IDENTITY AND COMMUNITY:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF SPECIALIST PRIMARY MUSIC TEACHERS IN NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA

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Statement of Originality

I declare that the research presented here is my own original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for the award of a degree.

Signed

Date    February 24, 2017
Abstract

This qualitative study explored the experiences of specialist primary (elementary) music teachers working in New South Wales, Australia. Generalist primary teachers’ lack of confidence in teaching music is widely reported in Australian and international music education literature, and the provision of specialist teachers to teach music, or act in consultative roles, is frequently asserted as a means of rectifying this issue, although such provision is not widespread in many Australian states. This study was significant in developing understanding about these practitioners in an Australian context, as research in this area has principally been undertaken in jurisdictions where specialist primary music teachers are more prevalent.

The data were collected in two stages, using a qualitative multicase design. The first stage of data collection entailed semi-structured interviews with 19 participants, including specialist music teachers and providers of professional learning experiences. The second stage of the study consisted of four intensive observational case studies conducted within naturalistic school settings that enabled in-depth investigation of themes that emerged during initial data analysis. Through a process of inductive coding, the two themes that were identified for intensive investigation in the second stage of the research were the participants’ music teacher role identities and their participation in learning communities.

In accordance with symbolic interactionist theories of identity formation, the participants’ music teacher role identities were shaped by social interaction. The study reaffirmed the dynamic nature of the music teacher role identity, with participants experiencing shifts in the prominence of various sub-identities that construct their role identities. The findings revealed the influence of role support for specialist teachers’ self-perceived identities provided by school leaders and community members. Additionally, personal conceptions of role identities were expressed through teaching behaviours and the selection of music education pedagogical practices. The participants’ role identities and interactions with generalist teachers, executive staff and other community stakeholders were found to affect the place of music in the actions of school-based communities of practice and the extent that these communities were defined by music. The status of music and its incorporation in the joint enterprises of schools was frequently reflected in the provision of resources such as suitable teaching spaces, time allocations or financial support for ongoing professional learning, and the withholding of resources had the capacity to hinder the music teachers’ participation in communities of practice. Through access to other professional or
informal music education communities of practice, music specialist teachers engaged in landscapes of practice that not only influenced the shaping of identities, but potentially provided avenues for the development of shared competencies and mutual learning.
Acknowledgements

I have greatly benefited from the supervision of Professor Kathryn Marsh for the duration of this research. Kathy is a world-renowned ethnomusicologist and music educator whose passion for quality music education in primary schools is personally inspiring. Kathy has guided and motivated me, and I have been fortunate to have her support and advice. I will continue to strive to maintain the high standard that she has taught me to achieve.

I have also appreciated the collegiality of the staff and fellow postgraduate students of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and the opportunities to share ideas as this project evolved. I extend sincere thanks to Associate Professor Jennifer Rowley and Dr James Renwick. I have also been privileged to share this path with other doctoral students and I am particularly thankful for the camaraderie and good-humoured wisdom of Wendy Brooks and Graham Sattler.

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From personal experience, I know the ever-increasing demands of the teaching profession and I greatly appreciate the time that the participants in this study invested in sharing their stories with me. I have been humbled by their willingness to openly express their realities, imaginings and challenges.

Above all, I am grateful for my husband Patrick who encouraged me to pursue this goal. His patient proof reading, unfailing belief in me and enthusiastic interest in my research spurred me on, particularly when the task seemed insurmountable.

It is to Patrick and our children
- Alexander, Lucinda, Harrison, Oliver, Oscar, and Poppy -

that I dedicate this thesis.
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Chapter One
Introduction

This thesis examines the experiences of specialist primary music teachers working in school settings in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. In the context of this research, a specialist teacher is considered to be one to whom the responsibility of teaching music across the school, or to whole year groups, is given. The study is based on qualitative research involving 16 primary music specialist teachers who collectively provided a sample of the three main schooling systems operating within NSW. A symbolic interactionist framework was employed to explore the role identity formation and actions of specialist primary music teachers as they engaged in their social worlds.

The need for primary music specialist teachers in Australian schools was featured in a substantial analysis of school music education across all states and territories of Australia. The National Review of School Music Education (Pascoe et al., 2005) identified strategic areas for future development in music education that were linked to key recommendations. One such strategic area was that each Australian primary school should have access to a music specialist teacher or a specialist teacher to act in a consultancy role. The following key recommendations were linked to this proposed development:

R.14.1 Provide appropriately trained music specialist teachers for all Australian primary schools
R.14.2 Negotiate industrial agreements for music specialist teachers to recognise the specific working conditions of music in primary schools and support collaborative and team-teaching between specialist music teachers and classroom teachers
R.14.3 Monitor the implementation of music specialist teachers in primary schools as part of accountability processes (Pascoe et al., 2005, p. xxv)

This endorsement of specialist primary music teachers was in response to concerns identified in music education practices due to the music being taught by generalist classroom teachers in primary schools. However, little is known about those who provide specialist music teaching in NSW primary schools, as there has been limited empirical investigation of these practitioners who operate within this educational context.

My interest in this topic initially stemmed from my experiences as a teacher in primary schools, both in music specialist and generalist capacities. During my teaching career, I have witnessed changes in tertiary training, educational policies and curriculum that have subsequently affected the practices of music teachers in primary schools. Consequently, I have maintained a personal interest in the experiences of these practitioners and this,
combined with a growing interest in teacher development as I moved into school leadership roles, ultimately resulted in this thesis. This introductory chapter explores the context of NSW in which the study was undertaken, the background to the research, and concludes with a brief overview of the framework of symbolic interactionism.

**Primary Music Education in NSW**

The regulation and operation of Australian schools is generally the responsibility of the states and territories, although the Federal Government does have a role in the provision of funding. In 2011, the mid-point of data collection for the study, there were 9,435 schools in Australia, comprising 6,705 government schools (71%), 1,710 Catholic schools (18%) and 1,020 independent schools (11%). Nationally, 33% of schools were in NSW. Schooling is compulsory in NSW and *The Education Act* (New South Wales Parliamentary Counsel’s Office, 1990) stipulates that children residing in the state who are of, or above, six years of age and below the minimum school leaving age, must either be enrolled in a government school, a registered non-government school or registered for home schooling. Primary education encompasses the first seven years of formal education, for students from Kindergarten (typically aged five or six years) through to Year 6 (typically aged 11 or 12 years). Primary school education takes place in infants schools (Kindergarten to Year 2), primary schools (Kindergarten to Year 6) or composite schools that cater for both primary and secondary students (Kindergarten to Year 12). Some government schools are designated for special purposes, such as the provision of education for students with significant disabilities.

NSW government schools are responsible for providing non-fee paying education to Australian residents and receive the majority of their funding from government sources. In 2011, the proportion of government schools in NSW was approximately 70% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). These schools are administered by the NSW Department of Education.¹ The education in government schools is strictly non-sectarian and secular, and any child residing in a school’s designated intake area can be enrolled. Alternatively, students in NSW may be educated in non-government schools. In 2011, the proportion of NSW non-government schools (Catholic and independent combined) was 30% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). The largest systemic group of non-government schools in NSW is affiliated with the Catholic church and the remaining independent schools are either religious or private. Non-government schools receive a significant amount of their funding through

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¹ The NSW Department of Education was previously known as the NSW Department of Education and Communities.
student fees that is supplemented by further funding from the Australian and NSW governments. Non-government schools must be individually or systemically registered with the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES), the regulatory authority for NSW schools.\(^2\) Registration requirements include adequate policies for school governance, suitable educational facilities and resources, and suitably qualified teaching staff. Non-government schools may be registered as primary schools, secondary schools or schools for education of a kind or for children of a kind. Registered combined independent schools are those providing education from Kindergarten through to Year 12.

**Music curriculum.**

All schools in NSW must teach a curriculum that is developed by BOSTES on behalf of the NSW government. From 2009 through to 2013, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Resources Authority (ACARA) developed and wrote the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts* (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, n.d.). The curriculum, which includes the study of music, was available for use from July 2013; however, the implementation timeframe was dependent on the designated curriculum authorities for each state and territory. It remains the responsibility of BOSTES to develop syllabus documents for NSW schools from the Australian curriculum documents. At the time of writing, and during the period of fieldwork, NSW primary schools are required to continue using the *Creative Arts: K-6 Syllabus* (Board of Studies NSW, 2000a). Music is a strand of Creative and Practical Arts, which is one of six key learning areas mandated for primary education instruction in NSW schools (New South Wales Parliamentary Counsel’s Office, 1990).\(^3\) This key learning also incorporates visual arts, dance and drama. According to the BOSTES recommended timeframes, the four strands together are allocated 6% to 10% of a typical teaching week, which generally equates to 1.5 to 2 hours (Figure 1.1.).

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\(^2\) From 2017, BOSTES will be known as the NSW Education Standards Authority (Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards, 2016).

\(^3\) The term *Creative and Practical Arts* is used interchangeably with *Creative Arts* in NSW schools.
The curriculum is presented in the *Creative Arts K-6 Syllabus* (Board of Studies NSW, 2000a), which is accompanied by the *Creative Arts K-6 Units of Work* (Board of Studies NSW, 2000b). The syllabus contains the aims, objectives and outcomes of the four strands, including music. The introductory section of the syllabus establishes the prevalence of generalist teachers providing instruction in the arts, through the statement, “the syllabus is designed to be used by classroom teachers. It is acknowledged that schools may use other staffing arrangements, such as a combination of teachers, specialising in one or more artforms supporting classroom teachers” (Board of Studies NSW, 2000a, p. 5). The music section of the syllabus aims to “develop knowledge, skills and understanding in performing music of different styles and from different times and cultures by singing, playing and moving, and in
organising sound into musical compositions using musical concepts” (Board of Studies NSW, 2000a, p. 7). This is similar to the aims of general music programs in the United States of America (USA) in which music education goals are met through “singing, playing, creating, connecting with, and responding to music” (Abril, 2016, p. 5). Rather than providing mandated sequences of content, the NSW learning foci are presented through broad outcomes and indicators that reflect the expected learning that should have occurred by the end of each stage. The outcomes are aligned to particular years of schooling (Table 1.1.).

Table 1.1.
*The Alignment of Syllabus Outcomes to Years of Schooling.*

<table>
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<th>Stage</th>
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<td>Years 5 and 6</td>
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The emphasis throughout the stages of outcomes is on listening, performing and composing within learning sequences that engage students in the musical concepts of pitch, duration, tone colour, dynamics and structure. The accompanying syllabus support document contains sample units of work that can either be taught or adapted by teachers, or act as exemplars for the development of contextually appropriate programs (Board of Studies NSW, 2000b).

**NSW primary music teachers.**

In NSW schools, the responsibility for teaching the learning areas contained in the primary syllabi is given to class teachers who have undertaken university studies in all curriculum areas and primary education pedagogies. In NSW schools, these teachers are frequently referred to as generalist teachers. A more detailed definition of this term is found in Table 1.2. Principals are required to allocate periods of time to class teachers for the purpose of meeting administrative requirements, known as Relief from Face to Face teaching (RFF). At the time of the fieldwork, the total period of RFF in Catholic systemic and government schools usually equated to two hours per teacher per week, although this varied in other independent schools. The collective time allocated to RFF is most frequently used by schools for specialist teaching in an area or subject that is seen to be of particular benefit to students, and which supplements teaching by generalist teachers. The subject selection is at
the discretion of the principal and some principals elect to employ staff to teach music during all or a portion of the generalist teacher’s RFF. In contrast, in combined independent schools, these teachers are sometimes part of a broader music department that provides music education from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Teachers in NSW schools typically have an undergraduate degree in primary or secondary education, or a discipline-specific degree and a postgraduate education qualification. There is currently no delineated certification as a primary music specialist teacher in NSW, and specialist music teachers in primary schools are either qualified generalist teachers who have additional musical expertise, or teachers who have initial training as secondary music teachers. Prior to the early 1990s, preservice generalist teacher education in NSW was the responsibility of universities or the Teachers Colleges and Colleges of Advanced Education that were amalgamated with universities in the late 1980s to early 1990s in response to government reforms (Australia. Department of Employment Education Training, 1988). Preservice generalist teachers undergo some studies in music education, although concerns about declining contact hours for music in primary education courses have been raised (Pascoe et al., 2005; Taylor, 1987; Temmerman, 2006). In 1985, two tertiary institutions commenced specialist postgraduate primary music education courses that led to the award of a graduate diploma in order to supplement the implementation of the primary music curriculum and provide a specialist music qualification (Taylor, 1987), although these courses were discontinued in the mid-1990s. Some specialist music teachers working in NSW primary schools have secondary music education qualifications. Secondary music education courses in NSW typically include some units of study in primary music.

**Background to the Study**

By examining the experiences of specialist primary music teachers, this study addresses a gap in the field of knowledge, as Australian investigations into primary music teaching have largely focused on the experiences of generalist classroom teachers who teach music. Issues pertaining to the difficulties experienced by generalist teachers in teaching music and the subsequent impact on music education quality, and the limited provision of specialist music teachers in primary schools have long been featured in Australian music education literature. The need for specialist music teachers in primary schools was addressed nearly 50 years ago in studies by Bartle (1968) and Covell (1970). Findings of inadequacies and low status of music education in Australian primary schools have been broadly discussed in Australian contexts (DeGraffenreid, Jeanneret, Kretchmer, & Morita, 2003; Jeanneret,
1996; Lepherd, 1975; New South Wales Ministry of Education, 1974; Russell-Bowie, 1993b) and were reported in the *National Review of School Music Education* (Pascoe et al., 2005) as mentioned earlier in the chapter. The lack of confidence of generalist teachers in providing music education in Australian schools has been identified as a contributing factor (Russell-Bowie, 1999). In response, research into strategies to develop preservice generalist teachers’ capacity to teach music through university training has been undertaken (Jeanneret, 1997; Jeanneret & Stevens-Ballenger, 2013; Russell-Bowie, 2013). The impact of generalist teachers’ competency and confidence on primary school music programs is not confined to Australian music education research, as similar concerns have populated the literature from other jurisdictions in which generalist teachers provide music instruction, for example in the United Kingdom (G. Beauchamp & Harvey, 2006; Hennessy, Rolfe, & Chedzoy, 2001; Holden & Button, 2006; Knapp, 2000; Rogers, Hallam, Creech, & Preti, 2008; Seddon & Biasutti, 2008), the USA (Bresler, 1994; Byo, 1999; Hash, 2010), Turkey (Özgül, 2009), and Portugal (Mota & Abreu, 2014).

In response to the reported challenges faced by generalist teachers, some research regarding primary specialist music teachers that examines proposals for collaboration between these practitioners has been undertaken in Australia and further afield (Australian Youth Orchestra, n.d.; Russell-Bowie, 1999; Wiggins & Bodoin, 1998). However, as the focus of these studies is generally on the development of the generalist teacher, rather than the music specialists, the studies provide limited information to further inform the understanding of specialist primary music teachers’ experiences. Some research regarding primary specialist music teachers has been undertaken in Queensland, Australia, where the employment of these practitioners is more prevalent than in NSW. Roulston (1998, 2004) investigated the working conditions of itinerant primary music teachers and Davidson and Dwyer (2014) explored the role that professional learning could play in reducing isolation. An international multi-site study of preservice music teacher identities included participants who were undertaking primary music specialist teacher training in a Queensland university (Ballantyne, Kerchner, & Aróstegui, 2012).

Although the Australian research is limited due to the widespread provision of music education by generalist primary teachers, empirical research about primary music specialists has been conducted in other international contexts where such practitioners are more prevalent. In some jurisdictions of the USA, the identities of preservice primary music

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4 A recent trans-European study was conducted by the Music Educators Network and documented in
teachers (Ballantyne et al., 2012; Pellegrino, 2015) and those in practice (Kelly-McHale, 2013) have been investigated. Issues pertaining to the preservice training of elementary music specialists have also been examined (Conway, 2002). Wagner and Anderson (1999) have compared the experiences of music specialist teachers and generalist classroom teachers, with Blair (2008) focusing on those of novice teachers. Although generalist teachers often teach primary school music in the UK, some research has been conducted to investigate the different approaches to teaching improvisation undertaken by generalist and specialist teachers in primary schools (Koutsoupidou, 2005) and how specialist practitioners teach composition (Dogani, 2004). A study of rural primary music education in China included some trained specialist teachers, although they were largely inexperienced (Sun & Leung, 2014). In Singapore, the methods used by primary music teachers to teach culturally diverse music were also recently examined (Cain, 2015).

The literature regarding primary music specialist teachers provides much useful information; however, the contextual nature of these studies can be problematic when applied to other jurisdictions due to cultural and systemic differences in educational landscapes. When comparing research from different Australian States, such as Queensland and NSW, factors such as differences in the state-determined music curriculum must be considered. Similarly, music education in some districts of the USA has a tradition in instrumental ensemble work, unlike the focus on general music in NSW. In the UK, where there are similarities with Australia, teachers’ experiences have been affected by political decisions that do not necessarily reflect the current climate of schools in NSW, Australia. As well as providing insight into the unique experiences of specialist music teachers in NSW primary schools, my research is also pertinent to the international field of knowledge, as the findings provide a point of comparison with studies undertaken in other contexts.

**Foci of the study.**

In order to contribute to the identified gaps in the field of knowledge and explore the experiences of specialist primary music teachers in the context of NSW, the research was defined by four broad questions:

1. What are the conceptions held of a “primary music specialist” in a NSW primary
school?
2. What do primary music teachers perceive their role identities to be?
3. In what forms of learning communities do specialist music teachers in NSW primary schools participate?
4. How does participation in learning communities shape specialist music teachers’ experiences?

The areas of investigation were inductively refined throughout the study, as is discussed in the Methodology chapter of the thesis.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

Symbolic interactionism is a theoretical framework for exploring the study of human conduct and life (Blumer, 1986). This was adopted for the research and is used throughout the thesis to inform the analysis of the participants’ experiences. In taking a symbolic interactionist perspective, I focused on the development of identity through interaction with others and examined how people respond to each other. The three core principals of the theoretical framework are meaning, language and thought (Blumer, 1986). The way that people act towards other humans is based on the meanings attributed to other people. Language enables the negotiation of meaning through symbols and the interpretation of these symbols is then modified through thought. As people interact, they reflexively adjust their behaviour according to their designated positions, which leads to the establishment of internalised expectation (Stryker, 1980). The framework has the experience of an individual as the basis for studying and interpreting a social group or system, therefore symbolic interactionism was suitable in exploring the behaviour of specialist primary music teachers within the social worlds of their schools.

In investigating the interactions and behaviour of the participants, I drew from scholarship about learning communities, particularly those that are conceptualised as communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) and professional learning communities (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace, & Thomas, 2006). Both offer a means to understand the groups that form through interactive knowledge building. A community of practice is characterised by people who mutually engage in a practice and consequently become defined by a shared domain of knowledge (Wenger, 1998). A professional learning community is unique to schools and can be characterised as people who have a mutually determined vision and take collective responsibility for student learning to improve students’ outcomes (Hord, 1997). These conceptualised forms of learning communities are elaborated in the review of literature.
and examined throughout the thesis in the contexts of the participants’ experiences.

**Outline of the Study**

In Chapter One, I have provided contextual and background information to the study. The foci of the study pertain to music specialist teacher identities and interactions in learning communities, and the research is theoretically framed by symbolic interactionism. Chapter Two contains an overview of the literature relevant to the study of primary music specialist teachers. The review presents a detailed description of the symbolic interactionist framework and is categorised by the themes of role identity and learning communities. The chapter also outlines conceptualisations of learning communities in which specialist music teachers may be engaged and provides an overview of music education literature relating to music teacher’s experiences of collaborative practices and mentoring. Chapter Three of the thesis describes the research paradigm and methodology of this qualitative study, including the sampling procedures, the two stages of the research design, the methods of data collection, and how the data were analysed. The chapter also contains information regarding the trustworthiness of the study and the ethical considerations.

The analysis of data and subsequent findings are presented across four chapters. Chapters Four and Five are centred on the data that were collected through the semi-structured interviews conducted in the first stage of the study with 16 specialist music teachers and three professional learning providers. Each chapter focuses on a theme and resultant sub-themes that were discovered through analysis of the first-stage data. Chapter Four is devoted to the examination of music teacher role identities through investigation of identity formation and interpretation. Participation in conceptualised forms of learning communities is explored in Chapter Five, with reference to the communities that are formed within the confines of a school and across a broader landscape of practice. These themes are elaborated further in Chapters Six and Seven through the presentation of the data and findings from four intensive observational case studies that were conducted within the naturalistic settings of the participants. The thesis culminates with a synthesis of the conclusions and recommendations for further practice and research.

**Explanation of terms.**

There are several terms used throughout the thesis that require clarification for their use to be understood within the confines of the study. These are presented in Table 1.2.
Table 1.2.

*Explanation of Terms Used in the Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition Within the Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES)</td>
<td>The regulatory body for NSW schools, acting on behalf of the NSW government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Education Office (CEO)</td>
<td>The Catholic Education Office (CEO) is responsible for the administration of Catholic systemic non-government schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Arts</td>
<td>When used in reference to NSW schools, the term encompasses the study of music, dance, drama and visual arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalist teacher</td>
<td>A generalist teacher has a broad knowledge and understanding of the curriculum as a whole and is equipped to present all required subjects to school students. In the context of NSW, a generalist teacher is trained to teach all NSW key learning areas from Kindergarten to Year 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>An entire year group of children in a school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants</td>
<td>The first three years of primary school. In NSW, this encompasses Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior School</td>
<td>The name sometimes given to the primary department of an independent school, usually Kindergarten to Year 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>The first year of formal schooling in NSW. Students are typically aged five or six years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Department of Education</td>
<td>The government body that is responsible for the administration of government schools in NSW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>A primary school provides education for students from Kindergarten to Year 6 (typically aged from 5 to 12 years).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief from Face to Face (RFF)</td>
<td>A weekly period of non-teaching time that principals allocate to NSW teachers for the purposes of planning and administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>A secondary school provides education for students from Year 7 to Year 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist teacher</td>
<td>One to whom the responsibility of teaching a key learning area, or part thereof, has been given.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage class</td>
<td>A class combination of students in two consecutive years that corresponds with the alignment of NSW syllabus outcomes (Table 1.1.).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Two
Literature Review

To identify key elements that influence the experiences of specialist primary music teachers and provide an informed and substantive theoretical analysis of these issues in the context of my study, a range of literature was examined. The literature drew from both empirical research and theoretical texts, and included scholarship from the fields of general education and music education. A review of this literature, which is centred on two main areas, is the focus of this chapter.

The first section of the Literature Review examines the development of music teacher role identities. This includes an historical overview of sociological role identity theories, with a particular focus on the theoretical symbolic interactionist framework. Attention is then turned to the formation of teacher professional identities, with reference to research in this area from the body of general education literature. This section of the chapter also contains analysis of empirical music education research pertaining to the specific development of specialist music teacher identities.

The second section of this chapter is concerned with providing a theoretical and empirical basis in order to understand primary music specialist teachers’ experiences of the social learning that occurs through the contexts in which they operate. An overview of social learning is provided through an explanation of the features and functions of communities of practice and a description of the elements that form a school-based professional learning community. This is followed by analysis of the participation of music educators in learning communities as revealed in music education literature.

The Role Identities of Music Teachers

In order to understand the experiences of primary music specialist teachers, it is necessary to explore the conceptions held of these practitioners with regard to their professional role identities. In the broader educational literature, investigation into professional identity emerged as a separate area of research in the early 1990s. However, providing a clear definition of professional teacher identity has proven problematic as a result of differing usages of the term identity across the fields of psychology and social sciences, from which identity theories have been derived (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). The most significant influence on discussions of professional identity in both education and music education literature appears to derive from the work of George Herbert Mead and the symbolic interactionism movement, which emphasised the influence of social factors on
personal identity.

**Historical Overview of Identity Theories**

The work of Mead is considered to be the most influential precursor to symbolic interactionism, and his theories remain central to the framework on which symbolic interactionism is structured (Stryker, 1980). Mead was a philosopher and psychologist, yet was most influential in the field of sociology. He drew from the work of 18th century Scottish moral philosophers, who had sought to develop an empirical means through which human behaviour and society could be studied. This group, which included David Hume, Frances Hutcheson, Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson, observed and theorised everyday experiences through a largely introspective methodology. The emergence of symbolic interactions was evident in their growing belief that psychology could not be understood without consideration of human association.

Through a series of essays, Mead examined the way in which the mind, the self and society develop through social interactions (Mead, 1934/1967). According to this theory, the mind develops through gestures, symbolic actions and language. The initial stage of a social act is a gesture. When both the receiver and producer share the meaning of a gesture, the gesture becomes a significant symbol through which future behaviour can be predicted. This communication of significant symbols can be viewed as language and is the social participation through which the mind is developed. The mind is then able to adjust to others in the social interaction and anticipate future actions, thus changing behaviour before the anticipated act has occurred. It is through these social acts that personality and organised social behaviour develop. Mead viewed the development of the self as occurring through the same social processes. The self could be conceptualised as an internal conversation in which the symbols that arise from social interaction are used; therefore, consciousness reflects the social environment in which a person operates. Mead referred to the process through which the self is built as *role taking*, in which an individual anticipates the response of others through communication. The self can be viewed as consisting of two parts: the *me* and the *I*. The former is the organised expectations of others, whereas the latter is represented by the way in which a person responds to the organised attitudes of others. The self develops through stages of play in which a child takes on the role of others. To describe the complexity of an organised social life, Mead used the concept of the *game*, in which the player must respond to the patterns of others’ behaviours for effective participation. This involves assuming a generalised role (Mead, 1934/1967).
Symbolic interactionism.

The term symbolic interactionists was first used by Herbert Blumer (1937) to describe the social psychologists who ascribed to the view that a culture consisted of mutually shared common symbols of behaviour possessed by members of the group. At the time, Blumer distinguished the field of social psychology from that of previous decades by stating that social psychologists were no longer concerned with studying the collective mind, but were interested in understanding the social development of the individual. Previously, human behaviour was explained by theories developed from the observation of animals, as a result of Darwin’s theory of organic evolution. According to this theory, humans were born with instincts that predetermine different types of behaviour, such as seeking food in response to the hunger instinct. Interpreting or explaining the human behaviour was therefore a matter of identifying the instincts responsible for the conduct. Blumer acknowledged criticisms of the theory occurring in the previous two decades that had led to less acceptance of the theory. One criticism related to the disagreement between instinct psychologists regarding the definition of an instinct and the instincts that could be attributed to human behaviour. Some psychologists viewed instincts as specific, fixed forms of behaviour whereas as others classified them as general urges. Critics of the theory argued that instincts should be identifiable if they are present in human behaviour, which should lead to agreement as to their number and character. Another criticism acknowledged by Blumer was that the study of human infants revealed complexity and diversity in actions that suggests a similarly complex biological nature. This is in contrast to the expectation of instinct doctrine that the biological nature consists of a small number of specific elements. The third criticism discussed by Blumer was regarding the variation in behaviour between members of different cultural groups, despite the supposition that they must share common human instincts.

While symbolic interactionism was applied to a variety of different ideas, generally, theorists were united in their view that the self and society were abstracted from social interaction (Stryker, 1980). From the symbolic interactionism perspective, theories of role identity emerged. Two such theories that have permeated research on teacher professional identity were those developed by McCall and Simmons (1978) and Stryker (1980). McCall and Simmons describe role identity as the character and role devised by an individual as a result of occupying a particular position in society that may include idealistic standards of achievement and conduct. Within this theory, people are identified through a systematic categorisation of the social positions they hold, for which society held a set of conventional
expectations of the occupants of social roles. Identity refers to the personal interpretation an individual applied to his or her role. Personal elaboration, however, usually occurs within culturally established conventions that are acquired through socialization and indicate the actor is a member of his or her culture. These conventions are also indicative of culturally established themes that provide the scaffold for the role identity, whereas the human idiosyncratic interpretations elaborate the scaffold. Thus, according to McCall and Simmons, role identity consists of both a conventional and an idiosyncratic aspect, and the influence of either of these aspects varies from person to person. The influence of role identities can be seen in daily life through their effect on plans of action as the basis for self-appraisal. Frequently, idealised aspects of a role conflict with reality, leading to new perspectives through which to legitimise the role identity.

The multiple social positions held by an individual lead to the maintenance of a role identity for each social role (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Consequently, an individual consists of a complex pattern of identities. Identities are therefore clustered in a hierarchy of prominence that is determined by the extent to which the participant has invested in the aspect of identity, the degree to which the participant believes in his or her imagined qualities and performance in the position, and the extent that external role support is given. Role support is defined as a set of reactions toward the actor in a manner that supported the actor’s imagined identity. Due to differences in the personal interpretation of one’s role identity compared to the impressions of the external world, there is usually some degree of discrepancy between the role support given and the content of the role identity. Generally, the role support received is not stable, as performances in a role frequently change, leading to a perpetual desire for the acquisition of role support.

Whereas McCall and Simmons’s (1978) conceptualisation of role identity focuses on the idealised and idiosyncratic dimensions of identity, Stryker’s (1980) structural framework of social interactionism and role identity is less concerned with the negotiation of identities through social interaction than that of McCall and Simmons. Instead, Stryker explores the effect of social expectations on identity and behaviour. He labels the shared behavioral expectations developed through social interaction as roles. In other forms of role theory, parts of organised groups are generally referred to as a status or position, whereas within symbolic interactionism theory, position is used to refer to any recognised category of actors. Therefore, a position can refer to any kind of person in society. As societies are complex, people are categorised in terms of multiple positions and their identities are only limited by
the number of structured role relationships in which they individually engage.

According to Stryker (1980), when individuals are named as occupants of positions, due to their actions in the context of social structures, certain expectations of behaviour are invoked and individuals reflexively apply internalised expectations to themselves. As people define situations through applying names to the situation, the participants and the features of the situation, the definitions are used to organise behaviour. Whether roles are made or played depends upon whether the larger social structures are considered open or closed. As roles are made, changes occur in definitions and class terms and in the possible interactions. These changes eventually lead to changes in the larger social structures in which the interactions take place.

Whereas McCall and Simmons (1978) organise identities according to a hierarchy of prominence, Stryker refers to the way in which the self is organised as the *identity salience*. The salience hierarchy is defined by the likelihood of frequent invocation of an identity across a range of situations. Therefore, the higher the identity is placed in the hierarchy, the more likely it is to be invoked in a given situation. The most important influence on the salience hierarchy is the commitment of the individual to the identity, of which there are two forms:

The first, interactional commitment, refers to the number of relationships entailed in having a given identity and by the ties among networks of relationships…The second, affective commitment refers to the depth of emotional attachment to particular sets of others in networks of relationships. (Stryker, 2007, p. 1093)

Stryker (1980) also indicates that social relationships influence the identities that are likely to be invoked across a range of situations.

The theories of role identity construction elucidated by Mead (1934/1967), McCall and Simmons (1978), Blumer (1937) and Stryker (1980) emphasise the centrality of social interaction in shaping identities and the influence of these interactions on behaviour. These theories are influential in understanding the definition and development of teacher role identity and are reflected in general education and music education literature.

**Defining Teacher Identity**

The varying interpretations of identity across disciplines have proven to be problematic in defining teacher professional identity, or role identity. There particularly appears to be a lack of clarity regarding the connection between the self and identity (C. Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) and the distinction between the professional self and personal self (Beijaard et al., 2004). The multifaceted nature of identity is addressed in Gee’s (2000) sociocultural analysis of identity. Gee distinguishes between the *core identity* and the concept
of identity through which someone is recognised as being a certain kind of person. Four interrelated perspectives of identity are proposed that provide different focal points for identifying the form and function of identity. The nature perspective is the identity that occurs through natural development, which cannot be controlled by society. The identity formed through a position in an institution is known as the institutional perspective and is shaped by the authorities, rules and traditions of the institution. The discursive perspective refers to the characteristics of identity that develop through the way in which an individual interacts with and is spoken of by others. The affinity perspective is the identity that develops through participation in experiences with those who hold allegiance to common endeavours or practices. These different forms of identity may exist simultaneously across multiple contexts and provide an insight into the ways in which identity can be perceived through different frameworks.

Difficulties in defining teacher professional identity led to Beijaard, Meyer and Verloop (2004) seeking to identify the essential features for research in this area and the problems that needed to be addressed in the research, by analysing research into teacher professional identity. Literature from 1988 to 2000 was analysed according to the purpose of the research, the definition of professional identity, the concepts, methodology and major findings. The analysis led to the identification of four key features of professional teacher identity that are consistent with general education literature published since their initial analysis. This scholarship has also strongly influenced literature relating to music education.

**The lifelong process of identity formation.**

The first feature of professional identity recognised by Beijaard et al. (2004) is the lifelong process of identity formation through which teachers not only question who they are now but who they want to become. The concept of a learning trajectory is explored by Wenger (1998) who states that identity is defined by past experiences and future directions. Wenger suggests five types of identity trajectories that can be summarised as follows:

1. *Peripheral trajectories* that contribute to the formation of identity but do not lead to full participation in a community
2. *Inbound trajectories* where identities are invested in future participation, although present participation may be peripheral
3. *Insider trajectories* where an identity is formed but does not conclude with full membership of a community, as identities continue to be regenerated
4. *Boundary trajectories* where identities are sustained across the boundaries of
5. **Outbound trajectories** where the world and oneself is viewed in a different way upon exiting a community. (Wenger, 1998 pp. 154-155)

It should be noted that the process of identity development is described in different ways across the literature (C. Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Sachs (2005) describes the dynamic process of identity development as being negotiated through experience, whereas Lauriala and Kukkonen (2005) express identity as consisting of the actual or current self, the self one ought to become that is established by an external group as a goal, and the ideal self desired by the individual that leads to personal goal setting. The alignment of the self to a particular group through the adoption and display of the occupational characteristics and behaviours of the group reflects the conception of occupational socialization (Merton, Reader, & Kendall, 1957). Through their study of medical students in the 1950s, Merton et al. investigated the training of medical students and their development as doctors through the transmission of the norms and values of the medical profession. They concluded that this occupational socialization begins from the time a person anticipates entering a particular occupation until the time he or she leaves it, and includes any period of training.

**Preservice identity formation.**

Before entering teacher education programs, preservice teachers have experienced a form of socialization known as *primary socialization* to the norms of teaching, through their experiences of school education (Woodford, 2002). Primary socialization generally occurs through the influence of family members and those who are emotionally close to an individual. As preservice teachers frequently hold inaccurate preconceptions of teaching, a function of teacher training programs is to provide opportunities to transform these preconceptions into those consistent with a professional identity (Isbell, 2008). Additionally, researchers find that teacher education programs provide the ideal opportunity to instill within students awareness of the need for the development of a professional identity and an understanding of the changes that are likely to occur (Ballantyne, 2007; Ballantyne et al., 2012; C. Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Lamote & Engels, 2010).

