive audience and is governed by symbolic culture rules, novelty and validating experts (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). According to Csikszentmihalyi, this is an exciting model for living and “the secret to a happy life” (Csikszentmihalyi 1996; 113). This model explores contextual creativity,

in which individuals within creative activity are not bounded by an impenetrable landscape.

More recent approaches to understanding creative thought, process and creativity characteristics, re-conceptualise essential features of models of Wallace, Boden and Csikszentmihalyi. Barnes builds on flow, arguing that all have creative potential (2001) and Craft further develops Boden's *P* and *H-creativity*, considering *High Creativity* and *little 'c' creativity* (2005; 62). Craft looks for creativity markers in much the same way that Wallas' *incubation* and *verification* stages of his creativity model might be applied. Jones (2012) considers Boden's *P* and *H-creativity* in the context of Artificial Intelligence, with computers as tools for composing or "the extended composer" (2012; 175). He develops concepts of *P-introspection* and *H-introspection* as a means for computer functioning as tools to "reflect and understand the user's personal creative acts" (Jones 2012; 192). Therefore, models of creativity that exist, appear regularly in the literature. New concepts and frameworks in creativity tend to remodel rather than transfigure these established foundations.

### **3.10 Agency**

The manner in which models and concepts of creativity appear and are facilitated in classrooms includes teachers enabling student decision-making. This approach to enabling creativity in schools involves providing opportunities for deep learning and engagement, or what has been described as agency (Burnard, 2013). Burnard develops this concept into creative inclusion, opening up interactive possibilities, experiences and expressions of peer worlds (2013; 10).

The extent to which teaching for creativity (Department for Education and Employment, 1999) can be achieved without agency facilitation is difficult to determine. Agency is intertwined with providing an environment that enables

creativity in its most complete sense. Context is therefore important, as enabling creativity has been demonstrated to be a time consuming activity (Webster, 1996; Hallam 2006), requiring space and enabling conditions for its development. In musical creativity, as well as adequate time to enable creativity, Barnes (2001) also suggests additional requirements include: *a range of musical instruments, teacher understanding of the elements of music and musically confident generalist teachers*. Too much detail in models that emphasise teacher-centric lesson content delivery, has been shown to limit creativity as well as intrinsic motivation (Hallam and Rogers, 2010). Thus children's creative agency in music can be either inhibited or advanced according to the emphasis placed on lesson design. Agency is therefore a pathway towards classroom creativity in music, but musical creativity consists of further multi-dimensional features, which I will now explore.

### **3.11 Defining Musical Creativity**

Understanding musical creativity is a domain of considerable complexity that has significant connectivity to music curriculum design in the secondary school classroom. In its musical history, 'creativity' in music has, on occasions, been viewed as a pejorative term, following the late 1970's creative music-making projects (Paynter, 1982). Opinion was divided at this time amongst music teachers about an approach which allowed for extensive creative freedom in school music lessons, with some regarding this as a recipe for chaos and low standards of music-making. At the heart of this debate was the concern that imagination as embodied in composition projects would be given higher regard than developments in technical skills. Hallam and Rogers, (2010) later described difficulties around the 'creative' term, arguing that it not only caused controversy, but was limited by timetabled time and progression opportunities. Paynter discussed these problems, stating later that creative music had become an overworked term and discredited by misuse (Paynter, 1992). He nevertheless asserted that it should be central to all music curricula, as a way of "coming to know" (1992; 10) music. These debates in music education within

which creativity has been regarded as both beneficial and detrimental, can cause difficulties in clarifying rationales for its inclusion in curriculum structures.

Nevertheless, it is agreed that creativity is a central tenet of what it means to be educated in music (Barnes, 2001; Mills, 2009; Hallam and Rogers, 2010; Bunting, 2002; Burnard, 2013).

Although creativity has been described as woven into music's central nature (Philpott, 2007b), means for accessing and enhancing musical creativity is an area that lacks consensus. Despite an extensive range of approaches, philosophies and methodologies, evident in schools since the inception of the *Schools Council Project for Music* in 1982, there remains a lack of agreement in how to recognise and enable creativity. Burnard (2013) describes this as an unresolved problem for music education. As discussed in the identity section above, the KS3 classroom music teacher possesses a unique range of musical experiences, competencies and knowledge, which result in an individually defined approach to enabling classroom creativity. Burnard (2012) has argued that this manifests in a lack of congruence on musical creativity, and that attempting to narrow musical creativity is problematic due to competing music teacher discourses. Such a lack of agreement on creativity is also evident in academic discourse, where music education is described variously as: creative in all aspects (Barnes, 2001), a sequentially creative process (Mills, 2009) and one in which judges are needed to facilitate and assess its merits (Craft, 2005). Bunting (2001) considers that regarding learners as empty vessels to be filled suppresses musical creativity, whilst Csikszentmihalyi argues that notation and tradition are pre-requisites to creating music (1996; 8) and Bambrugger considers notation as "clues" of creative intent (1991; 67). Reconciling these various strands in praxis is a demanding task for classroom music teachers, resulting in a differing creative emphasis according to school contexts.

Enabling musical creativity is, nevertheless, an iterative characteristic in teacher and learner classroom work. Cox (2001) describes the inclusion of creativity as the new orthodoxy, which has redefined music educational aims. Bringing together differing dimensions of musical learning into coherent curricula models, is a continuing aspiration within debates on musical creativity. Barnes (2001) argues for an assimilation of knowledge, imagination, intellect and skill, and Bunting (2002) explores continuing tensions between knowledge and creativity and how these impact curricula development. Craft (2005) has developed such tensions into knowledge types, to enable critical scrutiny of creativity. Therefore, although creativity has been described as essential in music education (Finney, 2007), disentangling how to formulate creativity to enable learners to engage, remains an individual pedagogical teacher perspective and choice. There is thus huge variability of approach, dependent on meta-perspectives created through combinations of music teacher identities as musician, music teacher, and musical individual, as discussed in the section on *identity* above, and made explicit in Dalladay's model (in Dalladay, 2014, see *figure 14*).

Musical creativity is present in practical music-making as part of the development of musical knowledge. There is accepted consensus that this is the case, particularly in composition and improvising (Paynter, 1982; Swanwick, 1999; Barnes, 2001; Mills, 2009; Hallam and Rogers, 2010). Composing has been described as the highest form of musical creativity (Hallam and Rogers, 2010), as music is brought forth through building on musical experiences, and combining influences, to create an observable creative process *and* product. Barnes describes knowledge, imagination, intellect and skill finding an ultimate creative sense in composition (2001), whilst Mills (2009) considers composing as leading towards performing and listening, but nevertheless as highly significant in enabling creative origins. Given that composition is an agreed area of creative agency, there is surprisingly little

consensus about how it might be structured or taught in classroom models. The QCA framework for creativity (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2004) does not define creativity approaches for composing, and the NACCCE report (Department for Education and Employment, 1999) suggests that trust is essential to facilitate creativity, but does not offer frameworks for composition. Exam board criterion-referenced assessment grids present a structure for evaluating levels of creative work, but do not offer strategies for facilitating creative composing. Thus, even when there is agreed consensus around musically creative domains, pedagogical approaches demonstrate wide variance, resulting in a lack of teacher confidence in how to tackle creative assessment. My research findings demonstrate such a lack of teacher confidence and this is described later in this thesis.

### **3.12 Creativity and Curriculum Design**

Discourses around musical creativity and music teachers' individual perceptions of these, affect their interpretation and design of their KS3 curricula. Creativity and music-making continually interact and impinge on each other, due to active processes in developing musical knowledge. Developing musical knowledge requires applications of creative processes, and this requires individual manifestations of creativity through curricula design. This approach to developing curricula, which embodies creativity, has been summarised by Webster (1996) as curriculum *effort*, not only classroom *activity*.

Paynter (1992) suggested that enabling curricula approaches, in which factual information and objective description took precedence over other forms of knowledge and expression without question, was erroneous. In other words, encouraging creative processes within curricula realisations, was as important for music, as linear processing might be for other subjects. Paynter (1994) later suggested that curriculum managers were suspicious of accepting creativity into the curriculum, and regarded it instead as a way to add cultural value and "a bit of polish" (1994; 101).

Webster (1996) regarded creative strategies as a central focus of music curriculum design, which suggests an alternative emphasis, where creativity in curriculum can be a structure as much as an outcome. Facilitating creativity within curricula to add value presents challenges, but continues to form policy expectations, both in government reports (Department for Education and Employment, 1999) and as an international measure of success, where, for example, it will be included in international Pisa rankings from 2021 (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2017). The NACCCE report (Department for Education and Employment, 1999) built further on Paynter's approach to music curricula, stating that creativity could be taught, but that rigour was needed just as much in this mode of learning as any other. It also identified *encouraging*, *identifying* and *fostering* as related teaching tasks. Thus, planning for creativity in a strategic manner was just as much a part of curriculum development as any other. This requires teacher consideration of not only what constitutes *creativity*, but what constitutes *musical creativity* and its value in *musical development* (as previously discussed in this thesis). Planning for creativity is therefore a multi-dimensional complexity and recognising its embodiment is equally multiplicitous.

The *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development* combines creativity with critical thinking in its discussions of creativity (OECD, 2017). Craft (2005) has formerly defined creativity as a cross-curricular thinking skill; a definition that explores one aspect of creativity, but indicates manners in which it may be applied across subject disciplines. Regarding creativity as a thinking skill demonstrates close associations with curriculum design, and musical creativity may in this sense be a strand which enables different learning approaches to work together effectively. Philpott (2007b) has developed this idea, when he argued that creativity was needed to inform musical learning in the classroom. He regarded creativity as necessary to

enable progression and continuity, without which, the essential nature of music as a discipline was lacking.

Creativity is also central to music curriculum design. What Swanwick described as the “corners of the curriculum” (1999; 44) provides frameworks within which creativity can be facilitated. Hallam and Rogers (2010) have shown that constraints are essential in providing effective opportunities within music curriculum tasks, origins of which begin with teachers themselves. Burnard has explored the extent to which creative tasks are determined by teachers (2012) and their role as *creativity generators* (Burnard 2013) within learning spaces they create. As previously mentioned, this is described in the NACCCE report as “teaching for creativity” (Department for Education and Employment, 1999; 102). A central tenet in music teacher facilitation of creativity involves establishing curriculum structures and interpretations, within which Burnard regards teachers as co-learners (2013). Creative music classrooms therefore require structured environments for learning, where opportunities are enabled by teachers within mediated curriculum frameworks. Jones (2012) explores *feedback loops* within frameworks of creativity in music technology, but these remain important in human musical interaction, as the site of creative decision-making. Jones (2012) argues that such feedback loops incorporate *selection, generation and evaluation* of creative material and states that these may be *amplified, constrained or imposed*. These reactions may be observed in any creative music classroom, where teacher responses may dampen or enhance creative work. Establishing creative environments that enable learners to progress in their creative musical decision-making has curriculum design as an essential starting point. Price (2012) connects creativity to curriculum development, regarding these as essential in effective musical education. To promote classroom creativity therefore requires an open pedagogical approach, which draws on understood

features of creativity, creativities and the creative process itself. These are therefore origins from which a KS3 music curriculum can be designed.

Understanding contexts within which creative design, and design for creativity takes place is the next step in exploring curriculum conceptualisations and processes. The final section of my literature review will therefore focus on the central area of perceptions and perspectives of curriculum as both conceptualised and practised.

## 4. Curriculum

My thesis and research case study pivots on positioning notions of curriculum as conceived and enacted in secondary school music classrooms. In order to understand processes through which teachers interpret and practise music education, it is first necessary to consider characteristics of learning and knowledge, and spaces that musical identities and creativities occupy: this has been the rationale for their discussion in earlier chapters. However, as the framing of curriculum concepts consists of multi-dimensional perspectives, which can be tacit or hidden (Jackson, 1968; Lamont, 2002), it is critical to consider curriculum both as conceptualised and realised practice. The usage of *curriculum* in a wide variety of discourses, is problematic due to hermeneutical constructs, and education stakeholders apply curriculum conceptualisations in a variety of contextual circumstances. Curriculum is used by Senior Leaders of schools as a synonym for *subjects on the timetable* connected to allocation of teaching time and staffing (Spielman, 2017); it is used by government in their discussion of educational policy as *standards of achievement* (DES, 1987); it is used by mass media as a *typology of education* (Richardson, 2014); and by teachers as *lesson content* and how learning is organised over an extended period of time (Anderson, 2017). Conceptualisation of curriculum is therefore crowded and opaque, with different understandings and applications of the term rarely objectified. Given the centrality of curriculum in decision-making processes for education policy in England, this lack of clarity is a significant vacuum.

This chapter will therefore discuss how curriculum might be defined, and how its processes have been modelled; consequently addressing my third research question, considering the extent to which music teachers are enabled in the process of music curriculum design in a secondary school context. It will also consider ontology of curriculum as it is transformed and reformed on its journey to praxis and

emergent space that exists in contemporary discussion of curriculum. Curriculum construction, with its emphasis on subject content as building blocks (NCC, 1989) does not adequately represent nuances and complexities of curriculum as realised in practice. I will therefore consider positionality of curriculum design and curriculum designers in the formation of curriculum rationales in schools. This will lead to a discussion of contexts within which the National Curriculum for Music has developed in England, and the discourse that surrounds curriculum as a means of political power. Whilst setting my discussions of curriculum in their historical educational context, my concern will be to discuss impacts and influences of curriculum thinking for Music at Key Stage 3 in the English secondary school. Examining these critical points, which have shaped Music curriculum development, is confined to exploring one layer of a rich curriculum seam, further consideration of which lies outside the scope of this study.

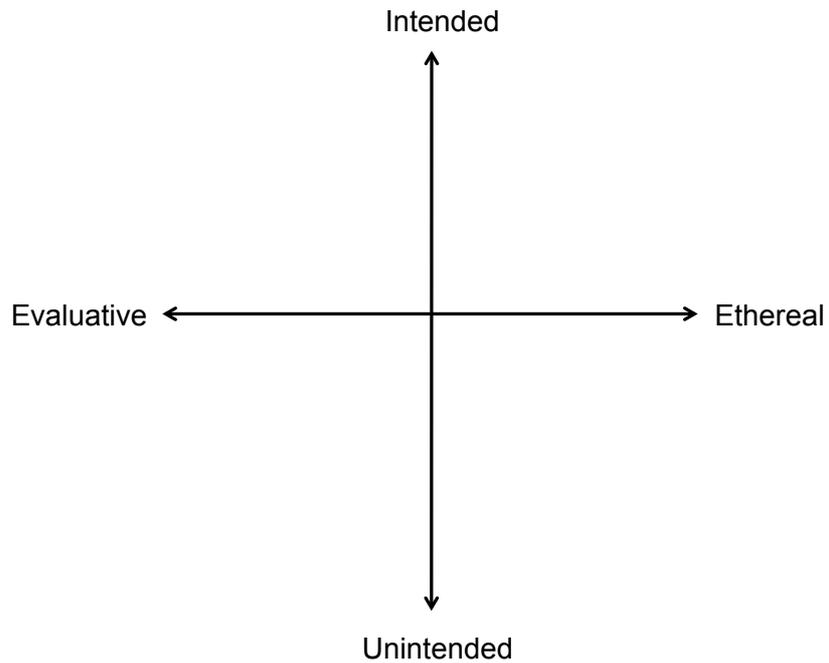
#### **4.1 What is curriculum?**

Although 'curriculum' is frequently a part of everyday discourse relating to education, it is, in essence, a nebulous concept. Theorists and commentators have emphasised varying perspectives in defining its essential nature. In a foundational consideration of curriculum, Bernstein (1971) connected what he described as three message systems: *curriculum*, *pedagogy* and *evaluation*. In his framework, "curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge" (1971; 47); pedagogy, valid transmission of accepted knowledge; and evaluation realisation of these knowledge structures. Bruner (1991) was later to refine this dynamic, describing curriculum as a three-way conversation between learner, expert, and defined bodies of knowledge existing within cultures. These definitions describe curriculum as an interactive entity within an educational field. In their more recent work, Lehmann *et al.* (2007) are more reductionist in their definition, in which curriculum is not delineated in an integrated context: "A curriculum indicates what content is to be taught and in what order"

(2007; 188). Standish (2017;1) similarly states that “the school curriculum is about what knowledge to teach the next generation”.

This approach, which centres on subject discipline content, is what Young (1971) described as the “tyranny of subjects” (1971; 3) and this remains a common construct for curriculum discourse, of which the National Curriculum in England with its prescribed core and foundation subjects is an example. Kelly (2009) maintains that curriculum is not the same as syllabus and that the two are not synonymous. In his discussions, he describes curriculum as greater than knowledge contribution alone, and distinguishes between planned and received curriculum. His four dimensions of: *planning and practice intentions, procedures, experience, and hidden learning* provoke questions around the extent to which curriculum is exclusively controlled by its designers or whether it extends beyond defined learning space.

Perceptions of curriculum as planned content alone would therefore appear to be insufficient. Curriculum extends beyond pre-defined knowledge transfer, and learning may produce unintended consequences that necessitate development. It is this aspect that has led to definitions of curriculum as an *ongoing social process* (Cornbleth, 1990). Cornbleth identifies the same agents as Kelly (2009), teachers, students, and knowledge, but the emphasis here is on interaction and its outcomes, rather than validity of prescribed transfer and associated frameworks. Curriculum thus becomes socially inclusive. It can be delineated into intended, unintended, that which can be evaluated, and that which is more ethereal:



*Figure 16: Representation of Cornbleth's social process curriculum*

Pollard and Triggs (1997) describes these manifestations as: *official, hidden, observed* and *experienced* curriculum. There is thus an important moment when planned and unplanned collide, and curriculum existing as teacher constructs becomes tangible. This is a continual dynamic interaction in schools, where theory and practice meet and are actualised (Jorgensen, 2003).

#### **4.2 What is music curriculum?**

Complexities in curriculum definitions follow into understanding characteristics of music curriculum, which is also difficult to define, due to the inter-relational dimension of its interactions. Music is inter-relational due to its properties of communicative dialogue and response and Philpott (2017) suggests that meaningful musical learning also features these multi-dimensional aspects. Elliott (1986) proposed that *the* curriculum is, in actuality, several curricula in simultaneous operation. How these micro-curricula interact, and their conceptual origins is also important, for music

curricula focus on expression and communication in a unique manner. Elliott (1986) thus considers that there are two spheres of curriculum operation in music education, one for *personal growth* and one for the curriculum as *preparation for life: work and survival*. The Department of Education and Science (1991) described this as the main aim of music education: to “foster the sensitivity and understanding of music” (1991; 7). Using this conceptualisation, curriculum in music is therefore considered to be an active process, arising from and reacting to teacher framing as realised in curriculum design.

A significant question therefore becomes how to shape curricula for music to enable this mode of response. Teachers’ roles in developing student knowledge, is thus more extensive than transfer alone. Cooke and Spruce (2016) argue that music curricula facilitate young people to co-create lived experiences which in turn allow musical knowledge to emerge. This is another different conceptualisation of curriculum, which moves beyond prescribed subjects and content. With a similar emphasis on musical interactions, Finney (2007) describes a series of principles to structure a music curriculum, which include: *recognising the interest of pupils, acknowledging prior learning beyond school, moving from the known to the unknown and nurturing critical judgement and discrimination*. The field for defining a music curriculum thus continues to widen. In Finney’s definition it is both learners *and* teachers who are engaged with defining boundaries and natures of curriculum and encompassing learning, which emanates from beyond the classroom. Other musical learning in other contexts therefore become part of curriculum, as this learning is a pre-existing and continually developing aspect of learner experience. Teacher roles enable starting points; shaping, mentoring and nurturing on a spectrum of continuing musical development within curriculum space.

More recently, Finney has developed a more honed definition of curriculum:

*The music curriculum can be defined as a dynamic set of musical processes and practices framed within historical and contemporary cultural discourse and dialogue that comprise the material musical encounters of pupils and teachers. (2017b; 1)*

This brings practice and process, context, culture, dialogue and encounter together in an enacted experience. Thus, although curriculum begins as a conceptualised design to be taught in classroom space, it may become transformed during delivery. Curriculum in music education by its essence and development, thus extends beyond content limited definitions of curriculum. It is an interactive and dynamic process as well as a conceptual structure.

### **4.3 Curriculum fracture**

Curriculum is an area of education in which thinking is still emerging and linkage between theorising and praxis still evolving. Young (1971) asked early in the modern era of curriculum debate, why there was no sociology of the curriculum, and this is a question that remains pertinent. Space for curriculum designers to reflect on conceptualisation of curriculum and how its substance might be formulated in classrooms, can be a challenge to achieve in performative school environments. This was recognised by Elliott (1986) who highlighted what he considered to be disparity between ideal and realised curricula, and argued that failure to provide quality arts education through the curriculum of a school was justifiable “grounds for complaint” (1986; 139).

Swanwick (1994) identified what he regarded as a vacuum in music curriculum, in terms of musical knowledge evidenced in expression and sensitive control of sound materials. This is an example of the problematic fracture that exists in linking

theoretical construction of curriculum into its practical design, and confidence of curriculum designers in this process. In 1992, the *National Curriculum Council* identified that in all key stages, advice would be needed on how to develop a scheme of work (NCC, 1992). Such detailed schemes are now routinely developed by music teachers (Finney, 2017), but design of *Programmes of Study* remains a considerable curriculum gap in content and practice. It is this 'unknown unknown,' which further emerged through many of the semi-structured interviews in my research, that I have sought to model and analyse, and which I will explore in later discussion of my case study.

#### **4.4 Curriculum ontology**

If curriculum is more than a binary procedure and is a multi-faceted dynamic interaction, there is a need for conceptual linkage between curriculum as defined and enacted. It is this zone that shapes curriculum understanding in synthesis of theory and practice. I am describing this cognitive pivoting, where conceptualisation of teachers' understanding of what a music curriculum is, melds with how to realise these principles in practice, as *curriculum ontology*. This is a signifier for expressing the moments in which curriculum *definitions* become shaped and expressed as curriculum *mediating notions*, which once established, determine processes and procedures of realised curriculum *practice*.

To return to Bernstein (1971), curriculum ontology is guided by his underlying curriculum principle, that curriculum contents stand in either open or closed relationships to each other. How internal curriculum relationships of an institution are perceived to interact, or to exist, as distinct entities by those working within these settings, determines curriculum perspectives. This institutional curriculum (Swanwick, 1999) affects the basis of curriculum design in identifying starting points. Regelski has discussed this by asking the question: "of all that can be taught, what is the most worth learning?" (2005; 220) It may also be asked: of all that is most worth

learning, where should learners begin and why should they start from there?

Teachers' roles in identifying "the best which can be thought and said" (Arnold, 1869; viii), thereby becomes an important segue into curriculum design. Determining where learning should begin and following this through into a structure, is a fluid procedure demonstrating that curriculum development is an ongoing process (Schyff *et al.*, 2016). Such a climate of development has also been described as a "shifting curriculum space" (Stunell, 2006; 5) and teacher existence and practice within such a space, is a conduit through which curriculum ontology is experienced by teachers.

Oates (2011) claims that curriculum represents totality of experiences of young people within education, and that it reflects that which is beyond, mirroring society. Curriculum choices are framed within societal choices and priorities, and curriculum is one way to determine and understand what these are. Elliott (1986) regards curriculum as a nexus for society's problems and future expectations, whilst also expressing ontological aspirations that curriculum is about making "a life as well as a living" (Elliott, 1986; 140), aspects which he regards as fundamental. It is because of such social theory and *a priori* conclusions that curriculum is silently shaped and enacted in schools.

#### **4.5 Music curriculum ontology**

In developmental processes that classroom music curriculum experienced, during transition from creative music-making movements of the late 1970s and early 1980s, through to its assemblage as a National Curriculum *programme of study* in the late 1980s, perceptions of music in curriculum remained fundamentally connected to human expression. Whilst earlier notions of music curriculum as a "secret garden" (Eccles, 1960) were not maintained in the increasingly policy-driven curriculum climate, links to musical aesthetics were consistently included in curriculum documentation. Paynter's (1982) early advice that it was unwise to think of

curriculum too definitively and that it was more of an underlying principle, developed, and he later discussed the essential unity and deep structure in music curriculum realisation (Paynter, 1992).

At this time, music curriculum was soon discussed as living process, and one that was necessary to ensuring that the National Curriculum did not become a lifeless document (Plummeridge, 1996). Ontology of music curriculum was therefore increasingly emphasised in balances between curriculum planning and activities: the heart of musical experience was to revisit and bring previous musical response to new musical encounters (Spruce, 2002). Mills argued that music curriculum should not be “wallpaper” (2005; 168) and that teachers should welcome what children brought to school music rooms. The development of these *mediating notions* has had considerable influence on music curriculum and reached beyond limited definition and practice.

Music curriculum therefore has an ontological presence, which is interlinked with its enacted realisation. Just as music can be improvised, Cooke and Spruce (2016) suggest extemporising music curriculum, in a response to outcome led planning. They also suggest that curriculum should be a dynamic phenomenon and not only a document, which has become reified in its implementation. However, documentation alone does not necessitate reification; curriculum planning does not limit curriculum conceptualisation as an interactive musical response. Swanwick, for example, discusses “a potentially rich musical experience” (1994; 46) nevertheless requiring a map for guidance on musical journeys. It follows that it is not documentation that leads to reification, but its use. How curriculum is enacted is therefore the critical element of ontological curriculum balance.

#### 4.6 My definition of curriculum

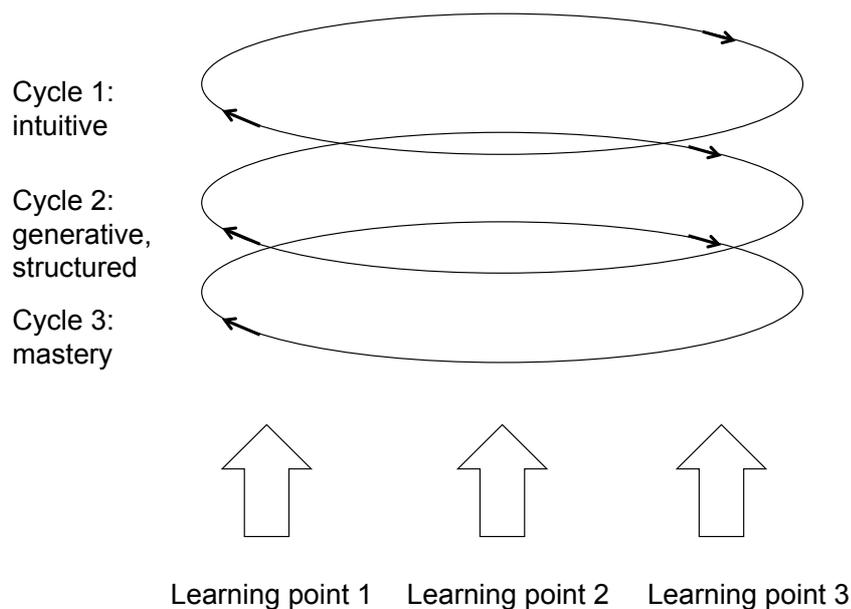
Taking into consideration definitions of curriculum given above and the wider field of curriculum ontology, my definition of curriculum is:

*An intentionally designed and sequenced programme of study, evidenced in documentation, enacted and realised in dynamic musical encounters, experienced as musically dialogic and responsive interchanges in learning space.*

I have developed this definition to incorporate purposeful actions that I regard curriculum to contain. Namely: it is *intentional* in its framing; it is *designed* rather than constructed (this will be discussed further below); it is *sequenced* to achieve learning objectives; curriculum itself is *evidenced* in documentation, but *not restricted* by this construct; it is realised through *dynamic musical encounters* in the classroom (for example between teachers and learners; learners and learners; and other participants, including instrumental teachers or music practitioners from arts organisations, for example) in the form of musical learning *dialogue*; and it takes place in a pattern of *interchange* in learning space: this may include the classroom, but may also include a range of further formal and informal settings. Importantly, this definition does not limit curriculum creators, define what is acceptable and unacceptable as learning experience, restrict curriculum locus to classrooms, or assert that curriculum arises only from documentation. It is from this definition of curriculum that my discussions will emanate.

## 4.7 Curriculum Models

Whilst curriculum models abound in potential timetabling organisation and blocking patterns (Sherrington, 2017), curriculum models that explore rationale, or conceptual representations, are less common. Such conceptual models are important because they are valuable cognitive generators for curriculum development, both at Senior Leader and Middle Leader level in schools. Bruner's spiral curriculum model is a formative example of curriculum conceptualisation. Bruner (1960; 1991) suggests that teaching and learning should begin with intuitive accounts, which later spiral back to become more powerful, generative and structured, to ultimately enable deep learning and mastery of subjects. I have represented this curriculum model in *Figure 17* below:



*Figure 17: Bruner's spiral curriculum model, 1960*

Whilst notions of mastery are problematic, implying as they do an achievable end point in which all is known, notions of spirals are also somewhat disconnected. Bruner's model is not essentially a spiral, but a circular model in which layers are associated only by the passing of time. The model itself is static, repeating at

temporal intervals, with suggestions that more profound learning occurs with each successive cycle. Bruner's spiral curriculum can therefore be a concept that is problematic in its translation to classroom practice (Harden and Stamper, 1999).

The spiral as a basis for curriculum design has been further developed and more closely integrated in a variety of contexts. In a musical context, a spiral has been used to represent complex learning relationships that exist in creative learning, (the nature of these relationships has been discussed in the previous creativity chapter). The *Manhattanville Music Project* is an example of a spiral curriculum in a musical context. The project, whose core delivery ran from 1966 – 1970, included a re-envisioning of the music curriculum in a borough of New York, North America, and its spiral sought to bring together the disparate aspects of musical learning into a unified model (Thomas, 1970):

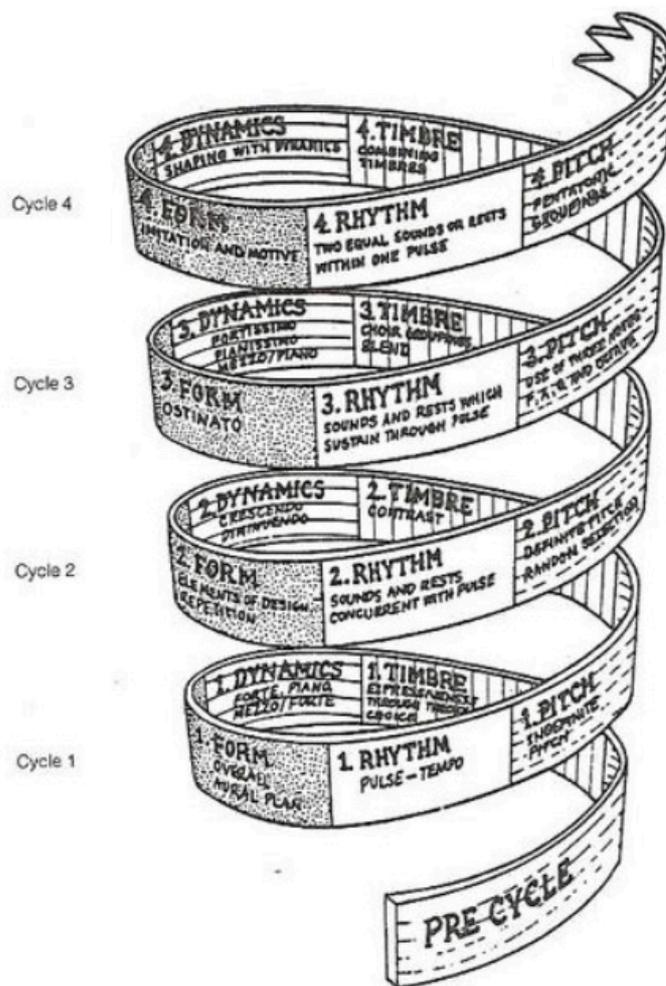


Figure 18: Manhattanville Music Project Spiral, 1970; 115

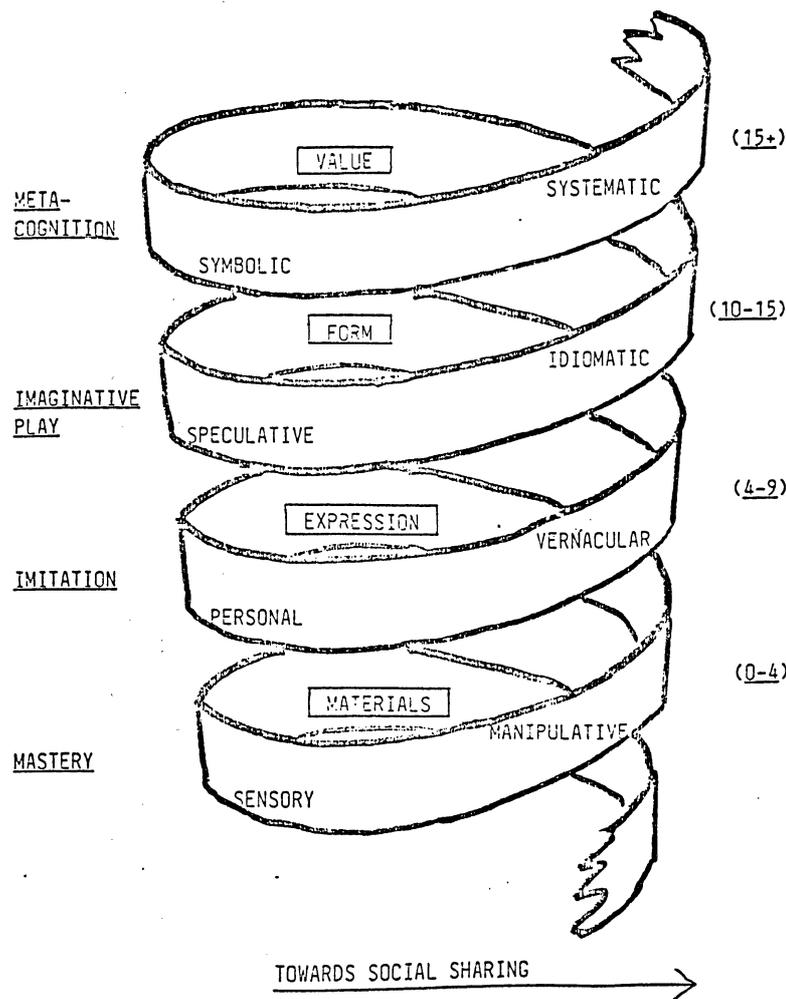
However, this spiral does not include *inter-related dimensions of music* (DfE, 2013), making it of limited use in educational contexts in secondary schools in England. It is very specific in its layers of development, unlike approaches in England, which tend towards a more interpretive realisation: e.g. *rhythm* begins with “pulse and tempo” in cycle 1 and moves to “sounds and rests concurrent with pulse” at cycle 2, “sounds and rests which sustain through pulse” at cycle 3 and “two equal sounds or rests within one pulse” at cycle 4. Differences of nomenclature are indicated in the comparative table below:

<i>Manhattanville Music Project</i> nomenclature	<i>National Curriculum</i> nomenclature
pre-cycle	-
timbre	timbre
dynamics	dynamics
form	structure
rhythm	duration
pitch	pitch
pulse-tempo (sub-heading in <i>1. Rhythm</i> )	tempo
-	texture
-	appropriate musical notations

*Table 2: Comparison of nomenclature in the Manhattanville Music Project and the National Curriculum for Music in England*

Tillman (1987) was also to develop a spiral model for music education, which outlined curriculum resources and activity types for different stages. This has been discussed earlier in the thesis, but its spiral nature and intended outcome of assisting with curriculum planning (Tillman, 1987) makes it relevant to this discussion, where it is also presented as it appears in Tillman's thesis:

Figure 3



Swanwick and Tillman - 1985

Figure 19: Tillman spiral of musical development, 1987; 50

Tillman's spiral makes reference to mastery, as does Bruner's (1960, 1991) spiral curriculum. The musical development that occurs through curriculum in her model is less prescribed than in the *Manhattanville Music Project*, but the concept of curriculum that rotates around itself is a common theme. (It is worth noting that Tillman describes the model as a helix, rather than a spiral, so there is some divergence from spiral conceptualisation (Boyce-Tillman, 2017)). Charanga (2015) have also developed a curriculum spiral, which builds on the legacy of the

Manhattanville spiral by including dimensions of music. However it is now represented with colours and the shape of the spiral is flared to account for increasing content:

**The Interrelated Dimensions of Music**  
Progression through Charanga Musical School



Progression throughout the Units of Work reinforces the interrelated dimensions of music.

With each new song, always start again with the foundation of pulse, then rhythm, then pitch, adding new dimensions as you progress.

This represents an ever increasing spiral of musical learning.

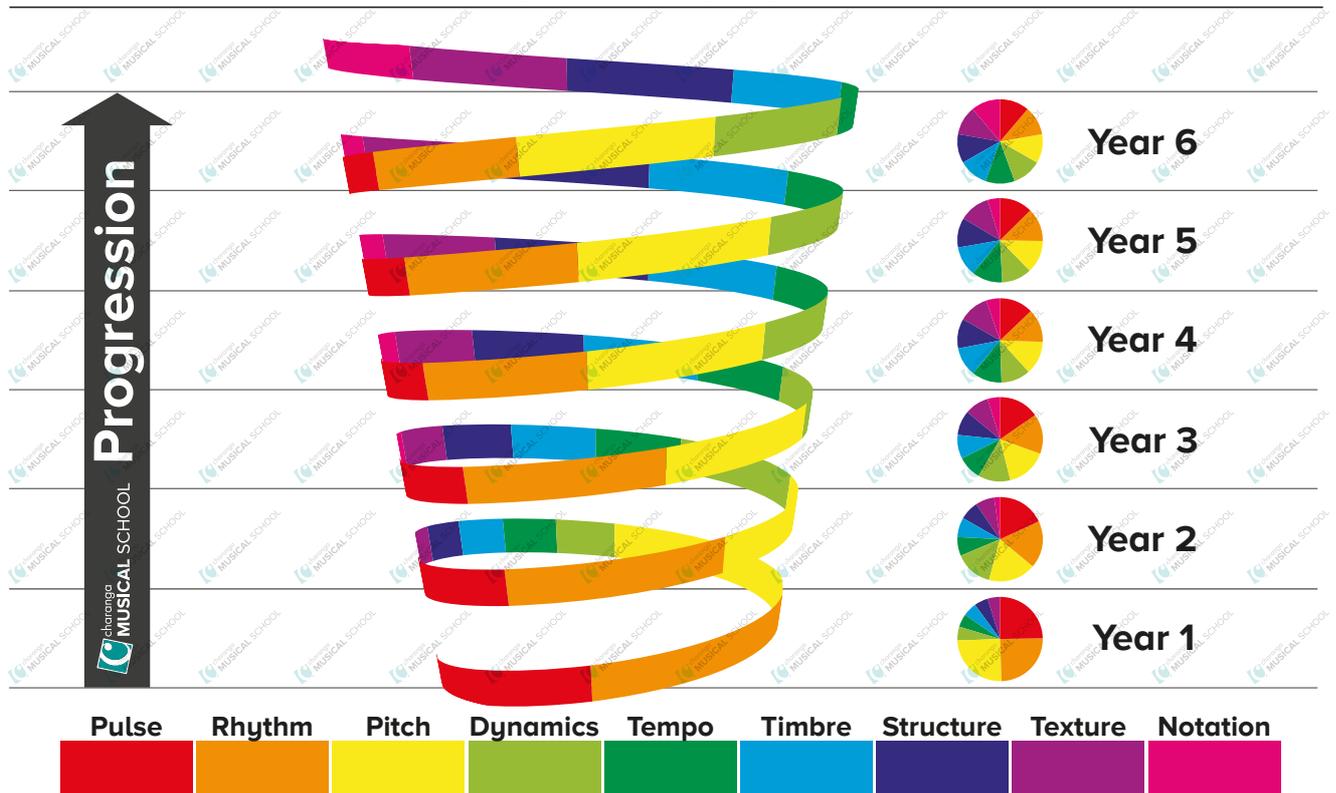
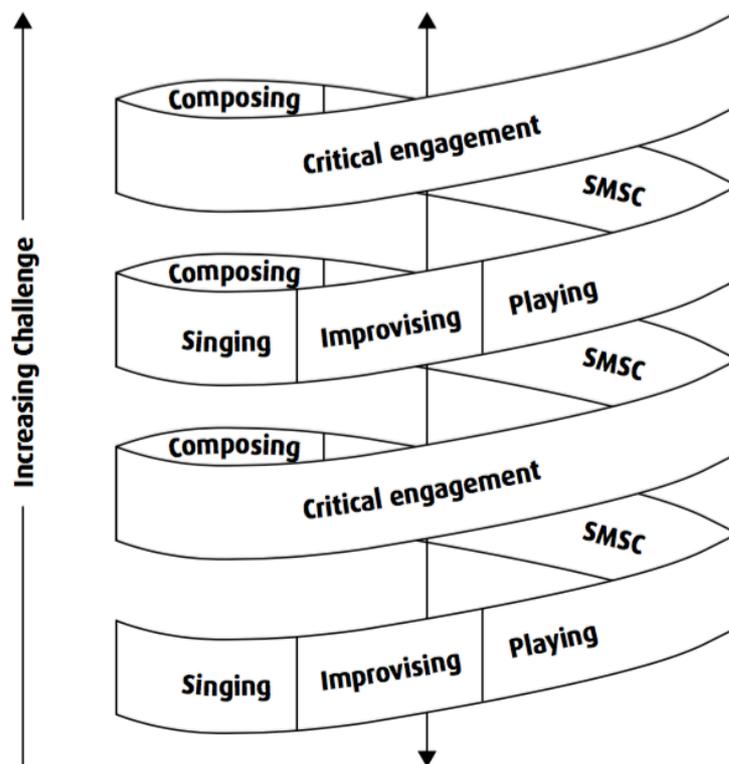


Figure 20: Charanga Spiral of musical progression, 2015

Fautley and Daubney (2015) have developed a spiral as part of their work in discussing planning and assessment of music, commenting that progress in music is a multi-dimensional process, during which learners relocate their spiral positions:



*Figure 21: Fautley and Daubney's Planning and assessment spiral, 2015*

A spiral model has therefore been used in several manifestations to represent curriculum music in its multi-dimensional complexity. Tillman has since developed her curriculum model further, reconceptualising the spiral as though looking through it from above (Boyce-Tillman, 2004) resulting in a set of interconnecting circles:

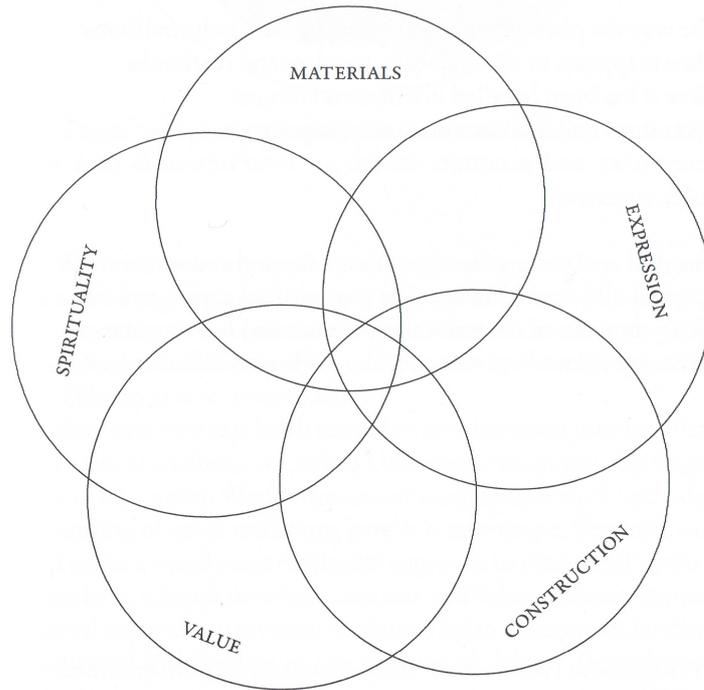


Figure 22: Boyce-Tillman's Five domains of musical experience, 2004

She was later to explore spirituality as the all-encompassing domain, which she was required to remove from her original work as it was “too speculative for an academic thesis” (Boyce-Tillman, 2017):

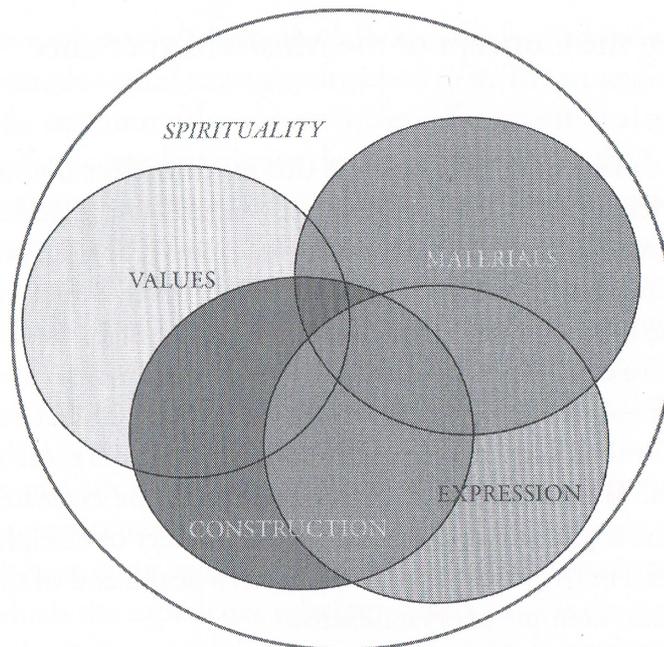
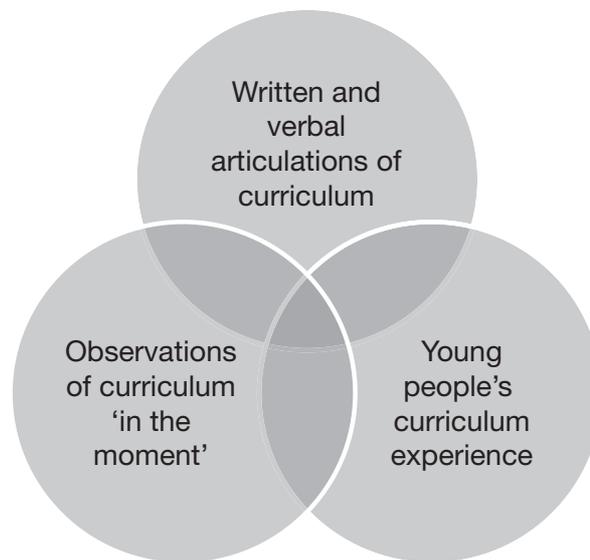


Figure 23: Boyce-Tillman's The Spiritual Experience in Music, 2006

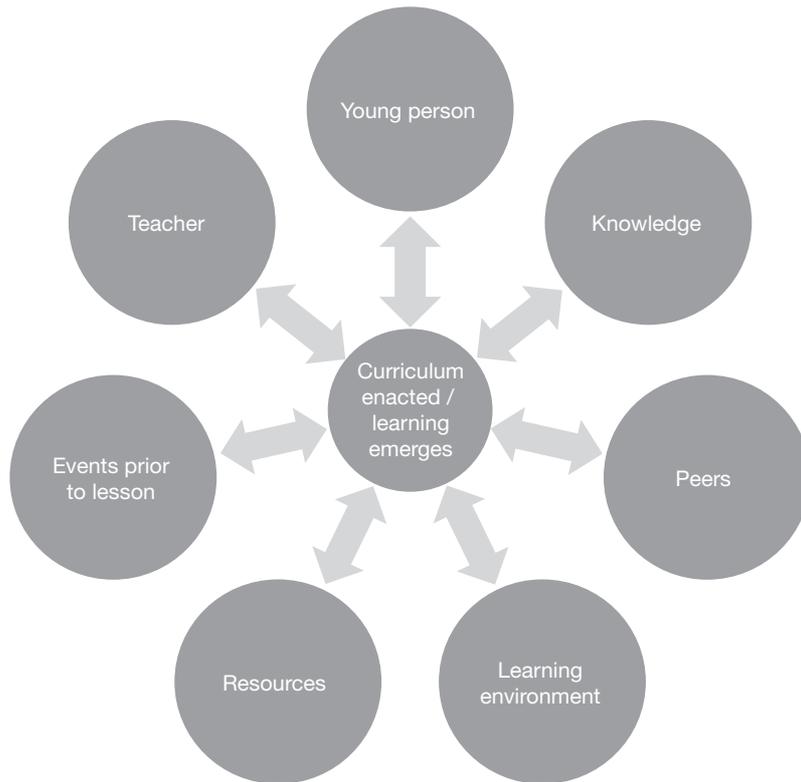
These concepts of interconnecting domains are thus developed by Boyce-Tillman into a phenomenology of musical experience. There is therefore more than a single link into “social-sharing” as appears in her original model, there is a link between musical experience and curriculum.

Circles have similarly been used for modelling music curriculum. Cooke and Spruce (2016) visualise the ‘lived-curriculum’ for music in a Venn diagram:



*Figure 24: Cooke and Spruce's Understanding the curriculum, 2016; 69*

This brings together realisations of curriculum with immediacy of curriculum moments and young people's curriculum experience as a nexus where curriculum activity occurs. Citing Cornbleth (1990) they later develop this diagrammatically into radiating circles of curriculum parameters:



*Figure 25: Cooke and Spruce's Interactions leading to an emerging curriculum, 2016; 71*

Circles were also used as part of the 2008 revision of the National Curriculum, in which a model of curriculum planning was described by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) as the 'disciplined wheel of innovation' (QCA, 2008):

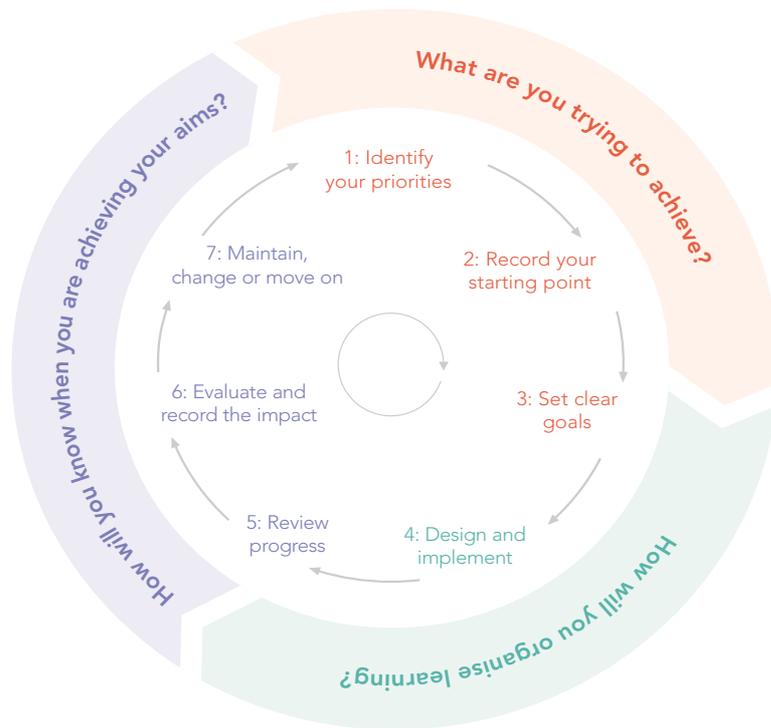


Figure 26: QCA's *The Disciplined Wheel of Innovation*, 2008; 1

This model is an attempt to describe processes of curriculum design, rather than its theoretical core and it is not limited only to music. However, it is significant that once again a non-linear representation is used to explore the complexity of curriculum characteristics.

Other curriculum models exist and have been applied to music. Elliott (1986) cites Goodlad (1979) in his discussion of curriculum and conceptualises curriculum as a series of linear interactions:

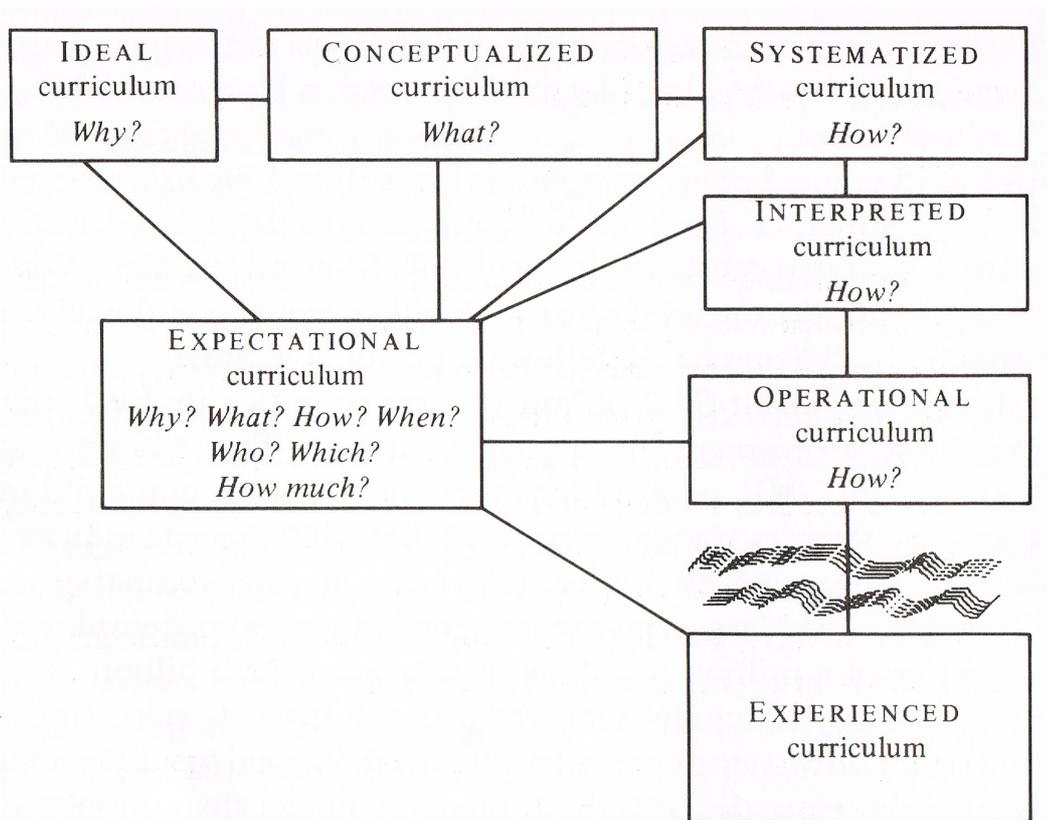


Figure 27: Goodlad's Curriculum model, 1979

However, it is notable that this representation of curriculum is based on enactment alone, with curriculum as it is *experienced* only accessing curriculum *conceptualisation* via an involved route of travel. In the Non-Statutory Guidance that accompanied the first generation of the national curriculum (NCC, 1992), a linear planning model is suggested along two axes:

**A framework for planning**

Diagram 2

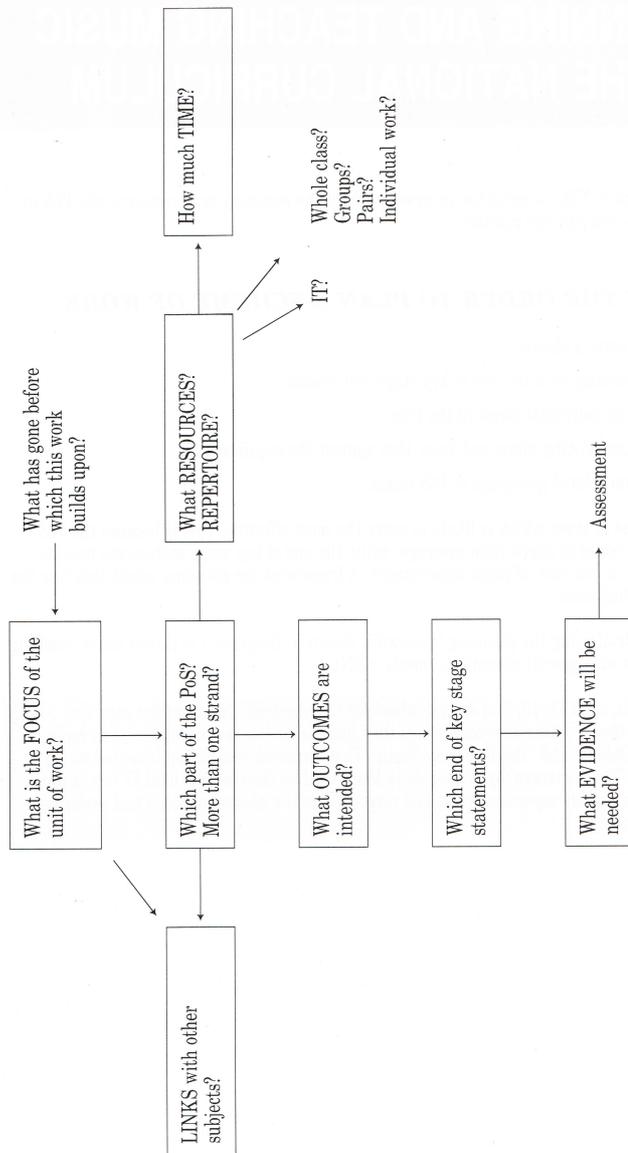


Figure 28: National Curriculum Council's Music Framework for Planning, 1992

This is a model of implementation rather than conceptualisation, aimed at assisting teachers in their planning with beginning prompt questions. The model contains

fundamentals for generating a *programme of study* and is focused on generating a scheme of work. It is interesting to note that by 2008 this type of model had been replaced by the 'disciplined wheel of innovation', as discussed above, with its circular cyclic form.

Such representations as exist of curriculum, and in particular music curriculum, most commonly take the form of three-dimensional representations, or two-dimensional radiating, overlapping or circular cycles. Such conceptualisations are frequently developed both as practical teacher planning tools and as methods for theorising curriculum. Three dimensional and annular models are appropriate to musical planning due to the nature of music itself. (The characteristics of musical space will be discussed in the *activity theory* section in the conceptual perspectives II chapter). With non-linear models, however, comes an additional layer of complexity. Such complexity can be difficult to interpret and lead to multi-variances in realisation of musical learning. This results in a depth spectrum of planning and teaching practice in music curricula in the secondary school classroom.

#### **4.8 Curriculum Design**

Throughout my discussions in this thesis I shall be using the term *curriculum design* to describe concepts, structures and processes through which secondary music curricula are shaped and enacted by curriculum designers. I shall be exploring the identity of *curriculum designers* in the following section, but I wish here to make a distinction between curriculum design and curriculum planning. In curriculum planning I am including lesson plans, schemes of work and associated resource collection and delivery to timetabled classes in secondary schools. This is important, but is not the primary focus of my research. I am considering curriculum design as that which is enacted by teacher Subject Leaders for music in a *programme of study* intended for Key Stage 3 learners. My research case study, which will be discussed

later in this thesis, demonstrates that this invariably consists of topics that are commonly followed in half-termly blocks. I am not considering curriculum design as conceptualised and enacted by Senior Leaders in a school, which are likely to be bounded by wider considerations of curriculum provision and statute. The term *design* is important in the context of Subject Leader teaching and learning rationale. This process of subject specific decision-making has been described as *devising* the curriculum (Gazzard, *et al.* 2017; 1), but this places emphasis on problem-solving and could be regarded as carrying pejorative overtones of content-led delivery. It is for these reasons that curriculum design is my selected nomenclature.

Tyler (1949) described four required elements in curriculum design: *understanding what is to be achieved; planning the ground that needs to be covered to achieve it; deciding on the kinds of activity likely to be most effective, and designing devices to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning.* Understanding what is to be achieved is therefore one possible curriculum origin, and Bruner (1960b) identifies this in his analysis that:

*Defining curricula in a way that reflects the basic structure of a field requires the most fundamental understanding of that field.* (1960; 46)

Subject content and its interpretation through teacher knowledge and experience, therefore has a powerful influence on starting points and pathways, as actualised through designs of locally developed curricula.

Curriculum can also be designed to include a more inclusive set of outcomes. Timewell (2012) argues that curriculum design means recognising the development of young people for the world as one of its guiding principles. Winch (2013) identifies a key issue in curriculum design as finding common ground for construction of

schema. These approaches shape curriculum design in a more holistic sense: design process is more than curriculum selection and ordering; it embodies societal context and relationships across and beyond itself for structural identity.

Curriculum design in music during the 1980s transitioned from flexible guiding frameworks underpinning musical activity, to a set of policy documents for whose implementation music teachers held statutory responsibilities. Paynter (1982) maintained that in curriculum design, teachers should set the general direction of study and that students should perceive a progression in their work. He highlighted formulating general rationale, as a significant first step to frame creative thinking, and argued that progress should be achieved through musical exploration and construction (Paynter, 1982). These foundation principles and their place in curriculum design were transformed in political discourse towards the end of the decade where music was now required to exhibit *progression* as well as *coherence*, and to be broad and balanced as a result of considered policy with a systematic plan (DES, 1991). Later, according to this same political discourse, the National Curriculum was to result in a more coherent and manageable music curriculum, in which planning should begin with a Programme of Study (NCC, 1992). These conceptualisations demonstrated a radical development in curriculum design in which processes became progressively more evidential and document-led.

Since this shift in conceptualisation of curriculum design, it has been argued that curriculum in its essential elements has greater significance than can be realised in documentation. Plummeridge (1996) asserted that for curriculum development, more was required than following a blueprint. He further argued that teachers needed to “feel the curriculum” (1996; 32) for it to be successfully embodied in school contexts. Later curriculum discussion has also argued for such a textual interpretation of curriculum design to be avoided, both by engaging students as curriculum designers

(Cooke and Spruce, 2016) and by not facilitating curriculum focused on learner interests alone (McPhail, 2012). It is this tension of curriculum conceptualisation that leads to conflicting notions, as well as teacher pedagogies (Plummeridge, 1996). Thus curriculum design is a multi-variance field, incorporating an extensive spectrum of multi-faceted perspectives. The nature of conflict within curriculum and the impact this has will be further explored in the section on political discourse below.

#### **4.9 Curriculum Designers**

If variance exists between conceptualisations in curriculum design, then disparity between designers of curricula necessitates discussion. Teachers are key agents in curriculum design, and are in turn guided by official frameworks of political discourse within which they operate. Realisation of curriculum design by these two agents of learning transmission is one of parallel duologue rather than interactive dialogue.

Elliott (1986) has argued that educational rationale is only rarely linked to learning content and that association between this content and its methodological delivery manifests even greater variance. The manner of content delivery is closely linked to curriculum design in that this in turn determines teaching priorities and objectives; teachers are intimately involved in curriculum design processes. Paynter (1982) argued that in the design of music curriculum the teacher should make a link between musical objectives and development of musical understanding, but also that selection of studies to be made should be based on the “predilections of teachers” (1982; 35) and teachers’ conceptualisation of learner interests.