Isbell (2008) explored the elements of socialization that contribute to the professional identity of music education undergraduate students across the USA. The majority of participants indicated that they chose to become music teachers during secondary school and many wished to concurrently pursue a career as a musician and as a music educator. Findings reveal that during adolescence, the influence of parents and tutors focuses on music
participation, whereas school music teachers significantly influence the desire to become a music teacher. Participants reported that involvement in school concerts was the greatest influence in becoming music teachers. Within a university environment, the decision to continue as a music education student was most greatly influenced by family, followed by music education faculty. Performances in ensembles and interactions with other music education students were rated most highly as the experiences that encouraged students to remain in music education programs.

In contrast to Isbell’s (2008) findings, participants in the Teacher Identities in Music Education (TIME) project undertaken by Welch, Purves, Hargreaves, and Marshall (2010) did not rate their secondary school music teachers as influential in the decision to pursue a musical career. Instead, they attributed greater significance to individual instrumental teachers. This may be indicative of differences between music teacher roles in the USA and the UK, with those in the former having a greater emphasis on instrumental ensemble teaching as opposed to general classroom music. It may also reflect the length of time that participants desired a career in music education, as Brand and Dolloff (2002) suggest that the positive impact of teachers as role models is more likely when music education is an ambition that has been held for a long time. Participation in educational ensembles was considered a significant career influence by participants in the TIME project, along with support from parents (Welch et al., 2010).

The identity of music education students in Nordic teacher training courses was examined through a phenomenological study undertaken by Ferm (2008). The research explores the identity of students undertaking musikdidaktik, a compulsory subject in which participants explored the theory of teaching and learning. Results reveal a shift in identity in some participants who had chosen music teacher training as a result of not being accepted into music performance courses. Ferm concludes that musical competence, educational competence, music education competence, generic competence (useful in situations not just music teaching) should be encountered, and combinations of discipline competence and generic competence are therefore considered to be important in identity formation.

A study undertaken by Draves (2014) in the USA suggests that the preservice music teacher participants felt most like music teachers when they were engaged in authentic teaching experiences, with their identities shifting towards those of music teachers through interactions with students. This supports the findings of Ballantyne et al. (2012) whose study of preservice teachers in Australia, Spain and the USA reveals that field experiences were
pivotal in the dynamic trajectory of identity development as these experiences enabled the participants to confirm or challenge their evolving identities.

**Inservice identity formation.**

The development of a professional identity continues beyond tertiary studies and into the workforce. A longitudinal study of music education students from six Swedish universities explored the ongoing process of identity formation through two questions: “Who can I be?” and “Who do I want to be?” (Bouij, 1998, p. 32). From the data, four categories of identity emerge. Those who are considered to be pupil-centered teachers or general musicians tend to be willing to acquire a variety of musical skills and encounter different kinds of music, whereas those who identify as performers and teachers who focus on content prefer to concentrate on their own instruments and genres of music. The longitudinal study revealed that the performers did not become pupil-centred teachers.

Participants in a longitudinal study of preservice secondary teachers in the UK revealed a change in their perceptions of the skills needed to become effective teachers, despite their beliefs about their effectiveness as musicians or teachers remaining unchanged (Welch et al., 2010). Participants increasingly identified the need for sound interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate, as opposed to musical performance skills.

**The relationship between the person and the context.**

The second characteristic identified by Beijaard et al. (2004) in their analysis of literature pertaining to teacher professional identity is the contextual nature of professional identity, which is described as a relationship between the person and the context in which he or she is situated. Identity is formed through the continuous interactions between the person and context, and teachers’ perceptions of the interactions are reflected in their self-efficacy, motivation, satisfaction and commitment to the occupation (Canrinus, Helms-Lorenz, Beijaard, Buitink, & Hofman, 2011). Rodgers and Scott (2008) describe the interaction between the internal and external contributors to teacher identity formation, such as emotions and context. The influence of the context is reflected in the expectation that teachers must adopt prescribed characteristics of professional behaviour (Beijaard et al., 2004); however, the extent to which this occurs is dependent on the value that a teacher places on the desired characteristic.

The influence of the relationship between the person and context on professional identity is seen in De Vries’s (2010) narrative analysis of his return to classroom music teaching following a period of work as a music teacher educator. He acknowledges the
importance of role support from other teachers, parents and students within the context in enabling his identity as a music teacher to thrive. When this support was lost due to factors such as prioritisation of literacy and numeracy that interrupted music lessons, he experienced a sense of change in his classroom teacher identity through which his identity as a music teacher educator came to the fore. In this role, he attempted to educate other staff of the importance of arts education.

Music teacher identities are shaped through the interactions between music specialist teachers and others in school communities. According to Draves (2012), music teachers attach symbolic meanings to the various titles by which they may identify themselves, for example, “director”. Other members of the school community, such as principals, students, and parents, then hold socially constructed expectations that are based on these titles. Music teachers enact their identities and engage in their work based upon these expectations.

The need for role support in identity development is discussed by Roberts (2004) who concludes that students who graduate as music teachers find little support for their identities as music performers, whereas they experience support for their roles as teachers. Roberts indicates the need for role support to maintain a particular identity and outlines the distress this causes when it does not occur. To counter this, Roberts recommends that music schools initially develop students’ identities as teachers who teach on the basis of their highly developed musical skills, as he believes that this could prepare students for their socially constructed role as music educators when they entered the workforce.

**Sub-identities.**

The existence of sub-identities has been used in literature to describe aspects of the multiplicity of teacher identity (C. Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Sutherland, Howard, & Markauskaite, 2010). It must be noted that the definition of “identity” is contentious as to whether an individual has multiple identities or an identity containing several facets (Grootenboer, Smith, & Lowrie, 2006). Beijaard et al. (2004) recognise that a teacher’s identity usually consists of many sub-identities, some of which appear to be central and others seem to be peripheral. Three sub-identities are described by Beijaard, Verloop, and Vermunt (2000) that are considered to cover teacher identity in European countries: the didactic expert, the pedagogical expert and the subject matter expert. The teacher as a didactical expert covers the elements of planning, executing and evaluating teaching. This overlaps with the teacher as a pedagogical expert, which is concerned with the moral and ethical concerns of teaching, such as engagement with students. The teacher as an expert in subject matter relates
to the knowledge of content and concepts within the discipline.

This view of multiple sub-identities resonates with Stryker’s (1980) concept of identity salience, in which identities are ordered in a salience hierarchy that is defined by the likelihood of invocation. It appears important that the sub-identities do not conflict with each other and are well-balanced; however, student teachers may experience conflict between sub-identities, and educational or contextual changes may invoke conflict between the sub-identities of experienced teachers (Beijaard et al., 2004). Wenger (1998) describes the reconciliation of multiple memberships into a single identity as the *nexus of multimembership*.

Music education literature frequently refers to the existence of sub-identities of “musician” and “teacher” in a teacher’s professional identity. While the term *musician* is often used to describe one facet of identity, O’Neill (2006) acknowledges that there may be intersecting identities based on the definition of the term *musician*. For example, she states that *musician* may refer to the identity associated with belonging to a musical grouping, whereas *musical identity* may be the “significance attributed to their musical behaviour within their self-concepts” (p. 467).

Although Beijaard et al. (2004) refer to sub-identities as being more or less harmonious, the music education literature suggests that there is sometimes tension or conflict resulting from the “musician” and “teacher” sub-identities. De Vries (2010) notes the loss of his identity as a musician in his earlier teaching career, yet he was able to address this issue unintentionally through activities such as playing the piano during breaks in teaching.

Ballantyne and Grootenboer’s (2012) qualitative study of experienced primary and secondary music teachers in South East Queensland explored the participants’ identities as educators and musicians and the interaction of these identities through pedagogy. Although the sample size is small, the findings are significant due to the inclusion of experienced teachers in the study, as opposed to other research in this area that tends to focus on the identity of preservice teachers. The music teachers expressed two sub-identities of teacher and musician. All teachers in the study viewed themselves as musicians; however, some placed emphasis on performance whereas others emphasised the role of a musician as a music maker. Several participants viewed themselves as musicians who had chosen to become teachers, while others placed a greater value on communication and teaching rather than musicianship. Teachers expressed the struggle to view themselves as musicians, which led to a default-identity of a teacher as a result of inadequate feelings of musicianship. Ballantyne and Grootenboer express the importance of both sub-identities being explored and negotiated.
during preservice training. The positive impact of teacher training in developing sub-identities was evident in a multi-site study of preservice music teachers in Spain, Australia and the USA (Ballantyne et al., 2012). Across the locations, participants’ understanding of the teaching profession shifted from being discipline-focused to incorporating many other educational aspects.

The tension between sub-identities was explored by Bernard (2004) through semi-structured interviews with six elementary general music teachers in the USA. Two participants viewed music making and music teaching as separate entities, with the first focused on obtaining an emotional response from an audience during a performance while the latter emphasised communication of facts and information to students. These teachers spoke of performance in terms of an aesthetic dimension that was lacking in their discussion of music teaching. Two participants identified similarities in the collaborative and communicative processes that occur during performance preparation and teaching. These teachers used similar teaching approaches in their music making and in classroom teaching, by focusing on the need to convey a sense of understanding of what is happening in the music to their students. By seeking to allow the students to experience in the classroom what they had experienced as performers, the influence of the musician sub-identity on enacted pedagogy was evident.

Freer and Bennett (2012) examined music teacher identity through a study of 38 Australian undergraduate and graduate music education students from a Western Australian university, and 34 music education students undertaking undergraduate, graduate and doctoral studies in the USA. Results demonstrate that strong perceptions of musical self-efficacy are important in the development of identity. Those who express a strong orientation towards the teacher identity also identify as musicians, yet the inverse is not always true. All participants expressed the need for a high level of musical skills in music education, which led to the authors questioning whether the music teacher identity is best positioned within a broader identity as musician.

Based on observations and interviews of students in preservice music programs, Roberts (2004) analysed the identity construction of music students. In a homogenous community, such as a music school, differences were emphasised. Students who were grouped as musicologists, performers and music education students viewed those in the performance stream as the most proficient performers. This affected the identity of those in other streams, who may have desired to construct an identity as a superior performer.
Students reported that faculty members, who did not take seriously the performance aspirations of these students in other streams, reinforced this. Roberts noted that students were likely to share as a common bond the lack of parental support for music as an undergraduate education major, due to a perceived lack of occupational security. Students also may have shared a bond arising from a lack of understanding of the musical world from students in other disciplines, resulting in the majority of social interactions of music students occurring within the music community of the music school. It must be noted that this research took place in the context of a music education program in which students initially undertake a degree in music, followed by one year of study in music education. In an Australian context, this would be similar to the path through which students complete their education training through a postgraduate program, although a four or five-year integrated undergraduate music education degree also constitutes a training pathway in some Australian states.

In contrast to research undertaken by Roberts (2004) research participants in Isbell’s (2009) study reported significant support from their families and music faculty members as music education students and did not feel stigmatised for choosing to be teachers, as opposed to performers. Furthermore, the results report a shift in the teacher sub-identities of the participants who elected to become elementary (primary) music teachers as a result of preservice training. Isbell attributes this realignment of their career aspirations in response to positive experiences of fieldwork in elementary schools.

The effect of music making beyond the classroom on the development of a professional music teacher identity is discussed by Pellegrino (2015) in the context of case studies involving four preservice teachers. Participants claimed that this music making enhanced their wellbeing and contributed to their self-identification as teachers as well as students’ perceptions of their identities as music educators. According to Pellegrino, the participants used their music making inside the classroom as a realisation of their identities as music teachers by inspiring students and developing self-motivation to teach.

Music making by elementary music teachers beyond the classroom is also discussed by Bernard (2005), who explains identity as evolving in response to social context and experiences, with the ongoing negotiation of meaning leading to a construction of self. Whereas social constructivists primarily state that identity construction occurs through social interaction, Bernard takes the stance that it simultaneously occurs at an individual, social and cultural level. In her research, she is surprised to find that elementary (primary) music
teachers generally continue to act as musicians outside the school environment, yet this is not acknowledged by school communities or within the field of elementary music education and she consequently challenges the view that music making and music teaching are pitted against each other and must be resolved.

Bernard’s desire to reframe the understanding of music teacher identity sparked much debate from other researchers that was expressed through a series of responses in the January 2007 issue of *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*. Contrasting views of conflict are evident in the authors’ responses to Bernard’s article. Stephens (2007) states that conflict and tension terms can have positive meanings, as opposed to Bernard’s initial negative interpretation, and claims that Bernard’s fear of the division of the musician and teacher identities is unfounded. This view of conflict is supported by Roberts (2007) who sees the tension that occurs through trying to balance both identities as crucial to success in the classroom. Both Roberts (2007) and Stephens (2007) assert that certain identities can rise to the fore depending on the context, and this does not devalue the identities that temporarily receded, whereas they argue Bernard is suggesting the musician identity should always be in the fore.

**Agency.**

The fourth aspect of professional identity identified by Beijaard et al. (2004) is that of agency in professional learning. Agency can be understood as the individual and collaborative learning that occurs through the activities of the learner and shapes professional identity as participants interact with others. Learning environments that nurture agency can assist in the development of resilience that overcomes negative vulnerability (Wiggins, 2011) and help teachers obtain the self-realisation that they are empowered to achieve goals or change their teaching context (C. Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

Professional learning that aids in the formation of role identity may occur through formal professional development courses; however, teacher agency in professional learning can be restricted by the limitations of personalisation in formal professional learning courses (Draves, 2012). Conway (2008) recommends that music teachers have access to both formal and informal opportunities for professional learning and that consideration is given to their changing needs across the continuum of career development.

Another form of professional learning in which teachers engage occurs through their involvement in learning communities. Participation in learning communities fosters collaborative professional learning for music teachers (Stanley, 2011; Stanley, Snell, &
Edgar, 2014). In constructing an agenda for music teachers’ professional development, Conway (2007) identifies the need for the creation of communities of practice specifically for music teachers and “professional development options that allow music teachers time and settings to interact informally to share ideas and stories of teaching” (p. 58). Communities such as these have the capacity to shape identities through learning, as the transformative nature of learning can be considered an experience of identity (Wenger, 1998). The following section of the chapter begins with a detailed discussion of the learning that occurs through participation in learning communities that can be conceptualised as communities of practice or professional learning communities.

**Specialist Music Teachers’ Experiences of Learning Communities**

Examination of literature surrounding school contexts leads to further investigation of teachers’ participation in school communities. Various forms of communities have been proposed and those that are reflected in educational literature are usually derived from the theory of *situated learning*, as conceptualised by Lave and Wenger (1991) through their groundbreaking work in communities that they referred to as communities of practice. This section of the chapter begins with a conceptual overview of communities of practice. It is followed by a description of the attributes of professional learning communities, which are learning communities specifically situated in school environments that share some of the characteristics of communities of practice.

**Communities of Practice**

The term community of practice was developed by Wenger and Lave to describe the learning relationships that occur through social interaction within business organisations (Wenger & Snyder, 2000). Communities in which learning relationships take place are not confined to such organisations, as they have always existed. Historically, communities of practice were often made up of groups of people who worked alone, but belonged to a wider corporation, such as metalworkers or potters in classical Greece or artisans’ guilds in the Middle Ages. Lave and Wenger’s (1991) study of apprenticeships led to their description of *legitimate peripheral participation* as a process through which newcomers to a community initially adopt the practices of the community by engaging in low-risk tasks and eventually become established members of the group and critical to its function. This participation in collaborative social practices results in learning shaped by the community of practice. Today, communities of practice are often found within organisations such as companies and educational institutions, in addition to many other contexts. Their purpose is to exchange
knowledge and develop the skills of the members and they are established through the equal
development of three elements: the domain, the community and the practice (Seaman, 2008).

The practice of the community is the tacit and explicit actions of its members as they
endeavour to pursue their shared enterprise. It is this that distinguishes a community of
practice from other types of communities (Seaman, 2008). The practice involves the
development of meaning within and between the members of the community as they interact
and experience life through solving problems (Wenger, 1998). This is experienced and
negotiated through the patterns that emerge, allowing members to see and identify similarities
and differences. Meaning is negotiated through the continuous adjustment of the way in
which the world can be understood, and demands both interpretation and action through what
Wenger describes as participation and reification. Participation refers to the complex social
interactions and experiences within a community of practice that shape both experiences and
the actual communities. Reification refers to the processes community participants work
through as they create representations of shared meanings that are generated through their
interactions. The term reification is also used by Wenger to describe the products that are
formed as a result of these processes, which could include policy documents, records or
classification systems. Wenger emphasises that a balanced duality of participation and
reification is an essential aspect of a community of practice to ensure the continuity of
meaning.

The practice of a community is inherent to the development of a community of
practice, as it distinguishes it from other types of communities and leads to the coherence of
its members. This occurs through the mutual engagement of the members in actions that
define the community, which can be seen in contrast to the type of communities that are
defined by networks of people, geography or social categories. Mutual engagement is a key
characteristic of the practice and refers to the way in which the community functions (Seaman,
2008). Through mutual engagement, relationships between members are established. It is
important to note, that these relationships are not always harmonious. Belonging to a
community of practice involves a variety of forms of interaction through the mutual
engagement of its members. Disagreements are a form of participation and Wenger (1998)
goes so far as to state that misery can be an inherent part of a community.

The negotiation of a joint enterprise becomes defined through the mutual engagement
of the community members and is another way in which community coherence is developed
through the practice. In a community of practice, the members work collaboratively as they
share and contribute towards a common goal. In later work, Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) increasingly referred to this aspect of the community as the domain, or purpose, of the community that brings the members together and serves to guide to their learning.

The third way in which community coherence is established through the practice is by the development of a repertoire of shared resources (Wenger, 1998), which can be simply described as what the community has produced (Seaman, 2008). It is important to note that the shared repertoire combines elements of both participation and reification that reflect the history of mutual engagement (Wenger, 1998).

As a result of the coherence that develops through mutual engagement in the practice, the establishment of a joint enterprise or domain and the development of a shared repertoire, histories between members emerge that shape their understanding of the world (Wenger, 1998). This can be described as the learning that takes place through involvement in the community, that is, the learning that occurs through engagement and participation in the practice. Just as the shared repertoire includes combinations of participation and reification, so too does the shared history. Frequently, learning is not considered to be a goal of the practice, for example, members may not consciously identify their own learning as they undertake what they perceive to be their role within the organisation. However, learning inevitably takes place through the interaction between the members of the community of practice. Learning occurs through the processes of establishing relationships to enable mutual engagement, collectively defining the joint enterprise and developing a shared repertoire of resources. Social interaction is a key characteristic of the practice, but not all situations in which social interaction occurs can be considered a community of practice, as these environments do not necessarily involve the elements of mutual engagement, negotiation of meaning and the development of shared histories.

The experience of a community of practice can be described in terms of participation and non-participation, suggesting that identities are also defined through the activities we engage in and those in which we are not engaged (Wenger, 1998). Non-participation and participation interact to form trajectories of peripherality and marginality and both states include a mix of participation and non-participation. Wenger states that participation dominates a trajectory of peripherality, whereas in the case of marginality, non-participation dominates and defines a restricted type of participation. There are, therefore, four forms of participation, as illustrated in Figure 2.1.
Participation inside the group could include those who are core members who take responsibility for the community’s learning journey, and active members who participate regularly without the intensity of the core (Wenger et al., 2002). Peripheral members may rarely participate but still observe the interactions of inside members, which can still enable an inbound trajectory to insider participation, whereas those in a marginal position may either remain in a state of non-participation or follow an outbound trajectory. An outsider may have an interest in the group’s domain, but neither belongs to nor participates in the practice of the community.

Communities of practice do not exist in isolation from the rest of the world or from other practices, as their members do not exist only within the community (Wenger, 1998). People may belong to connected communities of practice that differ in practice enough to not be considered as one community of practice. Wenger refers to these connected practices as a *constellation*. The enterprises of various forms of communities may be interconnected, with connections occurring through boundary practices, overlaps and peripheries. Communities have participatory and reified boundaries that indicate membership and non-membership; for example, people may be given titles to reflect particular roles within an organisation. Boundaries of practice exist between those who have experienced the sustained social history required to form a practice and those who have not (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Barriers to participation may be a subtle indication of the status of a non-member; for example, communities may use professional jargon that serves to indicate who belongs. Ultimately, it is the practice that is the source of the boundary (Wenger, 1998).

Identifiable boundary practices have the purpose of sustaining connections between
practices by reconciling perspectives and finding resolutions to conflicts, with examples of boundary practices including task forces, cross-functional teams and executive committees. The second type of boundary practice is considered to constitute the direct overlap between two practices. Within this model, the practices and enterprises of overlapping communities remain distinct, rather than merging into one community of practice, but the simultaneous engagement in both communities creates an overlap of practice, as opposed to an identifiable boundary practice. The third form of connection between practices identified by Wenger (1998) is the opening of a periphery that can occur through a legitimate access to a practice and is defined by being “neither fully inside nor fully outside” (Wenger, 1998, p. 117). Peripheral participation may be limited to observation or may include some participation in the practice.

It is important to note the distinction between the boundary of a practice, as the edge of inclusion and exclusion, and the periphery as the area of overlap or connection of communities. This does not mean, however, that there cannot be any interaction between communities. Both participation and reification can also be used to cross the boundaries between communities of practice through encounters, such as meetings, visits and conversations, or documents. Wenger (1998) described brokering as a form of participation that crosses boundaries, through the connections created between members and communities to which they belong. Typically, the broker is a peripheral member of both communities and, through the broker, meaning can be negotiated between communities. This might occur between communities of practice that exist within the one organisation, or between an internal and external community of practice.

In summary, communities of practice function through the mutual engagement in a shared practice from which a domain of knowledge emerges. Specialist primary music teachers may experience varying degrees of participation and non-participation in school-based individual or overlapping communities. To further understand teachers’ experiences of learning communities, attention is now turned to professional learning communities that are specifically situated in school contexts and illuminate the desired, collaborative learning journeys that contribute to teacher agency and the formation of role identities.

**Professional Learning Communities**

Terms such as communities of practice, communities of continuous inquiry and professional communities of learners feature in research into school-based learning communities (Stoll et al., 2006) and describe similar characteristics to those of professional
learning communities. Change and reform processes in the 1980s focused on the idea that schools needed to move from a traditional model of education to a system of accountability, cooperation between colleagues and teacher efficacy (Hord, 1997). The research that followed looked closely at the relationship between teacher quality and student achievement. Senge’s (1990) concept of a learning organisation in which members expanded their ability to create the desired results in environments in which new and expansive patterns of thinking were nurtured, and where people were continually and collectively learning, significantly influenced educators responsible for school reform and improvement initiatives (Hord, 1997).

Although there is not a specific definition that separates a professional learning community from other types of communities, the term was developed to describe a school-wide culture in which collaboration is expected and critical practice is ongoing (Stoll et al., 2006). Within a professional learning community, members reflect on their practice, work productively together and share their learning to improve outcomes for students (Hord, 1997). Hord describes five key attributes that emerge from the literature, including shared leadership, collaboration, shared vision, collective responsibility and supportive structures, and it is these qualities or attributes that distinguish a professional learning community from a group of people who work together. Morrissey (2000) states that a professional learning community is established when these dimensions are in place and working interdependently.

The collaboratively constructed and shared vision of the members is a key attribute of professional learning communities (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). This involves envisaging what is important to the organisation, rather than merely agreeing to an idea, and forms the basis for ethical decision-making. In the context of a professional learning community, values and vision primarily focus on student learning and achievement and the members must rely on each other to continually articulate and reinforce this objective (Hord, 2004).

Professional learning communities exist through the collaboration of members, as opposed to individuals working in isolated practice. These productive partnerships are developed as the members collectively seek and apply new knowledge to their work that focuses on the shared value of improving student learning through best practice (Hord, 2015). In some cases, this could involve teams working independently to achieve common goals (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Merely placing teachers on a team together does not guarantee the emergence of a collaborative learning group, as effective teams are characterised by their shared beliefs, attitudes and trust that lead to effective communication and a willingness to participate. Within a collaborative learning culture, members must feel empowered to make
decisions and to consequently take responsibility for these decisions.

In order for effective teamwork to occur, supportive conditions must be in place that may involve physical factors, such as time and space, or the personal skills of the members (Hord, 1997). Physical structures could include adequate time allocated for collaborative work and suitable spaces in which teachers can meet. Professional dialogue is facilitated by the provision of suitable spaces, such as staffrooms, and the physical proximity of colleagues’ classrooms (Stoll et al., 2006). Positive relationships are essential to productive partnerships, as teachers are unlikely to engage in mentoring, observation and feedback and collegial discussions in environments that are not perceived to be safe. Teachers are more likely to engage in problem solving when their vulnerability is reduced (Bryk & Schneider, 2002) and while disagreements and debate are an inherent part of a learning community, it is vital that leaders manage these effectively. The ability to select staff and administrators who are willing to work in a collaborative environment may affect the success of the community.

As well as working together, members must share a collective responsibility for student learning, which helps to sustain the commitment of the members and develop accountability for actions. The students must be perceived to be capable and together the staff must identify ways in which each student can achieve potential (Hord, 1997). Through working collectively, the potential for individuals to feel isolated within the workplace can be reduced.

Within a professional learning community, the capacity for leadership is shared, to enable and empower the members to share vision and values and to make decisions that improve student achievement (Hord, 1997). This does not mean that formal leadership roles cease to exist but it may affect the roles of those in such positions. A principal must share leadership and act as a supportive facilitator within the learning community, rather than being a dominating leader (Hord, 2015). The leadership role is crucial to the development of professional learning communities and school improvement, as strong leadership enables increasing student achievement through access to professional development, adequate resources and clearly set goals (Stoll et al., 2006). DuFour (2001) identifies steps that principals can take to ensure that collaboration and leadership are cemented in the function of a school. He states that they must ensure that adequate time is provided for teamwork and that critical questions to guide cooperative partnerships are identified. Additionally, principals must ask teams to use the results of collaboration to create products and insist that they identify and pursue specific goals related to student achievement. Finally, they must
provide teams with relevant data and information from which decisions can be made. Effective principals are instructional and learning leaders who see professional development as a systemic effort (Fullan, 2002).

Although small groups of teachers within a school may work together to solve specific problems, the facilitation of professional learning communities needs to occur at a school-wide level and be part of daily operations (Morrissey, 2000). Professional learning communities encourage teachers to move from isolated practices to becoming collaborating partners in improving student learning (Stoll et al., 2006). Collaborative practice encourages activities that can lead to a reduction in isolation, such as sharing, reflection and observation of colleagues (Hord, 1997). Isolation may be typical within the traditional school model, in which teachers may form a community with their students while being isolated from their peers (Snow-Gerono, 2005) and some teachers may choose to isolate themselves from others to protect themselves from disruptions and distractions.

**Communities in Music Education Literature**

Music education literature reveals a growing body of research in the area of learning communities found in schools, particularly with regard to communities of practice. Although the professional learning communities is yet to have a significant impact in framing music education research, despite a growing body of research in general education, the notion of collaboration as a vital element of teacher interaction that promotes learning is frequently addressed in music education literature. This scholarship also reveals factors enhancing and hindering participation in learning communities.

**Collaboration.**

Music teachers’ experiences of learning communities may be affected by their access to collaborative partnerships. This may not be confined to the collaboration between specialist teachers, but may also include the teamwork between specialist and generalist teachers. Frego and Giles (2004) found that there was a need for greater partnerships between generalist and specialist teachers in order to enhance the music curriculum, as the majority of participants in the study did not experience this. Such partnerships may help to address the issue of generalist teachers’ competency and self-efficacy in teaching music. This is consistent with research undertaken by Holden and Button (2006). Through surveys and semi-structured interviews of non-specialist teachers in one district of England, it was revealed that generalist teachers would like support from music specialists. During an investigation of two urban elementary schools in Chicago, USA, Whitaker (1998) observed
long-term assistance by specialist music teachers provided to generalist teachers that designed to meet the unique needs of each school community. As a result, Whitaker recommends regular consultation with specialist music teachers and access to arts instruction for generalist teachers in cases where the employment of a full time music specialist teacher is not viable.

Russell-Bowie (1999) proposed a system in which specialists act as advisory teachers to generalists in order to improve the quality of music education within the state of NSW. Programs such as this have been used successfully in the past, but faltered due to economic rationalism (Russell-Bowie, 1999). In 2015, the National Music Teacher Mentoring Program commenced as a pilot program in NSW, Victoria and Western Australia in which generalist teachers were paired with experienced music educators (Australian Youth Orchestra, n.d.). The pilot program involved 20 mentors, 62 teachers and approximately 1400 students. The initial results indicate increases in the professional confidence amongst the specialist music teachers and the teaching competency of the generalist teachers in response to participation in the program (NSW Department of Education: The Arts Unit, n.d.). The program was made available to all interested schools in NSW at the commencement of 2016.

The importance of collaborative professional learning experiences is discussed by Stanley et al. (2014) in the context of a study of eight music educators’ involvement in professional learning in the USA. The experiences of these practitioners reveal that collaborative professional learning can establish personal and professional networks, resources and contacts that can provide avenues for implementing new ideas and classroom change through feedback from colleagues. The researchers state that this form of mutual engagement is of benefit to experienced and beginning teachers, and contrasts with professional learning structures that are limited in duration and meaningful music content.

Similarly, opportunities for collaboration between music teachers working in different schools may facilitate valuable learning interactions, as discussed by participants in research conducted by Sindberg (2011) involving elementary, middle school and high school music teachers in a midwestern district of the USA. Despite the focus of these collaborative meetings within the school district not being formally determined, the participants appreciated the support they gleaned from colleagues through these experiences. This echoes the findings of Delorenzo’s (1992) research regarding early career music teachers, as participants expressed a need for meetings with experienced music educators and their desire feedback from experienced colleagues within their own workplace.
Isolation.

Isolation is a factor that can hinder the development or emergence of learning communities. Music teachers may feel isolated in the workplace, due to the lack of networking opportunities with other music practitioners (Krueger, 1999). In her study of 30 beginning music teachers in Washington, USA, Krueger refers to the idea of intellectual isolation, a consequence of being the only music educator on staff. This issue was also reported by the primary music specialist teachers who participated in a study of Foundation (Kindergarten) to Year 9 music teachers in Queensland, Australia (Davidson & Dwyer, 2014). These participants tended to discuss teaching practices with their generalist teacher colleagues, although they noted the isolation that occurred through their limited opportunities to engage with other specialist music practitioners. Similarly, participants in a survey of 100 music teachers with varying levels of teaching experience conducted by Sindberg and Lipscomb (2005) cited a lack of opportunities to share subject-specific information with colleagues as contributing to isolation within their workplaces, particularly during the first decade of teaching practice.

A sense of isolation may also stem from the practicalities of the music specialist’s employment. Krueger (1999) reported this as an issue affecting teachers due to time spent travelling between schools, as travel during lunch breaks or scheduled teaching at one location during another school’s staff meeting reduces time for teachers to interact with staff (Krueger, 2003). Similarly, a study conducted by Roulston (1998) in Queensland, Australia revealed that the majority of specialist primary music teacher participants found that travel between locations reduced the time available to adequately liaise with class teachers and principals. Half the participants also expressed challenges in developing relationships that could assist them to have a sense of belonging in their school communities, and they attributed this to the peripatetic nature of their roles. A reduced sense of belonging was reflected in the experience of an itinerant early childhood music teacher, who struggled to build community with classroom teachers at outreach sites due to their perceived lack of interest in music education (Gruenhagen, 2012).

Specialist teachers may feel a lack of support from generalist teachers that is manifested in such behaviours as interference with music lessons or not collecting the class on time (Bresler, 1998). This sense of isolation frequently influences the satisfaction levels of music educators (Krueger, 2000). Some music specialists may choose to isolate aspects of their teaching from colleagues, as reported in Bresler’s (1998) study of specialist teachers.
Isolation is not necessarily confined to the experiences of specialist music teachers and may be experienced by specialists in other disciplines working within primary schools. “Malcolm”, the participant in Sweeney’s case study of a specialist teacher responsible for teaching students of language backgrounds other than English, indicated that there was a lack of support for specialists in implementing curriculum. He expressed a sense of isolation within his own practice (Sweeney, 2007). This is consistent with research undertaken in a Western Australian primary school that investigated specialist teachers of music, health and physical education, and languages other than English (Stone, 2006). Participants in this case study felt that there was a lack of communication between generalist and specialist teachers.

A quantitative study undertaken by Sindberg and Lipscomb (2005) reveals that music teachers in Illinois, USA, experience isolation, particularly within the first one to ten years of their teaching careers. One of the factors causing isolation that was identified by these participants was the location of the music room on the school campus. Those teachers who had less than 10 years’ teaching experience were more likely to be affected by this than those who had been teaching for more than 10 years.

Communities of practice may be formed through the use of online forums and networks, enabling what Wenger (1998) describes as participation in multiple communities of practice. The use of an online community of practice for novice instrumental teachers was beneficial for reducing practitioner isolation and provided participants with emotional support (Bell-Robertson, 2014). Although the program served affective outcomes and facilitated participants’ access to multiple perspectives, the researcher concluded that it did not appear to develop understanding of curriculum, perhaps due to the differences in the participants’ contexts and role expectations. This is consistent with Wenger’s (1998) expectation that the joint enterprise will emerge as a result of the participants in the community. Fitzpatrick (2014) investigated the use of online weblogs by undergraduate music education student to facilitate interactions leading to community development and to provide a basis for the development of the shared domain of a community of practice. Results suggest that the students used the weblog to share classroom management strategies, reflect on ongoing shift in professional identity and to discuss their partnerships with supervising teachers. An online community also served to create a space in which the participants could provide each other with feedback and support, as well as sharing resources. Although this study focused on the experiences of undergraduate music education students, online practices such as these could potentially be utilised to reduce the isolation of geographically isolated music education
practitioners by creating a means of virtual cooperation and collaboration.

**Mentoring.**

Another element that is identified in the music education literature regarding teachers’ experiences of learning communities is their interactions with mentors. Engagement in mentoring relationships may contribute to community participation and the development of collaborative partnerships that are inherent to the practices of learning communities. Early career teachers benefit from mentoring relationships; however, music teachers tend to feel more supported when mentored by experienced music teachers rather than by teachers from other disciplines (Conway, Krueger, Robinson, Haack, & Smith, 2002; Krueger, 1999). This was revealed in Conway’s (2003) initial study of beginning music teachers in public schools located in Michigan and was again supported by these participants in a follow up study conducted more than ten years later (Conway, 2015). Of the 12 participants, seven had subsequently assumed positions as mentors to beginning or preservice teachers during the second stage of their teaching careers (Conway & Eros, 2016).

As it may prove problematic for specialist music teachers working in isolation within their schools to develop a mentor relationship with an experienced music teacher (Krueger, 2000), the formation of networks and relationships may address this issue (Krueger, 1999). Krueger’s participants described mentoring experiences at a district level, in which experienced teachers were invited to assist beginning teachers. Through the district program, beginning teachers were given release time in which to observe experienced teachers and participants in the study stated this was a positive and beneficial experience. Mentoring enables teachers to receive constructive feedback, leading to improvement in professional practice (DeLorenzo, 1992). Through mentoring, teachers gain access to fresh ideas and resources and are more likely to develop confidence and creatively approach problems (Krueger, 1999). This is consistent with Blair’s (2008) experience of mentoring five novice elementary music teachers in a local school district in the USA through a program in which participation was voluntary and occurred over the course of a school year. Regular communication with their mentor assisted the new music teachers in gaining confidence in classroom management and participants benefited from regularly meeting with other beginning music teachers. An investigation of teachers in Spain and Australia also reveals an increase in teacher efficacy through targeted professional development and mentoring (Carrillo, Baguley, & Vilar, 2015), although generalisation of the study results is limited due to the small number of participants.
A qualitative study conducted in the USA explored the benefits of the establishment of professional learning communities between universities and schools (Roulston et al., 2005). The teacher-researcher group aimed to mentor early career elementary music teachers in practitioner research models and facilitate supportive relationships and the development of a research community between teachers and university staff. While some aspects of the project were problematic, particularly with regard to time and difficulties obtaining the consent required for the teacher participants to conduct research, both the university and teacher participants reported the development of a supportive and collaborative community.

Teachers’ experiences of communities of practice are not confined to those developed between colleagues or with other music educators beyond school contexts. Beineke (2013) explores the emergence of a community of practice involving primary school students and the teacher through a creative composition process. The teacher’s role of organising students and fostering respectful, collaborative relationships between students was critical to the development of the community. Through the students’ social participation in composing, performing and critical analysis, a community bond of music practice was formed.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed the literature that determined the methodology and focus of my research into the experiences of specialist primary music teachers. I have provided an historical overview of the sociological theories that underpin research about role identities and an analysis of literature regarding the role identities of specialist music teachers. Wenger’s (1998) conceptual framework of communities of practice has been analysed, and the elements of professional learning communities have been described. These particular forms of learning communities are frequently cited in general education literature, hence their inclusion in the review. Drawing from a range of music education literature, I have examined three recurring themes in music teachers’ social learning interactions: collaboration, isolation and mentoring.

In undertaking the review of literature, research issues have been identified that are subsequently addressed through this study. Firstly, the music education literature regarding music teacher role identities has largely focused on the experiences of preservice teachers, therefore, further research of experienced teachers is needed to explore the ongoing trajectory of identity development and the role of occupational socialization. While there is an increasing focus on research regarding those music teachers who are in the second stage of their careers (Conway & Eros, 2016), this growing area of research has not yet focused specifically on primary music specialist teachers. Additionally, as the literature has mostly
explored the experiences of participants in preservice music education programs or those who trained as secondary music specialist teachers, further investigation of specialist music teachers who initially trained as generalist teachers is necessary.

Although the literature about music teachers’ involvement in learning communities continues to expand, these studies are largely contextual, which limits the transference of findings to other situations. Due to the distinctly contextual nature of communities, research within NSW primary schools is warranted to understand the experiences of the participants who are the focus of this study. The theories of role identity construction and social learning through learning communities as discussed in this review can be used to understand the experiences of specialist music teachers. Through thematic analysis, these interpretations can be applied to data acquired through qualitative means in order to further understand of the participants’ experiences within the unique contexts on NSW schools. The next chapter outlines the methodological design chosen, including the process of thematic analysis, to provide research that addresses the research gaps identified in the literature.
Chapter Three
Methodology

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of specialist music teachers in NSW primary schools. As my intention was to develop an understanding of the issues faced by the participants, I required a methodology that enabled investigation of the depth and complexity of their experiences (Matsunobu & Bresler, 2014). I drew from the work of Guba and Lincoln (1994) and referred to the fundamental questions asked by philosophers to determine the nature of inquiry. Rather than merely being a collection of assumptions, Reimer (2006) states that philosophical principles are a coherent, unifying core of tenets that are broad enough to cover the scope of inquiry and provide the guidelines for practical, purposeful actions.

In selecting a methodology, or method of knowledge acquisition, I firstly questioned the ontological and epistemological assumptions, as these then determined the suitability of methodological approaches (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Mertens, 2010). Interrogating the ontological assumptions involved questioning the nature of reality and what could be known (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) and deciding whether the social world of the participants was there to be uncovered by the researcher or if it was continuously being created and recreated by the participants (Bryman, 2008). As multiple realities of teachers’ experiences could be known and constructed through social interaction, I adopted an interpretivist/constructivist ontological stance for this study (Mertens, 2010). Interpretivism reflects a sociological interpretive process of \textit{verstehen} in which the meaning of behaviour is interpreted from the point of view of the actor (Weber, 1949). This process would require me to develop empathy for the subjects and attempt to recreate the experience of the subjects within myself (Bresler & Stake, 2006), thus developing an insider perspective of the participants in the setting (Roulston, 2006). The basic presupposition of the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm is relativism, defined as the belief in reality as a subjective experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), which contrasts with a positivist stance in which it is assumed that there is an objective reality that can be known (Mertens, 2010).

To determine the research paradigm, I examined the relationship between me, in my role as researcher, and what could be known. Given that the presupposition of the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm is relativism, the epistemological presupposition is transactional subjectivism, where the relationship between the knower and what is to be known is highly personal and dependent on the context in which the transaction takes place.
(Lincoln & Guba, 2013). In the context of this study, the interpretivist/constructivist epistemological stance was therefore appropriate due to the contextual natures of teachers’ experiences and the knowledge of social worlds where these experiences take place. This enabled me to acknowledge that meaning may be constructed by different people in different ways (Crotty, 1998).

To further define the research paradigm, I sought to explain how I could obtain the desired knowledge and understandings (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) and how knowledge of the nature of the teachers’ social worlds could be made possible (Hammersley & Campbell, 2012). The social world cannot be universally understood as simple causal relationships or through the application of universal laws of behaviour because “human actions are based upon, or infused by, social or cultural meanings: that is, by intentions, motives, beliefs, rules, discourses and values” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 7). My epistemological stance led to the need for a personal, interactive means of data collection, described by Mertens (2010) as an interactive process through which both the researcher and participants influence each other and interpretations of data are linked inextricably to contexts. Two key processes that are required to explore meaning-making and the minds of the participants are facilitating disclosure to uncover and analyse the constructions held by the participants, and comparing and contrasting their individual constructions in an “encounter situation” (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 40). In response to this, the methodological approach to data collection needed to be based in the field so that the social worlds of the participants could be observed. Therefore, the methodology selected for this study was qualitative, which determined the methods of data collection (Crotty, 1998).

**Qualitative Methodology**

The ontological assumption of the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm through which meaning must be discovered from the perspective of the actors reflects Mead’s (1934/1967) view of the self and community as the result of human meaning and interaction, that is, the determination of community behaviour through shared symbols that are given meaning by patterns of behaviour (Geertz, 1973). These interactions must be observed in the settings in which they take place, which reflects the epistemological transactional subjectivism of an interpretivist paradigm. Drawing from ethnography, fieldwork enabled me to study the participants’ actions and accounts within their school settings, instead of in conditions created by a researcher, which was vital for effective understanding (Bresler & Stake, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).
The realities constructed through social interactions are multiple and can vary throughout a study (Mertens, 2010), thus requiring the researcher to respond to themes as they emerge throughout the research (Matsunobu & Bresler, 2014). An emergent design permits practical and creative adaptations to the research design in response to changes in contexts or the revelation of new information (Campbell & Lassiter, 2014). Consequently, the research design for this study was a reflexive process throughout and the data collection was relatively unstructured as neither a detailed nor fixed design was developed at the beginning of the research process (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). An iterative inductive approach to this research allowed the themes to emerge from the data throughout the data collection, analytic and writing stages of the research (O'Reilly, 2011).

When investigating a context that is familiar, it is important to view the setting and events as though they are unfamiliar (Bresler, 1996). Difficulties with authority and authenticity may arise for researchers in educational settings, due to their personal experiences of schooling (Gordon, Holland, & Lahelma, 2007) and researchers should critically examine how their background and experience in the research setting may shape their analysis of data (Brewer, 2000; Matsunobu & Bresler, 2014). This can be described as reflexivity, which is an iterative way of thinking to guide critical analysis (May & Perry, 2013). I am an experienced teacher who has worked as both a generalist classroom teacher and specialist primary music teacher, and I hold undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in these areas. I have also held senior executive positions that have provided insight into the roles of school leaders in primary school settings. It was therefore necessary throughout the research to exercise reflexivity in terms of the influence of my beliefs and social values on the interpretation of data gathered through my observations and interactions with specialist music teachers, despite the fact that I may have appeared to share a key identity with the participants (Hammersley & Campbell, 2012). Furthermore, during the second phase of the data collection, discussed later in this chapter, I was working in an executive position in an independent primary school. During this stage of data collection, reflexivity was required as I sought to maintain objectivity despite some understanding of the complexities of the principals’ roles.

**Research Methods**

This section explores the specific qualitative data collection and analysis processes undertaken during the study in response to the ontological, epistemological and methodological framework of the study. An overview of ethical considerations and the
process to enhance the validation of results is also provided. The methodology explained in the previous section resulted in particular methods of preference, such as participant observation, interviews and document analysis (Crotty, 1998; Krueger, 2014). Both the research design and interpretive data categories evolved throughout the study, with the latter generated through data analysis (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007); the thematic approach to data analysis is explained in detail later in the chapter.

**Multicase Study Design**

As the purpose of the research was to develop understanding from the perspective of participants experienced in multiple contexts, a multicase study design was used. Due to the iterative inductive approach employed, the case studies were conducted in two phases to enable the collection of data to initially occur from a broad variety of sources and facilitate the collection of rich, in-depth data during the four intensive cases. The first phase of case study research consisted of semi-structured interviews with participants to broadly examine the experiences of participants across multiple settings in the NSW context of the study. From these interviews, four cases were selected for further investigation in response to the themes that were identified through the thematic approach to data analysis that is discussed in detail later in the chapter. The four intensive case studies provided exploration of the emergent themes in contrasting, yet connected, settings.

Stake (2006) describes a multicase study as the examination of cases that consist of multiple parts, members or cases. While each case is explored in detail, the focus remains on either the cases as a collection or the phenomena studied across the cases. This form of case study is considered to be *instrumental*, rather than an *intrinsic* case study in which the purpose is to understand the characteristics of a single case. The investigation of the issues across the individual cases is the *collective case study*. As the purpose of this research was to develop understanding within and between cases, the case study design was both instrumental and collective (Stake, 1995).

In a multicase study design, the phenomenon explored across cases categorically binds the cases together and is the starting point of the research (Stake, 2006). As opposed to a single case, in which a researcher may begin by questioning what helps in understanding the individual case, the multicase design begins with questioning what will help understand the phenomenon. The focus for this study was the experiences of teachers providing specialist music instruction in NSW primary schools and an instrumental multicase study design facilitated the exploration of this emerging phenomenon across a diverse range of settings.
Stake (1995) notes the importance of organising case studies around a series of research questions that serve to direct observations and thinking frameworks while still granting the researcher freedom to explore issues that arise from the data. Research questions therefore provide a conceptual framework for developing the study (Stake, 2006). Prior to conducting the first stage of cases, I developed four areas for investigation that centered on the broad themes that emerged from initial analysis of international literature pertaining to specialist primary music teachers’ experiences. The research areas at this point in the study focused on the conceptions held of a primary music specialist teachers, the effect of curricula and educational policies on their roles, the factors informing their professional practice, and their participation in learning communities. These served to frame the study and provide an orientation with which to initially interpret actions (Krueger, 2014). As they were brought to the cases by the outside researcher and were primarily the issues of a broader community of researchers, they could be considered etic issues (Stake, 1995).

During the process of data collection and analysis, emic issues were revealed in the data that then formed the basis for further investigation in the second stage of intensive case studies. In contrast to etic issues, emic issues are those discovered in the data. These issues led to the development of the four research questions contained in Chapter One. Thus, the case studies became increasingly emic as the research progressed and the framework was altered in response to the collected data (Krueger, 2014).

**Sampling**

The cases explored in this research were chosen on the basis that they would facilitate the development of understanding from the perspective of participants operating in contrasting geographic locations and school systems in NSW. As stated in the first chapter of the thesis, the three main school systems in NSW are government schools administered by the NSW Department of Education, Catholic systemic schools administered by the Catholic Education Office, and independent schools. The cases were also selected to explore the experiences of participants from a range of tertiary training backgrounds and teaching experiences. Thus, the sampling for the first stage was purposive (Burns, 2000). The schools were identified on the basis that specialist classroom music was part of the curriculum, as opposed to selection occurring in recognition of their programs through a merit-based approach. The participants in the first stage of the study were also chosen to provide multiple perspectives about music education in NSW primary schools. The participants included

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6 The research questions are found in Chapter One, pp. 8-9.
teachers and music educators working for organisations responsible for providing professional learning experiences and other services to both generalist and specialist teachers. Specific details of participants are provided in the next section of the chapter.

The sampling for the second stage of cases remained purposive and was more selective, as the inclusion of cases was influenced by the thematic categories that were being discovered through data analysis. As the first phase of semi-structured interviews with teacher participants was conducted in their schools, I was able to explore the feasibility of future intensive case studies in these locations (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). From the first stage interviews, four teacher participants for in-depth case studies were identified for further exploration of the thematic categories of “identity” and “community”. The intensive cases were selected on the basis of the participants’ contrasting career experiences, as well as differences in the geographic locations and socio-economic populations of their school contexts, which meant that the differences between cases were maximised. Three of the participants were selected as they were generalist teachers working in music specialist capacities, which facilitated further investigation of an area identified as a gap in the music education literature. Three of the schools were government schools, as these schools represent the majority of schools in NSW.

Achieving effective purposive sampling proved to be initially problematic, as I had intended to include a teacher from a Catholic systemic school in this phase of the research; however, in the time between the two phases of data collection, the role of this participant had changed considerably and I was unable to observe music lessons in that setting. Similarly, another participant in a rural government school was unable to be the focus of an in-depth case study as the school’s principal elected not to continue with the fledgling music program. Another school that met the criterion of rural geographical location replaced this school; however, the music program was longstanding and the teacher highly experienced. Despite these initial limitations, the requirement for a diverse sample was met during the data collection process as the intended cases could be replaced with those that still provided scope for investigation of the required categories and emerging theories.

In addition to the sampling that occurred during the process of case selection, sampling within cases during the second stage of research was also undertaken. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) refer to time, people and context as the three main dimensions of within case sampling. To establish adequate coverage of observations at different times, I sought to observe teachers for the equivalent of one of their working weeks. This allowed me to see
patterns of behaviour across the course of this period of time and to ensure that the data collection was representative of a range of coverage. Although my observations were primarily focused on the teacher participants in the intensive case studies, I also observed students and elected to make notes about students who met certain criteria of interest to the case. For example, I consciously observed students who appeared to be disengaged during music lessons or those who appeared to exhibit particular proficiency in musical activities. I observed other school personnel, including teachers and learning support assistants, and included entries in field notes about these observations. This sampling through observer-identified categories assisted in the development of analytic ideas. Within-case sampling of contexts occurred as I observed participants in different situations within their school, such as the playground, staffroom and classroom. I chose to view these as places of contrasting social constructions, rather than contrasting locations, to avoid generalisations about behaviour (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

The Participants and Their Contexts

The sampling strategies described above resulted in the selection of participants for the study. This section provides information regarding the participants and the contexts in which they experience their roles as primary music educators, within the broader context of the NSW education system. In order to encapsulate a broad range of experiences within the study, the first stage of data collection involved participants from the three main school systems and those responsible for providing educational resources and/or professional learning experiences for primary music teachers. These cases were purposively selected on the basis of each case’s relevance to the focus of the study, the diversity of contexts and potential to reveal complexity (Stake, 2006). Table 3.1., Table 3.2. and Table 3.3. provide an overview of the primary music teachers who participated in the first stage of data collection and their contexts within each of the major school systems. Information is included about the duration of the specialist music programs; however, due to the longstanding nature of the specialist music programs in the independent school included in the study, I have included information regarding the length of employment of the music teacher participant. In the government schools, the music teacher participant was the inaugural specialist music teacher, unless otherwise indicated.
### Table 3.1.

**Participants from Government Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>School Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel⁷</td>
<td>Highgrove Primary School</td>
<td>Inner West Sydney</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>K-6, metro, high s-e, music program recommenced 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denise</td>
<td>Burumarri Primary School</td>
<td>Far North NSW</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>K-6, provincial, music program commenced 2012, discontinued 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>Evergreen Primary School</td>
<td>North Sydney</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>K-6, metro, Korean &amp; Mandarin community languages, music program commenced 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>Parker Primary School</td>
<td>South West Sydney</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>K-6, metro, support unit, cultural diversity, music program commenced 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kylie</td>
<td>Arlington Primary School</td>
<td>Far North NSW</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>K-6, provincial, mid s-e, music program commenced 2001, band programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Keyburgh Primary School</td>
<td>Inner West Sydney</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>K-6, high s-e, cultural diversity, Louise employed for 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marian</td>
<td>Springtown Primary School</td>
<td>Greater Western NSW</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>K-6, provincial, low s-e, one teacher school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Wandi Primary School</td>
<td>Central Coast</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>K-6, low s-e, support unit, opportunity classes, music program commenced 2006, discontinued 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronika</td>
<td>Undala Primary School</td>
<td>North NSW</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>K-6, provincial, mid to low s-e, stage classes, music program commenced more than 25 years ago</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note* K-6 = Kindergarten to Year 6, metro = metropolitan, s-e = socio-educational advantage,⁸ shading denotes participation in the intensive case studies.

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⁷ Pseudonyms for participants and their schools/organisations have been used throughout the thesis to protect their anonymity.

⁸ The descriptions refer to the *Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)*, which is a calculation based on parental occupation combined with parents’ school and non-school levels of educational attainment (ACARA, 2015).
Table 3.2.

*Participants from Catholic Systemic Schools*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eleanor</td>
<td>Sancta Maria Catholic School</td>
<td>West Sydney</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>P-6, mid s-e, open learning spaces with separate music room, music program and teacher commenced 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willa</td>
<td>St Juliana’s Catholic School</td>
<td>West Sydney</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>P-6, mid s-e, open learning spaces, music program and teacher commenced 1998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note* metro = metropolitan, P-6 = Prekindergarten to Year 6, s-e = socio-educational advantage

Table 3.3.

*Participants from Independent Schools*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Kent School</td>
<td>North West Sydney</td>
<td>1527</td>
<td>P-12, high s-e, metro, boys, P-12, music teacher commenced 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jill</td>
<td>Crowley School</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>1276</td>
<td>P-12, boys, high s-e, music teacher commenced 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin</td>
<td>St Alfred’s College</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>3-12, academically selective, boys, music teacher commenced 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanne</td>
<td>St Clotilde’s School</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>P-12, girls, high s-e, metro, music teacher commenced 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melinda</td>
<td>United Academy</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>P-12, high s-e, bilingual program, coed, music teacher commenced 2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note* P-12 = Prekindergarten to Year 12, metro = metropolitan, s-e = socio-educational advantage, shading denotes participation in the intensive case studies.

In addition to the teacher participants, three providers of professional learning and/or educational resources were included in this stage of the study. These participants were selected to provide multiple perspectives on the initial research questions. Table 3.4. provides details of these participants.
Table 3.4.

*Professional Learning/Educational Resource Providers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role of Organisation</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angela</td>
<td>Provides professional learning experiences, live music performances in school settings and educational resources</td>
<td>Sydney CBD office, throughout NSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy</td>
<td>Provides professional learning experiences, live music performances and educational resources</td>
<td>Sydney CBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Provides a program of sequential professional learning experiences</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the semi-structured interviews, four participants were selected to be the focus of intensive case studies conducted within their school contexts to facilitate the generation of theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), according to the sampling procedures described above. Three of the schools were government schools, as these schools represent the majority of schools in NSW. During the intensive case studies, I interviewed three of the principals of these four schools (Table 3.5.).

Table 3.5.

*Principals Interviewed in the Second Stage of the Research*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Commenced as Principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Undala Primary School</td>
<td>5 years prior to case study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justine</td>
<td>Parker Primary School</td>
<td>7.5 year prior to case study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally</td>
<td>St Clotilde’s School</td>
<td>2.5 years prior to case study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A brief description of each music teacher participant who was included in the second stage of the study is included below, and these descriptions will be elaborated in Chapter Six.

**Kelly.**

Parker Primary School is situated in a culturally diverse suburban area of Sydney. The majority of the school’s population meet criteria placing them in the middle of the Index

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9 The principal of Wandi Primary School was unable to be interviewed during the time I was at the school and as the music program was discontinued not long after this, I did not return to the school.
of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA). Kelly graduated thirty years ago with a Diploma of Teaching that focused on general primary education. In addition, she has a Certificate of Music Technical Production. Kelly began her career in primary schools as a general classroom teacher, before teaching secondary school music for nine years. She was initially appointed as a classroom teacher at Parker Primary School six years prior to the case study, although the principal had originally employed her due to her musical background. In 2006, she was appointed as a specialist music teacher to provide music lessons as part of the Relief from Face to Face Teaching (RFF) program at Parker Primary School, in which teachers are given regularly scheduled time for administration while another teacher is with the class. In recognition of the music program, the school received a significant funded award. The school’s cultural diversity, its location in suburban Sydney and the inclusion of a support class for children with additional needs provides contrast to other cases.

Rebecca.

Wandi Primary School is located on coastal NSW, one hour’s drive from the nearest large city. Two-thirds of the school’s population meet criteria placing them in the lowest quarter of the ICSEA, and the school is situated in an area of extensive public housing. Rebecca completed a Graduate Diploma in Music thirty years ago. Following graduation, she taught in high schools and worked in several independent schools as a peripatetic instrumental teacher. As an accomplished viola player, she was previously employed on a casual basis by an internationally acclaimed professional orchestra. She commenced teaching at Wandi Primary School four years prior to the case study and initially was employed one day per week as part of a specific program designed to provide music education experiences to schools. The following year, she moved to a 0.8 teaching load as a member of staff at the school. This case was selected due to the school’s geographic location and the provision for gifted students and those requiring educational support due to specific criteria of disability. Rebecca’s prior experience as a performing musician also contrasted with that of other participants. Several months after the conclusion of the case study, the specialist music RFF program was discontinued.

Veronika.

Undala Primary School is located in regional, northern NSW and is located approximately 15 kilometres from the nearest large town and one hour’s drive from the nearest city. The majority of the school’s population meets criteria placing them in the middle and lower quarters of the ICSEA. The students are grouped in four classes: three are
composite classes consisting of students from adjacent year groups, and one is a kindergarten class. Veronika has a Bachelor of Education in primary education and is also qualified as a language teacher. She had worked in the school for approximately 26 years and teaches music two days per week. Veronika also taught music three days per week at another school in the nearest large town and has worked extensively as a casual teacher. The principal had been working at the school for five years, having arrived at the school following a period of time during which the enrolment numbers fell significantly due to economic factors in the region. This case provides contrast due to the rural location and small size of the school, the longevity of the music program and contrasting socio-educational status of the school context.

Joanne.

St Clotilde’s School is an independent girls’ school in Sydney that provides education for students from Kindergarten through to Year 12. The majority of the school’s population are placed in the highest quarter of the ICSEA. Joanne was employed full-time as a music teacher and initially qualified as a general primary teacher in the late 1960s in another country. In the mid-1990s, Joanne elected to retrain as a music specialist teacher, a role that she had fulfilled for several years. Having worked in Department of Education schools as a music teacher over a twenty-year period, she moved to St Clotilde’s School and this was the first independent school in which Joanne had taught. The school has a music department; however, Joanne was the only classroom music teacher in the primary section of the school. The classroom music program was supplemented by instrumental lessons taught by peripatetic teachers. Joanne’s experience in different school systems, involvement in external music education networks and background in musical theatre contrasts with the other participants. The structure of the music program and inclusion of an instrumental component as well as the single sex environment and independent status of the school also provide a contrast with the other cases. The thirteen-year span of schooling also provided by the school contrasts with the other case contexts.

Data Collection

Experiencing activity as it occurs within situations and contexts assists in developing qualitative understanding of a case (Stake, 2006) so the data collection throughout the study was situated in the participant’s school or workplace, with the exception of three interviews that were conducted on the telephone due to the geographic location and availability of the participants. This section identifies the specific, qualitative methods used to obtain data throughout the study, over a period of four years. As was explained earlier in the chapter, the
first stage of data collection consisted of a series of semi-structured interviews with music teachers and music educators working with organisations responsible for the provision of resources or professional learning experiences. The purpose of these interviews was to clarify the issues and develop the categories that would provide a framework for further intensive investigation. The second stage of the study consisted of four intensive case studies, in which data were collected through interviews, document analysis and observations.

**Interviews.**

Oral accounts are a significant source of qualitative data, whether they are solicited by the researcher through participant observation, clearly defined interview circumstances or occur spontaneously (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Rather than the researcher being concerned with what is truth in the interview, these descriptions offer opportunities to examine accounts “as social phenomena, occurring in, and shaped by, particular contexts” (p. 120). Interviews are a meaningful data-gathering method to explore activities in the social world that occurred when the researcher was not present (Hammersley, 2006; Stake, 2006) and can also assist in capturing the multiple realities of a situation and developing the interpretation of events (Bresler & Stake, 2006). I used interviews as a source of data collection in both stages of the research and the purpose of the interviews conducted in the first stage was to gather data that could be analysed through open coding (discussed later in the chapter) to identify the key areas for further, intensive investigation in subsequent intensive case studies.

**First stage.**

Developing a rapport with participants was critical to the success of the interviews in the first stage of the research and creating the trusting relationships necessary for participants to agree to be the subject of further investigation. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), participants will attempt to situate the ethnographer within the social context defined by their experience and establishing a rapport may be assisted when the participant is initially able to attribute a shared identity to the researcher. Developing a rapport with participants in the first stage of the research began during the process of negotiating their participation in the study. When contacting them initially, I identified myself as a part-time PhD student who was also working in a primary school, as I perceived that this would assist in establishing a shared identity as a teacher. On meeting participants, I answered questions about my background and teaching experience as needed to establish trust; however, I was careful to avoid portraying myself as an “expert” who was critiquing the music program or their
teaching. When establishing rapport with professional learning consultants, I was able to
draw from my experiences in school executive roles. Prior to entering the field, I considered
the influence that dressing in a similar way to those being studied may have in the initial
period of gaining trust (Fetterman, 2010; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). As the interviews
were conducted on a one-to-one basis, usually within the participant’s teaching space, I was
sensitive to the cultural norms of the context by dressing in a similar manner to the
requirements of the school in which the interview took place.

The semi-structured interviews were designed to permit the interviewee to elaborate
on information that he or she considered important (Bresler & Stake, 2006) and allowed for
exploration of ideas specific to certain cases (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The questions
were a combination of open-ended and theoretical questions that situated the data in the
context of the interviewee and the existing issues being investigated (Galletta, 2013). The
interview questions focused on the issues that were identified from a review of the music
education literature regarding primary music specialist teachers (see Appendix A for the
interview questions asked of teachers and Appendix B for interview questions asked of
professional development providers). While these interview topics and questions had been
prepared beforehand, the interviews were conducted reflexively, as the participants were not
necessarily asked precisely the same questions, nor were the topics covered in a fixed
sequence (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This required me to listen actively to the
participants and to engage in the non-directive or directive questioning required to ensure the
progression of each interview. Enabling the discussion to dwell on areas of particular interest
to the participants further facilitated the establishment of a trusting relationship as it
acknowledged my interest in the participants’ unique experiences in their schools. The
interviews ranged in duration from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Although the majority of these interviews were conducted face-to-face, three were
conducted with teacher participants by telephone. This form of communication may be seen
as conflicting with the general principle of personal and participatory research (Wolcott,
2008); however, it can be valuable in providing access to participants who could not
otherwise be interviewed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). For the purpose of this research,
the telephone interviews enabled data collection from participants in remote locations. I was
mindful of the difficulties in telephone interviewing, including the absence of visual cues
provided by the participant, the removal of contextual data regarding the participant’s location
and the possible reduction of rapport and in-depth discussion (Novick, 2008). To
compensate, I ensured adequate time was given for the telephone interviews so that participants had ample time to respond to any further questions required and I invited the participants to describe their schools’ physical characteristics in a more detailed fashion than occurred during face-to-face interviews.

The semi-structured interviews undertaken in the first stage of the study were audio-recorded for further reference, as this provided a more extensive record of the interviews than could be captured in field notes and assisted in helping the conversation flow naturally (Fetterman, 2010). The digital voice recording was only done with consent (Fetterman, 2010). The use of digital voice recording allowed me to listen to interviews multiple times and gather lengthy quotes for analysis. Following each interview, I made brief notes regarding other social processes, such as non-verbal behaviour, that could not be captured via audio-recording (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

**Second stage.**

As well as the semi-structured interviews that occurred in the first stage of the research, I informally interviewed the four participants in intensive case studies after observing their teaching. Whereas the semi-structured interviews in the first stage of the project were broadly guided by prepared questions, these interviews were informally constructed in response to observations and the topics for discussion varied for each participant, which enabled me to seek clarification where necessary and expand on points of interest (Galletta, 2013). Each participant was interviewed for approximately 30 minutes on each day that fieldwork was undertaken, in most instances leading to approximately 2 to 3 hours of additional interview data from each participant. Data were also collected through incidental conversations with participants during the course of the time spent with them in the field (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). These data, and the data collected through the informal interviews that took place in the second stage of the study, were described extensively in field notes for later analysis.

During the intensive case studies, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with three of the principals in the focus schools (Appendix C). These interviews were also audio-recorded to assist with the process of open coding, with the exception of one participant who did not consent to audio recording. In this instance, copious notes were taken during the interview. Although questions were prepared prior to the interviews, the interviews were guided by the participants, as they focused on interactions between the principal and music teacher.
Despite the importance of insider accounts offered through interviews, the data collection was not limited to this format, as Marsh (2009) states that becoming overly dependent on insider accounts may hinder the generation of thick description through the development of unhelpful preconceptions. Thus, the data collected through semi-structured interviews were balanced with data collected through observations and document analysis.

**Participant observation.**

Observation allows a researcher to develop greater understanding of a case when the setting is pertinent to the issues or phenomenon investigated (Stake, 2006). Through direct observation in the second stage of the research, I viewed the participants in their teaching contexts, exploring their interactions with students and other members of their school communities. This resulted in the comparison of inferences drawn from interview data with observational data (Hammersley, 2006). An overview of the period of observation and the number of classes and co-curricular groups observed is provided in Table 3.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Fieldwork Period</th>
<th>No. of Classes Observed</th>
<th>No. of Co-curricular Activities Observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joanne</td>
<td>St Clotilde’s School</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>Parker Primary School</td>
<td>4.5 days</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Wandi Primary School</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronika</td>
<td>Undala Primary School</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participant observation enables first-hand experience in the lives of the participants (O'Reilly, 2009). Participant observation presents a dichotomy regarding the extent to which the researcher participates in the community, as opposed to undertaking the role of an objective observer. Gold (1958) proposed four conceptions of participant observation that are frequently referred to in ethnographic literature (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Brewer, 2000; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; O'Reilly, 2009): the complete participant, participant as observer, observer as participant, and complete observer. This model presents a continuum from covert research through to objective observer who does not participate in the community at all. The danger in assuming the role of objective observer is the reliance on inference of
what is being observed, combined with the researcher’s background knowledge, without being able to check inferences against questions asked of participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Likewise, the role of complete participant may be problematic as “the task of analysis may be abandoned in favour of the joys of participation” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 87) and the researcher may become overly familiar with participants, leading to an element of bias.

There is some fluidity between participant as observer and observer as participant and I took on these roles within the intensive case studies to maintain marginality. My participation in the community was through interaction with the music teachers and other members of the school community. At times, I limited my participation, such as when observing lessons, as explained in the section on field notes. As the presence of a researcher may influence the actions of the participants (Krueger, 2014), I observed classes from an inconspicuous place in the classroom and did not participate in any activities. Additionally, I elected not to video record the fieldwork, due to the possible intrusive nature of video recording within a school context and the possibility that the presence of a video recorder could influence the ordinary activity taking place (Bresler & Stake, 2006).

I used the fieldwork to observe all facets of the participants’ school experiences, including formal classroom music lessons and co-curricular activities as well as the other tasks such as playground supervision and conversations with colleagues. These activities were recorded extensively in field notes.

Field notes.

Throughout the in-depth case studies, I took elaborate field notes describing my observations to provide what Stake (1995) describes as “incontestable description for further analysis and ultimate reporting” (p. 62). I did not limit field notes to observations of lessons, but instead I elected to document all facets of the fieldwork, including conversations and observations, including those relating to the general school life of the participants outside the classroom. The field notes consisted of detailed descriptions of activities and the settings and also lists of resources and sketches of room layouts in order to later explore meaning in relation to the physical space if necessitated (Stake, 2006). Detailed descriptions of participants and settings were vital for gleaning further insights during subsequent analysis (Krueger, 2014). Despite this, it must be noted that field notes are by nature selective, as the researcher records only what seems significant at the time (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2007).

Field notes may be used purely for the purpose of noting observations, or may include
the observer’s reflections and questions (Emerson et al., 2007). I elected to do the latter instead of keeping a journal separately to the field notes, as this assisted in identifying areas and questions for further clarification with participants during informal interviews that followed periods of observation.

Initially, I had intended not to take notes directly during observations of music lessons, in order to avoid deflecting my attention from the actions taking place and/or creating a sense of unease for the participant, as discussed by Emerson et al. (2007). At times, these notes could be taken inconspicuously in the field; however, other notes were recorded later when not in the presence of the participants. While I had not intended to overtly take notes during music classes out of concern for the way in which this may change the teacher’s behaviour, at times, I had to balance the impact of note taking in front of the teacher compared with that of the students. Sometimes students actively tried to gain my attention and taking notes reduced this, as it appeared that I was busy and not paying attention. This seemed to refocus their attention on the lesson in which they were participating. Some participants had clearly expected that I would take notes and had provided a desk for this purpose. This may reflect the expectation of teachers who are used to being observed or observing others, for example, when interacting with student teachers completing a practicum. In these situations, I was mindful of the perception of the participant and the potential interpretation that not taking notes may mean I was not valuing the experience. Thus the process of taking notes was shaped by my relationships within the setting and awareness of the participants (Emerson et al., 2007).