Although some commentators have expressed doubt about teachers’ expertise in implementing such a process – Hargreaves (1986) for example suggests that music teachers put the “cart before the horse” (1986; 59) when they emphasise formal before creative curricula – curriculum design remains a fundamental obligation which

teachers are required to fulfil. Plummeridge (1996) develops this further in his suggestion that teachers not only engage in processes of curriculum design, but are happy to do so, and that curriculum ownership is a key part of their professional practice. Teachers have consistently been required to design curricula, and Young (2014) distinguishes between implementing a National Curriculum and a school curriculum, where disciplinary knowledge is reconceptualised to complement school contexts. However, there remains a vacuum concerning processes of curriculum design as a professional competency. Teacher Standard 4.5 (DfE, 2013b) requires teachers to:

*contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s). (2013b; 11)*

Engagement is here set out as a driver for curriculum design, but further expectations and competencies are not made explicit. Statutory requirements and their boundaries are demarcated, but opportunity to conceptualise is absent. Teacher positioning between personal curriculum design choices and legislative obligations therefore becomes a source of tension. This has been consistently discussed in music educational debates: Paynter (1982) was to state in the pre-National Curriculum era, that teachers must be more than channels for passing on skills, and more recently, Savage (2013) warns of regarding curriculum as a delivery model, in which teachers are:

*the white-van curriculum delivery service, dropping off pre-ordained packages of curriculum content within a set timetable of deliveries.*

(2013; 85)

The second and more powerful agent as curriculum designer is therefore *the State* as it sets out requirements to be incorporated into curriculum programmes. These discourses will be discussed in greater detail below, but some preliminary observations should be made at this point. Firstly, the *Music Working Group* established to provide recommendations for the form of the National Curriculum stated that a:

*well structured way of teaching music will lead to greater satisfaction for pupils.* (DES, 1990; 1).

Although the nature of an effectively structured music curriculum is not specifically defined, this implies that music teaching that does not follow an identifiable structure (whatever that may be) is ineffective in developing musicality.

Secondly, it has been previously stated that poor outcomes in music are a causal result of ineffective teacher planning. For instance, in its proposals for the National Curriculum for Music, the *Department of Education and Science* stated that:

*standards of achievement in composing and performing are often variable. . . and often reflect inadequate planning.* (DES, 1991; 6)

Therefore, according to the *Department of Education and Science*, where issues of achievement and progress existed, this was due, at least in part, to failings on the part of teachers to implement effective curriculum design.

Thirdly, government bureaucracy - such as the *National Curriculum Council* - suggested that curriculum as designed by teachers and realised through the *Curriculum Working Group* was not suitably robust. It required "strengthening" (NCC,

1992; 4), with greater attention paid to “proper emphasis” (1992; 7) to ensure curriculum was “properly balanced” (1992; 16). It also suggested that specific musical works should be taught in the secondary music curriculum.

These tenets of curriculum design challenge teacher perception and positioning. They present a rationale for why structure in curriculum is needed, what this structure should resemble, and how it should be implemented. They also justify government agencies, as quality assuring bodies, to ensure a balanced and accountable infrastructure for curriculum design. There is thus a competing discourse at the centre of curriculum design in which practitioners and legislators are at variance. What emerges is therefore a struggle for curriculum power, between personal teacher outlook and State ideology realised in statutory documentation. Curriculum and power politics is therefore an important dynamic that requires discussion.

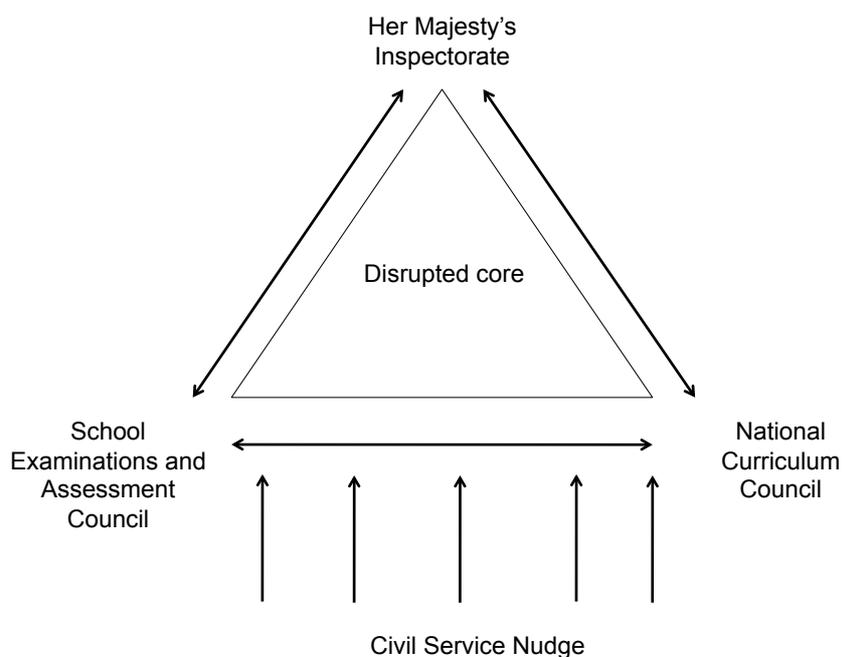
#### **4.10 Curriculum and power politics**

The manner in which curriculum designers view societies in which they live, in turn determines central tenets of curricula they design. Individual schools represent culture in mini-culture realisations (Elliott, 1986) and reflect processes through which ideological foundations become realised in structural policies. Althusser (1970) has discussed manners in which teaching accepted “know-how” (1970; 133) is subject to the ruling ideology of societies, which is perpetuated through submission to rules of an established order. Schools, and curricula they teach are fundamental necessities to the perpetuation of such an order in which, like a building, “the upper floors could not ‘stay up’ (in the air) alone, if they did not rest precisely on their base” (Althusser, 1970; 135). Those in political power therefore possess opportunities to ensure that their conceptualisation is the dominant discourse, although Maw (1993) suggests that internal power struggles between politicians and civil servants mean that this can be an ambiguous process without predictable outcomes. Nevertheless, as Fautley

indicates, there is a need to be aware of political dimensions to policy, which can be observed in processes of implementation of the National Curriculum in music education (Fautley, 2017). When curriculum is defined in this way, what is accepted as knowledge, including musical knowledge, is controlled from an ideological power fulcrum, realised in statutory policy documents. As Espeland has observed:

*Knowledge is the basis for power and power produces knowledge.  
Curricular reforms are... examples of a process where there is a close connection between the production of knowledge and power. (1999; 177)*

The process of development of policy documents forms a battle of powerful discourses in which Maw (1993) also identifies institutional and material forms of power. This leads to gradual emergences of power constructs as political negotiation, persuasion and dominance occur. Such internal conflicts during the construction of the national curriculum may be presented diagrammatically:



*Figure 29: Power conflicts in the construction of the 1992 National Curriculum for Music*

It was these emergent points of power dominance that led to the National Curriculum being described as the:

*most centralised state control of secondary music in England since the establishment of a universal education in 1870.* (Finney, 2007; 13),

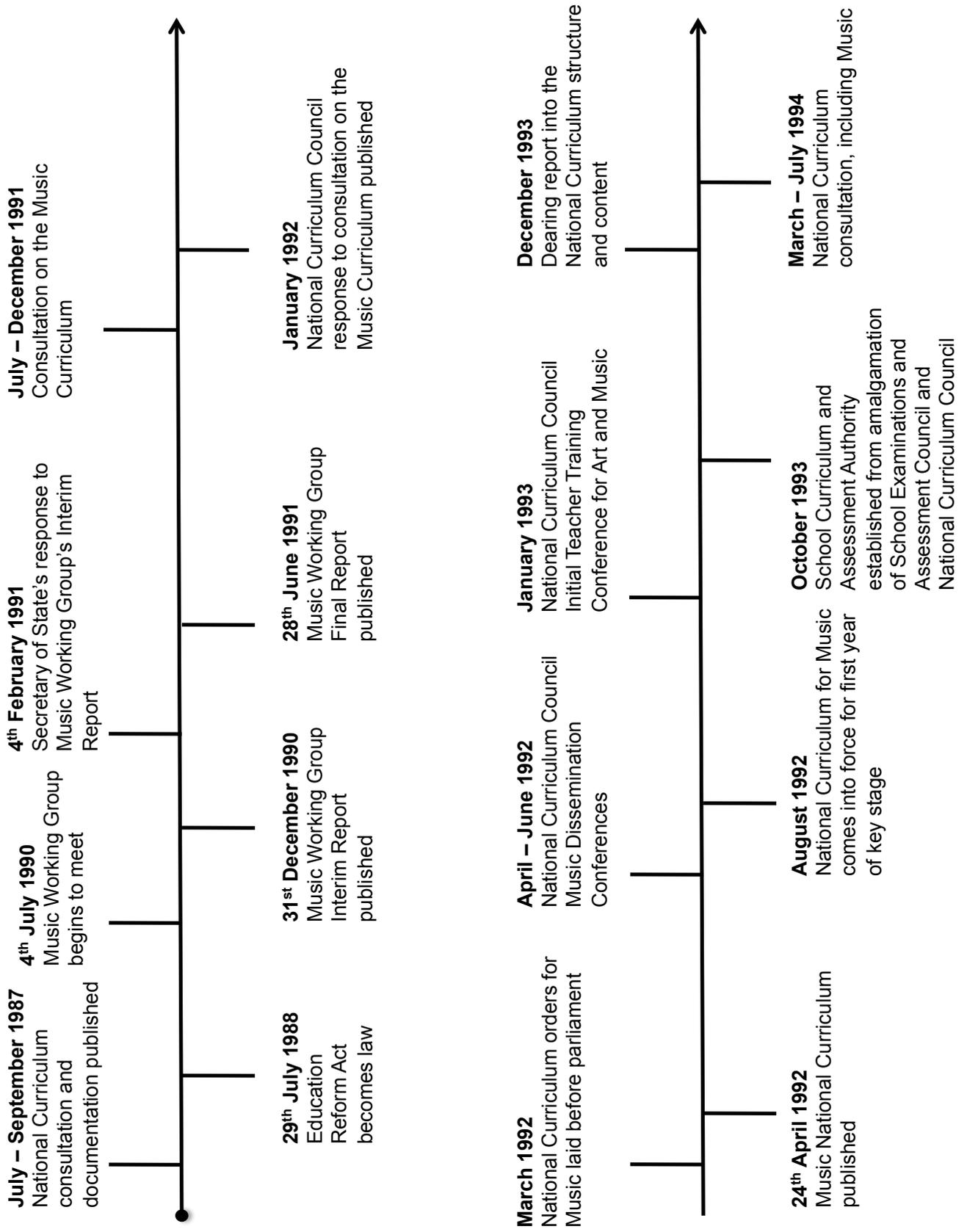
and as a “straitjacket for the containment and demarcation of knowledge” (Fautley and Savage, 2011; 3), despite the original National Curriculum proposals insisting that: “the law provides a framework not a straitjacket” (DES, 1987; 5). McPhail argues that what counts as curriculum knowledge will always be contested (McPhail, 2012), but what is also clear is that natures of potential dominance, which accompany political power, play pivotal roles in knowledge validation through curriculum formulations.

#### **4.11 Emergent curriculum power positioning**

Advantages of a national curriculum in music were evident from its inception: access to regulated entitlement irrespective of geographical region, and expert facilitation to develop musicality, supported by considered pedagogical principles. Lamont (2002) later described this as commonality of musical experience and the aspiration that children should become more ‘musical’ as they grew older. Green (2008) was to assert that the National Curriculum implied both content and pedagogical procedures in its construction. However, these constructs only emerged gradually as strands of the functions of a national curriculum began to be developed in discourse, and approved practices by those wielding political power emerged. The Secretary of State for Education outlined some of these justifications in a press release immediately prior to the establishment of the *Working Group for Music*. These included the proposition that the National Curriculum would lead to good curriculum practice being widely deployed in music and that the National Curriculum would

encourage the achievement of consistently high standards (MacGregor, 1990). These conceptualisations were developed further in successive political consolidation: the National Curriculum would result in a population “which is better educated, musically, than ever before” (DES, 1991; 7); and proposals would result in a “coherent and manageable music curriculum” (NCC, 1992; 5). That the curriculum was more manageable politically, as well as contextually, was developing in policy, although this may not have been the National Curriculum Council’s intended meaning.

The vacuum of power positioning around education that existed in the years between the *1944 Education Act* and the *1988 Education Reform Act* was therefore politically recolonised with the inception of a national curriculum. It was from this politicisation that the dominating concept of curriculum as a set of subjects emerged, together with its hierarchy of *core* and *foundation* subjects (DES, 1987). Thus, a powerful curriculum discourse was gradually constructed within political fields (Maw, 1993) (See also *figure 29*, above.) It was in this moment that the pre-eminence of policy texts as sources of authoritative curriculum constructs began, linking what Maw (1993) describes as: *power, hegemony, ideology and practice*. The acceptable form that a realised curriculum should take, tacitly took hold. Thus a more complex understanding of ‘hidden curriculum’ (Jackson, 1968; Vallance, 1973; Pollard and Triggs, 1997; Lamont, 2002; Froehlich and Hildegard, 2007; Kelly, 2009) emerged, in which positioning to obtain curriculum power became critical to political dominance. The timeline of this transformation is given below in *figure 30*:



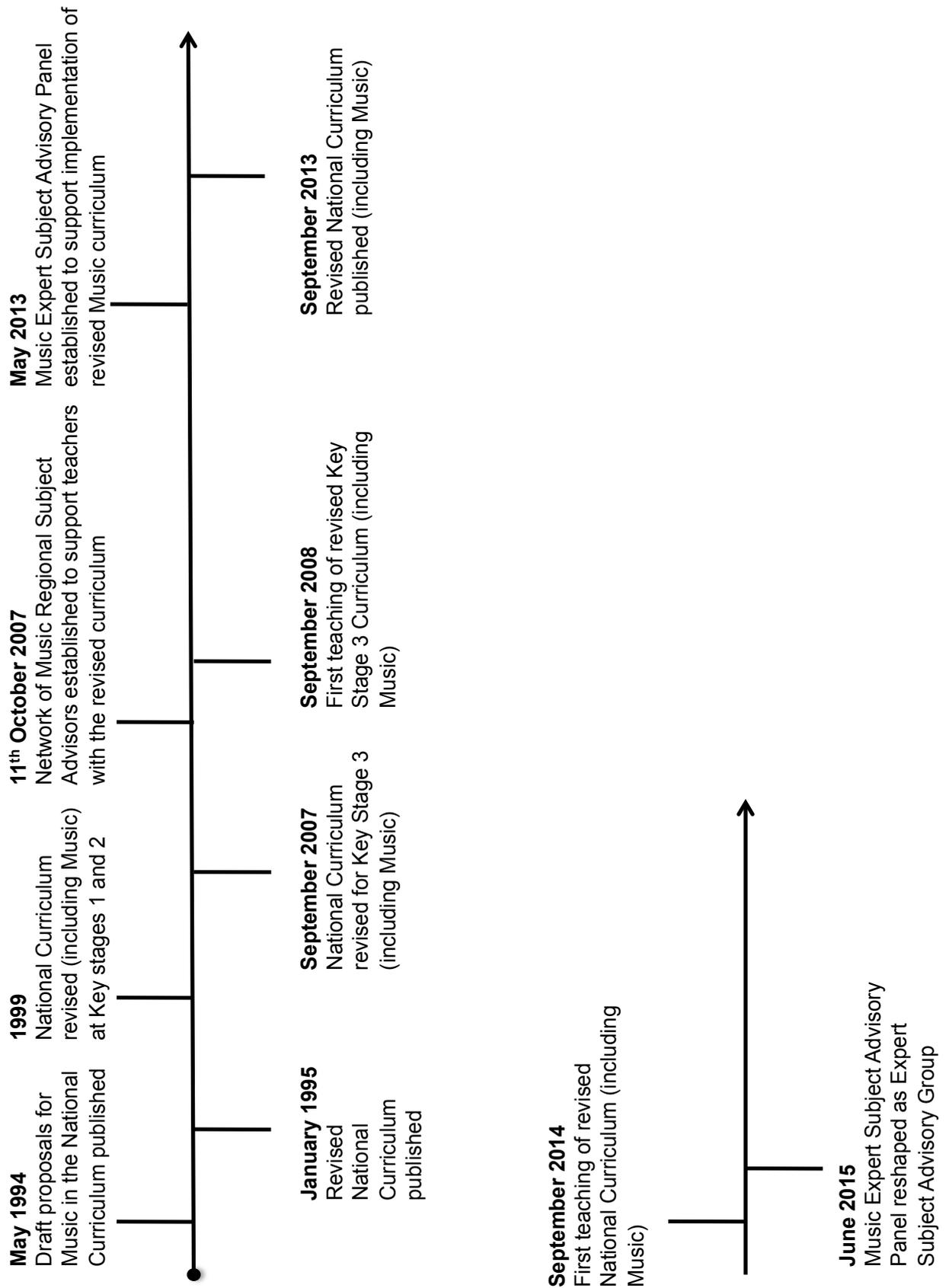


Figure 30: A chronology of the development of Music curriculum 1987 - 2015

It was at this time that many of the constructs that govern curriculum boundaries, as determined by political ideologies in policy formation began, and whose influence remain a dominant force. Bureaucratic bodies commissioned with advisory roles were established in the late 1980s and early 1990s: the *National Curriculum Council* (NCC), the *School Examinations and Assessment Council* (SEAC) and the *Office for Standards in Education* (Ofsted) among others. These bodies served to legitimate policy (Maw, 1993) as well as fulfilling their public-facing advisory function. Although some were later amalgamated or disbanded, Ofsted remains a strong ideological curriculum force. For some time, Ofsted has insisted that curriculum is central to effective teaching and learning, arguing for “robust curriculum plans” (Ofsted 2012; 7), “curriculum vision” (2012; 7, 25), “a meaningful curriculum programme” (2012; 23) and a “good curriculum plan” (2012; 51). It is only with the Ofsted curriculum survey which is ongoing at the time of writing (2017) that Ofsted’s three-part conceptualisation has become clearer as: *intent* (setting out the aims for an educational programme); *implementation* (translating that framework to a contextual narrative over time); and *impact and achievement* (evaluating knowledge and understanding gained against expectations) (Phillips, 2017). Empowered by political policy, Ofsted’s conceptualisation of curriculum is well placed to become the dominant definition of what curriculum means for schools.

The complexity around disentangling such a definition of curriculum from power relationships that government retains in supremacy over Ofsted, and that Ofsted practises in turn over schools, raises serious questions around legitimacies of this dominant discourse in controlling subject content, teaching methods and evaluation of what is regarded as successful in school music classrooms. Michael Gove, former Secretary of State for Education, stated in 2010 that:

*The most recent overhaul of the National Curriculum in 2007 was a serious backward step as concepts were replaced with vague and generic statements of little value. (Oates, 2011; foreword)*

Dominant political power controls validation of concepts, and therefore the very essence of curriculum. Curriculum power is therefore ultimate political power.

The relationship between curriculum and controlling political power, means that curriculum is a contested field. Contrasting pedagogical and content knowledge approaches (Shulman, 1986) result in dissonance as competing knowledge structures clash in quests to create cohesive curricula (McPhail, 2015). However, curriculum is an unstable domain, due to its position in the midst of powerful political ideological policy making. Elliott (1986) suggests that contradiction is the theme for curriculum design, because of powerful opposing motives, including confused policies. Shifting fields of political perspectives, and how these are enacted through legislation, results in inevitable classroom confusion realised as a curriculum that is continually in flux. Tensions between school contexts and political dominance mean that the curriculum can never be in balance. The continuing attempt to bring this into equilibrium thereby creates instability:

*The model of the whole curriculum. . .is inherently unstable because it attempts an equilibrium between conflicting models of curriculum construction. (Maw, 1993; 72)*

This is a continuing tension, as music teachers work to interpret and realise curriculum documentation as meaningful musical experience, which goes beyond the perception of music as a backwater in the school curriculum (Stunell, 2006), and

instead regards music in the classroom as a fundamentally transforming process, enabled by a dynamic interactions.

Addressing conceptualisations of *curriculum, identity and creativity, learning and knowledge* informed my research questions, and established perceptual fields for the context of my research into music teacher curriculum design at Key Stage 3 in English secondary schools. Developing appropriate methodologies, which acknowledged and enabled analysis of teacher practices in my case study, constituted my next research activity, and it is to a discussion of these conceptual structures that I now turn.

## Part 2: Methodology and Methods

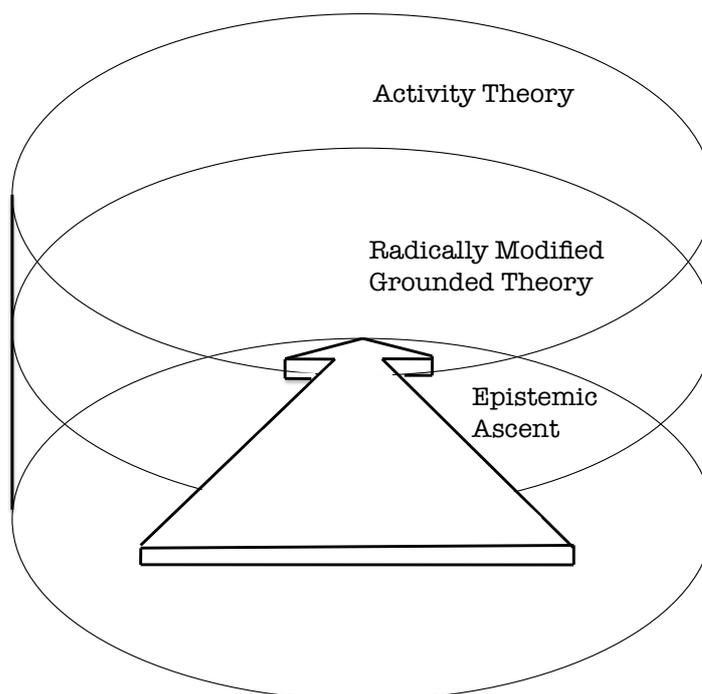
### 5. Conceptual Perspectives I

In interpreting and analysing data that my music curriculum case study research has gathered, I have selected a range of conceptual perspectives, which facilitate coherence in understanding teacher planning discourse. *Epistemic ascent* (Winch, 2013) is the first strata of my methodological approaches and addresses my first research question of knowledge and learning, in which axial tensions between horizontal discourses of praxis, and vertical discourses of academic theorising, are considered as a conceptual perspective, illuminating teacher choices in curriculum design. This is further supported through theoretical frameworks of *grounded theory* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), which have been *radically modified* to enable a discourse of music teacher curriculum semiotics to emerge organically from research data. This addresses my second and third research questions of curriculum sequencing and teacher enabling in curriculum decision-making. To reveal hidden curriculum polyphony of music teacher curriculum design choices, *activity theory* (discussed in chapter 6) and its developments are also utilised as a lens for analysis (Vygotsky, 1978; Leont'ev, 1978; Engeström, 1999). This enables a consideration of my second and third research questions, which *radically modified grounded theory* initiates. Activity theory facilitates the emergence of essentials from complex data, and enables strands from curriculum design processes, obscured by content conceptualisation, to become visible and pliable to analysis. Each of these conceptual perspectives as methodological approaches with their tendency to perspicacity and their bounded complexities will be discussed in turn.

#### 5.1 Epistemic Ascent

Prior to a *radically modified grounded theory* approach to consider ontology of music teacher planning, followed by the use of *activity theory* to conceptualise and make

visible music teacher curriculum design rationale, it is first necessary to understand discourses that frame fields of planning narratives in secondary music classrooms. This constitutes the first gateway of methodological conceptualisation that brings hidden planning practices to light. My methodology framework can therefore be described as a series of *successive research spaces*. Non-hierarchical in formation, these facilitate and inform the next stage of the methodological sequence:



*Figure 31: Successive methodological and sequential gateways in my research case study: epistemic ascent, radically modified grounded theory and activity theory.*

In order to illuminate structures of teacher planning practice, I will consider knowledge constructs and Bernstein's (2000) concepts of knowledge discourse, and how this connects to notions of epistemic ascent (Rata, 2016; Winch, 2013) as realised in curriculum design models. Without such a methodological conceptualisation, there is a vacuum between theory and pedagogical practice, both of which, by their inter-connectivity, impinge on each other. Such a consideration is therefore essential in the formulation of my thesis.

## 5.2 Knowledge in planning discourses

The nature of knowledge has been discussed in detail in chapter 2 of this thesis.

However, it is necessary to briefly consider its conceptualisation in classroom planning practices in order to contextualise epistemic ascent. Durkheim (1912) described knowledge as *sacred* and *profane*, establishing a knowledge genus. He regarded scientific knowledge as emanating from religious understanding. Bernstein was later to develop this distinction into *horizontal* and *vertical* knowledge discourses (McPhail, 2015; Bernstein, 2000), in which knowledge operates as both intellectual discipline and external practice. How pedagogy is conceptualised and realised by classroom music teachers is influenced by this knowledge spectrum, or what Bernstein described as fundamental principles “underlying the transformation of knowledge into pedagogic communication” (Bernstein, 2000; 25). Bernstein argues that understanding knowledge characteristics will invariably affect approaches to teaching it. Perspectives on educational knowledge will therefore shape realisation in classroom practice.

This leads to Bernstein’s (2000) central concept of *vertical* and *horizontal* discourse, in which vertical represents an *academic* knowledge, whilst horizontal presents knowledge of the ‘*everyday*’. How these two types of knowledge interact, and the status that each is given, will fundamentally affect teacher concepts of pedagogical practice and curriculum design within this interaction. McPhail (2015) argues that these discourses enable perspective on knowledge theory, and the different forms that knowledge takes. An inherent property of such a manifestation of knowledge, is that one form of knowledge can privilege another, with horizontal and vertical conceptualisations battling for curriculum prominence. The position where teacher knowledge consistently supersedes learner knowledge in the design of curriculum, is therefore a constraining scenario in pedagogical classroom music practice. It is this that leads McPhail (2015) to argue for pedagogies of mixed-modalities.

### **5.3 Epistemic ascent as a bridge to discursive practices**

Epistemic ascent provides a means to bridge discursive gaps between *academic* and *everyday* knowledge, due to its emphasis on conceptual development. Moore (2014) has argued that it is emphases between vertical (academic) and horizontal (everyday) knowledge that act as catalysts of conflict, and that provision should be made for epistemic access to knowledge and skills required for learners to successfully progress to Higher Education in Music. This observation, although focused on Higher Education contexts, indicates the potential validity of a model based on a spectrum of continually developing learning epistemology.

Epistemic ascent has been described as a developing mastery and expertise in stages through practical activity (Winch, 2013) and as a means of structuring concepts from higher to lower complexity in ascending pedagogical framing (Rata, 2016). Conceptualisation is central to these pedagogical perspectives of music in the classroom, as realised through teacher planning practices. It is a means for enabling differing discourses to correspond; McPhail (2015) suggests that music teachers can model concepts of vertical knowledge in their practice, for example. He has also suggested that conceptualisation of actions should run in congruence with actions and that experience is more powerful if conceptualised (McPhail, 2017). Rata (2016) has similarly argued that conceptual progression is significant in music, where the subject is not traditionally linear with “a clear vertical structure . . . such as Maths and Physics” (Rata, 2016; 173).

This has significant implications for theorising the field of curriculum design in music, where much classroom learning is predicated on practical music-making activity. Concepts as experienced, link to subject knowledge (Winch, 2013) and my research uncovers this as a tacit music teacher assumption, as will be outlined in the *Further discussion* chapter. Conflict in epistemic ascent is described by Winch (2013), in

which teachers have difficulties reconciling subject-specific “conceptual schemes developed by experts with those developed by teachers” (Winch, 2013; 138). A conceptual approach may have wide variance in practice. How teachers manage their own musical narratives and how they assimilate and mould vertical and horizontal discourses can therefore be anticipated areas of curriculum ‘noise’ (Oates, 2011).

Whilst epistemic ascent frames my conceptual approach to methodology and is a theoretical initiator, my fieldwork procedures were formulated according to grounded theory influenced principles. This chapter of my thesis therefore now turns to setting out the principles that I used in application and adaption of my grounded theory approach.

#### **5.4 Radically Modified Grounded Theory**

My research methodology is based on a grounded theory approach, which I am describing as *radically modified*. My use of grounded theory as an underpinning methodology should not, therefore, be understood as a pure application. Rather, it takes aspects of a suite of grounded theory approaches as core (outlined in *Table 3*), from which it is modified to form an encircling conceptualisation which informs my research fieldwork with teacher participants. In this section I will discuss how grounded theory has been defined, its use as both method and methodology, its essential characteristics and perceptual difficulties, and details of approaches to coding. Interlinked with this will be my own approach to grounded theory as I have applied it, and rationales for research decisions I have made in its adaption.

#### **5.5 Grounded theory concepts and constructs**

Grounded theory as a methodological approach has been subject to variance of interpretation during its history, and definitions have varied according to context.

Birks and Mills (2015; 1) describe it as “one of the most popular research designs in the world,” and its popularity has led to multiple interpretations. At its inception in Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) *Discovery of Grounded Theory*, there was considerable emphasis on grounded theory as an alternative to theory verification. Thus, instead of research seeking to validate or critique existing theory, theory informing research was generated directly from data in which it was *grounded*, hence the *grounded theory* label. Although modes of conceptualisation did form part of this original discussion, there was also an increased emphasis on a systematic approach in which continual comparative analysis alongside data collection led to developments of *substantive grounded theory* (in which theory is developed from a *context*) and in turn *formal grounded theory* (in which a core theme emerging from theory is applied *more widely* than initial research contexts).

Strauss (1987) developed grounded theory underpinnings further into testing, as well as generating, theory and also described it as a *style* of research, implying a far less rigid structure than its initial formulation. Generalisation and making use of grounded theory to understand social phenomena in greater depth became a more significant aim of this approach. Later, in his work with Corbin, Strauss was to re-emphasise the systematic gathering and analysis of data to generate theory, to provide a meaningful guide to action (Strauss and Corbin, 1998); so that links between data collection and research impact became more explicit. “Data collection, analysis and eventual theory” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998;12) were thus treated as indivisible entities.

Glaser (2007) was to outline different grounded theory principles, for example, drawing in other data studies relating to research participants in the same substantive area, and developing conceptual not descriptive generalisations (see also *Grounded Theory Essentials* below). His variance from his initial work with

Strauss is evident in his defence of grounded theory methodology developments, which he has insisted was not in any sense a grand theory. This diffused any possible tension between grounded theory and postmodern approaches (Lyotard, 1979), although Glaser has also described his methodology in aspirational terms: “grounded theory is more than a methodology, it’s a way of life” (2007; 26). Glaser emphasised the development of a formal theory from grounded theory principles, whilst avoiding tendencies towards every aspect of data resulting in only one core category.

Thus, between the two originators of grounded theory, different conceptualisations exist. Other researchers also regard grounded theory differently, and define it within a wide theoretical range. Bryant and Charmaz (2007) describe *schools* of grounded theory approach within a family of methods: *Glaserian*, *Strauss and Corbin*, and *Constructivist*. Denzin (2007) considers that there are seven different types of grounded theory: *positivist*, *postpositivist*, *constructivist*, *objectivist*, *postmodern*, *situational* and *computer-assisted*. Birks and Mills (2015) describe grounded theory as *integrated* as they seek to synthesize what they consider to be essential grounded theory elements. These methodological ingredients are considered in the next section below (see *Table 3*), and demonstrate that there is precedent for understanding and applying grounded theory differently, and that consistency of interpretation and application of the theory is difficult to find, even between its initial proponents. There is therefore precedent for the approach I have taken of adaption of grounded theory in its application.

## **5.6 Grounded Theory essentials**

In their initial outline of grounded theory, Glaser and Strauss (1967) describe what they consider as grounded theory essentials. These include: *comparative analysis*, *conceptual category generation*, *substantive or formal theory*, *theoretical sampling*,

*theoretical sensitivity, coding, theory development and memoing*. According to Glaser (2007) some of this early work lacked specifics, leaving researchers to create viable models for themselves of grounded theory formulations. Glaser (2007) placed an emphasis in his later work on conceptual development, arguing that many grounded theory attempts were descriptive only. This in turn led to his stress on generation of formal grounded theory generated through “back and forth interplay” (2007; 100) of theoretical grounded theory discussion.

Strauss (1987) had earlier sought to set out essentials of a grounded theory approach, in which he included *coding, axial coding* (dense coding around an axis enabling facture), *saturation* and *theoretical sampling*. In his work with Corbin (Strauss and Corbin, 1998) additions of *conceptualising, microanalysis* and combining of *axial* with *selective coding* were made. Grounded theory thus became a more tightly defined field through their work. Whilst Bryant and Charmaz (2007) called for imaginative engagement, as an essential for grounded theory analysis, for others the field continues to constitute a highly structured approach, which recognises and identifies essential characteristics. For example, Birks and Mills (2015) list what they consider as the essential elements of a grounded theory approach: *initial coding and categorization of data, concurrent data generation or collection and analysis, writing memos, theoretical sampling, constant comparative analysis using inductive and abductive logic, theoretical sensitivity, intermediate coding, identification of a core category, advanced coding and theoretical integration*. This list is extensive and prescribed.

My approach is strategically applied, and as such is not pure grounded theory. However, it preserves many elements of grounded theory and it is these that have framed my data collection and analysis, enabling critical concepts to emerge organically from my case study data. In order to adequately represent my

methodological stance, which embodies grounded theory approaches, and the manner in which these are present in a radically modified form, I have analysed my procedures and processes within a grounded theory epistemological framework. My approach in radically modifying grounded theory is summarised in *Table 3* below. I begin with my most prominent grounded theory influenced approaches that feature in my analysis, and at the end of the table summary, present the most prominent features, which are *radically modified*. Following this, I proceed to explain and annotate how these features are present and how I have interpreted them in the context of my research study:

Concept ingredient	Manner in which evidenced in my case study	Manner in which absent in my case study
<i>Evident Grounded Theory Procedures</i>		
Discovery of theory from data	Coding of themes and concept repetition emerges from interviews	
Theory generation	Lack of current theories on music curriculum design; therefore theory generation not verification	
Modes of conceptualisation	Different research model strands require differing explanation, analysis and description	
Inductive theoretical development from social research	Social development from observing and exploring concepts with practising teachers	
Category emergence contamination free (literature not used in category construction)	Data allowed to speak in development of coding categories	
Data slicing	Variety of modes of knowing used to interrogate teacher discourses	
Conceptual category development from research evidence	Conceptual categories developed through <i>activity theory</i> modelling	
Aspects of grounded sociological theory	Fits substantive application area; understood by music teachers; sufficiently general to be applicable;	

	allows teacher control over structure and daily situations	
Theoretically sensitive researcher facilitates conceptualisation and theory formation from data	Practitioner researcher allows this aspect to develop through interview data interpretation of self-censoring	
Rules of evidence not allowed to hinder discovery of theory	Purpose of research in teacher planning cognition is central to research model and implementation	
Explicit coding and analytic procedures	Coding is explicit and applied within a consistent analytical structure	
Coding saturation	Extensive coding categories in recurring words analysis enables saturation to be achieved	
<i>Modified Grounded Theory Procedures</i>		
Comparative analysis	Emerges from methods e.g. question comparison in interviews	Takes place after main study data collection
Comparative analysis to develop substantive theory	Second stage substantive theory modelling to conceptualise field and comparison tools in analysis of interview questions	Not used to hypothesise. Takes place after main study data collection
Development of substantive to formal theory	Immediate research evidence forms basis for theory modelling	Immediate research theory not used for causative explanations or linked with other research theory contexts. Core category not developed.
Connected collection, coding and analysis of data	Joint collection within temporally defined field	Coding and analysis subsequent to initial research
Theoretical sampling	<i>Pilot study</i> and <i>elite interviews</i> included following initial research with focus on emergent areas	Majority of research model was pre-determined and not affected by initial data conclusions
Constant systematic comparative method	Data diversity is embraced in theoretical analysis	Takes place after main study data collection
Memos during data collection	Written reflexively immediately following interviews	Memos do not overtly determine gathering of new research interview data
Literature Review	Processed during fieldwork	Continued to be processed after fieldwork
<i>Absent Grounded Theory Procedures</i>		
Replication for validation		Replicated between interviews only, not as a

		complete project
Data collection determined by emerging theory		Emerging theory does not impact research model choices
Emerging theory indicates next steps in research model		Emerging theory does not impact research model choices
Statistical sampling determines accurate evidence and category distribution		Not used in form of robust statistical model
Formal theory emerges from substantive theory		Formal theory does not arise from substantive theory
Aiming at one final overarching variable core category		Complexity of analysis does not allow for a final conclusive variable but an interplay of interactive dynamics

*Table 3: Radically Modified Grounded Theory in practice*

My research embodied a conceptual grounded theory approach, in that the coding of theme categories emerged directly from data, and so these were grounded from the data collection. The engagement with data was such, that realities as well as imagined realities were given researcher permission to become evident. This was responsive to the task set out by Charmaz (2006), in which:

*Part of the interpretive task is being alert to the possibilities for moving the analysis beyond the definite evidence you currently have. (2006; 148)*

Categories were then recoded and refined in successive coding cycles, as set out in *Figure 32* later in this chapter. Comparative analysis was used between interview questions from different participants to enable a holistic view to be taken of data. Theory was developed directly from data and fell into a theoretical space, where there was an absence of theoretical constructs on music curriculum design, so was focused on generating rather than verifying existing theory. I employed differing modes of conceptualisation, due to the varying data strands which I collected,

including questionnaire data, semi-structured interviews, *think-aloud protocols* exercises, observations, documentary analysis and elite interviews (all of these aspects will be discussed in my *Methods* chapter). There is an element of social development in this study, due to my observation of participants teaching in their classrooms and this was undertaken to verify teachers' interview responses, demonstrating theoretical sensitivity. Rules of evidence do not hinder discovery of theory in this context due to inclusion of opportunities to understand teacher cognition through *think-aloud protocols* exercises (this process is explained in chapter 7 on *Methods*). Conceptual categories emerge due to coding cycles directly from research evidence, and these themes are then subjected to nodal *activity theory* analysis (discussed in the next chapter). Substantive theory modelling is evident in second and third coding cycles, and comparative analysis enables emergent themes to be conceptualised. Data is the basis for coding categories, which allows these categories to emerge without contamination directly from research data.

The collection of data, coding and analysis was designed as temporally limited, to ensure a consistency of contemporaneous educational context, so as to provide a validity link with its analysis. Theoretical sampling was a limited feature in that pilot study interviews enabled a focus on main study areas, and elite interviews followed the main study and explored emergent themes. My position as a practitioner researcher at the time of data collection and the role this played in interpreting participant responses enabled theoretical and contextual sensitivity. A variety of *modes of knowing* (see discussions on triangulation in chapter 7) were used to interrogate teacher discourses applicable to data slicing, and this was developed in a comparative method of data analysis. Coding was explicit and analytic, and saturation was enabled by three-cycle coding procedure that followed data collection. There was also a sufficiently common experience of teachers in their planning discourses to enable generalisation of data pertaining to this. Memos were made

during collection of data in the form of a reflexive diary and the literature review was undertaken concurrently with data collection, allowing themes to emerge organically from the data itself without undue influence.

However, my research also differs significantly from other pure grounded theory approaches and it is in that it is *radically modified*. It is important at this stage to state that I am not here aiming at saturation via situational analysis; an approach in which maps lay out research elements and their relations, and where such maps are designed to elucidate complexities (Clarke, 2003). The approach I have chosen, rather, seeks to make modifications to classical grounded theory, to enable hidden practices to emerge from the ground, whilst also incorporating a flexible model which is not subservient to grounded theory processes. There was, therefore, a strong research rationale that guided this choice as a modification, which has allowed me to create a research design able to most appropriately access teacher participant practice in an “emergent methodology” (Dick, 2007; 410). The discussion that follows, therefore, considers rationales behind details of *radically modified grounded theory* approaches.

During research processes using radically modified grounded theory, all comparative analysis took place after the main data collection had been completed, but interviews and other modes of data collection took place within a temporal limitation of six months to maximise curriculum interpretive and practice landscapes. There was no replication for validation as a complete project, but selective validation of *think-aloud protocols* exercises was replicated, as a focus area of teacher planning practices. Comparative analysis was not used to hypothesise until after the main study data was collected, allowing a full range of narratives and their analysis to emerge. Immediate research theory was not linked with other research theory contexts, as the research questions and case study focus was set within the mode of teacher

planning in music curriculum, in which a conceptual and empirical vacuum exists (Boyce-Tillman, 2016), which this study seeks to explore.

Core category development has not been adopted as part of my grounded theory approach allowing for a greater complexity of practice to speak. Notions of curriculum planning as they emerge are complex and closely inter-related. Although future research may develop a core category, my research follows established conceptualisations in music curriculum research where the complexities of musical knowledge are discussed (Philpott, 2017). Coding and analysis were carried out subsequent to initial research, due to temporality and access elements discussed above, and the majority of my research model was pre-designed, and not adapted following initial data conclusions. Thus, although data impacted coding categories, it did not impact the location of data, which enabled consistency of research format and location. There is some adaption following *loose-linkage coding* (discussed below) and elite interviews were added to the research model following initial interviews of pilot and main study. Emergent theory does not impact my research model choices and there is no use of statistical sampling, as random and stratified sampling was not relevant to my research design, which focused on a smaller and diverse group of teacher participants, already exhibiting a range of theoretical stance and practice. Formal theory has not, therefore, developed from substantive theory, and it is not a research aim to arrive at a formal category, in order to allow complexities of teacher design processes an uninhibited voice. Glaser admits to only four instances of development from substantive to formal theory in his career (Glaser, 2007), this is not a feature that my initial research is seeking to develop. Although there is some statistical analysis of data in my case study, “random and stratified sampling” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; 63) is not a feature of my qualitative research due to the localised field sample. Memos do not overtly determine gathering of new research interview data, but stand alongside data collection,

informing it in parallel, to ensure continued and enriched data collection, rather than causing data interference. The literature review continues to develop following data collection *and* fieldwork, and emerges together with data content. In this way, my modified approach facilitates fieldwork, within which conceptualisation continues to be developed.

### **5.7 Difficulties with Grounded Theory methodology**

Bryant and Charmaz (2007) describe grounded theory as a contested concept, which they argue can lead to confusion in its common manifestations. This is in part due to its use as both *methodology* and *method* in qualitative research. Glaser and Strauss (1967) when introducing grounded theory concepts, placed considerable emphasis on guiding researchers in practical application of structures involved. Later, Strauss was to continue this systematic emphasis and insist that grounded theory must provide a “meaningful guide to action” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; 12). Glaser (2007) was also to state that earlier definitions were not specific enough in describing or prescribing procedural approaches to the use of grounded theory. As Birks and Mills (2015) point out, Glaser and Strauss did not therefore begin by developing grounded theory as an initial methodology, but rather as a set of applicable methods. This ethos has changed over time, with Glaser (2007), for example, arguing that grounded theory enables “conceptual extension” (2007; 111), rather than only a heuristic research dimension. Bryant and Charmaz (2007) conclude that both meanings have now become accepted, and my intention in this study is to apply grounded theory as a methodology to reveal tacit planning processes in teacher assembled curricula in my research design.

Generalisation from grounded theory can also be problematic. In successive coding cycles leading towards one core element, parameters for such generalisation can become unclear. Glaser describes this as “core fever” (2007; 99), in which the core category is seen everywhere to the detriment of conceptual, rather than descriptive

development. Such a leap from the general to the particular, is also discussed by Bryant and Charmaz (2007) as problematic in the development of theory from grounded theory methodologies, which can appear rather too suddenly. In order to enable robust research validity, my use of grounded theory will be solely to draw common features from data collection, which will be more closely analysed within an activity theory methodology.

My *radically modified* grounded theory research conceptualisation may thus be represented as follows:

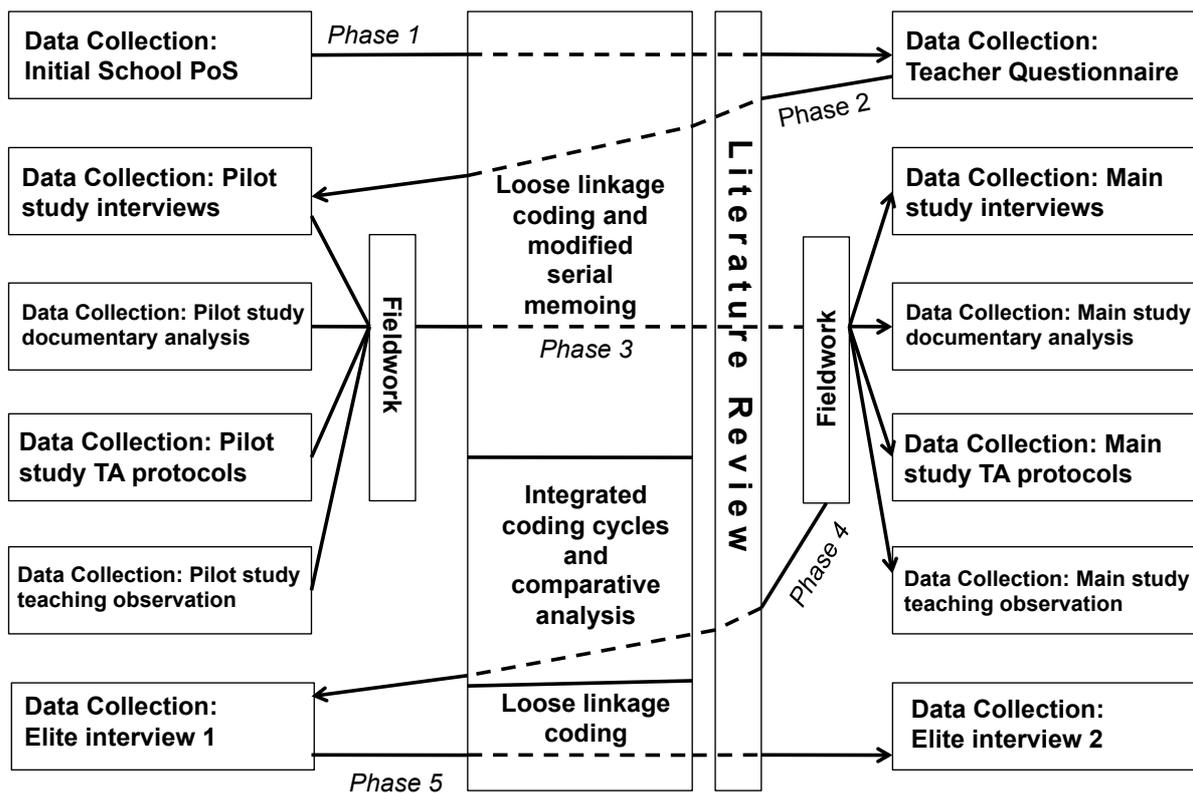


Figure 32: Radically modified grounded theory as a conceptual perspective in my research

This diagram outlines my approach to grounded theory methodology, in which there is a five-phase development, which moves back and forth within modified grounded theory activity, each phase filtering into the next. Initial data collection is applied *through* grounded theory to main study data collection, and also administered via a developing review of relevant literature. *Loose linkage coding* describes the emergence of initial themes through research data, which then influences the coding of the main study into more refined areas, leading ultimately to visualising the complexities of teacher curriculum planning processes. *Modified serial memoing* refers to manners in which reflexive field notes were taken at each moment of data collection and successively built into an additional data collection profile. Reflexive field notes were taken after each interview and verification observations and were based on teaching environments and their organisation as well as lesson activities. These adopted an open style, to allow for hidden complexities to emerge with reflexive critiques (Winter, 1996) within subjectivity boundaries (Peshkin, 1988). TA

protocols in Figure 32 refers to the *Think Aloud Protocols* exercise, which teachers completed as part of their semi-structured interview, outlined in detail in the *Methods* section of this thesis.

## 5.8 Coding Processes

As part of my grounded theory methodology, I have adopted a multi-faceted coding procedure. It is important to understand this conceptually, as well as in terms of methods, as coding is itself interpretive and involves “linking as well as labelling” (Saldaña, 2009; 8). Glaser and Strauss (1967) identified the importance of coding early in their description of grounded theory, although they considered its value only alongside data collection and analysis. Strauss (1998) was later to develop this concept into a paradigm, which he represented diagrammatically:

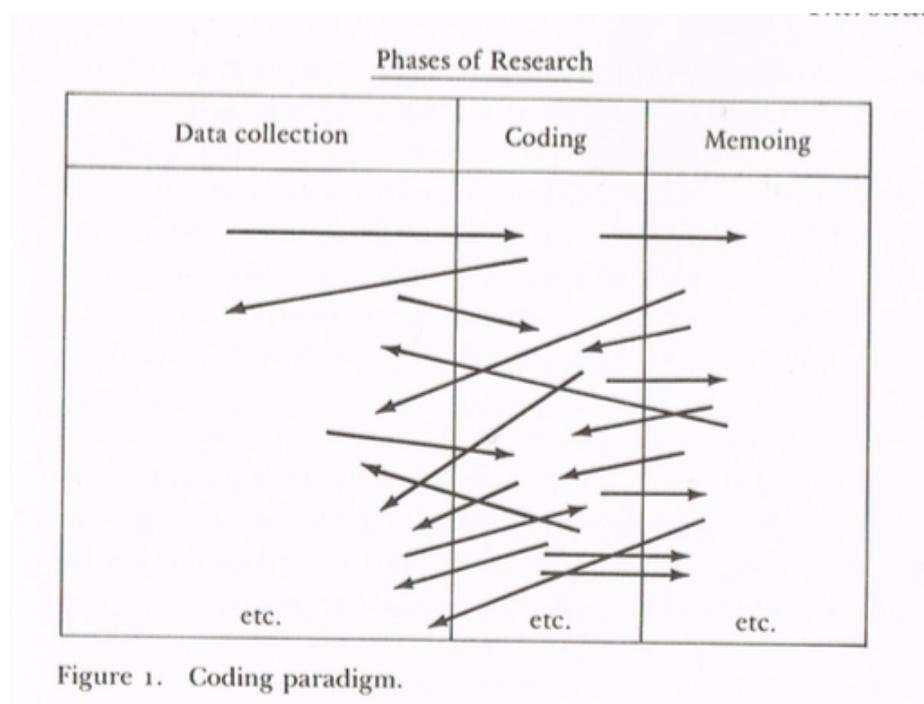


Figure 1. Coding paradigm.

Figure 33: Strauss' Coding paradigm, 1998

This model emphasised a grounded theory ethos of concurrent data collection, coding and memoing, however, coding can also be defined as identifying patterns, defining and describing these patterns and interpreting them. This definition forms a

foundation in other qualitative research approaches, such as thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). It is this stratified approach to coding (described below) that I have used as part of my conceptual research analysis.

Axial coding is a grounded theory approach that I have not used in my research coding. Appearing only later in the work of Strauss, it has been defined as:

*. . .relating categories to subcategories along the line of their properties and dimensions.* (Strauss and Corbin, 1998; 124)

It has been critiqued: one analysis, for instance, arguing that it is based on preconceived prescriptions, so not representing a productive methodological approach (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007), whilst others comment on its cumbersome nature as a methodological tool (Saldaña, 2009). Rather than fracturing and reassembling, my approach is to create a proximal linkage between coding approaches, providing a methodological connection in coding processes.

Within the first cycle of coding, several approaches feed into *open coding* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), also referred to as *initial coding* (Saldaña, 2009). Within this, *descriptive coding* summarising the conceptual content of interview data is combined with *values coding* in which participants reflect on characteristics in which their worldview is evident in their practice. For my research this is manifest in the *Think Aloud Protocols (TAPs)* exercise (described in my methods) so I have therefore described this coding approach as *modified values coding*. As both these methods work together, this also represents a *simultaneous coding* approach, where two different coding systems are utilised (Saldaña, 2009).

My second and third coding cycles develop a *focused coding* style, which consider most frequent and initial codes in a coding saturation approach. This analysis considers recurring concepts in teacher discourse as evident from semi-structured interviews. The outcomes of this coding analysis then lead into further methodological analysis:

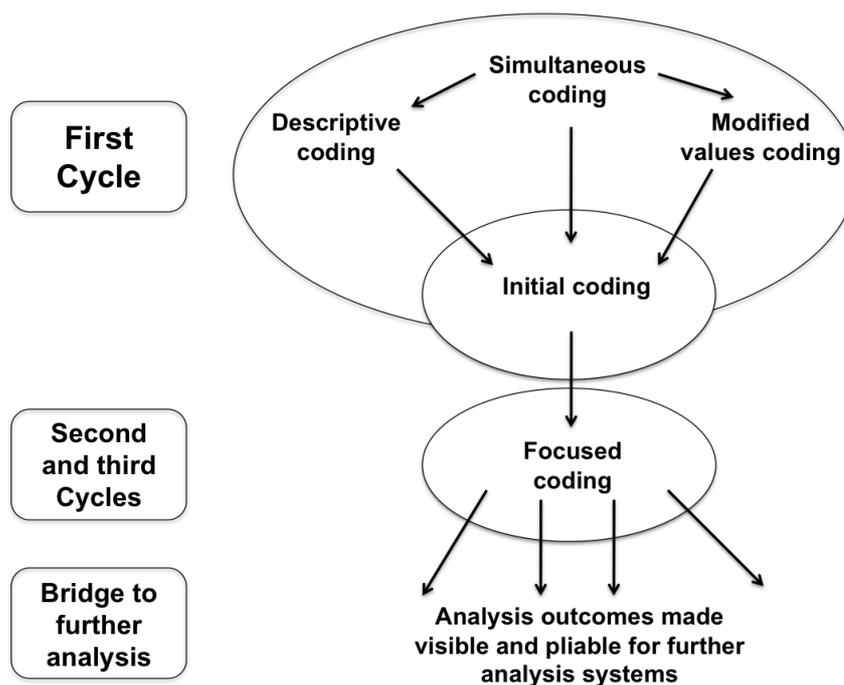


Figure 34: My use of coding processes within radically modified Grounded Theory cycles

Later in this thesis, I develop these coding cycles into constituent elements, revealed through analysis of research findings. This will be discussed in the Findings section and represented in the *Double Prism of Music teacher curriculum dynamics* (Figure 88). For the present discussion, however, it is necessary to trace the outcome of coding procedures, as these formed part of my modified grounded theory approach, which were then developed using *activity theory* methodology. This final stage of my methodology was used to make visible hidden practices and interpretations in teacher curriculum design and included developing activity theory models in order to facilitate such a process. A discussion of activity theory and its role in

conceptualising music classroom space, will therefore be the theme of the next chapter.

## 6. Conceptual perspectives II

As discussed in chapter 5, *epistemic ascent* (Winch, 2012) is utilised as a methodology to frame tensions between horizontal discourses of praxis, and vertical discourses of academic theorising, and a tool for interpreting teacher choices in the design of their curricula. A methodology based in *grounded theory* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) then follows, which has been *radically modified* to enable a discourse of music teacher curriculum semiotics to emerge organically from research data. To reveal hidden polyphonies of music teacher curriculum design choices, *activity theory* and its developments are also utilised as a lens for analysis (Vygotsky, 1978; Leont'ev, 1978; Engeström, 1999). Activity theory applied in this way, facilitated the emergence of essential characteristics from complex data; enabling strands from processes of curriculum design, obscured by content conceptualisation, to become more visible and pliable to analysis. Each of these conceptual perspectives, operate as methodological gateways. I now focus on *activity theory*, identifying its prominent features, its applicability to understanding curriculum design and my rationales for its use in my research.

### 6.1 What is activity?

Seeking to describe the essence of what it means to be human, has been a perennial philosophical question. Human characteristics have been variously defined as exhibiting: reflective thoughts that distinguish humanity from animals (Dewey, 1910; 14), abilities to operate in political fields (Aristotle in Roughley, 2011), and in moral and sentient interactions (Carson, 1996; 209). *Activity theory* touches on at least two of these attributes, in that human essence is unique for its inclusion of both *activity* and the role that *speech* plays in that activity, as a mediating artifact for learning. It is therefore important to consider the significance of activity characteristics, and how these are distinct from action and intentionality in isolation.

Vygotsky (1978) originated the earliest conceptual forms of activity theory, and has been considered by some to be ahead of our time as well as his own (Carpay, and Van Oers, 1999). However, in Vygotsky's initial conceptualisations, activity is presented as a ratio in which he calls action the "*numerator*" for the pre-school child. Only later, following development, does he reassign such action as the "denominator" (Vygotsky, 1978; 100). Vygotsky's approach therefore considers the consequences of activity as a transformative agent, rather than activity itself as a catalyst for learning. John-Steiner and Soubberman (1978) describe Vygotsky's concerns as centring on consequential impacts of activity on society and nature as evidence for development, rather than intrinsic identities of activities. This impact on society as arising *from* activity, was developed by Leont'ev, who sought to extend concepts of activity beyond the individual. In this conceptualisation, the individual is set into a social context from the outset, as (according to Leont'ev) activity is manifest through life *within* a society, and is not a relationship *between* an individual and an opposing society (Leont'ev, 1978; 51). He argued that Vygotsky had not understood the social aspect of activity, in which an external form is necessary to the communication and furtherance of activity (Leont'ev, 1978; 59). Kinsella (2017) also considers developments from individual action to social structures in her analysis of Vygotsky's individual *action* and the process of Leont'ev's societal *activity* and social structures. She describes this as "collective motivation" (Kinsella, 2017; 5), which ultimately enables "socially structured knowledge" (2017; 5) to develop.

The notion of activity is problematic and reaches beyond its use as noun or verb. In Vygotsky's original Russian, activity is recorded as "деятельность" (deyatel'nost), and its translation as 'activity' fails to capture the decisive and intentional nature of the term as a distinctive human interaction. Human activity is not congruent with insect activity, or conceptualisations developed by Vygotsky and Leont'ev. As Davydov (1999) has suggested, the term *activity* from the Russian translation is too

“inclusive and broad” (1999; 46). A more satisfying alternative of the word, may therefore be “дело” (delo), meaning ‘deeds’, with its inferred imports of choice and decision. To think of ‘*deeding*’ is thus much closer to the concept of activity, as a distinguishing feature of schematic learning. Understanding the extent to which music teachers were using activity or ‘deeding’ was therefore a helpful demarcation in my data analysis of my case study. It also enabled analysis of teacher conceptualisation and practice, which addressed my research questions of rationales for structures and sequencing of curriculum models, and how these were enabled for music teachers in secondary schools.

In this vein, Engeström (2007) created a progressive taxonomy, in which *activities* are driven by *objects*, *actions* are driven by *goals*, and *working spheres* are driven by *purposes*. His theory seeks to make a useful distinction between action and activity, and Engeström (2007) also suggests that identification of units between action and activity may be a useful development, in whatever way this is conceptualised. Thus concepts of activity as an individual entity, distinct from action, are considered to be significant in the literature. This directly affects the role of actions and activities as objects and goals within activity systems and their conceptualisation within an activity model.

## **6.2 The mediating artifact in curriculum design**

The place of the mediating artifact is central to curriculum design. This notion determines teacher construction of activity that is designed to meet classroom curriculum aims. How such an artifact is conceptualised is therefore of significance. The mediating artifact was initially considered as a *tool* by Vygotsky (1978), which with repeated and consistent use over time could then be interpreted as a *sign*. Vygotsky (1978), suggests that intellectual development occurs through the convergence of speech and practical activity, identifying speech itself as a tool (1978;

24). As present and past experience is united, Vygotsky surmised that intentions and symbolic representations enable purposeful action as a single system is developed (1978; 37). Leont'ev was less willing to embrace the symbolic element of the mediating artifact, referring to it as "*equipment*" (Leont'ev 1978; 59) and arguing that activity itself necessitated observable activity, regarding his theoretical outlook as developing "concrete science" (1978; 6). In Leont'ev's view, intellectual and practical activity could therefore not be separated.

This led to Engeström's (1999) work on the importance of mediation and to debates on the nature of what constitutes a mediating sign or tool. For example, language has continued to be discussed as the means through which a topic of conversation results in an object and outcome, with Carpay and Van Oers (1999) regarding this "game" (1999; 299) as a means for developing a conceptual inventory. In this context, Carpay and Van Oers claim that the mode of communication is just as important as the details of what is said. Moreover, Peim (2009) has argued that language must be more than a mediating artifact as it is the vehicle for activity, and must therefore be more than a tool. He regards the classification of language as a tool as essentially reductionist. Classroom language in teacher practice, whether sign, tool or part of a wider ontology, therefore has significant potential to impact on learning as delivered through curriculum design.

Mediating artifacts as identified in my research (see *figures 47 – 50*, below) are also fundamentally entwined with societal and cultural aspects, and music curriculum design with its echoes of cultural identity (Webster, 1988) is similarly posited.

Leiman (1999) distinguishes between tools for object activity and signs for social intercourse, suggesting cultural structures, and Daniels (2004) built upon this to argue that learning and development exist as mediated processes that ultimately enable semiotic mediation. The artifact may act as a stimulus affecting practice and

thus curriculum conceptualisation (Fautley and Kinsella, 2017; 28), but it has also been argued that consciousness itself is mediated through artifacts in practice:

*Consciousness is always mediated through the use of artifacts, be these material or linguistic. (Peim, 2009; 170)*

Such perspectives therefore have considerable significance for teachers designing their curriculum.

Artifacts themselves are without power and require active use. Engeström has argued that no tool achieves anything by itself (Engeström and Glăveanu, 2012) and the realisation of curriculum in learning is a “mediated process” (Daniels, 2004; 121). Such learning can only be realised by motion towards objects and outcomes as mediated by artifacts in classrooms (Kinsella and Fautley, 2017) be they functional or symbolic. Thus symbols and language that Henley (2015) identifies as significant for meaning-making, ultimately find their voice in *curriculum conceptualisation translated into classroom activity*. Therefore, how teachers conceptualise curricula is a significant first step: it determines pathways that learners will be offered to enable their development.

### **6.3 Pedagogically centred activity theory**

The use of activity theory within social-settings of classrooms enables complexities of interactions between teacher and learner to be analysed in their authentic form.

Classroom actions and interactions are difficult to predict and make tangible, but activity theory provides a conceptual structure within which observations can organically emerge, to become visible. Lompscher (1999) cites *activity formation* as a core teaching strategy, due to unique natures of learning, with their central aim of psychic transformation. He argues that in classroom ascendancy practice, from

abstract to concrete, actions must be *mastered* and therefore transformed systematically. This complex classroom environment requires considered conceptual origins and raises questions around individual perceptions and approaches to learning, with associated complexities of influences that teachers and learners have on learning. Understanding classroom activity is therefore central to understanding classroom learning. However, Miettinen (1999) argues that such a pedagogic interchange is two-dimensional in its nature and that, in comparison, activity theory enables multi-voiced natures of curriculum planning in classrooms to be uncovered. Miettinen maintains that “learning activity cannot be realized within any single societal activity alone” (1999; 331), especially one which rests on a transmission culture of reproduction, resulting in binary learning. Therefore understanding complex social learning interactions within a classroom is directly connected with teacher and learner pedagogical perceptions. Kinsella (2017), refers to this complexity as socially constructed classroom knowledge; in which identity itself is pedagogised within practises. It is this placement of pedagogy in practice locus that highlights contributions activity theory can make to understanding such a highly-complex environment. It is the manner in which activity theory places learners centre stage that makes it appealing as a methodology to researchers (Avis, 2007).

The role of teachers and their individualised approach to pedagogy can therefore be described as a central determinant of classroom activity. Miettinen (1999) has noted the dominion of question and answer dynamics between teachers and learners in classroom interactions. Within this structure, learners respond to teacher-determined questions in a state of continual pedagogic flow, with unprovoked questions from learners themselves being rare. Such a pattern follows a quasi-behaviourist approach to learning: *stimulus – response* (S – R), and the prevalence of such traditionalised discourses is revealed through activity theory analyses. Both Daniels (2004) and Avis (2007) regard this teacher/learner interaction as pivoting around the

substance of teacher interventions. For Daniels (2004), activity theory enables positive possibilities for such interventions, which, in turn, enable fundamental human development. Avis (2007) is critical of the simplistic use of activity theory for interventions, claiming they lead to positive transformation in his critique of Engeström's work. Thus power and control as spotlighted by activity theory in the classroom teacher/learner dynamic, essentially determine learning content, style and evaluation of progression. Carpay and Van Oers (1999) highlight this as "evaluative standards" (1999; 299) of traditionally accepted successful pedagogical practice, determining intended outcomes, but devoid of critical evaluation or contextualisation of their value. As it is the teacher who essentially determines classroom activity (Kinsella, 2017; Lompscher, 1999), consideration of how such activity frames learning environments and their impact on pedagogical formation can be made visible through applications of activity theory. This is because such interactions make explicit power balances in the design and implementation of curriculum, in which teachers and learners are equal in essence, but not existence (Carpay and Van Oers, 1999) and acknowledges the influence of this discourse.