**Documentary sources.**

In addition to the observations I recorded in field notes during the second phase of data collection, I analysed documents such as timetables and teaching programs, as they had the potential to reveal information about school administration and the school community (Fetterman, 2010). Coffey (2013) refers to documents as “versions of reality, scripted according to various kinds of convention, with a particular purpose in mind” (p. 369). Access to documents was sometimes limited due to variations in the requirements for maintaining written records, such as teaching programs. For example, Joanne was required to maintain a comprehensive written program whereas Kelly was not. I was able to compare the participants’ timetables, as these were available in all four sites. Data were also collected from school websites and other publicly available information regarding the schools’ music programs and communities, such as articles in school newsletters or materials displayed in
administration areas.

**Data Analysis**

In this section, I describe the thematic analysis used to analyse the data collected through semi-structured interviews, observations and document sources. Thematic analysis methods were used in this study to facilitate the development of a picture of the whole setting and the study of the social processes at work. Thematic analysis emphasises the identification and description of ideas within the data, and is closely linked to grounded theory, although, the distinction between grounded theory and thematic analysis is that the result of thematic analysis may or may not be a theoretical model (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). The primary goal of thematic analysis is to present the experiences of the participants accurately and comprehensively (Guest et al., 2012), while achieving rigorous analysis instead of simply reporting experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As Boyatzis (1998) writes, a theme is “a pattern in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon” (p. 161). Thematic analysis can be used with various forms of qualitative data, such as interviews and qualitative field notes (Guest et al., 2012), and was therefore an applicable tool in analysing the data collected in this study.

Rather than viewing thematic analysis as a set of specific procedures that must be followed, I adopted a flexible approach that reflected key tenets of the method. A key feature of grounded theory is that data collection and analysis occur simultaneously (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2007). Data analysis in a case study design is an ongoing process that has no set starting point, as analysis simply refers to the giving of meaning to our impressions and observations (Stake, 1995). Thematic analysis and grounded theory are both concerned with the process of developing codes from data to represent possible themes or concepts (Ezzy, 2002b; Guest et al., 2012). With this in mind, literature pertaining to the process of grounded theorising was beneficial in approaching the analysis of data and is included in this chapter.

The first step of analysis involved linking codes to specific data sets, which was undertaken in two main stages (Appendix D). The initial stage of open coding requires the researcher to critically examine the data by questioning what is being studied, the category indicated by an incident, what is really happening in the data, the main concern faced by the participants and the continual resolving of this concern (Glaser, 1998). To generate themes from the data, an open coding approach was initially used to analyse the semi-structured interviews undertaken in the first stage of research (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). As I listened to...
the audio-recorded interviews, I assigned initial codes to data that were subsequently identified and reassigned as the data were revisited. As it was not necessary to fully transcribe the interviews in the manner required for discourse analysis (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007), I used a similar approach to line-by-line coding of the partially transcribed interviews to ensure that the coding remained close to the data (Glaser, 1978). These codes were not prepared beforehand, but were developed from the data (Charmaz, 2014; Glaser, 1978) as thematic analysis is inductive in nature and does not use predetermined categories (Ezzy, 2002b). However, it must be noted that I chose to avoid what Ezzy (2002b) describes as “simplistic inductive theory building” (p. 11). Instead, prior to data collection, I developed a preliminary literature review regarding specialist music teacher experiences. The coding involved a careful interplay between inductive and deductive methods, as “codes do not emerge from the data as uninfluenced by preexisting theory” (Ezzy, 2002b, p. 93). Instead, I was conscious not to force the data into preexisting categories of knowledge. Although the open codes were influence by music education literature, symbolic interactionism also provided a theoretical lens through which to frame the data. As I was concerned with examining the underlying ideas and conceptualisations found in the data, I elected to develop latent codes, as opposed to coding based on the semantic content of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By using latent codes, I interrogated the data beyond explicit meanings to identify underlying assumptions, meanings and conceptualisations.

Open coding enabled me to determine the direction in which to take the study through theoretical sampling in the second stage of the research before beginning to focus on the particular themes of learning communities and teacher identities (Glaser & Holton, 2007). Small segments of data were coded line-by-line (Charmaz, 2014). During constant comparative coding, the views and experiences of people were compared for similarities and differences, as well as the comparison of data from the same people at different points in time so that data could be grouped and differentiated (Charmaz, 2013; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Ezzy, 2002a).

In the second stage of the research, field notes, interviews and documentary sources were also subject to open coding to check the validity of the selective codes. Whereas a line-by-line approach was used to analyse interviews in order to remain close to the data (Glaser, 1978), I elected to use whole scenarios when coding observations documented in field notes as line-by-line coding may impose conceptual limits because the data is decontextualised (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2007). In analysing documentary sources, consideration was given to
their content, form and function (Coffey, 2013). School websites and promotional material are intended for a different audience from that of a teacher’s program. Similarly, a written program of work may be intended as a working document for a teacher or a document to meet compliance regulations at a school or government level. The audience and purpose of the documents were considered in analysing their function on everyday life within the context and the data were constantly compared to data of the same categories collected through observations and interviews.

The second stage of coding involved the application of selective codes that were more focused and conceptual than the initial coding stage (Glaser, 1978). From the initial codes, selective codes were chosen to facilitate the development of the conceptual categories such as “communities” and “identities” that were identified in the data. These formed the core categories to which subsequent categories were then related. Selective coding was not begun until a substantial amount of data were collected (Charmaz and Mitchell, 2007), which also ensured that complex data was not reduced to simple concepts early in the process (Stake, 2006). According to Charmaz (2014), the most significant or high frequency codes are used; however, they must be tested before being applied. The codes were frequently revisited during analysis of field notes based on observations and subsequent interviews and analysis of documentary evidence to ensure that the themes were those represented in the data. The selective codes also facilitated the synthesis of data sets both within cases and between cases, as the uniqueness of individual cases needed to be preserved while still drawing cross-case conclusions (Bresler & Stake, 2006). The development of selective codes enabled theoretical sampling to occur in the stage of intensive case studies and assisted with the development of thematic categories. These selective codes reflect the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism and provided the lens through which data collected during the intensive phase of case studies were analysed.

When the data corpus was coded, I began to search for themes, which involved analysing the codes and considering the overarching themes that could be developed from the combinations of codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I identified in the data the major themes of the development of music teacher identities and contrasting experiences of community participation. Figure 3.1. provides a graphic representation of these main themes and associated subthemes.
It is acknowledged that the identification of themes involves some degree of subjectivity on the researcher’s part. I have sought to enhance the reliability of these judgments for the reader by clearly and explicitly explaining the method used to identify the themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

**Establishing the Trustworthiness of the Research**

Roulston and Shelton (2015) state that subjectivity in research can be understood through the researcher’s theoretical assumptions, the implications of the theoretical paradigm and the design of the study, which may alleviate perceptions of bias. I have therefore sought to enhance the trustworthiness of the study by providing a detailed description, its theoretical framework and design, the data analysis methods employed, and by stating information that may give insight into any subjectivity. Further to the discussion of reflexivity in the section on qualitative methodology, the reflexivity of the researcher is critical in establishing credibility and quality in qualitative research, in order to address any bias (Patton, 2014); however, it must be noted that, in the context of qualitative research, bias is not necessarily viewed as an error and is not able to be eliminated (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). This section examines the processes used to enhance the quality and trustworthiness of the research.

In addition to reflexivity, establishing the credibility, or accuracy, of research can be achieved through the triangulation of data (Bresler & Stake, 2006). The sampling procedures used enabled data to be gathered from a variety of people in contrasting social situations and at different times (Denzin, 1970). This occurred through the comparison of data relating to the same concepts that were collected at different times during the fieldwork and through the different accounts of participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). For example, data collected in the semi-structured interviews undertaken in the first stage of the research were compared with data collected later in time during the intensive case studies. Cross-case analysis also led to the triangulation of data collected in different spaces, or school contexts.
This process of validation occurred throughout the fieldwork and analysis, through checking whether new knowledge was consistent with what was already known about the phenomenon and the case (Stake, 2006) and the intention of this was to ensure that the correct interpretations of information had been obtained. Furthermore, the triangulation allowed me to discover the validity of inferences drawn from the data (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Methodological triangulation involves the use of more than one method of data collection (Denzin, 1970). While Patton (2014) identifies the collection of high quality data through fieldwork as a facet that enhances the credibility of qualitative inquiry, checking data against multiple methods and routines is standard in qualitative research and assists readers of research to identify subjectivity and draw their own interpretations (Bresler & Stake, 2006). Triangulation through comparison and cross-referencing of interviews, observations and other materials was critical to ensuring the credibility and validity of this research (Krueger, 2014). The use of multiple data collection methods within each case ensured that triangulation was possible and provided assurance that cases were not oversimplified (Stake, 2006). To achieve this, I compared the data collected through interviews, participant observation and documentary sources, which enabled me to check any interpretations and inferences by comparing and contrasting the data collected through different data collection methods (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Trustworthiness of research is also assisted by the applicability of the findings to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) view this as a form of establishing external validity by describing the findings in significant detail in order to allow the readers to determine the extent conclusions may be transferred to other settings. This may be achieved through the use of thick description whereby behaviours and contexts are described in a way that provides meaning to the outsider (Geertz, 1973). In response to this, I have incorporated the use of thick description and have sought to present claims in a manner that is “sufficiently explicit for the reader to be able to evaluate them” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 206).

**Ethical Considerations**

This section outlines the procedures and principles that were put into practice to ensure that the rights and interests of participants were respected and to protect them from harm (Murphy & Dingwall, 2007). In order to conduct the research, ethics approval was sought and granted by the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (Appendix E), the relevant ethics committees of the Department of Education (Appendix F).
and diocesan branches of the Catholic Education Office (Appendix G). Approval to conduct the research was granted on the basis that ethical considerations had been satisfactorily addressed.

In the case of teacher participants, permission to gain access to fieldwork settings was negotiated and granted by individual school principals (Appendix H). The principals were considered gatekeepers to the field, as they determined the initial agreement of access and the relationship for emergent needs of access (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Once permission had been granted to conduct research in a school, informed consent was obtained from each teacher participant (see Appendix I for information statements and consent obtained in the first stage of the research, and Appendix J for those obtained in the second stage). Similarly, informed consent was obtained from the professional learning providers who were interviewed in the first stage of the research (Appendix I) and the principals who were interviewed during the intensive case studies (Appendix K). Participants were able to opt out of the study at any time, although this did not occur. Those included in the study on the basis of their provision of professional learning experiences were approached individually and were also able to opt out of the study at any point.

During the second phase of the research, informed consent was obtained from parents and guardians of the students who were being observed in the school setting (Appendix L), as children being observed in a classroom setting can be considered a vulnerable population (Birk & Schindledecker, 2014). This research was undertaken in an overt manner and I was known as the researcher to all teacher participants and their school communities (O'Reilly, 2011).

Ethical consideration for the needs of the participants was given through the research process. In addition to following ethical protocols, positive ethical values were maintained due to the mutual trust in which the researcher and participant must engage during fieldwork (Atkinson, 2009). An ethical consideration in research is the harm that may be done to participants during the research process or publication of the findings (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). To avoid data being attributed to individuals or places, the identities of participants were kept confidential and pseudonyms were used throughout the thesis (O'Reilly, 2011).

In developing thick description during writing, the needs of the participants were considered, as Marsh (2009) refers to the importance of tact when writing and cautions against revealing that which may have been disclosed unguardedly. In some instances,
participants inadvertently disclosed information that could potentially harm their future interactions with co-workers who were aware of their participation in the study. I used my discretion as to whether to include such information, making decisions with regard to the need to avoid causing harm to participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Summary

This chapter has explored the philosophical principles that influenced the selection of the qualitative methodology chosen for the study. My methodology was determined by the ontological and epistemological assumptions regarding the multiple realities of teachers’ experiences, as constructed within their social worlds. This led to the adoption of a methodology that facilitated a personal means of data collection whereby the social worlds of the participants could be explored. The philosophical principles extended to the multicase design of the study, through which participants were able to elaborate on areas of personal significance in the first stage of semi-structured interviews, and the foci of intensive case studies were observed in their school settings.

Throughout the research process, I generated a large volume of data and the process of coding, with its connection to grounded theory, proved to be an effective way to discover themes within data from multiple sources. Although this was primarily conducted inductively, familiarity with literature pertaining to the research area was beneficial in illuminating aspects of the data during the coding process.

The next chapter is the first of four containing the analysis of the data collected during the study. It identifies and elaborates on the themes that were discovered in the data regarding the participants’ contrasting music teacher role identities.
Chapter Four
Formation of Role Identities

This is the first of four chapters that presents the analysis of data that investigated the experiences of primary music specialist teachers in NSW. The findings are presented in relation to the two distinct stages of the study. This chapter and Chapter Five that follows contain analysis of the data collected through the semi-structured interviews conducted in the first stage of the study with 16 specialist music teachers and three professional learning providers. The rationale for inclusion of these participants was discussed in the methodology chapter. Both chapters introduce the themes of role identity and community that were discovered through analysis of the first-stage data. These themes were subsequently investigated through the intensive case studies undertaken in the second phase of research, and are presented in Chapters Six and Seven. As Chapters Six and Seven are exclusively devoted to investigation of the experiences of Joanne (St Clotilde’s School), Kelly (Parker Primary School), Rebecca (Wandi Primary School) and Veronika (Undala Primary School), data collected from these participants are generally omitted from Chapters Four and Five.

Chapter Four explores the various conceptions of the participants’ role identities and the influence of these on their personal interpretations of primary music teacher role identities, as manifested through teaching behaviours and interactions. The chapter begins with an analysis of the dynamic trajectory of music teacher identity development experienced by the participants, in keeping with the notion of trajectory referred to by Beijaard et al. (2004) in their analysis of literature exploring professional teacher identities. As was stated in the Literature Review, the definition of identity within the literature varies, as identity can be conceived as constructed of multiple sub-identities, or the multiple identities held by an individual (Grootenboer, Smith, & Lowrie, 2006). Although this issue is important, it is not the central focus of this study and I have elected to refer to a broad identity of a primary music specialist teacher that is constructed of multiple sub-identities. The different sub-identities, or categorisations of identity, within the primary specialist music teacher identity are discussed, with reference to changes in hierarchies of prominence (McCall & Simmons, 1978) and salience hierarchies (Stryker, 1980).

The second section of the chapter, entitled Conceptions of Music Teacher Roles, examines the participants’ personal interpretations of their roles. Through the participants’

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10 Refer to Tables 3.1., 3.2., 3.3. and 3.4. for information regarding each participant (pp. 48-50).
descriptions of musical experiences and classroom practices, aspects of primary music teacher identity that may be considered conventional are identified. Similarly, specific music education teaching approaches or methods that form the basis of participants’ pedagogies are discussed in light of the factors that led participants to select these music education methods that may be embodied in role identity.

**Becoming Primary Music Specialist Teachers**

The nature of professional identity formation as a dynamic, rather than stable, process is included by Beijaard et al. (2004) as an aspect of identity formation. This section examines the process of identity formation, beginning with the tertiary training of participants, which was associated with various role expectations due to the vocational nature of the courses studied. Following this, the changes in hierarchies of prominence of sub-identities that contributed to the trajectory of role formation are discussed.

**Music Teachers**

Twelve of the sixteen teacher participants undertook tertiary studies in music education (Table 4.1.). For Joanne (St Clotilde’s School) and Eleanor (Sancta Maria Catholic School), this was in the form of a postgraduate diploma specifically designed to focus on primary music education. Similarly, James (Kent School) completed a degree that qualified him to teach primary music in a specialist capacity, although his degree also enabled him to work as a generalist primary teacher. Of these twelve, nine teacher participants underwent tertiary training that enabled them to be music teachers in secondary school contexts.
Table 4.1.

Music Qualifications of Teacher Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Year Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Diploma of Music Education</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor of Music Education (conversion)</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleanor</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma Primary Music</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education (Music)</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jill</td>
<td>Bachelor of Arts</td>
<td>1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma of Education (Music)</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanne</td>
<td>Graduate Diploma Primary Music</td>
<td>1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin</td>
<td>Bachelor of Music Education</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Associate Diploma Jazz Studies</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>Bachelor of Music Education</td>
<td>1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kylie</td>
<td>Bachelor of Contemporary Music</td>
<td>1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate Diploma of Education</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Bachelor of Music Education</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melinda</td>
<td>Bachelor of Music Education</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Diploma Music Education</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willa</td>
<td>Bachelor of Music Education</td>
<td>1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master of Music Education</td>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Secondary music to primary music.

The teachers who completed tertiary studies in secondary music education experienced shifts in their hierarchies of prominence within their music teacher identities as the gradually assumed roles in primary schools. Hierarchies of prominence are determined by personal investment in the aspect of identity, the degree of self-belief in imagined qualities and performance, and the provision of external role support (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Generally, the participants who underwent Bachelor of Music Education courses stated that their tertiary studies contained a primary music education component; however, the courses focused on preparing preservice teachers to teach syllabus content from Years 7 to 12. Through the semi-structured interviews, three factors emerged that contributed to the shift from secondary music teachers to that of primary music specialists: the availability of
employment opportunities; dissatisfaction with teaching experiences in secondary school contexts; and the participants’ personal family circumstances.

**Employment opportunities.**

Louise (Keyburgh Primary School) and Melinda (United Academy) studied secondary music education in conservatorium environments; however, both were employed upon graduation in primary music specialist capacities. For both teacher participants, the decision to accept primary music education roles was not related to a specific desire to teach primary music but was in response to the available employment opportunities.

Louise largely perceived her tertiary studies as an intended training ground for secondary music teachers, saying, “In terms of resources and that sort of thing I felt there was a real emphasis on the high school, which is obvious because that’s where more people end up” (interview, May 17, 2011). Louise’s identity as a performing musician was prominent in her hierarchy of identity and, following graduation, she sought a part-time teaching position that would allow her the flexibility to pursue further experiences and study in viola performance (as discussed later in this section of the chapter). She described her appointment in a two-day per week capacity at Keyburgh Primary School as almost accidental:

> It [the position] wasn’t advertised. I had recently moved house and had finished my course so I was looking to get some casual teaching experience while I was looking at what I wanted to do and whether I pursued the performing or go into the teaching. I sent out a series of resumes to every school within a five-kilometre radius, so I did all the primary and high schools to be added to the casual list. I had quite a lot of schools wanting to add me. I had a call from Keyburgh saying the music teacher had unexpectedly not come back, and could I come in and have a chat? It seemed like they just wanted some advice. When I turned up it didn’t seem to be an actual interview but at the end she asked if I could start tomorrow. It was a real shock! (Louise, interview, May 17, 2011)

Louise was responsible for teaching classroom music lessons and she also assisted the school’s string peripatetic tutor when needed. Prior to the conclusion of the school year, Louise chose to resign, citing the demanding nature of the role and her desire to pursue further instrumental performance opportunities as the main reasons. Nonetheless, she believed she would eventually teach classroom music again and her experiences at Keyburgh Primary School had contributed to the prominence of a primary music teaching identity, rather than a secondary music teacher identity, when she imagined the teacher she would like to be in the future. Louise said, “I really don’t want to go back to high school teaching because you have the enthusiasm with these primary kids” (interview, May 17, 2011). This prominence suggested that, within her music teacher identity, the primary categorisation was
salient, that is, more likely to be enacted in the future (Stryker, 1980).

Similarly to Louise’s experience of employment due to available opportunities, Melinda’s first appointment as a music teacher was in the primary department of a Catholic Kindergarten to Year 12 school. She remained at this school for a period of twelve months before relocating to another capital city where she was employed by a university to provide a music program to primary schools. Upon returning to Sydney, she taught music in both primary and secondary environments before her appointment at United Academy, where the staff “were just given a load that spanned from preschool to Year 12” (Melinda, interview, May 25, 2011). This was indicative of the school’s timetabling of music classes and all members of the music department were expected to teach primary and secondary music education. At the time of the interview, Melinda revealed that some consideration was being given to dividing the music faculty into primary and secondary music specialists. Although she was not overly concerned with this possibility, she preferred being able to teach both, saying:

I think it’s quite unique to be able to teach across the years, firstly for your own musicianship so that you’re not stuck into sol-mi-re-do. I would be more than happy to do primary but I would miss the academic challenge of secondary. You can talk on a different level with high school students. (Interview, May 25, 2011)

These statements suggested that Melinda had harmoniously balanced the primary and secondary aspects of her music teacher identity. Due to the structure of the music department, it is conceivable that these two elements had become so intertwined in this context that they were viewed as one role identity, or two closely connected elements within the core of Melinda’s music teacher role identity.

The availability of employment after Kate (Evergreen Primary School) became a parent also influenced her ongoing professional identity, as it was following the birth of her eldest child that she first gained the opportunity to teach primary school music.

When my eldest son was born, I looked around for something I could do while the baby was still little and I wrote to a number of the surrounding schools. The little Catholic school that I lived near rang back straight away and said “Can you prepare them for mass, can you take the choir for the festival, can you train the teachers in the school to teach music?” and I thought “yes!” It grew into that because initially I’d just said that wanted to teach piano. (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010)

Despite the lack of confidence experienced when teaching secondary music (discussed below in the sub-section of the chapter entitled Dissatisfaction), Kate’s willingness to take on the requested role may have been due to the nature of the role described by the school and her
acknowledgment that she could fulfill the responsibilities outline in the excerpt above. Her success in achieving these functions provided further support for the emergence of her primary music teacher identity. Additionally, the school’s willingness to incrementally develop the music program when her son was a baby assisted in creating balance between her personal identity as a mother and her professional identity as a teacher, enabling Kate to assume extra responsibilities as she was able.

**Dissatisfaction.**

For three of the secondary-trained teacher participants, the development of a primary music specialist role identity could be partly attributed to a sense of dissatisfaction, or unease, experienced during their initial period of teaching music in secondary school contexts. Although this did not appear to directly lead these participants to actively seek employment in primary schools, it did seem to contribute to their desire to remain engaged in primary education, rather than return to secondary music teaching.

Kylie (Arlington Primary School) taught as a secondary school music teacher for a period of three years before relocating to Queensland due to her husband’s employment. On returning to NSW, she began working in the local primary school. Although Kylie described her move into primary teaching as unintentional, stating, “I kind of stumbled into what I’m doing now” (Kylie, interview, August 5, 2011), she was also dissatisfied with her experiences in teaching secondary music, which contributed to her willingness to teach in a primary school. In discussing her experience as a secondary music teacher, Kylie said, “I would have stayed if I could have just taught Year 9 to 12 but it was painful teaching children who didn’t want to be there” (interview, August 5, 2011). This suggested that Kylie did not receive extrinsic or intrinsic gratification through acting in this role, leading to a lack of commitment or investment in the role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978).

Similarly, Kate (Evergreen Primary School) had experienced frustration when teaching secondary school students for a period of eighteen months after her graduation from university:

I had a pretty rough experience in high schools and that was not very good at all. Being much younger then, I felt I was hitting my head against a brick wall trying to teach high school students. (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010)

In contrast, her experience of teaching primary school students was more positive, which she expressed by saying “These primary kids, they’d stand on their heads for you, they were just so lovely and I thought this is where I want to be and I’ve been here [primary schools] practically ever since” (interview, September 8, 2010). It seemed that Kate experienced
greater intrinsic gratification when teaching primary school students than secondary students. Kate described her foray into primary teaching as unintentional, saying, “I hadn’t really thought about working in primary schools as a career but when I got there, I thought this was really nice…I hadn’t planned to teach primary but loved it.” Kate attributed some of her initial frustrations to her perceived lack of content related to preparedness for the practicalities of teaching in her undergraduate degree. She described this, stating that, “they gave you lots of stuff on musicianship and the theory of it all but we weren’t really taught how to teach” (interview, September 8, 2010). It is possible that Kate’s achievements did not conform to her idealised standards of the role; therefore, her imagined identity was not compatible with her reality (McCall & Simmons, 1978) and her view of her working self (Canrinus et al., 2011).

Jill (Crowley School) also began what would eventually become her transition from secondary music teaching to primary music as a result of a sense of dissatisfaction with music teaching in her particular secondary school context.

I went from Kindergarten to Year 12 in a private school as a student and then I was sent in my first posting as a teacher to Drawford High [School] in the western suburbs and, when I got there, virtually anything I had learnt at university was irrelevant to what I was dealt with. So they had a component that was the history of musical something, so I changed that to the history of popular music…a lot of those students couldn’t read and it was seriously basic. I even cut the music at times and taught them how to read. (Jill, interview, August 25, 2010)

While Jill adapted to the challenges faced in this context, she eventually decided to stop teaching and, instead, became an editor. This was partially due to difficulties experienced with the distance she was required to travel each day, but was also associated with her lack of satisfaction in her teaching role, which she described: “It wasn’t particularly rewarding music teaching, it was survival music teaching” (interview, August 25, 2010).

The descriptions offered by Jill, Kate and Kylie demonstrated that they did not receive the intrinsic gratification through performance in a secondary music teacher role identity, considered by McCall and Simmons (1978) as a factor in determining the overall salience of a role identity. Furthermore, these participants perceived discrepancies between their actual experiences in these contexts and their imagined role identities.

**Family circumstances.**

Whereas dissatisfaction with secondary teaching was a factor in Jill’s decision to discontinue her employment as a teacher, the birth of her children and her experiences during their early childhood years provided experiences that proved foundational to the
establishment of the music teacher identity that would emerge later. While her children were young, Jill remained active in music education in the context of organising church musicals and developing a preschool music program for three and four year olds, which contrasted to her prior teaching experiences that focused on secondary music education. Jill’s decision to return to classroom teaching was in response to an advertised position at a local government primary school:

After I had the kids, I didn’t teach at all for ages and then a job came up for a day and a half at Terama [Primary School] teaching as a music specialist there and I thought “that’s a nice little way back [to teaching]”. My fourth child had started school by then. I didn’t have any resources and I didn’t know [what to do] but I had kids and I’d taught Sunday school. That built up and I ended up nearly full time. (Interview, August 25, 2010)

Although Jill did not enter this position with an established plan for how to design and implement a primary school music program, her description illustrates the impact that her role as a parent, and her subsequent musical experiences in an early childhood setting, had on her confidence to assume this role. This was in contrast to a lack of role support that she experienced when teaching secondary music, as her imagined role identity conflicted with the actualities of the circumstances in which she was teaching. Therefore, the change in her social role as a parent influenced the dynamic trajectory of identity.

Similarly to Jill, Willa (St Juliana’s Catholic School) entered primary music education after the birth of her children. Willa had studied in a conservatorium environment in order to become a secondary music teacher. Willa described the course as “being focused on secondary music, with one year of pre-secondary music education” (interview, October 8, 2011). Following graduation, Willa taught in secondary schools for a period of five years before leaving teaching in order to have children. During her absence from school-based classroom teaching, Willa taught music to preschool-age children through programs implemented in conservatorium, performing arts centre and local preschool environments. Additionally, she provided piano tuition to children and adults.

Willa’s commencement as a primary music specialist was, in part, due to her connection with a school in her capacity a parent:

Michele: Was it an advertised position?
Willa: It wasn’t a position at all. My eldest son started there and I put my name down to help with reading. The principal rang me and said, “A little bird told me you’re actually a music teacher, would you do some singing with Kindergarten instead. I said yes and that was just with my son’s class. After a couple of weeks, I had to do that with the three Kindergarten classes and, within a term, they asked me to teach one day
The time spent teaching in early childhood environments and her role identity as a parent enabled Willa to shift her role identity in which secondary music teaching was prominent to a music teacher role identity that encompassed early childhood pedagogy. Willa’s acceptance of the music teacher role at St Juliana’s Catholic School may have reflected this change in hierarchy of prominence and subsequent likelihood that it would be enacted in future contexts, as one of the factors of the salience of a role identity is “the perceived degree of opportunity for its probable enactment in the present circumstances” (McCall & Simmons, 1978, p. 82).

Just as Willa began teaching at a school where her child was enrolled, Daniel’s appointment as a music specialist teacher in a primary school initially occurred due to his connection with Highgrove Primary School in his capacity as a parent. Daniel had some prior experience in teaching primary music through his tertiary training, that he described as “a good grounding in primary and early childhood in first year” and he undertook some blocks of primary teaching in a casual capacity. However, the majority of his employment to this point had been as an operatic performer, as discussed later in this section of the chapter. In Italy, he had taught some primary music in a school. On his return to Australia, Daniel was invited by the principal of Highgrove Primary School to restart a specialist music program. He said, “They’d had a good music program here and it sort of stopped and then the principal wanted to build it up again. That’s when she asked if I’d be interested in starting up a new music program” (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010). Daniel gradually built up the program, starting part-time and expanding the role until he was teaching all students from Kindergarten to Year 6 and conducting music ensembles. Although Daniel had not actively sought a primary music teacher role, his positive experiences in casual teaching, both in Australia and Italy, combined with his perception that his tertiary studies had provided a “solid grounding” (interview, June 23, 2010) assisted him in bringing a primary-focused element of role identity to the fore. Furthermore, the role support he received from the principal and other staff as he gradually expanded the program contributed to the emergence of this identity.

Of these three participants, Jill was the only one to actively seek employment as a primary music specialist teacher, although her decision was possibly influenced by the convenience of the school’s location to her home. Daniel and Willa both became involved through connections to the school as parents. This suggests that none of these participants
envisaged a primary music specialist role identity within their imagined role identities, rather circumstances led to the emergence of their role identities as primary music specialist teachers.

**Music Teacher and Generalist Teacher**

Changes between generalist teacher identities and specialist music teacher identities were found in the data. These changes included participants who were qualified as generalist teachers who subsequently adopted a specialist music teacher role, and secondary music teachers who adopted characteristics that are generally associated with generalist primary teacher role identities.

**Generalist to music specialist.**

Six of the teacher participants underwent undergraduate training to become generalist primary classroom teachers (Table 4.2.). Although these courses contained music or creative arts components, the courses were not intended to provide specialist music teacher training. Instead, these diploma and degree-level qualifications were designed to prepare practitioners to educate students across all learning areas of the curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Year Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denise</td>
<td>Diploma of Teaching</td>
<td>1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleanor</td>
<td>Certificate of Teaching</td>
<td>1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma of Teaching</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanne</td>
<td>Certificate of Teaching</td>
<td>1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor of Teaching</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly</td>
<td>Diploma of Teaching</td>
<td>1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marian</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veronika</td>
<td>Diploma of Teaching</td>
<td>1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The trajectory of transformation from role identities as generalist teachers to music specialist teachers for Veronika, Joanne and Kelly are examined in detail in Chapter Five. This section explores the experiences of Marian, Denise and Eleanor.
Following completion of her teaching qualifications, Marian (Springtown Primary School) began her career as a provider of RFF in science, art, drama, music and French. She said, “I basically started as a release teacher and that’s the way I seem to be finishing my career” (Marian, interview, May 16, 2012). These positions were not advertised but Marian was invited by one principal to teach music:

Michele: Were those positions advertised? How did you end up in these roles?
Marian: Almost by osmosis, I think! They weren’t advertised, I was asked initially to do the position at Emery. This [Springtown] has been a brilliant school because they’ve always employed a science specialist and music specialist. That’s how I got into science. They set aside their release specifically for music, which I feel is quite a powerful and brave thing to do. Music is an integrated part of curriculum and is given quite a bit of credibility. (Interview, May 16, 2012)

Marian attributed her success in gaining employment as a music specialist to her prior experiences as a musician, stating, “Because of my music, I’ve never had a problem getting work and I’ve always had more work offered than I have days in the week to do” (Marian, interview, May 16, 2012). Readily available employment as a music specialist teacher contributed to the prominence of this role identity, and commencing her career in a specialist teacher capacity enabled Marian’s music teacher role identity to quickly become increasingly prominent. The role support provided through her employment as a specialist music teacher in four contexts also led to salience and an expectation that it would be enacted across multiple situations (Stryker, 1980).

In contrast to Marian’s experience, Denise (Burumarri Primary School) did not become a music specialist teacher until some years into her teaching career. After obtaining a teaching diploma, Denise taught in a casual capacity at several schools in a large city in NSW. She was then seconded as a liaison officer for the NSW Department of Education and communities. Following relocation to a regional area of northern NSW, Denise assumed a similar administrative role with the Department and was then appointed as a class teacher at Burumarri Primary School, nine years prior to the interview. On returning from maternity leave, she worked as a part-time generalist teacher until she was asked to begin the music RFF program in 2011 (Denise, interview, October 18, 2011). Denise had some music education components in her tertiary training, although she did not view this as a positive experience due to her poor results in guitar studies. Instead, Denise tended to draw from her experiences as a student in secondary education, “I play the clarinet and have been in bands and orchestras. I bring more from my experiences in high school” (interview, October 18,
An anticipated change in leadership cast some doubt on the future of the program; however, Denise spoke positively of her music teaching experience and indicated that she would like to continue developing in this role, stating, “I hope the school will continue [with the music program]. This is the plan for the following year and then there will be a new principal, so fingers crossed”. However, despite Denise’s desire to continue with the music program, the new principal determined that she would return to general classroom teaching on a fulltime basis and the specialist music program would not continue.

Since speaking before, our music program has come a long way! Band and guitars are improving steadily and our choirs have been going great guns, even receiving an [choral] award! As for next year, I'm afraid I will be back on a standard class and won't be involved in music except for my own class and choir so I won't be of as much use to you and there won't be anyone taking on the role. (Denise, personal communication, October 16, 2012)

While Denise may have continued with some musical involvement in the school, it is likely her identity as a generalist teacher remained dominant in her hierarchy of prominence on her return to classroom teaching and the discontinuation of the music program. Denise had expressed both a desire to remain in the role and potential disappointment at the prospect that the program may not have continued (interview, October 18, 2011). Having already acquired the role of music specialist teacher, this suggested that she would have been willing to continue to redefine her teacher identity, had it been socially legitimated by the new principal (Coldron & Smith, 1999).

Just as Denise taught for several years in a different capacity before her brief term as a music specialist teacher, Eleanor (Sancta Maria Catholic School) also spent some years working in a generalist capacity before assuming the role as music specialist (Eleanor, interview, December 12, 2010). In Eleanor’s first year of teaching as a generalist teacher, she was given responsibility for the school band and choir. In recognition of her musical background, a colleague offered to teach Eleanor’s class art if Eleanor taught the colleague’s class music. Six years later, Eleanor was appointed as a part-time class teacher in a Catholic school; however, this role quickly became a music specialist position. Eleanor remained in this position for fourteen years, teaching four days per week, after the school re-formed and became a new school. She described this as, “a great time because I was [teaching] in one place…the school was abuzz with music” (interview, December 12, 2010).

Eleanor’s music teaching role was suddenly cut back in 1995 due to the arrival of a new principal who wanted to focus on drama, as opposed to music. The music-teaching role finished abruptly in 1997 and Eleanor did not think she would teach music again. This was in
response to the lack of role support provided by the principal. However, through her casual teaching, schools became aware of her musical abilities and expertise and she was gradually appointed to teach music four days per week, across four schools. Eleanor’s willingness to return to music teaching suggested that the music sub-identity was prominent in her hierarchy (McCall & Simmons, 1978).

**Music specialist to generalist.**

For some of the teachers who trained as music specialists, shifts occurred in their role identities that led to changes in their teacher identities from music specialists to generalists. This was largely because of changes to school structures and environments or a deliberate choice for teacher participants to pursue this pathway.

A change in the physical structure of St Juliana’s Catholic School, and the educational rationale for teaching the curriculum area known as Creative Arts, led to a shift in Willa’s role identity to incorporate aspects of teaching that had previously been the responsibility of generalist classroom teachers in that school context. As well as teaching music, Willa became responsible for delivering the Creative Arts curriculum, in collaboration with the teachers in the school's learning spaces.

At my school, they decided that we should offer Creative Arts instead of just music because we weren’t meeting syllabus requirements and also because we’d just done a big creative arts festival and we’d found that we had a big pocket of kids who danced and loved to dance but weren’t excelling in anything else at school so we thought we might engage more kids if we offered a broader range of opportunities. So the school had moved to that. (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010)

This curriculum decision led to Willa being given responsibility for teaching visual arts, dance and drama, in addition to music, as these strands comprise the Creative Arts syllabus document in NSW (Board of Studies NSW, 2000a). The change to focus on four strands of Creative Arts led to Willa designing programs where students could focus on a common element across Creative Arts strands, such as texture in visual arts and music (interview, October 8, 2010). The change to the program was further compounded by the school’s replacement of single classrooms with learning spaces, each containing up to 90 children and three teachers. This also had an impact on the music program:

At the same time there was a building program and we don’t have any classrooms any more, we have learning spaces, so we had a whole lot of changes in venue for the music and arts classes and they’ve ended up being just as part of the learning space with no specialist classroom, which has made a really big change to music. (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010)

Following the decision to alter the physical layout of the school, Willa no longer had a
designated music classroom. The implication of this decision in terms of Willa’s engagement in learning communities is discussed in the next chapter. Both the curriculum change and the change to the physical environment led to a greater expectation that Willa would assume responsibility for areas in the school that had previously been the responsibility of generalist teachers. This eventually led to a redefinition of her role from music specialist teacher to that of a Creative Arts team member, as indicated in the following correspondence:

My teaching situation has changed again - I am now part of a three-person "Creative Arts team". We now release a whole grade (3 teachers at a time) for a two-hour block. One of the other teachers is a general classroom teacher, and the other is the librarian. So it is rather interesting. (Willa, personal communication, April 17, 2011)

This change suggested that the school’s principal perceived Willa more strongly as a teacher than as a teacher of music. This could be considered a form of selective perception whereby the element of most importance to a plan of action is given attention (McCall & Simmons, 1978). This was also indicated in previous correspondence:

I have been working out of music in our school this term while we have some staff off on long service leave – it’s quite indicative of the way the arts are under-valued that they took me off music to put me into a Year 6 classroom and have casuals covering my job. (Willa, personal communication, September 17, 2010)

In this instance, the need to cover a class may have been of greater priority to the principal than the need for the students to have regular music lessons. Consequently, this selective perception led to a lack of role support given to Willa.

**Further study.**

Three of the participants who initially trained as specialist music teachers with the intention of becoming secondary music teachers chose to pursue further studies in general primary education. Melinda, the music teacher at United Academy, began this process during her tenure at the school. She stated, “I am currently studying primary education to broaden what I can do as an educator. I want to be able to teach other things and to teach overseas” (interview, May 25, 2011). This revealed that Melinda was open to developing a teacher role identity that was not necessarily associated with music education. In engaging in further study, she demonstrated a sense of agency to pursue a goal that assisted in Melinda in understanding her professional identity, or making sense of herself as a teacher (Beijaard et al., 2004).

Kylie (Arlington Primary School) also decided to undertake a Master of Teaching degree, specialising in general primary education. This two-year degree is usually considered a means to achieve accreditation as a primary generalist teacher in NSW schools. In Kylie’s
case, this was not her intention in undertaking further studies, as she had already been granted accreditation as a primary teacher in response to her prior experiences. Instead, she said, “I wanted the bit of paper in case I need to go interstate, or to get a permanent job” (interview, August 5, 2011).

Similarly, Kate from Evergreen Primary School elected to undertake a Bachelor of Primary Studies degree to address her self-perceived need for development as a teacher. In describing the rationale for this decision, Kate said that the course “taught me things I should have been taught in the first degree, such as classroom management and teaching method” (interview, September 8, 2010). Whereas it could be assumed that her initial undergraduate training provided Kate with the necessary teaching skills for secondary music classroom environments, she challenged this in saying “it didn’t prepare for teaching anywhere, even high school” (interview, September 8, 2010). While the primary education studies were not focused on music, they assisted Kate in developing her identity as a primary music specialist by allowing the primary teacher sub-identity to become salient. Following her preservice education, Kate recognised that she was lacking the knowledge of teaching approaches and classroom management techniques that she considered essential to teaching and consequently experienced difficulty during her initial teaching in a high school context. This contributed to her desire to reshape her professional identity to that of a primary music teacher when the opportunity arose.

Kate’s description of her experiences reveals the ongoing development of her sub-identity as a teacher, rather than as a musician. Once at Evergreen Primary School, she decided to further develop her knowledge of primary education, and she later began studies to train as a primary generalist teacher. Although she still identified herself as a music teacher, these studies enabled her to assume elements of a new identity that essentially served to make her more like her primary school classroom generalist colleagues, through her increased understanding of pedagogy in other curriculum areas. This is also reflected in her role, as in addition to the four days per week in which she taught music, she also provided lessons in Physical Education one day per week (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010).

**Demands of music teaching.**

The shift in hierarchy of the balance towards a more general teacher identity was identified by some participants as resulting from the fatigue experienced as a music teacher. This fatigue could be considered to be resulting from role strain, described by Goode (1960) as the strain felt in fulfilling the obligations of a role. In the case of Kylie, Daniel and James,
the role strain seemed to be in response to their self-expectation that the role required them to either continually prepare students for performances or their difficulty in sustaining the physical elements of a teaching role that was considered to be highly active.

Kylie’s teaching load at Arlington Primary School involved teaching a class as a generalist teacher for half the week and spending the remaining days teaching music. She was satisfied with this arrangement, stating,

I’m quite enjoying doing half and half. I think music teachers get burnt out easily, so doing half a load on class is sane. Then I have my band and recorder day, which is insane as I’m performing. I would miss it if I weren’t doing it. (Kylie, interview, August 5, 2011)

These statements revealed that Kylie was maintaining a balance between her music teacher identity and an emergent generalist teacher identity, due to the perceived demands of fulltime music teaching. This may be indicative of her conception of a music teacher role as being largely performance-based. Rather than seeing a shift towards a higher placement of the generalist teacher in her hierarchy of prominence, it seemed that she was keen to maintain equilibrium between classroom teaching and music teaching in order to avoid role strain. It is possible that this balance also indicated a transition from a discipline-focused understanding of teaching to a perception encompassing other educational aspects, as experienced by participants in a multi-site study of preservice teachers conducted by Ballantyne et al. (2012).

Similarly, Daniel’s teaching load at Highgrove Primary School was not solely focused on music, and he claimed that this had been his choice.

Daniel: I’m full time. I’ve asked for it not to be face-to-face music teaching all the time, so I do a bit of ICT.
Michele: Why is that?
Daniel: Because it’s too exhausting to do face-to-face music all the time. If you watch me teach, I’m moving, singing, dancing and it’s quite physical. It’s a bit like doing a little aerobics session! It’s physically demanding. (Interview, June 23, 2010)

The demands of music teaching were also described by James (Kent School) as a reason he enjoyed a hiatus from music teaching prior to immigrating to Australia. James had begun his career working concurrently in generalist and specialist teaching capacities. “I taught for three years in a primary school in [the United Kingdom] as a Years 3 and 4 class teacher, but I was given time to do music and take choirs. I was the music specialist” (James, interview, February 23, 2011). Following this, James moved abroad and was appointed to teach Years 4 to 6 music in an international school until a change in staffing led to another appointment: “The Director of Music left and I took over. I taught some Year 8 and 9 there.
There were five other music teachers in the department and then with the instrumental teachers it became more of an administration job” (James, interview, February 23, 2011). After resigning from this position, he returned to the UK and worked solely as a generalist classroom teacher. James described the two years in which he did not teach music as valuable.

That year that I had at the Prep school and then the year I had after that of not really doing anything but just classroom teaching… was needed because of the intensity of working with the children, getting everything ready and performing. (Interview, February 2011)

This suggested that James had experienced role strain during his tenure at the International School, in response to the demands of his role. The return to classroom teaching, albeit for a relatively short period of time, served to provide enough of a break from music teaching without seeking to shed this aspect of his professional identity completely.

**Musician and Music Teacher**

Justin, Daniel and Rebecca each spoke of working as professional performing musicians, in addition to their work as music teachers. Similarly, Louise entered her tertiary music education training with the intent to continue her development as a performer post-graduation. These participants experienced tension between their teacher and musician sub-identities within their music teacher identities, which is commonly reported in music education literature pertaining to the development of role identities (see Ballantyne and Grootenboer, 2012; Bernard, 2004; Davidson & Burland, 2006; De Vries, 2010).

When Justin first began teaching, he did not feel equipped with the working knowledge of curriculum and programming that he had expected and indicated that students in pre-service teacher programs were particularly concerned about issues regarding classroom management. Following his studies in music education, he chose to remain at university to undertake further studies in jazz, rather than immediately beginning a teaching career. After graduation, he taught music in an independent school for six years, where he began to teach primary school music while continuing his work as a performing musician. Justin’s interests in performance were reflected in his decision to leave teaching to undertake a Certificate in Performance that focused on acting. On returning to teaching, he was employed concurrently in three primary schools and was viewed as the primary music specialist in each context (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011).

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11 Rebecca’s experiences as a professional musician are discussed in Chapter Six.
Justin’s experiences in music performance appear to contribute to his dominant sub-identity as a musician. This was reflected in his belief that teachers must remain active as musicians and his continuation of music performance opportunities and self-development as a musician (interview, March 16, 2011). Just as some participants in Ballantyne and Grootenboer’s (2012) study viewed a musician identity as linked to performance, Justin’s conception of a musician appeared to focus on musical experiences relating to performances in bands or other ensembles, as opposed to activities such as composing or the music making that occurs within a classroom environment. This may have been as a result of socialization experienced during university studies (Bouij, 2004). It is possible that his perceived early lack of balance between the sub-identities of teacher and musician influenced his decision not to initially pursue a career in teaching and to later cease teaching to pursue studies in acting.

Similarly, Louise experienced difficulty during her early career in maintaining a balance between her musician identity and teacher identity. When Louise commenced her undergraduate music education degree, she was not yet certain whether she wanted to be a music teacher, or pursue a career in music performance.

Michele: When you did the [music] education degree, did you think at that point you intended to go into teaching?
Louise: I actually didn’t have a good music high school teacher so my initial reason was I didn’t want anyone to go through what I went through but also I chose the course [during university training] because it had such a good range of subjects. I was quite academic at school and I didn’t want to just do performance, I wanted to have that academic structure and get those skills, aural skills, and when I saw that we could do philosophy and psychology and history as part of the music education course, I just didn’t want to knock it back. (Interview, May 17, 2011)

The opportunity to study in a conservatorium environment provided Louise with a variety of music education and music performance experiences. From her description of her education, it seemed that a musician identity as a performer featured more prominently that that of a teacher.

I’m a viola player, so I’ve always done a lot of performing subjects. [At university] I did orchestral studies and chamber music, so I’ve always had an orchestral focus. My Honours project was on string quartet rehearsal technique and I looked at that as a form of cooperative learning. I’ve always been a performer first. (Louise, interview, May 17, 2011)

Louise’s decision to leave her teaching position at the end of her first year of teaching was indicative of the prominence of performance in her hierarchy of prominence. This was also compounded by the lack of support she felt from the school’s executive staff (see Chapter
Five), which therefore contributed to her prioritisation of her musician sub-identity, rather than a sense of agency in continuing to develop her teacher sub-identity at that point in time.

In contrast, Daniel (Highgrove Primary School) seemed to have developed a music teacher identity in which he was content to enact the musician component of his identity through music-making experiences in the classroom. Following graduation from university, Daniel taught in a casual capacity for two years before becoming a principal artist with an internationally acclaimed operatic company. He continued in this role for a period of twelve years before starting at Highgrove Primary School after some overseas travel. Although the school often prepared for significant performance events, Daniel tended to compartmentalise the performances and the experiences he defined as music education.

I really distinguish between music education and performance. Music education is doing things that are bite size and progressive and are always leading on to another skill. Whereas when you work on performance, you’re doing a lot of rote and drilling just getting the sound right, the words right, the movements right. It’s a whole different set of things. If you get stuck into that, what happens is you’re not doing music education. (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010)

This demonstrates that Daniel’s prior experiences as a performer in rehearsal were perhaps not compatible with his conception of music education, which he viewed to be more creative in nature, particularly through composition (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010). Through his experiences at the school and interactions with other staff (discussed in Chapter Five), Daniel’s music teacher role identity became prominent.

Each participant’s role identity consisted of sub-identities, or categorisations of identity that shifted in prominence or salience during the periods of teachers training and ongoing teacher development. Two of the research areas investigated in the first stage of the study centred on what music specialist teachers perceive their role identities to be and the conceptions held of music teacher roles by others. These areas of inquiry form the focus of the next section of the chapter.

**Conceptions of Music Teacher Roles**

Through discussion with the participants about their teaching approaches, methodologies, descriptions of the classroom environments, and preferred teaching resources, personal perspectives of their music teacher role identities emerged that revealed similarities and differences between the participants’ enacted role identities. The first issue revealed through the analysis pertained to the participants’ interpretation of the purpose of a specialist music program and the consequent musical skills and knowledge that should be taught. The
second issue was the contrasting pedagogical knowledge of the participants and their interpretations of how music should be taught. This section of the chapter analyses both of these issues and examines how the participants’ thoughts about subject matter and pedagogy shape perceptions of primary music teacher role identities.

**Purpose**

Contrasting rationales for music education were evident amongst the participants. The two main reasons for music education that emerged from participants’ descriptions of their music programs were the development of music notation reading skills and instrumental proficiency, compared with music education as a means to experience and develop creativity.

**Instrumental proficiency.**

James’s description of the music program and his role at Kent School emphasised the acquisition of musical skills and knowledge, particularly with a view to developing proficiency on an instrument.

In a school such as this when we have an instrumental program in Years 2, 3 and 4, Kindergarten is basically music and movement where they respond to the basic elements loud, soft. In Year 1, I’m really introducing their standard notation of rhythm and pitch because in Year 2 they are playing instruments. So my aim is to get as much literacy into them by the end of Year 1 so, when they come to play in Year 2, they can focus on technique rather than decoding the notes on the stave. So Year 2, 3 and 4 is pretty much full up with the playing of music and actually engaging in the instrument. (James, interview, February 23, 2011)

Interestingly, James’s comment, “in schools such as these” suggested that he might have perceived there was an expectation in independent schools that comprehensive instrumental programs would shape the music education experiences of the students. This may have been comfortable for James, given his background as the Director of Music in an international school that became “largely an administrative role” overseeing the work of department members and peripatetic staff (James, interview, February 23, 2011). Nonetheless, there did seem to be a questioning of this interpretation of a music teacher role, through his desire to revisit creativity in Year 5, when the students were not involved in a formal instrumental component to the program. “I come back in heavily in Year 5 and we focus on the creativity of music, so we strip away all the notation and go back to graphic scores so we focus on the individual elements, texture, etcetera” (interview, February 23, 2011). As internal cognitive processes and social structural identity sources intersect at the point of behaviour that expresses identities (Stryker & Burke, 2000), the design of this music program under James’s leadership must have, in part, at some point been a manifestation of his role identity.
Nonetheless, he further challenged this conception of his music teacher role, as he questioned the educational and musical validity of the program:

I’m still reserving judgment on the compulsory string and band program, whether it’s beneficial and we should spend that much money on the tutors, the instruments and instruments are going home and boys aren’t playing. Should we just open it up to choice? It seems a lot of schools run these programs and it’s the icing on the cake. (James, interview, February 23, 2011)

It may be that his prior experiences in the international school led to initial acceptance of the structure of the music program. However, it is possible that ongoing tension between the expectation of the school and parent community versus James’s desired expectation of the music program’s structure could lead to a form of role conflict through contradictory expectations attached to the role (Stryker, 1980). In this instance, these expectations may be related to the anticipation that the students will develop proficiency on an instrument, yet the students were not engaging with the programs.

Components of the music program at the Universal Academy emphasised the importance of developing instrumental skills for ensemble performance. From Years 4 to 6, the students participated in what Melinda described as a “performance program” (interview, May 25, 2011). Whereas James was conflicted about the compulsory instrumental program at Kent School, Melinda seemed to have overcome this issue at the United Academy by running a program that allowed students to select their preferred mode of ensemble participation:

One choice is a band program, one choice is an extension program for those students who have already been involved in music and don’t want to choose a second instrument, and the other one is an Orff ensemble for those who are not interested in learning an instrument. They become the percussionists for the band to give them ensemble experience. (Melinda, interview, May 25, 2011)

According to Marian (Springtown Primary School), her teaching largely focused on developing skills for performance on instruments, such as playing the recorder. She identified music notation and rhythmic values as fundamental to the success of this process:

The philosophy is to get them playing because of performances. The children want to play and I guide them to play correctly and teach duration. The children love this. I do simple activities and incorporate reading as soon as possible. The goal in a small school is to have Year 6 students reading music off the stave onto the recorder and I mostly succeed. One school has performed at the Opera House instrumental concert on recorder and there’s time allowed to practise for this. (Marian, interview, May 16, 2012)

In the small school environment, preparation for performances formed a pivotal part of the music program in order to create a profile for music in the local communities and to serve a
functional role in the school environment. While this approach was partly in response to community expectation, Marian’s experiences and identity as a musician performing in community ensembles may also have contributed to this emphasis. She stated,

I started learning piano when I was nine. The last 35 years I’ve played in bands, been a musician at weddings and participated in community playing as well for ANZAC services. I’m still in a band and I play church organ. (Interview, May 16, 2012)

It is also conceivable from the latter statement that her musical and social interactions in the regional communities in which Marian has lived also assisted in forming this musician identity that consequently shaped her music teacher identity.

The importance of the music program in terms of preparing students for performances was also evident in the regional location where Denise taught. Although the music program was only in operation for one year, Denise chose to use it as a vehicle to promote music within the community. She said, “The word’s out there. We’re in the newspapers with choirs and the band is playing at events for parents. We came first and third in the eisteddfod and we’re being talked about in the community” (interview, October 18, 2011). This emphasis on performance reflected Denise’s description of her prior musical experiences in bands and orchestras during her secondary education (interview, October 18, 2011). This reveals that Denise was shaping the school’s beginning music program on the basis of her personal, practical knowledge developed through socialization during her formative years of schooling, which is consistent with the primary socialization described by Woodford (2002) that occurs prior to university studies through the influences of family members and teachers.

Similarly, Justin’s prior experiences as a performing musician and the value he attributed to possessing sophisticated musical knowledge and skills were evident in his curriculum development for St Alfred’s College, as he developed a program that he believed “reflects everything a child should know if they are to survive in the real world as a musician and is designed to have enough musical sense to develop the musician” (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011). Justin’s program included aspects that he described as the “building blocks for the music we listen to today” (interview, March 16, 2011). He believed that children should be able to write and read music, have a sense of rhythm, sing in tune, understand how lyrics are set to music, understand chord structures and use ICT.

This emphasis on developing students as performing musicians through the

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12 Anzac Day services are held in Australia on April 25 to acknowledge the anniversary of the major military action fought by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) during the First World War.
acquisition of key music literacy and composition skills reflects Justin’s own role identity as a musician. Justin described his piano teacher as the most significant influence on the development of his musicianship, as this teacher provided him with a “solid grounding in contemporary music” (interview, March 16, 2011). During his tertiary studies, he majored in trumpet, although he described his musical experiences in a conservatorium environment as fragmented. Justin “performed in bands in a club scene for 15 years” (interview, March 16, 2011). He sang with a philharmonic choir and was also part of the ballet corps for a professional operatic ensemble. This suggests that the secondary socialization experienced by Justin through tertiary studies and interactions with other professional performing musicians served to develop a musician-performer identity that consequently influenced his adopted pedagogy. This element of socialization was consistent with research undertaken in international tertiary contexts by Bouij (1998) and Woodford (2002).

Likewise, Kylie (Arlington Primary School) drew from her tertiary training in contemporary music to design a music program that focused on ensemble performance. Her tertiary program was designed to equip graduates to work in a range of careers in the music industry, with a particular focus on 21st century music. “I draw from background knowledge and things that interest the kids. For example, I choose a song in the charts, we learn to sing it, then the band kids play instruments, others play instruments” (Kylie, interview, August 5, 2011). In this context, it seemed that Kylie’s internal cognitive processes as a musician were centred on creating group performances of contemporary popular music, which would have been reinforced through interactions during university studies that provided a social structural identity source. The combination of these cognitive processes and identity therefore influenced her teaching approach and was manifested in the design of her teaching program, which reflects the theory of actions as occurring at the junction of internal cognitive processes and social structural identity (Stryker & Burke, 2000).

Creative experience.

Whereas some participants emphasised the importance of performance, whether for events or in the classroom through collaborative music making, others described their roles in terms of facilitating creative processes for students. At Highgrove Primary School, Daniel particularly chose to distinguish between preparation for performance-based events through focused rehearsal techniques, and the core of his classroom program that he described as music education (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010). Daniel believed the most vital aspect of his role as a music teacher was music education through exploration and composition.
I believe in working from doing, that is, playing singing. I build up a raft of songs, movement and dance. When they are performing them well, we start unpacking them, sometimes doing some moving, composition and explaining skills they’re developing…I start from word go with composition. I always talk about composition so they get used to the idea of making up their own. Then it becomes more formalised, looking at non-traditional & traditional symbols. (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010)

Daniel’s self-perceived distinction between performance and music education may have been in response to his prior experiences as a musician through his employment as an operatic performer and the associated rehearsal processes. It indicated the rise in prominence of his teacher sub-identity, as discussed earlier in the chapter, because Daniel became concerned with imparting a sequential process of skill development and teaching for musical understanding whereby students could become musically proficient and independent (Wiggins, 2015).

At Evergreen Primary School, Kate’s interactions with the school community assisted in shaping her conception of a music-teaching role in order to meet the needs of her students.

In a school like this, most of the children go to coaching colleges and the parents have an idea that rote learning is everything so what these children desperately need is the other side of the brain. They need creativity and exploration, which I find I can give them with Orff with improvisation and exploration. (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010)

When she was first employed, Kate’s role included instrumental ensembles and preparation for events. Ten years prior to the interview, she gave responsibility for this to the school’s parent committee because she believed the role was too vast (interview, September 8, 2010). This enabled Kate to focus on classroom teaching and develop a program based on Orff Schulwerk (discussed later in the chapter). In this regard, Kate’s conception of a primary music teacher role identity shifted in response to the needs of the students.

**Pedagogical Knowledge**

Through discussion of the approaches taken to teaching music in the classroom, the music teacher participants revealed aspects of pedagogical knowledge that contributed to their conceptions of music teacher role identities. The teaching approaches or methodologies referred to were Dalcroze eurhythmics, Kodály and Suzuki methods, and the Orff approach. Of these, Orff and Kodály were most prevalent, although a similar number of participants stated that they did not use a defined teaching approach or combination of approaches (Table 4.3.).
Table 4.3.

*Teaching Approach or Method Used by Teacher Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Dalroze</th>
<th>Kodály</th>
<th>Orff</th>
<th>Suzuki</th>
<th>No Specific Approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
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<td>Denise</td>
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<td>Eleanor</td>
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<td>James</td>
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<td>Jill</td>
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<tr>
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<td>✓️</td>
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<td>Justin</td>
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<td>Kate</td>
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<td>Kelly</td>
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<td>Louise</td>
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<td>Marian</td>
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<td>Melinda</td>
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<td>Rebecca</td>
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<td>Veronika</td>
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<td>Willa</td>
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**Orff Schulwerk.**

The prevalence of Orff Schulwerk amongst the participants listed in Table 4.3. is not surprising given the widespread use of the approach in Australian school-based primary music education programs (Pascoe et al., 2005). Interest in the Orff Schulwerk approach in NSW initially developed through workshops provided in teacher’s colleges during the 1970s by practitioners who had previously studied the Orff approach at the Carl Orff Institut in Salzburg, and the subsequent incorporation of aspects of Orff Schulwerk in demonstration lessons at a school in Sydney for those interested in the use of creative movement with students with disabilities that were later developed for any interested teachers (Gerozisis, 2002). As a result of the growing interest, NSW Orff Association was founded in 1972.

The inclusion of Orff-based movement activities in the 1984 *Music (K-6) Syllabus and Support Statements* (New South Wales Department of Education, 1984) reflects involvement of Orff practitioners in curriculum writing, and aspects of this approach are retained in the
current Creative Arts syllabus. In particular, movement experiences and activities that are
designed for body percussion and the use of the Orff instrumentarium are featured in the
music component of the current NSW syllabus (Board of Studies NSW, 2000b).

In addition to the inclusion of Orff activities in curriculum documents, the
establishment of courses to provide sequential professional development and the development
of teaching materials has led to widespread use of the approach in Australian primary schools
(Pascoe et al., 2005). The courses evolved from the levels courses developed in the USA and
were first presented in the 1990s in Victoria, Australia in this format in the 1990s and the first
Level One course was presented in NSW in 1997 (Royal & Shearer, 2004). The courses
present the Orff process as a sequential approach. The levels courses in Australia provide
teachers with repertoire of musical value and material that can be used to explore a particular
concept of for a particular activity (Gill, 2004). Involvement in these professional learning
experiences led to some participants’ engagement in communities of practice, as discussed in
Chapter Five, as well as contributing to the formation of their role identities.

Seven of the teacher participants stated that they incorporated the Orff approach in
their teaching, although to varying degrees. Of these seven participants, three particularly
viewed the approach as a core element of music teaching, which could therefore be
interpreted as vital to their interpretation of their music teacher role identities.

Melinda described an Orff approach as being fundamental to her teaching and that of
the broader United Academy music department, to the extent that all teachers within the
department underwent compulsory Orff-based professional development. “What we do with
new staff members that come here is enroll in an Orff course. They spend a week in their
October holidays progressively going through the levels until they’ve got to Level Four”
(interview, May 25, 2011). This approach was chosen because of its perceived flexibility and
emphasis on practical music making and had been endorsed by previous Heads of
Department, leading to its long establishment as part of the practice of music teachers in the
school. In 2010, a survey initiated by the school’s principal indicated that students who had
participated in the music program since kindergarten had been exposed to a range of musical
styles and were open to improvisation and composition as a result Orff Schulwerk
experiences. This provided further support for the incorporation of the approach and the
expectation of the school’s principal that the current pedagogical influences were successful
and were therefore integral to teaching, thus adding a relational aspect to the identity that
reflected Stryker’s (1980) assertion that the premise of commitment to a particular group is
the manifestation of attributes associated with the group’s identity. In this context, the Orff approach consequently became part of the music teacher role identities of those employed in the music department, leading to an increased probability that that the role performances of Melinda and other members of the department reflected the Orff approach that could be considered one of the “institutionalized norms and values” of the group (Stryker, 1980, p. 84).

Kate also described the Orff approach as the primary means of teaching in her music lessons at Evergreen Primary School. Her initial adoption of this approach was in response to her perception of the students’ needs:

> There is a huge range of musical ability in the classes, from highly talented children to those who only have a music lesson with me. I feel I’m able to cater for that diversity because I use the Orff Schulwerk method of music education and I’m able to keep the highly skilled ones entertained and also include those who don’t have that musical background. (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010)

In addition to opportunities for differentiation afforded by the approach, Kate also believed the students at Evergreen Primary School benefitted from an experiential approach to music teaching that fostered creativity through improvisation (interview, September 8, 2010).

Kate was first introduced to Orff Schulwerk during her tertiary training in a conservatorium environment; however, it was not until she attended an Orff-focused conference in 2006 that she decided to implement the approach fully (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010). In this regard, Kate’s role identity was further shaped by the context in which she was working and the availability of Orff-focused professional learning experiences. Following the conference, Kate progressed through the Orff program of sequential professional learning. Whereas the commitment to Orff methodology in Melinda’s salience hierarchy was influenced and maintained by her relationships with teachers in the music department of United Academy, Kate’s access to Orff practitioners in the context of a network beyond the school spurred the development of relationships that further fostered her commitment to this aspect of her role identity. Just as groups can be considered systems of relationships containing normative elements (Stryker, 1980), the Orff network of practitioners operated as a system of interaction centred on Orff Schulwerk in which interpersonal relationships were defined by this pedagogical approach. These interactions in turn developed Kate’s commitment to this aspect of teaching as integral to her identity.

Just as Melinda and Kate strongly aligned themselves with Orff Schulwerk, Joanne also described this pedagogical approach as fundamental to her teaching. Having been exposed to the approach when undertaking postgraduate study in primary music education,
Joanne began implementing it while working in her two previous schools prior to her appointment at St Clotilde’s School. The approach resonated with her as she identified that it was the way in which she already operated in the classroom:

This is the approach that has a sequence, has a purpose and a philosophical approach. This is how I operate but this is the proper way to do it. It’s a case of sharing what the children do and building up musically so they have ownership of their music. You increase the scaffolding so that every child can achieve. Training in Orff Schulwerk was the real mastery, putting a stamp of educational soundness on teaching music. That has been the greatest training ground for working in the classroom. It [Orff level training] is intensive as each level is thirty-six hours. But it’s all hands on. It’s working with the repertoire to suit the age groups that you teach. (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010)

Joanne’s need for a sense of sequence and purpose seemed to have been resolved through her implementation of the Orff approach (see Chapters Six and Seven). In addition to the experience of community as a result of participation in Orff-based, sequential professional learning experiences (discussed in Chapter Seven), Joanne experienced significant role support from other members of the Orff Association through her participation that reinforced her imagined music teacher identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). The development of identity through practice involves how one’s competence is expressed within that community and whether one is recognised as a member by other members of the community (Farnsworth, Kleanthous, & Wenger-Trayner, 2016). Joanne’s participation in the practice of the Orff Association provided this role support as other members of the community recognised her knowledge of Orff Schulwerk that constituted the domain of the community.

The Orff-based professional learning experienced by Melinda, Kate and Joanne was a form of socialization defined as the processes through which a newcomer or trainee is incorporated into the organisational patterns of a group. Through interactions with others in the network of Orff practitioners, these teacher participants became attuned to the symbolic cues that “serve to elicit expected behaviour” (Stryker, 1980, p. 63). This could have occurred through copying the actions or behaviour of others and engaging in role taking, whereby the responses of others were anticipated by making use of symbolic cues. Their investment in exploring the Orff approach through the completion of sequential levels of professional learning courses may also have served as commitment to, and investment in, this aspect of music teacher identity, thus increasing the likelihood that these behaviours will be enacted across contexts (McCall & Simmons, 1978)

**Kodály method.**

Six of the teacher participants claimed to use some aspects of the Kodály method in
their teaching. Although Melinda (United Academy) strongly identified with the Orff approach, she also incorporated elements of Kodály methodology, saying, “Orff is the main teaching approach to allow flexibility, choice and integration of students but we use Kodály for skill development and musical literacy” (Melinda, interview, May 25, 2011). Furthermore, Melinda believed the Kodály method offered an aural foundation to teaching that addressed what she perceived some instrumental students were lacking. To structure the program, the teachers used a syllabus document from Queensland, another state in Australia. “We use the Queensland syllabus as much as possible…we chose to have an existing program and people can come in and out of that” (interview, May 25, 2011). The emergence of the Orff Schulwerk approach as part of the role identities of the United Academy’s music department staff was interesting, as the Queensland syllabus on which the school’s scope and sequence of musical knowledge and skills was developed, is significantly influenced by Kodály methodology. The growth of the Kodály method in NSW schools was largely a result of a pilot scheme developed by Deanna Hoermann, who was later involved in developing the Music (K-6) Syllabus and Support Statements (New South Wales Department of Education, 1984; Russell-Bowie, 1993a). The program, known as A Developmental Programme of Music Education for Primary School (Kodály–based), commenced in 1972 in a cluster of schools in Western Sydney (Hoermann & Herbert, 1979). The aims were to adapt the Kodály method to suit the Western Sydney context and to provide training and ongoing professional development for generalist teachers in order to improve music education in primary schools. Generalist teachers used sequential activities that were devised as part of the program to deliver Kodály-based lessons. As a result of the program’s length, some students in participating schools were able to experience sequential, developmental music lessons throughout their primary school years (Pascoe et al., 2005). Through the program, teaching materials were created by Hoermann (1979) and were subsequently used by teachers throughout Australia that focused on the development of musical literacy through the interpretation of standard Western notation. The program was discontinued in the 1980s, due to lack of funding, but a similar program has since been evident in Queensland schools (Pascoe et. al, 2005).

The decision to follow a Kodály-based curriculum may also have been supported due to Melinda’s early school experiences of musical activities. In discussing her personal experiences of music education as a school student, she said, “I had a Kodály specialist in primary school…which may have been part of Deanna Hoermann’s trial. I did Kodály and
recorder in Year 2 or 1 and these were my earliest musical experiences” (interview, May 25, 2011). Interaction with this specialist teacher served as a form of socialization to Kodály methodology, or exposure to something that could then have been considered a norm of music teaching (Woodford, 2002). This was reinforced during her tertiary studies when she completed one semester of Kodály-based primary music training.