An activity theory influenced pedagogy, therefore highlights that a successful learning environment is not constituted of individual thinking, but of groups of minds in interaction (Kinsella, 2017). Such an acknowledgement creates significant layers of complexity in analysis, and credits polyphony that exists in classroom discourse (Carpay and Van Oers, 1999). It presents an argument that proposes a multi-dimensional pedagogy: "a thinking curriculum" (Carpay and Van Oers, 1999; 304). Creating such multi-voiced curriculum planning (Miettinen, 1999) demands considerations of equal partnerships of subject pedagogy and subject content. Activity theory is therefore valuable in designing and organising musical learning (Henley, 2015) as essential curriculum design factors, which influence its resulting formation.

## 6.4 Activity theory as a lens for analysis

Activity theory as originated by Vygotsky (1978) and developed by Engeström (1999) has been used as a method for understanding complexities in a variety of organisations and contexts. Henley (2015) uses it to understand developing identity in primary schools, prisons and young offenders institutions; Burnard and Younker (2007) select it to understand group composing and arranging with 10 – 13 year olds in American and English settings; Engeström *et al* (1999b) have applied the theory to healthcare settings in system organisations from GPs, interagency communications, primary health care systems, hospitals for children and adolescents and care agreement practice. Such applications have been used to highlight what Avis (2007) describes as *dissonances*, *disturbances* and *disjuncture*; also known as *contradictions* (Engeström, 2009) between activity systems.

Such uses of activity theory have not been without critique. Peim (2009) argues that activity theory has become a positivist technology of improvement, moving beyond a descriptive function of systems and networks. From Peim's perspective, such uses of activity theory create exclusive forward movement, with improvement rather than development forming the nomenclature. Avis (2009) similarly describes such an application of activity theory as the "politics of hope" (2009; 152), claiming that it reduces activity theory to a management technique, rather than a more sophisticated tool for analysis. Idealism, and will-to-power, are identified by Peim (2009) as an encompassing ontology, which over-shadow the context laden applications of activity theory, constraining the concept to problem solving within organisations.

However, there is a developing discussion that suggests that activity theory is valuable as a lens through which data analysis can occur, making hidden discourses tangible and balancing polyphonic praxis. Kinsella (2017) proposes activity theory as an analytical methodology which presents such "a lens" (2017;1), enabling an

exploration of cognitive interactions. Kinsella and Fautley (2017) have together argued for activity theory's use as an analytical methodology, which is particularly useful for highlighting system changes – contradictions which lie unrecognised but are nevertheless embedded in practice. In Thorpe (2015), activity theory is used to explore contradictions, as an analytical methodology in which the “object is the goal of the activity” (2015; 79). She uses Engeström's delineation of types of contradiction (Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009): *primary*, *secondary*, *tertiary* and *quaternary* to highlight tensions in her case study of group composing in New Zealand. This is an evidenced example of an activity theory approach that concurs with Fautley and Kinsella's (2017) suggested application: to make contradictions visible, and to challenge and transform activity as manifested through practice.

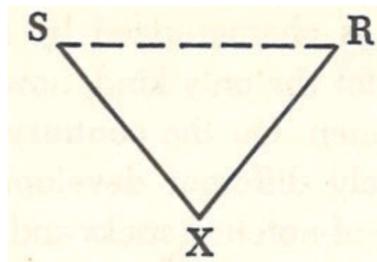
Henley (2015) has also argued that activity theory as a methodology enables concepts to be synthesised, moving from the *what* to the *how*. However, she discusses the importance of a modified model, arguing that activity theory is unstable without a holistic reimagining, which involves incorporating three-dimensional tensions, which she represents in constellations (see *figure 43* below). This is a development from earlier perceptions of activity theory as a lens, in which it is used in a more confined realisation of two dimensions. For instance, Burnard and Younker (2007) suggest Activity Theory as a tool for tracking the mediated nature of activities. Whilst such an approach may bring polyphonies to light, noting differences between them is a limited dynamic in a model that contains complex interrelated domains.

Among the most persuasive arguments for the use of activity theory as an analytic methodology is its ability to uncover complexities that may otherwise remain tacit. Fautley and Kinsella (2017) have explored the manner in which the constituents of an activity system reveal how music functions as social practice. Activity analysis,

they argue, enables perceptions of cognition, socio-cultural and historical structures, to unveil complexities of musical manifestations. This approach ultimately allows for, but does not simplify activity, rather it allows for identification of constituent elements of the field as a whole. Kinsella (2017) has described this as combining the complexities of different domains with activity theory as a lens for cognitive social interaction. Activity theory is therefore a practical and analytical tool (Kinsella, 2017). Kinsella has further argued that activity theory reveals underlying classroom ontologies (2017), and it is this attribute of activity theory, which brings hidden processes into plain sight, which justifies its use as a methodological approach.

### 6.5 Activity theory models

Vygotsky (1978) was the first to conceptualise a model of activity theory, by proposing that the *stimulus* (S) and *response* (R) of learning as suggested by Watson (1924) and Pavlov (1927) is enabled via a mediated act:

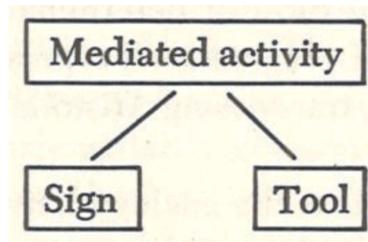


*Figure 35: Vygotsky's Stimulus and Response via Mediated Act Model, 1978*

Vygotsky regarded this mediated act formulated as either a sign or a tool, so that learning is enabled by material effects (such as a pen) or by symbolic manifestations (such as speech). Vygotsky regarded speech as central to thought in activity:

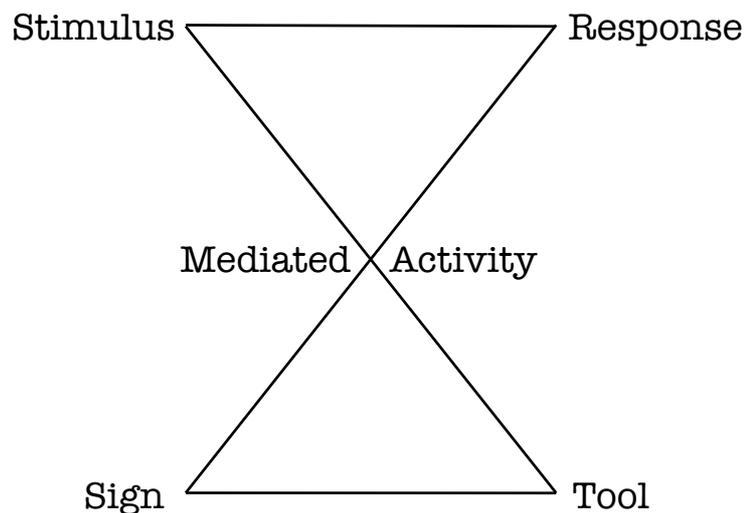
*Children solve practical tasks with the help of speech, as well as their eyes and hands. (1978; 26).*

He represented his activity model in the form of a triangle (see *figure 35*) and the mediating artifact as subdivided into two branches:



*Figure 36: Vygotsky's Mediated Activity Model, 1978*

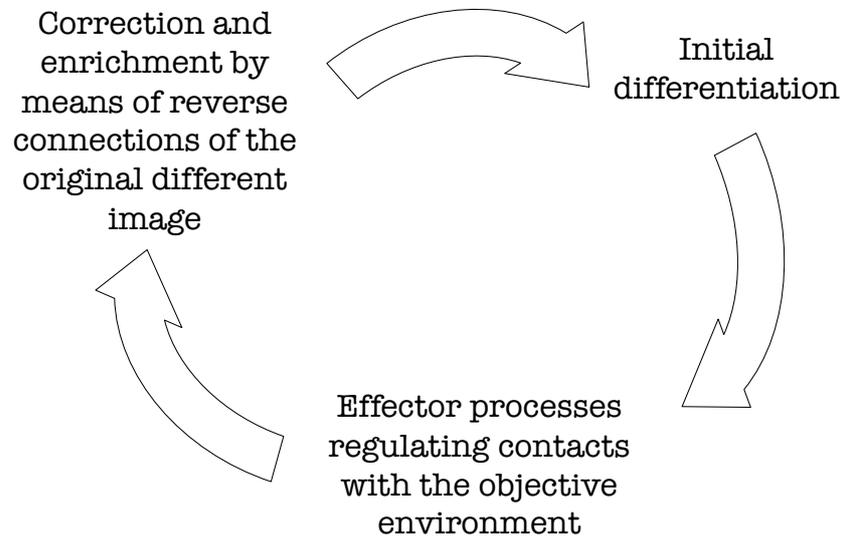
When these two triangles are combined, this model adopts an hourglass shape:



*Figure 37: Synthesised Activity Model*

Such a conceptualisation has traditionally been referred to as *first generation activity theory* (Fautley and Kinsella, 2016; Kinsella, 2017; Engeström, 1999). Leont'ev (1978) referred to this notion of activity as trinomial, rather than the binomial stimulus and response, but also argued that all activity has a circular structure. This is problematic, as Leont'ev's critique of *activity theory* is also regarded as having developed the model, but his conceptualisation in its base form is fundamentally different. In his circular model, Leont'ev regards the mediating artifact (which he

refers to as *equipment*) as the objective environment, which is open to corrections, which makes a more complex case for the mediation of learning:



*Figure 38: Leont'ev's Activity Theory Model created from "Activity, Consciousness and Personality, 1978; 53*

Leont'ev argued that "the expression 'objectless activity' is devoid of any meaning" (Leont'ev, 1978; 32), and, as in Vygotsky's work, the place of the object was central. However, Leont'ev adopted a fundamentally different view of mediating activity characteristics, which he considered to be rooted in practical, observable activity and not, in any sense symbolic. He regarded cognitive development as arising from practical activity, rather than as a separate strain:

*In social conditions that ensure a well-rounded development of people, intellectual activity is not separated from practical activity.*

(Leont'ev, 1978; 61).

Notwithstanding the considerable difficulties with superimposing a curricular model onto a triangular one, Leont'ev's version of activity theory may be represented thus:

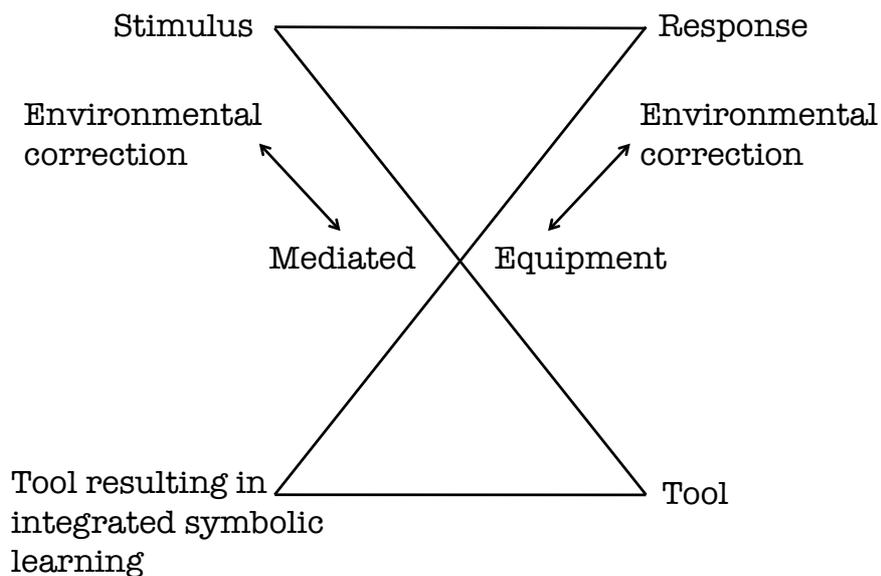


Figure 39: Leont'ev activity theory model revised

Both these conceptualisations of activity have been critiqued. Daniels (2004) notes that Vygotsky failed to examine social systems within which activity occurs, and additionally, it has been suggested that the political climate under which Leont'ev's theories became an official ideology has compromised their validity, due to Leont'ev's acceptance of dominant Marxist interpretations (Rey, 1999). Leont'ev (1978) referred to Marxist-Leninist ideas as a "treasure chest" (1978; 12), indicating his own socio-historical context.

Such criticism led to fresh conceptualisations of activity theory, in its so-called *second generation* formulation. Engeström (1999) inverts Vygotsky's triangle and extends it further to include concepts of social setting, for which Vygotsky had been critiqued (Daniels, 2004; Engeström, 1999; Henley, 2015). Engeström has added the further nodes of *rules*, *community* and *division of labour* to these social aspects of activity systems and repurposed stimulus as *subject* of learning and response as *object* of learning. Although grounded in Vygotskian perceptions, activity in this analysis is therefore reconceived and this influences the analysis it produces:

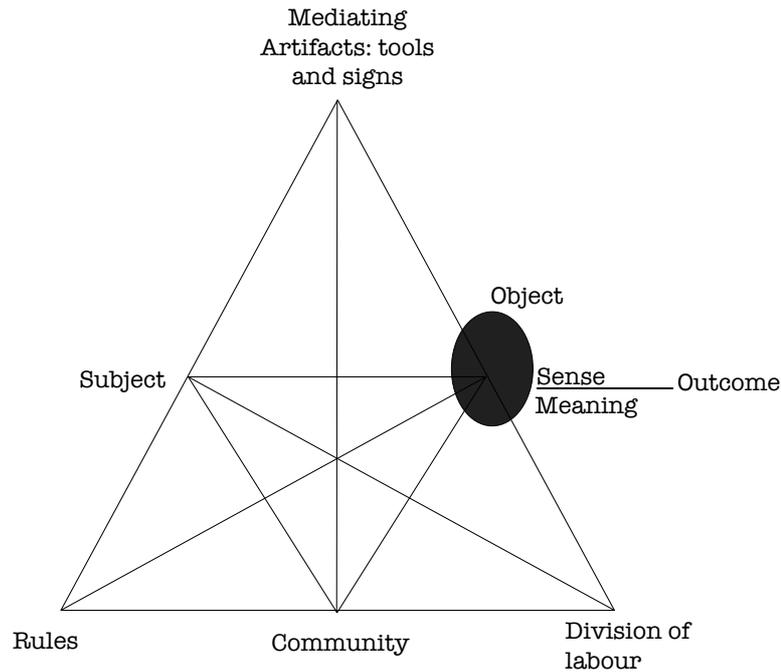


Figure 40: Engeström's Structure of a human activity system, 1987

As a model, Engeström (1996) has stated that activity theory is one of the “best held secrets of academia” (1996; 64) and there is consensus that it is under-applied (Burnard and Younker, 2007; Daniels, 2004). There remains divergent theorising on activity theory labelling and conceptualisation as *Engeströmian Activity Theory* (Peim, 2009), *Cultural-Historical Activity Theory* (Henley, 2015) or *Socio-Cultural-Historical Activity Theory* (Peim, 2009). These aspects are significant as they affect activity theory nodes, which are emphasised in contextual interpretations.

The *second generation* model has been further developed, as consideration has been given to activity systems existing in tension. Engeström (1999) describes this as a *multi-voiced system*, and there is agreement about complexity in co-existing perspectives of activity. For example, Carpay and Van Oers (1999) describe *multi-perspective* activity, Daniels (2004) discusses *myriad of systems*, Burnard and Younker (2007) term these as *differentiated activity systems*, Avis (2007) identifies *clusters* of activity systems and Henley (2015) and Kinsella (2017) identify the *multi-*

*layering* of activity systems. This examination has further supported Engeström's (1999) interpretation of society as an inter-layered network of activity systems, rather than pyramids of power.

In attempting to resolve this complexity, Engeström (2009) developed a third generation of activity theory, in which contradictions between systems lead to the identification of "structural tensions" (2009; 57), thus identifying points (Engeström identifies these as further 'objects') of conceptual vacuum:

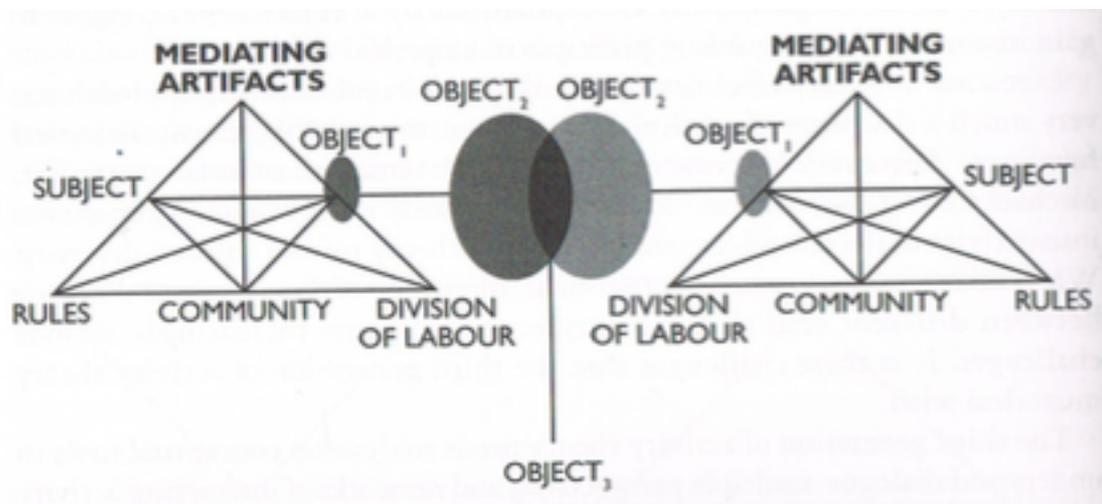


Figure 41: Engeström's third generation Activity Theory model, 2009

Engeström has warned against over-simplistic attempts to develop the models by creating new diagrams, which he has termed "short-cuts" (Engeström, 2007; 256). He has continued to explore complexities of power centres in *knotworking* systems (Engeström, 1999) and developed *strings* and groups of strings into *chains* to represent further activity within an activity system:

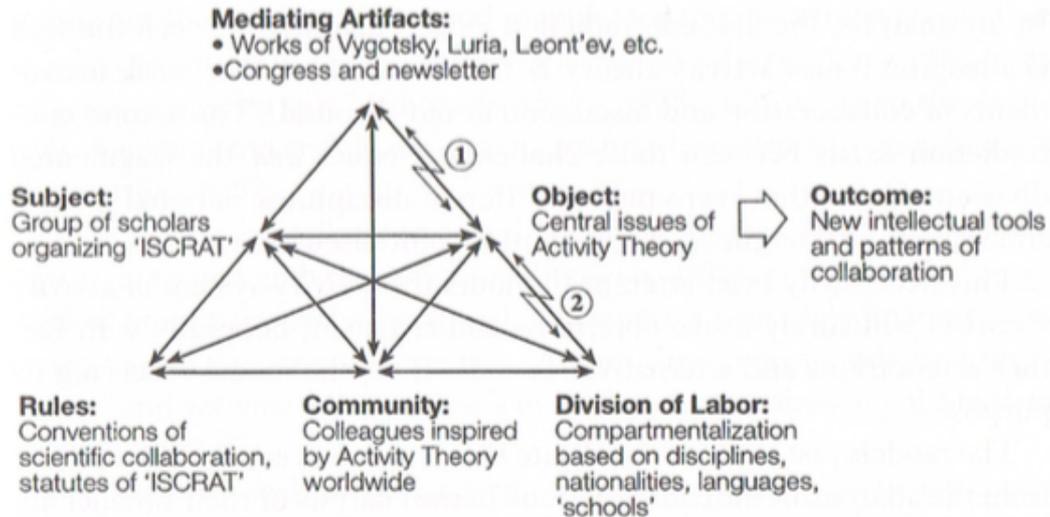
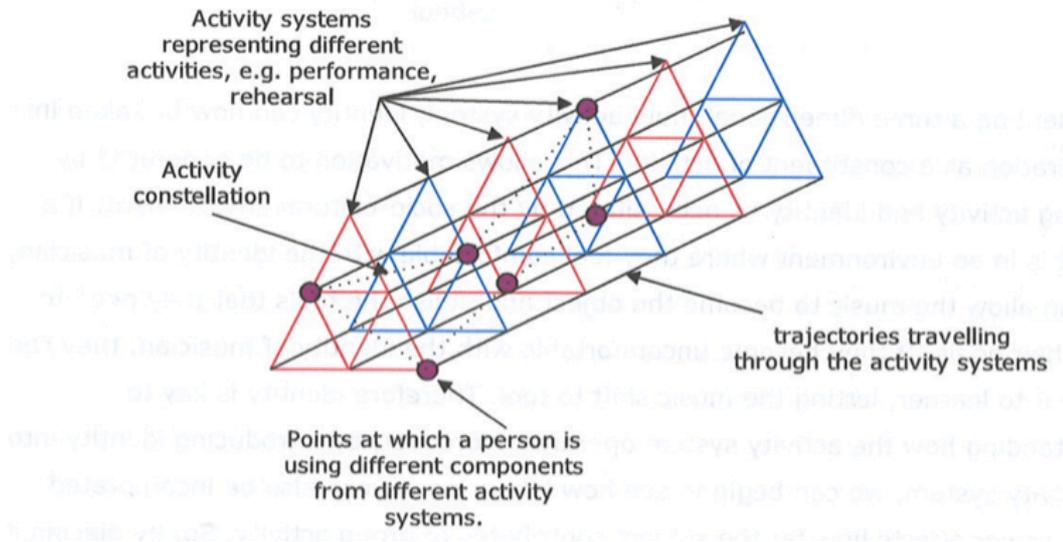


Figure 42: Engeström's a complex model of an activity system, 1999

This increasing complexity indicates fundamental difficulties with representing complex human activity in diagrammatic form, where it is difficult to capture subtleties, complexities and divergences of settings through activity theory analysis. For this reason, Engeström's *third generation* activity theory remains an inadequate explanation, as it describes new insights revealed in contradictions as manifesting *outside* activity systems. However, these contradictions are fundamentally occurring within the system itself, at moments of multi-nodal activity. Such an extrinsic analysis is therefore an inadequate mapping of activity processes.

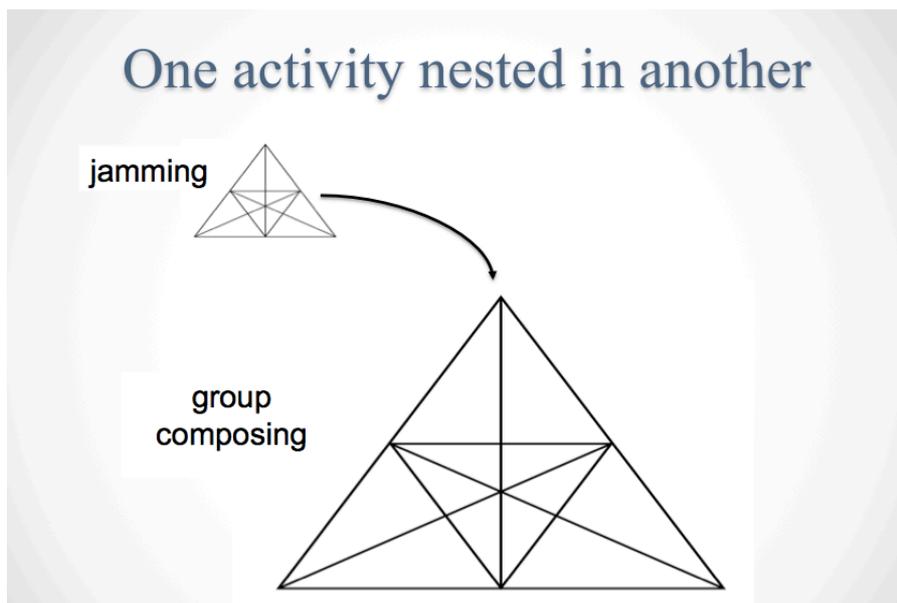
The idea of nodes has been explored in Henley (2012), who describes constellations between systems to describe an activity pathway:

**Figure 24 – A three dimensional activity system**



*Figure 43: Henley's constellation model, 2012*

However, this model still treats activity systems as parallel operatives, rather than interactional modalities, within a multi-personality activity system set. It also eliminates relationships between rules and object, division of labour and subject and community and mediating artifact. In Thorpe (2015), activity systems are analysed as 'nested' manifestations in which each node expands to a further activity system, revealing previously unseen complexities:



*Figure 44: Thorpe's nested Activity Theory model (a), 2015*

## Tensions, contradictions, opportunities

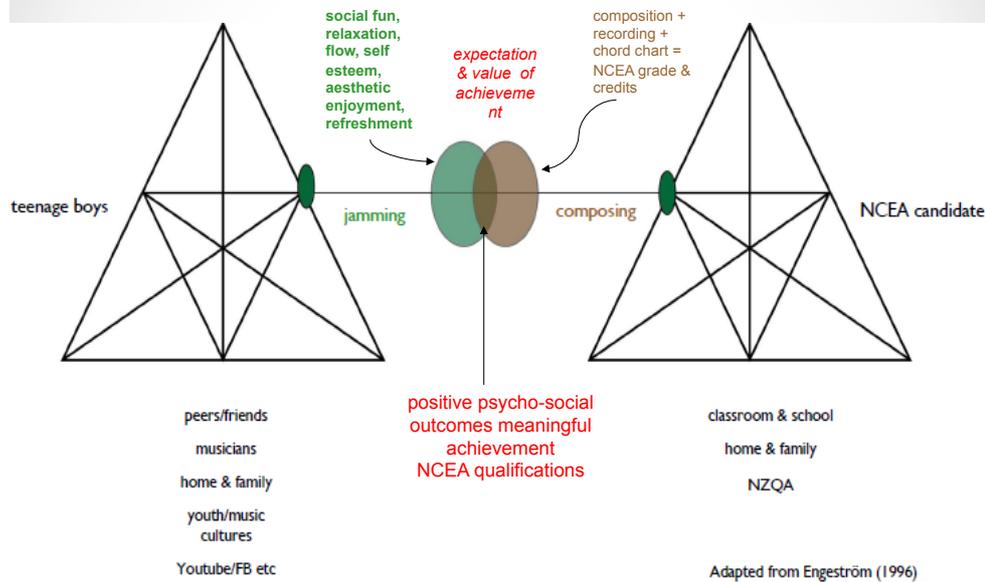
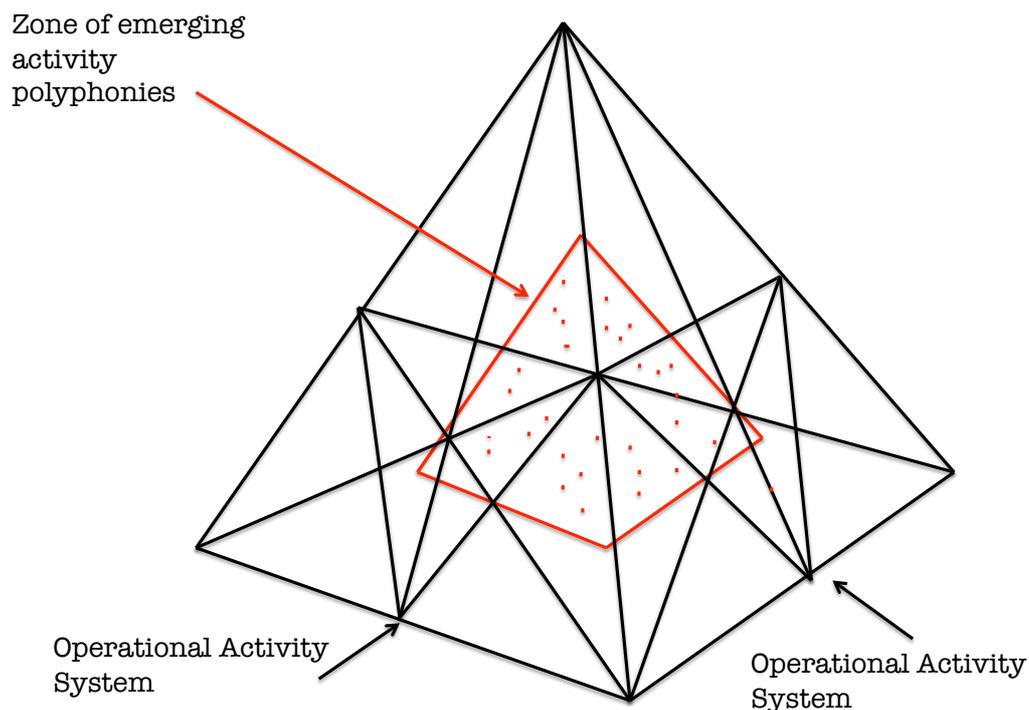


Figure 45: Thorpe's nested Activity Theory model (b), 2015

As with Engeström, the contradictions are indicated occurring *outside* the system, rather than forming *within* and, therefore, representations of contradictions between subject and subject, for instance, rather than object and subject would prove both conceptually and diagrammatically problematic. (Engeström uses his activity theory triangle in mirror image to make his analysis plausible, which, one could argue adds confusion to complexity, as it is unclear how further levels of development could be included within this structure.)

What is therefore needed, to uncover music teacher curriculum design practices, are models that enable internal multiplicities to emerge and present this for analysis within activity systems. I contest that such multiplicities are not necessarily *contradictions*, as they may represent differing perspectives only; nor are they finite *dissonances*, as they may not repel like opposing poles of a magnet occupying the same space. Rather, they are *polyphonies* (Carpay *et al.* 1999), accurately

representing and making visible internal system complexities of activity personalities. Such a representation allows for co-existence of activity systems and enables each to speak, but also draws developments together in meaningful analytical dialogue. It accurately represents three-dimensional dynamics of activity interactions that two-dimensional representations fail to capture.



*Figure 46: Three-dimensional activity theory conceptualisation*

## **6.6 Activity theory Music curriculum design models**

In an activity theory analysis of music teacher curriculum design at Key Stage 3, arising from my own research, the following activity systems are evident as operational:

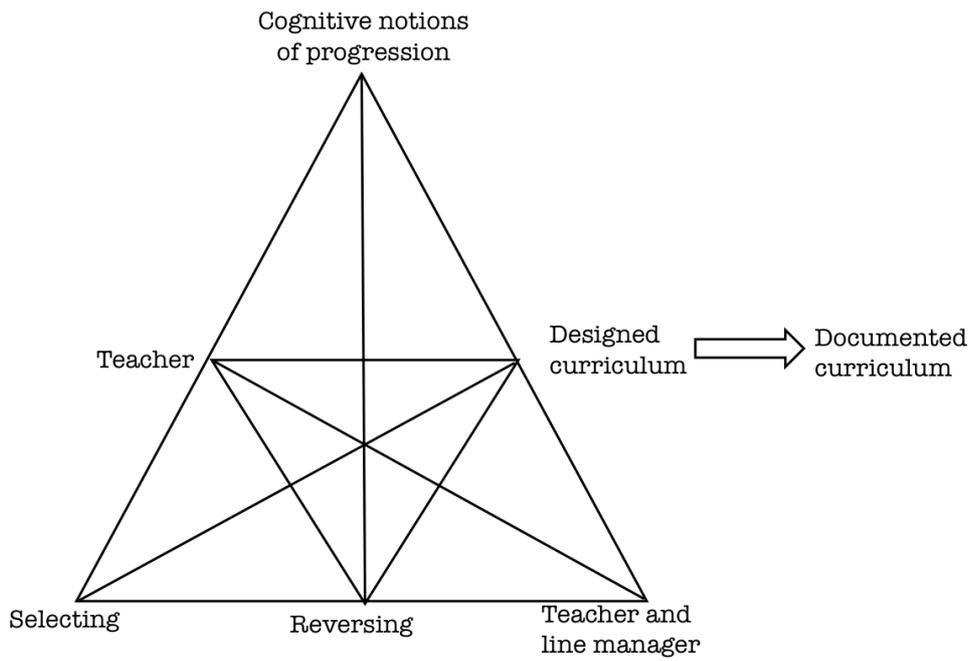


Figure 47: Music Teacher Curriculum Design Activity System 1

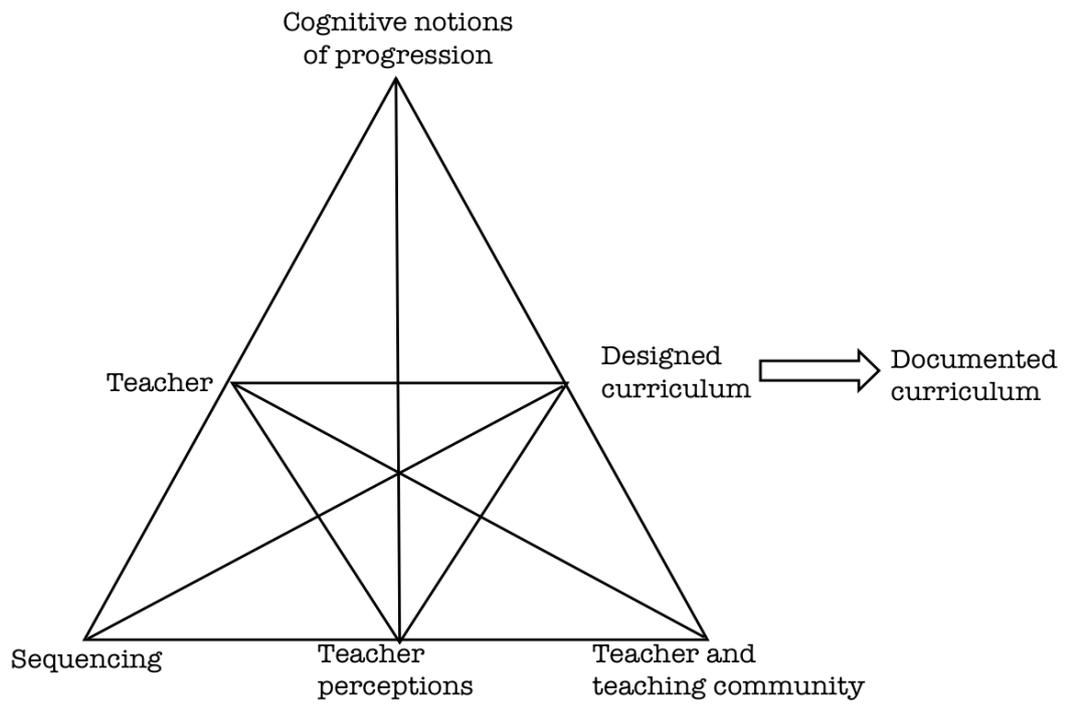


Figure 48: Music Teacher Curriculum Design Activity System 2

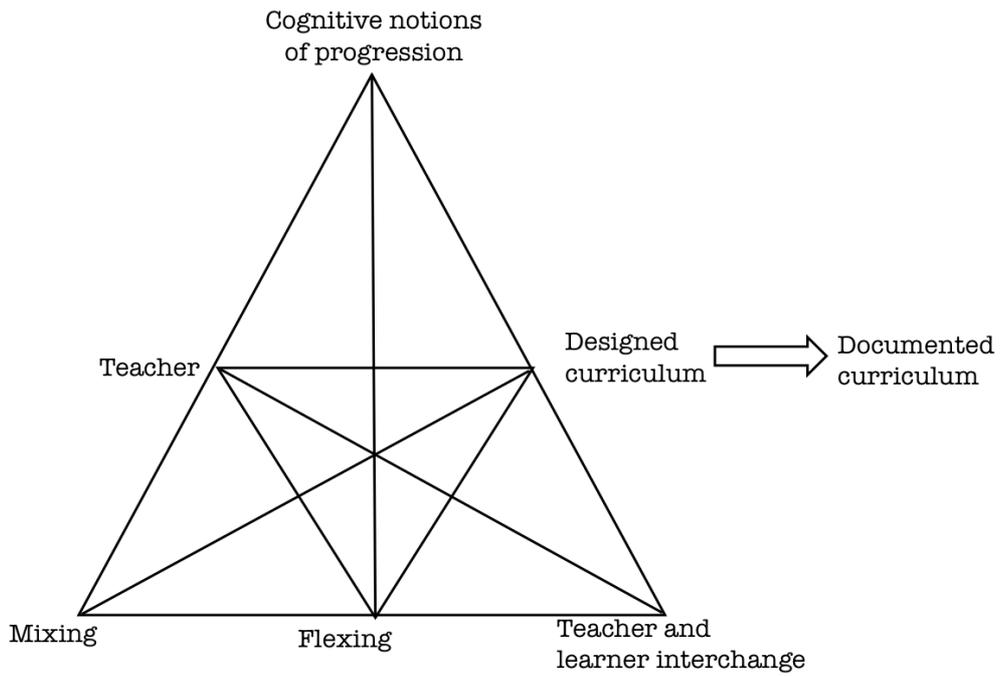


Figure 49: Music Teacher Curriculum Design Activity System 3

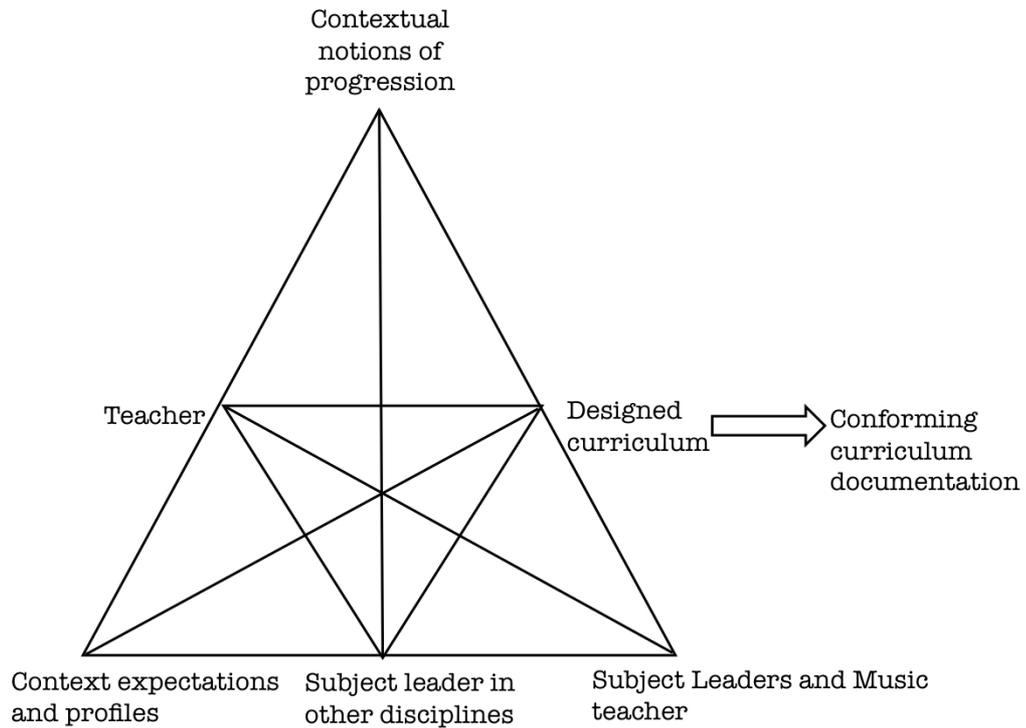


Figure 50: Music Teacher Curriculum Design Activity System 4

Within these systems of activity, I developed observed practice into conceptual notions, so that in my models *selecting* refers to processes of teacher decision-making during planning procedures. This decision-making consists of deciding which teaching topics will be used to enable development of learner musical understanding. *Reversing* defines an approach which begins by teacher analysis of what is required for a learner to achieve the highest GCSE grade, and working backwards from this descriptor, to design curriculum at Key Stage 3 that move towards this aspirational goal. *Sequencing* defines ordering of music topic-based learning into selected orders for teaching and teacher rationales that determines this. *Mixing* defines combining of musical contexts and cultural backgrounds together with ability ranges to design a curriculum. *Flexing* defines a curriculum in flow, that allows for a simultaneous spread of achievement. Challenge, following a scheme out of order, and approaching tasks in different formations, are manifestations of a flexing approach. I outline more specific detail on these areas in *table 29*, later in this thesis.

A multi-nodal analysis of these systems indicates congruence and divergence:

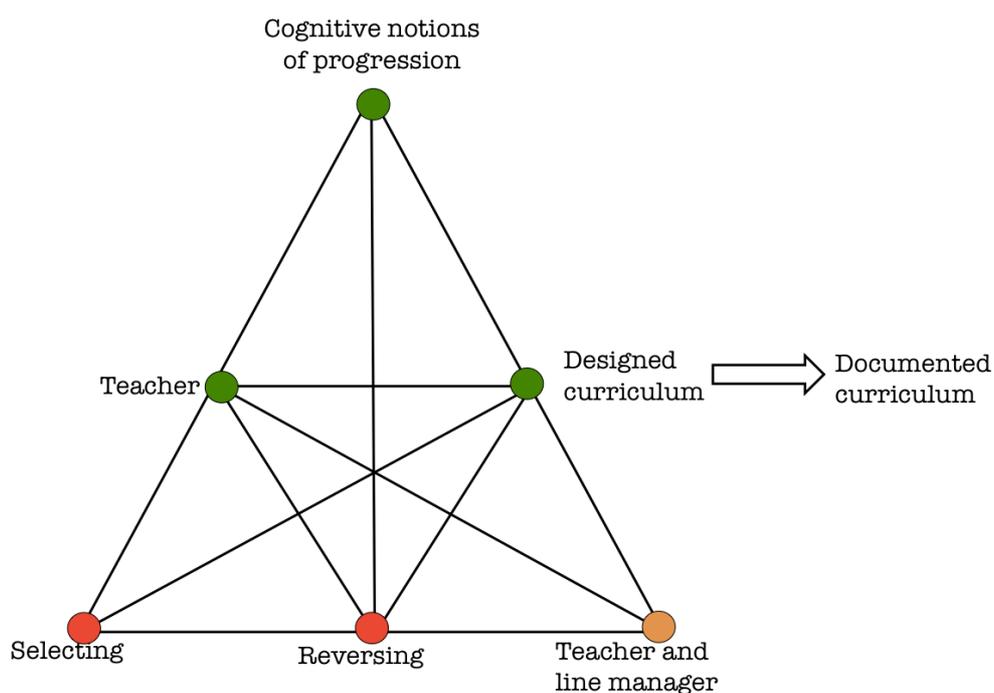


Figure 51: Music Teacher Curriculum Design Activity System 1, with nodal analysis

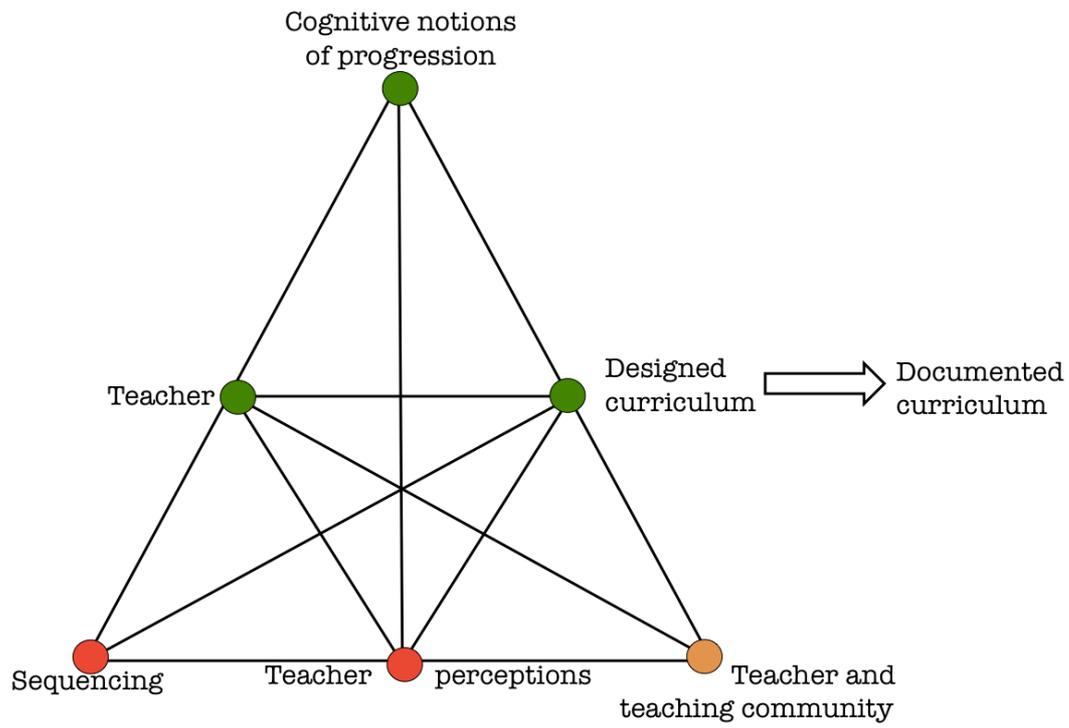


Figure 52: Music Teacher Curriculum Design Activity System 2, with nodal analysis

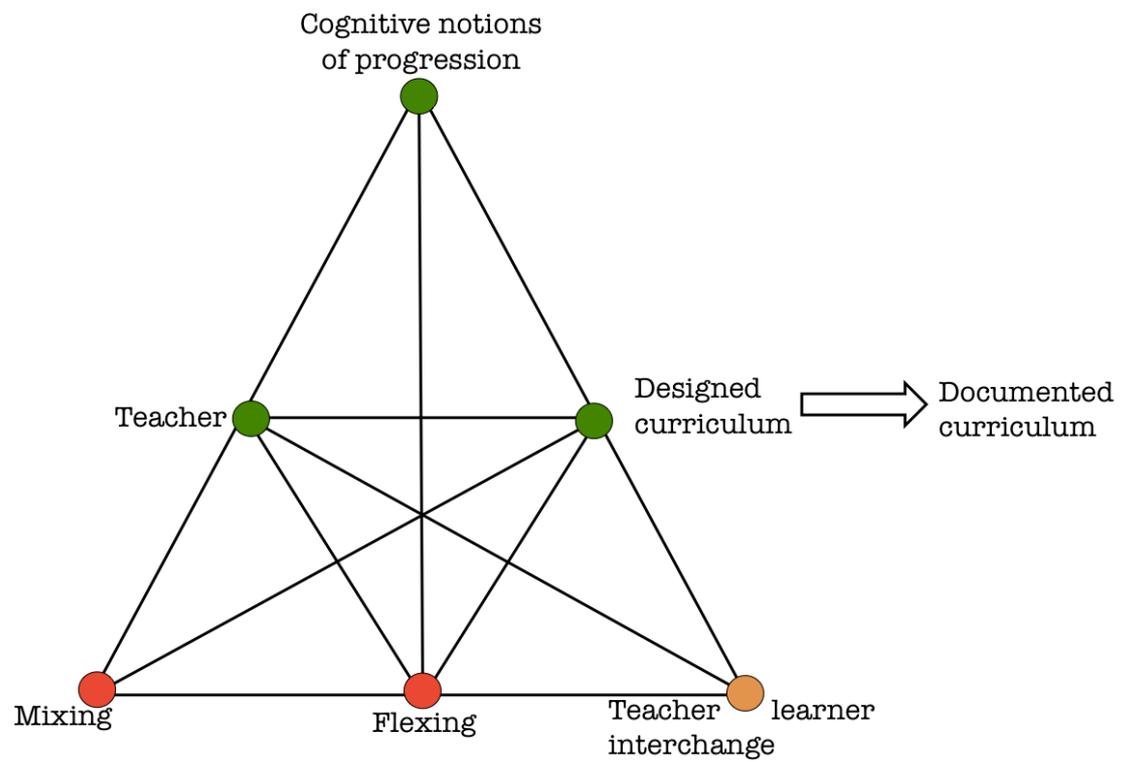


Figure 53: Music Teacher Curriculum Design Activity System 3, with nodal analysis

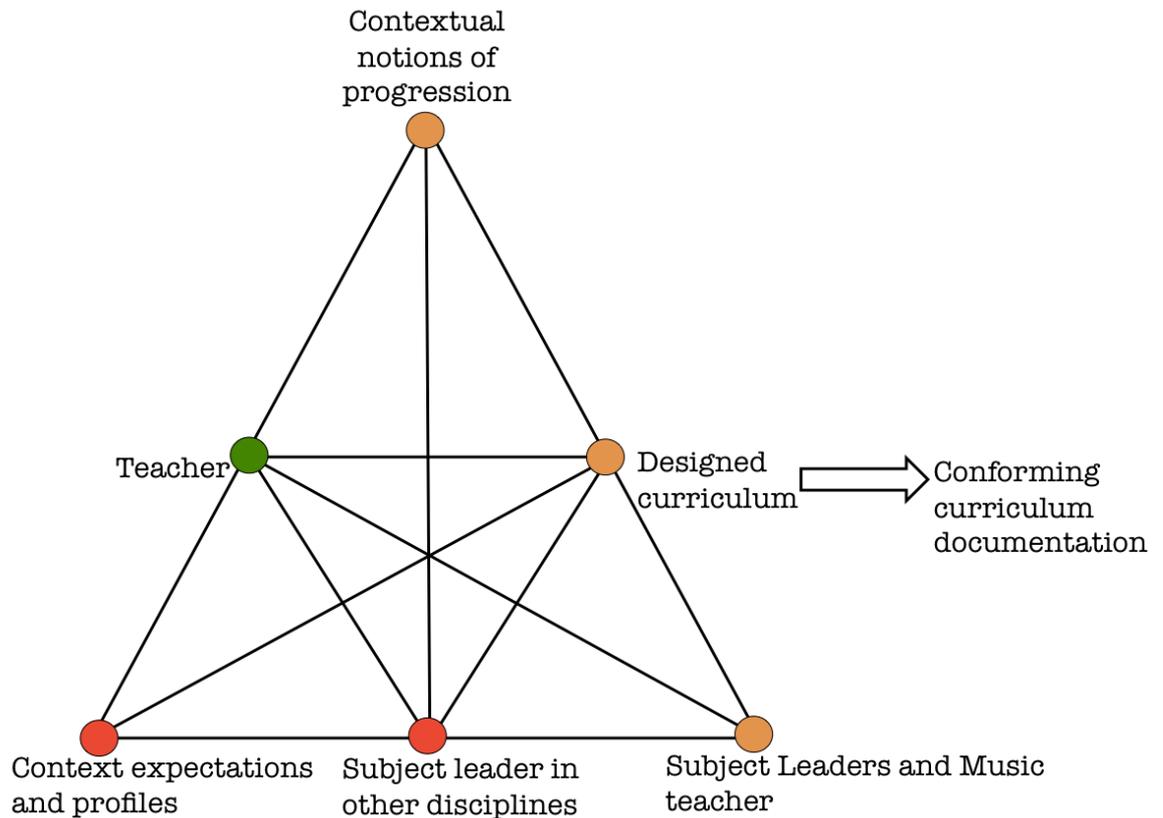


Figure 54 Music Teacher Curriculum Design Activity System 4, with nodal analysis

This analysis reveals the multi-persona nature of nodes, but also where they bind a meta-activity analysis together. In the diagrams above, green represents nodes which are identical, orange represents nodes with one exception (often the music teacher and additional other in the division of labour node) and red highlights the activity system polyphonies. There is, therefore, an element of polyphony within one-exception nodes, but these take the form of binary tensions:

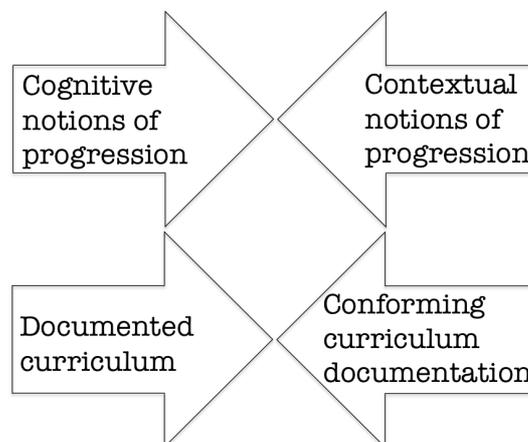


Figure 55: Binary tensions in curriculum design activity systems

In the case of *division of labour*, these nodes contain complexities of dynamic interaction, rather than opposition. They can thus be represented:

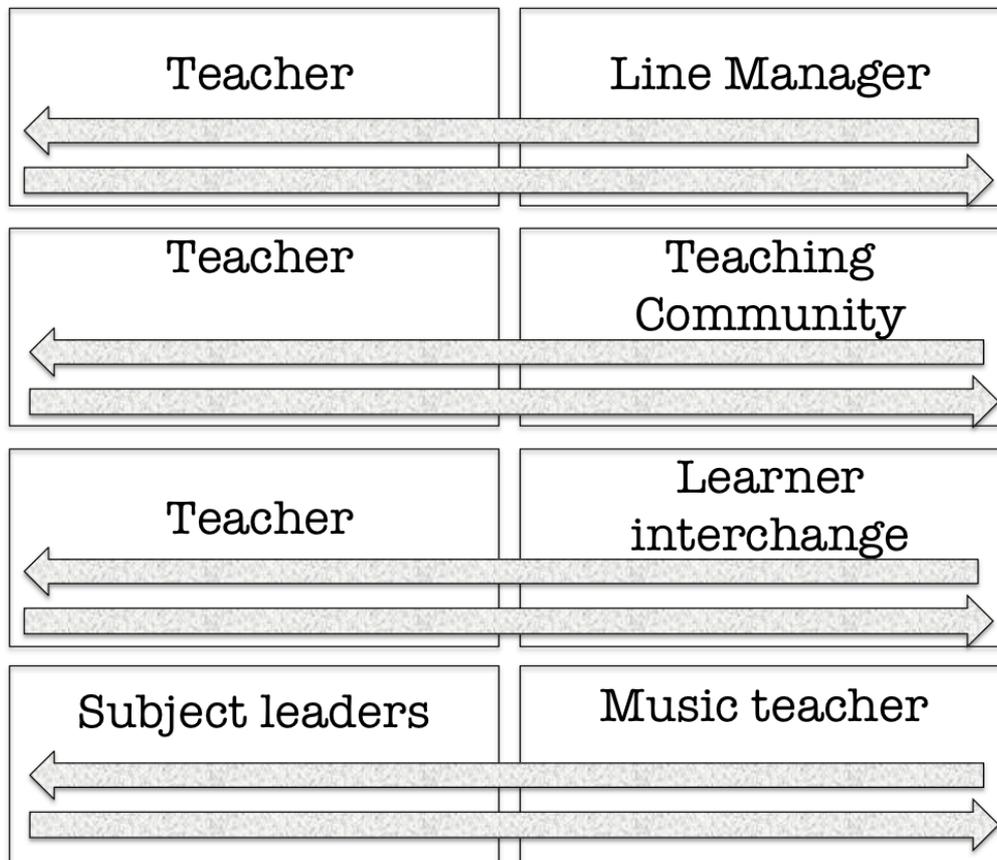


Figure 56: One-exception dynamics arising from activity systems

It is when activity systems are combined that polyphonies become pliable to analysis, as they are revealed *within* three-dimensional operational activity. Given degrees of shared nodes, these differences become even more significant, as they highlight the extent of variance. Activity theory analysis of teacher planning, for design of Key Stage 3 music curricula, thus makes tangible the following polyphonies through a combining of activity systems into three-dimensional *societal* models:

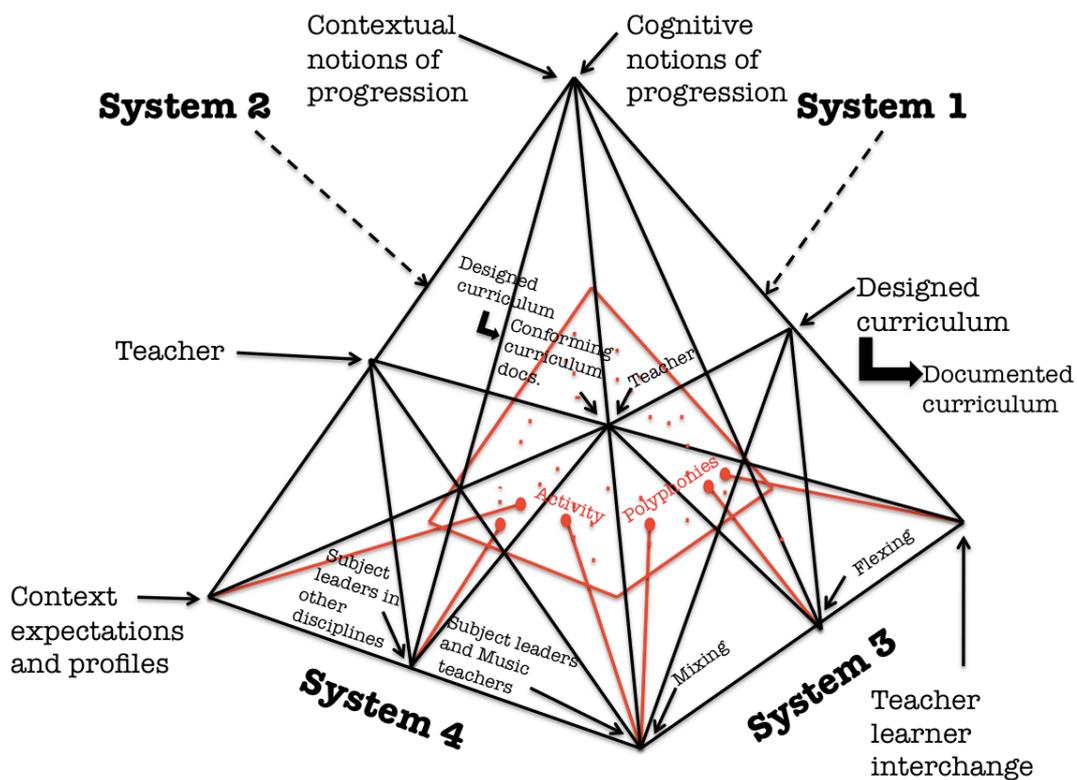
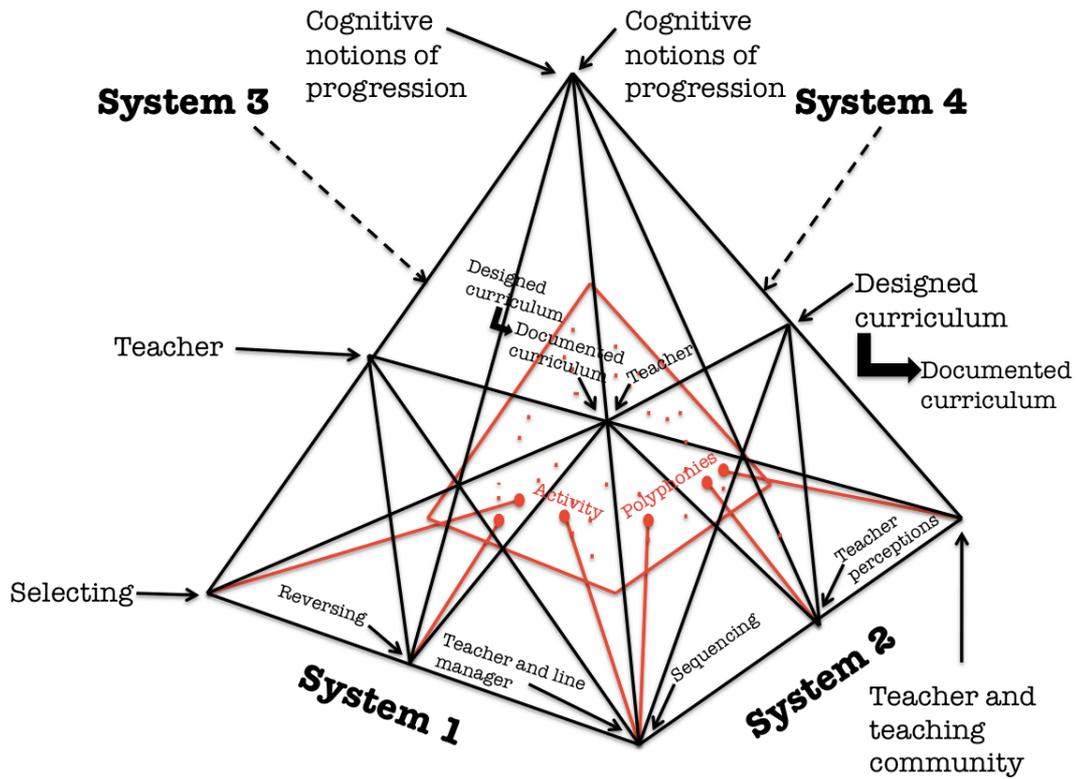
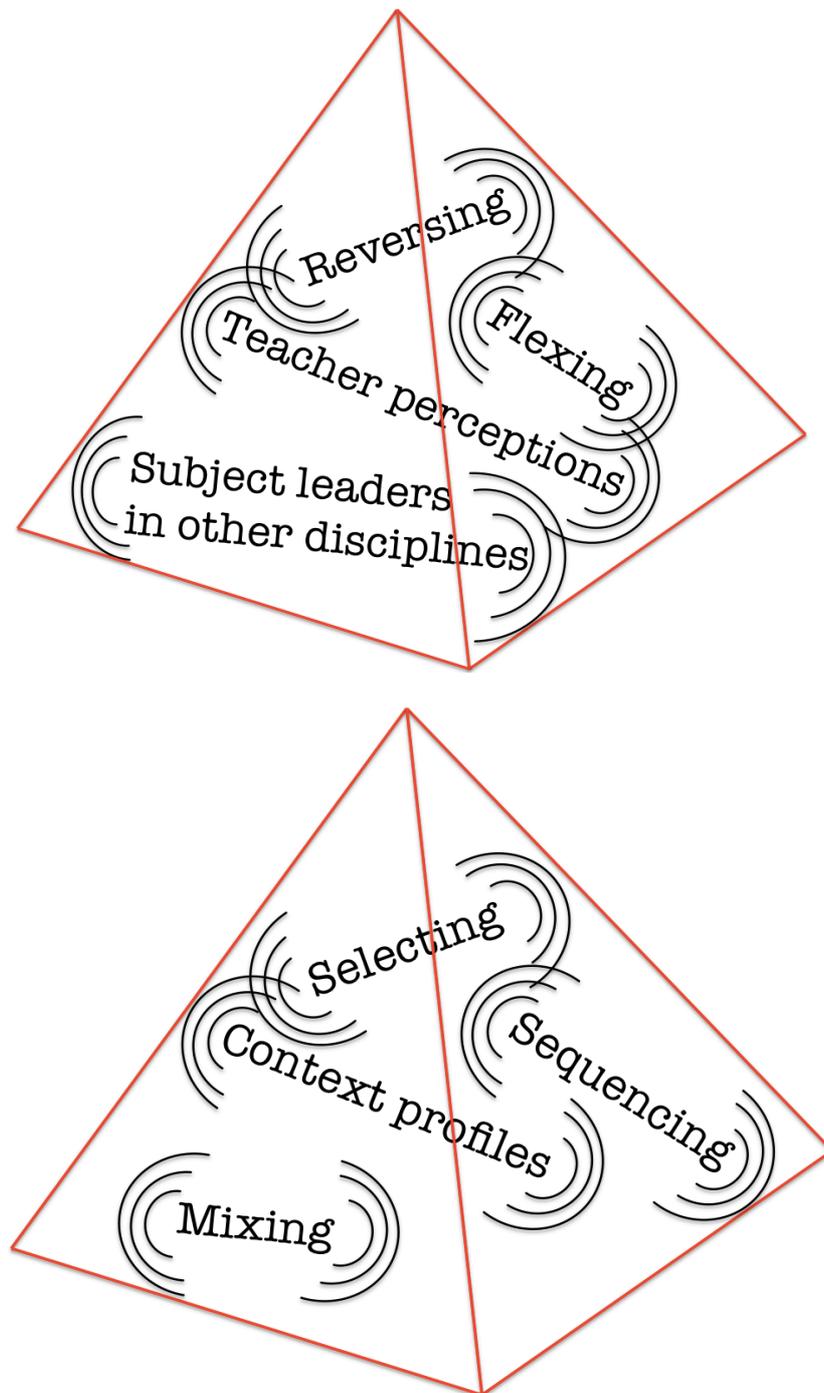


Figure 57: Three-dimensional activity system society models highlighting polyphonies

There are therefore three main areas of polyphony, which emerge from such an analysis, demonstrating free-form movement of conceptual concepts within planning activities. My research thus indicates the following zones of emerging polyphony, or semi-polyphony, within which conceptual concepts are colliding:



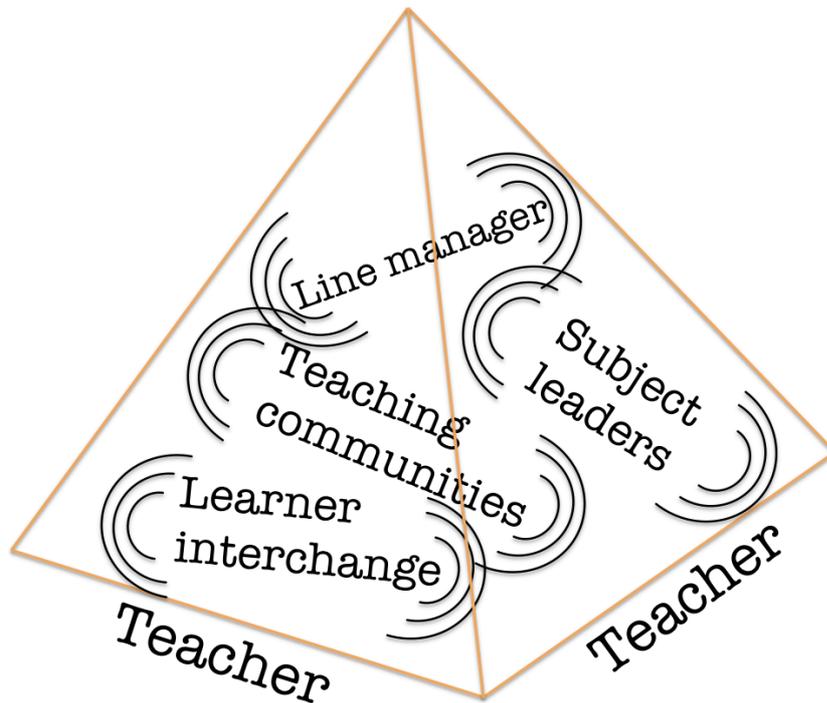


Figure 58: Zones of emerging polyphony in three-dimensional activity societies

The manner in which these notions interact for teachers conceptualising their curriculum, is therefore highly complex, and indicates intricate planes of cognition, which are required to design curricula.