Just as Melinda’s early experiences of Kodály methodology shaped her conceptions of music teaching, Eleanor (Sancta Maria Catholic School) described early musical experiences that influenced her chosen music teaching method:

I was born in Switzerland, so I have a cultural heritage. From a very early age, I was harmonising with my mother. What I could hear, I could play. Whatever I could sing, I could play on the recorder and transfer onto the piano. I could form chords and, through the harmonising, it became something I just did. (Eleanor, interview, December 12, 2010)

The primary socialization that occurred through these shared singing experiences proved influential during Eleanor’s educational experiences following her emigration to Australia during primary school, as she was naturally comfortable singing to students and teachers:

A year before high school I learnt English. In those days, music was broadcast on the radio. The teacher figured out I could sing anything I heard once, and the teacher couldn’t sing, so I had to get up and sing to the class in my broken English. It wasn’t something that concerned me because my mother always sang with me. (Eleanor, interview, December 12, 2010)

Eleanor stated that she became trained in the Kodály method during her first two years of teaching under the supervision of a nun who had been trained by Deanna Hoermann. Eleanor was expected to observe and replicate the nun’s lessons. She described this, stating “I got a very solid grounding in the method, which I’ve hung onto ever since because it was ear before eye. It was hearing it, feeling it, playing it then doing it” (interview, December 12, 2010). Her postgraduate music education training exposed her to the Orff approach that she uses occasionally with primary students; however, her focus remained on implementing Kodály methodology in the classroom and she joined the Kodály Association.

Hopefully I can do my conference again because I just found it so inspiring. I took the Kodály conference last year and I thought “Wow! This is where I’m at” and it reaffirmed everything I’ve been doing. I know I was doing things for a reason, but I went to the conference and thought I’d been doing things right for all these years. It just was wonderful. (Eleanor, interview, December 12, 2010)

Eleanor’s commitment to the Kodály method seemed to have been influenced by her relationship with her mother and the musical experiences she associated with this relationship that formed part of the musical cognitive processes shaping her music teacher identity. Her
membership of an association of Kodály practitioners and the opportunity to relate to like-
minded people in a conference environment further strengthened her commitment to the
method through social relationships, thus consolidating Kodály methodology as a
fundamental part of her music teacher role identity.

Whereas Melinda and Eleanor chose to follow the Kodály sequence, other participants
referred to the use of Kodály method, but did not incorporate it to the same extent. Louise
spoke of “integrating some Kodály” in her teaching at Keyburgh Primary School, which
would likely have been due to the exposure she was given to Kodály during her music
education training.

We also did a subject with either Kodály or Dalcroze. I was in the block of students
that had to get the Kodály focus, and that was really the early childhood focus. I
found that to be very helpful. I remember the way they had timetabled it. We were to
spend six weeks on one and then change to the other teacher, but the way it was
timetabled we couldn’t change and I spent the whole semester on Kodály. (Louise,
interview, May 17, 2011)

Just as the conceptualisation of role identities leads to choices of actions (Stryker & Burke,
2000), this broad exposure to Kodály may have contributed to Louise’s internalised role
expectation of a primary music specialist teacher and a subsequent conceptualisation of this
identity that led to the role choice of incorporation of the Kodály method.

Mixed approaches.

Whereas some teacher participants identified strongly with a particular teaching
methodology or approach, others responded to questions surrounding this issue in a manner
that indicated an internalised expectation of meaning with regard to music teacher identity
that was not completely manifested in actions, nor suggested a commitment to relationships
founded on social interactions relating to pedagogies.

James suggested that his lack of strict adherence to a particular teaching method or
approach may have been a deficit in his teaching, stating, “I don’t use an approach.
Sometimes I feel bad that I haven’t studied all the way through an Orff or Kodály program or
Dalcroze with the precise movements” (interview, February 23, 2011). This comment
reinforced the perception that alignment to a particular music education method may be part
of the conventional music teacher role identity in a primary school. Although James had not
formally engaged with these methods or approaches, his imagined conception of a primary
music specialist teacher enabled him to experience identification beyond his immediate
engagement (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015).
Kelly (Parker Primary School) also did not verbally align herself with Orff or Kodály to the same extent as other teacher participants, preferring to refer to these approaches as elements, stating, “I use a whole lot of different things. I use some Orff work; I use Kodály. I’m always finding and trying new approaches” (interview, June 16, 2010). Similarly, while not showing a wholehearted commitment to the approach, Rebecca (Wandi Primary School) chose to incorporate aspects of Orff Schulwerk in her teaching, saying, “I don’t use a particular teaching approach. I use sol-fa and a bit of Orff. I do some movement activities that are loosely based on [Dalcroze] eurhythmics” (interview, May 19, 2010). Jill also described herself as using a combination of Orff, Suzuki and Dalcroze (interview, August 25, 2010).

Although these participants did not describe themselves as devotees to the Orff approach, referring to the approach when asked about teaching practice may suggest it is considered a norm of a perceived music teacher role identity. Whereas Melinda, Kate and Joanne had interacted socially with members of an Orff-based network and Eleanor had similarly done so through attendance at Kodály conferences, neither Kelly, James nor Rebecca spoke of belonging to a group defined by an Orff or Kodály allegiance (James, interview; Kelly, interview, June 16, 2010; Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010). The commitment to particular teaching approaches or methodologies appeared to be influenced by “the degree to which persons’ relationship to others in their networks depend on possessing a particular identity and role; commitment is measurable by the costs of losing meaningful relations to others, should the identity be foregone” (Stryker & Burke, 2000, p. 286). It is conceivable that their lack of commitment to these approaches reflected low salience in their role identities (Stryker, 1980) due to the limited importance placed on maintaining relationships that were either Kodály or Orff-based.

The acceptance of mixed pedagogies in primary music education was reflected in the approach taken to designing an educational kit that supported educational excursions to orchestral performances. Kathy, the professional learning provider who oversaw the production of the kit alluded to this when describing the educational activities contained in the resource:

The kit activities reflect a number [of approaches] because we have a Kodály person, an Orff person. The whole underpinning philosophy is that is has to be a doing thing…I am very Orff in my thinking but I know a lot of Kodály stuff is similar and there’s things like French time names and sol-fa. (Kathy, interview May 12, 2010)

Wenger (1998) refers to the representation of abstract ideas in congealed forms, such as
documents, as reification. The inclusion of Orff and Kodály related activities provided reification for these teaching approaches through their inclusion in the kit, thus contributing to the expectation that the Kodály method and Orff approach, or a combination of the two, are conventional aspects of music teacher role identities.

**Critical responses.**

Not all participants were supportive of either Orff Schulwerk or the Kodály method and two participants particularly expressed concern that these modes of teaching may be restrictive, thus challenging the notion that these should form part of a conventional primary music teacher role identity.

Angela, a professional learning provider, worked for an organisation that provided live music experiences to schools along with associated music education resources and professional learning experiences for generalist and specialist teachers. In response to a question about factors that can inhibit school music programs, Angela believed that these particular pedagogical approaches could actually inhibit a music program:

> Sometimes it can actually be the teachers themselves, I have to say, can inhibit the music programs. The specialist teachers, sometimes they are not open minded to different genres of music, different ways of teaching. They get very stuck in teaching Kodály, or teaching Orff. They become a bit too, in my opinion, hung up on the sequential and that side of things, rather than actually allowing themselves to pick and choose and create an all-embracing program of teaching. (Angela, interview, May 5, 2010)

Angela attributed the limiting adherence to a method or approach, as described, as being a product of the teachers’ tertiary background and personal history of music learning. Citing her own experiences of having to adapt her preconceived teaching beliefs associated with her own training as a bassoonist in order to teach students who wanted to learn rock music, Angela indicated the importance of fluidity in teaching practice.

Justin was likewise critical of the widespread use of Orff Schulwerk by music teachers, stating:

> I’ve moved beyond Orff. I might use elements of Orff but it’s limiting. You have to look at developing the whole musical potential of the child. Orff has big gaps. A lot of teachers are using it because it has a structure they can latch onto otherwise you have to do alchemy; you have to go out foraging for things yourself. (Interview, March 16, 2011)

Additionally, through interactions with members of an independent schools’ music teacher network, Justin developed the perception that other primary music specialists were only interested in the Orff Schulwerk approach. The meaning he derived as a result of these
interactions may have further served to disconnect him from his perception of the dominant conception of a primary music specialist and strengthened his desire to develop his sub-identity of musician and to value the characteristics of a “teacher” that relate to music performance.

I find a lot of specialists are lacking in creativity and just teach the way they were taught. That’s a danger. You need to have a good, hard think about what’s important and you need to have a career yourself. If you’re a practising musician, to understand the skills you really need and Kodály is only going to take you so far. No one at a gig is going to care if you can do sol mi. (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011)

Similarly, Justin was critical of the Kodály method as he questioned the appropriateness of the method in the context of Australian schools:

The problem that I found with Kodály is that you become good at Kodály, which then becomes a test of someone’s intelligence rather than their innate musical ability…I had an intuitive musical appreciation myself and I found Kodály confusing and really quite unnecessary. It’s superimposing something that may have worked in Hungary. Is it that relevant here? (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011)

In these excerpts, Justin seemed to be questioning the socialization that occurred during teachers’ tertiary training that he believed led to the widespread adoption of an Orff Schulwerk approach and the Kodály method and the rigidity he perceived that this imposed on their enacted pedagogies. Moreover, the lack of value he placed on Orff Schulwerk and the Kodály method in his own cognitive processes meant that these teaching approaches were unlikely to be manifested in his actions as an expression of his role identity.

The data about enacted pedagogy reveal that adherence to Orff and Kodály is part of the conventional role identities of primary music teachers in NSW schools, and influences behaviours that music teachers reflexively apply to themselves (Stryker, 1980). This may be because the styles of teaching form part of the internalised role expectations that shape an identity, and the conceptualisation of the identity leads to role choices that are influenced by the organisation of identities within the salience hierarchy (Stryker & Burke, 2000). The value placed on Orff or Kodály within the teacher participant’s role identity affected whether or not the method or approach was enacted as a result of the expectations attached to the role identity.

Summary

This chapter presented the analysis of data collected in the first stage of the study pertaining to the formation of music teacher role identities. The music teachers interviewed were either trained as secondary music teachers or generalist primary teachers, with the
exception of one participant who was qualified to teach primary music and general primary education.

Within the broader music teacher role identity, specialist primary music teachers experience a shift in the prominence of identity hierarchies (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Specialist primary music teachers fluctuate in the prominence of their musician, primary music teacher, secondary music teacher and generalist teacher sub-identities. Secondary trained music teachers do not necessarily actively seek opportunities to assume a primary music teacher role identity. Significant factors that contribute to a shift from a secondary music teacher identity to a primary music role identity are identified as the availability of employment opportunities and changes in personal family circumstances. Dissatisfaction with secondary teaching experiences is also significant, particularly if the practitioners do not receive intrinsic gratification through performance in a secondary music teacher role identity, or perceive there are differences between their imagined role identities and actual selves.

Qualified and experience generalist teachers may assume music specialist teacher role identities, particularly when elements of a musician identity are recognised by others and a role is consequently created that enables the enactment of this aspect of their identities. A generalist primary teacher role identity can be desirable to secondary trained music teachers who work in primary schools, and these teachers may actively elect to pursue further training in this area or assume aspects of a generalist teacher role identity to alleviate what they perceive to be the demands and intensity of full-time music teaching. The shifts between music specialist teacher roles and generalist teacher roles can be dictated by changes in school structures and are not always the choice of the practitioner.

Specialist primary music teachers reveal contrasting rationales for music education, with the two main purposes identified as the development of instrumental proficiency and notational skills, an experiential process that facilitates the development of creativity. Pedagogical approaches to music education can be viewed as expressions of identity that are influenced by the learning trajectory of past events (Wenger, 1998). Although some primary specialist music educators are critical of traditional music education methods and approaches, adherence to Orff and Kodály appears to be associated with the perceived role identities of many primary music teachers in NSW schools, and this association influences the internalised behaviours of music specialist teachers and their subsequent teaching behaviours. However, the degree to which this occurs is dependent on the value placed on Orff or Kodály within the teacher participant’s role identity.
The next chapter is concerned with the participants’ experiences of learning communities. Identities and participation in learning communities are intricately connected because of the negotiation of identities that occurs through social interactions (Wenger, 1998).
Chapter Five
Participatory Practices

This chapter focuses on the specialist music teachers’ experiences of participation in communities, both within their school contexts and through external music education associations and learning communities. Participation in community is inextricably linked to the development of a role identity, as is evident in the inclusion of relationship between the person and context as a key category of identity formation in the literature analysis undertaken by Beijaard et al. (2004). The connection between identity and context is illuminated in Wenger’s (1998) description of the formation of a community of practice as simultaneously being the negotiation of identities. Wenger states that people are self-defined by experiences of participation and by the ways they are reified by others. This is consistent with the framework of symbolic interactionism, as self and society are abstracted from social interaction (Stryker, 1980). In understanding the experiences of specialist music teachers, it was therefore necessary to explore their role identities in conjunction with their experiences of community participation.

Music education literature reveals that music teachers are affected by access to collaborative environments, particularly with regard to desired collaboration between specialist teachers and generalist teachers (Frego & Giles, 2004; Holden & Button, 2006; Russell-Bowie, 1999). Several studies focus on the reduction of isolation through collaboration with an experienced mentor (Blair, 2008; Conway, 2003, 2015; Conway et al., 2002; Krueger, 1999). In contrast, this chapter addresses the participatory partnerships that occur within schools, between specialist music teachers and other stakeholders in their school communities, with reference to the learning communities that are conceptualised as communities of practice and professional learning communities.

Drawing from the conception of a community of practice as a group of people whose regular interaction serves to deepen their expertise and knowledge of a shared passion, topic or area of concern (Wenger et al., 2002), the chapter begins with an analysis of the social engagement between the music teacher participants and other members of their school communities, such as teaching colleagues and executive staff, pertaining to the practice of music. This is followed by an exploration of the networks and associations beyond the school contexts of the participants that afforded interaction with other music educators and, in some instances, enabled membership of constellations of communities of practice.
Participation

Although the various forms of learning communities discussed in the Literature Review (namely communities of practice and professional learning communities) have slightly different definitions, they share the expectation of collaboration and interaction in order to meet an emerging or stated goal (see DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Hord, 1997; Pembroke & Craig, 2002; Stoll et al, 2006; Wenger, 1998). Findings in this study revealed that the specialist music teachers were engaged in contrasting participatory practices within their school environments. The concept of participation refers not just to the actions taken, but to the connections formed with others that reflect this process (Wenger, 1998). In this regard, the participants experienced contrasting social memberships and were involved in different social enterprises. This section of the chapter describes and analyses the social interactions between the music specialist teacher participants and teacher colleagues, executive staff and other members of school communities. The various levels of membership of communities of practice are investigated and members are identified as core members who assume responsibility for a group’s learning, active members who participate regularly but without the intensity of the core group, and peripheral members who observe the interaction of the core and active members but rarely participate (Wenger et al., 2002).

Generalist Teachers

The teacher participants outlined differing experiences of engagement in music education practices with the generalist classroom teachers in their school contexts. In this respect, the interactions were indicative of whether the practice of the teachers incorporated music education, or whether the music teachers’ actions were peripheral to any communities of practice that were operating within the schools. Mutual engagement in music education was influenced by the confidence of generalist teachers and whether or not there was a perception that the music teachers’ identity shared common elements with that of the generalist teachers. The availability of school structures, such as time and music teaching facilities, also influenced participation, as well choices made about curriculum design.

Mutual recognition.

A defining feature of participation in the practice of a community is the development of identity through recognition of the mutuality of participation (Wenger, 1998). In some of the cases, mutual participation in music education was enhanced when members of the community mutually recognised their capacity to create meaning due to shared aspects of role identities. This reflects the mutual understanding of shared symbols, derived from gestures,
from which future behaviour is predicted (Mead, 1934/1967).

Two of the participants, Denise and Daniel, experienced collaborative partnerships that could be attributed to a perception of shared identity with the classroom teachers. This reflected the process of social perception that involves a person’s appraisal of other people and assessment of their potential to fulfill the person’s role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Denise stated that the Burumarri Primary School teachers were “happy to help, and be involved [in the music program] where possible” (interview, October 18, 2011). Although they would only occasionally come in to observe the students during music lessons, they were willing to be actively involved in key performance events, such as the annual end of year concert. She said, “Other staff practise in class and, as the time gets closer, they will help pull together the logistics” (interview, October 18, 2011). It is conceivable that Denise’s shared identity as a generalist teacher assisted her in achieving this support from the staff. Past training and experiences influence how one is perceived by others, which incorporates cultural patterns, social positions and personal histories (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Denise’s interactions with the staff in her capacity as a generalist teacher could have assisted them to view the preparation for music events as being with their domain of practice because they may have not defined this as part of the music teacher’s role due to the music program being in its first year of inception. It could also have been indicative of Denise’s social standing within the teaching community as a long-serving member of staff, as she was likely to have been considered a central member of the community (Wenger, 1998).

At Highgrove Primary School, Daniel benefited from the collaborative relationships with generalist teachers in his own development as a teacher. When he first returned to teaching following twelve years of work with an operatic company, he needed assistance in writing teaching programs and implementing the school’s reporting guidelines to convey students’ academic achievement effectively to parents. In describing the support he received from his colleagues, Daniel said “We have a very good team here, so if you’re unsure of a particular area, there’s usually someone who can help and support you” (interview, June 23, 2010). Daniel’s initial expression of vulnerability through requests for assistance potentially meant that he was not portraying himself solely as an expert and that he valued the expertise of other teachers, which was essential to the functioning of the music program. To this effect, he made this collaboration central to the program and to his relationship with other teachers. Accordingly, Daniel was able to take on aspects of a role associated with the generalist teachers, which is indicative that some components of his own identity were generally similar
in prominence (McCall & Simmons, 1978), and he inherited some of the identity characteristics of his social location (Farnsworth et al., 2016). Daniel’s early requests for assistance and demonstrated willingness to develop as a teacher also could have granted him the legitimacy required to be treated as a potential new member of the community and provide what Wenger describes as an “inbound trajectory” into the community, where newcomers become invested in the practice of a community in ways that anticipate future membership (1998, p. 101). This inbound trajectory was evident in his collaborative partnerships with the language teachers to build a repertoire of Chinese and Italian songs, and project based cross-curricular work for events such as Harmony Day or Reconciliation Week that incorporated music education. Daniel also liaised with a Year 6 teacher on audiovisual projects to develop soundtracks (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010). Through his engagement in teamwork, other teachers may, therefore, have recognised aspects of their own identities in Daniel’s actions that further legitimised his role in the community.

Confidence.

Generalist teachers’ limited confidence in teaching music has been widely reported in music education literature as inhibiting their own teaching (Holden & Button, 2006; Jeanneret, 1996; Rogers et al., 2008; Russell-Bowie, 2002; Swanwick, 1989). In the context of this study, some specialist teacher participants identified the confidence of generalist teachers to participate in music-related activities as a factor in whether or not the class teachers were open to engaging in the practice of music with the music specialist teacher.

At St Juliana’s Catholic School, Willa partially attributed the generalist teachers’ widespread reluctance to be actively involved in music education to their limited confidence in music education practices.

Most general teachers aren’t confident to teach music and they’ll shy away from doing it at all. With a specialist, at least they [students] will get real music, not just a CD player and singing. The teachers that I know, none of them do anything other than what I do. No one does anything extra with music. (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010)

This perceived lack of confidence potentially stemmed from the teachers’ limited music education experiences during their own schooling, which did not provide the socialization needed to foster self-efficacy. Willa said, “A lot of staff are local. Some of them I taught when I was in the high school! …. They don’t have it [music] themselves and they don’t see it as important” (interview, October 8, 2010). This contributed to a cycle of low teacher confidence and self-efficacy that led to the abdication of responsibility for engagement in
music to the specialist teacher, despite the opportunities for mutual engagement afforded by
the expected collaboration within the learning space environment of the school. Wenger-
Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2015) refer to knowledge defined within a community as the
competence, and the competence expressed by Willa in this context may not have then been
recognised as part of the competence of the practice of this community, due to the teachers’
limited musical experiences.

Similarly, Eleanor found a similar lack of confidence amongst the class teachers at
Sancta Maria Catholic School inhibited her interaction with them and stifled opportunities for
potential mutual engagement. Although she had tried to assist other teachers with music
activities, she attributed their perceived lack of interest to actually be an issue of confidence.
For example, she gave the Kindergarten teachers a folder of music and songs she believed
would be suitable for early childhood classrooms; however, she did not believe the teachers
actually chose to use the repertoire, because of their lack of confidence.

I think the think the teachers have their own confidence in what they know and if they
won’t know it, they won’t do it. It’s a very confronting subject if you can’t sing in
tune and a lot of teachers felt very insecure…there’s not a lot of collaboration.
(Eleanor, interview, December12, 2010)

Whereas Swanwick (1989) reported teachers of younger students frequently were relieved to
receive the support of a specialist music teacher, the teachers required sustained interactions
with Eleanor, with a professional learning focus, in order for them gain the necessary
confidence to then implement her suggestions in their classrooms.

Daniel (Highgrove Primary School) reported this approach had been successful in his
school context. He said, “There are a lot of teachers who actually use what I do on the class
again in their own lessons. We’ve tried to implement it in such a way that they get a little bit
of professional development” (interview, June 23, 2010). He indicated that this professional
development was in response to the limited numbers of contact hours in music education that
primary generalist teachers receive in their undergraduate courses. Daniel initiated the
professional development for staff in order to develop the teachers’ confidence.

They sit in the class and watch the lesson. If they don’t know how to read music, I’ll
teach them a little bit about music literacy and I’ll point out things they can do if they
have five or ten minutes, two or three times a week between music lessons. It
generally revolves around recorder because there’s a book. (Daniel, interview, June
23, 2010)

The provision of support for generalist teachers by a music specialist in a classroom setting
reflected the findings of Holden and Button (2006), who conclude that this method is
considered most beneficial by generalist teachers. As a result of this approach, music seemed to be increasingly part of the practice of the generalist teachers at Highgrove Primary School. This form of engagement could also have served to develop a shared repertoire of resources for creating meaning within the community, through the development of mutual understanding about the practice of music as manifested in recorder playing and simple musical notation reading (Wenger, 1998). By focusing these experiences on the use of a recorder book, the book constituted a form of reification, as it represented abstract meaning presented in a concrete form (Wenger, 1998). Through the combination of participation and reification, these musical experiences seemed to have become part of the community’s domain, or definition.

Kate also experienced support from, and opportunities to collaborate with, the generalist teachers of Evergreen Primary School. Several times during the interview, she referred to the “supportive” teaching and executive staff and parent body of Evergreen Primary School (interview, September 8, 2010). Having taught at the school for fifteen years, Kate was one of the longer serving members of staff, enabling her to develop shared histories (Wenger, 1998) with other members of the school community. She reported that teachers tended to remain employed at the school until retirement and younger staff entered the community as these positions become available. Kate was aware that the generalist teachers lacked confidence in teaching music, stating, “Generalist teachers don’t have training, interest, background or confidence to do what I do” (interview, September 8, 2010).

One of the ways that Kate addressed the lack of confidence that she believed inhibited the practice of music amongst the teaching staff was to raise awareness of the learning experiences taking place during music lessons through her participation in staff development days.

I’ve inserviced the staff when we’ve had staff development days… I taught them Orff things that I do with the kids. There were three reasons why I wanted to do this. I wanted give them a glimpse of what I do with the children because they don’t really know. I wanted to give them some resources that they can do even if they’re not music specialists, as many of them would not be confident to do any music in the classrooms. I wanted to give them some things they could be confident to do, not singing, but worthwhile music activities that they could do, if not here, at another school. Just to relax and have fun. At the end of last year, we were all exhausted and I wanted to give them a happy fun time of staff bonding. (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010)

Despite the staff not tending to regularly use the material in their own lessons, it raised the profile of music in the school and enabled the teachers to see what their students were
experiencing during music lessons, which contributed to the perception that music was becoming part of the practice of the school (Wenger, 1998). Through these experiences, the class teachers appeared to fluctuate between active and peripheral members of a community of practice focused on music. In order for the teachers to begin implementing the musical activities in their classrooms, and therefore consistently engage in the practice of music education and further develop a sense of mutual accountability to music teaching (Wenger, 1998), it was necessary for Kate to provide some in-class support, possibly in the role of an advisory teacher, as this approach has been found to develop teachers’ confidence and lead to increased participation in music teaching (Holden & Button, 2006; Rogers et al., 2008).

**Resources.**

Just as mutual engagement in the practice of music was affected by the mutual recognition of identity and teacher confidence, the availability of resources also influenced participatory practices in the participants’ school contexts. These resources included time allocated for music or interactions with other teachers, and the location of the music room or suitability of spaces for teaching. These elements are identified as critical to learning communities that focus on improving student learning (Stoll et al., 2006). Moreover, they can be considered design interventions that support mutual engagement in a practice and, therefore, support the formation of a community of practice (Wenger, 1998).

**Physical resources.**

The location of the room where music was taught, or the inclusion of music activities in the general classroom, proved to influence the music-focused interactions between music specialists and generalist teachers. This is indicative of the need for supportive structures to facilitate collaboration (Hord, 1997), such as proximity to colleagues’ classrooms (Stoll et al., 2006). The physical environment of Highgrove Primary School undoubtedly affected Daniel’s interactions with class teachers. When Daniel first began teaching at the school, he did not have a classroom and his music lessons took place in the school hall or in the generalist teachers’ classrooms. “I was teaching mostly out of the hall, but if there were other events on, I would go from class to class” (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010). This was problematic from a music-teaching point of view, as it limited the equipment that could be used in lessons; however, the central location of the school hall or the positioning of music lessons in individual classrooms meant that teachers frequently observed what was happening in the lessons. The teaching location assisted Daniel in initiating the opportunities to provide teachers with help in music reading and recorder activities that could take place in their own
classrooms. The school hall served as a form of boundary object to connect Daniel’s practice to that of the other teachers and facilitate collaboration (Wenger, 1998). In addition to the hall’s proximity to classrooms, this was possible because the school hall lent itself to accommodating various activities and was potentially a neutral zone that could be used by any staff member. As a result, several teachers began to use activities from music lessons with their classes and, in some classes, the teachers provided the students with an extra 10 minutes of singing and recorder playing each day (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010). Although Daniel found that the teachers of younger grades were generally more flexible with time, there was a sense that responsibility for student achievement in music was not solely his, and the teachers were developing mutual accountability for music education (Wenger, 1998).

Whereas Daniel benefited from the central location of the school hall, Eleanor felt that her use of the school hall for music lessons at Sancta Maria Catholic School was restrictive in terms of developing fledgling collaborative partnerships, due to its remote location in the school, saying, “I was in the hall until this term and out of sight out of mind is the perfect description” (interview, December 12, 2010). A subsequent move to a music room surrounded by classrooms provided more opportunities for teachers to be aware of happenings in the music program and to break down misconceptions of the music activities in which the students were engaged, as Eleanor attested, “Now I see them [teachers] walking past and seeing what the kids are doing and I’m seeing a reaction. They comment, ‘did you see those children singing and dancing?’ I do movement and singing, it’s not all recorders!” (interview, December 12, 2010). Although Eleanor had not yet managed to forge situations whereby she and the class teachers were mutually engaged in music education practices, she believed the change of location to a music room was promising. Whereas Daniel actively pursued these opportunities, Eleanor seemed to view the next step of developing shared practices as being in the hands of the teachers, stating “I do have helpers in the Kinder classes who can tell the teachers what we do, but I wish they would come in and see the children” (interview, December 12, 2010). This contrast in approaches seemed to be indicative of Daniel’s central membership to the community of practice at Highgrove Primary School, which resulted from the inbound trajectory discussed earlier in the chapter, and Eleanor’s peripheral status in any community of practice operating in the school. It is conceivable that these contrasting experiences were influenced by Daniel’s full-time employment within the one context compared to the part time nature of Eleanor’s employment at Sancta Maria Catholic School. Furthermore, as music was not yet part of the community’s practice at Sancta Maria Catholic
School, Eleanor could have remained peripheral to their practice if she felt her observations did not carry weight (Wenger et al., 2002).

Just as both Eleanor and Daniel’s participation in their school communities was influenced by the location of music teaching spaces, Willa’s interaction with the generalist teachers was affected due to the decision to dramatically change the physical layout of St Juliana’s Catholic School referred to in the previous chapter. Prior to this significant building project being undertaken, Willa had a music room that had once been a classroom, but was vacated following a decline in enrolment numbers. It was while she was teaching in this room that a building program commenced that saw the transformation of traditional classrooms to large learning spaces, each accommodating multiple class groups and up to three generalist teachers.

The classes went back up to a full three-streamed school and enrolments lifted. A High School started with a demountable at the back of our school grounds during construction. They were left there and I was given one of their classrooms when our enrolments lifted. This time last year, the demountable was taken away because our building program is finished and our [building] program doesn’t include a music room. I went from having nothing to having a room with whatever I wanted to buy from my budget, and now I have no room. (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010)

The introduction of learning spaces meant that she was required to teach music in these learning environments.

Now we don’t have traditional classrooms, we have learning spaces with up to 90 children and three teachers and that’s where the Creative Arts lessons happen. Creative Arts lessons have to be with a group of 90 or with a class with 60 other children there doing something else. (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010)

The staffing of these classes proved to be problematic as sometimes Willa was attempting to teach music to one class when the other classes were engaged in activities related to a different subject area, which created issues due to the distractions and noise (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010). Moreover, the inclusion of music activities in the learning spaces could have led to increased generalist teacher participation in music education, yet the class teachers’ reluctance to participate suggested that music was not part of the practice of any community that was operating in the school amongst the teaching staff. This may have been because of the teachers’ prior experiences of music being taught in a separate room and perceived to be exclusively the role of the music specialist teacher. A well-developed domain affirms the community’s purpose and value to its stakeholders (Wenger et al., 2002); however, changing the architecture of the St Juliana’s Catholic School did not automatically lead to a renegotiation of the domain amongst the teachers, despite the
increased visibility of music practices.

Whereas Daniel’s experience of participation with the generalist teachers at Highgrove Primary School seemed to have shaped the practice of his community, the participation in music activities did not shape the community of St Juliana’s Catholic School, despite Willa’s longevity in the school. It is possible that this was indicative of other issues, such as the poor status of music education, discussed in the second part of the chapter, that could not be overcome by a change of physical structures. Indeed, the change to learning spaces seemed to inadvertently reduce the value for music education further through the removal of a teaching space specifically purposed for music, combined with the changes to Willa’s role identity discussed in Chapter Four.

Daniel’s use of the Highgrove Primary School hall enabled discussions with other teachers about music education and profoundly influenced their participation in the practice of music. In 2010, he saw the potential of the Education Revolution, a program in which significant Federal Government funds were allocated to schools for building purposes, and he lobbied the principal to create an area to teach specialist art, craft and music (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010). Consequently, the music program moved from the neutral zone of the school hall to a facility solely intended for music and other arts. While it could be anticipated that this would result in a reduction in visibility and a shift in the place of music in the practice of the community, Daniel believed this was not the case, saying “It [music] is well enough established now that people just accept music is part of the school” (interview, 21 June, 2011). The construction of the music room reflected a process of design for the evolution of the community (Wenger et al., 2002) that began with increasing the teacher’s participation in music, which led to inclusion of music in the community’s practice, and drew members into a community of practice focused on music. Once this had occurred, the presence of a dedicated music space acted as a reified representation of the importance of music in the function of the community (Wenger, 1998).

Time.

Just as the physical location of music lessons affected participation in the practice of music, when asked what aspects inhibited the practice of music in the school, several participants cited the allocation of time as a factor. Firstly, the music teachers experienced a lack of time allocated to their roles, restricting either the implementation of their music programs or their ability to work collaboratively with other members of staff. Secondly, the music specialists perceived that the generalist teachers experienced pressures related to time
allocations that reduced their time availability to work collegially with the music specialist teacher, leading to the expectation that the music teacher was solely a provider of the generalist teachers’ RFF time. Both of these factors reduced the likelihood that music would be part of a community’s practice.

The nature of Louise’s employment at Keyburgh Primary School restricted her time to consult other staff or facilitate opportunities for her to engage with members of the teaching staff.

It was a school of 350 children, Kindergarten to Year 6 and I taught all 13 classes and took two choirs in two days. So what I found out later was that the previous music teacher had three days a week, but with me, they squeezed it into two days. When I suggested I needed another day or half day to fit it in and not burn out, they said they couldn’t do it like that because of the budget. (Louise, interview, May 17, 2011)

Louise was aware of the limited time teachers had to discuss student management issues with her, particularly when she required assistance with classroom management.

Nipping things in the bud was very difficult and I felt that a lot of the teachers were very helpful if I went to them after the lesson and said “What’s the issue with this child? I had problem with him or her, is there something I should be aware of?” Quite often they would say ‘yes’ and fill me in, but other times the teacher is too busy themselves to be following up on a child’s behaviour that wasn’t in their class. I found that very hard, especially if it was a serious behaviour problem. (Louise, interview, May 17, 2011)

The scheduled choir rehearsals at lunchtimes also affected her discussions with other staff, as Louise was not able to interact with other teachers in common room. Despite the school having a music program for fifteen years prior to Louise’s appointment as a music teacher, Louise identified the inadequate time available to interact with the staff as a reason why she remained peripheral to the community, saying “I really felt like I was an extra-curricular teacher, I didn’t feel like a member of staff” (interview, May 17, 2011). This suggested that Louise was either peripheral or outside any community of practice within the school and that music was not a part of the practice, despite the specialist music program being in existence for at least a decade (Louise, interview, May 17, 2011). The lack of time that inhibited Louise’s interaction with others interfered with the development of mutual relationships stemming from sustained interpersonal engagement and prevented the development of a shared practice that is considered necessary for the development of a community (Wenger, 1998). Likewise, the reduced interaction did not enable consistent social participation through the communication of significant symbols (Mead, 1934/1967).

Similarly, Eleanor cited lack of time at Sancta Maria Catholic School as restricting her
implementation of the music program and opportunities to liaise with other staff members. Her perception was that there was no flexibility within the timetable and the provision of relief time for teachers was more important than student learning in music. Eleanor said, “I’m flexible but the school is not and it stems from the school leadership. It’s very complex timetabling and they’re trying to make sure teachers get release and that’s the priority” (Eleanor, interview, December 12, 2010). Eleanor’s experience of this contrasted significantly with her role at the government school where she was employed one day per week. She said, “At the state school, I’m not a release teacher, I’m a demonstration teacher so the feeling isn’t the same” (Eleanor, interview, December 12, 2010). In that school context, teachers attended music lessons taught by Eleanor with the purpose of continuing to equip the generalist teachers to teach music. That structure was similar to the approach taken by Daniel at Highgrove Primary School, whereby he used teachers’ observations of lessons to develop their confidence in teaching.