The methodologies of *epistemic ascent*, *radically modified grounded theory* and *activity theory*, have guided my research modelling and researcher identity. In the chapter that follows, I will expand and explain the methods that I utilised to conduct my fieldwork, including processes and procedures that have elucidated my data. These will explore strands of my research work, and my approach to research validity and consistency.

## 7. Methods

My research methods were chosen to enable themes to emerge from teacher practice without predetermining findings. I sought to explore teacher research participant practice in naturalistic settings, and to bring research methods to bear in a nuanced narrative. This section therefore begins by discussing the positionality of my own research paradigm, mixed methods research, and case study approaches and how this is placed within my research design. There then follows a discussion of ethical considerations for conducting my research. Then I move to discussing issues regarding how I address the Hawthorne effect, and my approach to triangulation.

In order to clearly establish domains of my research, I then consider and define what I mean by a *Programme of Study* in the KS3 Music curriculum, and how I defined my research sample. This is followed by a discussion of each of my research stands, beginning with my pilot studies and then moving into the main study of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, my *think aloud protocols* activities, observations and documentary analyses. I conclude this chapter with my approach to elite interviews, which I included in my research design, and how I incorporated these into my final analysis.

### 7.1 Research paradigm

My paradigm primarily adopted an interpretivist position, which focused on meanings that individuals bring and use to understand the world (Punch, 2011). Such an approach is consistent with practices of music teachers, with its emphasis on individually realised knowledge, and formed the core of my research questions - namely, how secondary music teachers plan musical knowledge for musical learning in the selection of their musical material for classroom study; how they sequence such material; and how they are enabled to realise these processes. As music teacher approaches were anticipated to demonstrate variance (the extent of which could not be determined prior to the research) an interpretivist paradigm allowed for

such complexities to find a voice. The research did not take a positivist position of a scientific mode hypothesis for testing (Creswell, 2009) and used limited amounts of quantitative data, hence my use of *radically modified grounded theory* methodology. Neither is my paradigm post-modern, in which meaning is constructed at subsequent incidental moments (Lyotard, 1979). An interpretivist paradigm allows for individual responses to speak in case study research, and there is considerable precedent for its use in Arts educational research (Kinsella, 2014; Dalladay, 2014; Thorpe, 2015).

## **7.2 Mixed Methods**

In order to endeavour to adequately explore social settings of classrooms, and teacher interaction within this space through curriculum design, my research adopted a mixed methods approach. This drew together a range of research modalities and allowed for inclusive perspectives as part of the study. In his discussions of mixed methods, Newby describes mixed methods as, “breaking other people’s rules and replacing them with our own” (2010;48). Yin (2009) suggests that mixed method research enables more complex research questions and a greater array of evidence, whilst Cohen *et al.* (2007) suggest that to uncover organisational cultures of schools, a mixed methods approach is most effective. I therefore used a mixed methods approach to facilitate the drawing of data from different origins, and not only one source, enabling its collation from differing contexts (*documentary analysis* from participants conceptualising according to their own frameworks of musical education, and *classroom observations* where such frameworks were enacted, for example). A mixed methods approach was also most suited to classroom settings, which are complex social environments (Kinsella, 2017), and therefore facilitated appropriate theoretical sensitivity (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

An overview of my mixed methods research approach, divided into qualitative and quantitative aspects is given in the table below:

<b>Research element</b>	<b>Research paradigm</b>
<i>Pilot Study Part 1</i> : Programme of Study data collection and analysis in 4 schools	Qualitative and quantitative
On-line questionnaire of 64 secondary Music teachers	Qualitative and quantitative
<i>Pilot Study Part 2</i> : Music teacher semi-structured interview	Qualitative
<i>Think aloud protocols</i> activity	Quantitative and qualitative
<i>Pilot Study Part 3</i> : Music teacher semi-structured interview	Qualitative
<i>Think aloud protocols</i> activity	Quantitative and qualitative
Classroom observation	Qualitative
<i>Main Study</i> : Music teacher semi-structured interviews in 7 schools	Qualitative
<i>Think aloud protocols</i> activities	Quantitative and qualitative
Classroom observations	Qualitative
Documentary analysis of Programmes of Study	Quantitative and qualitative
Elite interview 1	Qualitative
Elite interview 2	Qualitative

*Table 4: Overview of case study research paradigms*

*Programmes of Study* were analysed from multiple perspectives (for example, considering frequency of topic types and choice of topics), and so were subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The on-line questionnaire was analysed quantitatively where there were closed responses, and qualitatively where there were opportunities for open responses, each structure determining the choice of methodological tool. Semi-structured interviews were analysed using a qualitative modality due to rich data that emanated from their text-based form. Elite interviews were treated in a congruent analytical manner, due to their comparable format and illuminative purpose. The *think aloud protocols activity* received a primarily quantitative analysis, in a quest for emerging patterns in curriculum design practices. There were, however, elements of qualitative analysis in this aspect of the research (for instance the manner in which teachers physically arranged their responses). Observations were entirely qualitative in analysis method, as they acted as a form of

verification for interview data and not as discrete methods. Observations were included with the intention of uncovering emergence of previously unrecognised patterns.

### **7.3 Case study**

Within my mixed method approach, I chose the case study as the overarching structure for my research design methods, due to the manner in which it enables a study of complexity based on human interactions. The characteristics of research case studies has been explained as a method for studying social phenomena through an individual case (Theordorson, 1969), and more specifically for recognising existing complexity from within an individual context (Punch, 2011). It is generally understood as a “specific instance” (Cohen *et al.*, 2007), from which findings can be developed; what Denscombe described as: “illuminating the general by looking at the particular” (2007; 36). Newby later suggested that case studies were active agents in research, in that they identified what he described as, “critical incidents” which then acted as “decision points for change” (2010; 115). I chose to use a case study method as it enabled a contextual approach, which preserved naturalistic settings, allowing for complexity to emerge organically from data. Thus it “preserves the character of the object being studied” (Goode and Hatt, 1952; 330) and enables understanding, analysis and conceptualisation from “real-life phenomena in depth” (Yin, 2009; 18), or what Denscombe describes as “complexity and subtlety” in real life (2007; 38).

My case study is set in classroom contexts, with the aim of theory building (Denscombe, 2007). My study seeks to uncover practices of music teacher curriculum design, through semi-structured interviews, interview activities, documentary analysis, questionnaires and observation. It is therefore a multiple-case study, researching practice in 9 different school contexts, but exploring

converging practices and themes. This creates a more compelling (Yin, 2009) research narrative, which authentically represents teacher and learner experience.

There have been multiple endeavours to describe attributes of case study methods in research. Yin (1984) defined case studies as *exploratory* (as in the case of a pilot project), *descriptive*, or *explanatory*. Stake (1994), later described case studies as embodying either: *intrinsic aspects* (focused on improving the notion of a case), *instrumental aspects* (centred on using a case to refine a theory) or *collective* (a concentration of several cases which refine a theory). Denscombe (2007) defined case study attributes as providing either accounts of *events*, *relationship*, *experience* or *processes* occurring within a study. Punch (2011) was more prescriptive, locating operations of case study research within a *bounded system*, in which there is an attempt to preserve the unity of a case from multiple sources of data, and data collection methods. My case study research takes aspects of all of these and blends them together to create my research method approach which is: *intrinsic*, as it seeks to improve understanding of the case (music teacher curriculum design perceptions); *descriptive* and *explanatory* (setting out curriculum design landscapes and seeking to interpret results); seeks to understand *relationships* (between interactive processes of music curriculum planning) and is consistent in its attempt to preserve unity between the *individual cases* which make up the *multiple case study* approach (use of the same methods processes and data collection procedures).

Generalising from case studies can be problematic. Yin (2009) cautions against regarding case studies as “sampling units” (2009; 38), arguing instead for analytic generalisation, in which previously developed models enable comparisons between research case studies. Punch (2011) acknowledges problems generalising from case studies, but argues that it is possible through conceptualising and developing propositions. Denscombe (2007) cites the credibility of generalisations as one of the

disadvantages of case study research, but argues that limited generalisation is possible, in that each case can be an example of a “broader class of things” (2007; 62). My approach to generalising is that I will be doing so as defined by boundaries of the case study school contexts I researched. However, I hope that the findings will find a wider application in the sense of illumination only: “a specific instance to illustrate a more general principle” (Cohen *et al.* 2007; 253). This complexity is problematic for interpretation of data, but also provides a valuable depth of understanding: Cohen *et al.*, describe this as the simultaneous “glory and headache” of qualitative data (2007; 461). It is for fascinating complexities that seek to describe and explore real life experiences and actions, and opportunities to understand and interpret these, and patterns they suggest, that I have chosen the case study method.

#### **7.4 Research design**

My research methodology was, to use (Cohen *et al.*, 2007)’s terminology, *operationalised* in a research design that sought to access the thinking of secondary music teachers in the differing modes and actions of curriculum design for their KS3 Music classes. My research design is therefore presented visually in *figure 59*:

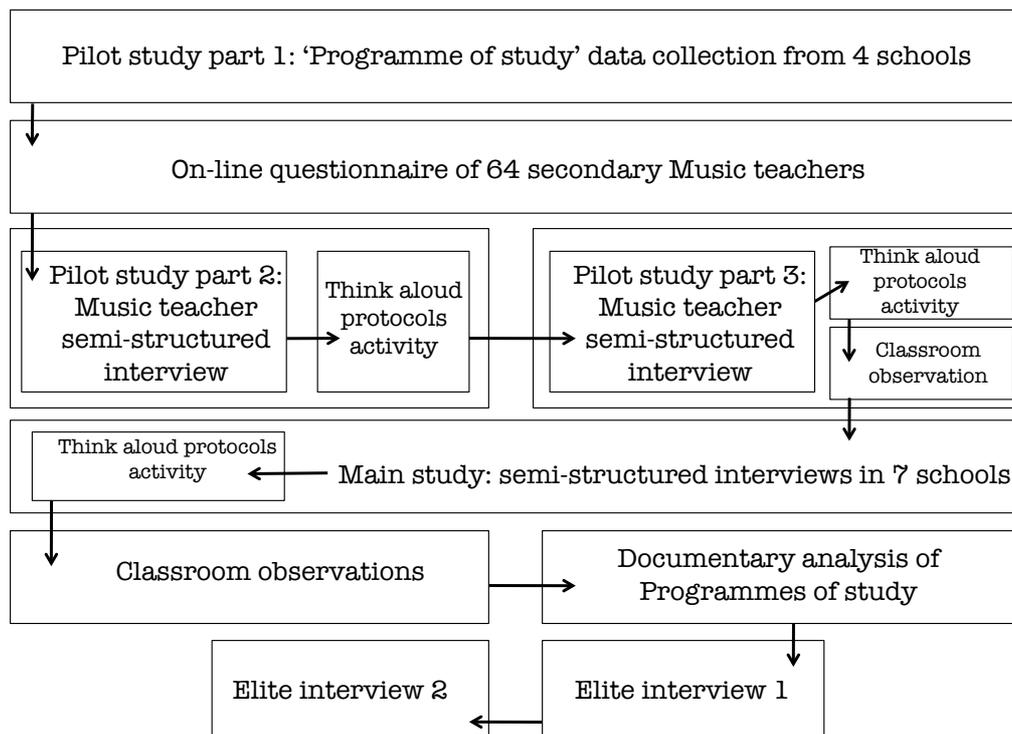


Figure 59: Summary of research design

The details of elements of my research design will be explained in the sections below. My intention behind my research design was to reveal hidden curriculum practice (Jackson, 1968; Valance, 1973; Pollard and Triggs, 1997; Lamont, 2002; Froehlich and Hildegard, 2007; Kelly, 2009), through a range of data, which included: documentary analysis, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, a design activity which formed a section of interviews, classroom observations and two further elite interviews: one with a prominent academic and one with a senior Ofsted inspector. This combination of approaches was adopted to reveal and align interpretations of curriculum as *communicated to learners* (documentary analysis of 'Programmes of Study'); curriculum as *conceptualised and understood by teachers* (semi-structured interviews and think aloud protocols activity); curriculum as *implemented in the classroom* (classroom observations); and curriculum as *understood by senior educationalists* who were no longer working as *prima facie* classroom music teachers, although they had once done so (elite interviews). The research design therefore suits research purposes (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

The research tools for analysis as outlined in my methodology, map onto my research design thus:

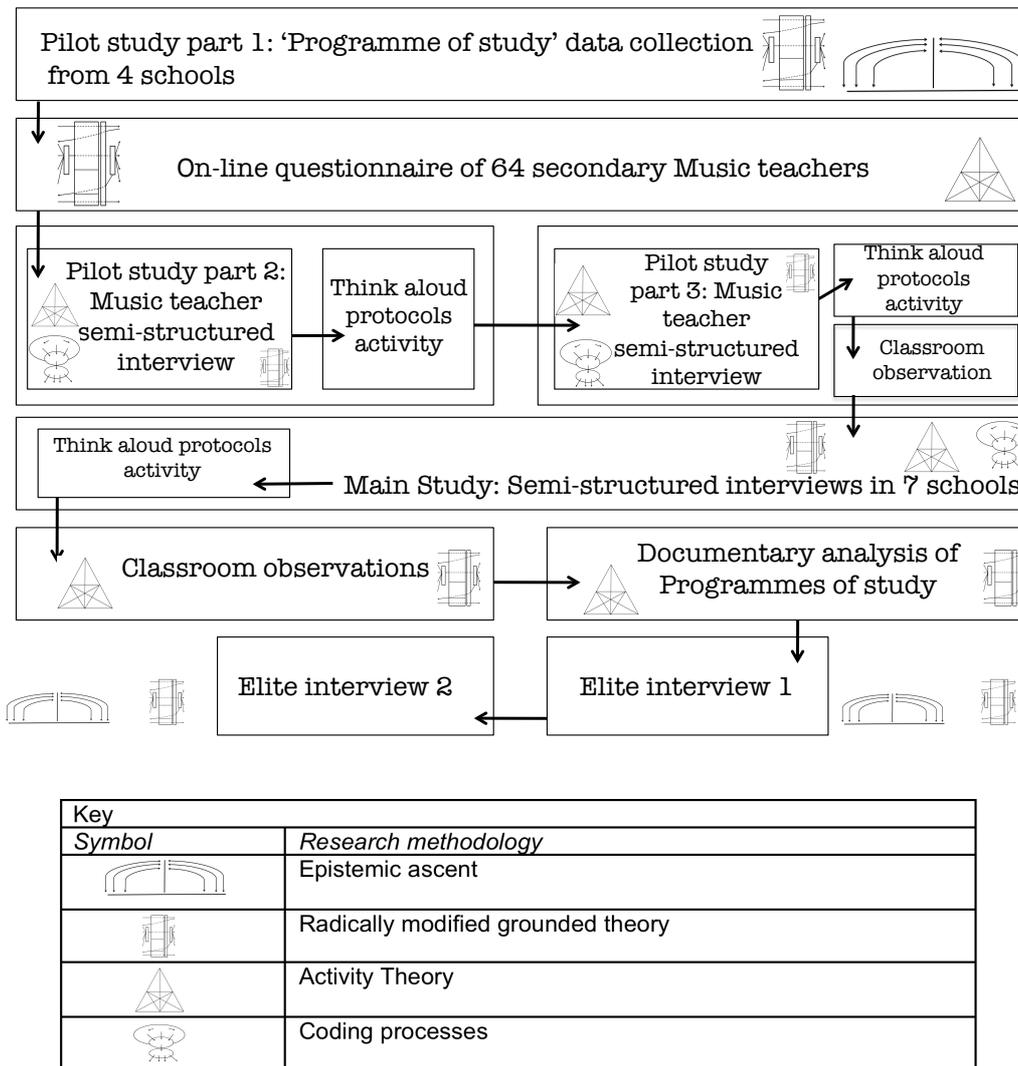


Figure 60: Mapping of research tools onto research design

At each stage of my research design, research methods were informed by research methodology, and were aligned in a consistent research perspective. These principles guided the structure of the study to enable the data to be understood within naturalistic settings.

## 7.5 Ethics

Safety, trust and a considered ethical approach were at all times paramount in the conduct of my research and were embodied within the research design. My research with music teacher participants adopted ethical principles as outlined by Newby

(2010), in that I ensured those participating in my research understood its purposes, why I had asked them to participate, how research data would be used, how identifiable they would be, and the limits of their involvement. These principles were discussed with all participants prior to fieldwork to ensure they were willing to participate in the research study and were informed.

I sought to ensure that the principle of 'no harm' (Denscombe, 2007) was consistently applied in all my researcher interactions in which I endeavoured to treat all participants with respect and professionalism and to ensure that they were in no way disadvantaged as a result of participating in my research. This included rescheduling where necessary due to participant teacher commitments, or offering assurances that research data would not be used in a performance management context, for example. This was significant, as participants may have encountered previously unrecognised vulnerabilities, as they responded to interview questions and discussed their outlook to music curriculum design. I therefore offered regular assurances throughout interviews, that my case study was not formulated according to preconceptions of an idealised curriculum representation, but was seeking to uncover practice in its enriched enactment.

Following from this, my research was also guided by principles of informed consent (Yin, 2009; Miles and Huberman, 1994), so that participants understood: my research questions and why I was undertaking the research; what would be happening at each stage; (*semi-structured interviews, think aloud protocols activity, observations, documentary analysis*); and the reasoning for the inclusion of these research strands. Research participants were assured of anonymity, but not confidentiality (Miles and Huberman, 1994), to ensure that their data was treated respectfully, but also that data was permitted to direct and influence research findings. In elite interviews, research participants were not offered anonymity, but

were assured that the content of the interviews would be available for them to review, and would not be used in any public context outside of this thesis, without their permission. Participants were also assured of the right to withdraw from the research at any stage, and of access to their research contribution, including interview data and curriculum documents supplied for documentary analysis.

Arrangements for fieldwork were consistently formed in an ethically congruent manner. The timing of research visits was always at the control of the participants, and there was never any expectation from me that these would proceed if inappropriately scheduled. For example, the date I had arranged to visit one school, unexpectedly coincided with an Ofsted inspection. In this instance, the interview still went ahead, at the teacher participant's request, although I had frequently offered to cancel the visit and to rearrange the fieldwork. In this case, my presence appeared to reassure the teacher participant, rather than to cause additional anxiety, and so the interview was judged to be ethically appropriate.

The location of the interviews was also an important consideration. Interviews took place in naturalistic school settings, but in environments where teachers were comfortable and had self-selected (sometimes classrooms, sometimes side-rooms connected to classrooms, sometimes in private conference rooms). It was important that the teacher was not concerned about being overheard, but felt able to respond openly to interview questions and activities. Where teachers expressed any concern about disclosure of their perspectives, I suggested a reschedule or worked with the teacher to find a suitable private location within the school, and reminded them of their right to withdraw from the research at any time and verified if they wished to continue.

Classroom observations also required careful ethical consideration. As an observer, I did not interact, speak or engage with young people within any classes, to ensure I did not infringe on the category of my ethical approval. I also ensured that I communicated to teacher participants that observations were *classroom* observations, not *lesson* observations, and would be used as a data source for verification of interview responses, not as part of any kind of judgement or performative process. I commented on lessons when requested by teachers, in the context of a welcomed guest, and made no judgement on any classroom activities I had observed. I also ensured that teachers were comfortable with the class observed, and that their selection was not a case of convenience (for example the nearest or soonest class after an interview), but one that teachers had previously selected from amongst their KS3 classes. Through these considerations, I therefore met faculty ethics committee requirements.

### **7.6 Hawthorne effect**

The *Hawthorne effect* occurs when research participants' behaviour is modified, due to their awareness that they are part of an observation process (Newby, 2010). It is sometimes known as the *observer effect* (Denscombe, 2007) and can result in questions of validity if unacknowledged in research. Whilst it was possibly less likely to occur during my research study observations, as there was no end result to be achieved, the Hawthorne effect was a consideration within the semi-structured interviews. In particular, this manifested within the *think aloud protocols* activity, where participants were unsure what outcomes should be and more likely to look to my responses for guidance: for instance, one participant asked whether the answers were on the back of the cards.

In order to mitigate Hawthorne effects, I was careful to use open statements, and not to give examples or preferences to participants. I also repeated comments back to

participants and asked them to verify their statements. These approaches enabled stronger validity constructs in my findings. Examples of this approach are given below:

Participant Comment	My response
"We don't do any of these [topics] in Year 7."	"Try and imagine that you did. You were talking about, earlier on, coming into a department where everything was already set up, so you can use that as a scenario, if you like. Just talk me through what you would do when and why?"
"Okay. Where would I start? Actually I don't know."	"Take your time. If you can just tell me what you're thinking as you do it."
"Okay so these will be a series of topics that I will teach?"	"Yes, if you were going to teach those topics, what order would you put them in and why would you put them into that order?"
"Oh my word!"	"It's nothing to worry about - it's not a test or anything like that."

*Table 5: Think aloud protocols exemplars to mitigate Hawthorne effect*

## 7.7 Triangulation

The Hawthorne effect raises questions of validity, and in seeking to further ensure validity and reliability in my case study research, I adopted a range of foundational approaches for mixed-methods data. These included seeking as far as possible to ensure that my data sets were representative, complete, and transparent (Newby, 2010). For my study I therefore sought to ensure that a range of school contexts were represented, that teacher participants had opportunities to contribute at each stage to enable multiple perspectives, and that methods I used to gather data were clearly set out to participants and in my findings. I also adopted general principles to enable validity, which included research in a naturalistic setting (classroom observation and school-based interviews), descriptive data (memoing and semi-structured interviews), and a research approach that was seeking to uncover cognitive processes, rather than outcomes alone (think aloud protocols activity, for instance) (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

In addition to these background research approaches my research also featured triangulation in its underlying assumptions. Newby (2010) describes triangulation as the collection of data from the same process with more than one individual and as the corroboration of interviews with documentary evidence. I adopted this approach in the selection of my research sample, which used congruent methods with multiple participants (for instance, all participants engaged in a semi-structured interview with a *think aloud protocols* activity) and also in my research design, which included data from multiple sources, each informing the other. For instance, interviews, or questionnaires *alone* did not constitute the data set.

Yin (2009) goes further in asserting that conclusions cannot be solely based on interviews, and identified four types of triangulation: *data sources, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation and methodological triangulation*. My methodology is also triangulated in that it makes use of three methodological approaches. However, it would be errant to consider triangulation as a three-sided model. My methodology and research methods were more complex than this and involved multiple interactions in order to draw research conclusions. It was these multiple interactions, which sought to make visible hidden practices and conceptualisations, and to therefore make sense of an entangled domain of music curriculum design *in operation*. This approach sought to embrace complexity and therefore bring validity to my research findings. Rather than a three-sided model, my approach to triangulation was therefore one of *encirclement*: interacting research elements led to findings, which then required synthesis and refining as part of a connected analysis. The research elements themselves were also interacting, to ensure a robust and non-linear approach to research methods.

My approach to triangulation in my research methods may be represented thus:

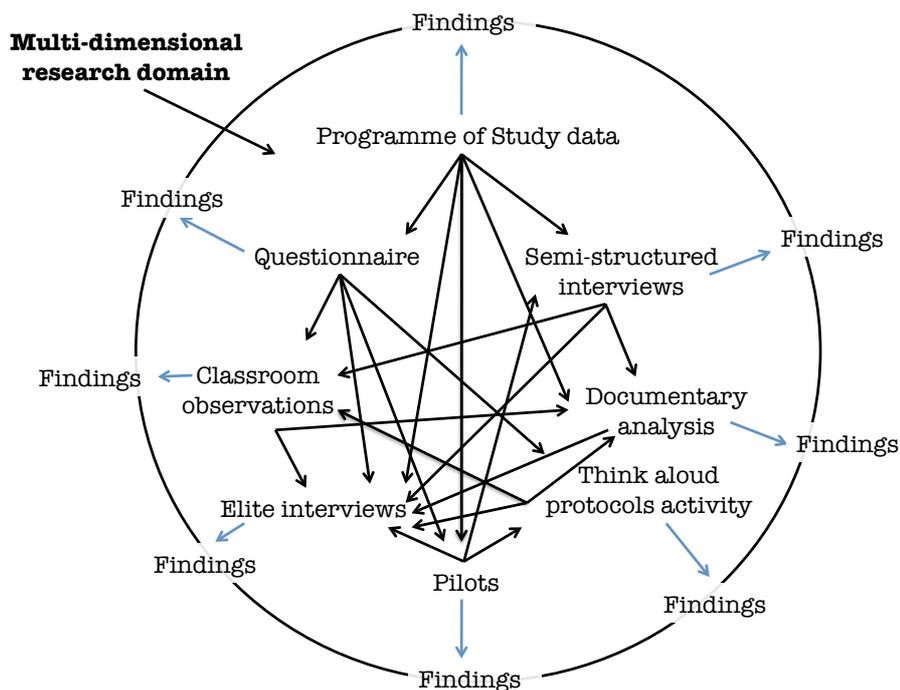


Figure 61: Encirclement triangulation

## 7.8 Programme of Study explanation

Following from these research principles the first part of my *pilot studies* (to be discussed in a separate section below) involved data collection from four schools, which consequently informed my research. This data collection took the form of documentary analysis of Key Stage 3 *Programmes of Study* for Music, primarily in years 7, 8 and 9, but also including year 6, in schools that retained a Key Stage 2 entry. In my thesis a working definition of a *Programme of Study* is:

*A summary document that outlines titles of musical topics, as the basis for teaching and learning content in classroom music lessons. Such a document is categorised into year groups, presented in consecutive layers and includes: sequences in which topics are to be taught, their duration, and their scheduling in the academic year.*

*Programme of Study* documents were common practice for teacher participants of my research, by whom they were generated. They were generally used as a first step towards more detailed teacher planning and provided an overview, which was followed by teachers, sometimes reproduced and given to learners, and also used as evidential documentation to Line Managers of Music Subject Leaders to explain the Key Stage 3 music Curriculum. The topics appearing in this document were almost exclusively organised into discrete areas, of which representative examples included: *the Blues, Minimalism or the Orchestra*. An example of a *Programme of Study* from this pilot data collection is given below:

<u>Year/teacher</u>	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	
	Calypso/Ternary Form	Calypso/Ternary form (Jammin' with Chordds)	Musical Cycles. Gamelan and African Drumming	Musical Cycles. Gamelan and African Drumming	Music for an occasion/purpose	Music for an occasion/purpose
7 – Teacher 1	Carnival of the Animals Pictures at an Exhibition	Carnival of the Animals Pictures at an Exhibition	Theme and Variations	Theme and Variations	Building Bricks	Building Bricks
8 – Teacher 1	12 Bar Blues/jazz improvisation	12 Bar Blues/Jazz improvisation (Rock 'n Roll)	Garageband/ Song Structure	Garageband/Song Structure (Samba)	Film Music Mystery/nervous/ Action adventure	Film Music. Mystery/nervous/ Action adventure
8 – Teacher 2	Magic of the Musicals Magic and Mystery Hooks and Riffs	Magic of the Musicals Magic and Mystery Hooks and Riffs	Folk music Rap and Minimalism	Folk music. Rap and Minimalism	Concerto	Concerto
9 – Teacher 1	Music and media	Music and Media	Song Writing	Song Writing	Music and media	Project/presentation work.
9 – Teacher 2			Song Writing	Song Writing		

Table 6: Example of Programme of Study taken from Pilot study 1

Whilst it is possible to accurately surmise *general* content from these topic titles (e.g. 'Ternary' in *Table 6* would involve a discussion of structure, in which there is a contrasting middle section bookended by a main theme and its development into a coda, for example), specific content is not evident from documentation alone. In some instances, topics could have multiple meanings, such as 'weather report' in *Table 6*, which could consist of multiple musical elements, approaches or foci, and perhaps even the jazz funk fusion band! This was a further rationale for my method of combining documentary analysis with semi-structured interviews, which allowed for interrogation and clarification of content. There was wide-ranging teacher practice in how *Programmes of Study* were designed, and there was no one agreed template, which was a further layer of complexity explored as part of participant interviews.

Analysis of *Programmes of Study* was also multi-faceted. My analysis included consideration of musical categories, congruent practice between research participants, temporal approaches to teaching and learning (how much classroom time was allocated for each topic and how this was developed across the key stage), and analysis of progression and how this was embodied within *Programmes of Study* documentation. Understanding substances of *Programmes of Study* and how they represented musical learning, was therefore a significant area for consideration in my research approach, and a range of practice was evident from participants in my research sample.

## **7.9 Research Sample**

My research study took place between December 2012 and July 2013, ensuring that it was temporally bounded and therefore consistent in educational context. Schools were selected in order to ensure maximum variation sampling, in terms of their size, Pupil Premium profile, Special Educational Needs and ethnic origins. There was a

wide range of school participants in all these areas, ensuring that no one type of school context was privileged over another.

The research was based in schools in Birmingham and Leicestershire, and research participant music teachers were of different genders and ages, which ranged from early career teachers to those close to retirement. Teaching background also demonstrated variance across the research sample and included those who had worked in fields of popular music and music technology, to those who were classically trained; and included conventional routes into music teaching (e.g. Music A-level and Music degree) to less conventional ones (e.g. no Music degree or primary teacher training before transferring to the secondary school sector at a later date).

There was therefore a wide spread of teacher background, training and experience, age-range and school context. This was to ensure that research was suitably representative, giving access and releasing tacit narratives of curriculum design as conceptualised and realised by a range of secondary classroom music teachers.

*Table 7* and *table 8* give a more detailed representation of school participants engaged in my research and their contextual profiles:

School	Size	Pupil Premium	Special Educational Needs	Minority Ethnic backgrounds
<i>Pilot study 2 school</i>				
A	Larger than average	Significantly higher than average	Lower than average	Lower than average
<i>Pilot study 3 school</i>				
B	Larger than average	Higher than average	Average	Almost all
<i>Main study schools</i>				
C	Larger than average	Lower than average	Higher than average	Lower than average
D	Smaller than average	Lower than average	Lower than average	Higher than average
E	Larger than average	Lower than average	Lower than average	Lower than average
F	Smaller than average	Higher than average	Average	Significantly higher than average
G	Smaller than average	Lower than average	Slightly higher than average	Significantly lower than average
H	Significantly smaller than average	Lower than average	Lower than average	Almost none
I	Larger than average	Higher than average	Lower than average	Significantly higher than average

**Key:**

Colour	Gradation
	Very significantly above average
	Significantly above average
	Average
	Lower than average
	Significantly lower than average
	Very significantly lower than average

*Table 7: School research sample for Pilot study 1, Pilot study 2 and Main study*

School	Gender	Approximate Age	Background
<i>Pilot study 2 school</i>			
A	Female	30	Data not gathered
<i>Pilot study 3 school</i>			
B	Male	32	Conservatoire
Main study schools			
C	Female	55	Education degree
D	Female	28	Contemporary Music degree
E	Female	26	Conservatoire
F	Male	45	Education degree in Primary Music
G	Female	32	Russell Group
H	Female	50	Education degree
I	Male	35	Self-taught

*Table 8: Teacher participant research sample, with colours to indicate areas of congruence*

## 7.10 Pilot Studies structure

My pilot studies were an essential element of my research design, as I honed and refined my research elements, thus enabling a rich capture of data. The pilot studies facilitated conceptual clarification and improved question formation (Yin, 2009), thus informing the research project as a whole. The pilot studies of my research were structured into several developmental sections, which facilitated refinement of research process methods.

*Pilot study part 1* consisted of data collection of *Programmes of Study* from a selection of four schools, chosen to demonstrate maximum variation sampling (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007) to ensure that data was representative. This data then informed the construction of an on-line questionnaire completed by 64 teachers, identifying common patterns and uses of musical learning domains (e.g. it enabled identification of names of frequently occurring topics in the questionnaire).

*Pilot study part 2* consisted of a semi-structured interview with a music teacher participant, which sought to explore in greater depth some of the clusters of responses emerging from initial questionnaire analysis. (E.g. question 10 of the

questionnaire asked about repeating topics to develop learning. This was developed in the semi-structured interview pilot by asking the research participant about whether they taught different topics simultaneously within a year group; whether they adapted their curriculum for different learners; and to elucidate their thinking behind these curriculum choices). Topics for the think aloud protocols task were also trialled at this stage.

*Pilot study part 3* repeated congruent structures for semi-structured interviews as employed in *pilot study part 2*, enabling further clarification, and the think aloud protocols activity was also repeated. However, in addition, a classroom observation was added for verification of music teacher participant responses given during the semi-structured interview. This looked for moments of synchronous activity that aligned with interview responses in observation techniques, including memoing (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) relating to the classroom environment.

Following *Pilot study part 3*, changes were made to interview questions, which were refined, reordered and expanded. For example, a preamble question was added at the beginning of each interview, enabling music teacher participant reflections during the interview process, which allowed for more specific coverage of music teacher background and experience. This then informed interpretation of designs of music teacher curricula in my analysis. Classroom observations were also established as a protocol. For example, notes were made only after the sessions to allow for a saturative observation experience (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and to avoid notions of power imbalances between researcher, teacher and classroom learners.

### **7.11 Questionnaires**

Following from initial data collection for my *Pilot study (part 1)*, I interrogated

*Programmes of Study* collected, and used these to identify areas revealing more

complex data, and applied this as the basis for the design of my questionnaire. The questionnaire used a variety of closed questions to permit significant scope, and open questions to facilitate significant sophistication of response; approaches which Newby (2010) describes as the distinction between lots of data and rich data. Questionnaires are bounded by their structures: they do not enable safeguards on the truthfulness of respondents or an opportunity to explore disparities (Denscombe, 2007); the way a question is phrased affects responses (Newby, 2010) and the sample size needs to be significant enough to draw comparisons: Newby (2010), suggests that the sample size should be at least 30 for comparative data to be significant). In order to permit appropriately valid responses, I sought to keep questions closely related to professional practice and as contextually accurate as possible, extracting learning domains from *Programmes of Study* in my initial data collection, for example. I chose phraseology carefully drawn from my own teacher experience, and included a range of open and closed questions, to provide opportunities for teachers to clarify their responses. My research sample consisted of a significant number of respondents:  $n = 64$  (Newby suggests at least 30 respondents is needed for questionnaire findings to be regarded as significant (2010; 331)). The questionnaire was publicised in internet forums including the *Times Educational Supplement (TES)* and the government funded *Teaching Music* website. It was also made available to teachers via local authorities (e.g. Leicestershire and Hampshire) and at music education events (e.g. Leicestershire network meetings). Responses to the *TES* forum also led to a forum discussion regarding topics which forum members used in their lessons, which further illuminated my data collection.

The questionnaire was structured in five sections: *thinking and training in music curriculum design; putting a curriculum together; timings; ordering musical learning and duration*. Each section was designed to reveal teacher thinking and practice beginning with conceptual parameters and progressing to how individuals might

realise this for their classes. There were twenty questions in which participants indicated their approaches from options, or provided reasons to support their thinking. The survey was completed using the *Bristol On-Line Surveys* (BOS) software, as this was a suitable tool to which BCU subscribes, which enabled electronic capture and interrogation of data. The survey was made available to participants between 9<sup>th</sup> January and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013. BOS was used as an analysis tool to interpret survey results and to present findings in histogram charts:

<b>4. Is your music curriculum and whole-school curriculum linked?</b>			
Yes:		45.3%	29
No:		54.7%	35
<b>4.a. If yes - In what way?</b>			
- There are too many responses to display on this page and so all the responses to this question are available on a separate page.			

1/31/13

Survey administration - Bristol Online Surveys

### Results For Question 4.a.

<b>4.a. If yes - In what way?</b>
Aims
All departments looked at the topics they want/need to cover and where there are links between topics this is highlighted
Always cross curricular references in schemes of work as are plts and smcs
Assessment procedures
Common themes at KS3 for example, Me, War and Conflict, World
Common themes explored: African Music, Medieval Music ....
Creative arts curriculum - draws upon proper links to music in other subjects
Cross curricular topics/schemes of work
Emphasis on challenge for all
has to have a literacy focus

Figure 62: Open and closed questionnaire styles

(Detailed discussion of questionnaire responses will be presented in the *Findings and Discussion* section of this thesis in my next chapter.)

## 7.12 Semi-structured Interviews

In designing my interviews, I chose to use a semi-structured approach to enable a significant quantity of data rich responses from teacher participants. Semi-structured interviews allow for researchers to interrogate areas related to research questions, whilst granting the liberty of pursuing interesting responses as they are made by

participants. Denscombe describes this as “open-ended” (2007; 113), enabling participants to expand on areas of significance for them. This approach enabled my research participants to be confident within a structure, whilst also allowing for disclosure of their intentions and rationales, which often occurred at the end of interviews, when I asked participants for any other comments they would like to make in the area of music curriculum design.

I conducted two semi-structured interviews as part of my pilot study, each consisting of approximately 24 questions. (As this depended on participant response, and due to the semi-structured nature of the interview, this exhibited some variance). The first pilot study interview lasted for 57 minutes, and the second for 53 minutes. As part of my main study I conducted a further 7 interviews, each consisting of approximately 28 questions and once again depending on participant response and the semi-structured nature of the interview, this demonstrated some variance. The main study interviews lasted for an arithmetic mean of 51 minutes, with the shortest interview lasting 35 minutes and 50 seconds and the longest interview duration consisting of 63 minutes and 46 seconds.

Interviews were transcribed and interrogated using coding processes based on *radically modified grounded theory* techniques as described in the methodology section of this thesis. Coding was in a three stage process: *descriptive coding* (or *open coding* as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967)); *modified values coding* and *simultaneous coding* fed into initial coding processes, which were then analysed using *focused coding* (Saldaña, 2009), see *figure 34*.

*Descriptive coding* describes a process which summarises and describes themes arising from data; *modified values coding* depicts analysis of research participants' worldview, as revealed in their comments and assertions; *simultaneous coding*

represents concurrent use of at least two coding techniques; and *focused coding* looks for significant codes to develop into categories (Saldaña, 2009).

An example of the coding of interviews is given below in *figure 63*, where colours represent different emergent themes arising from interview data:

Interviewer: Okay. Still just thinking all around the curriculum which is what we'll be thinking about in the interview, I'm just wondering if you've had any training in designing a curriculum?

Interviewee: Yes, a little bit. When we were doing the... then the 2008 curriculum launch came out and the whole thing about planning and all that kind of thing. In terms of what topics I taught, not really. I just kind of trial ideas. Things that I know that would work. I've tried... I mean I've changed my schemes of work loads of times. I've done loads of different ones. I've tried ideas, find out what works and then maybe try something else and see what works and then you kind of get an idea of where you needed to go and what skills you need them to learn by the end of the year and how you're going to do it. And it's really... no I wouldn't say I've had masses of training, bits and bobs in networks and things like that and talking about it. When we did the

*Annotations:*  
 - Red: planning mentioned!, How does teacher determine this?  
 - Pink: planning mentioned!, Trialling ideas and skills emerge as key.  
 - Blue: Progress here determined by trial and error and teacher's evaluation of success.  
 - Green: SLT needs analysis  
 - Red: Trial ideas and skills development Curriculum construction.

Figure 63: Example of colour data coding

In this example: **red** indicated teacher approaches to designing a curriculum; **pink** indicated areas considered by this teacher to be the key elements of a music education; **blue** indicated how the teacher planned for progress; and **green** indicated the expectation of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT). These themes became visible as they emerged from the data and were not pre-determined.

This coding was gradually refined through successive focused coding cycles to establish common core perceptions in music curriculum design, amongst the participants of my research, as set out in the findings chapter of this thesis. Analysis was also made of indicators of under-confidence in teacher responses.

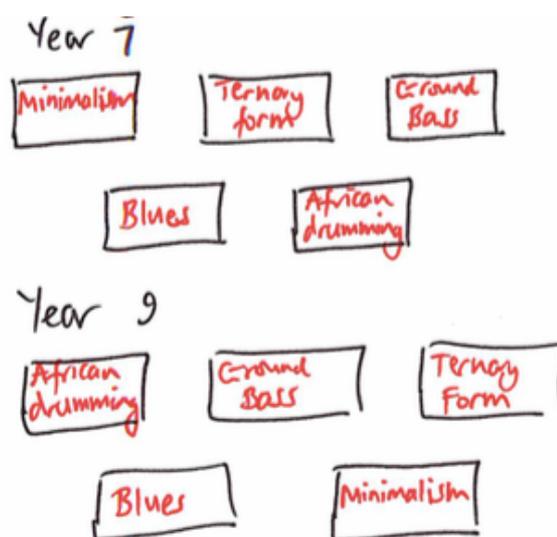
### 7.13 Think aloud protocols

*Think aloud protocols* has been defined as “a research procedure to identify psychological processes” (Richardson and Whittaker, 1996), although I would regard its use as more than a *procedure*: it is, in essence, a *method* to access research

participants' tacit assumptions, and realised cognitive structures. As part of my semi-structured interviews, I included a *think aloud protocols* (TAP) activity as a method to understand processes of music curriculum design and what occurs during critical incidents of teacher planning. The TAP activity therefore sought to uncover practices in curriculum design, by asking participants to enact planning scenarios in which they vocalised their thinking during a task. The research intention in asking teachers to engage with the TAP activity, was to illuminate significant factors that participant teachers take into account during enactments of curriculum design and choices and reasoning that occupy their conceptual space. Its inclusion was designed to reveal whether there were common planning themes, or whether design of KS3 music curricula demonstrated variance. My TAP activity occurred during semi-structured interviews, and therefore is an example of a concurrent protocol (Ericsson and Simon, 1993).

Such an activity is sometimes referred to as "think aloud interviews" (Newby, 2010; 340) and has precedent in research that seeks to uncover complex cognitive processes. For example, thinking as a process has been explored in research with chess players by Frey, who refers to this technique as "thinking-aloud protocols" (Frey 1983; 183) and uses it to explore the psychology of human thinking in chess mastery. There is also precedent for this technique in music research, although this is most frequently as a means for understanding qualities of aesthetic aspects of music and musical choices of preference, such as in composition (Sloboda, 1985; Crozier, 1974; Smith and Cuddy, 1986; Reitman, 1965). TAP has also been used in music education, but not as a tool to understand curriculum design processes, and its use as a *level 3 procedure* (Ericsson and Simon, 1993) in which participants explain concepts and internal narratives, remains a method that is seldom deployed.

The activity was constructed using a range of frequently occurring music curriculum topics, as they arose from teacher responses to the on-line questionnaire. I included a wider range of topics from the 17<sup>th</sup> (*Sonata form*) to the first (*the Blues*) most frequently occurring in my questionnaire data. This rationale helped to ensure that teacher participants were not overly familiar with all topics, and therefore required their cognitive concentration and accompanying illuminating commentary and engagement with the activity. These topics were then represented as cards, which participants arranged in sequences in which they would teach them, first for a year 7, and then for a year 9 class. As well as commentaries, which were recorded and transcribed, the sequencing of the cards was recorded in a template and a sketch also made of their arrangement (see *figure 64* below):



*Figure 64: Example of arrangement of cards in TAPS activity*

Interview questions were based around exploring reasons for these choices and identifying differences and similarities between year groups.

In order to understand if there were emerging patterns, topics and their sequencing were then collated, and analysed in *post-hoc testing*, to reveal statistical significance.

The *Friedman Anova* test (Field, 2017) was applied to data, comparing multiple pairs using *SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science)* software to reveal statistical significance between topic relationships. Newby (2010) suggests that the Friedman Anova test is a valuable tool for comparing multiple data sets, and although there are complexities in the manner in which some teachers arranged their cards (discussed in the *Findings* section of this thesis, where the details of its application will also be elucidated), it is in this concurrent analysis of data that the test is valuable for my research context of multiple school practitioners.

#### **7.14 Classroom observations**

Observations were a key tenet in verification of interview data. They allowed for a naturalistic analysis and comparison between teacher participants' interview responses, and teacher participants' practice, enabling a holistic viewpoint (Newby, 2010). Therefore, whilst not as reliable as speech originated research (Newby, 2010), due to their dependence on interpretive analysis and lack of opportunity for clarification of events, observations provided a valuable opportunity to understand extents to which teacher participant pedagogical principles, as described by teachers, were evident in praxis.

My approach to observation was *open*, rather than *focused*, *structured* or *systematic* (Hopkins, 1993) in that I sought to record activities, responses, environment and critical incidents as they occurred and not in a dependent pre-determined structure, sequence or theme. As part of this process, and as previously mentioned, it was therefore important to communicate to teacher participants that my research observations were not equivalent to *lesson* observations, to which they may have been accustomed from a line-manager or teaching colleague. I therefore chose to refer to these as *classroom observations* rather than *lesson observations* and not to take notes during the session, so as to allow a concentrated and open observation of

events as they developed within classroom spaces. Observation notes were instead recorded immediately at the end of sessions, and before the end of research visits. These observation notes were combined with further contextual notes about visits to create a framework of *radically modified grounded theory serial memoing*, in which reflexive comments informed each phase of the research cycle (see figure 65):

Students work in groups (some share ukes) to play patterns that they have previously learned. Teacher asks some pupils to demonstrate.  
**Supports encouraging children to work together and student voice.**

Recap of how to play chords – interestingly, not combined with singing, although at end of lesson, teacher does demo some Jason Miraz “I’m yours” – if at a rather fast tempo! **Transitions in lesson may reveal transition thinking in *Programme of Study*.**

*Figure 65: Example extract from observation notes*

Observations in my research were confined to one occasion. This means that they were restricted in a time-bound and contextual manner. In addition, they were also researcher dependent, in that I chose what should and should not be recorded. However, my observations functioned as a valuable method to access intent, as expressed and enacted, and enabled comparison between these planning and teaching frameworks.

### **7.15 Documentary Analysis**

Documentary analysis was a final strand of my main study research design, and took place after data collection of other forms, including semi-structured interviews and observations. Whilst Cohen *et al.* (2007) state that the substance of documentary analysis exists in the interpretation of events, in my research context, documentary analysis was also of events yet to be realised in teacher curriculum design, or in a revised and repeated incarnation of a music curriculum plan for Key Stage 3. My documentary analysis considered *Programmes of Study* as authored by music

teacher participants in my research as a means of further understanding music curriculum in operation in their different schools.

*Analysis of Programmes of Study* was based around verification of themes that emerged through semi-structured interviews, and examining correlations between these two strands of my research design. I also analysed documents between schools, looking at topics taught, the number of these in a school year, and the number that recurred. These areas of analysis related to emerging findings from both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews in an attempt to understand commonality or variance between them. The *Programmes of Study* were collected during the same research visits as semi-structured interviews from teachers, to strengthen their plausible authenticity.

In addition, relevant additional materials were collected as data when offered by teachers, and relevant to the research questions of my study. These often consisted of teacher resources used during observations, or additional resources used during a scheme of work, to provide insight into teacher approaches as perceived by that participant teacher. Whilst limited by participant teacher perceptions of what was relevant to the research, these additional documents provided valuable insight into working practices in music curriculum design, and how these were realised as valid practices by teachers. The details of my analysis of these documents, is set out in the *Findings* section of this thesis.

### **7.16 Elite interviews**

Elite interviews were used as the final stage of my fieldwork. I am here using the term *elite* as a means of referring to discrete specialist interviews with additional knowledgeable individuals within the field of music education. This is not therefore an interview of the 'elite' with the associated negotiations for power positioning

(Smith, 2005). The intention of these interviews was to provide further illumination, and inform research results with main study teacher participants. It enabled explorative questioning, in semi-structured interviews around emerging findings, and presented an opportunity to understand how primary lexicons of music education were understood by these more experienced individuals, who had worked in different educational settings, whose experience began with classroom teaching practice.

The elite interviews were not subject to coding in the manner of the primary semi-structured interview research. They rather enabled more extensive exploration of primary research, and facilitated discussions of research finding implications in a research context. In addition, they allowed for clarification of policy in relation to music education in schools, and of academic models that formed part of the theoretical evaluation of the field.

There were two elite interview participants. The first of these was a senior HMI and former National Leader for Music at Ofsted. Questions from this interview included issues related to definition of curriculum and Ofsted's place in contributing to a national curriculum debate. The second participant was June Boyce-Tillman, a senior academic and Professor of Applied Music at Winchester University<sup>1</sup>.

Questions from this interview considered the Swanwick Tillman spiral (Swanwick and Tillman, 1986) (discussed in the literature review of this thesis), and explored the nature of musical development and conceptual gaps in its theorisation.

This chapter has explored methods I employed in my research, and my rationale for these approaches. In order to examine the outcomes of my work, I will now move to

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the prominent nature of the work of June Boyce-Tillman in the Swanwick Tillman spiral (1986), she agreed not to be anonymised in this thesis, on the understanding that interview data would not be used elsewhere without permission.

findings and discussion, which consider both research evidence and implications that this has for understanding curriculum design in secondary school music classrooms and addresses my research questions around musical knowledge, learning, sequencing and enabling of teacher practice in this field.

## Part 3: Findings, Discussion and Conclusions

### 8. Research Findings

Following my consideration of research methods, I now move to a discussion of research findings and reflections on emerging themes and domains. In order to facilitate valid data comparison, I will present each element of my research design in turn, synthesising findings with analysis. I will therefore consider my: three *pilot studies*; on-line *questionnaire*; *semi-structured interviews*; *think aloud protocols* activities; *classroom observations*; *documentary analysis of programmes of study*; and each *elite interview* in turn. After examining each area of data, I will then present a meta-analysis discussion (Davis *et al.*, 2014). This will include findings and implications for developing understanding of musical progress and development, within context school music education contexts.

#### 8.1 *Pilot study 1* findings

In order to enable an informed structure for my on-line questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, my initial research involved data collection of *Programmes of Study* from four schools. These schools were chosen to enable maximum variation sampling (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007) to enable representative data, and to reveal hidden structures in curriculum (Jackson, 1968; Valance, 1973; Pollard and Triggs, 1997; Lamont, 2002; Froehlich and Hildegard, 2007; Kelly, 2009). They are different schools from the main study and were participants only in the *pilot study 1* stage of the research. This approach thus addressed relevant exploration of my research questions, namely how secondary music teachers plan musical knowledge for musical learning at KS3, how they sequence such learning and how they are enabled to undertake this process. Contextual information about these schools is shown in *table 9* below:

School	Size	Pupil Premium	Special Educational Needs	Minority Ethnic backgrounds
Programme of Study Data Collection Schools for <i>Pilot Study 1</i> (n=4)				
1	Larger than average	Higher than average	Average	Almost all
2	Average	Significantly lower than average	Lower than average	Well above average
3	Significantly lower than average	Significantly lower than average	Lower than average	Almost none
4	Larger than average	Significantly higher than average	Lower than average	Lower than average

Key	
Colour	Gradation
	Very significantly above average
	Significantly above average
	Average
	Lower than average
	Significantly lower than average
	Very significantly lower than average

Table 9: School context data for Pilot 1: Programme of Study data collection

The demographic of teacher participants for *pilot study part 1* was also diverse, although educational backgrounds were clustered around traditional music educational forms of training (largely based in music conservatoire models).

School	Gender	Approximate Age	Educational Background
<i>Pilot Study Schools</i>			
1	Male	32	Conservatoire
2	Male	55	General music degree
3	Female	26	Conservatoire
4	Female	30	Data not gathered

Key					
Column 2 colour	Gender	Column 3 colour	Age range	Column 4	Training
	Male		20 - 29		No data
	Female		30 - 39		Traditional
	-		50 - 59		-

Table 10: School context for Pilot study 1: Music teacher background (see table 8, p. 223 for context data of Pilot study 2, Pilot study 3 and Main study schools)

Despite this congruence of educational background, range of topics chosen by these teacher participants demonstrates extremes of variance (see *Figure 66*):

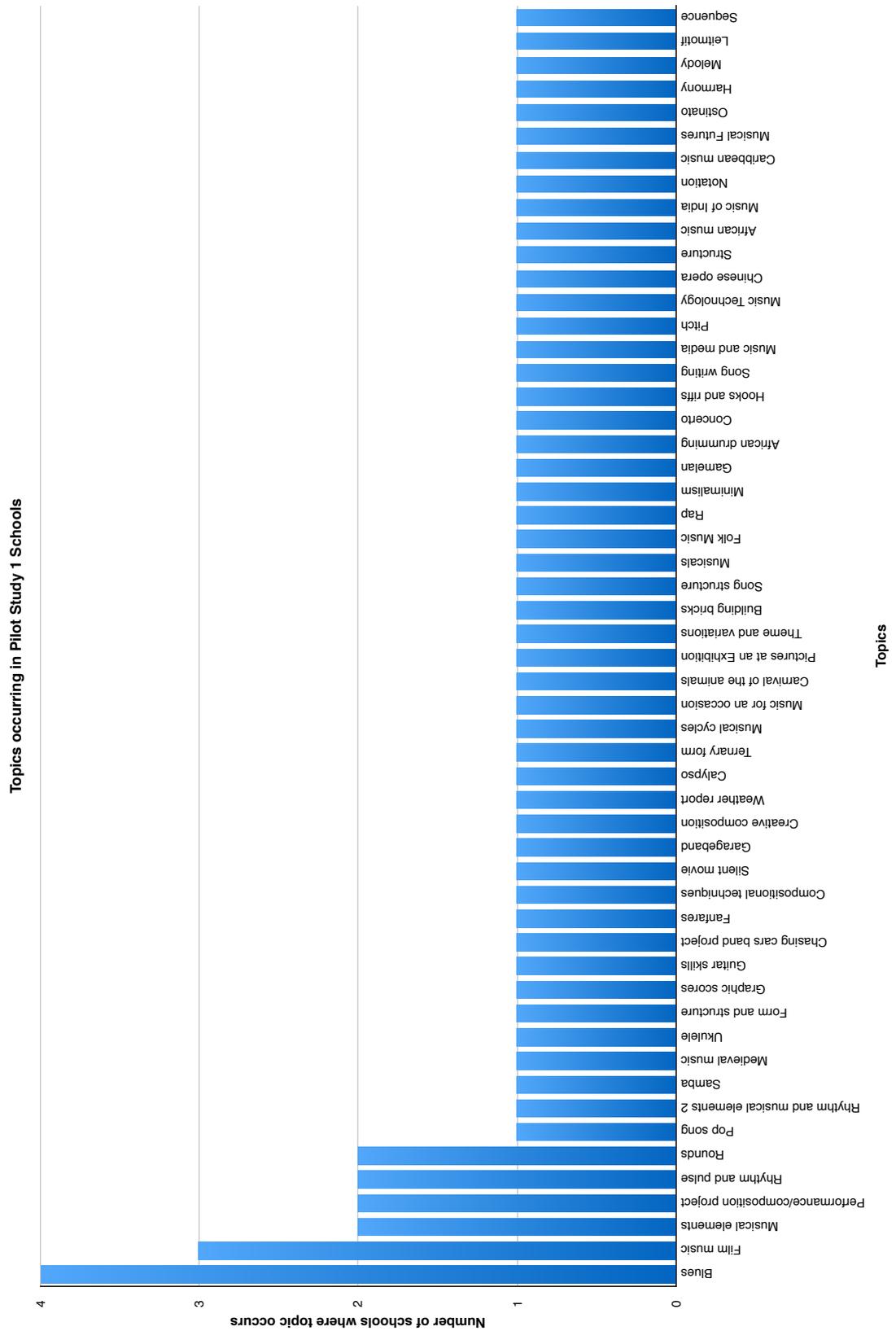


Figure 66: Topics occurring in pilot study 1 schools

Most topics were not repeated, and appeared only once in the four schools from which data was collected, with three out of the four schools in *Pilot study 1* designing a curriculum in which topic frequency was one per half-term. The variance of practices in choices of topics at this initial stage of the research, led to a focus on how musical education was conceptualised by teachers, and aspects that teachers considered to be essential in an effective Key Stage 3 Music classroom experience. Areas in which there was agreement consisted of the *Blues* and *Film Music*, which were the most frequently occurring topics; results which were to be replicated in my main study. *Musical elements, performance and composition projects and rhythm and pulse*, were the next most frequently occurring, which were findings congruent with anticipated responses, due to foundational aspects of *musical elements* (pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure, notations (DfE, 2013)); the location of practical music-making resting on *composing* and *performing*; and the frequency of *rhythm* as a facilitating learning concept (e.g. it subsumes all types of drumming, which may be taught in the classroom, whereas pitch cannot be applied exclusively to these areas).

If topics are classified into areas of thematic similarity, there remains significant divergence in teacher choices of learning materials, notwithstanding the small number of schools ( $n=4$ ) for this initial data collection. If topics from *Pilot study 1* schools were therefore grouped into broader thematic categories (see *Table 11*), curriculum design remains *multi-faceted*, demonstrating widely differing curriculum conceptualisations and practices:

Theme	Topics	Theme	Topics
<i>Performing</i>	Ukulele	<i>Composing</i>	Compositional techniques
	Guitar skills		Creative composing
	'Musical Futures'		
	'Chasing Cars' band project		
<i>Structure</i>	Rounds	<i>Forms</i>	Concerto
	Form and structure		
	Ternary		
	Theme and variations		
	Building blocks		
<i>Music from cultures and traditions</i>	African music	<i>Music history</i>	Medieval music
	African drumming		
	Music of India		
	Caribbean music		
	Samba carnival		
	Calypso		
	Folk		
	Gamelan		
	Chinese opera		
<i>Musical elements</i>	Pitch	<i>Musical cycles</i>	Minimalism
	Rhythm and pulse		Ostinato
	Rhythm and musical elements 2		
<i>Song</i>	Pop	<i>Blues and jazz</i>	Blues
	Musicals		Jazz
	Rap		
	Song structure		
	Hooks and riffs		
<i>Media</i>	Film	<i>Music technology</i>	Music technology
	Silent movie		Garageband
	Weather Report		
	Music and media		
<i>Programme music</i>	'Carnival of the Animals'	<i>Music for a purpose</i>	Fanfares
	'Pictures at an Exhibition'		Music for an occasion
<i>Notation</i>	Notation	<i>Musical development</i>	Harmony
	Graphic scores		Melody
			Leitmotif
			Sequences

Table 11: A taxonomy of topics arising from pilot study 1 data collection

The number of topics in operation in these four schools therefore remains large, even when classified into areas of consilience:

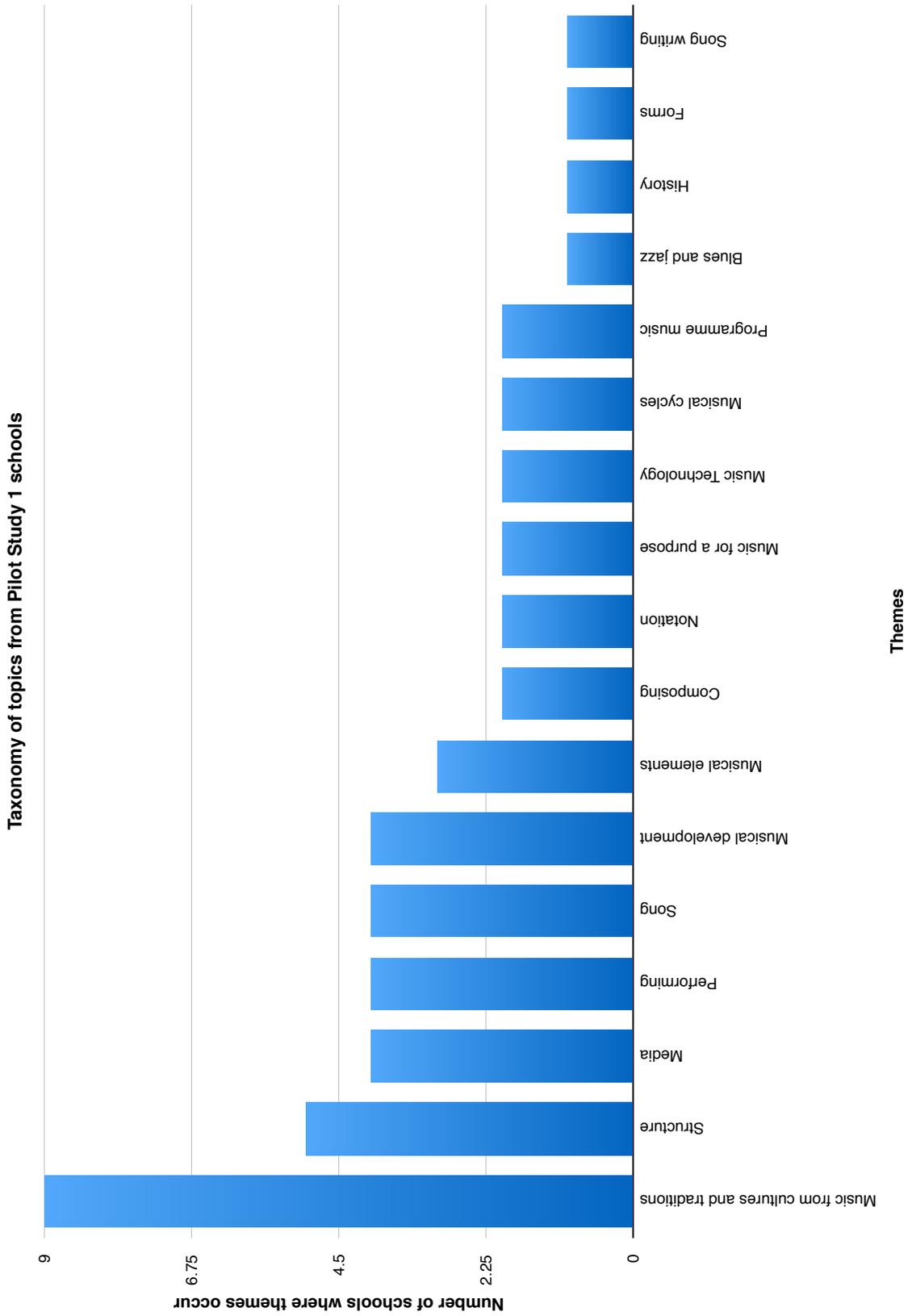


Figure 67: Taxonomy of themes in Pilot Study 1 schools

This considerable range of topics raised questions for investigation at this preliminary stage of the study. Whilst some topic names indicated learning materials to be developed into a scheme of work (e.g. *Theme and variations*), and other topic names could be surmised by a music specialist (e.g. *Guitar skills* would be likely to consist of an exploration of strumming patterns and basic chord shapes), some topic names remained idiosyncratic in their nature, and content remained unexplained (e.g. *Building Bricks*). Therefore, *Pilot study 1* offered starting points for further investigation within my research.