However, Eleanor’s experience in the Catholic school equated with that of Marian, who believed that the teachers at the four schools in which she worked viewed her role as a provider of their RFF time. She said,

You appear at the door and they say is it Thursday again? They don’t care what you do as long as they get their RFF. The pressure on teachers is so great…I’m often trying to give a lesson while the children are withdrawn for testing. (Marian, interview, May 16, 2012)

The pressure on generalist teachers identified by Marian, and their subsequent need to maximise their RFF time seemed to inhibit their interest in music education and restrict any participation in this form of practice. Designing for a community of practice involves inviting participation and interaction (Wenger et al., 2002) and the restrictions on the class teachers’ time suggested that this interaction was unlikely to occur. Compounding this was the itinerant nature of Marian’s employment, as she worked across four different schools, which inhibited other opportunities to interact with teachers. This was problematic in terms of the development of communities of practice because time is required to accumulate knowledge by sharing insights, information and advice that leads to their formation (Wenger et al., 2002).

At St Juliana’s Catholic School, Willa also experienced difficulty in involving the other staff in music education activities, as their perception was that she was available to provide extra relief. This was despite the expectation that two teachers would remain in the learning spaces during music lessons:

No, because it’s their RFF they don’t stay. Well, two are supposed to stay while one
goes on RFF. Do they stay? No, they don’t always. Some of them love it, some think it’s great fun and they love staying, but others see it as extra time and say ‘I just need to pop to the library’ and I might have 60 children on my own. (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010)

In this context, the teachers’ use of time indicated their lack of value for music, as opposed to the lack of time for interaction experienced by Marian. In Willa’s case, the use of learning spaces almost forced some form of interaction between the specialist teacher and class teachers; however, some generalist teachers seemed to resist these opportunities. Again, this may have been because of the teachers’ limited experiences in music, as discussed earlier in the chapter.

**Curriculum design.**

Choices about the way curriculum would be developed affected the extent that generalist teachers and the specialist music teacher interacted in certain school contexts. Some of the participants engaged in curriculum integration practices with generalist teachers, while others did not interpret this as an essential component of their practice within their role identities as specialist music teachers.

In two of the case study locations, Crowley School and Kent School, interdisciplinary teaching was an expected part of the music teachers’ roles due to the specific form of curriculum development that these schools had elected to employ through engagement with a set inquiry learning model. This program for primary schools was developed in the 1990s, following the widespread use of a similar program for secondary schools that was established in the 1960s by educators who wanted to create a framework that could be used in international schools. The initiative introduced an inquiry-based approach, using an internationally recognised framework in which students explored six themes across the subject areas of language, mathematics, science, social studies, arts and personal, social and physical education to develop understanding of aspects of human society. In order to use the model, schools must go through an authorisation process that includes mandatory professional development and school inspections (Jill, interview, August 25, 2010).

Jill initially found the interdisciplinary framework problematic and she felt it was more suited to a generalist teacher.

I have to incorporate [the organisation’s] stuff into what I do, and we’ve just been accredited. It’s affected me enormously. In terms of a music teacher, it’s something that probably would work if you didn’t have a specialist music teacher and you had a

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13 The name of the inquiry learning model has been withheld to protect the anonymity of the participants and their schools.
generalist teacher who wants to integrate with everything and not have a fabulous scope and sequence. (Jill, interview, August 25, 2010)

Jill’s most significant challenge was developing and maintaining an appropriate scope and sequence of musical skills and knowledge.

The integration is to be flexible but the issue for the specialists is to maintain a scope and sequence. You can’t jump from doing a rainforest soundscape to something about the body to something about space. You’ve actually got to teach them that a crotchet is a crotchet before they learn there are semiquavers! (Jill, interview, August 25, 2010)

The difficulty in maintaining a program in which musical skills and knowledge were given equal value to the other teaching material suggested that Jill was concerned that this form of integration was likely to be what Bresler (1995) describes as the *subservient approach*, where the skills and knowledge of one subject area are more prominent, or given greater emphasis, within the interdisciplinary process, with the arts being used to serve the content of the basic academic curriculum.

To work effectively within an interdisciplinary framework, Jill had to liaise with the classroom teachers, as it was expected that the themes explored in the generalist classroom would continue to be investigated in the music classroom. Jill described collaboration as always having been something she had tried to do, regardless of her workplace, as she believed collaborative partnerships were critical to effective teaching. She said, “I’ve always had two-way dialogue in the state school and here. They’d go past and talk to me, or they’d give me their program and say, ‘This term, Year 4 is doing rainforests!’” (interview, August 25, 2010). This willingness to collaborate could have reflected her experience as the sole music teacher at her previous school and her perceived, consequent need to build partnerships with the generalist teachers.

The need to work collaboratively beyond her subject area at Crowley School contributed to Jill’s participation in the practice of the community. The use of the inquiry framework provided a form of reification, through the process of using an artifact, such as a teaching program, to influence the behaviour of others (Wenger, 1998). In this context, ideas and understandings were recorded in programming documentation that represented understandings constructed by Jill and the generalist teachers. Just as the combination of participation and reification forms the identity of a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), the expectation that interdisciplinary themes would be taught indicated that music-focused participation was emerging as part of the practice of the Crowley School teaching community through the interdisciplinary inquiry-based approach to teaching.
Similarly, the staff at Kent School used the same inquiry approach to curriculum design, although James’s approach to implementing the framework contrasted with Jill’s.

James: This is really only the first year I’ve been getting my head around it.
Michele: How long has Kent [School] been using it?
James: Oh, since a couple of years before me. This is my fifth year. I did a course in Adelaide last year and basically, as a specialist, they’ve asked us to link in with one unit per year group per year. They understand we can’t do an inquiry approach with everything we do.
Michele: Is [the organisation] allowing you to do that or the school?
James: The school is allowing us to do this. My programming has to be done on the [the organisation’s] planner and, to be honest, we have specific skills we have to teach and within one lesson you can cover a huge range of skills. (Interview, February 23, 2011)

Both James and Jill identified the problematic aspect of the program being the concern that music would be subservient to other subject areas; however, whereas Jill viewed collaboration with generalist teachers as vital to the implementation of the framework, James seemed to be concerned with the impact of the framework on his own teaching and planning. It is possible that James’s interpretation of the framework focused largely on the implications for documentation and planning, that is, the reified aspect of the framework rather than the participatory elements, such as the need for collaboration. Wenger (1998) cautions that overemphasis on reification with limited opportunities for interaction can lead to insufficient participation to generate new meaning for the community. James required more time and more structured opportunities to work collaboratively with the generalist teachers in order to successfully negotiate meaning. He seemed to be aware of this as a deficit in the implementation of the framework, stating, “In an ideal school inquiry approach, I would be in with the classroom teacher and we’d be working collaboratively but that model doesn’t happen here” (interview, February 23, 2011). This was consistent with the findings of Barry (2004), whose case study of four specialist teachers implementing a specific integrated curriculum revealed that the process could be frustrating, due to the lack of time and administrative support.

Whereas the teachers at Crowley School and Kent School were committed to an interdisciplinary framework, interdisciplinary teaching involving participation between generalist teachers and specialist teachers was not part of the practice of the music department at United Academy. Melinda believed this decision had been made because of the role identities of the staff as music teachers, stating, “There’s no integration and we don’t try to do this. I would do it if asked, but the class program is purely music learning. This has been a
deliberate decision because we are music educators” (interview, May 25, 2011). This also suggested that there was a perception that the study of music could become viewed as subservient to other subject areas if cross-curriculum practices were employed (Berke, 2000). Similarly, Justin (St Alfred’s College) rejected the notion that music should be integrated with other curriculum areas, due to the potential for this to lead to teaching in which music is subordinate to other curriculum areas (Bresler, 1995).

In the government schools, I did, if they were doing Australian history or something. These days I just focused on music. That starts to dilute music. I have to then say if I pick an Australian folk song, I have to go fishing and look for concepts to make it relevant…and it [integration] dilutes the real learning. It becomes a process of choosing repertoire and then fishing for musical concepts. (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011)

This suggested also that Justin was content not to engage in cross-discipline collaboration with generalist teachers and did not support this practice.

Curriculum design and the availability of supportive structures affected the interactions between the music specialist teachers and their generalist teacher colleagues, as well as the extent that identity characteristics were mutually recognised.

**Specialist Teachers**

Just as the teacher participants had contrasting experiences in engaging in the practice of music teaching with generalist teachers, differing opportunities for the participants to engage in collaboration with other specialist music teachers within their school contexts were discussed during their semi-structured interviews. These opportunities were either determined by school structures or participants’ personal preferences. In the majority of government schools, the music specialists were operating as sole providers of music education, whereas the teachers in independent schools seemed to have more access to other music specialist teachers within their contexts, usually due to the existence of a music department connected to the secondary school.

The community of practice in which Melinda operated at the United Academy primarily consisted of music teachers within the department, who operated longitudinally throughout the school by teaching classes from Kindergarten through to Year 12. This enabled their practice to clearly focus on music education. Collaboration between specialist teachers was necessary within this context, due to the structure of the teaching load, with each teacher working across the various age groups of the school community (Melinda, interview, May 25, 2011). The choice of a spiral approach to curriculum design and the emphasis on maintaining a highly sequential program where concepts were revisited in increasing
complexity meant that communication between the staff was vital in order to ensure that the teachers had a clear understanding of the progression of musical development as students moved through the school system. The longitudinal and collaborative approach to professional learning that was evident in this setting is supported by the findings of Stanley et al. (2014) as a means to achieve the implementation of a vertically aligned curriculum and to develop teacher understandings across the continuum of learning.

In contrast, Justin was the only music classroom teacher working in the Junior School at St Alfred’s College. Although there was a music department operating in the secondary part of the school, he chose not to liaise or seek opportunities to form connections with these staff members.

Michele: How much do you liaise with the teachers in the secondary part of the school?
Justin: Oh, barely. I liaise with the tutors, the peripatetic teachers, but not with my colleagues in the senior school. They are aware of what I do, vaguely, but once about three or four years ago, I explained what I do and that’s about it. (Interview, March 16, 2011)

Whereas it is conceivable that Justin and the secondary music teachers could have formed a community of practice, it seemed that Justin’s preference was to demarcate a boundary between his practice and that of the other music teachers and to not act as a broker; that is, to not form connections across communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). Justin’s preference to operate in isolation from other practitioners may have been because of his confidence in his identity as a primary music teacher. Additionally, it reflected the period of time when he worked in three schools in a part-time capacity, five days per week, which could have led to his expectation that he did not need to work alongside other music teachers. Instead, Justin indicated that he tended to work relationally with the peripatetic music teachers who were responsible for co-curricular ensembles and instrumental teaching. This drew from his experiences as a performer and the value that he placed on his identity as a musician, which was reinforced by his support of the school’s decision to primarily base the selection of peripatetic teachers on their success as performers rather than their teaching expertise (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011).

At Crowley School, Jill had limited opportunities to work alongside the music specialist teacher for Kindergarten to Year 2 classes due to their location on different campuses (Jill, interview, August 25, 2010). The two campuses were not within walking distance of each other, and the different locations of the campuses not only served as a physical marker of boundary, but also created an obvious marker due to the distinction within
the school between the separate infants and primary departments. The degree that markers form a boundary is dependent on how the marker affects participation (Wenger, 1998) and, in this case, Jill’s comment regarding the physical locations of the campuses in relation to each other suggested that a boundary was in place.

Michele:  Do you liaise with the Kinder to Year 2 music teacher?
Jill: Not really – we’re on separate campuses!  (Interview, August 25, 2010)

Instead of engaging in participation with the Kindergarten to Year 2 music teacher, she had formed positive relationships with some of the secondary music teachers and instrumental tutors, as she mentioned, “I make myself go up to the secondary [music department]. I have a good relationship with the string teacher and, to a lesser extent, with the band guy and woodwind guys” (Jill, interview, August 25, 2010). The secondary music department’s location on the same campus as the Junior School of Crowley School assisted in overcoming any marker of boundary between the primary and secondary sections of the school.

Whereas the other teacher participants operating within the government school system had limited opportunities to work collegially with other specialist music teachers within their schools, Kate benefited from partnership with other specialists when she was first employed at Evergreen Primary School.

When I came in 1995, there were three of us doing part-time music. They were all like me: all secondary trained, all had worked in secondary schools, and all had an interest in choral work and working in primary schools. (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010)

During this initial employment, Kate appreciated the knowledge and expertise of these teachers and the opportunity to mutually engage in music education. It is possible that their shared similarities assisted her in developing an inbound trajectory into the preexisting community of practice. When the other teachers left the school and her teaching load increased, she began working with another music teacher, Joy.

Joy, a colleague, teaches music on Friday. We have five days of music RFF in the school, and I do four of them and Joy comes in and takes the other day. I take the senior choir and Joy takes district choir. (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010)

Kate’s early experiences of entering what was likely to have been an existing community of practice between the music teachers may have created a self-expectation of collaboration between music specialist teachers and, consequently, contributed to the development of a community of practice with her colleague, Joy. These teachers may also have benefited from shared meanings of gestures (Mead, 1936/1967), through their shared identities as music specialist teachers.
Leadership

Just as support from teachers was seen as an important component of the practice in some of the participants’ communities, the support from school executive staff was considered influential in establishing music as part of the practice and the school’s domain of knowledge. This is consistent with learning community literature that emphasises the role of school leadership teams and principals in ensuring that teachers have access to resources and time for collaboration (DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Stoll et al., 2006) and that professional development is systemic (Fullan, 2002).

Three of the professional development providers identified the importance of support from school principals as critical to the success of school music programs. These statements were significant due to the wide exposure these participants had to music specialist teachers and programs through their roles as music education consultants. Mary and Angela particularly noted the influence of principals in establishing a school culture that values music, which could also be interpreted as the principal contributing to the shaping of a school’s domain of knowledge, as conceptualised by Wenger (1998). Mary said, “The principal contributes to the success of the music program and sets the tone of the school” (interview, July 6, 2010). Angela stated,

Music specialists in primary schools need a good principal who believes in the value of music education and supports it. This leads to the best music programs. The parents and general community must be supportive; this often comes from the principal. (Interview, May 5, 2010)

As well as identifying the contribution principals make to the success of music programs in schools, Kathy further outlined the influence a principal could have in terms of time and financial status, stating, “The principal must support the music program because then money and time will be allocated to music” (interview May 12, 2010). In summary, these professional learning consultants believed the role of the principal to be pivotal in to the establishment and maintenance of a music-focused practice in a school. The relationships of communities of practice to their official organisations can be described as a continuum from what is unrecognisable to its members and the organisation community through to an institutionalised community that is given an official status and function (Wenger et al., 2002). The support of a principal can assist in achieving the latter, whereby the community is perceived to be of such value that it becomes part of the school’s structure and is thus legitimised.

According to Kate, a motivating factor for principals to continue with the Evergreen
Primary School music program was the involvement of the parent body in the practice of the community and their subsequent expectation that music will be an integral part of the school. Since Kate commenced teaching at the school, there were four principals and, as a result of parental involvement and expectation, each one supported the program. She described one of the previous principals as not having a musical background and coming from a school in which there was little music. She said, “The last one didn’t know what to expect. He wasn’t musical, but he had to support it because it was expected at the school and so he came to see the value of the music” (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010). This revealed that music was considered part of the school’s domain and the principal was expected to accept music education as part of the school’s practice. Similarly, the principals legitimised the existence of a community of practice focused on music and enabled it to become part of the organisational structure of the school. The survival of this community was also the result of the active membership of parents in the community of practice, as Kate had given a parent committee responsibility for the school’s instrumental ensembles (interview, September 8, 2010).

Music was also highly valued by the principal and teaching staff of Highgrove Primary School. When he first was first employed at the school, Daniel found that he had to be proactive about communicating the value of music education to these stakeholders to ensure that it was not taken for granted (Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010). As a result, it became part of the practice of the community. Daniel benefited from the presence of principal who initially invited him to restart the music program in the school for the decade he has been staff member. He described her as “allowing him to take control of the program, without micromanaging” him (interview, June 23, 2010). Furthermore, the principal’s willingness to allow Daniel’s participation in design of the new music facility reflected a sense of distributed leadership whereby teachers are encouraged to lead development work in schools (Harris, 2003).

In contrast, Willa had “no input into the building program” at St Juliana’s Catholic School that led to the loss of her designated teaching space (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010) and she attributed this to a change in principal, stating, “The previous principal pushed to keep a room, but he left at the end of the [building] program and the new principal had no idea what was going on” (interview, October 8, 2010).

A change in principal also affected Kylie at Arlington Primary School:

Michele: Does the school community value music?
Kylie: I don’t think it’s particularly valued in general. In the past it’s been quite high and our band program stands out a lot, but we have a new principal and she doesn’t value it as much as our old principal. I’m yet to find out how that’s going to go. Our old principal would always find money for instruments. (Interview, August 5, 2011)

In the previous chapter, I wrote of the intended changes to the music program at Burumarri Primary School where Denise was teaching. These changes were in response to a new principal determining that she would return to a fulltime class teacher role. Again, this illustrated the impact that a change in school leadership can have on music-focused communities of practice. When communities of practice are first formed, their value is not always apparent to outsiders (Wenger et al., 2002), and it is likely that the new principal did not appreciate the potential value of the emergent community. Without the time allocated for a specific music teacher role to act as coordinator of the group and enable members to gradually develop shared knowledge, it is likely that the music-centred community of practice that was beginning to emerge at the school would not continue.

Although Keyburgh Primary School had a longstanding music program, one of Louise’s frustrations when employed at the school was the lack of interest that the executive showed in the music program. While the leadership team wanted to maintain music specialist lessons, she did not benefit from the formation of a mentoring partnership with an experienced teacher or the regular feedback she had expected to receive when commencing teaching.

The school was initially interested in what I was doing with the kids, so they [the executive] scheduled a meeting a couple of months into my staffing. I had a meeting with a member of the executive staff and she looked over my curriculum documents. I guess it was a checkup. I was supposed to have follow up meetings but it never eventuated and they just let me do what I like. (Louise, interview, May 17, 2011)

Despite the music program seeming to be part of the schools’ identity, Louise appeared to be marginal to any community of practice operating, possibly because of the compacted teaching load and her own limited access to RFF, as some of her release time was scheduled 10 minutes prior to the conclusion of the school day (Louise, interview, May 17, 2011). Her statements about the school executive suggested they were neither aware of the quality of Louise’s teaching nor interested in her development as a teacher. This also suggests they were unaware of the value that a music-focused community of practice could bring to the school. In describing the meeting where her teaching program was evaluated, Louise indicated that this executive staff member did not have the capabilities to determine whether Louise was teaching effectively.
Michele: Did that person have any sort of music background or knowledge?
Louise: Not at all. They don’t know how much work it involves or how much preparation. It wasn’t uncommon for them to say, “we have an assembly or a music night, can you organise the whole school to perform this song?” I said “fine”, but I can’t then teach my program. They didn’t care what I did in the lesson so long as I taught music. They didn’t understand the content or what it involved. (Louise, interview, May 17, 2011)

In this instance, Louise’s feelings of isolation might have been overcome if she had been given access to a music-teaching mentor, as research indicates that music teachers feel more supported when mentored by fellow music educators than those in other disciplines (Conway et al., 2002; Krueger, 1999).

**Summary of Participation**

The participants described contrasting experiences of engagement in music education. Seven participants were engaged in communities of practice whereby music formed part of the actions of a socially connected group (Table 5.1.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Highgrove Primary School</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denise</td>
<td>Burumarri Primary School</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>P/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>Evergreen Primary School</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Kent School</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jill</td>
<td>Crowley School</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin</td>
<td>St Alfred’s College</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melinda</td>
<td>United Academy</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note P/T = Part time employment, F/T = Full time employment

Although Denise was involved in a fledgling community of practice in which she could be considered a core member, with the active assistance of generalist teachers, the change in principal and subsequent discontinuation of specialist music lessons may have led to the discontinuation of the community of practice. This indicated that the principal was

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14 The experiences of Kelly, Joanne, Veronika and Rebecca are omitted from this summary as they are examined in detail in Chapter Seven.
external to the emerging practice of this group and music was not part of the school’s domain of knowledge. In this setting, the class teachers potentially fluctuated between active and peripheral membership, and the parent committee formed a core group through their active organisation of the instrumental ensemble program.

Both Jill (Crowley School) and Melinda (United Academy) had opportunities to engage in the practice of music education with other music specialist teachers; however, Jill had also extended her community of practice to include generalist teachers through the inquiry framework of teaching in the school. Similarly, James had developed a community of practice involving the peripatetic tutors and some generalist teachers who tended to remain on the periphery of the community. Justin is included in Table 5.1., as it seemed he had formed a community of practice with some of the peripatetic music staff. It is likely that there was another community of practice operating in the school that involved members of the secondary music department, as music was part of the school’s domain and function. However as was discussed earlier in the chapter, a boundary was in operation between the practices of the two communities.

In contrast to the participants listed in Table 5.1., five participants did not seem to be involved in communities where music was part of the practice within their schools (Table 5.2.). It is important to acknowledge that these music teachers may have been involved in other communities of practice within their school settings that developed domains in areas other than music; however, these experiences were not explored in the scope of this study.

Table 5.2.

*Participants Not Involved in a School Community of Practice*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
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<th>School Type</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kylie</td>
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<td>Government</td>
<td>F/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>Keyburgh Primary School</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>P/T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marian</td>
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<td>P/T</td>
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<td>Eleanor</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Willa</td>
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<td>systemic</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note* P/T = Part time employment, F/T = Full time employment
Whereas it could be expected that the structures in place at St Juliana’s Catholic School were designed for the evolution of a community of practice focused on music, due to the learning spaces and enforced co-teaching arrangements, the class teachers’ reluctance to engage in music suggested that this was neither part of a practice nor the school’s domain. It is conceivable that Willa, as a longstanding member of staff, was engaged in other forms of learning communities within the school.

The itinerant nature of Marian’s employment at four schools, including Springtown Primary School, inhibited the opportunities for interactions needed to develop communities of practice in these locations. Similarly, the part-time nature of Louise’s employment at Keyburgh Primary School and subsequent compacted timetable reduced her capacity to form mutual relationships with other staff, as well as the lack of support she received from the leadership team. In fact, with the exception of Marian, all participants listed in Table 5.2 reported limited support from their school principals, which gives credence to the suggested impact of school leadership on the emergence of communities of practice.

**Intersecting Communities**

In addition to any school-located communities of practice, some participants were involved in music-focused communities of practice beyond their school contexts. This was consistent with Wenger’s (1998) assertion that communities of practice do not exist in isolation from other practices and people can belong to more than one community of practice. These intersecting communities and their boundaries can be considered the landscapes of practice that contain professional knowledge (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Within the participants’ landscapes of practice, three particular communities were identified in addition to their school communities. These communities were concerned with professional practice and other dimensions such as professional learning (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015).

**Professional Learning Experiences**

Several of the participants identified a desire to broaden their landscapes of practice and connect with other specialist teachers, beyond their school contexts, sometimes to address the intellectual isolation experienced as the only music specialist teacher on staff, and access to professional development courses was considered a means through which this could occur. In this sense, it seemed that these participants were seeking opportunities to interact with others who mutually shared common symbols of behaviour (Blumer, 1937). As well as addressing the need for ongoing growth through professional learning that is critical to
teacher agency (Coldron & Smith, 1999), the participants desired experiences that would facilitate learning in practice, described by Wenger (1998) as developing mutual relationships; understanding and reshaping an enterprise; and acquiring discourses.

The need for connection between specialist teachers was acknowledged by professional development providers, who distinguished between the needs of generalist teachers attending their courses and those of specialist music teachers. In speaking of her work in presenting seminars to support educational kits that prepare students for live orchestral performances, Kathy said, “Specialists coming to courses want lessons to take back to the classroom. They want time to interact with their colleagues, get some new activities and maybe share some ideas” (interview, May 12, 2010). This contrasted with the needs of generalist teachers attending the courses who wanted to obtain specific music skills, such as reading the rhythmic notation in the kit. Mary, another professional learning provider also addressed interaction with colleagues in her description of experiences pertaining to the delivery of Orff Schulwerk focused professional learning (interview, July 6, 2010), as elaborated later in this section of the chapter.

Similarly, Jill (Crowley School) identified the need for specialist teachers to form connections with each other through her experiences of providing professional development courses to generalist teachers and music specialists. “Specialist teachers want time to talk to each other at PD, to talk about ideas. You’re in a group of people that have got a million ideas and you want to talk ideas through” (Jill, interview, August 25, 2010). This statement is indicative of the need to align engagement to an enterprise, which can involve deciding how to resolve contrasting perceptions of what constitutes the enterprise (Wenger, 1998). Jill attributed this need to the isolation experienced by some music specialist teachers.

When I go and run those things [professional learning] there’s usually a combination of general primary teachers and specialists. The general primary teachers want everything you’ve got, every lesson plan. The specialists really just want to connect because we’re really quite isolated within the schools. (Jill, interview, August 25, 2010)

Jill related positive experiences of the professional development networks available to teachers in government schools while she was working in that school system. Through a network, she developed working relationships with other teachers that she used as she developed a scope and sequence document to be used at Crowley Junior School and which she felt was lacking in the current NSW syllabus. This is consistent with Wenger’s description of participation in groups of communities of practice, through which members
share ideas across communities that can then be implemented within the organisation (Wenger, 1998).

**Geographic isolation.**

Two of the participants who worked in regional locations cited geographic distance as prohibiting them from accessing professional learning networks, which consequently limited their engagement in constellations of practice. The regional location of Arlington Primary School in northern NSW inhibited Kylie’s participation in learning communities due to its geographic distance from major cities where professional learning courses were more readily available. This served to restrict her collaboration with other music specialist teachers. Kylie said, “Location is definitely an issue. Our choir went and sang at the choral concert in the Opera House [in Sydney]. If you’re in Sydney, you have more access to things, but there’s not a lot happening up here” (interview, August 5, 2011).

Similarly, the regional locations of the four schools where Marian taught in central NSW were also identified as inhibiting her access to other groups of music specialist teachers.

I would like to go to more PD courses. They come up but they might be at Carlingford [Sydney] at a day I’m teaching at another school. Distance is a big factor! To get to one school, it’s an hour. On different days each week, I drive 100 kilometres, 80 kilometres, 65 kilometres to Springtown, 75 kilometres out of town. (Marian, interview, May 16, 2012)

Although people with related backgrounds, such as music teachers, can conceivably participate in a community of practice with less mutual engagement than if they had non-related backgrounds (Wenger, 1998), the limited proximity to other practices for these two participants proved to restrict their engagement.

**Financial factors.**

Limited funding for such opportunities sometimes inhibited access to specialist teacher communities of practice or networks beyond the participants’ school contexts. Financial restrictions also reflected the prioritisation of other aspects of education in the schools. In Kylie’s case, the school’s funding for professional learning was allocated in order to meet priority areas determined by the school.

There are no opportunities for PD [professional development] and money is an issue. The school is supportive if it falls in line with the PD priorities, for example positive behaviour for learning. Ninety percent of the PD funding has gone to that, so if I wanted to go to a conducting workshop, it would need to come out of my own funds. There isn’t the money available to spend. (Kylie, interview, August 5, 2011)

Similarly, Denise cited the cost of professional learning courses as a constraint to her
participation in opportunities to network beyond the school. She said, “I’m given opportunities for PD, but it is limited. There’s limited funding to the school and most PD has gone to the English committee” (interview, October 18, 2011). Willa also expressed the emphasis on key development areas for staff at St Juliana’s Catholic School and the resulting financial constraints as impeding her potential access to professional learning experiences that could have assisted her in forming connections with other specialist music teachers.

I hardly ever go to PD [professional development] and I often don’t receive information at school about what’s on. I often have to pay for my own PD, as there’s not really a budget for any of the staff. Most PD has focused on technology, learning spaces & religious education. (Willa, interview, October 8, 2010)

For these teachers, participation in external professional learning that could have facilitated mutual engagement with other music educators was restricted due to other school priorities. These priorities were indicative of the practices of their school communities and reflected the low prioritisation of music as a practice. Although music was emerging in the practice of Burumarri Primary School due to Denise’s role, the change of principal and subsequent discontinuation of the music program made it unlikely that further music-focused constellations of practice would become available to her in the future.

Generally, individual professional learning courses did not constitute communities of practice due to the lack of sustained mutual engagement in these forums. However, from participation in a course, a community of practice could be spontaneously generated if participants subsequently came together to address their need for learning partners and colleagues (Wenger et al., 2002). The lack of financial support for professional learning, either due to school economic issues or place of music in the school community domain, frequently prohibited the active participation of these teachers in communities of practice beyond their schools.

Orff Association

Whereas the professional learning experiences could potentially lead to the development of spontaneous communities of practice, membership of the Orff Association of NSW and engagement in the levels courses offered by the association provided some participants with avenues to engage in an intentionally created community of practice. As was discussed in the previous chapter, participation in the Orff Association’s levels courses also contributed to the formation of the role identities of some of the teacher participants. In speaking of the impact of the Orff levels courses, Mary described the benefits of mutual engagement as follows:
It offers them that network of really great, practical teachers who will support them in the beginning of their teaching or if they want to try different techniques. The levels courses are a really important part of what they do. (Mary, interview, July 6, 2010)

Mary’s focus on the networking opportunities afforded by participation was indicative of the emphasis on expected participation amongst the teachers undertaking courses. In this regard, the focus was on facilitating participation, rather than merely emphasising the aspects of reification that were present through the formalisation of the approach. This duality of participation and reification is pivotal to the success of a community (Wenger, 1998) and is discussed in greater detail later in this section.

In addition to the support she received at school from executive staff and her music-teaching colleague, Kate was able to avoid professional isolation through participation in professional learning provided by the Orff Association. She received a financial contribution from Evergreen Primary School to attend the biennial conference for music teachers that was organised by the association and she was also a regular participant in the Orff levels courses (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010). Kate’s description of her experiences with the Orff Association revealed that a community of practice had emerged (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010). As Kate stated, this enabled her to “meet like-minded people, share resources and ideas. It was the best source for collaboration” (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010). Her experiences were indicative of her direct engagement in the practice of the Orff network and that she was learning the competence of the community (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). This engagement also seemed to have been enhanced by her alignment to the competence of the community through her eagerness to embrace this approach to teaching in response to her perceived needs of the students at her school (Kate, interview, September 8, 2010). It is likely that the development of significant symbols through participation that are associated with the Orff approach also contributed to the organised social behaviour of network members (Mead, 1934/1967) and positively enhanced Kate’s experience.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the emergence of Orff Schulwerk within the practice of the music department at the United Academy led to an outsourcing of their professional development primarily to the NSW Orff Schulwerk Association. This decision connected this community of practice to the network of Orff practitioners. New staff members were enrolled in an Orff professional development course, in which they progressed sequentially through the four levels of training. The decision to outsource the professional development seemed to ensure that this part of the practice of the community continues, despite changes to staffing. Wenger’s (1998) conception of a community of practice is that
the practice continues to evolve depending on the membership of the community. While this approach appeared to meet the community’s need for a consistent and sequential program across the thirteen years of formal schooling, it may have proven problematic should individual members of the community seek to implement other pedagogies. In this sense, the practice of the competence of the community could be a liability that blinded members to other forms of competence in music education (Wenger et al., 2002).

Central to each practice is reification, which then becomes a focus area for the negotiation of meaning. It is important to note that Wenger (1998) indicates that reification can be both a process and a product and, in this context, the process of undertaking the Orff levels courses served to provide reification in addition to opportunities for participation. As participation and reification are considered the two elements essential to engagement in a practice, the duality of these in the Orff levels courses contributed to the perceived success of the programs by Kate, Joanne and Melinda. Moreover, the success of the network could be attributed to the identifiable value delivered to participants through offering practical solutions to music education issues, as within the network participants could report the impact of an applied idea (Wenger et al., 2002). The combination of participation and reification possibly overcame the challenges in building trust and personal relationships that are common to geographically distributed communities of practice (Wenger et al., 2002).

**Independent School Music Teachers Group**

The participants from independent schools were able to attend termly meetings of music teachers working in NSW independent schools. The network meetings were designed to support teachers through the provision of professional learning and the development of collegiality. The group could also be considered a geographically distributed community, as this form of a community of practice spanned the organisational boundaries of individual schools (Wenger et al., 2002). The participants involved in the meetings revealed contrasting insights into the usefulness of the network that seemed to be attributed to perceptions surrounding the practice of the group and the knowledge defined within this community of practice, that is, the competence (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Homogeneity is neither a requirement of a community of practice nor a result of a community’s development and members (Wenger, 1998). The participants’ contrasting interpretations of what should constitute competence did not imply that a community of practice was not in operation within the association of music teachers.

James spoke positively of the group and the leadership role he had undertaken in its
organisational structure for two years, thus revealing himself to have played a core membership role. In this role, he strove to develop the group’s practice to be focused on learning. “I made an effort to make it more developmental for the staff who go along because sometimes it was ‘bring along your choral music to share’” (James, interview, February 23, 2011). One of the issues identified by James that hindered the members’ interactions was catering for the diversity in teaching styles and approaches, for example, relating to the use of technology.

The person in charge of the group needs to almost have a vision of ‘this is what needs to be covered’, but that’s hard when we’re running it ourselves. We had a guy from Smartboard technology and some of the people there were very uppity about it.\(^{15}\) (James, interview, February 23, 2011)

This suggested that the group experienced conflict in trying to crystallize a domain that would inspire members to contribute, guide their learning and assign meaning to their actions (Wenger et al., 2002). It is possible that the termly meetings were not frequent enough for face-to-face interactions between the members. Alternatively, one-to-one networking between meetings undertaken by core members and peripheral members may have assisted in developing the sense of community and overcome some of the difficulties associated with the distributed nature of the group (Wenger et al., 2002).

Justin also identified the differing priorities and interests amongst the community members. He recounted the difficulties he experienced when presenting his curriculum ideas at a meeting of the group (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011). Justin indicated that other teachers talked through his presentation and did not appear to be interested in learning, leading to a feeling of marginalisation as a result of his perception that the community was not accepting his contribution to learning emanating through his sharing of competence and personal experiences (Farnsworth et al., 2016; Wenger, 2000).

James and Justin both identified the competitive nature of the independent school system as constraining mutual engagement within the group:

Sometimes the egos come into it and they send me an email saying they can’t come because … and the reason is showing off? Sometimes it can be a bit competitive. There are some characters in the music group who can take over. (James, interview, February 23, 2011)

Justin related this competitiveness to music festivals organised by the group, saying, “The performance is all about doing something to set ourselves apart, and that’s the killer instinct!”