This first stage of my pilot studies, indicated music teacher polyphony (as discussed in section 6.3 of this thesis) in the area of topics, where such learning domains were alternatively titled, sequenced, and in which there existed very little agreement of the manner in which classroom music essentials were understood. This included whether topics constituted evidence of musical development, whether and how they might be revisited, and whether the inter-related dimensions of music (DfE, 2013) constituted a topic in teachers' conceptualisation of curriculum design in these four schools. The duration of topics, how many might be included per term, and the sequencing of these domains, were also areas which initial analysis of *Programmes of Study* suggested required further research.

Additional areas for discussion from *Pilot study 1* were clustered around pedagogical conceptualisations of topics, and whether different topics were taught to different year groups and if so, identifying similarities and differences. Within these frameworks, balances between *composing*, *performing* and *listening* and whether these were taught in an integrated, or atomised manner, and the place of skills development within music curricula were also areas of complexity, which required further research within my study to provide data for analysis.

Therefore, as well as providing some preliminary findings on the nature of topics, their titles, sequencing, and duration, in my initial data collection, *Pilot study 1* was also critical in determining the developing nature of my research project. It revealed areas requiring further research interrogation and *pilot studies 2* and *3* continued to have a significant influence in honing research procedures. Providing a greater quantity of data from a wide range of teacher participants was therefore the next step, which would in turn influence my semi-structured interviews. In order to collect this data, I designed an on-line questionnaire and it is to a discussion of the findings of this aspect of my research, which I will now address.

## **8.2 Questionnaire findings**

In order to explore themes which emerged from my initial data collection in my first pilot, I designed an on-line questionnaire, with an anticipated respondent rate of  $n=50$ . I exceeded this, and my final response rate was 128% with participants  $n=64$ , each of whom responded within the questionnaire window (9<sup>th</sup> January to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013). The questionnaire was designed to access teacher participant responses to: *curriculum conceptualisation*, *curriculum design* and *curriculum sequencing*. This section is therefore organised to present findings in each of these areas.

### **8.2.1 Curriculum Conceptualisation**

When participants were asked if they had received any “formal training” in curriculum design (Q1), the majority affirmed that this was the case (68.8%), and for most this was a part of initial teacher training (59.1% Q1a), suggesting that unless within the first five years of their careers, this may have been experienced at a distance to practice:

## Section 1: Thinking and training

1. Have you ever received any formal training in curriculum design?			
Yes:		68.8%	44
No:		31.2%	20
1.a. If yes, was this as part of			
Initial teacher training:		59.1%	26
School CPD:		11.4%	5
External training:		29.5%	13

Figure 68: Questionnaire findings for curriculum design training

When asked if there was a link between music curriculum participants were teaching, and whole-school curriculum (Q 4), most (54.7%) replied that there were no links:

4. Is your music curriculum and whole-school curriculum linked?			
Yes:		45.3%	29
No:		54.7%	35
4.a. If yes - In what way?			
- There are too many responses to display on this page and so all the responses to this question are available on a separate page.			

Figure 69: Questionnaire findings for curriculum links

For those that responded affirmatively (45.3%), there was an opportunity for a more detailed free response in Q4a. This elicited responses, such as:

1. *I introduce many cross curricular aspects into my Schemes of work but liaison with other departments is quite piecemeal (not through lack of trying, but probably due to workload.)*
2. *The music curriculum forms part of the whole school curriculum.*
3. *Yes, but only because my musical curriculum is constrained by what the school specifies I have to include.*

4. In yr 7 – 8 we have a whole school ‘Learning Skills’ map, in which certain skills (e.g. creativity, collaboration, research), are explicitly taught; the music schemes of work reference these.

I have categorised the 29 responses given into four domains: *cross-curricular aspects* (point 1 above is an example of such a response); *tautological responses* (point 2 above is an example of such a response); *pragmatic approaches* (point 3 above is an example of such a response); and *approaches which follow a detailed rationale* (point 4 above is an example of such a response). Each of these responses presents a framework for conceptualising music and whole-school curricula, as expressed by questionnaire participants. The weighting of responses within these domains were as follows:

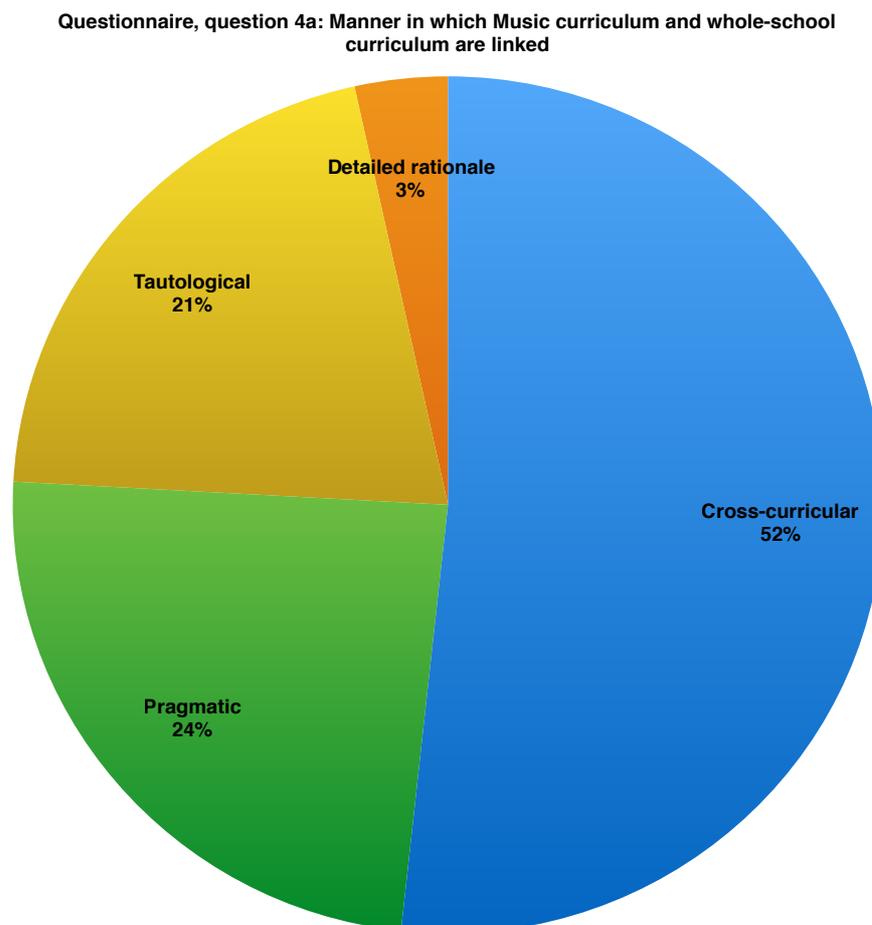


Figure 70: Questionnaire findings - music curriculum links to whole school curriculum

Thus, where a link between music curriculum and whole school curriculum existed in research participant schools, this was largely determined by cross-curricula project working, or by considerations included as school policy requirements, that subject curricula contain, for instance, “a literary focus”.

Teacher participant conceptualisation of musical learning, is that it centres on making music. This can be seen in the response to question 2, in which 68.8% of participants chose this as the most applicable option:

2. Which of these statements most closely matches your own thinking?			
Musical learning is content driven:		6.2%	4
Musical learning is determined by resources:		4.7%	3
Musical learning is about making music:		68.8%	44
Musical learning is creativity centred:		20.3%	13

*Figure 71: Questionnaire findings for substances of musical learning*

The Music curriculum, is therefore, not conceptualised as a body of deliverable knowledge, but as a process of music-making through which learning occurs. This was borne out in other aspects of the research (e.g. repeated comments about practical music-making as essential in participant semi-structured interviews) and may be one reason why music *Programmes of Study* exhibit such a wide degree of variance.

When participants were asked to name musical thinkers or approaches who influenced their conceptualisations of curriculum, musical educational movements were more often cited than educators (musical or otherwise):

Educators or approach	Frequency
Bruner	1
Vygotsky	1
Claxton	1
Dylan William	1
Robinson	1
Sloboda	1
Hargreaves	1
Eisner	1
Hindemith	1
Orff	1
Mills	1
Finney	1
Spruce	1
Swanwick	2
Paynter	3
Practical music-making	4
Schemes of work	6
Musical Futures	8

*Table 12: Educators or musical movements identified in questionnaire question 3a.*

Most curriculum design conceptualisation in my research questionnaire, was therefore influenced by practical approaches and pedagogies, which centred on music-making, and on documented approaches which suggested materials (e.g. “Music Matters resources”), rather than writings of individual educationalists. This may be a further reason for variance of practice that exists in music curriculum design in my research, where teachers do not attribute a high significance to theorists, but use methods and approaches, which are adapted to suit their school contexts. Further evidence of such adaption is evidenced in participant responses to realisations of curriculum design in the following section.

### **8.2.2 Curriculum Design**

My questionnaire defined a “topic” as:

*A genre, musical form or context (e.g. minimalism, Indian classical music, ternary form).*

When teacher participants were asked (Q5) if their music curriculum was topic based, the majority of participants answered that it was (85.9%):

### Section 2: Putting a curriculum together

<b>5.</b> Music teaching in the classroom can follow topics. A topic is defined as a genre, musical form or context. (E.g. minimalism, Indian classical music, ternary form). Is your music curriculum topic-based?			
Yes:		85.9%	55
No:		14.1%	9
<b>5.a.</b> If you do not teach in topics, how would you describe your approach to designing a music curriculum?			
- There are too many responses to display on this page and so all the responses to this question are available on a separate page.			

Figure 72: Questionnaire findings on topic-based learning

Of the 14.1% who responded that their curriculum did *not* consist of topic-based learning, a free response question (5a) then followed. The majority of these responses (66%) evidenced that participants taught in topics within my definition, but replacing “genre” for “topic”. For example:

*Really, yes. But with a mixture of approaches that look at, for example, structure, improvisation etc. in a variety of genres and traditions.*

There were therefore only three notable exceptions to topic based learning from the 64 participants who completed the questionnaire. These were:

1	<i>By using APP and following the 3 AF routes</i>
2	<i>Development of musical elements</i>
3	<i>Spiral / Following a skills approach (through practical music making)</i>

Table 13: Questionnaire responses exhibiting exceptions to topic-based learning

Response 1 references *Assessing Pupil Progress* (DCSF, 2009), a three-year project that sought to develop assessment for learning in classrooms by making connections between formative assessment and National Curriculum attainment targets. The three AF (Assessment Frameworks) for Music were: *Understanding the nature of music* (AF1); *Communicating through creative music-making* (AF2); *Evaluating and informing practice* (AF3). Such an approach does not preclude a topic-based

approach, as it is an evaluative rather than a planning framework. *Response 2* refers to a development of musical elements, which the National Curriculum refers to as the “inter-related dimensions” (DfE, 2013;1), listing these as: *pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture, structure* and *appropriate musical notations*. Musical materials as media through which these elements will be taught, is not specified in this questionnaire response, but it is probable that it included a range of *styles, genres* and *traditions*. It is therefore also possible that these musical pathways could have been interpreted as topics, although it is not possible to be definitive based on this response alone. *Response 3* refers to a spiral approach, which has been extensively discussed in the literature review of this thesis. This focus on practical music-making may not have used topics as in other cases, although it is probable that it used a range of musical styles and conventions drawn from a wide historical base.

It is therefore possible to conclude that almost all participants in my questionnaire used topic-based learning in their approach to music curriculum design, and that it was the most frequently adopted approach. The exceptions outlined in responses also demonstrated some congruence with a topic-based approach, although this cannot be definitively concluded in all cases.

The length of teaching time given to individual topics also demonstrated considerable consensus, with 65.6% of participants stating that they spent half a term on each:

### Section 3: Timings

6. On average how long do you spend on each topic?			
more than a term:		4.7%	3
a term:		25.0%	16
half a term:		65.6%	42
three weeks:		1.6%	1
one week:		0.0%	0
I do not teach in topics:		3.1%	2

Figure 73: Questionnaire findings on topic duration

When teacher participants were asked if all topics they taught were the same length (Q7), an apparent conflict then emerged, with only 40.6% stating that they followed this pattern:

7. Are all topics that you teach the same length?			
Yes:		40.6%	26
No:		59.4%	38
<b>7.a.</b> If you allocate time to topics differently, identify the topics you spend the <b>most</b> time on:			
- There are too many responses to display on this page and so all the responses to this question are available on a separate page.			

Figure 74: Questionnaire findings on topic duration parity

If topic lengths are most often half a term, the expected outcome in question 7 would be that all topics are the same length, but this is not what the data shows. Greater exploration of this complexity is enabled in the following questions (7a, 8 and 9), which asked participants to identify topics on which most and least time was spent and the rationale for this design.

Topics receiving the least time, where time was allocated differently (Q8) in teacher design of their music curricula included Samba music and notation as the most frequently occurring responses:

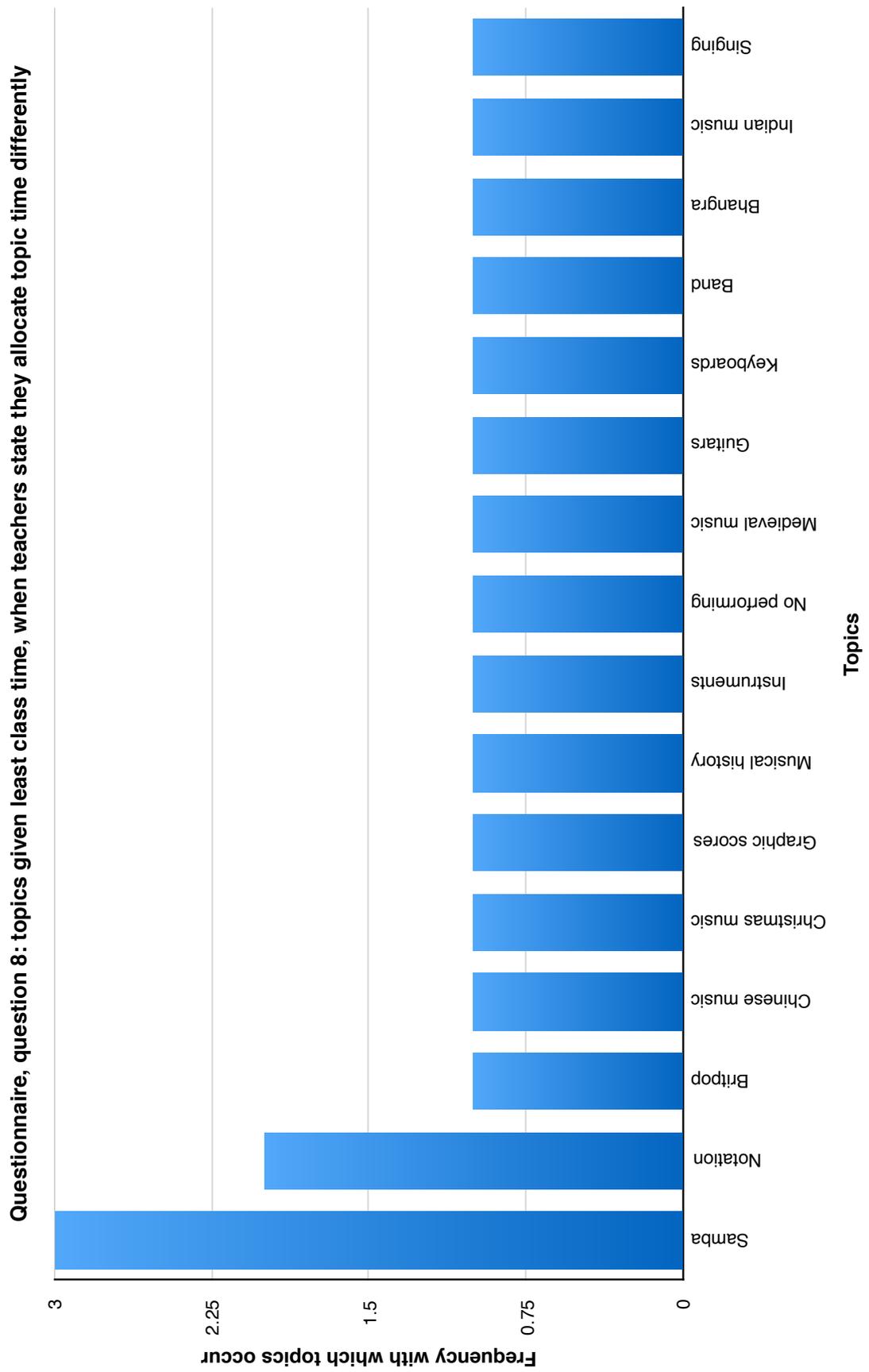


Figure 75: Questionnaire responses to topics given the least time, when allocated differently

Rationale which participants provided for choices of least allocation of time included, in the lowest proportion: teacher ability (2%) and convenience (3%) with responses such as: “It is easier to organise”. Mid-range responses considered factors such as assessment (11%) and available class time (13%) where comments such as “school assessment data deadlines” were common. Among the highest proportion for topics ascribed least time where distribution of class time was allocated differently, were: school structures (20%) and skills development (20%). School structures imply a structural limitation as evidenced in responses such as:

*year 7 have one lesson per fortnight so not possible to get a topic in a term.*

However, there is also a conceptualisation that *some topics are easier than others* and so require less time for skills to be developed. A response such as:

*Larger topics tend to involve more skills and often require a summative assessment.*

was typical and frequently occurring. There is thus a teacher perception that topics themselves contain inherent levels of difficulty, rather than difficulty parameters finding their embodiment through musical activity realised pedagogy. *Figure 75* illustrates participant rationales in further detail:

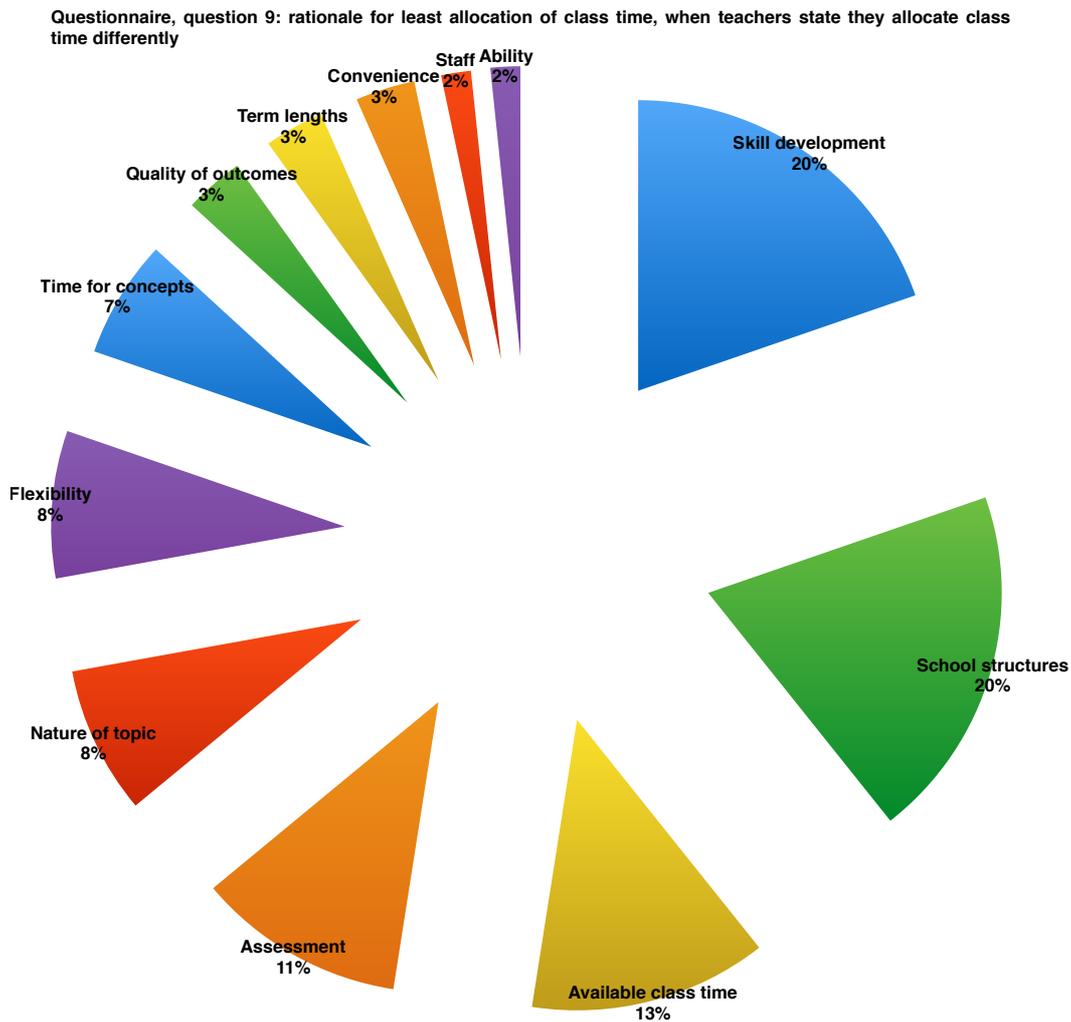


Figure 76: Questionnaire findings for least allocation of time per topic

Topics where class time was not uniform, but in which teachers spent most time included *Blues* as the most popular (10%), followed by *composing* (10%), *performing* (8%) and *listening* (5%). As composing, performing and listening may be sub-sets themselves of almost any topic, their frequency is not surprising. However, the frequency of the *Blues* is significant, and this also emerges in further results in teacher chosen topics, discussed later in the sequencing section of the questionnaire findings. The full range of topics is set out in *Figure 77*:

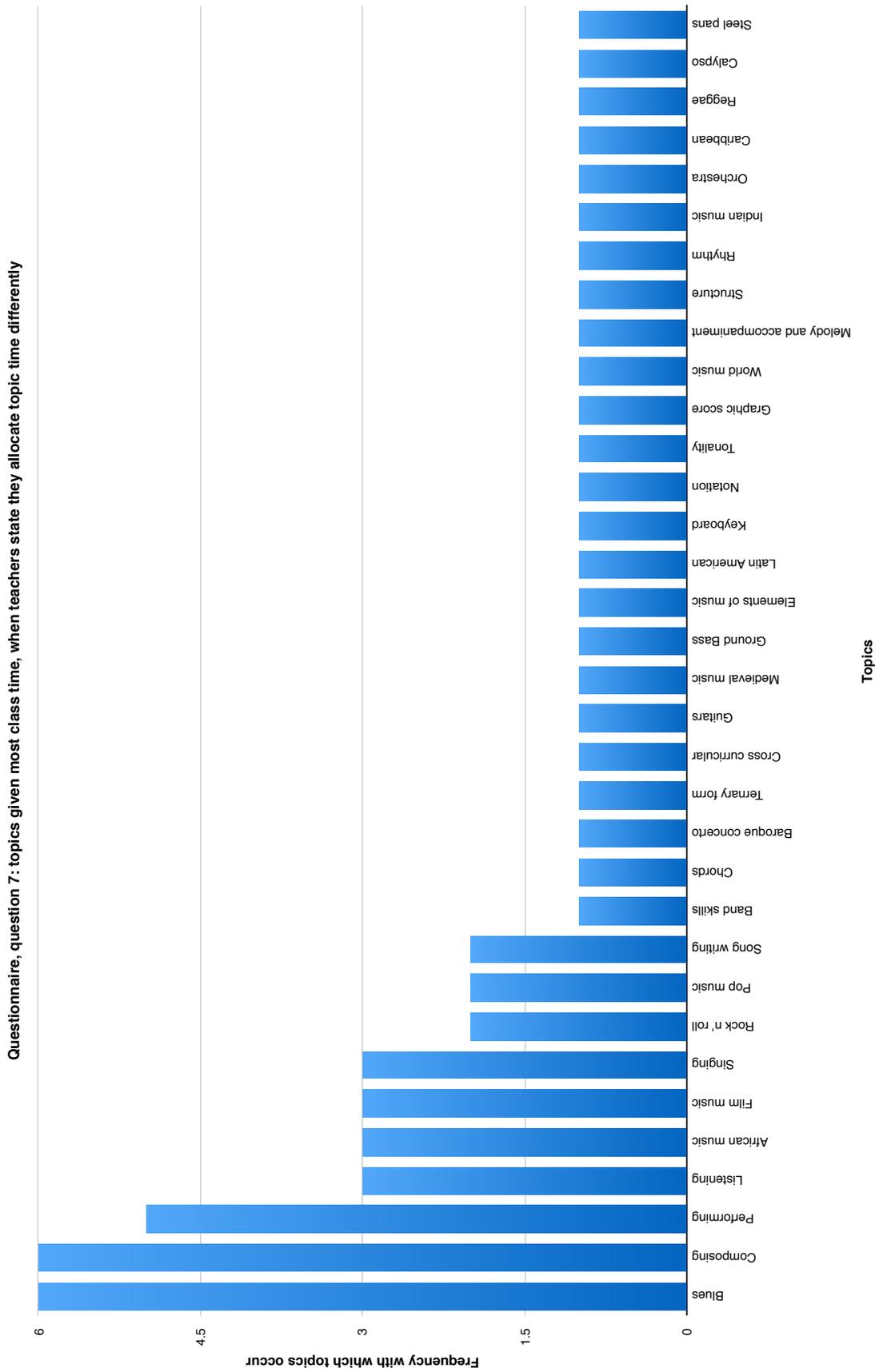


Figure 77: Questionnaire responses to topics given the most time, when allocated differently

Questionnaire responses to question (7a) outlining rationale for the longest allocation of class time, where division of time for topics differed, demonstrated a range of justifications. These included skills development (4%) and assessment method (4%) in the lowest proportion, in which comments such as:

*Have a couple of longer topics to develop skills further*

*Depends on the assessment targets which we wish to be taught and experienced by students*

are representative. There is thus a divergence of thinking on the place of skills within the curriculum, with some teacher participants giving less time for its development (as in question 9) and some giving more (as in question 7a). Mid-range responses as a rationale for spending greater time on selected topics included what I am describing as *nesting*, where several mini-topics are taught as a subset of a larger overarching topic (8%) and where music was identified by teachers as unfamiliar to learners (8%). This is represented by comments such as:

*Caribbean music also encompasses Reggae, Calypso and Steel Pans*

*Music that is new to students, E.g. Classical or forms of World music.*

The greatest number of teacher responses based their rationale on: what they considered was appropriate to the year group (17%); the time available (17%) and when learners were not engaged (21%). Response examples for these categories are:

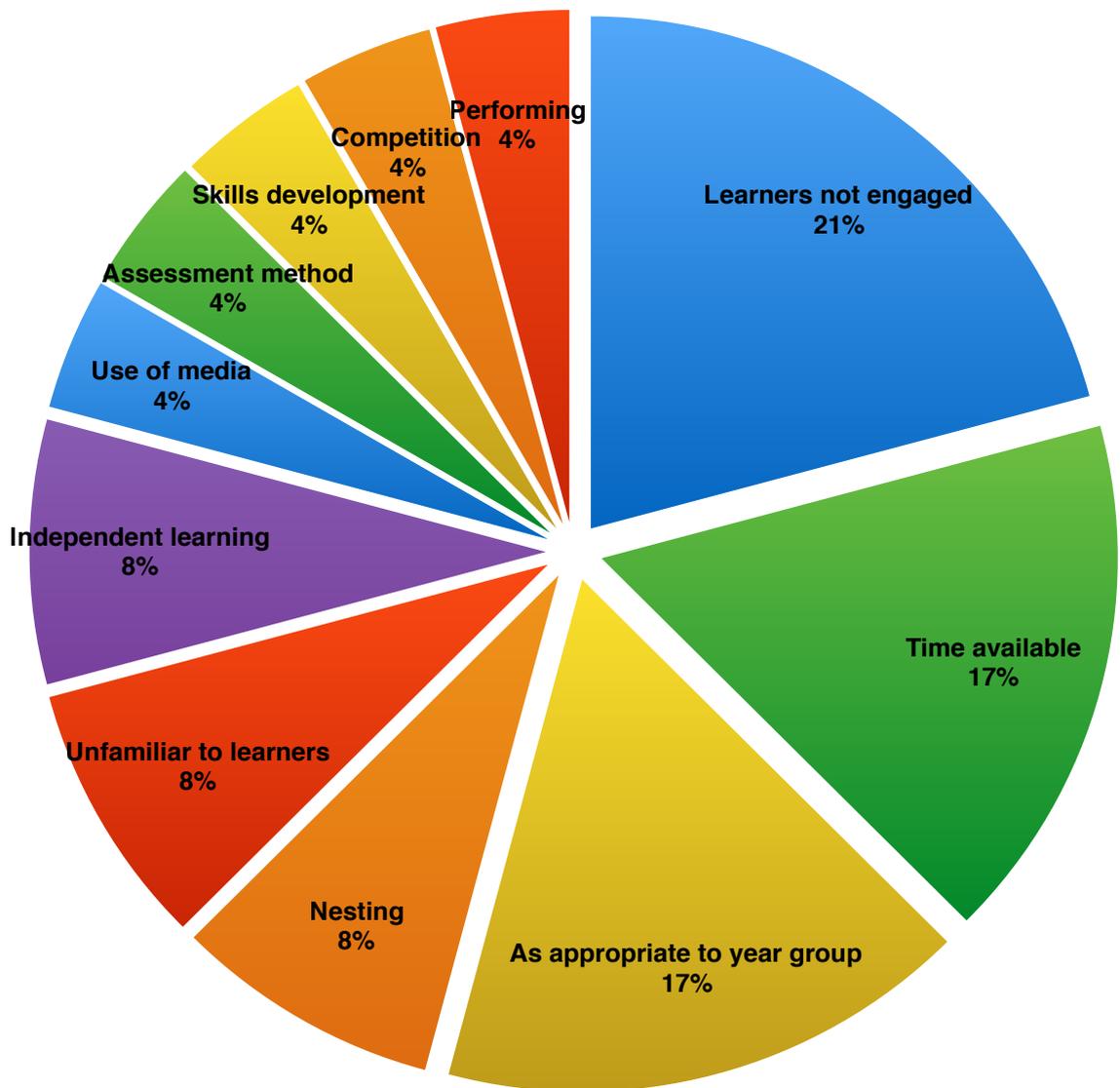
*Year 7 ½ a term moving to a term year 8 all a term*

*It depends how many weeks we have in the half term. Topics are usually adapted to fit the time scale*

*Depends on how engaged the learners are.*

These responses are set out in *figure 78*:

**Questionnaire, question 7a: rationale for greatest allocation of class time, where teachers state they allocate time differently**



*Figure 78: Questionnaire findings for greatest allocation of time per topic*

There is therefore a recurring conceptualisation that topics themselves have innate difficulty, with some being appropriate to year groups and others being less suitable,

just as in question 9. From research responses, it can be stated that class time available was at teachers' own discretion, and as such, participants were architects of their curriculum, with choices for how to design and implement it. Nevertheless, research participants considered such timeframes as restrictive. Perhaps most significantly, the engagement of learners correlated to the length of time that a topic was given in music curriculum time. Analysis of responses shows that if learners were *not* engaged and were progressing at a *slower* pace, the scheme of work for this topic would be *expanded* by a significant number of teachers. This has implications in relation to teacher interpretations of learning models, pedagogical emphases and scaffolding of musical learning; as curriculum design and planning for sequencing of learning will undoubtedly be affected by this interchange.

The differences between how teachers distribute classroom teaching time to topics, and the individual rationale that accounts for these choices, facilitates insight into why the majority of teacher participants described their standard topic length to be half a term (Q 6), and yet why they also stated that their topics were not of the same length (Q7). This apparent contradiction is at least partially accounted for by the variance of competing contextual factors which shape music curricula. This would appear to be more than only design processes, and to incorporate a range of factors including, but not restricted to: school structures, learner reactions, and assessment protocols. There is, evidently, an overhang between planning practice and realisations of this in lesson delivery. These two aspects are therefore not synonymous.

In addition, question 6 asks only for an average length of topics, and there is evidently a blurring of topic boundaries, which are not delivered in a bounded manner, but as part of a learning process in which young people are engaged. There is also research evidence that topics are not delivered by all teachers as a

single engagement. Question 10 interrogates the extent to which teacher participants return to topics to enable musical development:

10. I return to topics to deepen student learning in			
Years 7 and 8:		6.2%	4
Years 8 and 9:		6.2%	4
Years 7 and 9:		1.6%	1
All years:		34.4%	22
I do not repeat topics:		51.6%	33

Figure 79: Questionnaire findings on topic iteration

Whilst 51.6% of participants stated that they did not repeat topics, a considerable number (34.4%) responded that they did this in all years. Whilst it is not possible to interrogate participants due to the limitations of questionnaire data (Newby, 2010), it is reasonable to assume that at least some of these participants are re-teaching topics to perceived deeper levels of understanding, much in the way Bruner suggested in his spiral curriculum model, as previously discussed (Bruner, 1960). My research therefore begins to make visible complex shades of curriculum design practices, which are more nuanced and multi-faceted than analysis of *Programmes of Study* in isolation may suggest.

My questionnaire also suggests that music curriculum design is a fluid process, which is in continual transition. Music teacher participants stated (Q 14) that they revised their music curricula every year (64.1%) and some participants even more frequently (18.8%):

### Section 5: Duration

14. How often do you revise your music curriculum?			
More than once a year:		18.8%	12
Every year:		64.1%	41
Every other year:		15.6%	10
Once every five years:		1.6%	1
I have not revised my curriculum in the last ten years:		0.0%	0

Figure 80: Questionnaire findings on curriculum revision

With no participants responding that they had not adjusted their curriculum in the last 10 years, the design of music curricula at Key Stage 3 can be regarded as a set of complex frameworks, within which a wide variety of contextual factors (see Q. 6 – 10) shape and influence its formation and shape. Following on from teacher contextual understanding, decisions about sequencing of topics (addressing my second research question) revealed further levels of divergence and congruence, and it is to an analysis of this within the questionnaire that I now turn.

### 8.2.3 Curriculum Sequencing

Understanding distribution of topics taught across Key Stage 3, and rationales teacher participants gave for their inclusion and sequencing, revealed music curriculum design as practised in my research schools. Participant teachers usually taught one topic per year group (57.8% - see Q 11 in *figure 81*), and therefore the sequencing of topics and their inclusion were significant decisions that shaped musical development for learners in these schools.

### Section 4: Ordering musical learning

11. Do you ever teach classes in the same year group a different topic at the same time?			
Yes:		42.2%	27
No:		57.8%	37

Figure 81: Questionnaire findings on topics per year group

Out of the 25 topic options presented in the questionnaire (Q12), the top six most frequently occurring topics across the key stage were:

Topic	Percentage of teachers including this topic
Blues	85.7%
Music for Film and TV	82.9%
Musical elements	82.8%
The Orchestra	71.9%
Programme Music	65.6%
African drumming	64.1%

*Table 14: Questionnaire findings - top six topics in KS3*

The complete distribution of topics and their frequency is given in *figure 82* below:

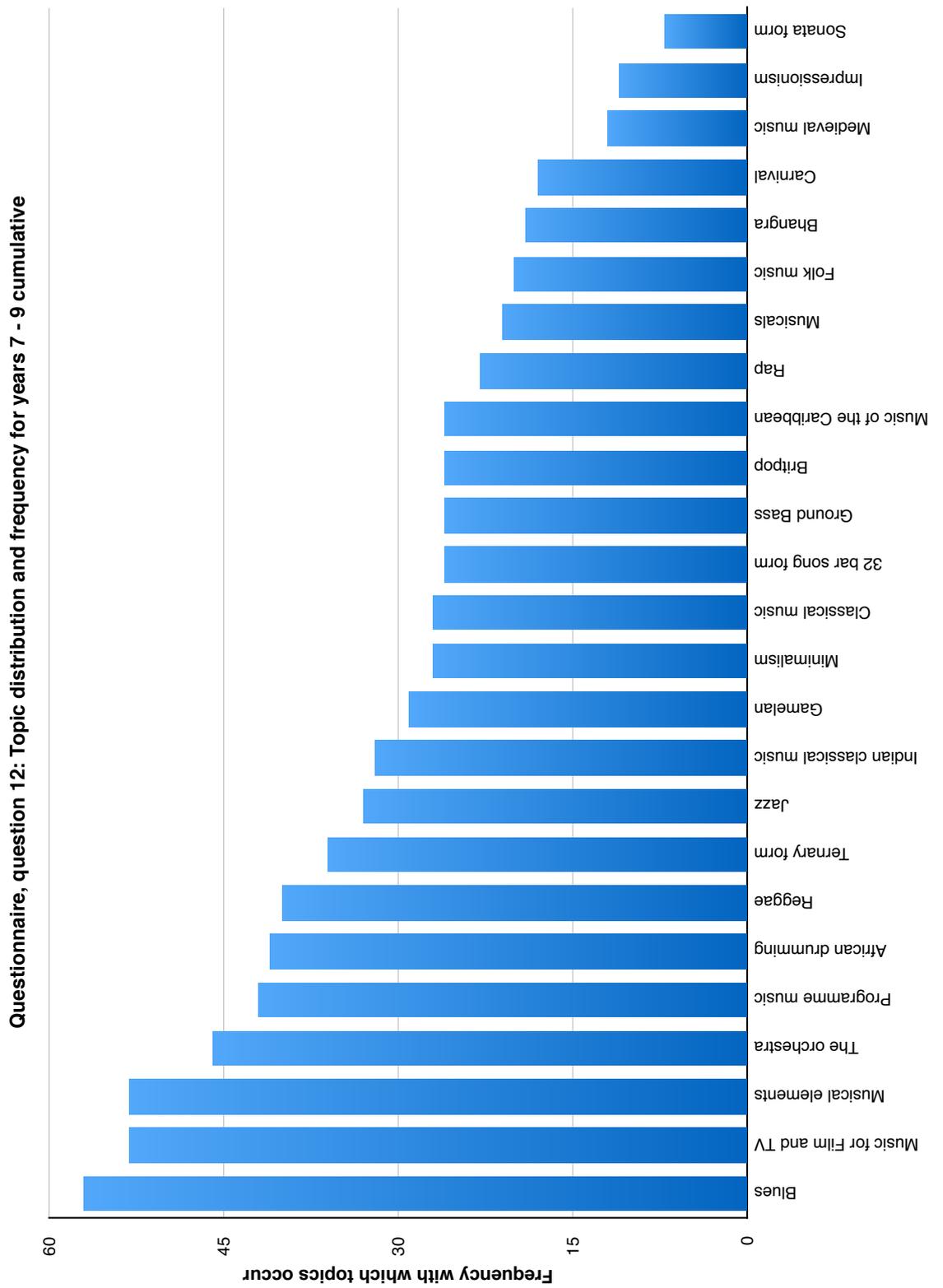


Figure 82: Questionnaire findings – KS3 topic distribution

*Blues* emerges as the most frequently taught topic among my participants, with *sonata form* as the least frequently occurring. It is also notable that all topics included in the questionnaire were taught in at least 7 teachers' curricula, so this selection of topics appears to be broadly representative. There is no one style, genre or tradition that takes precedence in the most frequently occurring top six grouping, which includes classical music (*Programme music, The Orchestra*); musical structures (*Musical elements*); music from popular contexts (*Blues, Music for Film and TV*); and music from other cultures and traditions (*African drumming*). The most frequently occurring topics of the questionnaire exhibit a high degree of congruence with the topics evident in the initial data collection of *Pilot Study 1* in my research, particularly in the top three most frequently occurring (highlighted in red):

Pilot Study 1 Topics	Percentage taught <i>n=4</i>	Questionnaire Topics	Percentage taught <i>n=64</i>
<b>Blues</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Blues</b>	<b>85.7%</b>
<b>Film Music</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>Music for Film and TV</b>	<b>82.9%</b>
<b>Musical Elements</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>Musical Elements</b>	<b>82.8%</b>
Performance Composition Project	50%	The Orchestra	71.9%
Rhythm and Pulse	50%	Programme Music	65.6%
Rounds	50%	African drumming	64.1%

*Table 15: Findings topic comparison in Pilot Study 1 and Questionnaire*

There is, therefore, tacit teacher consensus of what should be covered within *Programmes of Study*, and a consilience of diverse musical palettes, from which Key Stage 3 music teachers in my research mix and create their curricula. However, the profile for topics taught as part of teachers' Music Key Stage 3 curriculum, varies considerably between years 7, 8 and 9. In year 7, there is considerable emphasis on teaching structural aspects, such as *Musical Elements* and conventional classical media, such as *The Orchestra*. Two topics are not taught at all during year 7 from

my questionnaire research sample: *sonata form* and *32 bar song form*. The complete profile for year 7 is given below:

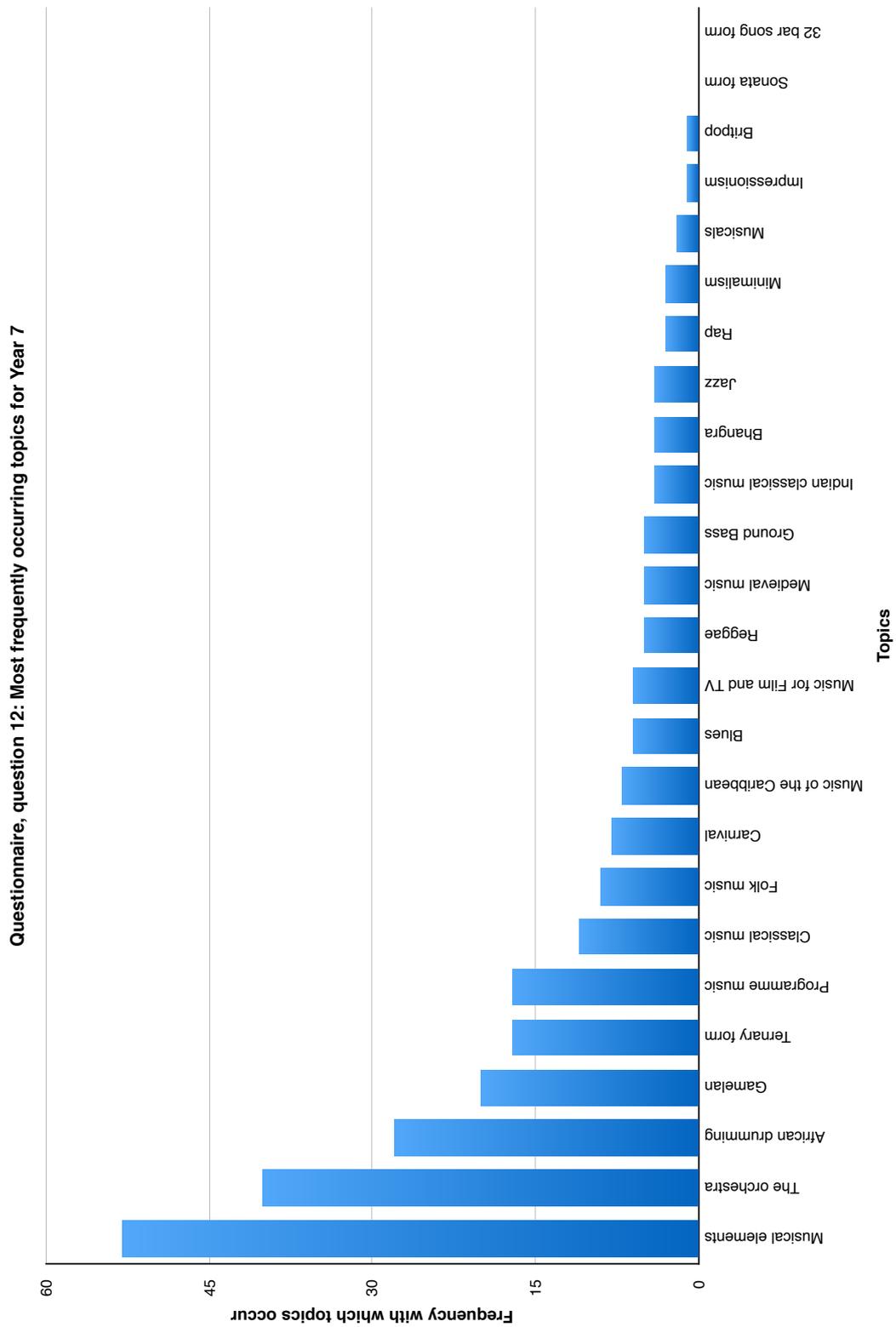


Figure 83: Questionnaire findings – Topic distribution for Year 7

The topic profile for year 8, is where *Blues* emerges as the most frequently occurring topic, with 54.7% of teachers choosing to include this in their curriculum during this school year. *Jazz* does not receive the same prominence (17.2%) despite its affinity with blues as a genre, and *Indian Classical Music* is the next most frequently occurring topic at 32.8%. This is significantly less than the popularity of the *Blues*. *Musical Elements* was not taught by any of the teacher participants during year 8. The complete profile for year 8 is given in *Figure 84*:

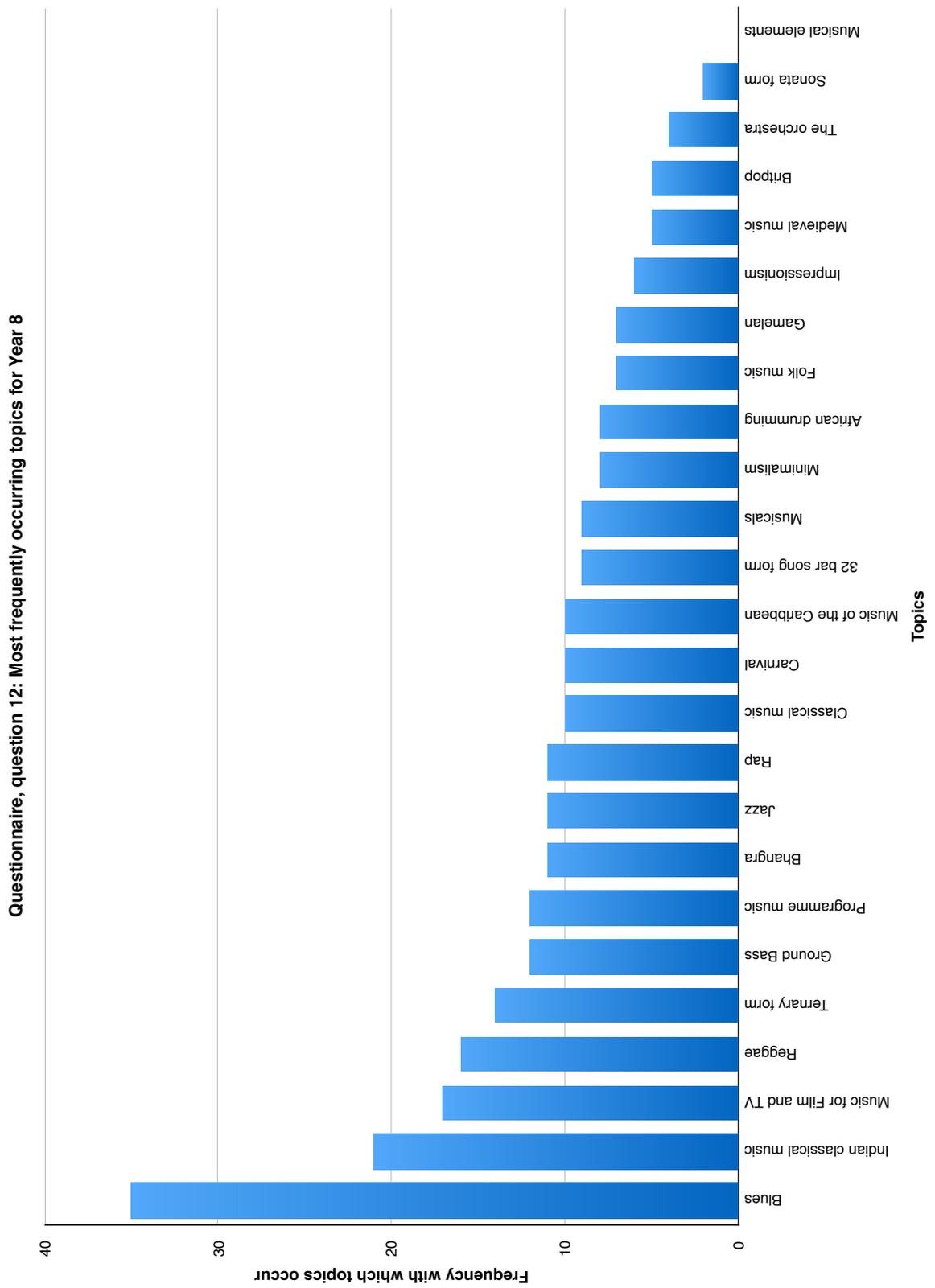


Figure 84: Questionnaire findings – Topic distribution for Year 8

The profile for year 9 exhibits *Music for Film and TV* as the most frequently occurring topic (46.9%). *Musical Elements* and *Carnival* do not appear as topics in year 9 in responses from the questionnaire research participants. *Reggae* (29.7%) and *Jazz* (28.1%) are the next most frequently occurring topics in this year group. There is also a greater parity between topics, in that they are relatively evenly distributed: e.g. *Ground Bass*, *Rap* and *Music of the Caribbean*. The complete profile for year 9 is given in *figure 85* below:

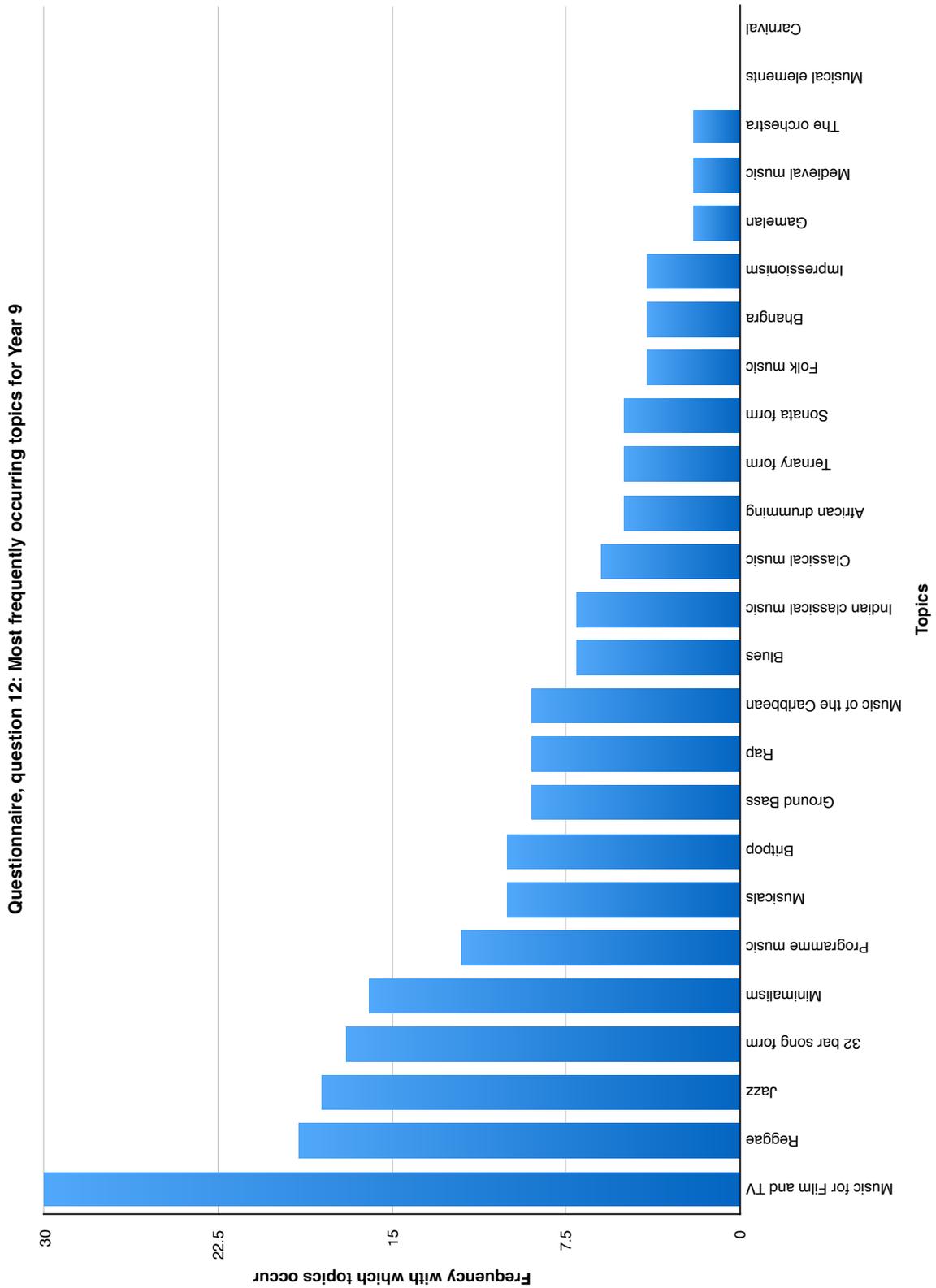


Figure 85: Questionnaire findings – Topic distribution for Year 9

When the profile for each year group is tracked in a comparative analysis, distinctives within the questionnaire research sample become evident:

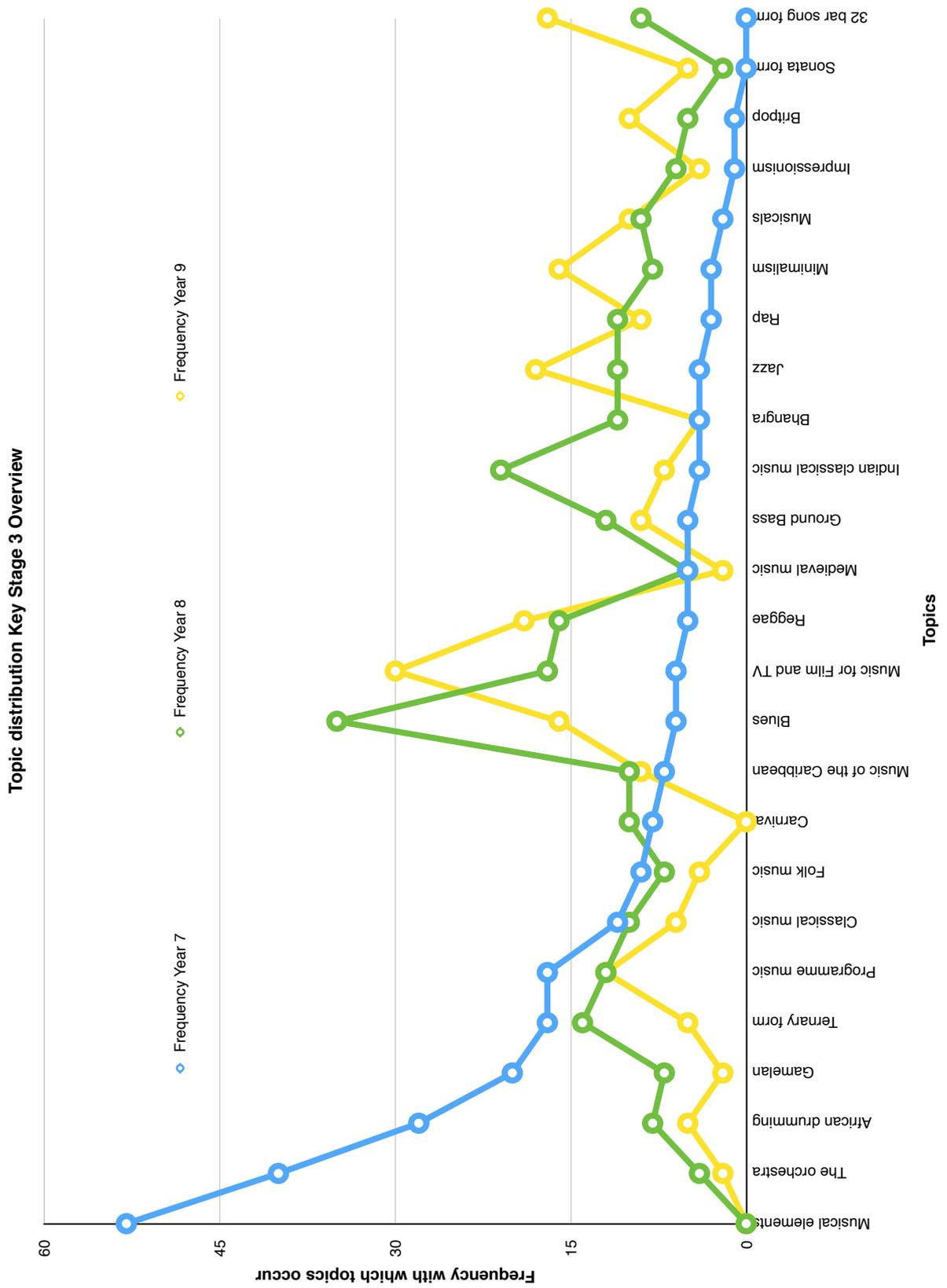


Figure 86: Questionnaire findings – comparative analysis of topics in KS3

There are differences in two domains, where there was varying practice between curriculum design for year 7, and with years 8 and 9. Years 8 and 9 were either distinct from each other, or in some instances exhibited closer enacted proximity. For example, within my questionnaire findings, year 7 almost always contains a topic on musical elements (82.8%), whereas year 8 and 9 never do. (The 17.2% difference here is accounted for by teacher participants who stated that they do not teach *Musical Elements* at all). *The Orchestra* was similarly almost entirely delivered to year 7 (62.5%) with 6.2% of teacher participants including this as a topic in their curriculum for year 8 and 3.1% including it as a topic for year 9. *African drumming* was also primarily treated as a year 7 topic, where 43.8% of teacher participants included it in their curriculum at this stage, compared to 12.5% in year 8 and 7.8% in year 9.

Years 8 and 9 showed more similarity of practice in topics of *Song*, and *Blues*, but there remained a significant difference between these upper years of Key Stage 3 and the first year, in Year 7. *32 bar Song Form* appeared in 14.1% of year 8 curricula and 26.6% of year 9 curricula, but did not appear in Year 7. Similarly, the *Blues* appeared in 54.7% of curricula for Year 8 and 25% of curricula for Year 9, appearing in 9.4% of Year 7 curricula. The lowest proportion of teachers of any topic from within the research sample, was those who did not teach *Blues* at all: 10.9%. *Jazz* and *Minimalism* were most popular in Year 9, appearing significantly less in other year groups (see *figure 86*).

Similarities of teacher participant approaches to planning curricula are evident between years 8 and 9. Examples of this include *Rap* (17.2% for Year 8 and 14.1% for Year 9) and *Impressionism* (9.4% for year 8 and 6.2% for year 9). However, the closest similarities are *Programme Music* (18.8% for both years 8 and 9); *Bhangra* (6.2% for both years 7 and 9); *Medieval Music* (7.8% for both years 7 and 8), which

evidences different levels of similarity between school years. There is some clustering around *Classical Music* for all years (17.2% for Year 7, 15.6% for Year 8 and 9.4% for Year 9), however, as this topic may subsume a wide variety of musical contexts, this is an unremarkable congruence.

Understanding why teachers grouped topics as they did, and why they sequenced them in this manner was addressed in question 13, which interrogated rationales for sequencing of music topics. Such rationales demonstrated a wide range of practices in teacher approaches to sequencing musical knowledge:

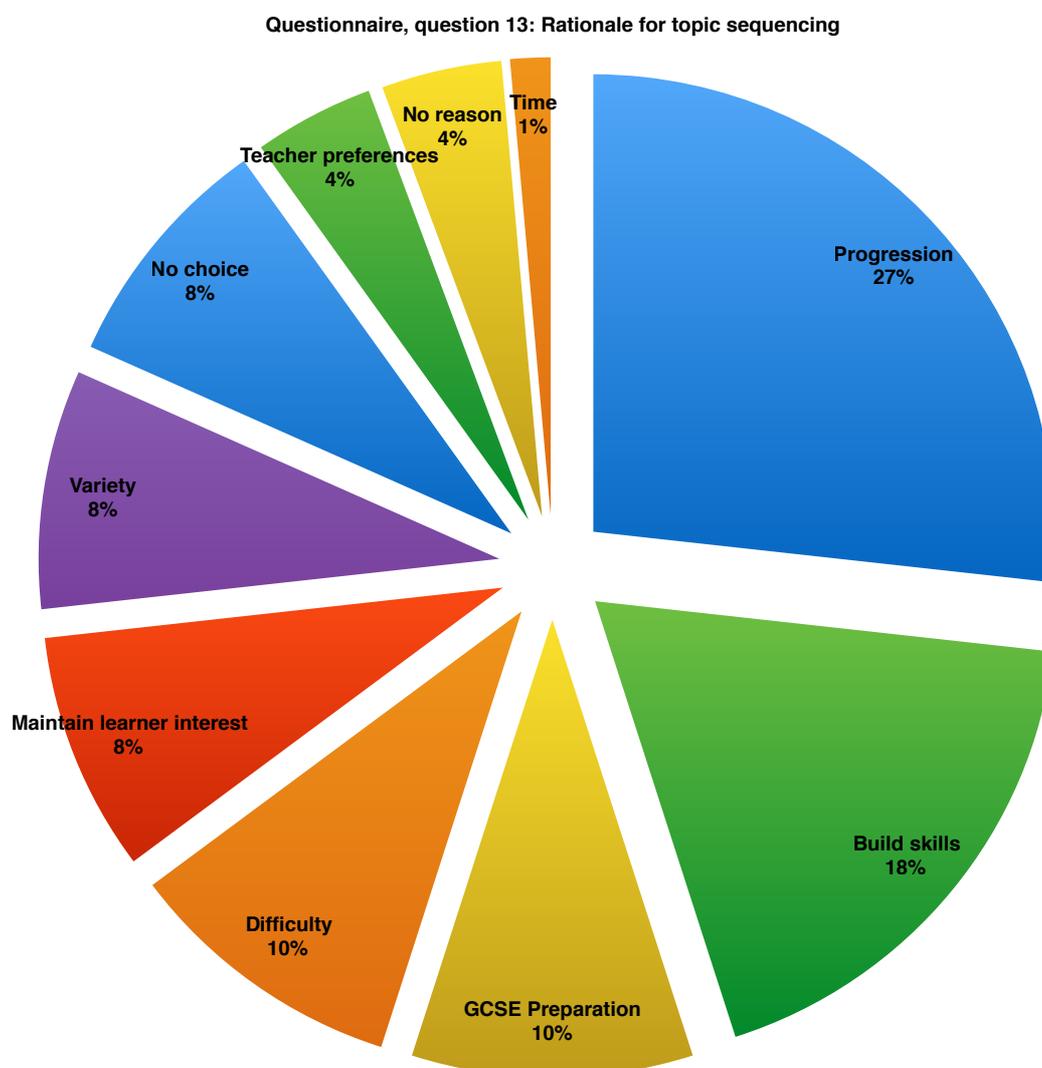


Figure 87: Questionnaire findings – sequencing rationale

From these responses, three participants (4%) stated that there was no reason for their choices, and an equal number commented that their choice of topics and their sequencing was based only on personal preference. A combined total of 16% regarded decision-making in curriculum sequencing to centre on creating a varied curriculum that maintained learner interest. The concept that topics have a related difficulty appears again at this stage, with a significant number (10%) citing the difficulty of topics as their rationale for their place within a learning sequence, with GCSE preparation given an identical ranking (10%). The majority of responses cited building skills (18%) and progression (27%) as the reason for their sequencing of music topics.

The exploration of teacher participant approaches to curriculum conceptualisation, design, and sequencing, which my questionnaire enabled, raised further questions of approaches to Key Stage 3 curriculum modelling in music. I continued to explore such aspects in my second pilot study, which explored these issues in a semi-structured interview.

### **8.3 Pilot Study 2 findings**

Following from my questionnaire, *Pilot Study 2* facilitated additional detail to my findings, by exploring themes and strands of common practice in semi-structured interview contexts. Following coding processes of *grounded theory* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in a radically modified formation, themes began to emerge from this early work. My questionnaire had identified signifiers of curriculum design practice, and my semi-structured interviews were closely related, translating to findings into question formation. *Table 16* tracks this development, from questionnaire responses into interview questions, which enabled greater interrogation of these areas:

<i>Questionnaire domains</i>	Domain developed <i>interview</i> questions
Any training in curriculum design?	Describe the training you have received in designing a curriculum
What is musical learning?	What do you consider is most significant in planning for musical learning? How is this reflected in your approach?
Topic-based approach or not? Any underlying musical purpose in planning?	Do you use topic-based learning? How do you decide on the order of these topics? How do you put your approach to musical learning into this planning?
Why do you sequence learning as you do?	Can you arrange these topics in a suitable order for a year 7 class, explaining your thinking as you go? How long would this take? Can you arrange these topics in a suitable order for a year 9 class explaining your thinking as you go? What adjustments have you made? Why have you made these?
To what extent is your music and school curriculum linked?  Do you repeat or build topics across years?	How do you explain your rationale behind your planning of the music curriculum to your line manager?
How long do you spend on each topic?	How do you explain your rationale behind your planning of the music curriculum to your line manager?
Top 10 topics	What topics do you cover – why and how?
Top 10 topics  Plan for individuals or same each year?  How often revise curriculum?	Which is the most successful topic/unit of work that you teach? What does success look like? Why do you think it is so successful?  How often do you revise your curriculum? What are the most important considerations in this process?  To what extent does the curriculum have to be adjusted for the students in front of you? Do you teach the same topics to classes in the same year group in different ways? Why/how?

*Table 16: Development of questionnaire domains into interview questions for Pilot Study 2*

This development led to an initial semi-structured interview of 24 questions addressing the domains outlined in *Table 16*.

### 8.3.1 Emergent coding categories

Although coding categories were later refined and modified, at this stage five coding categories emerged from *Pilot Study 2* interview data. Categories were grounded in the data, and were not preconceived. I expressed them as:

1. School context curriculum limitations
2. Senior Leadership Team expectations of Music
3. Planning for progress
4. Essential elements of a musical education
5. Curriculum design approaches

#### *1. School context curriculum limitations*

A recurring theme throughout the *pilot study 2* interview, was the limitations of the context that this teacher participant was working in, consisting of a variety of independent interactions: isolated planning; instrumental resources; and changing class demographics between school years. For example:

*Our Music groups are mixed up, so once they're in the year 7 class, that's not the same class you'll get in year 8, so the two music teachers might have taught it [the topic] differently.*

The timetabling management described by the *pilot study 2* teacher will influence music curriculum design in this school, due to the manner in which it constrains progress. As such, this example also impinges on emergent theme 3 (planning for progress) but is not restricted to this domain, as the resourcing of classroom spaces are also influential.

## *2. Senior Leadership Team expectations of Music*

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) expectations of Music were perceived to be low by the teacher participant in this *pilot study 2* school, who referred to her managers frequently during the interview. The participant observed the ranking of Music as a subject compared to other disciplines; the profile of music by SLT within her school; and the degree of interest SLT had in music curriculum design. The quotation below is a representative example taken from the interview:

*I think [Music] is fairly near the bottom of the ladder. We were told by the Head in front of all the staff that we are a third priority out of three in the Arts. . . it hasn't got the same importance.*

The support allocated to curriculum design, realised in management time and messages communicated to the leadership team by the Head teacher, were therefore less than in other areas of school curriculum, in this interview data.

## *3. Planning for Progress*

As was evident from my questionnaire research, a large proportion of teachers (27%) cited progression as a key signifier in their rationale for topic sequencing.

Progression similarly began to emerge as a theme from the semi-structured interview in *pilot study 2*, and this was to become a significant recurrent theme across the 7 semi-structured interviews in the main study. Discussion in *pilot study 2* was clustered in several areas: the target outcome determining the pathway for the planning of progress; the potential disconnect between planning documentation and lesson delivery; transition as a progress enabler; progress through skill development; and the place of graduated complexity across KS3 music curricula. Emergent teacher processes evident in *pilot study 2* included:

*I think I kind of break it [planning for musical learning] down backwards when I'm planning.*

*I don't refer to it [Scheme of Work] when I'm lesson planning week to week.*

*You're developing that [subject knowledge] to a more complex level.*

The link between planning and progress and the effect that this has on curriculum design and originating *Programmes of Study*, from which to initiate learning, thus emerges from the *pilot study 2* data as a theme requiring further exploration. My research in this context does not, therefore, focus on assessment, but rather considers the manifestation through teacher conceptualisations of what progress might like look like and seeks to understand its active profile in the sequencing of KS3 music curricula.

#### *4. Essential Elements of a musical education*

This motivator in Music curriculum design begins to emerge in *pilot study 1* as more significant than planning, or conceptualising progress. It is inherently linked with music teacher identity (as discussed in the literature review) and backgrounds decision-making in the context of curriculum design. There are therefore more comments that were coded into this area than any of the previous coding categories. The teacher participant in *pilot study 2* identified the following aspects as essential elements of a musical education: musical elements as key to curriculum sequencing; personal achievement to motivate future musical learning; accessibility of musical source material; and skills development required for successful music-making (this theme emerged more than once in the interview); the ability of learners to work together in musical activity; continual revisiting of skills, but not topics; and ensuring

learners are engaged and enjoying musical activity taking place in the classroom.

Examples taken from the *pilot study 2* interview in this area include:

*If they've achieved something, they want to come back next lesson.*

*I would look at the accessibility of them [the topics chosen for study].*

*You're all working together.*

*Revisiting it [the focus of the musical learning] all the time.*

*The kids are engaged in it; they're enjoying it. . .they're interested in how it fits in the real world.*

There is therefore greater variance of factors which influence curriculum design in essential elements of a musical education in the view of this teacher participant; a highly personal, yet highly influential view. Such motivational factors in curriculum development continued to emerge from the main study data, and led to the development of *activity systems* analysis (Engeström, 1987). These are explored and developed in the nodal analysis in the *activity theory* section of this thesis.

##### *5. Curriculum design approaches*

Transitioning from a musical educational ethos to practicalities of capturing ideological approaches within a *Programme of Study*, consolidated teacher participant outlook with realised process in *pilot study 2*. There were therefore a plethora of notions and delivery approaches, which were expressed with multiple qualifying comments, resulting in rich data. Teacher participant themes which emerged here included: managing spectra of musical elements within topics; thinking forwards to enable skills development; planning templates; scheduling musical learning with allocated timeframes; topic nesting (defined in questionnaire results section of this thesis); topics as a means to teach skills; linking topics with relevant aspects of musical theory; strategies for baseline assessment and immediacy of

learner engagement; how to realise musical development; integration of topics and musical elements in curriculum planning; behaviour management as a modifier of curriculum design; designing episodes that allow learners to demonstrate understanding through the language of musical activity; connecting instrumental tuition with classroom learning; and maintaining the profile of music as academic and not only performance-based. Examples of these extensive responses include:

*Looking where they are and thinking forwards.*

*I think: right, well, we did that last week and we're going to move to here and this is how many weeks we've got.*

*We do look at Programme Music as a vehicle to teach keyboard skills.*

*When I first planned the curriculum sequence it was a case of I wanted to introduce a base line into Year 7.*

*So the first thing we do with them now is the Pop unit, because it hooks them into music so quickly.*

*I would just pick that on a behaviour management basis, because I know I could start with them working in pairs until I'd worked out the group dynamic.*

The transition between teacher motivators and outlook, and practical considerations based on teacher perceptions of effective classroom learning, are revealing in this *pilot study 2* data. Using topics to deliver learning alongside simultaneous skills development, perceiving that some topics are more effective than others in managing behaviour, and selecting topics that this teacher considered would immediately engage learners, are significant curriculum motivators. Such factors may not be immediately perceived in planning, or included in conceptual responses, but they influence tacit curriculum (Jackson, 1968; Lamont, 2002) processes of realisation.

### 8.3.2 Meta-coding

In addition to emergent coding categories and themes that they suggest above, the teacher participant in *pilot study 2*, adopted what I will describe as an *organic curriculum perspective*. This was a recurring theme (and even a phrase used by participants), which was to surface in semi-structured interviews in the main study, and was therefore a finding from my research. This over-arching perspective for curriculum design thus becomes evident in my research data as a meta-coding category: *a summary theme*, which encapsulates how teacher participants conceptualise and enact their understanding of curriculum. Such meta-coding was often possible towards the conclusion of interviews, when participants were most engaged with the interview process.

The teacher participant in *pilot study 2* described their curriculum as “organic,” and when prompted to expand this stated:

*It kind of changes itself. You teach it one way, but then it might develop into something else and it's always moving. I was just thinking then, it's a bit pointless writing it down, because it never does actually stay as I've written it down, because it always is taking risks and then changing it. It's not gospel at all. Perhaps it should be. I don't know. It's not where I am.*

This conceptualisation is of a curriculum that is continually changing as an autonomous identity, and not at the teacher's edict. There is also a theme of uncertainty around the substance of a music curriculum. This theme was traced in later interviews, where there were recurring comments on the nature of music curriculum, and how to design it for Key Stage 3 classes. Before considering these interviews, it is first necessary to examine the linkage into *pilot study 3* and how teaching conceptualisation of curriculum was linked to teaching practice.

## 8.4 Pilot Study 3 findings

The semi-structured interview from *pilot study 3* exhibited congruent features of coding themes that had emerged from the *pilot study 2* interview. Example statements that evidence this, taken from semi-structured interview data, are given in *table 17* below:

Theme	Example of supporting data from <i>pilot study 3</i>
School context curriculum limitations	<i>Me and [teacher colleague] don't do the same thing at once, so it's kind of dictated by space.</i>
Senior Leadership Team expectations of music	Researcher: <i>If SLT were to ask you, "Why have you planned the curriculum like this?" how would you respond?</i> Teacher participant: <i>Which they never have, to be honest. I don't think they're bothered.</i>
Planning for progress	<i>You'll see an upward progression in all the units of work that we've done.</i>
Essential elements of a music education	<i>I want to ignite that interest and give them the means and the opportunity to learn more. . . If you made these kids pay fifty pence to come to Music next week, would they pay you the fifty pence or would they not?</i>
Curriculum design approaches	<i>Context, interest, relevance, ability, learning something new, keeping them engaged.</i>

*Table 17: Congruent themes between pilot studies 1 and 2*

### 8.4.1 Coding refinement

Additional themes also began to emerge from the *pilot study 3* interview at this stage, and these were repeated in interview data from the main study. These themes consisted of more detailed descriptions of what were initially broader categories, and resulted from the *limited theoretical sampling* of my modified approach to *grounded theory* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). These authentically voiced categories of music teacher discourses consisted in:

1. *Music-making in the classroom*
2. *Development of musical skills and notions of progress*

3. Curriculum conceptualisation and structures
4. Perceptions of Music as enacted in pedagogy
5. Realisation of inclusivity through differentiation

This refinement for understanding the domain of curriculum design represents complex processes, which act as more than a lens (Kinsella, 2017). They are also alternatively situated from crystallisation interpretations (Richardson, 2000), as constituent strands of practice converge together, to transform *aspirations* of what a musical education should be, into *realisations* of music curriculum praxis, with teacher practitioners as *conduits* for such an alignment. This operation as made visible through coding processes can be represented as a double prism:

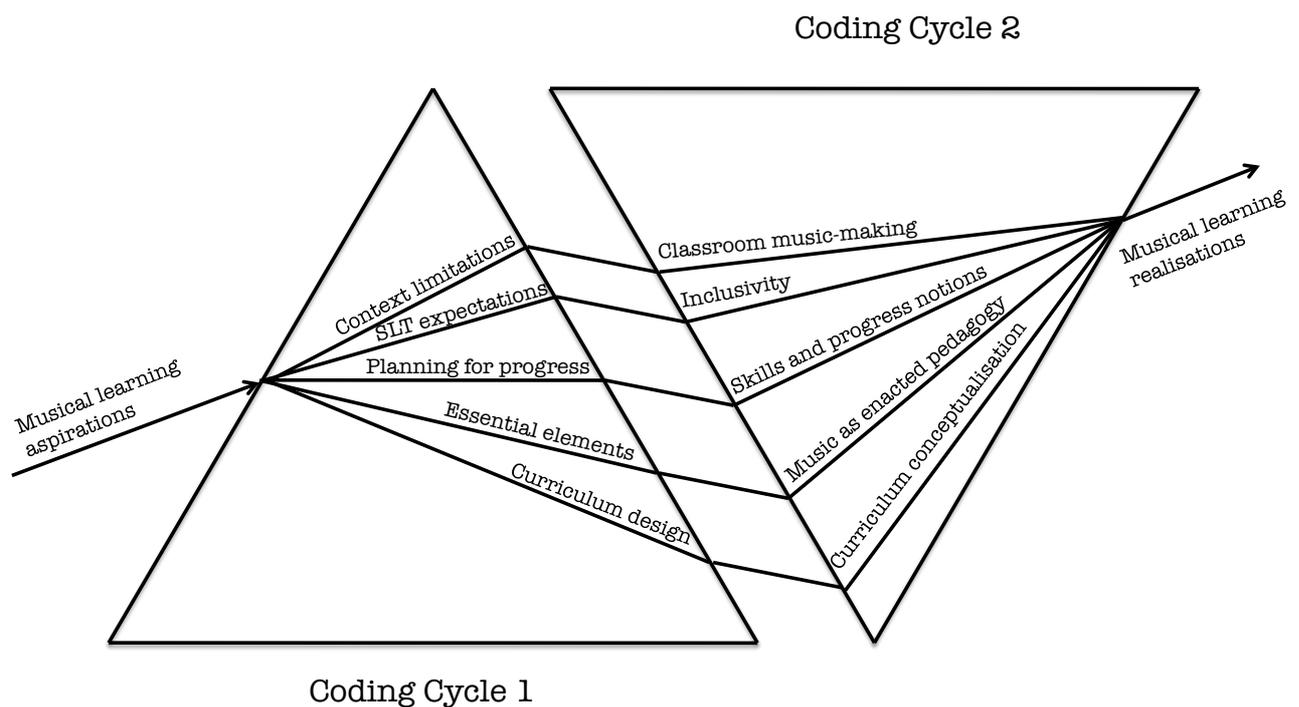


Figure 88: Double prism of music teacher curriculum dynamics

These coding attributes were evident in detailed comments and observations of the teacher participant in *pilot study 3*. Such responses frequently contained repeated concepts expressed in terms which acted as indicators of discourses outlined above.

A sample table of some of these is given below in which congruent ideas are highlighted:

Discourse theme	Evidential terms and phrases
Music-making in the classroom	<i>Keyboard; djembe; Caribbean music is good for practical work; something that <b>sounds</b> cohesive and sensible and <b>decent</b>; engaged by what they've done; a <b>good outcome</b></i>
Development of musical skills and notions of progress	<i>Keyboard <b>skills</b>; elements of music reading <b>skills</b> within every scheme; rhythm <b>skills</b>; know which instruments; know something about the structure; know a few elements; difficult to plan for linear progression; they should be <b>getting better</b>; a very basic form of <b>progression</b> from year 7 to year 9</i>
Curriculum conceptualisations and structures	<i>Order the topics based on the time you've got available; <b>planning for contrast</b>; a matrix; <b>happy accident</b></i>
Perceptions of music as enacted in pedagogy	<i>Key concepts; music has patterns; in depth learning; <b>like listening to it</b>; we sat there and did it ourselves; interest; it <b>sounds good</b></i>
Realisation of inclusivity through differentiation	<i>Kids gets bored when they can't do stuff; you tell more about a kid's ability by sitting around in a circle with a drum; more advanced grasp of performing; group with mixed abilities and you give them a <b>differentiated</b> task; <b>differentiation</b> by support; <b>adapt it</b> for different learners</i>

Table 18: Pilot study 3 discourse themes and evidences

Such recurring concepts within one interview led me to consider significances of repeated words and phrases within each of the interviews that constituted the main study. It was from these coding cycles that processes of curriculum design, in which music teachers engage as common practice, became more transparent. I explore these actualisations and compare them in my discussion of findings for the main study.

#### 8.4.2 Pilot Study 3 observation

As well as illuminating the semi-structured interview in *pilot study 2* by providing a point of comparison, *pilot study 3* was also included in my research design to trial the

addition of a classroom observation, as a means of verifying responses in the semi-structured interview. As discussed in the methods section of this thesis, this approach contributes to the development of a holistic viewpoint from research data (Newby, 2010). In *pilot study 3*, I therefore engaged in a classroom observation of a 50-minute lesson of a class of 20 Year 8 learners, following the semi-structured interview, and as part of the same research visit.

The classroom lesson took the form of a final lesson on the *Blues*, during which the learners were to be assessed. The importance of assessment to create data as discussed during the interview was evident in the lesson, where musical tasks were sub-divided into assessment levels according to their complexity, as perceived by the teacher. Understanding contexts of musical development in learners was stressed by the teacher, e.g. “Have I taught you everything there is to know about the *Blues*? No!” There was evidence of extensive differentiation for one learner, who used *Garageband* on an *iPad* to realise his work.

The overall findings of the classroom observation as a means of verifying interview data is shown in *table 19*:

<i>Discourse theme</i>	<i>Extent of verification in classroom observation</i>
Music-making in the classroom	Practical work is evident in classroom, as in interview, and is part of assessment model.
Development of musical skills and notions of progress	A high level of musical skill is needed to access <i>Blues</i> scheme and this is integrated into classroom lesson as teacher explained at interview. Teacher outlook to avoid skills as a topic is evident in practice. Progress and how this is to be evidenced is explained to learners (e.g. repeating a pattern for a piece which was learned the previous lesson) is more of a learning structure than the teacher explored at interview.
Curriculum conceptualisations and structures	Evidence of context is limited, although repeatedly referred to during interview.

Perceptions of music as enacted in pedagogy	Considerable scaffolding sought to ensure that the final outcome was one of quality, as expressed at interview. Assessment task allowed for a wide variety of outcomes.
Realisation of inclusivity through differentiation	Worksheets allowed for a wide-variety of abilities and entry points, therefore evidence of differentiation.

*Table 19: Pilot study 3 comparison between semi-structured interview and classroom observation*

Whilst there are some differences in teacher participant practices and their interview responses, this proportion of divergence is proportional to the restrictions of a single interview and my potential influence as an observer (Newby, 2010; Denscombe, 2007). In most instances, the observation of *pilot study 3* supports responses that the participant gave, thus emphasising validity of interview data. The use of a classroom observation therefore provided additional insight, and illuminated the findings from interview. This valuable process was therefore adopted for the main study. *Think aloud protocols* (TAPS) were also incorporated into both *pilot study 2* and *pilot study 3*. The findings from this strand of my research demonstrated considerable inherent variance and were not, therefore, modified following pilot studies. The findings from the TAPs are thus considered as a unified domain, and it is to this area that I now turn.

### **8.5 Think Aloud Protocols activity findings**

As set out in the methods section of my thesis, I included a *Think Aloud Protocols* (TAPs) activity as part of my semi-structured interviews, as a tool to access internal structures and perceptions of teacher participants, whilst engaged in curriculum design interactions. As previously stated, TAPs have been used in a variety of contexts, including research into chess players (Frey, 1983), and there is precedent for TAPs as a research tool in music education (Richardson, 1996; Sloboda, 2002), which has generally been to access origins of personal choices and musical preferences. There is no known precedent in using TAPs to develop understanding

of what is happening when music teachers engage in curriculum design, and my research is thus making a new contribution to knowledge. In this section I will begin by discussing research process limitations, followed by a summary of findings of patterns, statistical analysis and what a scrutiny of teacher comments reveal. I consider results from my two pilot study schools, as well as data from the main study in this section.

### 8.5.1 Research process limitations

*Pilot study 1*, and my *questionnaire*, both indicated frequently occurring topics in KS3 music curricula. Topics included in TAPs activities were drawn from this and consisted of: *minimalism, ternary form, ground bass, blues and African drumming*. These topics represented a range of frequently occurring, midrange and infrequently occurring topics from both years 7 and 9, in order to enable activities that contained a parity of possibilities. Using five topics allowed complexity to surface, without limiting choices respondents had to an insignificant number, or constructing tasks with overwhelming parameters for participants.

Teacher participants arranged cards sequentially in 7 out of 9 cases; either vertically or horizontally, and consequently presented minimal interpretive issues. However, two participants arranged their cards in a less conventional manner, as indicated below:

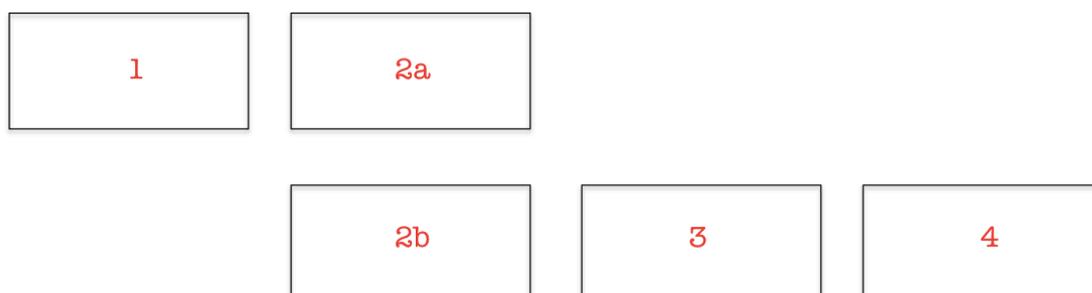
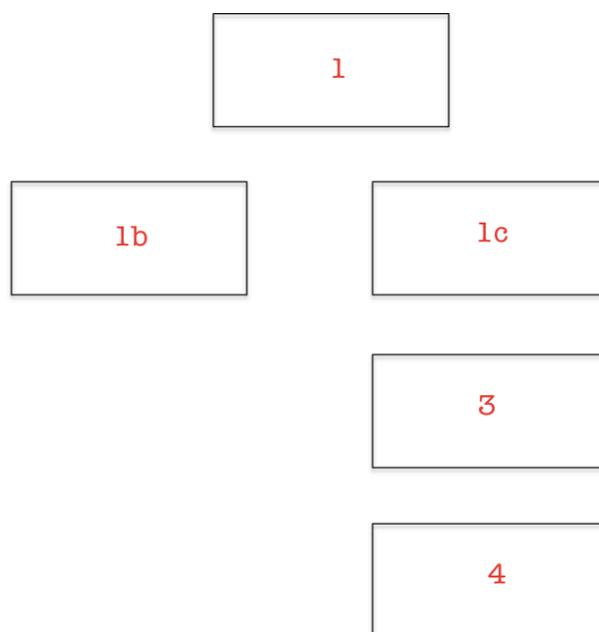


Figure 89: TAPS findings – non-linear response 1



*Figure 90: TAPS findings – non-linear response 2*

These arrangements of cards are different, indicating how teachers regarded topics as nested. However, through interviews, it was possible to clarify a sequential process, as sequential letters in *figures 89 and 90* indicate. The sequential form was therefore included in analysis of teacher participant approaches to the development of musical learning through topics. In the instances above, some topics were regarded as subsets of the others: in *figure 89*, the cards are arranged with *Ground Bass* as a subset of the *Blues* (*Blues* = 2a, *Ground Bass* = 2b). In *figure 90*, the cards are arranged with *Ground Bass* and *African drumming* as subsets of the *Blues* (*Ground Bass* = 1b, *African drumming* = 1c). There is a convergence of practice in these two arrangements, in which *Ground Bass* is considered as a subset of the *Blues*, and this arrangement was applied to year 9 classes in both cases. Whilst it is problematic to understand definitively the rationale for this convergence, there is evidence that topics in year 9 were often implemented over a more extended timeframe (schools G, B and E, all did this). More details of this approach to

curriculum realisation, is given in the documentary analysis of *programmes of study* in this thesis.

### 8.5.2 Sequencing findings for year 7 TAPs activity

The sequencing activity that formed part of semi-structured interviews exhibited some congruent practice, within which significant patterns emerged. Comparisons between year 7, are given below:

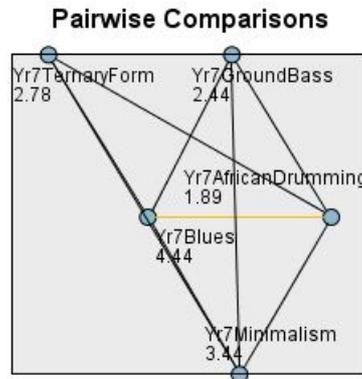
School	<i>African drumming</i>	<i>Ground Bass</i>	<i>Ternary form</i>	<i>Minimalism</i>	<i>Blues</i>
A	1	2	4	3	5
B	1	2	3	4	5
C	5	3	2	1	4
D	1	3	5	2	4
E	1	2	3	4	5
F	1	4	2	5	3
G	3	2	1	5	4
H	3	2	1	4	5
I	1	2	4	3	5
Most frequently occurring	1 <i>(6 of 9 cases)</i>	2 <i>(6 of 9 cases)</i>	1, 2, 4, 3 <i>(2 of 9 cases)</i>	4 <i>(3 of 9 cases)</i>	5 <i>(5 of 9 cases)</i>

Table 20: TAPs findings – Year 7 arrangements

For the TAPs year 7 activity, *African drumming*, *Ground Bass* and the *Blues* are consistently ranked first, second and fifth respectively. It is therefore most likely among my research participants, that a year 7 *Programme of Study* would begin with *African drumming* and end with *Blues* when given these choices. The placement of the *Blues* in this final position may be anticipated when informed by questionnaire results (as previously discussed), when *Blues* occurred most frequently in year 8. Within the parameters of the TAPs activity, the end of year 7 was the closest that participants were able to place this topic to year 8.

In addition, statistical analysis using the *Friedman Anova test* (Field, 2017), also reveals a statistically significant finding in this year 7 scenario. Following analysis

using the IBM SPSS program, which looks at a collection of variables to reveal if there is a difference between them as a collection, a model of statistical significance is revealed:



Each node shows the sample average rank.

Sample1-Sample2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj.Sig.
Yr7AfricanDrumming-Yr7GroundBass	-.556	.745	-.745	.456	1.000
Yr7AfricanDrumming-Yr7TernaryForm	-.889	.745	-1.193	.233	1.000
Yr7AfricanDrumming-Yr7Minimalism	-1.556	.745	-2.087	.037	.369
Yr7AfricanDrumming-Yr7Blues	-2.556	.745	-3.429	.001	.006
Yr7GroundBass-Yr7TernaryForm	-.333	.745	-.447	.655	1.000
Yr7GroundBass-Yr7Minimalism	-1.000	.745	-1.342	.180	1.000
Yr7GroundBass-Yr7Blues	2.000	.745	2.683	.007	.073
Yr7TernaryForm-Yr7Minimalism	.667	.745	.894	.371	1.000
Yr7TernaryForm-Yr7Blues	1.667	.745	2.236	.025	.253
Yr7Minimalism-Yr7Blues	1.000	.745	1.342	.180	1.000

Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. Asymptotic significances (2-sided tests) are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Figure 91: Taps findings – Model of statistical significance for year 7 activity

This analysis looks at comparative pairings, taking 0.05 as *statistically significant*, 0.01 as *very statistically significant* and 0.001 as *highly statistically significant*. The findings from this analysis, demonstrate that there is significance between the

rankings, with the pair-wise comparison model (*figure 91*) above, indicating the average between each pairing following *post-hoc* testing. There is a significant difference between *African drumming*, with an average value of 1.89 and the *Blues*, with an average value of 4.44. This is higher than a type one error of random distribution and includes negation of false positives in the 0.6 outcome for *African drumming* and the *Blues*, in calculating by a division of 10. There is thus a statistically significant difference between all topics, but there is a very strong statistical difference between *African drumming* and the *Blues* in comparison with random distribution. The next most significant finding (*weak evidence of a difference*) is between *Ground bass* and the *Blues*, which recorded an adjusted significance of 0.73. There is therefore weak evidence that there is a difference between these two topics. Statistical analysis therefore supports eye-ball analysis (Jankowicz, 2004) of the comparative ranking between topics, which initial analysis in *table 20* suggests. In consequence, this connects the placement of *African drumming* and the *Blues* in teacher participant responses, with some statistical evidence also linking *Ground Bass* to this relationship.

### **8.5.3 Sequencing findings for year 9 TAPs activity**

In contrast to year 7, the sequencing activity that formed part of the semi-structured interviews exhibited wide-ranging practices within which no significant patterns emerged for year 9. A comparison of responses for this second activity are given below:

School	African drumming	Ground Bass	Ternary form	Minimalism	Blues
A	5	4	2	1	3
B	1	3	4	2	5
C	1	2	3	5	4
D	4	1	5	3	2
E	3	2	4	5	1
F	1	3	4	5	2
G	5	1	3	2	4
H	3	2	1	4	5
I	3	2	5	4	1
Most frequently occurring	3, 1 (3 of 9 cases)	2 (4 of 9 cases)	4 (3 of 9 cases)	5 (3 of 9 cases)	1, 2, 4, 5 (2 of 9 cases)

Table 21: TAPs findings – Year 9 arrangements

There is some agreement in sequencing of topics between research participants, most notably in placing *Ground bass* second in a *Programme of Study* for year 9 students. However, there is no statistical significance in these findings, due to the low level of congruence. There is thus a great variety of practice within the TAPs curriculum design activity, which is insignificant in comparison with random distribution.

The same finding is evident when the data is analysed with *Anova Friedman* (Field, 2017) using SPSS software, which produces no statistical model:

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1	The distributions of Yr9AfricanDrumming, Yr9Blues, Yr9GroundBass, Yr9Minimalism and Yr9TernaryForm are the same	Related-Samples Friedman's Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks	.406	Retain the null hypothesis.

Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05.

Figure 92: Taps findings – Model of statistical significance for year 9 activity

Therefore, there was no pattern of distribution in sequencing of topics for year 9.

This may, once again, be linked to differing formulations of musical learning for year

9, in which some of the respondents (3 out of 9) preferred a *Programme of Study* structure that favoured fewer topics over longer periods; a contrast to the curriculum design practice of years 7 and 8.

#### **8.5.4 Rationale for TAPs sequencing**

As with statistical findings, teacher participant rationale for sequencing of topics for year 7 learners, indicated some convergent thinking. This was particularly evident in the placement of *African drumming*, as the beginning topic of a *Programme of Study* sequence. Teacher participants indicated both their perception that *African drumming* was accessible and engaging. Research participant responses included:

*Instant results with drumming.*

*Drumming to get the kids involved straight away.*

*African drumming is accessible to you and get them working together.*

*Immediately gets children thinking musically.*

Further encompassing rationale for topic placement (not only *African drumming*) included creating structures which participants considered enabled progress.

Responses that reflected such a paradigm included:

*You need to do something that's going to get them used to a keyboard.*

*Developmental – draw upon previously learned skills.*

*Learn to play and apply.*

*African drumming followed by Blues because you can make the link.*

*Ground Bass develops pitch.*

An equal proportion of teacher participants expressed the absence of a conceptual framework in their curriculum sequencing:

*My theory's quite warped really, isn't it? I could just shuffle them up! It's very random.*

*I don't know how you could do it. I think I'd need to look at it. . .*

*Is the correct answer on the back?!*

*A little bit vague.*

*I don't know.*

Therefore, whilst there is a strong association for operations of some topics within a *Programme of Study* (e.g. *African drumming*), and an overarching rationale that sequencing of topics should enable progress, there is also dissimilitude regarding processes and uncertainty regarding the extent to which participants regarded their choices in the sequencing activity as fully formulated.

Research participant rationales for year 9 were similarly varied in substance. Some responses identified progress and developmental aspects:

*Use a seed to get a groove going.*

*Thinking about what's come before.*

However, more frequently, responses emphasised engagement and variety, and were expressed in modes of hesitancy:

*That one first [African drumming] because it's fun. . . get them engaged and performing. . . engagement purposes rather than skills based.*

*Am I aiming for contrast in this scheme? [as an aside to self]*

*Terrible reason for the order – they are fun.*

*Minimalism in pairs for behaviour management.*

Similar motivators are evident when participants discuss their rationales for adjustments of approach between year 7 and year 9:

*I wouldn't want to start with drumming with year 9, because the boys would be too hard to control.*

*Year 9 topics chosen to engage kids and are fun.*

*Ways of getting kids to shine in year 9.*

*Finish on something at which kids can excel and you can give a summative level in.*

*You want them to get involved in the music.*

*Start it with something simple and then develop it maybe – not really sure, don't know!*

Many of the principles that teachers outlined (for the final year of Key Stage 3 for all participants), promoted classroom management and assessment procedures, which research participants considered as enablers for rich outcomes, whilst fostering engagement and complicity. These motivators for year 9 structures may or may not have impacted the effectiveness of musical learning in their classrooms, but were very different from progress motivators which appeared to some extent for year 7. There was thus a considerable variance of practice between sequencing of topics for these year groups, within the confines of the TAP activity.

The TAP activity was embedded into both the pilot studies and main study, and therefore findings of the main study begin to come into focus in discussions of the TAP findings. In order to understand this context more fully I will now present the findings of the main study, arising principally from semi-structured research interviews.

## **8.6 Main study findings**

My main study consisted of 7 semi-structured interviews, which developed from two pilot study interviews (detailed in *pilot study 2* and *pilot study 3*). The interviews were pre-structured into 28 questions, but these were adjusted during the course of interviews, to enable themes offered by teacher participants to be explored. This section of the thesis presents an exposition of findings arising from this oral data, followed by a discussion of recurring themes, and ideas about how these have been

interpreted. The context of curriculum design and teacher perceptions of adequacy in this domain will also be considered in this section.

### **8.6.1 Interviews overview**

In order to illustrate the themes and content of interview responses as a data set, and prior to detailed analysis, verbal responses are represented below as a *Wordle* cloud:



In a *Wordle* cloud, the size of words appear in proportion to their frequency. It would therefore appear that teacher respondents *think* in detail about their curriculum and place a priority on knowledge (*know*). Other priorities from this basic analysis include the prominence of *like*, indicating that this may be important from teacher and learner perspectives and *different* as a significant factor in curriculum design. Establishing a curriculum that includes breadth and variety may therefore be motivators for teacher participants in their practice. To determine the extent to which such broad conclusions are evident in the interview data, more detailed analysis is required, as set out below.

### **8.6.2 Semi-structured interview question responses**

To facilitate clarity in music teacher participants' approaches to music curriculum design discourse, I have structured question responses into pairings, where each provides an analysis of the other. For example, where *whole school curriculum* is one domain of discussion, *music curriculum* is the parallel, with each informing the other. Understanding the manifestations in which Key Stage 3 music curricula is determined by formations of a wider school curriculum context, is significant in interpreting topic and sequencing choices, which may form a part of non-formal requirements, such as cross-curricular elements. I have therefore organised questions into the following pairings:

Question	Question focus 1	Question	Question focus 2
Preamble	Musical background	6	Curriculum topics
3	Curriculum design training	3b	Curriculum design in teacher training
2	Whole school curriculum structures	1	Music curriculum school perceptions
4	Planning for musical learning	8	Musical learning in topic sequencing
19	Topic selection according to year group	20	Topic selection according to class within year group
22	Most successful topic	23	Success as a profile
25	Curriculum adaption	26	Curriculum revision
28	Musical learning free response		

Table 22: Semi-structured interview concept interrogative pairings

### Musical background and curriculum topics questions

Music teacher research participants, who were all Subject Leaders for music in their respective schools, represented divergent contexts of educational and musical experience. These demographics are represented in *Table 23* below:

School	Degree	Instrument (s)	Further musical biography
C	Education	French horn	Teacher of English and Drama as well as Music
D	Music degree at Huddersfield	Piano Cornet	GCSE and A-level Music Brass band tradition
E	Conservatoire	Tuba	Brass band tradition
F	Primary Education	Euphonium Guitar Saxophone Clarinet Piano	Concert bands No GCSE or A-level Music qualifications
G	Music at Cambridge	Violin Piano Viola	A-level at independent school Played in local orchestras
H	Education	Piano Violin	O-level and A-level. Played in local orchestras
I	Education	Harmonica Clarinet Piano	Self-taught Former band manager Began in education as teaching assistant

Table 23: Educational and musical experience of research participants

The addition of a *preamble* question, was an alteration that resulted from *pilot study 2* and *pilot study 3*, and informed participant responses related to their curriculum. Domains of curriculum design equivalency emerge when details of topics taught are mapped onto participants' musical background:

School	Degree Instrument (s) Further musical biography	Topics included in KS3 Music curriculum
C	Education French horn Teacher of English and Drama as well as Music	Blues, Graphic notation, Musical elements, Chinese music
D	Music degree at Huddersfield Piano Cornet GCSE and A-level Music Brass band tradition	African rhythm, Peter and the Wolf, World Music, Carnival of the Animals
E	Conservatoire Tuba Brass band tradition	Blues, Samba, African drumming, Structure, Keyboard skills, Ground bass, Reggae, Fanfares, Minimalism, Film music
F	Primary Education Euphonium Guitar Saxophone Clarinet Piano Concert bands No GCSE or A-level Music qualifications	Notation, Gamelan music, Blues, Variation on a theme, Salsa
G	Music at Cambridge Violin Piano Viola A-level at independent school Played in local orchestras	Song-writing, African drumming, Rap, Musical Futures, Music Technology and dance tracks, Band skills, Drums of the world (Gamelan, jazz music, samba), Integrated band skills (Theme and variation), learning the guitar, Fanfare (composition), Ternary form, Song-writing
H	Education Piano Violin O-level and A-level. Played in local orchestras	Rhythm work, Pitch, Keyboard skills, Sounds and instruments of the orchestra, Mixing rhythms, Composing, Taiko drumming, English folk song and sea shanties, Verse chorus structure, Tonality, World music, Indian drumming, Carnival music, Music through the centuries, Rap, Drum kits skills, Blues and jazz, Gamelan music, Song-writing
I	Education Harmonica Clarinet Piano Self-taught Former band manager Began in education as teaching assistant	Rhythm and pulse, Picture melody, Instrument families, R n' B, Chords and melodies, Pop bands, Musical Futures, composing for film

Table 24: Music teacher background and curriculum mapping

One interesting finding from this, is that teachers whose musical origins were more informal (e.g. school D, F and I) do not list extensive lists of musical topics, and topics focus on musical elements and contexts (e.g. *composing for film, Peter and the Wolf*). Teachers whose origins follow a traditional instrumental pathway include a very wide range of topics, including world musics, structures and nested approaches to topics (e.g. *Drums of the world – Gamelan, jazz music, samba*). The difference between the number of topics that teacher participants recalled, demonstrated considerable variance: a minimum of two for those more informally trained, and up to 19 for those with a more traditional background. This suggests that some teachers consider diversity and quantity of topics as less important than contextual classroom learning (or that it does not have a high priority in their recall), whilst for others descriptive contexts in how curriculum is conceptualised is central to their perception of it. These perceptions of music curriculum therefore motivate its realisation.

*Curriculum design training and initial teacher training questions*

Designing a KS3 curriculum was the responsibility of all music Subject Leaders who participated in my interviews. None of these teachers had received any formal CPD in curriculum design since their initial teacher training, which for some participants, towards the end of their careers, was many years ago. These responses are representative of interview data:

*None.*

*None – I think we might have had a discussion at a Music network meeting.*

*No – I learned from the Head of department at the beginning of my career.*

*No – I've designed it myself and I've looked at other schools' music curriculums.*

*Only when training.*

*2008 curriculum revision training sessions, but nothing in terms of how to plan for topic-based learning.*

Of those who had received training in curriculum design as part of initial teacher training, only one appeared to go beyond planning practice of lessons and schemes of work:

*Distinguishing between a thematic and non-thematic approach.*

This participants' practice was influenced by this recalled experience: in the TAPs activity, she discussed "structural themes" as part of her rationale for sequencing arrangements she selected. She also grouped her *Programme of Study* in this way (e.g. as previously mentioned *Drums of the world* subsumed *Gamelan, jazz music and samba*). Opportunities for cognitive development in curriculum design, is therefore linked to curriculum design in practice in this case, and to citation of an underlying rationale. No other participant referenced specific structures in curriculum design.

*Whole school curriculum structures and music curriculum school perceptions questions*

Teacher participants frequently responded that there were only implicit links between their classroom curriculum and that of their school contexts. This therefore indicates

two curricula in operation from a music subject perspective: that of wider learning environments, and that of subject learning environments enacted in classroom realisations of musical activity. It is possible that this structure is actualised in subjects other than music, although my research did not seek to explore these wider relationships. Where links between music and the wider school did exist, these were initiated by the music teacher and took the form of cross-curricula or extra-curricula structures:

*Cross-curricular, but other departments are more reluctant than we are to engage in this.*

*Music is part of the school and there are concerts and performances including in assemblies.*

Teacher participants also identified links between music and the whole school curriculum in professional expectations, such as assessment and policies:

*My curriculum has to have the same structure as the school development plan.*

*My curriculum is linked through formal summative assessment.*

Whilst schools did exhibit unified approaches in *timetabling* (the number of lessons per week in each subject, and the number of hours per year expressed in school policies), there was a different approach to KS3 curricula, which was originated by music subject leaders without explicit guidance.

This is linked to the status with which participants associated music as a subject within their school communities. This was frequently perceived as *low-status* by research participants:

*Not as important as English, Maths and Science.*

*Does not have priority over core subjects, needs development with computers and accommodation.*

*At the bottom of the ladder.*

The professional dialogue between Senior Leadership Teams and Subject Leaders for music therefore appears, to some extent, to frame contexts for curriculum design for KS3 classroom music. Where there is a diminished discourse between levels of leadership considering curriculum design at subject level, this is realised in *procedural* rather than *pedagogical* engagement. Interview responses therefore tend to be around elements such as perceived GCSE take-up, rather than subject content and its organisation.

*Planning for musical learning and musical learning in topic sequencing questions*  
The essential elements of planning for musical learning were expressed in a wide variety of modes by research participants, and no dominant perception emerged.

Some respondents emphasised music-making:

*Music should be about experience – composing and performing.*

*The importance of practical activities: how to get children playing.*

Other responses emphasised working backwards from GCSE as a means of understanding what progress had been made:

*What would prepare students for GCSE?*

*Thinking and planning backwards.*

For one teacher, there was a stream of consciousness of complex questions, which emanated from considering the characteristics of musical learning:

*What resources are available? What skills do I want to teach? What do I want the students to improve on? What progress is being made? What musical understanding do I want them to have learned? What evaluation skills do I want them to develop?*

This variance of conceptualisation of music as pedagogical practice, may suggest causality for multi-spectral actualisation of KS3 Music *Programmes of Study*. In understanding musical learning and its nature, the teacher practitioners have adopted models that incorporate differing shades of musical meaning, and thus find realisation in different forms. These forms are then exemplified in topic titles of which the *Programme of Study* in their school context consists.

In combing sequencing with musical learning, there was a broader consensus that this was located in contrasting practical music-making activity. Thus responses were commonly centred on this aspect of musical realisation when participants were asked to explain their sequencing rationale:

*Lots of practical work. Getting them going. Getting them involved.*

*So kids are not bored. Task is interesting and relevant and not pointless.*

Musical learning as evident in music curriculum design was therefore centred in practical music-making, but emanated from multiple motivators. No one discourse dominated as a conduit for understanding musical learning, but there was convergence in realisations of conceptual constructs in music, as aural communication and inter-active response to sound in original music creation. Therefore, whilst teacher participants in my research engaged in exploring their perspectives on musical learning expressed as a *personal ideology*, their realisation of these various concepts, through music-making for musical meaning, evidenced greater consensus, and thus influence as a *curriculum motivator*. Although such a secondary strand may at moments of curriculum origination remain tacit, or hidden, it is this perspective that significantly influences KS3 music curricula *Programmes of Study* in their multiple forms.

*Topic selection according to year groups and classes within year groups*  
Most participants in my research did not revisit topics to revise and develop musical learning in the manner of a Bruner (1960) spiral curriculum. For some participants, this was due to different arrangements of classes between each year, in which their groups were not consistent, making repetition of topics as a means of development problematic. However, most regarded this as an issue of *coverage*, with the aspiration of exposing students to as wide a spectrum of style, genres and traditions as possible:

*With only one lesson a week, you want them to have a varied musical experience.*

However, teacher participants did identify recurrence of themes within their curriculum design, and these themes demonstrated variance; they were not all musical elements, for example. These responses are set out in *table 25* below:

Recurring themes in music curriculum design	Classification
<i>I come back to things, but not a whole topic.</i>	Unspecified
<i>Ukulele</i>	Instrumental facility
<i>Development of skills learning</i>	Instrumental facility
<i>Music technology</i>	Composition media
<i>Not the same topic but certain things</i>	Unspecified
<i>Scales</i>	Musical structures
<i>Notation</i>	Musical media
<i>Revisit world music</i>	Music from other cultures and traditions
<i>Revisit programme and film music</i>	Musical traditions and genres

*Table 25: Recurring themes identified by music teachers in curriculum design*

The rationale for not repeating, or returning to topics for development, was expressed by one teacher as:

*There's not enough time to do this.*

This response resonates with earlier comments by teacher participants that the curriculum evolves and that it “kind of changes itself” (teacher participant in *pilot study 2*). Thus although teachers design their own KS3 Music curricula that is suited for their context and purpose, there remains a teacher perception that it is the curriculum that has supremacy in the teacher/planning dynamic.

Without exception, participant teachers used the same topics with different classes in the same year group. For example, all year 8 classes would be simultaneously learning about the *Blues*, when this was a part of music curriculum at one participant teacher’s school. The rationale for this choice was invariably that of organisational practicalities, including that it was a direct method for teachers to track and plan, retaining clarity and coherence:

*The same topics, but some different teachers.*

*The same topics – it's less confusing.*

*The same topics, except that there are only one set of keyboards, so we have to change things then.*

There was also evidence of some adaption for differentiation, expressed in organisational structures, in which precise details of adaption were not always clear:

*Teach the same, but change it slightly: make it shorter and more practical for difficult classes.*

*Same topics, but adapt for each class.*

*Have to adapt as they are all at a different stage in their musical understanding and knowledge.*

What therefore existed within my research sample, was more of an adaption and flexibility of approach *within* topics, rather than a differentiation *of* topics themselves. The teachers changed their orientation within the curriculum that they had designed, rather than developing the structure of their curriculum, to provide alternative musical provision.

*Most successful topic and success as a profile*

Understanding teacher perceptions of success enables insight into motivators for curriculum design, which my research has indicated is an intensely personal

interaction. Interview questions that explored these conceptualisations as manifest in practice, therefore enabled insight into further influences on how teachers realise and practice musical interactions through their curricula. When asked which topic research participants considered to be most successful, the range of responses, (as may be anticipated from the variety of approaches to KS3 music curriculum planning) were diverse. They included:

- Blues
- Blues and jazz
- Roots of R n' B
- Musical Futures
- Chasing cars: songs and making bands
- Guitar playing and music technology
- Keyboard and drums
- Intro to music tech
- Structures
- Spy music composition
- It's different every year: I couldn't pick one

There is some convergence in the 'success factor' of the *Blues* and music-making topics; indicators that reveal *why* these are successful is more difficult to access in teacher planning processes. Teacher conceptualisations of success were, however, evident and included responses such as:

Responses	Classification
<i>Not a number.</i>	Personal achievement of learners
<i>Achieve the best they can.</i>	
<i>Working towards the end result and having something to show for it.</i>	
<i>Happy with what they've done and doing something they couldn't do before.</i>	
<i>Not afraid to have a go.</i>	
<i>When students have achieved their full potential.</i>	
<i>Kids wanting to be involved and engaged.</i>	

<i>They enjoy it, proud of it, take ownership.</i>	Engagement with musical learning
<i>Pupil engagement.</i>	
<i>Kids engaged, enjoying what they're doing, being creative.</i>	
<i>Engagement.</i>	
<i>Engaged fun.</i>	
<i>Something that sounds decent by the end of the scheme.</i>	Quality of musical outcome
<i>They have played something really well.</i>	
<i>Linked to the real world: engaged in another culture's music.</i>	
<i>If they come to the lesson excited and leave buzzing</i>	Musical learning atmosphere
<i>They come out buzzing.</i>	
<i>There's a buzz in the classroom.</i>	

*Table 26: Teacher perceptions of 'success' in classroom music*

Thus teachers are aiming to recreate these notions of success in curricula they create. The quality of musical outcome is important to how teachers in my research sample understood learners to respond, so this is likely to be a motivator in choices of topics, and past perceptions of success will therefore influence future choices. It is also important to these teachers that learners are engaged, and that there is an atmosphere within the classroom of concentrated music-making. Without these external indicators, it is unlikely that teachers would consider topics to have been successful, and this may lessen the chances of it reappearing in their curriculum the following year. This motivator is as important as any conceptual interpretations of what a music curriculum is, or should be, as is indicated by the enthusiastic mode of response and the ease with which participant teachers engaged with this question.

#### *Curriculum adaption and curriculum revision*

Following the same model of reciprocal practice, within which topics were applied uniformly across a year group, units of work were also applied equidistantly across classes by teachers in my research sample. Learners did not follow different realisations of topics, but adjustments were made for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and teachers commented on differentiation strategies, which included differing expectations from those given the same amount

of time. Teacher participants contributed extended answers to this question of which this is a representative example:

*I had a visually impaired boy and so he... severely visually impaired, so we had to think about, okay, keyboard work, how are we going to do that? So we had to think of a way, basically we had a different card with the letter names on and then put some sort of Braille-y things on the keyboard so that he could feel where he was.*

This example demonstrates adaptive range that music teachers were prepared to incorporate into their lesson delivery, and my research revealed many comparable cases. All of such adaption arose from the main tasks and it was these elements – *the activities in the lesson* – that were differentiated. Learners did not follow different concurrent parallels within a topic: there was one learning objective and one topic interpretation in operation within a lesson at any one time, in all the responses which teachers offered in interview and as noted in classroom observations. There was therefore one predominant discourse that was enacted by teacher participants in their classroom practice through which all musical activity was interpreted.

Curriculum adaption therefore exhibited boundaries of conceptualisation, but such perimeters did not restrict curriculum revision, which was a frequent process with which teachers engaged. Teacher participants in my study describe their curricula as existing in a continual state of flux, which is subject to constant revision. There was thus a remarkable degree of similarity in their responses to questions about the frequency of curriculum revision, some of which were identical:

All the time. Every year.
All the time, probably too much.
Yearly.
All the time.
Every year.
All the time. Every year.
Constantly.
There have only been two years when I've taught the same thing.

*Table 27: Teacher participant responses to frequency of curriculum revision questions*

The rationale for such frequent change in designs of curriculum for KS3 music is not understood by the participants, with responses bounded by comments such as: “I don't know why I change things.” *Under-confidence* therefore appears to exist in music teacher practice, related to processes of curriculum design, and further evidence to support this finding is given in the section on under-confidence indicators later in this discussion.

#### *Musical Learning Free Response*

Responses from teacher participants to the final question of semi-structured interviews suggest that although teachers wish to retain autonomy in the activity of curriculum design, they are uncertain of spaces their practice occupies, and whether it is representative. For some participants, interviews offered opportunities to think and review this domain for the first time, and this was a reflective moment they appeared to welcome. It was in this interview process, almost at its conclusion, that some of the most open comments were made in relation to music curriculum design:

*Yeah, I think, this is the first time that I've ever been asked directly by somebody who's an expert about my musical decisions in my curriculum building really. This is first time somebody's sat down and said what do you do and why.*

School D

*I never really thought about it until we spoke today, in terms of the in depth way which we've spoken about it. I think actually when you talk to other teachers about this, the words “happy accident” might actually be a big part of people's vocabulary.*

School B

*I've got the way that I do it, but I do find it difficult to know whether that's the right way. I think maybe there is no right way. I don't know, but it is*

*difficult to know whether you are on the right track. It's difficult to know whether what you're doing is correct because it is so open.*

School H

*As I said right at the start, I choose to do... to interpret the curriculum in a way which suits me, and I think it suits my community of children, and I would argue that that's how we should do it. I don't think there should be some top down this is how we do it and we must do it in this way, because there's so many debates and arguments about how to teach music that there is no one answer.*

School I

*I think there's not necessarily a right way to do it. And I think because a lot of my friends are music teachers and we all do it very differently, and I think it's quite a personal thing as well. And I do worry sometimes that I do too much popular music and we don't do enough classical. In another school I might do more of that.*

School A

The planning of lessons and schemes of work within which those lessons exist is a frequent and recurring feature of teacher practice. However, wider perspectives of curriculum design within the context of creating a *Programme of Study* is, according to my research findings, an area in which there is a vacuum of consensus, and in which conflicting discourses of pedagogical practice exist. Extracts from interviews given directly above illustrate this conflict, between both professional profile and personal identity, and how this then manifests into realised educational personae for music. Further evidence of this conflict is explored in the expression of under-confidence indicators in the next part of my discussion.

### **8.6.3 Under-confidence indicators**

During the course of semi-structured interviews, teacher participants frequently expressed their uncertainty of suitabilities of their personal approach to curriculum design. There was considerable breadth in these comments, some of which identified catalysts for their hesitations:

*These are hard questions. I'm not used to thinking about things so deeply.*

Whilst others expressed moments of self-doubt in a more foundational fashion:

*I've tried my best, but I don't know.*

However these exclamations are regarded and interpreted, they demonstrate an obscured tension, within which teachers feel under-confident in their music curriculum design, but are constrained to engage with the process of its development, as it is from this origin that musical activity in their classrooms radiates. Signifiers of under-confidence are evident in all semi-structured interview questions, related to the substance of music-curriculum as an interactive dynamic, processes of planning to facilitate musical development, rationale for music at KS3 in an accountability structure, and consideration of an effective classroom ethos for musical learning. However, the most prominent indicators of under-confidence were clustered around questions considering topic selection and sequencing.

Responses to questions seeking to uncover teacher thinking on *Programme of Study* construction were evenly distributed and uniformly demonstrated signifiers of under-confidence. There were multiple examples across all participants, of which a representative selection includes:

*I don't know really – it's just random.*

*I've lost my train of thought.*

*I don't know. . . I'm just thinking on that sort of level.*

*My last answer was probably not quite right.*

*Sorry, does that cause a problem?*

Indicators such as those above demonstrate hidden complexities within processes of curriculum design in KS3 music curricula. Multiple perspectives of music *Programmes of Study* were evident in semi-structured interview responses, and teacher participants' modes of response, which include statements indicating episodic uncertainty in the interaction of curriculum design, were equally diverse. There are therefore two spheres in operation: individual teacher approaches to constructing a curriculum as realised in anticipated musical learning activity; and internal teacher conflict in the development of curriculum models and identifying which of these constructs to put into such operation. The course of these interacting dynamics became evident through repeated coding procedures within which common practices emerged. My findings now progress to identifying such recurring features.

#### **8.6.4 Revealing music curriculum design practice**

As discussed in *pilot study 3* of this thesis, *radically modified grounded theory* processes based on Glaser and Strauss (1967), revealed thematic convergence from interview data. This convergence was represented in a model of a *double prism of Music teacher curriculum dynamics* (see *figure 88*). During the course of analysis of the 7 semi-structured interviews of the main study, further clarification of these themes became possible, as greater complexity emerged. This took the form of repeated phrases and thematic content, which was developed through a further two coding cycles. The third coding cycle enabled more detailed identification of curriculum design processes, whilst the fourth coding cycle consisted of developing labels to describe these findings within a theoretical analysis.

I have developed a model that represents these emergent themes and combines these interacting fields. In this conceptualisation, the *double prism of Music teacher curriculum dynamics* (figure 88), is synthesised into one model, to indicate the conflation of these constituent processes and to trace their connection to realisations of curriculum design processes in teacher interactions:

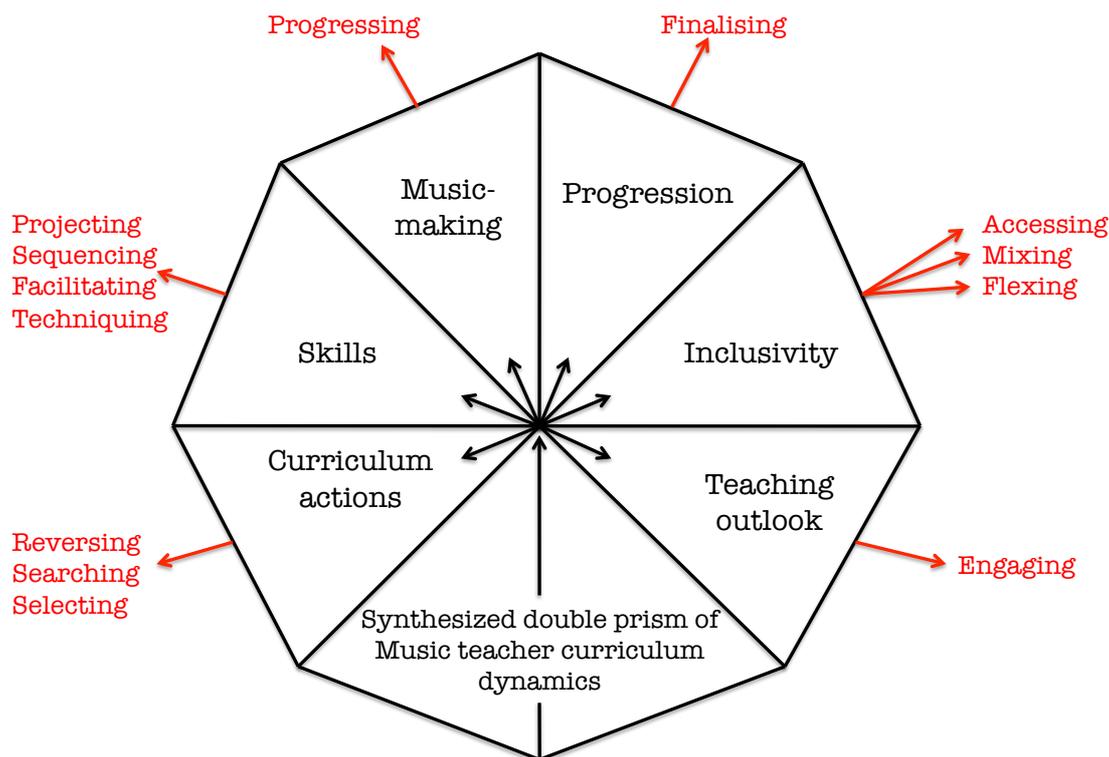


Figure 94: Music curriculum design enaction model

Six domains emerged from semi-structured interview data, as operations of curriculum design: *teaching outlook*, *inclusivity*, *progression*, *music-making*, *skills* and *curriculum actions*. *Teaching outlook* represents teacher participants' personal approaches and the influences these have on developments of their classroom curriculum for KS3 music. *Inclusivity* represents teacher participants' ethos to ensure that their lessons are inclusive, and this aspiration begins at the moment when teachers' curricula are in the processes of conception. *Progression* subsists in attitudes of designing classroom activity to enable musical development, and music-making is also considered by music teacher participants in my study, as a means to

enable musical skills. *Curriculum actions* subsumes the domain of designing music curricula, and the processes by which such a realisation occurs.

From these domains, *chains* of related activity (shown in red) began to emerge from my research data, for which I have sought to provide an explanatory typology (set out in table 29 below). These *chains* became fully evident following *activity theory analysis* and this is discussed in the *Further Discussion* section of this thesis, where my curriculum model is further refined. In realising this first stage curriculum design enactment model (*figure 94*, above), coding processes were an essential feature. An example of such coding processes, which enabled an understanding of curriculum interactions is therefore given below:

Theme	Theme Sweep two	Sweep two grouped	Theme Sweep three
Teaching Outlook	Teacher open to learn	Teacher open to learn	Projecting
	Capture student attention	What would the kids find interesting?	
	Inspiring	Make lessons relevant	
	Emotion	Topics students would want to buy into	
	Communication	What suits our kids, our community	
	Expression	Let by what the children's interests are	
	Enabling independence	Creative, adaptive, responsive to class	
	Memorable events	Suits my community of children	
	Engaging students	Capture student attention	Engaging
	Adaptable	Engaging students	
	Results kids can be proud of	Adaptable	
	Feel they've achieved something	Be available	
	Build confidence	Engage	
	Be available	Not bored	
	Varied learning	Engage immediately	
	Give confidence	Engaging	
	Engage	Fully engaged and challenged	
	Varied musical experience	Inclusive engagement	
	Helping them feel proud	Independence	
	Not bored	Ignite interest	
	Build confidence	Something they can excel in	
	Evolving	Engaged by what they've done	

Table 28: Sample interview findings analysed in coding cycles

My curriculum design typology explores teaching actions found on the periphery of the octagon in my *Music curriculum design enactment* model. These processes are defined in *table 29* below:

<i>Teacher curriculum design process</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Selecting	The teacher process of decision-making during planning activity. This consists of deciding which teaching topics will be used to enable the development of student musical understanding.
Projecting	A process prior to selecting, where teachers make decisions about musical learning topics based on their own perceptions of what learners will find appealing.
Sequencing	Ordering musical topic-based learning into a selected order for teaching.
Progressing	Repeating musical skills (such as keyboard work) and applying these to outcomes in varying contexts.
Facilitating	Teacher interaction and feedback to students following the initial setting of a task.
Techniquing	Refining and developing progressing aspects to achieve higher level outcomes. (E.g. chords and melody together at the keyboard).
Reversing	Working backwards from GCSE grade descriptors to design curriculum.
Searching	Teacher action to attempt to source successful curriculum models.
Accessing	A curriculum design that allows all students to engage through a multi-level ability model.
Mixing	Combining musical contexts and cultural backgrounds alongside ability ranges to design curriculum.
Flexing	A curriculum in flow, that allows for simultaneous spread of achievement. Challenge, following a scheme out of order and approaching tasks in different manners are manifestations of a flexing approach.
Finalising	Designing curriculum determined by desired final outcome, either at the end of the year or at the end of the Key Stage.
Engaging	Presenting a version of curriculum with which it is perceived that learners will choose to engage.

*Table 29: Typology of curriculum design*

Music teacher participants in my research, therefore demonstrated in their own practice that music curriculum design is a complex process, containing domains of interacting and overlapping conceptual and empirical process. Whilst teachers found the process of verbalising these dynamics problematic, such cognitive curriculum

processes for music subject leaders are inherent accumulations. Distinguishing features of music curriculum as a domain are “unstable” (Maw, 1993; 19), and music teacher participants within my study operated, responded to and adjusted their practice as a continual process within this field. In order to balance interview responses with pedagogical practice, I also observed participants in the classroom as well as verbal explorations. Initial observation findings have been discussed in *pilot study 3* as part of the development of research methods. I now turn to an analysis of observations for the main study, in order to reveal the extent to which these validate interview responses.

### **8.7 Classroom observation findings**

As discussed in the methods section of this thesis, my intention through the inclusion of classroom observations was to enhance the validity of my research and to establish an evidential standpoint from a complex web of *encirclement* rather than triangulation. In examining classroom observations, I have subdivided my findings into the six domains identified as curriculum design operations in *figure 94* from my discussions of the main study. This structure enables thematic lines of perspicacity in data comparison. Two schools are omitted from this data, the first because as a pilot school classroom observation for verification was an emerging concept in my research design, and the second because in seeking to ensure temporal reliability, data collection from a semi-structured interview or an observation were the achievable options in this context. The semi-structured interview was therefore chosen in order to preserve data intensity. This section of my findings will therefore present a data table which details teacher participant representative extracts from semi-structured interviews juxtaposed with observation data to support congruence and variance, followed by a commentary on these findings.

School	Theme	Interview data extracts	Observation data extracts
A	<i>Pilot Study 2 school, at which point observation was not part of research design.</i>		
B	Music-making	"Interesting lessons. . . particularly practical lessons"	Many performance and composition episodes throughout session
C		"Music should be about experience"	Musical activity in which learners explored was the primary classroom activity
D		"Practical music-making for me as a teacher is very important"	Ukulele chord sheets and note patterns were the primary resources for extended musical activity
E		"Success looks like they enjoy it and come up with a good performance they're proud of"	Solo and ensemble performance and composition activities
F		"It's a lot of practical work; not much written work"	Classroom activities were entirely based on music-making using collections of instruments
G		"I want the students to come in and play"	Music-making is the focus of the classroom activity, with emphasis on quality of outcome
H		"Responsibility in playing which is what music is all about"	Whole class music-making led by the teacher was the focus of classroom activity
I		<i>Interview scheduling precluded classroom observation at this school</i>	
B	Skills	"Essentially a keyboard skills lesson"	Skills a means to access topic activity
C		"Through music you encourage a lot of skills for life"	Focus on developing skills of interpretation and performance
D		"My kind of plan is to be able to develop a series of skills throughout the topics"	Skills identified for continued development for homework through use of chord bookmark
E		"Probably more important than the skills that they actually learn as long as they can feel confident that they've achieved something"	Music-making encouraged and no specific focus on skill development
F		"We need to think about sequence in terms of skills"	Teacher regards composing and performing as skills and these are a part of classroom observation
G		"What performance skills do I want them to have improved?"	Skills are emphasised during classroom work and there is some reference to these in

			teacher feedback
H		“Some basic skills of working as an ensemble”	Multiple aural memory skills evident in performance work
B	Curriculum actions	“Context, interest, relevance, ability, learning something new, keeping them engaged”	Many performance and composition episodes throughout session
C		“Keeping it fresh, keeping it mixed-up”	Prior knowledge of graphic notation and composition combined in class activity
D		“When I designed this curriculum, I knew straight away that we had to engage immediately to get effective results”	Music-making in small groups was the immediate focus of this observed lesson
E		“It still is a challenge to get the right topics that are going to engage the kids at the right time”	Frequent references to SEND, SMSC, AfL, PLTs and other whole school policies in lesson planning
F		“If the knowledge is out there then we can fit it in, in the topics as we go through”	Notation understanding in classroom observation required an established understanding of symbol
G		“You can have that theme, but a million ways of introducing it”	All learners follow the same classroom activity
H		“I was taught about rhythm, I was taught about pitch – why not start with that?”	Rhythm was the focus of classroom session in which all learners were encouraged to engage
B		Teaching outlook	“When I plan for musical learning, first of all I think about what the kids would find interesting”
C	“Being open and looking”		Learners encouraged to be independent in the creation and assessment of their work
D	“Providing rich and involved experiences for the pupils”		Teacher gives direct instructions for further development and encourages engagement
E	“I like the end results to be something the kids can be proud of”		Classroom activity required independent learning and celebrated outcomes
F	“The driving force behind me as a music teacher is about enthusing kids; getting them going and giving them new		Music-making is the focus and structured as a step-by-step process

		experiences”	
G		“Topics students would want to buy into”	Aspiration to contextualise music within learner experience is evident in lesson formation
H		“I look at music as being possible for everybody”	Classroom work was interactive in mode
B	Inclusivity	“Engaging two or three different types of learner”	Supporting worksheets allow for different entry points
C		“Squeeze the curriculum to make them involved”	All learners complete the same activity
D		“I’m not entirely sure how I make it accessible, but children seem to think it’s accessible to them and teachers seem to think that what I do is accessible to all”	All learners complete the same task, with a variety of outcomes
E		“I do try and talk about the mixture in musical cultures”	Historical detail of topic included in classroom work
F		“I do like the idea of every child getting the same experience”	All learners were given the opportunity to perform and appeared to enjoy and be engaged by this approach
G		“They access the same activity, but do it in guitars rather than forcing them to play keyboard”	Teaching and reaching the whole class is evidenced in classroom dialogue
H		“How can I teach in such a way that all children will be able to access that?”	Teacher repeatedly reinforces the expectation that all learners must be involved in the lesson activity
B		Progression	“A very basic form of progression from the beginning of year 7 to the end of year 9”
C	“It’s stepping up, isn’t it? Each time I think”		Prior knowledge of graphic notation and composition combined in class activity
D	“Knowing that they’ve got an end result – I think those are things that I would consider as success and progression really”		Teacher expects performance skills to develop throughout observation
E	“I can’t do it in one lesson a week, because they just		Tables of note names rather than traditional

		forget”	notation evident
F		“As we go through the three years, the vocabulary that I expect them to use is more demanding”	Activities within classroom observation become more complex as lesson progresses
G		“Not all of them are going to make the same amount of progress at the same time”	Individual learner achievement was tracked in classroom processes
H		“It’s linking your learning – previous learning with whatever topic you might be doing”	Linked to previous learning – e.g. counting to 18 in Japanese and basing new rhythms around this established pattern

Table 30: Interview and observation main study comparison

#### *Music-making domain*

Music teacher participants consistently expressed the centrality of music-making (frequently expressed in the term “practical”) to their music pedagogy. These aspirations were substantially evident in classroom observations and in cases where statements such as: “Music should be about experience” were apparent, this was supported, in that musical activity was the primary activity of the classroom session. There were no discernable moments of diversion in this ideological stance among any of the teacher participants, and for this reason it can therefore be classified as an authentic vocational complementarity.

#### *Skills domain*

Elements which music teacher participants identified as skills in semi-structured interviews, were also evident in classroom observations. Teacher conceptualisation of skills in music were therefore realised in pedagogical practice within discourses of musical knowledge. One participant identified “some basic skills of working as an ensemble” in their interview and during the classroom observation emphasised features of aural memory as part of performance communication. There was therefore a close relationship between perceptions of *skill* as an active mode of learning and the *teaching emphasis* in classroom music-making.

*Curriculum actions domain*

Curriculum actions were also validated from interview perspectives and observations demonstrated a close correlation between each. There was therefore a line of development from notions of idealised KS3 music curriculum, to classroom manifestations of these concepts. An example teacher participant statement of this was as follows:

*When I designed this curriculum, I knew straight away that we had to engage immediately to get effective results.*

The classroom observation indicated that this ethos was realised in practice, with multiple episodes of small group music-making evidencing this musical ideology. Curriculum actions were not, therefore, only symbolic or cognitive, but were embodied in specific pedagogical identities.

*Teaching outlook domain*

Participant teachers' professional outlook continued patterns of classroom action, realising personal and interpretive conceptualisations. During interviews, questions relating to personal constructs for teaching music received some of the most enthusiastic responses, which embodied least hesitation, possibly indicating the degree to which practice remains under-theorised. Classroom observations assisted in consolidating such personal embodiments of music teacher profiles as foundational. Therefore, when one participant summarised their approach as "being open and looking," this was realised in the classroom observation, as learners were encouraged to be independent in the creation and evaluation of their work. The process of assimilation and synthesising interview and observation data was, therefore, a harmonious one.

### *Inclusivity domain*

Whilst there are moments of congruence within inclusivity, as with those that preceded, there is also some evidence of disparity in teacher expression and practice in this domain. Some participants commented that they would “squeeze the curriculum to make them [i.e. learners] involved,” however, this was not evident in the classroom observation, in which all learners completed the same activity. Within the same dynamic, one respondent self-questioned:

*How can I teach in such a way that all children will be able to access that?*

In the classroom observation they reiterated that all learners must be involved in the lesson activity as a behaviour for learning approach, therefore not diverging significantly from their planned lesson content. This finding suggests that in interpreting inclusivity in a classroom context, there is a greater dissonance between ideological interpretations and teaching practice.

### *Progression*

Conceptualisation and enactments of musical progression demonstrate a similar differentiation as in the inclusivity domain. There was therefore an expression of both variance and congruence in the essential status of philosophical realisations. The participant from school B, for example, perceived development within the music curriculum as:

*A very basic form of progression from the beginning of year 7 to the end of year 9.*

Despite this general summary, the classroom observation evidenced a specific progression focus: repeating a drum pattern from the previous lesson and developing this work. Another participant commented:

*I can't do it in one lesson a week, because they just forget!*

However, within the classroom observation, the teacher referred to note names and tonality structures which were embedded from previous learning.

Classroom observations in most cases, therefore, supported participants' interview responses, although there were some areas of difference. These are clustered in inclusivity and progression, potentially indicating variance of interpretive significance of these factors within the design of the KS3 music curriculum. Understanding curriculum as realised in documentary analysis, is the final strand of research from school participants and this is discussed in the following section.

## **8.8 Documentary analysis**

Documentary analysis of main and pilot study schools, enabled a naturalistic insight into curriculum design complexities as enacted by research participants. It provided examples of a range of practice, facilitated comparison of topics both across *Programmes of Study* and between other research strands (such as *questionnaire* and *pilot study 1* findings), and enabled correlation between interview responses and music curricula as realised by participants in their school contexts. The style of presentation of these programmes also enabled insight into teacher conceptualisation of curriculum dynamics and additional classroom resources, that were part of classroom observations, further facilitated understanding of operations of teachers' pedagogical discourse. This section of the findings will consider each of these curriculum realisations as represented in documentary dimensions.

### 8.8.1 Programme of Study Layout

There was no stylistic consensus that emerged from my documentary analysis of formats for the presentation of *Programmes of Study*. However, it was possible to identify limited commonalities, from which two distinct approaches emerged: *lists* and *charts*. A *list* consisted of a topic heading for successive years, often with a bracketed reference to a resource. A *chart* consisted of a table with a row for each school year in KS3 (7,8 and 9) and a column for duration (frequently six half-termly blocks, or three termly blocks). Within a chart, there was often a topic title followed by a brief summary of indicative content. Representative examples of these two forms are given below:

#### School I

##### Year 7

##### Baseline test

##### Rhythm & Pulse (Percussion small ensemble skills & note lengths)

##### Pitch & Melody (Pitches on stave, Singing, Piano simple Melody fingering)

##### Instrument Families: (Texture & Timbre)

##### Music Technology 1: (Garage-band loop remix + basic apple computer commands)

##### Rock Band: (Smoke on the Water riff on guitar, keyboard & drum kit)

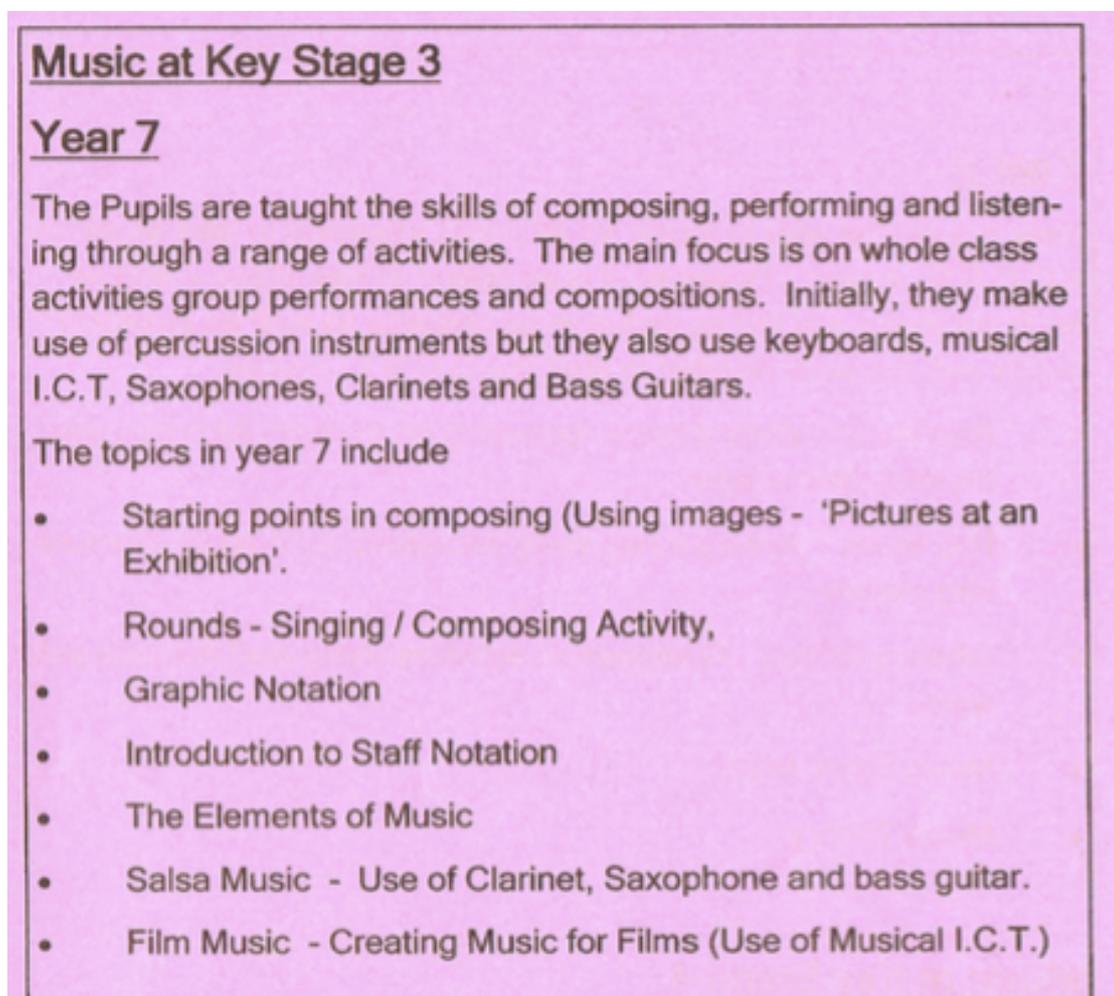
Figure 95: List style Programme of Study

Year 7

AUTUMN	SPRING	SUMMER
Musical Elements and Danse Macabre – Composition and Performance	Keyboard Skills- Reading basic notation, fingering, note finding- leads to solo performance	Medieval Music/Folksong-Composition and Performance
The Music of Africa- Djembe Drumming and singing	Musical Structures- Composition on Dance EJ- Performance- Keyboards	Samba/Djembe – Ensemble Performance

Figure 96: Chart style Programme of Study

In addition to these *Programme of Study* styles, such schemes were in single cases presented either as published realisations in music department publicity information, or as multi-faceted charts, detailing contrasting musical operations (*context, conventions, elements and skills*). Such realisations may be regarded as developments or subordinates, but remain essentially a list or a chart in their orientation. Extracts from these two cases are given below:



**Music at Key Stage 3**

**Year 7**

The Pupils are taught the skills of composing, performing and listening through a range of activities. The main focus is on whole class activities group performances and compositions. Initially, they make use of percussion instruments but they also use keyboards, musical I.C.T, Saxophones, Clarinets and Bass Guitars.

The topics in year 7 include

- Starting points in composing (Using images - 'Pictures at an Exhibition').
- Rounds - Singing / Composing Activity,
- Graphic Notation
- Introduction to Staff Notation
- The Elements of Music
- Salsa Music - Use of Clarinet, Saxophone and bass guitar.
- Film Music - Creating Music for Films (Use of Musical I.C.T.)

Figure 97: Showcase List Programme of Study

Year 8	Autumn I	Autumn II	Spring I	Spring II	Summer I	Summer II
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Band Skills</b>	<b>Integrated Band Skills</b>	<b>Drums of the World Blues</b>	<b>Image Junction</b>	<b>Drums of the World Gamelan</b>	<b>Music Technology Club Dance Music</b>
<b>Context:</b>	Learning how to develop instrumental skills on a range of Band Instruments.	Learning how to develop instrumental skills on a range of Band instruments and expand the knowledge of chords/melodic patterns/riffs for known songs.	Learning how music can reflect a time and place, and how disparate cultures can influence each other's' music.	Learning how music can be composed to link to images. Learn how to compose music in the minimalist style.	To learn about musical techniques of the Gamelan as used in Java and Bali.	Learning how music technology is used to create contemporary forms of music for dance.
<b>Convention:</b>	Learning to perform a known pop song, and developing instrumental specific techniques	Learning to perform a known pop song, and developing instrumental specific techniques - pupils choose their own songs to develop and learn in a style appropriate to themselves	Learn how blues music uses triads I, IV and V in the 12 bar sequence, creating swung, homophonic music with solo improvisations to convey personal ideas and feelings	Learn how to compose and perform music using minimalist conventions.	Learning how Gamelan makes use of improvisation, scales and Cyclic patterns.	Learning that they key characteristics of Club Dance Music are a 4 to the floor drum beat, simple harmonies, repetitive riffs and melodies and common structure.
<b>Element(s):</b>	Pitch : bass riff/melody Texture : Layering of music, combining all instrumental parts effectively	Tempo: appropriate use of steady rhythm -developing more complicated drum patterns	Pitch: blues scale related to chords, learning bass clef pitch through walking bass Rhythm: creating rhythmic patterns from words	Timbre : using appropriate instruments to create sounds that link to images Texture : Using minimalist techniques to compose music	Texture: layering music in groups to create a desire effect Timbre: using appropriate instruments to create an authentic sound	Tempo: conventions in tempo for dance music Texture: layers of percussion and synthesised sounds, vocals and samples
<b>Skill(s):</b>	Performance : Learning individual instrumental parts for a known song	Performance : Learning individual instrumental parts for a known song	Composition: how to develop solo melodic line within constraints of core 12 bar conventions (harmonic and structural).	Performance : learning to play simple rhythmic parts in performances of minimalist pieces such as clapping music Composition: composing music to accompany moving images using minimalist conventions'	Performance: of gamelan composition Listening: to various examples of Indonesian Music	Performance: creating and performing a dance-style track.

Figure 98: Multi-faceted Chart Programme of Study

Charts appeared slightly more frequently than lists, but all *Programmes of Study* taken from *Pilot Study 1* take the format of a chart. Therefore when these findings are combined, it is possible to conclude that charts are the most commonly occurring conceptualisation of KS3 music curriculum in my research study.

### 8.8.2 Topics in operation

Documentary analysis revealed a wide variance of both the number of topics in operation and their substance. A number of schools in the study designed their curriculum with different quantities of topics in each year and minimum and maximum number of topics for KS3 also varied widely between school contexts. These findings are set out in the table below:

School	Number of year 7 topics	Number of year 8 topics	Number of year 9 topics	Total topics
A	5	5	No data	10
B	6	6	2	14
C	4	4	4	12
D	6	3	14	23
E	6	6	3	15
F	7	4	5	16
G	4	6	6	16
H	7	7	6	20
I	6	4	3	13

*Table 31: Documentary analysis findings – topic frequency*

The total topics in Key Stage 3 for which there is a complete data set ranged from 12 to 23 topics, with an arithmetic mean of 15.4 topics. The pattern of one topic per half-term (6 topics) is most common in year 7 (4 out of 9 cases), and also appears in other years with less frequency (3 out of 9 cases for year 8, and 2 out of 8 cases for year 9). However, this pattern is not consistent between schools, and no *Programme of Study* contained six topics for years 7, 8 and 9 in a single context. Most schools (5 out of 9 cases) planned for the same number of topics in years 7 and 8, with the greatest variety being between these lower and middle years of the Key Stage and the upper year. With the exception of two participants, the *Programme of Study* for

the majority of schools exhibited fewer topics in year 9 than in year 7. There is therefore a transition between years in the quantity of topics that form KS3 curricula, with the tendency to do less in these later years, where topics were often project based and delivered over an extended period. Topics such as *Pop Band*, *Music Industry*, *Performance Project*, *Music Technology* were typical expressions of this form of extended learning. Opportunities for musical exploration and development in an extended module that provided additional space for musical creativity, were thus restricted to year 9 learners. It may therefore be surmised that year 7 is regarded as a foundational year to establish musical principals in extended teacher focused content. This tendency exhibits a “starting again in year 7” persona, which has often been associated with problematic transition between primary and secondary schools in music education (Glover and Young, 1999). The design of curriculum is therefore indicative, in some domains, of teacher perceptions of musical learning tenets, and how these should be enacted (Sanders, 2008). This informs the design of the curriculum, but lacks research justification.

Topics, which documentary analysis revealed, present a more complete representation of curricula in operation than semi-structured interviews, during which teacher participants were less likely to access their curriculum documentation. The analysis demonstrates diverse curriculum foundations from musical structures (such as *chords*), performance domains (such as *Ukulele*), music from other cultures and traditions (such as *Taiko*) and a wide range of styles, genres and traditions (such as *Medieval Music* or *R n’ B*). There are also topics that demonstrate congruence, with *Music Elements*, *Blues*, *Film Music* and *Music of Africa* being the most frequently occurring. Comparisons between this and other areas of my research will be explored in the *Further Discussion* section of this thesis. The complete results for the topics which appear in curriculum documentation of research participant schools is given below:

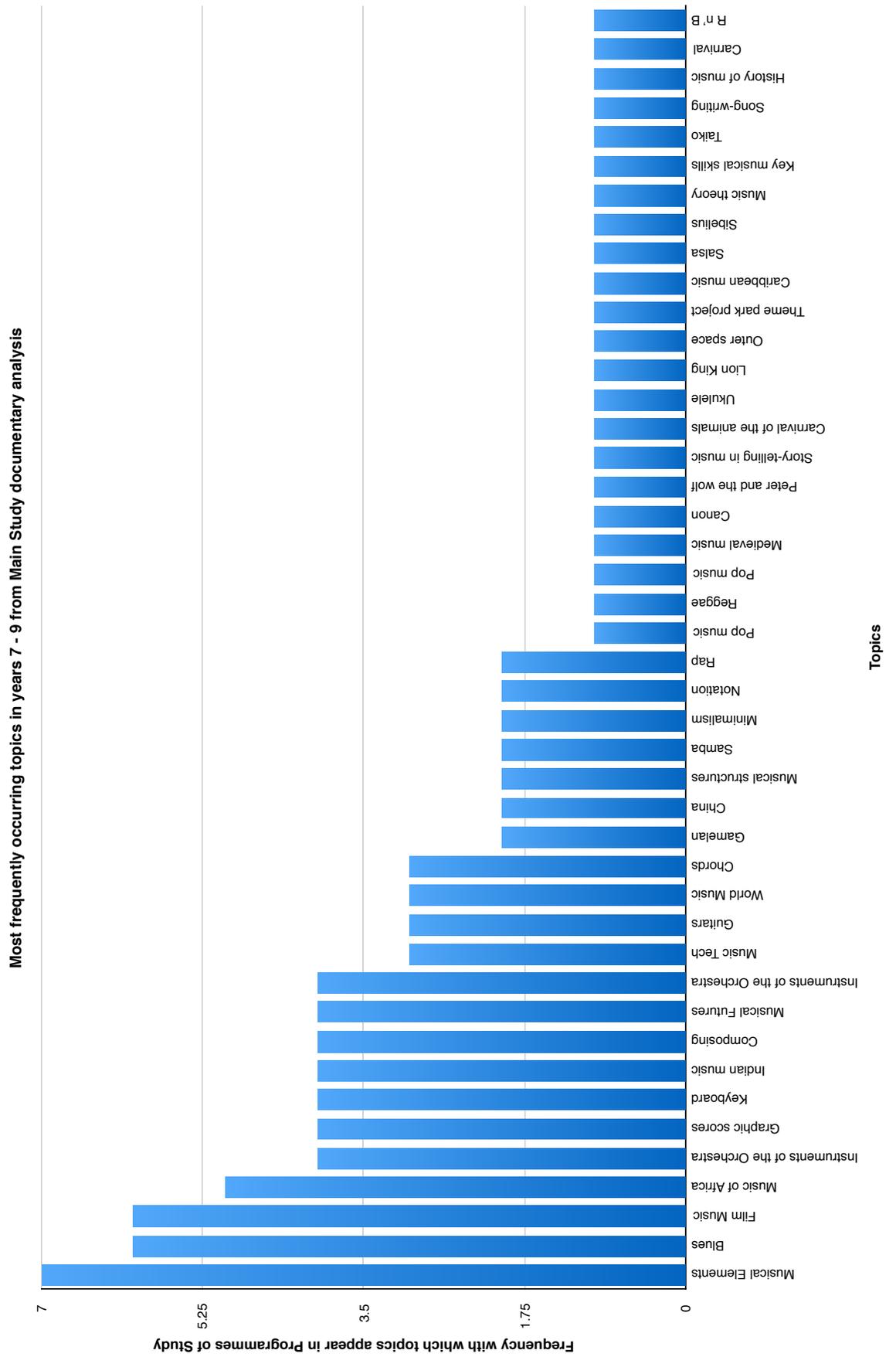


Figure 99: Documentary analysis findings – topic frequency

### 8.8.3 Interview correlation

As in my observation findings discussion, I adopted a comparable approach to documentary analysis as a means to establish validity of participant interview responses. These comparisons are set out in *Table 32* below:

School	Theme	Interview data extracts	<i>Programme of Study</i> Documentary analysis
A	Music-making	"It's always a practical lesson"	A core feature of documentation, within a wide variety of topics and cultures.
B		"Interesting lessons. . . particularly practical lessons"	Specific labels used which relate to topics (e.g. Music Tech re-mix: performing).
C		"Music should be about experience"	Self-contained performance units.
D		"Practical music-making for me as a teacher is very important"	Explicit music-making topics occur frequently (e.g. singing, playing using chords, ukulele, guitar, piano).
E		"Success looks like they enjoy it and come up with a good performance they're proud of"	Every topic includes ensemble and solo performing (including improvisation) and composition.
F		"It's a lot of practical work; not much written work"	Almost all topics explored through playing, singing and composing.
G		"I want the students to come in and play"	All topics subsist of a considerable proportion of music-making.
H		"Responsibility in playing which is what music is all about"	Extensive range of topics evident in KS3 curriculum.
I		"Practical skills on instruments in a band and on computers are really important to me"	Almost all topics are related to contemporary practical music-making.
A	Skills	"They're developing musical skills"	"Skills" specifically identified in a large proportion of topics and their development is a key feature of this curriculum.
B		"Essentially a keyboard skills lesson"	Few skills evidenced, with exception of <i>Music Tech</i> and <i>Musical Futures</i> .
C		"Through music you encourage a lot of skills for life"	<i>Keyboards</i> and <i>guitars</i> topics centre on technique and instrumental skills
D		"My kind of plan is to be able to develop a series of skills throughout the topics"	Ukulele skills development are evident. Music technology skills also required to access topics later in this curriculum.

E		“Probably more important than the skills that they actually learn as long as they can feel confident that they’ve achieved something”	Large number of skills based topics correlates with participant’s comments relating to aspiration for learners to feel proud and produce quality music-making
F		“We need to think about sequence in terms of skills”	Large proportion of topics focused on developing instrumental skills.
G		“What performance skills do I want them to have improved?”	Skills are explained in considerable detail and form a section of the <i>Programme of Study</i> .
H		“Some basic skills of working as an ensemble”	<i>Keyboard</i> and <i>drum-kit</i> skills identified as skills-based topics.
I		“Delineating between knowledge and skills – it’s a kind of semantic thing”	Skills in the form of instrumental technique development are the starting point for all topics.
A	Curriculum actions	“Kids through my curriculum learn to enjoy music”	Revisiting of some topics is evidenced in <i>Programme of Study</i> .
B		“Context, interest, relevance, ability, learning something new, keeping them engaged”	World musics combined with elements of music and tradition notation approaches.
C		“Keeping it fresh, keeping it mixed-up”	<i>Keyboard</i> and <i>Blues</i> topics appear in year 8 and year 9. Other topics appear only once.
D		“When I designed this curriculum, I knew straight away that we had to engage immediately to get effective results”	Engagement emphasised through quantity of music-making approaches. Curriculum breadth is evident, although curriculum draws extensively on western music constructs.
E		“It still is a challenge to get the right topics that are going to engage the kids at the right time”	Independent learning and opportunity for greater depth particularly evident in year 9
F		“If the knowledge is out there then we can get it in, in the topics as we go through”	Notation recurs as a theme in topics and as an emphasis in the <i>Programme of Study</i> .
G		“You can have that theme, but a million ways of introducing it”	Topics are not isolated, but always connected to a context (e.g. minimalism is part of a theme on images and film).
H		“I was taught about rhythm, I was taught about pitch – why not start with that?”	<i>Programme of Study</i> presents only limited evidence of curriculum sequencing and

			rationale.
I		"I choose to interpret the curriculum in a way that suits me"	Topics selected by teacher to maximise perceived learner engagement, hence their contemporary status.
A	Teaching outlook	"Hooks them into music quickly"	Contextual thinking paired with topic content (e.g. song with keyboard work).
B		"When I plan for musical learning, first of all I think about what the kids would find interesting"	Enjoyment and interest most evident in wide variety of half-termly units of work. Very little classical music evident beyond year 7.
C		"Being open and looking"	Wide range of topics. No evidence of locally developed curriculum.
D		"Providing rich and involved experiences for the pupils"	Context, music-making and rich learner experience in music evidenced through supplementary headings on <i>Programme of Study</i> .
E		"I like the end results to be something the kids can be proud of"	Confidence, engagement and challenge evident in quantity of practical work embedded into programme
F		"The driving force behind me as a music teacher is about enthusing kids; getting them going and giving them new experiences"	Music-making is evident in multiple appearances and musical topics are broad in scope.
G		"Topics students would want to buy into"	Curriculum design is based on popular music and seeks to make links into contemporary youth culture.
H		"I look at music as being possible for everybody"	A wide range of topics, which centre on teacher presentation and energy as catalysts.
I		"My mission must be everyone does like music whether they think they do or not"	Topics based on music-making with a significant proportion also centred on music technology.
A	Inclusivity	"You're a musician, I'm a musician – everybody in the class is a musician"	Focused in documentation which aims to discover "closet musicians".
B		"Engaging two or three different types of learner"	Most evident in project-based year 9 learning.
C		"Squeeze the curriculum to make them involved"	Wide range of topics. Further curriculum adaption not evident in <i>Programme of Study</i> .
D		"I'm not entirely sure how I make it accessible, but"	Music-making nature of curriculum enables access for

		children seem to think it's accessible to them and teachers seem to think that what I do is accessible to all"	learners at different levels. Challenge for more able learners is more problematic to evidence from <i>Programme of Study</i> .
E		"I do try and talk about the mixture in musical cultures"	Wide range of musical styles, genres and traditions in <i>Programme of Study</i> .
F		"I do like the idea of every child getting the same experience"	Same topics evident for each class in each year.
G		"They access the same activity, but do it in guitars rather than forcing them to play keyboard"	Programme is differentiated and inclusive, especially for more able learners, who are offered a BTEC path of study in year 9.
H		"How can I teach in such a way that all children will be able to access that?"	Music groups run in sets to enable teacher differentiation between them in content and delivery.
I		"It's not a universal thing"	<i>Programme of Study</i> is mainly based on contemporary styles and does not feature any world musics.
A	Progression	"Development of skills and understanding"	"Consolidation" identified as a concept in curriculum design.
B		"A very basic form of progression from the beginning of year 7 to the end of year 9"	Problematic to trace in <i>Programme of Study</i> . Revisiting of <i>Music Technology</i> is one area in which a progressive line of development is evident.
C		"It's stepping up, isn't it? Each time I think"	Progress in terms of skills development topics. When revisiting topics: first manifestation is to perform, second manifestation is to compose.
D		"Knowing that they've got an end result – I think those are things that I would consider as success and progression really"	Boundaries of progression as perceived by teacher make this aspect problematic to analyse in <i>Programme of Study</i> .
E		"I can't do it in one lesson a week, because they just forget"	Allocated class time to year 9 presents limited evidence of consolidation and progress
F		"As we go through the three years, the vocabulary that I expect them to use is more demanding"	Problematic to access through documentary analysis.
G		"Not all of them are going to make the same amount of progress at the same time"	Notions of progress is most evident in repeated topics which are detailed as skills development. ( <i>Band skills –</i>

			<i>Integrated Band Skills</i> is an example of this).
H		“It’s linking your learning – previous learning with whatever topic you might be doing”	Some revisiting of topics is evident (e.g. songwriting).
I		“They have the knowledge why they do it, while they’re developing the skills how to do it”	Progression of topics evident between year 8 and 9 in music technology and pop band work and more extensively developed across whole of year 9 in pop band construct.

Table 32: Comparison between Documentary analysis of Programme of Study and interview data

Interview extracts in table 32 and documentary analysis of Programmes of Study are consistent, indicating that teacher participants’ perceptions of their curricula and realisation of these curricula into documentary form, connect coherently with each other. For example, when school H participant describes linked learning, this is realised with the revisiting of *song-writing* as a topic. Other examples include School A’s development of skills and understanding as connected to “consolidation” in their documentation, and School E’s teacher interview comment on a “mix of range and styles” is evident in variance of topics considering world musics in their *Programme of Study*.

Where there is variance between interview responses and documentary analysis, this is frequently clustered around conceptualisations and realisations of terms. For example, School B’s comments on “keyboard skills lessons”, is not evidenced in their documentation, which does not identify discrete keyboard learning units of work. School F’s response that if “the knowledge is out there” it can be “incorporated as we go through” is only evidenced in knowledge of symbol through conventional musical notation. School C’s comments that progression is “stepping up” is evidenced in documentary analysis through musical process of either performing or composing, rather than complexity of this activity *per se*. Thus, conceptualisations of *skills*, *knowledge*, and *progress* in these examples, present problematic cognitive

challenges in curriculum design, which result in unacknowledged tensions between music teacher discourse of theoretical consolidation and pedagogical practice.

#### 8.8.4 Supplementary documentary analysis

In addition to *Programmes of Study* further documentation was gathered in some research locations. This was not consistently available, and generally took the form of lesson resources, but it enabled further verification of research findings and enriched the data profile of the research project. To facilitate boundaries of analysis enabling findings to emerge from complex data, the subject matter of *assessment* has been taken as a point of comparison in this data, as it is a thematic strand, which is common to all documents. A summary of this documentation is given in *Table 33* below:

School	Additional documentation gathered
A	-
B	<i>Blues</i> year 8 resource and assessment document
C	<i>Timbre</i> resource document as part of <i>Musical Elements</i> topic. Year 7 composition assessment resource document. Schemes of work for <i>Elements of Music, Pitch and Guitar Playing</i>
D	Ukulele lesson resource document. Ukulele book mark lesson resource
E	<i>Blues (lesson 5)</i> lesson plan. <i>Blues</i> lesson resource document. <i>Blues</i> Power point presentation
F	-
G	Applied Performing Arts GCSE <i>Programme of Study</i> . School Development Plan for Music
H	<i>Taiko Drumming</i> lesson plan
I	-

*Table 33: Supplementary documents supplied by participant schools*

In each case, the additional documentation further supported the ideological stance that teacher participants expressed as part of their semi-structured interviews. This is summarised in *Table 34* below:

School	Theme	Interview data extracts	Additional Documentary analysis
A	Assessment	-	-
B		“. . .that would incorporate some sort of <b>practical assessment. . .</b> ”	Learners <b>self-assess performance task</b> and teacher feedback is focused on <b>technical competencies of performance</b>
C		“. . .at the moment they’re working on their own <b>compositions and that’s going to be assessed</b> before too long. . .”	“Interim paired assessment” cards, in which learners <b>assess each others’ composition</b> work against a check list of musical elements
D		“I do try and promote that <b>practical skills</b> learning and progress in terms of skill bases”	Learners peer assess in pairs the effectiveness of a <b>ukulele chord sequence</b>
E		“Challenge her a bit, because she’s definitely one to watch and I say the fact that she doesn’t really play anything yet <b>when we did the guitar assessment she was doing five or six chords</b> when most kids were still doing ‘Three Little Birds’ on three and struggling to change between the two, you know between them, she’s just brilliant.”	Assessment for learning in lesson plan: self and peer-assessment. Based on <b>individualised model</b> of <i>What Went Well</i> , and <i>Even Better If</i> , in continual teacher rotation and <b>feedback to learners</b> .
F		-	-
G		“So although I do assess, because use <b>APP assessment, so although I do assess in the three areas AF1, AF2 and AF3</b> , for the year a lot of the focus is performance standard because I kind of realise with Key Stage 4, a lot of the students who were wanting to take Music were the students that really loved it but couldn’t play anything. “	Very specific highlights in <i>Applied Performing Arts GCSE Programme of Study</i> on assessment. E.g.: “You’ll be <b>graded on your final performance and your evaluations and log book.</b> ”
H		“. . . of beats in the bar and use mixes and then they’re given different composing tasks whereby the level of <b>the complexity develops</b> in terms of the types of notes values that are used, the introduction of rests, the	Lesson plan: “Perform the piece and evaluate it: e.g. did it have dynamics? <b>How might they make it a level 6 next week?</b> ” Self-assessment box ticked and focus on learners evaluating their own work.

		introduction of dotted notes to actually... some of them achieve melody at that point in a very basic form. They can progress onto that as well.”	
I		-	-

Table 34: Comparison with supplementary documentation and interview data

Therefore, although tacitly constructed, a consistency is evident between different types of research data emanating from the same music teachers. Although such constructs may differ in their emphasis between participants, they remain uniform as parallel notions of practice and pedagogy for teacher participants themselves. This enforces the reliability of documentary analysis of *Programmes of Study* as a conduit for understanding internal mental structures in the design of music curricula.

To enable a more inclusive perspective on music curriculum construction, supplementary interviews were also included with two significant personalities of music education, whose constructions and understanding of music curriculum is influential in its classroom enactment by music teachers. This final phase of my findings is discussed in the next section.

### 8.9 Elite Interviews findings

To facilitate a multi-perspective dynamic on findings of the *main* and *pilot studies*, two additional *elite interviews* were a part of my research design, which contributed to the scope of the study, and enabled further research validity. The participants who agreed to be a part of my doctoral research were drawn from fields of both policy and academia, to enable analysis as notions of both practice and abstraction. I was able to interview a Senior HMI from Ofsted and June Boyce-Tillman, Professor of Applied Music from the University of Winchester, whose spiral of musical development I have discussed in the literature review of this thesis. These interviews do not constitute

the main data of my study, which is based on primary research in the field of school practice. Therefore, it is not my intention to present a coded analysis of the interviews I conducted for my main study, but to examine the content of the elite interviews for constructs which illuminate the main findings. This section will consequently consider the curriculum as *conceptualised* and *actualised* in the classroom from the perspective of these participants.

### **8.9.1 Curriculum conceptualisation**

As discussed earlier in this thesis in definitions of curriculum, understanding the nature of curriculum is problematic due to the continually shifting nature of educational fields (Maw, 1993). Conceptualisations of curriculum in policy domains, can therefore generate clusters of competing narratives, which can be complex in their substance and challenging to analyse. Responses from the senior HMI (referred to hereafter as HMI) during interview recognised aspects of this complexity, but retained expressions of generality. Thus:

*The curriculum isn't just a tick list. . . There are bigger questions we ask about the curriculum – about the role of the curriculum and the purpose of the curriculum in a school.*

Due to the specificity of the work of Ofsted in a school, these are propositions that require a response and a definitive conclusion from HMI's perspective:

*Curriculum isn't just about activity: it's about the quality of where it goes.*

Decisions about characteristics of such quality are within the prerogative of Ofsted as a government agency, hence interview responses such as:

*And the question that we should be asking, is, “But, how good is the Music? How good is the French? How good is the Arts? How deep is it?”*

Therefore curriculum as a conceptualisation of quality, as assessed by an externally appointed evaluator emerges. Benchmarks for when a curriculum is “good” and when it is not adequate are an Ofsted paradigm, which appear frequently in Ofsted literature (Ofsted, 2012). HMI extends this qualitative discourse in his responses:

*And just look at the way we report curriculum. You know where we talk about how the curriculum isn’t just about exam results. It’s about that wider resilience that develops and wider well-being.*

Curriculum is therefore more in this senior inspector’s view than measurable content, although curriculum-related decisions remain an Ofsted indicator of a successfully managed educational context within a school.

This generalist framework, within which curriculum is understood to be something ‘other’ is complex, in that the substance of such perceptions were not defined in HMI’s responses. In place of definitions, HMI regarded *curriculum* as one element of an interactive music educational dynamic from which it could not be separated. This is evident in his remarks relating to classroom practice:

*When you talk about curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment – they’re all one, aren’t they? They’re all one.*

Therefore the interaction of curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment was understood from a discourse of practice, as accommodated within accepted

frameworks by Ofsted. The expression of the lack of distinction between these terms by HMI is thus voiced within these boundaries:

*You know, when I inspect, when I go and inspect a school, I don't go in and say: "Right, we're going to have a meeting about the curriculum and then we're going to have a meeting about teaching and then we're going to have a meeting about learning." That's false, isn't it? It's all ongoing, the whole thing. It's a mix, isn't it?*

As a result, the conceptualisation of curriculum is bounded by the manner in which it can be articulated within a policy paradigm. The outcome of this landscape is not an elemental view, however. HMI regards curriculum as containing breadth and balance, content, rationale for that content, preparing young people for citizenship, enabling access and providing opportunities for enrichment activities. This remains a complex and multi-dimensional model. HMI expresses this functional dichotomy of concept as:

*I'm going away from this idea that the curriculum is a series of subjects and that if Music's not on there, they're [the school] in trouble. . . The question might be: "So if you don't do Music, how is that helping to prepare young people for life in modern Britain?"*

Such a basis for curriculum as rooted in, reflecting and preparing learners for wider society, is also a central aspect of June Boyce-Tillman's (JBT) conceptualisation of curriculum. She argued for a holistic conceptualisation of curriculum, which impacts society in her response to the elite interview in this study:

*School has got to be able to teach in the curriculum as a whole, not just Music, but respect for diversity. If we don't do that in school, the wider society will come in and tell people not to.*

As reflected in her model for understanding musical development (see *figure 8*), JBT regards *values* as occupying a critical position in curriculum constructs. As part of the interview, JBT defined values as embodying context and intentionality; elements which she considered to be essential to a conceptualisation of curriculum tenets:

*Well, nobody's talked about the values that are necessary if you're going to do a programme like this [The X-Factor]. And it's secondary school level you see and that curriculum, that should be there. . . How far can you push them? [defined uses of spaces] And so on and so forth. All of that – we don't teach it! That should be the secondary school curriculum – that's where those youngsters are.*

In tandem with context and intentionality, JBT regards curriculum as an active space in which different musical domains are assimilated in the developing biographies of young people. She thus describes musical interactions as constituting the curriculum, rather than subject content to be delivered:

*The notion that the classroom becomes a sharing of experiences and the way people use music and so on and that you as the teacher have this frame in your mind, which enables you to think around it.*

JBT recognises that such notions create dissonance for classroom music teachers between curriculum conceptualisation and design, which she described in the elite interview as a “huge dilemma”. In her expression of this conflict, she explores the

classroom as a space which brings together these different domains as the essence within which curriculum exists; a task which she considers immense:

*The longer they stay in school, the greater the variety of those things are [learners' musical experience] – there's not a hope that a school can embrace it. Not a hope. And so I saw, at the end of the thesis, that the school should really be a broker out into all this; that the Head of Music in a school should know where the rock groups, the jazz groups, the church choirs, the string quartets are, and should be able to put those. . .to link those youngsters up.*

There was thus substantial polyphony between concepts of curriculum as discussed by elite interview participants who regarded curriculum as either an inter-relation which would prove very difficult to achieve (JBT) or one in which lateral manoeuvring should enable an effective curriculum to be both realised and assessed (HMI).

### **8.9.2 Curriculum actualisation**

Paradigms for curriculum conceptualisation create a field within which curriculum is enacted, or actualised (Cooke and Spruce, 2016). Domains of policy and academic discourse present a spectrum of responses, within which my elite interviews with Senior HMI (HMI) and June Boyce-Tillman (JBT) represent two sample approaches. Their individual interview contributions differ significantly. HMI locates his responses within measurable constructs:

*Schools have to publish on their website what curriculum is available – not just the subjects, but actually go into detail about what they do and why they do it – we look at that.*

The notions of content and context are here framed within concepts of a *curriculum offer*, which will be evaluated through the lens of a policy perspective of acceptable practice. This actualisation of the curriculum was a recurrent theme throughout the interview with HMI and was linked to social welfare indicators:

*We look at the design, the implementation, the evaluation of the curriculum – it's about breadth, balance, but it's also about the impact that it has on their [learners'] welfare – opposed from their behaviour.*

The curriculum was evaluated in this discourse within the confines of decision-making for particular school contexts, within which a supporting structure framing curriculum decision-making was required:

*It's about broad, balanced depth and so we'll talk to a school and we'll say, "Talk to us about the curriculum. Tell us about your curriculum. Tell us the rationale for designing it in that way. You know, I've not got a set view.*

Within such a framework, all realised curriculum models might anticipate parity if supported by a critically consolidated ideology. However, this is not the case in this policy framework, which requires an evaluation of the *effectiveness* of a curriculum approach. The subjectivity of evaluative judgements present as an approved, and unapproved discourse. Thus HMI makes statements such as:

*It's what the school is doing and the 'So what?' What's the impact that the curriculum choices that the school is making?*

Impact requires measurement, and it is the requirement for such measurement that generates a quest for the evidential. Curriculum actualisation is therefore perceived within a dichotomy of effective and ineffective practice, which requires curriculum manifestation within physical environments as well as within documentation:

*So if we go in to observe a lesson, we go in to observe in that classroom, so we can look at their books and look at what they're doing today, what they did last week, what they did last month and have a look at the scheme of work where this lesson fits within the curriculum. What have they been doing last week? How does it fit in? We look at the teacher's mark book, we can look at the walls, we look in the cupboards – open them the storeroom, door and whatever.*

(HMI, elite interview)

It is in this interaction that conceptualisation of curriculum and its actualisation become enmeshed, and observations about curriculum become observations about a teacher's organisation of physical classroom space. The policy practice paradigm therefore becomes a funnel that constricts curriculum design dynamics into not only a hidden curriculum (Jackson, 1968; Valance, 1973; Pollard and Triggs, 1997; Lamont, 2002; Froehlich and Hildegard, 2007; Kelly, 2009), but a curriculum of hidden political approval.

June Boyce-Tillman (JBT) regards curriculum as broader than its essential elements:

*It seems to me we've got so hooked in the curriculum on construction and we still are.*

However, unlike HMI, she does not consider this to be reflected through the physicality of a classroom. JBT does not recognise the curriculum as a measurable construct that begins with a receptive vacuum and concludes with a saturated expanse of learning:

*At the moment we've got a curriculum, which is – 'This is what you've got to learn' and it's an empty vessel model. But, actually, they're not empty vessels come 14/15 – they're very full vessels in a very confusing world.*

The curriculum therefore offers a domain for development that subsumes contexts, both within and outside classrooms, and seeks to synthesise these into learning experiences. JBT regards curriculum to be actualised from her models of musical development, particularly from her spiral of musical development shown in *figure 8* of this thesis, which traces the inter-relation of value, form, expression and materials. This approach to curriculum enactment is therefore evident in her interview responses:

*That makes, actually, curriculum tricky, because you're putting in a curriculum, which is in a sense related to where people are, but I think one could say, that you know, broadly in those areas, those four areas and how are you going to tackle them in year 1 (your first year at secondary) and how are you going to tackle them in year 2 – are you going to do it in different ways, or is it going to be different idioms that you're going to introduce? But always bearing in mind that there has to be a scope for the youngsters bringing their own experiences in.*

JBT's emphasis in curriculum design therefore rests in tracing a line of development, in place of designing content to be delivered and evaluating the effectiveness of this

process. The curriculum in action is therefore one of scaffolding for musical development through musical experience:

*It's creating a scaffolding in which people can understand where they are and what they're doing.*

Such scaffolding is an active process and an empirical methodology for realising curriculum conceptualisation in three-dimensional musical learning, but more problematic to evidence. Opening the store cupboard as HMI suggests is unlikely to reveal its presence. Teacher interaction and dialogic response with learners may more actively enable curriculum in operation to emerge. JBT suggests this interchange in her interview:

*I think the other thing it [spiral of musical development, see figure 8] did which was helpful, (which was at a time when already people needed stage-by-stage models to justify what they were doing), it did justify or give some structure for the way you might introduce composing and improvising in the curriculum. And I remember when I was lecturing in Australia – I'd got video tapes of myself teaching and so on and I said, "I hope that now if you want to introduce composing, I've given you a map that will help you to do it" and they were lovely. One person said to me: "If the smiles on the faces of the children are not enough. . ."*

This academic actualisation of curriculum is consistent with its conceptualisation by JBT as centred in values (context and intentionality) in that it considers developmental curriculum content, dependent on locality and focuses on intentionality of composing as a learning channel. Therefore, JBT's understanding of curriculum, in both its nature and incarnation, is centred on interactions that

facilitate development. This is a very different from a policy conceptualisation, where content, structures to deliver that content, and process to assess the effectiveness of that delivery are more prevalent.

The content of these elite interviews enable dual perspectives in fields of curriculum to emerge, from influential voices in policy and academic domains. Such findings have implications for underlying themes of my results and it is the contextualisation of these findings as a whole, which I will now discuss.

## **9. Further discussion**

Following on from my findings and discussion chapter, I now intend to highlight the most significant findings, which emerged recurrently from differing strands of my research design. This is necessary in order to make visible hidden conceptual discourses in teacher practice, thus contributing to an understanding of how teachers regard curriculum in operation, and to reveal concealed processes of curriculum design. To facilitate this discussion I will present four encircling curriculum themes arising from my research:

- *progression*
- *activity*
- *processing*
- *dynamics*

Each of these themes is accompanied by an explanative model, which seeks to represent interactive processes in operation. These four themes are connected with my research questions of: ideological understandings of musical knowledge for musical learning; sequencing of that learning in curriculum design processes; and actions which enable teachers in such interactions. Reflections on these research questions will be included in the next thesis chapter on conclusions and recommendations, but these questions have here guided my theorising processes and encompassing research outcomes.

### **9.1 Curriculum progression**

In discussing curriculum progression, I am not considering individual learner progression, but rather how conceptualisations of curriculum are influenced by concepts of progression provision. In this holistic sense, progression was consistently an aspirational intention for all teacher participants in my research. However, it is also evident that conceptualisation of what constitutes curriculum

progression varies widely, and there is thus no consensus amongst music teachers concerning how to recognise or realise progression. For many participants, concepts of progression were held in general formulations, but not in a realised alignment. This resultantly affected teacher rationale for curriculum sequencing, which was informed by the same general conceptualisations of constituent elements of progress. If progress as enabled by curriculum embodies this broad scope, then rationales for curriculum design can be expected to be similarly broad in their influences and realisation.

Notions of musical development were consistently at variance across my study as documentary analysis and main study interviews demonstrated, where teachers explained this concept as an aspirational motivator, whose form was not defined. The structure of *Programmes of Study* to facilitate progression can therefore be regarded as problematic: although use of topics was a common feature in practices of all participant teachers, there was no teacher interrogation of how this form of curriculum was, could, or should be constituted. Questionnaire data indicated that some re-teaching occurs between topics, suggesting that musical boundaries are not as precisely bounded as a sequential topic-based approach may suggest. The manner in which teacher participants continually revised their curricula also indicates that music curriculum design at Key Stage 3 is a fluid process in continual transition: a domain within which teachers operate in conceptual insecurity.

Teacher participants' conceptualisation of progression may thus be represented in the following model:

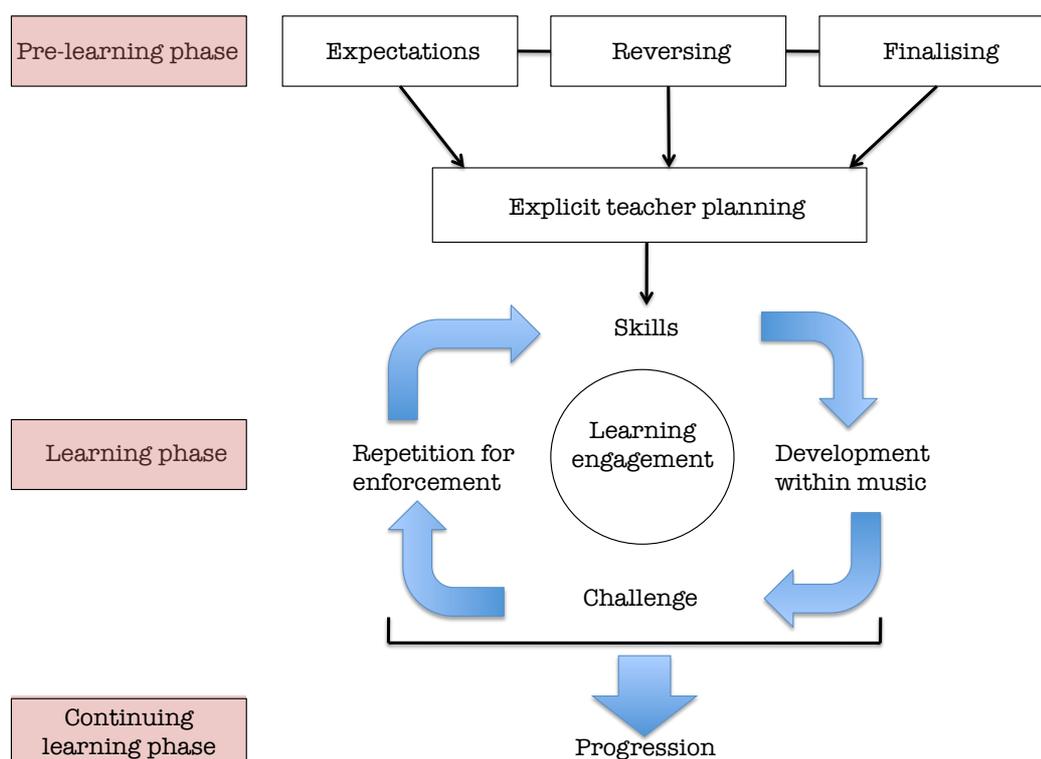


Figure 100: Model of music teacher conceptualisation of progression

Teachers who engaged in my research conceptualised progression through their planning processes, which incorporated their *expectations* of learner outcomes and engagement, through a process of *reversing* (as defined in *table 29*) from exam board specification descriptors for high level outcomes in GCSE Music, in which their choices were *finalised* in their teacher outlook, finding expression in their *Programme of Study* for Key Stage 3. This phase of determining boundaries for progression occurs prior to classroom activity, and is therefore labelled as *pre-learning*.

The *learning phase* describes activities that teachers regard as facilitating progression in my research project. In this phase, teacher conceptualisation of progression is anchored in learning engagement, and the degree to which this is evident is understood by teachers to indicate the effectiveness of topics within *Programmes of Study* in enabling musical development. Around this anchoring point

exist elements regarded as facilitating progression by teacher participants. The development of skills is the entry point to this cycle and is regarded by teachers as essential in facilitating a medium for progression. Teacher participants described skills almost entirely as instrumental facility (e.g. chord fingerings and strumming patterns on the guitar), and I have labelled this approach *techniquing* in the *Findings* section of this thesis (see *table 29*).

The cycle of learning engagement then rotates from *skills* to teacher perceptions of learner *development within music* as evaluated by the quality of musical outcomes. This evaluation requires differentiated levels of *challenge* to be applied to learners to develop their work, which is then repeated for *reinforcement* of musical concepts. The cycle begins again with the next musical *skills* element that forms the content of the successive topic in the *Programme of Study*.

It is the combination of these interactions in this cyclic form, which teacher participants regarded as constituting progression. This was then the basis for continued learning, and was a pattern that was repeated and applied across the Key Stage. Such dominant discourses in notions of progression were influential in the development of curriculum design for music in Key Stage 3: they determined how teachers worked in partnership with learners to facilitate their musicality, and how this was then reported in the wider school context to other stakeholders.

## **9.2 Curriculum activity**

The phrase curriculum activity is here used to indicate the manner in which teacher participants translated their concepts of *progression* into *activities* to enable *musical learning*. There was considerable agreement in my different research strands in choices of topics with which teachers engaged learners. These are set out below:

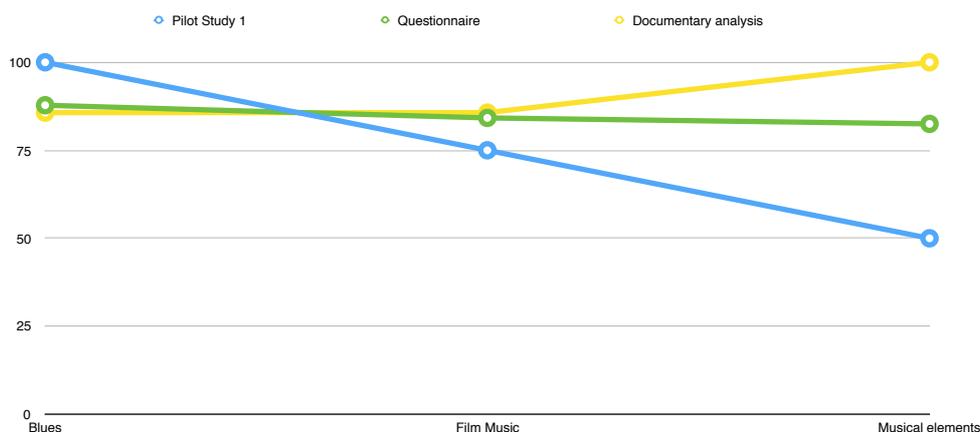


Figure 101: Comparison of topics in Pilot Study 1, Questionnaire and Documentary analysis

Figure 101 demonstrates agreements that teachers exhibited, with the top three most popular topics, after which, there was considerable divergence. However, even though the sample sizes varied significantly (*Pilot Study 1*  $n=4$ ; *Questionnaire*  $n=64$ ; *Documentary Analysis*  $n=9$ ), there was significant convergence in the frequency of these topics. Rationales that teacher participants identified for these topic choices were: *Musical Elements* at the beginning of year 7, as an introduction to musical learning; the *Blues* at the end of year 8, to enable a structure that facilitates a musical outcome that motivated learners; and *Film Music* at the beginning of year 9, to encourage musical engagement when many learners will be beginning final year music studies, and may be inclined to disengage.

Curriculum activity is further determined by the priority given to what music teachers described as “practical”. That musical learning should be musical and therefore fundamentally focused on musical activity, is a well-established principle in the literature of music education (Paynter 1992; Swanwick 1999; Philpott 2007a; Finney 2017b). However, participant music teachers in my research posited that it was musical activity that motivated the curriculum, rather than the curriculum motivating

musical activity. This is a significant difference, where music-making is coded as a discourse to ascribe it value, in place of regarding musicking (Small, 1998) as intrinsic to musical dialogue. The evaluation of such curriculum activity is determined by music teachers in the extent to which classroom learners engage with music-making, as framed by pedagogies in operation. If teachers perceive that learners consider the musical activity to be “fun”, notions of successful musical learning is reinforced. If learners are not engaged in the topic, then questionnaire findings indicated that more time was allocated to the topic with additional teacher input, in order to enable a quality outcome. These considerations reveal that learners have a significant influence over music curriculum as it is implemented in their schools. Their engagement, informal remarks and rate of progress in curriculum activity will directly determine the formation of curriculum they follow.

There is thus a dual perspective of music teacher and learner, and at significant moments these interact. However, these musical learning experiences are understood differently by both teachers and learners. The model below seeks to clarify these structures:

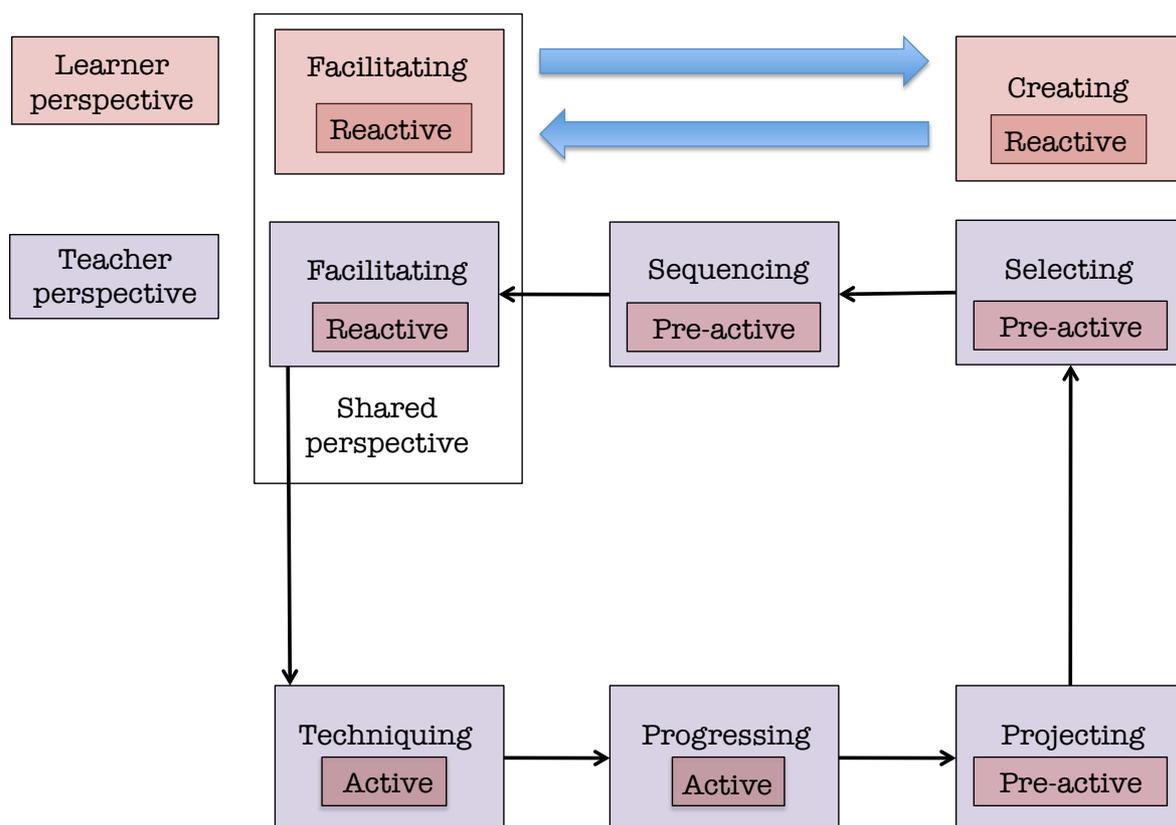


Figure 102: Model of curriculum activity in teacher and learner perspectives

The perspective of the learner in this model of curriculum activity, is that of *creating* (for example composition episodes), which is *facilitated* by the music teacher in a process of development. The music teacher perspective exhibits a shared perception of *facilitating*, and this is part of a cycle of curriculum activity that includes *techniquing* (developing instrumental facility), *progressing* (shaping outcomes for progress), *projecting* (evaluating perceptions of effective student engagement in music), *selecting* (decision making about resources and learning pathways) and *sequencing* (ordering musical *topics*) before the cycle returns to *facilitation*. These terms also appear in *figure 100* and, as previously discussed, are defined in more detail in *table 29*.

As part of the model of curriculum activity, actions of *facilitating*, *creating*, *techniquing*, *progressing*, *projecting*, *selecting* and *sequencing* are described in their differing modes of operation. Pre-active phases consist of *projecting*, *selecting* and *sequencing*, which are processes, which in my research data occurred in curriculum design before teachers met their classes. These phases were perceived by teachers as *planning*, which in operation included multi-faceted actions. Action phases consisted of *techniquing* and *progressing*, in which teacher participants realised curriculum activity in pre-determined sequences of musical engagement (e.g. learning finger placement on a keyboard and developing this into broken chords). These actions were not dependent on learner response for their formation, apart from initial and ongoing assessments of progress. Contrastingly, reactive phases within this model were those of *facilitating* and *creating*. These required interactive musical dialogue between learner and teacher without which they could not operate. To enable musical feedback, for instance, the teacher was required to access musical material as presented by the learner. Recognising fields of learner and teacher operation and interaction as distinct, is therefore significant in understanding how curriculum is actualised in music classrooms: more than one curriculum model is in simultaneous existence.

### **9.3 Curriculum processing**

Curriculum processing refers to validated behaviours, with which music teacher participants manipulated music curriculum materials, to design curriculum for their context. Such behaviours indicated both how they regarded their professional environment and characteristics of curriculum as an entity. This is realised in teacher reflections that express school environment as a context, which constrains their choices in music curriculum design. These limitations preclude a realisation of KS3 music curricula as envisaged by music teachers, which is fully moulded on their musical identities and musical learning priorities. Therefore, rationales for inclusion

or exclusion of topics of musical learning, is impeded by school contexts in which accountability systems require uniform approaches. These approaches exclude nuances in the format of assessment for whole school data in a 'one-size-fits-all' system, which is perceived as requiring parity in its structures and timings for points of data entry, whether this is for Music or Maths. Such accountability pressures place boundaries on music curriculum and, therefore, musical experiences of young people, leading to music teacher perceptions that Senior Leadership Teams are indifferent to music as a curriculum location. Actions including an absence of discussion between music subject leaders and Senior school Leaders, focused on the vision and rationales for music curriculum, further reinforce perceptions of music as a subject which occupies a more lowly rank in curriculum priorities.

Music curriculum as an entity constituted of topics, was regarded by participant teachers as subsisting in inherent levels of musical difficulty. Learner engagement in sets of competencies within such notions of complexity, contributed to approaches towards curriculum design adopted by teachers. These perceptions associated topics with levels of challenge, which determined status for their position within a *Programme of Study*. Within this construct, musical teaching and learning in teacher processing for curriculum design is not the result of a pedagogical practice, but of anticipated associations of complexity. Therefore, it is perceived content of topics and not modes of classroom operation, which determine their inclusion, location and surrounding sequencing in music teachers' Key Stage 3 curriculum. Thus, *sonata form* was placed in year 9 of Key Stage 3 by teachers, but not in year 7; and similarly *musical elements* was only considered appropriate in year 7 by teacher participants and never in year 9. Curriculum design is therefore further constrained before processes of its development begin, in the cognition of music teachers. Although hierarchies of topics are unvoiced, assumptive processes in music curriculum design, the influence these structures have in pre-determining legitimate topic occupation

within *Programmes of Study* is highly influential in teacher actions of curriculum processing.

A model that represents the processes and behaviours of curriculum processing is given below:

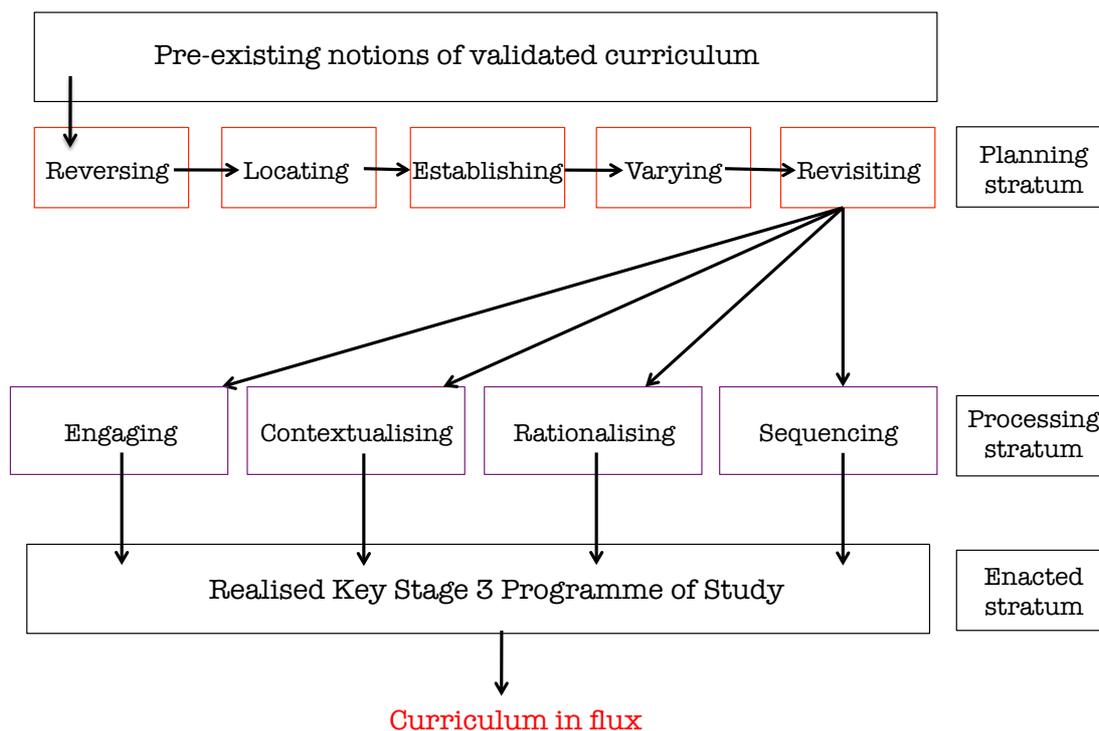


Figure 103: Model of curriculum processing in curriculum design

Within this model, pre-existing notions of a validated curriculum consist of contextual factors created by professional context and implied notions of complexity as discussed above. These feed into music teachers' perceptions of planning as a beginning stratum to curriculum design. This foundational phase consists of a consequential chain of interrelated processes: *reversing* (beginning with the highest grades at GCSE and designing a curriculum at KS3 which works back from this assessment episode); *locating* (identifying resources and approaches for musical classroom activity); *establishing* (consolidating sequencing of these elements); *varying* (arranging topics to facilitate variety of musical style, genre and tradition); and *revisiting* (repeating this cycle of planning with different musical media).

The second stratum of *processing* follows *revisiting*, in which there is a series of actions occurring in fluid form. The music teacher enables curriculum processing

through a process of *engaging* learners (making pedagogical connections in classroom dynamics); *contextualising* learning (exploring musical conventions and their realisation); *rationalising* learning (refining and manipulating musical materials to transform understanding); and *sequencing* learning (ordering and connecting musical features within a topic).

These strata together create an *enacted stratum*, in which a *Programme of Study* becomes realised through curriculum process as described above, and is conventionally recorded in a *chart* of topics. The outcome of actions of curriculum processing, is a curriculum that exists in continual flux, never realising a finalised form. This is due to natures of internal evaluative discussions of music teachers, and their shifting domains. For instance, shifting policy demands of school leaders and developing musical knowledge of teachers impacts on pre-existing notions of validated curriculum. Other influencing factors may include shifting of criterion referenced outcomes of GCSE grading, which resultantly affect processes of *reversing*; the necessity of *revisiting* may vary depending on the demographic of a class; or the extent of *rationalising* may be inconsistent due to the mix of abilities within a group. These rotating factors result in a curriculum, which is unstable (Maw, 1993) and can never be inert. It is, therefore, such variable values that enable inconsistent curriculum behaviours in teacher profiles, and cause curriculum to become a metonym for content delivery.

#### **9.4 Curriculum dynamics**

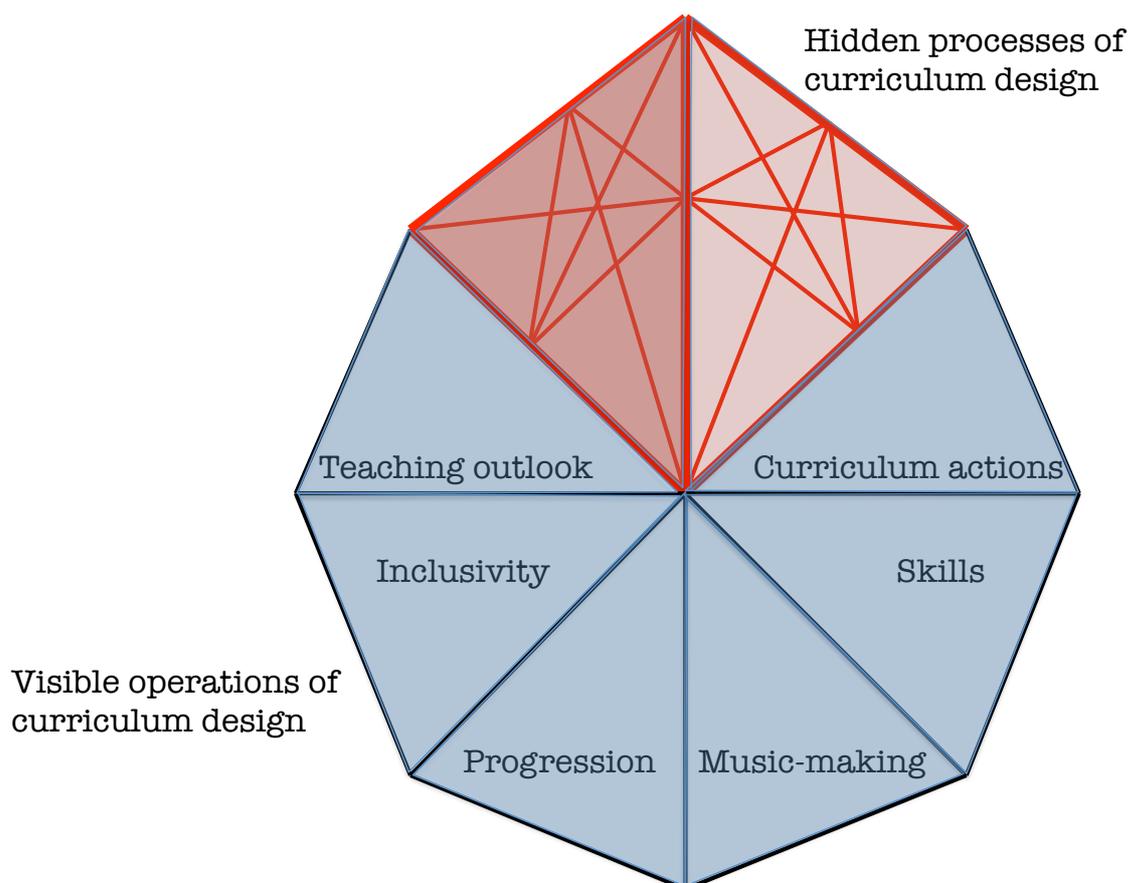
Curriculum dynamics seeks to represent understandings of *curriculum progression*, *activity*, and *processing*, as a whole and to represent how these processes operate and integrate together. This representation arises from both the tangible substance of curricula complexity in the three models so far presented in this chapter, and the intangible concealed interactions of curriculum design as described in *activity*

*societies* discussed in the activity chapter of this thesis. These two operational systems arise from music teacher participants' perceptions of *curriculum entity*.

*Curriculum entity* describes expressions in which music teacher participants describe curricula as greater than their common connotations: timetabling, content, and school structures. *Curriculum entity* considers curriculum as 'something other': a pervasive and powerful force in fields of pedagogical conceptualisation and practice. It is this that results in music teachers' statements that limitations of time, or the necessity of breadth, restrict musical education as realised in their curricula. Music teachers are the curriculum couturiers of their own context. There thus emerges a concealed power dynamic: music teachers as controlling or constrained by curriculum they have designed. The restriction of curriculum constraints imposed by music teachers on themselves, therefore becomes a more powerful controller in music curriculum narratives, than music teacher curriculum design identities. Within this construct, a series of permissions become required in validations of music curriculum developments by music teachers, and this determines perceptions of the shape and dimensions of acceptable music curricula.

The dominance of *curriculum entity* is a part of hidden processes of curriculum design, which are powerful and subsuming. In describing hidden curriculum, as I have previously established, I am not using this term in the sense of a tacit learning schema (Jackson, 1968; Valance, 1973; Pollard and Triggs, 1997; Lamont, 2002; Froehlich and Hildegard, 2007; Kelly, 2009), but rather to describe unacknowledged processes, which form cognitive curriculum parameters of perception. Hidden processes of curriculum design according to my analysis, exist in an *activity society*, consisting of inter-relating activity systems, within which activity polyphonies of curriculum design facets exist. These visible operations of curriculum design emerged through analysis coding of interview data and my *double prism of music*

*teacher curriculum dynamics*. I developed this into my *music curriculum design enaction* model, which describes the interaction of these visible fields. When these overt processes of visible operation of curriculum design are combined with the *activity society* processes, the following model emerges:



*Figure 104: Towards a model of curriculum dynamics*

This model reveals hidden processes (shaded red), teacher perceptions of operations (shaded blue), and makes visible relationships between these two domains, exploring complex natures of actions both hidden and visible in music curriculum design. It is this combination that makes visible my typology of curriculum design in *table 29*. The nature of *activity societies* I have developed is discussed in the activity system section of this thesis, and its combination here provides a more inclusive representation of hidden and overt processes of music curriculum design:

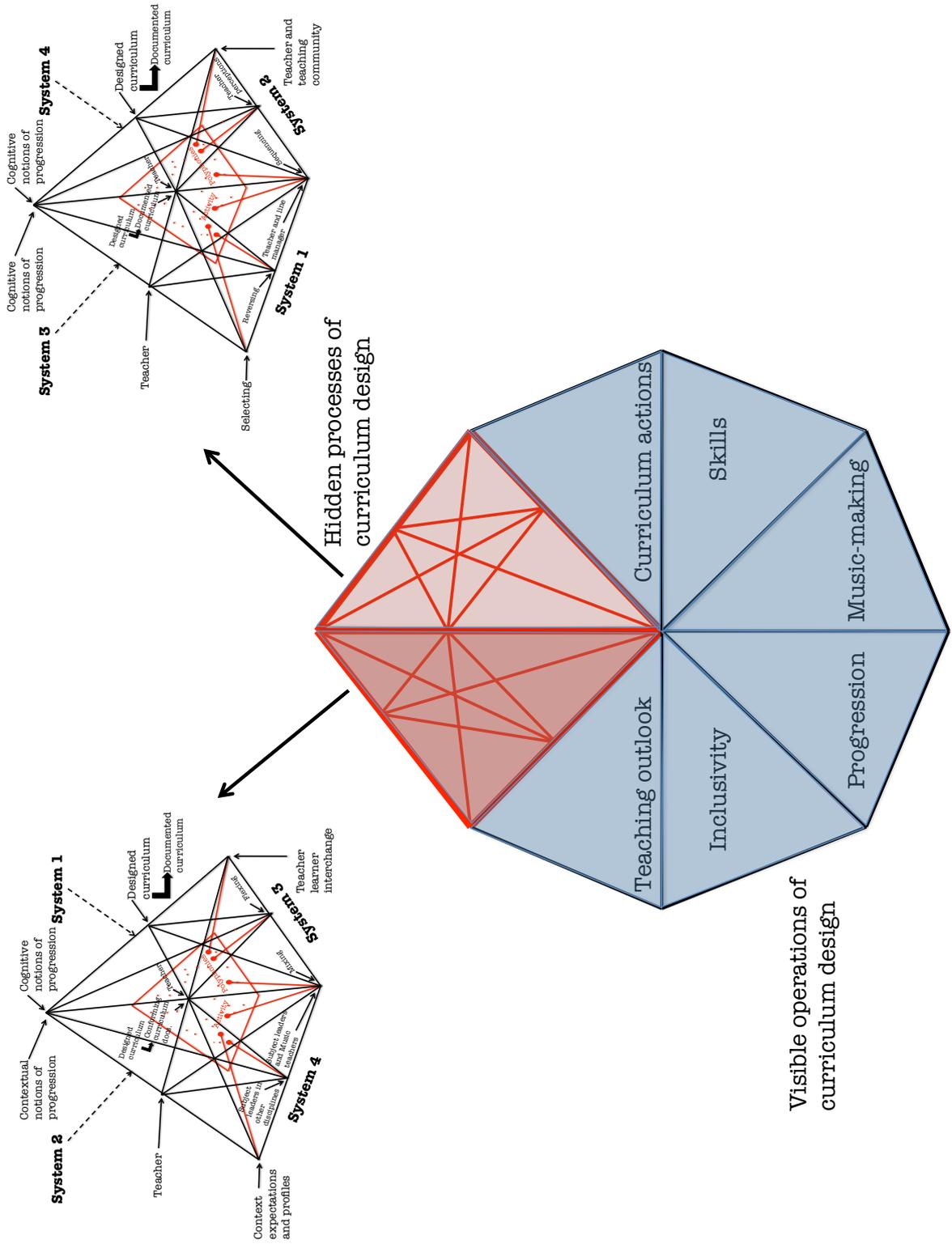


Figure 105: Model of curriculum dynamics

Music curriculum design thus exists in a constant state of tension, due to the complex nature of processes that are both perceived and hidden, recognition of which determines their embodiment and influence in practice. Whilst music teachers may, or may not, acknowledge visible operations and make choices upon these foundations, the complex interactions of concealed dynamics is more problematic. Such concealments affect not only how curriculum design in music is realised, but how it is positioned in an unacknowledged process of curriculum emergence. Such hidden interactions contribute to cognitive difficulties for teachers in articulating music curriculum design as a process, and consciously directing its development.

## 10. Conclusions

Reflecting on the themes that this thesis has uncovered, and their complex metamorphic nature makes presenting unified conclusions problematic. This study has indicated that *music curricula* exist in a state of flux, continually shifting and transforming, which ultimately come to exist as distinct, yet transient *entities*. The semantics of music realised in curricula formations is hard to capture, but its multi-dynamic structure is evident, and care is therefore needed in how a discussion of *music curricula* is framed. Hidden complexities are barely submerged and tacit assumptions that music teachers will competently engage with curriculum design, and master such conceptual Goliaths in unacknowledged interactions, indicates the scale of demands that generating considered pedagogical practice involves. Notwithstanding these demands, such a process is one with which music teachers engage daily. This conclusion will therefore seek to summarise my study, whilst acknowledging that it is the music teachers who participated in the research to whom I owe the true distinction: they allowed me the privilege of observing and discussing with them their world of music curriculum design.

The structure of this conclusion will therefore be to consider my research questions and their status following my research; to evaluate the contribution to knowledge, which my thesis offers; to examine recommendations for stakeholders in music curricula; to propose domains requiring further research; and to conclude with some final reflections on curriculum in schools.

### 10.1 Research Questions

I began this study with two main research questions and a subsidiary question:

1. In what ways do secondary classroom music teachers plan musical knowledge for musical learning in their Key Stage 3 music programmes?

2. How and why do music teachers sequence musical learning in the design of their Key Stage 3 curricula?
3. To what extent are secondary music teachers enabled in the process of curriculum design in a secondary school context?

As I researched each question, domains of complexity were revealed that I had not initially anticipated. Processes and interactions became visible through a consideration of activity theory (Engeström, 1987), and a review of the literature exposed conceptual vacuums in understanding entities of music curriculum and musical knowledge. These dimensions enabled research that considered practice and perception as operationalised in Key Stage 3 music classrooms, mediated through teacher practice.

Addressing the first research question, therefore uncovered multiple conceptualisations and operationalisations of musical knowledge, motivating and substantiating music teacher *Programmes of Study*. These were based on indicators such as: musical background; teacher preference; perceptions of learner preference; learner engagement; teacher reactions and reflections on their own experience as learners; conceptualisation of topics and teacher ascribed difficulty; influence from other music teacher practitioners known to the participants; and musical conventions or movements. Such multiple simultaneous conceptualisations of musical knowledge were realised in representations of musical topics, which were validated according to teachers' own professional outlooks. Musical learning was similarly perceived in diverse modes, in which music-making was an essential motivator. Performing was therefore the opening operation for topics nested in *Programmes of Study*, in which an analysis of the characteristics of musical learning, was a post-scripted descriptive addition to the planning of curriculum design. Thus musical knowledge for musical learning existed in all participants' programmes, but was often more *experienced*

than *planned*. This indicates the essential nature of musical communication, which was regarded as central by all those who shared their thinking and understanding with me.

Investigating the second research question revealed obstructed music teacher practices, where although there was a consistency of rationale for sequencing musical topics, this was either an unrecognised characteristic, or one that music teacher participants found challenging to articulate. Whilst some teachers *nested* topics or returned to them to enable musical development in the manner of Bruner's spiral (Bruner, 1960), others selected topics for engagement and variety – characteristics which are more problematic to quantify. In seeking to clarify music curriculum design as a researcher, it became clear that teachers were also seeking such clarity. Teacher participants were making curriculum choices, but rationales that lay behind such selections were hidden beneath concealed layers, even in teachers' own execution of such processes. It is these inherent difficulties that may account for the absence of research in music education that considers the mechanics of curriculum sequencing by music teachers. It is only through research modelling using activity theory, that some concealed interactions have been uncovered, demonstrating that curriculum design in music is a complex combination of teacher perceptions of overt actions interacting with hidden intricacies of obscured conceptualisations of music classroom space. According to my research findings, absence of reflective knowledge, interacting with curriculum design as a process, therefore results in unmodified iteration of practice.

The third research question exposed the extent to which secondary school music teachers operate in an isolated context. Curriculum design discourse is frequently limited to unidirectional communication within schools, specifying timetabling and options choices from Senior Leaders to Subject Leaders. There is very limited

dialogue that enables exchanges exploring the entities of curriculum, and how this might be realised or formalised in subject pedagogy. Such isolationist educational scenarios are probably more prevalent in music than many other subjects, where music teachers are frequently lone practitioners in a school (Daubney and Mackrill, 2017), and discourse of practice is therefore not spread widely, or enriched by an extensive base of staff expertise. Exchanges that do occur between Senior Leaders and music Subject Leaders in schools more commonly centre on performativity and accountability structures, and how perceived underachievement can be challenged through curriculum design, in place of an exploration of rationales for musical learning and how these are facilitated through curriculum. Such dialogue is commonly formulated in a hierarchical structure in which the Music Subject Leader, who is often the sole music teacher, responds to Senior Leader protocols. This structure makes it problematic for music specialists to promulgate professional vulnerabilities and inhibits growth of music curriculum design concepts and practices. Proactive enabling of music teachers in curriculum design developments is consequently infrequently evident. This presents in a discourse gap between music teacher training, (when such interrogation is common practice), and music teachers later in their careers, for whom space to reflect in this mode, and school priorities for teacher time allocation, and the availability of a significant other with whom to reflect, differ significantly.

### **10.2 Contribution to knowledge**

Curriculum design in music education is an under-researched domain and there have been very few studies that have considered the structure of Key Stage 3 *Programmes of Study* in music. My research has therefore presented an opportunity to reveal interacting processes and complexities and to develop a more considered understanding of a complex learning landscape. This consisted of a development of research methods aligned with activity theory and their transformation into new

formulations thus initiating insight into the complex and unacknowledged processes with which music teachers engage. Such research methods present potential for application to other contexts in music education and beyond, in which understanding may also therefore be developed. My work has also included the development of curriculum models that describe active processes, as music teachers translate conceptualisation to pedagogy. The research presented in this thesis has enabled an awareness of the standard form which Key Stage 3 *Programmes of Study* take and the rationales which teachers offer for their curriculum choices and decisions. In order to establish and clarify the nature of these contributions to knowledge and their significance, I will discuss each in turn.

As an enabling methodology to uncover unacknowledged teacher practices, I employed activity theory as realised by Engeström (1987). A nodal analysis of my data enabled emergence of a three-dimensional conceptualisation, which reflects the practice of music as a complex embodiment of responsive dynamics. Existing three-dimensional models are few, and those that exist tend to exhibit notions of parallelism. I therefore developed *activity societies* as a means to reveal hidden interactions in their raw state, as they vibrate and collide and synapse in three-dimensional polyphonic activity space. As music teachers in my study disclosed their approaches to curriculum design, and through coding refinement, a model of teacher outlook emerged of operational features. I was able to combine this with my *activity societies* of music curriculum design to reveal a model of *curriculum dynamics*, which makes visible these two domains and the interactions between them. This provides a more comprehensive understanding of music curriculum design as it operates in classroom space, than can be captured in a two-dimensional representation. My approach to interrogating music curriculum practices was therefore an original development that created new knowledge in the field of music education. My use of *Think Aloud Protocols* (TAPS) to reveal concealed processes of curriculum design

and not only personal musical preferences has also constituted a developing methodology in the field of music education. My mixed method analysis of TAPs findings also offers a new contribution to the field of research in school music teacher curriculum interactions.

An examination of the complex and often unacknowledged processes with which music teachers engage also enabled me to develop models of music teacher practices and interactions in realisations of music curriculum design.

Conceptualisation of curriculum *progression* was represented in a model labelling multiple phases of learning, anchored in perspectives of musical engagement for learning. Curriculum *activity* was described in a model outlining parallel teacher and learner perspectives of synonymous classroom musical episodes, illuminating moments of shared reference. Curriculum *process* was summarised in a model exploring strata of curriculum validation and how this is referenced to a music curriculum in flux. These models have been developed from the outcomes of my research project data, a field in which there are few comparable studies (Fautley 2015; Fautley *et al.*, 2018). These models therefore present fresh perspectives on knowledge for conceptualisations of music curriculum design.

My work has also developed definitions of music curriculum and *Programmes of Study* in contexts of school music education. This thesis therefore adds to knowledge in its consideration of curriculum, contributing to existing discussions of the substance and manifestation of curriculum as a set of musical practices and linking these to attributes of *Programmes of Study*. In defining *Programmes of Study*, my work gives voice to tacit music teacher practices within which unacknowledged conventions of curriculum design exist. I have also explained the format of the most common forms of *Programmes of Study*, which provides origins for further research and study. These representations of curriculum design as

practised by music teachers have received little attention in music education literature, and my research perspectives therefore seek to contribute to the debate of the form of curricula in classroom music education.

### **10.3 Recommendations**

The findings and discussion from my research have implications for educational practice and it is to these that I now turn. The design of curriculum is a moment of intersectionality at which governance of senior school leaders, judgement of music subject leaders and national frameworks (such as Ofsted), as realised in educational policy intersect. In order to enable clarity in discussions of outcomes from my research, I will therefore organise my recommendations into these sectors, identifying each in turn with an accompanying statement of amplification.

### **10.4 Recommendations for music teachers**

1. *Define personal perceptions of musical learning.* It is helpful to consider the formation of musical learning, before designing a curriculum, that both recognises and facilitates musical learning.
2. *Consider the substance and nature of musical progression.* Modes within which musical progressions are manifest, exhibit variance and without first consolidating perspectives on its nature, recognising and facilitating this creates conceptual curriculum hurdles.
3. *Evaluate sequencing of music curricula.* Justifying sequencing of musical topics within a music curriculum, enables an enriching pedagogical discourse, examining the consistency of enacted concepts of *musical learning* and *musical progression*.

4. *Accommodate differing realisations of music curricula.* The Key Stage 3 music classroom exists in diversity of conceptualisation and practice. Considered discourses will exhibit degrees of commonality and variance, rather than supremacy.

5. *Acknowledge influences of 'reversing' in music curriculum design, originating from highest grades at GCSE, on the formation of Key Stage 3 curricula.* The dominance of criterion-referenced descriptors from highest GCSE grades constricts realisations of curriculum in Key Stage 3 music.

6. *Evaluate the extent to which music teacher self-developed frameworks for designing and devising music curricula, restrict its growth.* Music teachers have autonomy in content and duration of curriculum elements, but these can become dominant powers that restrict developments and alternative discourses.

7. *Enable musicality as a curriculum motivator, in place of dominant performativity considerations.* Music teachers engineer constrained music curricula, to fulfil requirements from senior school leaders to produce data on learner progress. The requirement for music teachers to produce frequent data, uniformly formatted across subjects, facilitates an abbreviated curriculum, which resultantly impoverishes music curricula models.

8. *Locate music curriculum design in a cognitive space that acknowledges its instability.* Music curricula are formed within the tension field of shifting policy requirements and the needs of transforming cohorts of young people. This results in curricula models that exist in continual flux.

9. *Acknowledge the significant degree of complexity involved in music curriculum design.* My research reveals the hidden processes with which teachers engage in

curriculum design, as well as complex overt features of curriculum development. Music teachers should operate in a manner that acknowledges the high level of demand in realising music curricula; thereby enabling working space dedicated to its development.

10. *Recognise the influence of musical identity in curriculum design.* Music curricula are co-determined by musical biography and will therefore adopt different formations. Due to these mixed motivators, music curricula cannot be entirely inclusive, and each music curricula realisation will differ as a result of personal ideology and experience.

11. *Acknowledge dominant determinants of curriculum design.* Music curricula constructs in my research were consistently clustered in *topics* as a rationale for learning. Where alternative labels to *topics* were used by teachers, they contained congruent characteristics.

12. *Evaluate topics included in music curricula and rationales for their inclusion.* This may begin by analysing common ingemination: *musical elements* as a topic in year 7, the *Blues* at the end of year 8, and *Film Music* in year 9.

### **10.5 Recommendations for School Senior Leaders**

1. *Delineate curriculum design from timetabling in school policies.* Curriculum as defined by Senior Leaders and by Subject Leaders embodies unique distinctions. However, shared language in school communications masks these divergences. Perspicacity of curriculum mode therefore enables dialogic veracity.

2. *Reflect on the manner in which learning is embodied in classroom music.*

Engaging with multi-faceted forms of musical learning in curriculum design, and

enabling this, enriches personal development for learners as facilitated by music teachers. Musical learning thus motivates an enriched and transformative education.

3. *Affirm the value of music to Music Subject Leaders.* Aspiring towards a curriculum that is broad and balanced (Phillips, 2017), requires the circumvention of a hidden hegemony and valorised taxonomy (both tacit and explicit) of school subjects.

4. *Engage in dialogue with Music Subject Leaders exploring rationales for the design of their curriculum.* Developing a shared understanding of the tenets of music realised through curriculum, enables music teachers to facilitate compelling learning experiences for young people in music.

5. *Enable Music Subject Leaders in the reconceptualisation of music curriculum in a shifting policy field.* Senior School Leaders operate and respond to frequent policy changes from regulatory authorities, whilst Music Subject Leaders operate from a foundation of musical knowledge-making. These dual perspectives facilitate cohesive educational experiences in the process of their combination.

6. *Enable Music Subject Leaders to evaluate their music curricula in a mode synergous to their curriculum design perspective.* School Leaders are uniquely able to sanction Music Subject Leaders in the evaluation of their music curricula. Such evaluation may then be developed from an outcome perspective, towards facilitating music curriculum designer confidence, and, in addition, enabling discourses of wellbeing.

7. *Create space within school programmes for Subject Leaders to design their Key Stage 3 curricula.* Designing music curricula is a complex process, featuring an

extensive set of overt and hidden processes. In acknowledging this status, School Senior Leaders permit Music Subject Leaders to dedicate legitimised time to this activity, thus developing impacts of music education as conceptualised through Key Stage 3 school curricula.

8. *Reconceptualise performativity processes where necessary to enable musical authenticity.* Performativity processes and accountability measures can constrain realisations of a transformative music education. For musical learning to justify its inclusion in school curricula, assessment requires musical boundaries based on evidence which is valued, rather than value which is evidenced.

### **10.6 Recommendations for policymakers**

1. *Acknowledge music curriculum education research literature.* Whilst music education research literature is limited in its quantity, findings of studies exhibit potential for influence in consolidating founding policy perspectives. Music education research literature not only elucidates effective strategies, but enables the creation of considered frameworks. Such comprehensive acknowledgement of research discourse therefore has the potential to strengthen policy formation.

2. *Recognise complexities of music curriculum design.* In sustaining an educational landscape existing in curricula flux, policymakers contribute to a discourse of instability in music. In recognising the complex processes which policymakers require of music teachers, as a consequence of statutory curriculum developments, music teachers would become empowered to allocate personal resources and provision, to the facilitation of music curriculum developments. Music curriculum development could be further enhanced through statutory allocation of professional development time dedicated to the activity of subject specific, curriculum design. Considerations in music curriculum design should not be supplanted by generic staff

training, which offers inadequate responses to the complex dynamics of music teacher professional development.

3. *Restore supporting pedagogical guidance to National Curriculum orders for Music.* Following the 2013 revision of the National Curriculum, considerations of *key concepts (integration of practice, cultural understanding, critical understanding, creativity and communication* (DfE, 2009)), which recognised significances beyond traditional practices in musical education have been deleted. A reconsideration and expansion of these foundational features would enable music teachers to understand music curriculum design in context, and to develop programmes that have the potential to enhance, enable and inspire musical practice within classroom music lessons.

4. *Establish the statutory expectations of weekly classroom music lessons, with a qualified teacher of curriculum music, as an entitlement for all young people for the duration of their Key Stage 3 education.* Operating within a curriculum of creative realisation, young people are able to access and achieve in music, thus realising essential aspirations in their educational development. An absence of music as a curriculum entitlement may deny young people their only opportunity to access this unique way of knowing.

### **10.7 Recommendations for further research**

The task of understanding entities of music curriculum as realised and designed by music teachers is complex, and it is beyond the scope of this study to address the next stratum of questions which have arisen through my research. I hope that some of these are complexities that I will be able to explore in further post-doctoral projects. For the present, I outline the clusters of questions that have presented

themselves as my thesis has developed, and some of the conceptual layers that remain to be further revealed.

This study has focused on music curriculum design at Key Stage 3 and the manner in which musical knowledge is conceptualised for musical learning. The Key Stage 4 and 5 curricula contain greater congruence due to their prescribed layers of approved examination content. However, music teachers retain autonomy over pedagogies and structures of such content, and sequencing of musical materials. This suggests that music curricula in operation are unlikely to be divergent in their entirety from Key Stage 3 practice uncovered in my research. To establish the extent to which this is an accurate summation, further research is required. The impact of different exam boards (*Edexcel*, *OCR*, *AQA* and *Eduqas*) on this dynamic is a similar unknown, which requires investigation. These domains are important to understand, as they may determine natures of learning constructs that enable or inhibit musical development and achievement of learners.

The fieldwork for my research was conducted in 2012 and it is important to understand if it continues to be inclusively representative of the current status of curriculum design in music for Key Stage 3. Evidence from my work with music teachers in a variety of locations in England would appear to suggest that this is the case, but there is a need for follow-up studies which analyse the replication of this case study within a considered research framework. In particular, the impact of the increasing trend for a two-year Key Stage 3 on curriculum design requires research. This contraction of the Key Stage 3 curriculum, which may be particularly severe where schools operate timetabling arrangements that follow a carousel structure, requires urgent investigation. The impact of policy decisions on access to music, the connect between culture and music-making and on the entitlement to creative musical school experience, necessitate examination so that their influence can be

better understood and curriculum design modified for future generations to enable, rather than inhibit, musical development in education.

Conceptualising the cognitive processes of music curriculum design in a three dimensional model of *activity societies* as I have in this thesis, also presents potential for further development and analysis if applied to educational processes beyond the scope of this study. Associated domains may present potential for this mode of analysis, revealing further concealed processes and informing understanding, with implications for practice. Studies in Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, 2, 4 and 5 and progression into Higher Education may enable bricolage of music curriculum design, but the synthesis required of such a meta-study would necessitate significant inter-linking research projects to draw valid conclusions. Further research which applies *activity societies* to other educational stakeholders in music education, such as learners, parents, music services and arts organisations would reveal further layers of curriculum perceptions, and facilitating understanding of these interactions would enable curriculum design dialogue to translate into a developmental discourse.

There remains a further level of study required to understand rationales that teachers employ in overt and hidden practice, in selecting the three most frequently occurring topics: the *Blues*, *Musical Elements* and *Film Music*. A comparative study that examines music teacher perceptions of these choices and how this aligns with hidden palettes of musical learning from which teachers mix their curricula, may contribute to addressing questions of their frequency in Key Stage 3 music curricula across England. The development of further models to enable insight into this more detailed focus will be required, from which conclusions with wider implications for music curriculum conceptualisation may be drawn. Such a study would assist teachers in reflective practice and unmask assumed curriculum discrimination.

My thesis may also have implications for other subject disciplines, especially those in which there is comparable conceptualisations of creativity. Engaging in research that considers concealed practice in subjects such as Drama and Art may prove as revealing as in music education. Subject pedagogies that involve making and devising as central tenets (e.g. PE and Dance), may also reveal hidden practices in curriculum design and subject teacher perception. Cross-curricular research would be required to examine such potential tendencies. There may also be implications for unrelated subjects that are represented as “core” in policy literature (DfE, 2013c). Does Science, for instance, begin in year 7 with *Working Scientifically* in much the same manner as Music begins with *Musical Elements*? Unanswered questions such as these would be fascinating to explore when analysed through an *activity society* lens.

### **10.8 Endnote**

My research seeks to address the vacuum that currently exists in conceptualisations of curriculum design for music teachers, and my work contributes to curriculum discourse. It is my aspiration to share my findings with music teachers, and to continue to engage with them, to better understand how I can enable their classroom practice. I also hope that success in my doctoral studies will position me more effectively to influence curriculum policy in England, and I intend to continue to be an active participant in curricula debates. My PhD research has been constrained to one field, but the implications of my study are broad with potential to influence and enrich the education that young people engage with in English schools.

### **10.9 Reflections on music teacher integrity**

It is the music teachers who were willing to engage with my research, rather than the processes they described, who remain the true focus of this thesis. They were honest and open, sharing their thoughts and ideas with me in vulnerability and

integrity: without them, there would be no research to develop. So I return to my research title as suggested by one of my participants:

*I think actually when you talk to other teachers about this, the words “happy accident” might actually be a big part of people’s vocabulary. . .*

Despite all perceptions that my music teacher participants voiced in this regard, I do not consider that music curriculum design is a “happy accident” as suggested here. Music curriculum design is rather the embodiment of highly complex processes requiring assimilations of musical backgrounds, musical knowledge and local contexts, which is then conceptualised for young people and sequenced to enable their musical development. This is no accident, but the result of intense and demanding consideration, in an unacknowledged process, for which no specific time is allocated by school leaders or policymakers. Given these restrictions, it is startling how effectively music teachers consider their practice within the intensely personal process of consistently aspiring to design a rich musical curriculum. There is thus a beauty in music curriculum design as practised by the teachers who participated in my research. It is personally driven and designed to unlock musical potential in all learners. It subsumes content and process and aspires to envision and enable young people, irrespective of school accommodation and resources or demographic and catchment area.

Perhaps music curriculum is so difficult to understand because of the beauty of this interaction between personal outlook and classroom provision. As young people change, so music teachers adapt and respond in an empowering dynamic of musical development. Describing personal interactions and relationships is challenging and this is the landscape where music curriculum design is located. It is music teachers’ response to personal musical learning, which inspires, and perhaps this is the reason

that music teachers wrestle to conceptualise their practice. In my final thought for this thesis, I return to a music teacher participant who honestly shared such a personal perspective:

*Curriculum kind of changes itself. You teach it one way but then it might develop into something else and it's always moving. I was just thinking then it's a bit pointless writing it down because it never does actually stay as I've written it down, because it always is taking risks and changing. It's not gospel at all. Perhaps it should be. I don't know. It's not where I am.*

## 11. My PhD journey

My PhD journey has been one of seasons: I have moved from identities of a full-time school music teacher to full-time researcher, and from a position of definitive pedagogical perspective to one of academic questioning, in which the domains I aspire to explore reveal themselves like the next peak on a mountain path. It has always been fascinating, always engaging and consistently challenging. My doctoral study has spanned 7 years and has represented a transformative process through which I hope I am better placed to challenge and inspire other music educators in what I intend to be an outward-facing study.

### 11.1 Research interest

I was always fascinated by curriculum in my practice as a secondary school music teacher. How musical learning could be framed and understood in a classroom context was an area of acute interest, and I actively sought opportunities to work on developing my thinking. Such activity included membership of the music curriculum working group for the National Association of Music Educators, to becoming a Lead Regional Subject Advisor for the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) during the 2007 revision of the National Curriculum, and to work as vice-chair and chair for the Music Expert Panel, advising the Department for Education during the 2013 revision of the National Curriculum. It is the same passion that led to work designing music taxonomies for *Channel 4 Learning* and *BBC Bitesize* and to writing and publishing on curriculum, as well as presenting at music education conferences and leading workshops on music curriculum design. All these activities were orientated from my perspective as a practising teacher, but I desired to explore at a much greater depth. The draw towards PhD study was not one I could resist for long, and although I initially began as an MPhil researcher, it soon became clear that I needed much more space and time to develop more significant research with a greater impact.

### **11.3 Research reconceptualisation**

My expectations at the beginning of my PhD, were that I would conduct research to confirm prior assumptions I already held, about the manner in which music teachers conducted their curriculum design. As I engaged with my research, my whole perspective changed, and I realised that not only was the domain I was researching more complex than this, but that my perspective was facile and arrogant. The process of research gave rise to personal challenge and caused me to rethink my teacher perspective, around which my opinions were fortified, but in which evidence from research to support my perceptions were absent. I therefore began a gradual process of change as shades of complexity and diversity, in curriculum interactions which teachers were kind enough to share with me, began to reveal themselves.

During the course of my research journey, I crossed a bridge from that of full-time teacher to full-time researcher. This was a disorientating and unanticipated change. My Christian faith enabled me to make this transition, building my confidence and assurance in the purpose and meaning of life. It was a time to re-evaluate and to think about how to ensure that my research was not self-orientated, but outward facing in its position, where it could enable an impact and make a difference. This has been the whole purpose of my PhD work: not to increase personal knowledge, but to inspire and challenge others to think, to develop research understanding, and to support and help music teachers in their own personal journeys of development. It is an ethos that I will take forward and develop from here.

### **11.3 What I have learned**

Thinking at PhD level has enriched my life, and enabled me to offer something different to those I worked with, than I was able to achieve before beginning my research. I have learned the value of questioning, to lift the lid on rationales that lie beneath actions and ethos. In my research area of music curriculum design, this has

revealed concealed assumptions and processes, which I would never have acknowledged without developing my thesis. I have learned the value of expecting the unexpected, and learning to acknowledge that my own natural starting points for conceptualisations may not be that of others. I have learned that research can never be anticipated, and that no matter the depth of my own experience, research outcomes are not convenient, but divergent and exciting.

I have learned that it is not just the *why*, but the *how* that is interesting and significant. Methods and characteristics which music teachers employ in their curriculum design processes, are as fascinating as their motivations and reveal as much. Sometimes these are concealed or tacit interactions, and bringing these to light for discussion and analysis, with the participants with whom I have had the opportunity to work, has been a rare and genuine privilege. I have learned that the meaning of words is of huge significance and that the use of the same words with different motivators and meanings can create unacknowledged confusion. Selecting words with care, defining and delineating what we mean by them, and communicating this clearly to others has been a critical personal development arising from my PhD study.

#### **11.4 Who am I?**

I remain a committed Christian in my practice and belief. I have learned the importance of listening and that data is precious and to be treated with the greatest of care. My PhD study has been a transformative life experience in a way I could never have foreseen. My determination to be a voice impacting policymakers has been refined and found its location as a result of my PhD work. My appreciation for all that music teachers engage with on a daily basis, and my admiration for their work has immeasurably increased. My PhD has been the greatest intellectual challenge

of my life and every minute has been a precious opportunity. I would begin it all again tomorrow.

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

### *Section 1: Thinking and training*

1. Have you ever received any formal training in curriculum design?

- Yes
- No

1a. If yes, was this part of:

- Initial teacher training
- School CPD
- External training

2. Which of these statements most closely matches your own thinking?

- Musical learning is content driven
- Musical learning is determined by resources
- Musical learning is about making music
- Musical learning is creativity centred

3. Is your musical planning influenced by any particular thinkers/approaches?

- Yes
- No

3a. If yes, who/what?

4. Is your music curriculum and whole-school curriculum linked?

- Yes
- No

4a. If yes, in what way?

### *Section 2: Putting a curriculum together*

5. Music teaching in the classroom can follow topics. A topic is defined as a genre, musical form or context. (E.g. minimalism, Indian classical music, ternary form). Is your music curriculum topic-based?

- Yes
- No

5a. If you do not teach in topics, how would you describe your approach to designing a music curriculum?

### *Section 3: Timings*

6. On average, how long do you spend on each topic?

- more than a term
- a term
- half a term
- three weeks
- one week
- I do not teach in topics

7. Are you the topics that you teach the same length?

- Yes
- No

7a. If you allocate time to topics differently, identify the topics you spend the **most** time on:

8. If you allocate time to topics differently, identify the topics you spend the **least** time on:

9. Briefly explain why you allocate time in this way.

10. I return to topics to deepen student learning in:

- Years 7 and 8
- Years 8 and 9
- Years 7 and 9
- All years
- I do not repeat topics

*Section 4: Ordering musical learning*

11. Do you ever teach classes in the same year group a different topic at the same time?

- Yes
- No

12. In which years do you teach the following topics?

12a. Folk Music

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12b. Blues

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12c. Impressionism

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12d. Medieval Music

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12e. Reggae

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12f. Music for Film and TV

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9

- Do not teach this topic

12g. Gamelan

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12h. African drumming

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12i. Musical elements

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12j. Ternary form

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12k. Musicals

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12l. Carnival

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12m. Indian Classical music

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12n. Bhangra

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12o. Programme music

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12p. Music of the Caribbean

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12q. Jazz

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12r. The orchestra

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12s. Classical music

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12t. Sonata form

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12u. 32 bar song form

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12v. Minimalism

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12w. Rap

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12x. Ground Bass

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

12y. Britpop

- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Do not teach this topic

13. Why do you order musical topics as you do?

*Section 5: Duration*

14. How often do you revise your music curriculum?

- More than once a year
- Every year
- Every other year
- Once every five years
- I have not revised my curriculum in the last ten years

15. How long have you been using your music curriculum schemes of work?

- Less than a year
- 1 – 3 years
- 3 – 5 years
- 5 – 10 years
- More than 10 years

## Appendix 2: Semi-structured interview questions

Preamble: Could you tell me a little bit about your own musical background?

1. What place does the music curriculum have at your school?
2. Is the music curriculum and whole-school curriculum linked at your school? If so, in what ways?
3. Have you had any training in designing a curriculum?  
If yes, can you describe what it consisted of?
4. What do you think about when planning for musical learning?
5. Music teaching in the classroom can follow topics. A topic is defined as a genre, musical form or context. (E.g. minimalism, Indian classical music, ternary form). Do you use topic-based learning?
6. What topics do you teach?
7. How do you decide on the order of these topics?
8. How do you combine your approach to musical learning with deciding how to order the topics you teach?
- *Think aloud protocols activity start* -
9. How would you arrange these topics for a year 7 class? Can you explain your thinking for me as you go? [Five topics: Blues, Ground Bass, Ternary form, African drumming, Minimalism]
10. How long would you allocate for each topic?
11. Are any of these topics on your curriculum?
12. How would you arrange these topics for a year 9 class? Can you explain your thinking for me as you go? [Use same topics]
13. How long would you spend on each of these topics?
14. What adjustments have you made? Why have you made these?
- *Think aloud protocols activity end* -
15. How do you explain your rationale behind your planning of the music curriculum to your line manager?
16. What topics do *you* cover – why and how?
17. What order do you put these topics in? [To be supported with participant document analysis]
18. Why do you put them in this order?
19. Do you revisit topics in different years? Could you explain your thinking behind this?

20. Do you teach the same or different topics to classes in the same year group at the same time? Why do you take this approach?
21. What changes would you make for different groups/classes?
22. Which is the most successful topic/unit of work that you teach?
23. What does success look like? Why do you think this particular topic is so successful?
24. Do you adapt your music curriculum for different classes? If I walked into your classroom, what would this look like?
25. Do you adapt your music curriculum for individual students? Can you give an example of how you have adapted a topic for such a student?
26. How often do you revise your music curriculum?
27. What influences you in this revision?
28. Would you like to make any other comments about musical learning, the music curriculum or the ordering of that learning?

## Appendix 3: Letter of consent

*Key Stage 3 Music Curriculum Design: In what ways do Music teachers plan the sequencing of musical knowledge for musical learning at Key Stage 3 and why do they make these choices?*

*Who am I?*

My name is Anthony Anderson and I am studying for a part-time PhD at Birmingham City University. I am a practising teacher and have been a head of Music since 2000, and also work as an AST in schools, providing curriculum support to fellow music practitioners. I am interested in developing understanding of matters relating to planning of the music curriculum at Key Stage 3, and this is the rationale behind my research.

*What is the research project?*

Currently, a common understanding of musical progression in generalist classroom teaching does not exist. This may be due in part to the lack of a clear model. There are studies considering musical progression from the viewpoint of instrumental teaching (Hallam, 2006), complementary skills (Mills, 2008) and spirals of musical learning (Swanwick, 1994). However, there are currently no studies considering general classroom music in terms of a developmental model of emerging musical learning, and the place of teaching and learning of the curriculum in this development. This is the area research to which I therefore wish to contribute.

*How can you participate?*

As a research participant, you would be engaged with a research interview, discussing music curriculum design and your approaches. The interview would also involve a curriculum design activity. It is anticipated that this interview would last for around an hour and you would need to be able to provide a suitable location in your school where we could talk. Following the interview, there would be a classroom observation of one of your Key Stage 3 classes to observe your ideas in practice. You would also need to provide me with the *Programme of Study* that you use in your curriculum for Key Stage 3.

*Why am I undertaking this research?*

Little is currently understood about the process and practice of curriculum design in music. This makes it problematic to create Key Stage 3 music curricula and to evaluate their effectiveness. I will therefore be seeking to address three main questions:

1. How do secondary classroom music teachers plan musical knowledge for musical learning in their Key Stage 3 music programmes?
2. How and why do music teachers sequence musical learning in the design of their Key Stage 3 curricula?
3. To what extent are secondary music teachers enabled in the process of curriculum design in the secondary school?

*What are the details?*

I would expect to be working with you between November 2012 and July 2013. The information which I gather will be anonymised, and names of schools and teachers will be changed. All data will be held securely and ethical approval has been granted by Birmingham City University for the research, therefore facilitating ethical practices.

Data arising from interviews, observations and documents will be reproduced in a variety of contexts, including, but not restricted to research presentations and published papers in academic journals. My thesis will be available electronically and publicly accessible when completed.

*Do you have any questions?*

If you would like to know more, then do please contact me. You may have questions about the research and I would be more than happy to answer these for you.

I can be contacted at: [Anthony.Anderson@mail.bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Anthony.Anderson@mail.bcu.ac.uk)

Thank you for considering working with me in the development of my research.



Anthony Anderson

*Key Stage 3 Music Curriculum Design: In what ways do Music teachers plan the sequencing of musical knowledge for musical learning at Key Stage 3 and why do they make these choices?*

- I have been informed and understand the aims of the research
- I have had opportunity to ask further questions
- I understand that I can withdraw from the research at any time without consequence and that participation is voluntary
- I understand that information gathered will be anonymised and I will not be identified
- I agree to participate in the research as outlined in this letter of consent

Name:

Signature:

Date:

## Appendix 4: Semi-structured interviews coding example

### Big Picture Themes

- ✓ Influence of background and experience
- ✓ School curriculum restrictions
- ✓ Low SLT expectations
- ✓ Planning for progress
- ✓ Key elements in a music education
- ✓ Approaches to constructing a curriculum

Plus

Emerging  
as themes? →

Music-making  
skills  
Curriculum  
Teaching outlook  
Inclusive  
Progress  
Discourse Analysis

Interviewer: Can I just say thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed.

Interviewee: That's fine.

Interviewer: It's really helpful. I want to just start by asking if you could tell me a little bit about your own musical background.

Interviewee: Oh right, okay. I'm a tuba player by trade. I grew up playing brass instruments when I was younger, mainly playing it through school and through bands. I did do the local authority bands for a while as well. And then I went to Music College when I was 18. So I did my GCSE and A-level then got a scholarship to go to the Conservatoire, was there for [Redacted] then decided that I'd quite like to go into teaching. I did my training [Redacted] College. I'm now in my second job as Head of Music after 5 years.

Brass and brass band background  
Music Service participation  
Conservatoire training  
scholarship - all of it.

Interviewer: Okay. You said about doing some bands and things like that didn't you? Earlier on.

Interviewee: Yes. I grew up in the brass band community really, playing for a local village band. I started at [Redacted] Training Band, went through their system and then ended up at [Redacted] in the Senior Band and have been since I was 16. Yes and I'm still playing.

Interviewer: So lots of experience in that area.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. I want to start by asking you, what place does the music curriculum have at your school?

Interviewee: Okay. I think my school takes music quite seriously. I've noticed quite a change in attitude in here from previous school. I think a lot of that has to do with the fact that my Head teacher is married to a music teacher. So she kind of gets it. She gets that music is a really important... obviously living with it at home but also her sons play, so she comes from a musical family herself and sees that it's an important part of getting kids involved with stuff and making memorable events that they are going to remember forever and those kind of things, you know, how important it is. So actually although we only have one hour a week of music per class she does kind of put it quite highly on the priority list and we do everything that I've asked for this year. She's been quite supportive in everything that I've needed to do.

Difficult to build continuity?

Higher SLT expectations here.

Experience of music-making emphasised.

↳ PA. How does this manifest itself?

Interviewer: Can you give me any examples of how?

Interviewee: One of the things is I want a Samba kit with Year 7 and I've said that I wanted it, and although I've not got it yet, she is going to put the money in next year to buy full kit hopefully. Anything I've needed for Music Technology, new speakers, they've put in

Resource restriction affecting curriculum.

↳ A neglected area - but what is meant here? PA.

Teacher feels there has been support for curriculum, although some of this is invested in promises for next year

for me. Any bits of money that I've asked for, although I've not necessarily got this year, I will get next year. Any time that I've needed to do anything, concerts, organise things, she's given me time to do those. Cover and stuff's not really an issue. If they can do it, they'll do it. They're a lot more... they put it quite more high priority than I have experienced previously.

→ SA What does this mean precisely?

Interviewer: Okay, well just following that forward a little bit more, is the music curriculum and the whole school curriculum linked at your school?

Interviewee: Yes. I'm trying to... well I'm trying to link it. Obviously things like trying to cross-curricular links with some departments. I try to cross-curricular link as much as I can, but obviously we do things like you saw this morning. I taught the Blues, then we talk a bit about how they do that in History in Year 9 with the slave trade and so forth.

Interviewer: Yeah. That was on your lesson plans.

Interviewee: Yes, so I try and reference where I think it will link in. Obviously things like science and all the sorts of subjects that can link. We're doing structures at the moment with Year 7. Musical structures so, we're trying to link that with ADT a little bit more. Talking about the structure of things and how... where they might see structures in different subjects. So we started that scheme of work with a Powerpoint looking at lots of different structures. We had one of a bridge. We did one of a cell and they had to pick out... I said which subjects would you find these kind of structures in? And then we had one of a piece of music and we had to say that why music had a structure. So trying to link it as much as I can. Obviously I don't know every department's scheme of work so I can't necessarily link everything in that sense. We all have the same ethos in terms of the way that we look as a whole school policies on things we all kind of very much whole school. Things like the learning objectives and success criteria that is a school initiative.

Curriculum construction - link with concepts in other subjects.

Linkage and progress.

Whole school approaches (restrictions?)  
Awareness of other departments teaching approaches lacking

Interviewer: They were on your wipe-board, weren't they?

Interviewee: Yeah. Trying to do things...

Interviewer: Are they in every classroom?

Interviewee: Yes they are, although I don't use them on the... I normally do it with the Powerpoint, but yeah. They're trying to make a real whole school approach with a lot of things. Literacy initiatives and things like that, everything kind of fits together. But it's still a work in progress obviously as I've only been here for a year.

Something else about to be said here? (Discourse analysis)

JLT subject priority? Linkage for progress.

Using teacher experience in curriculum planning

Interviewer: So do or have other departments approached you to see how they can create...?

Interviewee: Not as yet no, but then again I've only been here since September so things are still a work in progress. I've talked with the Drama teacher about whether we can do some stuff together, teach some schemes of work together that we could do of the two subjects and again that's still a thought process that's going on, it's not cemented in stone. I think with the curriculum changes that are going on, things might change. I don't know. We shall see.

Something here about openness of other staff to this kind of working? (Discourse a..)

Interviewer: So a lot of those things you're talking about are they, are they kind of informal things that you've initiated?

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Is there any kind of more formal thinking that brings the different subjects together across the school?

Interviewee: Not at the moment no. We do off timetable days. We've got international day coming up in June, no July and there is some thinking about doing because I've got the djembes on loan from the music service, there is some, or the music hub, there is some talk about whether we could do something with African Drumming across the whole school and we've just done the African Drumming transition project with the Primary Schools, so that was kind of something that we linked in but as linking in with other subjects at the moment there's not a lot going on. I do find that there is a lot of support that goes on for different subjects and we did do at the start of the year, my Christmas Concert this year I didn't just make it a music thing, we made it a Creative Arts Evening and we did have the ceramics department made, on some workshops they some little ceramic candlelight things that we then put up all around the Hall when the kids performed. And we had the Food department made some cakes, so we kind of made that kind of and Arts Evening where we got Art and Design involved. And Drama sis some bits as well.

*More planning for progress and linkage.*  
*Another practical music-making experience.*  
*- Linking again in curriculum construction.*  
*What subjects? PA*

Interviewer: That's interesting. So it sounds like a lot of Performing Arts subjects working together, then on your lesson plan you reference History which obviously isn't like that.

Interviewee: No, no. But again I've not been here long enough to discuss with History how we're going to do this topic together. Unfortunately at my last school the slave trade was taught in Year 8 so it linked a bit better, but they don't teach it until Year 9 here, but again that's... it's difficult when you first come into a school and you're trying to organise all this stuff. *Pressure of newcomer to school, coping with everything, including curriculum links.*

*Support from SLT?*

Interviewer: Well that's interesting. You...you presumably have spoken to them, that's how you know it's taught in Year 9 and not Year 8.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. Still just thinking all around the curriculum which is what we'll be thinking about in the interview, I'm just wondering if you've had any training in designing a curriculum?

Interviewee: Yes, a little bit. When we were doing the... then the 2008 curriculum launch came out and the whole thing about planning and all that kind of thing. In terms of what topics I taught, not really. I just kind of trial ideas. Things that I know that would work. I've tried... I mean I've changed my schemes of work loads of times. I've done loads of different ones. I've trialed ideas, find out what works and then maybe try something else and see what works and then you kind of get an idea of where you needed to go and what skills you need them to learn by the end of the year and how you're going to do it. And it's really... no I wouldn't say I've had masses of training, bits and bobs in networks and things like that and talking about it. When we did the

*Progress here determined by trial and error and teacher's evaluation of success.*

*Trial ideas and skills development Curriculum construction.*

*Planning mentioned!*  
*How does teacher determine this?*  
*SLT needs analysis*  
*Trialling ideas and skills emerge as key.*

Key to progress according to this teacher.

Key Stage 3 and then as the new curriculum came out we talked about it quite a bit didn't we, but in terms of exactly what topic, there's no real you need to do this topic, you need to do that topic, so therefore I think for any teacher coming into it at the minute, it's a bit kind of oh, I can teach what I want? Okay, how am I going to get this to work and how am I going to get the kids to learn what they need to learn? And I think it still is a challenge to get the right topics that are going to engage the kids at the right time, because each year group is different and each Year 9 group is different, so you get one Year 9 group one Year that really take on board something and you try it the next year and it doesn't work. So you've got to be adaptable.

Engagement  
Adaptability  
↓  
Key factors in curriculum design.

Interviewer: Well we'll come back to the whole area of how we plan topics and things like that in a moment, but I want to just try to get an idea as well as your sort of background thinking as well, what do you think about when you're planning for musical learning?

Interviewee: I think about... so if I was to do a topic, I think about what I want the final outcome to be, so what do I want them to do by the end of it? What do I want to achieve from it and then I take it in backwards steps, so how can we design lessons to get to that point. With the Blues topic, that's been evolved that you saw this morning, that kind of evolved over years, years worth of trying things out and trying to find things that work. I now try and do things a lot slower than maybe other teachers do. I do try to go into detail a bit more and I think that's because I like the end results to be something that the kids can be really proud. With the Blues we spend three weeks on a chord sequence whereas other teachers may do that in a lesson and then move on. But I've done that over three weeks because I want them to get it right so they feel confident and then we just gradually add and add and add so that we've just started adding the melody. Next week we'll perform that and then we're going to work on composing over... with a Blues scale. And then their final piece will be their chords and the melody I've given them and then we play the chords again with the melody that they're going to compose themselves. The idea is that the end result actually is really good, even though it might've taken me more than half a term to do it. So I do try and tend to do things in depth a bit more and I try and think of little mini activities and mini performing activities as well. One of the things I realised when I first started here was kids hate performing, particularly Year 9s. It's been a right battle. I think the previous teacher did a lot of Music Technology work and the performing got lost a little bit, so I've been trying really hard to do topics where we do mini bits of performing every week, just to try and get them and I'm doing it with Year 8 and it's working quite well with Year 8, because they've just starting now to build their confidence and they're used to it because it's more of a routine because they know they're going to show something at the end of the lesson and therefore they're getting better with their confidence and stuff and I think that's it - you want them to be confident. You want them to feel that they've achieved something. That's really important to me. More probably important than the skills that the actually learn as long as they can feel that they've achieved something, that they've done something that sounds good, not something that sounds awful.

Curriculum design beginning with desired outcome

Evolution of curriculum.

Planning key based on:  
- final outcome  
- sense of student achievement  
- building confidence  
- depth  
- curriculum evolves

Confidence and emotions of students key to curriculum construction.

Practical music-making at the centre:  
- Performing (even when it's hard)  
- Composing  
+ Quality of outcome  
↓  
Building confidence

Interviewer: That's all part of your thinking.

Interviewee: Yeah it is.

Excerpt = 0.00 – 11.08 minutes from a 47.04 minute interview.