\(^{15}\) A Smartboard is a touch sensitive interactive whiteboard.
Justin and James’s observations did not necessarily imply that the group of teachers had not evolved as a community of practice, as mutual engagement establishes relationships amongst people and these can entail cases of disagreement, conflict and competitiveness (Wenger, 1998). It is possible that the group had moved beyond being a set of interrelated practices or a network to having a mutually negotiated joint enterprise centred on a domain (Farnsworth et al., 2016), and the participants’ differing experiences of participation could have then been suggestive of their degree of membership and whether they were core, peripheral or active members (Wenger et al., 2002). Community membership is generally fluid, so members of this group may have fluctuated between core, active and peripheral memberships, with the latter potentially being limited to observation, possibly extending to some form of engagement.

Justin, Joanne and James stated that Orff Schulwerk was a regular focus of the group (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011; Joanne, interview December 19, 2010; James, interview, February 23, 2011), which suggested that Orff Schulwerk was becoming part of the domain of the music teachers’ group, in addition to that of the Orff Schulwerk Association. The interest in Orff Schulwerk expressed by some members of the music teacher network provided an opportunity for overlap of communities. This could be considered a constellation, where one community of practice is connected to another through similar enterprises or members in common, or shared discourses (Wenger, 1998). This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven with regard to Joanne’s experiences.

According to Wenger (1998) the practice of a community can cause a boundary through three dimensions:

1) Participants form close relationships and develop idiosyncratic ways of engaging with one another, which outsiders cannot easily enter.
2) They have a detailed and complex understanding of their enterprise as they define it, which outsiders may not share.
3) They have developed a repertoire for which outsiders miss shared references. (p. 113)

The emergence of Orff Schulwerk as part of the domain of the group may have formed a boundary between those members who had a shared social history of participation in Orff-based teaching or training and those who did not. The nature of this boundary contributed to Justin’s peripheral status within the music teachers’ group, because his interactions with members of the group led to his perception that other primary music specialists were only
interested in the Orff-Schulwerk approach. He said, “Years ago, I found [the group] useful and I wanted someone to do something unique. I read what they had offer and it was Orff, and I thought ‘who cares?’” (Justin, interview, March 16, 2011). This statement was also symptomatic of Justin’s self-perceived marginalisation within the group. Had he felt affinity with his perception of the group’s domain (Orff Schulwerk), it is likely he found the experience of marginalisation painful (Farnsworth et al., 2016); however, Justin’s lack of identification with Orff Schulwerk would, therefore, have been more likely to prompt a search for trajectory in community membership in alternate contexts.

In contrast, it could be expected that Melinda’s participation in Orff levels courses would therefore open her to being a core member of the music teacher’s network, due to her shared practice and social history with other Orff practitioners (Farnsworth et al., 2016), as discussed in the previous chapter of the thesis. Instead, Melinda’s membership seemed to be mostly peripheral.

Michele: Do you go to the music teachers’ group at all?
Melinda: Not often [laughs]
Michele: Is it a helpful resource?
Melinda: If there’s a need, it’s good to go but I get their minutes and I look at the topics. If it’s something we’re already doing, I’d much prefer to be here teaching my students than having to leave. (Interview, May 25, 2011)

It is possible that the community of practice that operated at the United Academy provided a depth of sustained practice so that she did not need to be a core member of the network, enabling her to remain in a peripheral membership. This was shown by the way she chose not to attend meetings that focused on areas that already formed part of her enacted pedagogy. Consequently, to help all of the music teachers experience full membership, the group needed to offer a variety of community activities and also provide time within meetings for the individual conversations that could assist in connecting peripheral members (Wenger et al., 2002).

Summary

This chapter has described and discussed the participants’ experiences of communities of practice, both in their school settings and through constellations of practice. Mutual engagement in music education between music specialist teachers and generalist teachers is influenced by the shared recognition of mutual aspects of identities. The confidence of generalist teachers to engage in music education practices also affects their willingness to participate in music-focused communities of practice. Limited confidence can overcome by
the provision of professional learning for generalist teachers through professional development and the support of a music specialist in a classroom setting. These approaches increase participation in the practice of music and enable the development of a shared repertoire of resources that create meaning for the community of practice.

The availability and location of music teaching facilities influence participation. The central location of music teaching facilities can assist the visibility of music programs and lead to opportunities for specialist music teachers to engage in practice with generalist teachers. Music teaching spaces that are used for other purposes by generalist teachers can serve as a form of boundary object to connect a specialist teacher’s practice to that of the other teachers and facilitate collaboration.

Limited time allocated to the enactment of music teacher roles can restrict the implementation of their music programs and their ability to work collaboratively with other staff members. Similarly, generalist teachers experience time-related pressures that reduce their availability to work collaboratively with music specialist teachers. This can lead to the expectation that music education is the sole responsibility of the music specialist, thus decreasing the likelihood that music is part of a community’s practice.

Specialist teachers might choose to expand their practice through connections with other specialist teachers in the landscape of practice beyond their school contexts. This can occur through the networking opportunities available as a result of participation in professional learning sessions that can develop into constellations of practice. Access to professional learning may be constrained by school budgets, contrasting school priority areas or geographic isolation.

Progression through a series of professional learning opportunities can reify the practice of that community. In distributed communities of practice where the members are from different organisations, time must be given for the interactions required to crystallize the domain of the community. Where there are overlapping practices between communities, boundaries may be formed between music specialist teachers who have shared histories of engagement in a particular practice and those who do not, which can lead to participants feeling marginalised and assuming a peripheral membership.
Chapter Six
Music Teacher Identities

This chapter examines the formation of the music teacher role identities of the four participants selected for intensive case study investigation, as revealed through the analysis of the semi-structured interviews conducted in the first stage of the project and the intensive case studies undertaken in the second stage. Although the issue of music teacher identity has garnered considerable traction in music education literature, much has focused on the experiences of preservice teachers (see Ballantyne et al., 2012; Ferm, 2008; Freer and Bennett, 2012; Isbell, 2008; Roberts, 2004; Welch et al., 2010). Studies that have investigated the identities of experienced music teachers, such as that conducted by Ballantyne and Grootenboer (2012), have generally included participants who initially undertook music education qualifications and limited attention has been paid to trained generalist teachers operating in music specialist capacities. This chapter seeks to address these issues by exploring the emergent role identities of four experienced teachers, three of whom trained initially as generalist primary teachers.

The chapter begins with an overview of the participants’ career progressions from tertiary training through to their occupational contexts, at the time of the case studies. This chronological overview provides the reader with sequences of events that are theorised in the subsequent sections of the chapter. In Shifting Role Identities and Sub-Identities, I discuss the elements that contributed to changes in role identities and the shifts in identity prominence and identity salience that occurred, with reference to sub-identities that were nested within role identities. The section of the chapter entitled Music Teacher Role Identities investigates the various conceptions of music education held by participants and members of their school communities that informed their music teacher role identities and the interplay between the individuals and their enacted pedagogies. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the negotiation of identities within the case study contexts.

Overview of Participants

A brief overview of each participant’s background, case study context and rationale for inclusion in the second stage of research was provided in Chapter Three of the thesis. This section provides further information about the participants’ tertiary training, and early career experiences through to employment in the school in which the case study was undertaken. Much of the data for these overviews were gathered in the first stage semi-structured interviews of the research. In the subsequent sections of the chapter, these data are
compared with data collected during the intensive case studies for the purposes of theoretical analysis.

**Joanne**

Joanne’s desire to teach and share music with children led to her completing a two-year Teacher’s Certificate at a Teachers College in New Zealand. She described the music component of the course as “comprehensive”, as students were required to play an instrument, have a repertoire of 32 songs prepared for peer teaching situations, and demonstrate the necessary skills to teach the recorder. Although the course did not have a clearly defined music education methodology, the expected standards were high. Joanne did not attribute the coursework as being fundamental to her identity as a teacher; instead, she regarded her musical characteristics as inherent to her emerging teacher identity, stating that, “music was a major part of my life and something I saw as a way of sharing with students” (interview, December 19, 2010).

Joanne began her teaching career as a general primary teacher. Her first appointment as a music specialist teacher occurred in the 1970s when she was employed at an infants’ school (Kindergarten to Year 2) in inner Sydney, three days per week. This appointment was made in acknowledgement of the musical skills she had demonstrated while working as a generalist teacher. Joanne described the state of music education curriculum prior to the publication of the *Music (K-6): Syllabus and Support Statements* (New South Wales Department of Education, 1984) as having “no sequence or defined purpose”, and she experienced the pressure of finding repertoire herself that arose from an apparent limitation of available resources. Despite perceived inadequacies of the curriculum, she explained that the students were engaged in the lessons and she was able to draw from her prior experiences in music theatre and develop musical productions; however, the perceived lack of sequence or purpose led to her resignation from the position after three years at the school. Following her resignation, Joanne discontinued teaching while assuming the role as primary carer for her young children.

In the mid-1980s, Joanne was encouraged by a friend to apply for a position teaching music in a public primary school, with a teaching load of one day per week. Within the next three years, the role expanded to two and a half days per week and she was also appointed at another government school in the region to teach music two and a half days per week, thus working full time as a specialist music teacher across two locations.

Joanne remained employed in this capacity for a period of fifteen years, before
deciding to seek alternate employment. The desire for change was prompted by the lack of purpose that she felt after significant performance events at each school. Within weeks of the realisation that she should seek alternate employment, Joanne became aware that St Clotilde’s School, an independent girls’ school within the region, required a full time music specialist teacher for the Junior School (Kindergarten to Year 6). Joanne was appointed to the position and was pleased to discover that the school regularly staged musicals. This was the first independent school in which Joanne was employed and her first experience of working in a school in which the students remained for the duration of their primary and secondary schooling (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010).

At the time of the data collection, Joanne had been employed at St Clotilde’s School for twelve years. As well as classroom teaching, Joanne directed the school’s biennial musical and conducted the choral ensembles.

Kelly

Upon finishing her school education, Kelly underwent a three-year primary teacher-training course at a Teachers College in Sydney, from which she graduated in 1974. Within the course, she undertook a general study of music curriculum; however, she did not consider this to be a major study as equal time was allocated to the other curriculum areas. Throughout her candidature at Teachers College, Kelly was involved in musical theatre productions (Kelly, interview, June 16, 2010).

Kelly commenced her teaching career in a primary school as a teacher of kindergarten students. Her skills as a musician were quickly recognised within the school community through her organisation of music-related activities and provision of piano accompaniment at school assemblies. In response to this, she was invited to organise students for an inter-school festival performance. During her teaching career, Kelly began to interact with music education networks beyond the school context. She became involved in choral festivals, initially as an accompanist, and served as a musical director of a regional festival for six years. She was also appointed as the conductor of a regional choir comprised of students from primary and secondary government schools. The NSW State choral program was discontinued in 2009; however, Kelly remained an active participant in the regional choral network as a conductor.

Having established herself as a general primary teacher, Kelly transferred to a secondary school and initially worked as a teacher in a support unit for students with additional needs. A staffing change led to an internal restructure and she was appointed as a
teacher of secondary music, which included preparing students for the Higher School Certificate.\textsuperscript{16} Kelly’s decision to leave this music teaching position after seven years of service did not seem to be related to concerns about her ability to operate within the expected characteristics of a secondary music teacher, but was influenced by difficulties experienced in the high school context due to the students’ behavioural issues. On applying for a transfer, Kelly sought another secondary music position or a position in a support unit.

Despite seeking a secondary music or support unit position, Kelly was transferred to Parker Primary School in response to the school principal’s desire to employ a musically-experienced teacher, and, after a short period at the school, Kelly was asked to provide RFF through a music program. The music program gradually expanded to include all classes from Kindergarten to Year 6. At the time of the case study, Kelly had been employed at the school for a period of five years. Kelly was responsible for a percussion ensemble, string and recorder ensembles and the school’s choir (Kelly, interview, June 16, 2010).

\textbf{Veronika}

Having decided to become a general primary teacher at the conclusion of her secondary education, Veronika attended a regional College of Advanced Education and completed a Diploma of Teaching in three years of study. Veronika described the music component of the course as being the basic music curriculum studies offered at the college, which entailed two subjects (Veronika, interview, November 14, 2011).

Veronika initially began her teaching career as a general primary teacher who provided relief teaching and she calculated that she had worked in thirty-two schools in that capacity since beginning her teaching career in 1981. In 1985, Veronika was offered a position as a music specialist at Undala Primary School on the basis that she had been able to play some nursery rhymes on the piano during a kindergarten class. Veronika noted that the school’s principal made this decision. According to Veronika, the music program was already established as the classroom teachers indicated they were neither comfortable nor had the necessary competencies to teach music. Prior to Veronika’s appointment, the program was taught by her friend, Jean, who resigned following the development of damage to her vocal chords. Jean was also employed at Mandumala Primary School as the music teacher, where she remained for another six years until relocating to another region, at which point Veronika also became the music teacher at this school (Veronika, interview, November 14, 2011).

\textsuperscript{16} In NSW, the Higher School Certificate (HSC) is awarded to students who successfully complete Years 11 and 12.
The case study was undertaken in Undala Primary School, where Veronika had been teaching music for a period of 25 years. In addition to classroom music, she conducted the school’s bands and choir.

**Rebecca**

In contrast to the participants who elected to train as generalist primary teachers, Rebecca chose to commence undergraduate studies in music within a Conservatorium environment. This enabled her to study aspects of music education and continue intensive study of the viola. Within the diploma course, she completed some primary and secondary music education subjects, although Rebecca described the music education component as predominantly focused on secondary teaching. In addition to her tertiary studies, Rebecca also completed the Associate in Music, Australia (AMusA) diploma in viola (interview, May 19, 2010).

Upon graduation in 1979, Rebecca was initially employed as a music teacher in a secondary school. During this period of time, she continued to work as a performing musician and was engaged on a casual basis by an internationally acclaimed symphony orchestra. Rebecca also continued to perform in community chamber ensembles. After a period of teaching secondary school music, she worked for a decade in several independent high schools as a peripatetic instrumental teacher.

On returning to classroom teaching, following relocation to a regional area of NSW, Rebecca was employed by a music education organisation that provided learning experiences in schools for students considered to be experiencing disadvantage. The practitioners who worked for the music education organisation were referred to as professional artists with teaching experience who provided specialist lessons that used the arts to engage students in learning. The program emphasised the importance of learning experiences that were not reliant on students having obtained high levels of literacy. Under the auspices of this educational organisation, she was allocated one day per week to deliver a specific music program at Wandi Primary School. After one year of provision of this music service, Rebecca was invited by the principal to join the staff as a provider of music RFF teaching in response to the success of the program. She was initially appointed three days per week, which was increased to four days with one additional hour. As well as teaching classroom music,

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17 The AMusA is a diploma awarded by examination in music performance and music theory by the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB).
Rebecca conducted the school’s choir and string ensemble (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010). At the time of the case study, Rebecca was in her sixth year of employment at the school.

**Summary**

At the point of commencing tertiary training, these four participants did not intend to become primary music specialist teachers. Joanne, Kelly and Veronika intended to be general primary teachers, whereas Rebecca initially trained as a secondary music teacher. The subsequent years saw these participants assume roles as specialist music teachers and transform their professional identities accordingly. The remainder of the chapter investigates the aspects of identity formation that occurred as part of the dynamic continuum of development.

**Shifting Role Identities and Sub-Identities**

This section examines the shifts of role identities in hierarchies of prominence that occurred during the participants’ tertiary studies and early career experiences that contributed to the emergence of their respective music teacher role identities, sometimes through the shift of a musician identity in the participant’s hierarchy of prominence or identity salience. In some situations, participants experienced shifts in actual role identity, for example from that of a generalist primary teacher identity to a music teacher identity, whereas in other circumstances a sub-identity clustered within a role identity came to the fore, such as the musician identity becoming salient over the teacher identity, while enacting a music teacher role identity.

**Hierarchies of Prominence**

Part of the dynamic transformation of the participant’s identities occurred as sub-identities became more or less significant in their individual hierarchies of prominence, which was consistent with the theory of McCall and Simmons (1978). Similarly, the participants’ sub-identities became more or less likely to be enacted across contexts due to either the increase or decrease of the sub-identity in the individual’s identity salience (Stryker, 1980). The apparent sub-identities were generally consistent with those discussed in music education literature, such as musicians, performers or teachers (Ballantyne et al., 2012; Bernard, 2004; Pellegrino, 2010).

According to McCall and Simmons (1978), shifts in a hierarchy of prominence can be attributed to the extent that an individual invests in the aspect of identity, the degree that the individual believes in his or her imagined qualities and performance, and the scope of any
external role support. This was evident in changes of role identity (from generalist teacher to music teacher) and hierarchies of sub-identities. While these factors were seen across the cases, the formalisation of roles that occurred during the process of employment and through achievement of tertiary qualifications in music education was also significant. This could be considered as a form of reification, described by Wenger (1998) as the process of developing something concrete from an abstract concept. In this context, the formalisation of music education practices into the form of a recognised tertiary degree or diploma, or the bestowing of a work role title through a contract of employment may have reified the practice of music teaching.

Imagination.

Throughout the trajectory of identity development, the reconciliation of each participant’s imagined role identity as a music teacher and her appraisals of her performance contributed to the formation of a music teacher role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). McCall and Simmons (1978) describe these imaginings as “usually rather idealized, incorporating standards and achievement that are unlikely to be consistently attained…in the individual’s actual day-to-day performances relevant to that role” (p. 65).

Veronika’s formation of an imagined conception of a music teacher role identity could be attributed to her ongoing social interactions with other music educators within the community. In describing her relationship with her secondary music teacher, Helen, that extended beyond the time that Veronika was a school student, she said, “I’ve also been very lucky in that my very close friend who lived next door for twenty years was my high school music teacher. She is an amazing musician and teacher, so I’ve learnt so much from her” (interview, November 14, 2011). The influence of her secondary music teacher on Veronika’s role identity is consistent with Isbell’s (2008) findings regarding the influence of secondary school teachers during adolescence.

Furthermore, Veronika recognised the value in interacting with music educators, stating, “I’ve learnt from absolutely everybody I’ve come in contact with. I’ve tried to be like a sponge to learn everything I’ve needed to know” (interview, November 14, 2011). These interactions contributed to the development of her imagined music teacher identity and her willingness to assume the role at Undala Primary School, in conjunction with the role support received from others, as discussed in the next section. This is indicative of the development of the affinity perspective of identity, described by Gee (2000) as the formation of identity through interaction with those who hold allegiance to similar practices.
The lack of confidence experienced by the generalist teachers at Undala Primary School, at the stage in which Veronika was given responsibility for the music program, also contributed to her imagined role identity as a music specialist. Veronika described the school’s then principal as having “a limited knowledge of music education” (interview, November 14, 2011). The music program was already established because of the classroom teachers’ stated lack of confidence to teach music. She recounted:

They didn’t have the competence or confidence to teach music. I was actually working in both schools as a day-to-day casual when it [RFF music] started and I know. Most teachers would say “Oh, music! I can’t teach music; I can’t read a note! Aside from getting out their ABC Sing! books, a lot were too scared to do anything else.” (Veronika, interview, November 14, 2011)

Thus the principal’s limited knowledge of music education capabilities and the reluctance of the staff to teach music may have initially assisted Veronika in recognising that she could meet the expected requirements of the role.

Similarly, Joanne experienced changes in her imagined role identity. During her first appointment as a music teacher of Kindergarten to Year 2 students, conflict between Joanne’s belief in the role of music education and her perception that the then state of music education lacked “sequence and purpose” contributed to her resignation from the position. This was manifested in her statement that “I was unable to see myself going anywhere” in the position (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010). Following her resignation, Joanne’s absence from teaching for a period of years suggested that the conflict between the reality of her circumstances and her desired professional role identity led to a reduction of her music teacher identity in her hierarchy of prominence, while her identity as a parent became more salient (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Joanne described this as a period where she “opted out”, in reference to music teaching (interview, December 19, 2010).

Later, having taught music in two schools for fifteen years, Joanne again experienced what could have been a clash between her imagined identity and the circumstances, in response to a sense of emptiness following major concerts at each school, a feeling that she found distressing. This occurred despite having spent many years developing the schools’ music programs and receiving role support from colleagues, students and other members of the school community. In describing this situation, Joanne said, “I felt that I couldn’t go on and I found the feeling scary. I became quite depressed and sad” (interview, December 19, 2010).

2010. It may have been a result of conflict between the idealised aspects of the specialist music teacher role that Joanne had developed, such as staging large concerts, and the reality of the emotional and physical demands of maintaining the programs (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Joanne’s success in these schools over a period of fifteen years also led to a sense of increased expectations from the school communities that Joanne reflexively sought to internally apply, thus leading to a form of role strain (Stryker, 1980).

Joanne’s ability to imagine herself in a full-time music teacher role at this stage was demonstrated in her response to the advertisement for a full time music teacher position at St Clotilde’s School:

I knew I would get the job. I knew it would be really sad to leave the two schools but it was time to move because it was a wake-up call. I just thought I can’t keep doing this for another ten, fifteen years, as it wouldn’t be fair. (Interview. December 19, 2010)

Joanne’s confidence in applying for the role, which contrasted with her initial hesitation in returning to work as a music teacher in the 1980s, may have been because of the years of role support experienced in the two schools and the broader music education networks to which she now belonged (discussed in Chapter Seven) through which her imagined identity was supported by the actions of others (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Working in one school also constituted an easier social system or structure in which to operate, thus reducing role strain (Stryker, 1980), and operating in a school with an existing music program provided clearer expectations that were more compatible with her idealised role identity.

**Role support.**

Role support contributes to the shifts in prominence hierarchies and occurs through the reactions given to a person that reinforce his or her imagined identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). While the imagined music teacher identities as manifested in their case study contexts are discussed in the next section of the chapter, role support was a significant factor in shaping the early career identities of Joanne, Veronika and Kelly, whereas the perceived, ongoing lack of role support was believed to be significant in Rebecca’s case. Influential role support for the aforementioned participants was provided by colleagues, other members of school communities and through interaction with external networks.

**Colleagues.**

Role support provided by colleagues was a factor that led to a shift in the hierarchy of prominence (McCall & Simmons, 1978) of Veronika’s identity as a general primary teacher to that of a music specialist in her early career. Prior to Veronika’s appointment at Undala
Primary School, her friend, Jean, who was also providing music RFF at Mandumala Primary School where Veronika was also working a casual teacher, taught an established music program. Both schools commenced RFF music programs in 1984, which coincided with the release of the new *Music (K-6) Syllabus and Support Statements* (New South Wales Department of Education, 1984):

> When the RFF music program started, which I think was in 1984 – I’m pretty sure that’s when RFF music started - both [schools] had Jean doing it, right from day one. As soon as that RFF component came in both schools used part of it for a music teacher…Jean was an absolute whizz. Following in her footsteps, I felt very, very daunted but I received an absolute enormous amount of help and encouragement from other people to get it all together. (Veronika, interview, November 14, 2011)

Role support from colleagues was also experienced when Veronika considered applying for the music teacher position at Mandumala Primary School after Jean’s resignation. The position advertised in the local newspaper stated that the role requirements were the ability to teach classroom music, recorder and choral conducting. At the time, Veronika was providing relief teaching in the school and was encouraged by her colleagues to apply for the position:

> I had actually worked there for a long time doing day-to-day casual. A whole heap of teachers at Mandumala Primary were saying, “Oh, you should apply for the job,” so I did. I went for an interview and I got the job. (Veronika, interview, November 14, 2011)

By recognising Veronika as a potential occupant of this position, her colleagues invoked expectations of her behaviour with regard to her positional designation as a music teacher (Stryker, 1980). This external role support, through which colleagues responded to Veronika as someone capable of competently teaching a specialist music program, served to make Veronika’s sub-identity as a musician more prominent in her hierarchy of sub-identities, thus gradually shifting the emphasis from generalist teacher towards a music teacher identity in which the musician and teacher sub-identities became more balanced.

As with Veronika, Kelly also experienced a transformation of hierarchical sub-identity prominence in her early career in response to role support from colleagues. This process appeared to begin when she was asked to prepare performances for an inter-school music festival, during the period when she was working as a kindergarten teacher:

> Kelly: I started teaching at Grasslands Public School and I started off on a kindergarten class. In those days, there were forty in the class, which was huge! I started off doing musical activities there and I was asked to organise a group of students for a festival, although I forget which area it was for as the boundaries have changed. I was thrown in at the deep
end there, but I organised a group for that of some music and movement.

Michele: And why did they choose you to do that?
Kelly: Oh, because I had a music background and I was playing for assemblies and all sorts of other things. From then it just sort of grew and I got involved in all the local festivals. (Interview, June 16, 2010)

In this excerpt, “they” referred to members of the school leadership. By responding to Kelly as someone who possessed the musical capabilities required for a music education event, these colleagues provided impetus for the beginnings of an emerging music teacher identity, by assisting Kelly to synthesise aspects of her musician sub-identity with her teacher sub-identity. Furthermore, this shift in hierarchical prominence led to an increase in identity salience, as this music teacher identity was later enacted in other music festival contexts (Stryker, 1980).

Joanne experienced role support from a colleague that contributed to obtaining her first appointment as a music teacher in an infants’ school (Kindergarten to Year 2) through acknowledgement of the musical skills she had demonstrated while working as a general teacher:

The very first experience I had of doing music…happened in 1977. I got a job three days a week…because I’d done so much music at the school. A person who had a lot of contacts at the Department got me a job as a music teacher three days a week.

(Joanne, interview December 19, 2010)

In recognising Joanne as the occupant of a music teacher position (Stryker, 1980), this colleague provided role support that assisted Joanne to create internalised expectations of her position and thus organise her behaviour accordingly (Stryker, 1980).

Networks.

Kelly’s membership of choral communities seemed to have provided role support for aspects of her music teacher identity that would later emerge in school contexts. Thus, as Kelly’s music teacher identity was placed higher in her salience hierarchy, the more likely it became that this identity would be invoked in other situations (Stryker, 1980). The invocation of her musician identity at first in festival, rather than school, contexts suggested that the role support might have initially been provided more extensively in the choral communities.

Joanne’s participation in a network of educators who align themselves with Orff Schulwerk also greatly assisted her in developing her music teacher role identity. Joanne became aware of the Orff approach through tertiary studies in music education. This influence is discussed later in the chapter and in Chapter Seven.
School community.

The role support provided by parents in the school community proved significant in the emerging role identities of two participants during their early careers. Joanne spoke of the support she received from parents in both the schools she worked in prior to her appointment at St Clotilde’s School and she spoke of the contribution of parents to a musical event she was organising, stating that “the parents all were there on Saturday, helping to rig up lights and do everything. They were such a driving force of brilliant people” (interview, December 19, 2010). The support received by parents contributed to her emerging identity as a music teacher, through the parents’ willingness to allocate their time to a music endeavour arranged by Joanne.

For more than twenty years, Veronika experienced role support from a parent at the school, Vera, who has attended the school on a bi-weekly basis to accompany ensembles or choirs. Vera and Veronika attended the same secondary school and became friends. Following this, Vera studied music at a conservatorium while Veronika was undergoing general primary teacher training, and Veronika described Vera’s assistance as follows: “When Vera returned to the Undala area and had children at the school, she offered to play the piano and has been coming twice a week ever since” (interview, November 29, 2013). This support assisted in the transformation of Veronika’s role identity as a music teacher, particularly as Vera was a conservatorium-trained musician whose competencies and credentials held weight with regard the this particular role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Consequently, Vera’s tacit approval of Veronika’s practice consolidated the behaviours that Veronika was enacting as a specialist music teacher.

Investment in identity.

In addition to their imagined role identities and the provision of role support, the degree to which each participant committed herself to a role identity affected the place of that role identity in her hierarchy of prominence (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Veronika’s initial investment in the role of music specialist for a period of five to six years at Undala Primary School assisted her to further develop her imagined beliefs in her capacity to apply for an additional music teaching position at Mandumala Primary School. According to Veronika, the position required the ability to teach classroom music, recorder and choral conducting. She stated, “By that stage I was doing all of that at Undala and had been for five or six years” (interview, November 14, 2011). Veronika’s willingness to take on the role at Mandumala resulted from the shift in hierarchy of prominence from generalist teacher to music specialist,
through a gradual realising of her imagined music teacher role identity becoming enacted. Her commitment to the music-teaching role at Undala Primary School consequently contributed to this transformation of identity, due to the combination of commitment and imagination and the legitimation of the role identity by those at Undala Primary School (McCall & Simmons, 1978).

Similarly, Kelly’s investment in her music teacher identity during the period in which she taught secondary school music for students from Years 7 to 12 contributed to the broadening of a music teacher role-identity that had previously been predominantly enacted within the context of music festivals. The investment not only contributed to a change in hierarchical prominence, whereby her musician sub-identity became more in balance with her teacher sub-identity, but also led to a transformation of the musician sub-identity to include musical experiences other than performance that are enacted in a classroom setting in response to music syllabus requirements, such as those associated with composition and musicology. This shift was indicated in her desire to seek another music teacher position upon her decision to leave Brass Heights High School in response to students’ behavioural difficulties (Kelly, interview, June 16, 2010). This also demonstrated that the years spent away from general primary teaching led to that aspect of her professional identity not being as critical in her identity salience.

The transfer led to Kelly working in a generalist primary capacity at Parker Primary School until she assumed the role of specialist music teacher as a result of the principal’s acknowledgement of Kelly’s musical aptitude. This shows that Kelly was enacting her salient musician identity in this context. The shift in her identity prominence whereby the musician sub-identity emerged through investment in the music teacher role-identity was reflected in Kelly’s dissatisfaction when the principal suggested an alternative to the music RFF program at Parker Primary School. At this stage, Kelly had been invested in the music teacher role for four years. In response to this, Kelly stated during the initial interview, “I was quite floored by that and I’ve been looking for other jobs at this stage” (interview, June 16, 2010). When the future of the music program was uncertain, Kelly’s decision to seek another primary music specialist role, rather than potentially remain employed in the school in a different capacity, was indicative of her developing professional identity and the gradual decrease in her generalist classroom teacher identity in her hierarchy of prominence. Furthermore, this again reflected a shift in salience through Kelly’s desire to potentially enact a music teacher role-identity in another context.
Similarly, Joanne also experienced an increase in her investment in her music teacher identity that grew as her career progressed. The tension that Joanne experienced regarding her desire for a defined scope and sequence and purpose for music education in her first music specialist position actually led to a reduction in investment, as she had been unable to find a solution to this obstacle in that particular context. Some years later, this was countered by her commitment to the development of her skills as a music teacher when she chose to undertake postgraduate study, which is discussed in detail later in the chapter in the sub-section regarding reification through tertiary education. Joanne’s devotion to her music specialist positions in two locations over a period of fifteen years was also indicative of her investment in the development of a music teacher role identity. When acting as a generalist teacher, Joanne balanced her musician sub-identity with her teacher sub-identity in her hierarchy of prominence, possibly due to the aspects of socialization discussed in the previous chapter. However, the experience of postgraduate study provided the necessary input required to facilitate the agency that was needed to further develop her music teacher role identity.

**Reification.**

A form of role support may occur through the process of reification, which Wenger (1998) describes as the process of taking an abstract concept and representing it in some form that can become the focus of the negotiation of meaning. This could include representation through a symbol, documentation or a title associated with a particular role. Stryker (1980) considers the use of such symbols to designate positions that are then associated with expected behaviours. Through the process of employment as music specialist teachers, or the inheriting of such a role, participants were named as the occupants of music teacher positions. Therefore, the endowment of the title music teacher or music specialist invoked certain expectations of behaviour from members of the participants’ communities, depending on their conceptions of a music teacher role identity, and provided role support for the music specialist teachers through the representation of this identity in a title. However, issues surrounding the terms of employment perhaps challenged Rebecca and Kelly’s self-perceived identities through the non-reification of meaning.

On returning to classroom teaching, Rebecca was appointed one day per week to deliver a specific music program at Wandi Primary School that served to provide musical experiences for students who may experience disadvantage. This role contrasted significantly with her experience as a one-to-one peripatetic instructor of students in independent schools who were unlikely to be experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. After one year of
provision of this music service, Rebecca was invited by the principal to join the staff as a provider of music RFF teaching in response to the success of the program. Although this invitation served to provide some form of reification of her role as a primary music teacher, this was tempered by the lack of permanency in her contract. This became particularly evident during the case study period when, after five years of employment at the school, Rebecca did not see her name on a list of staff projected for the following year (interview, October 13, 2011).

Similarly, Kelly experienced a lack of support for her role identity. At the time of the initial interview, it appeared that Kelly still identified strongly with her experiences as a secondary music teacher, reflecting the effect of her commitment to this identity on her salience hierarchy (Stryker, 1980). A source of frustration was the lack of recognition provided by the NSW Department of Education for her years of service in this capacity due to her lack of formal training, which led to difficulties in obtaining further secondary music teaching experience:

I was looking for a high school placement. Now the issue with the Department [of Education] was because I didn’t have any actual music training. I’m finding it difficult to get recognised for the service I’ve done teaching Years 7 to 12, so at the moment I’m trying to get that done. I’m getting paperwork and someone to hear me from the Department. I’d just like approval and someone to say that I’ve actually taught that. As I say, the big issue is that the Department won’t recognise you if you haven’t had that formal training. (Kelly, interview, June 16, 2010)

It seemed that Kelly’s self-perceived identity as a competent musician and skilled educator was not reified through formal recognition of her secondary teaching service by the NSW Department of Education, which led to internal conflict regarding her role-identity.

This uncertainty was somewhat lessened through the reification that occurred when Kelly was in the role as a primary music specialist. In 2010, Parker Primary School received a national award in recognition of the music program that had developed under Kelly’s leadership. The award was judged by a panel of music educators who lauded the school for the inclusion of students’ cultural backgrounds and the creative use of a variety of instruments and technologies. Through the award, the school received a substantial sum of money to purchase instruments and the results were published in local and national media (Kelly, personal communication, May 10, 2011). This award served to reify Kelly’s identity as a music teacher and also provided resurgence of her professional identity as occurring within a primary school context, thus reducing the need for reification of her identity as a teacher of secondary music. In fact, during the intensive period of the case study, the desire for
acknowledgment of her experience as a secondary school music teacher did not arise as a topic of conversation.

Kelly’s desire to obtain formal recognition for her abilities was also indicated in her personal instrumental tuition, as she prepared for the AMusA. Kelly said, “I had studied piano earlier but never did exams, so I’m doing this to formalise it” (interview, August 4, 2011). It is possible that Kelly’s desire to achieve certification for her instrumental skills was in response to the lack of acknowledgement of her years of high school teaching by the NSW Department of Education and her desire for external role support.

The process of Veronika’s appointment at Mandumala Primary School provided reification as she was granted a title of specialist music teacher, documented in the advertised role. The reification that occurred through the formalisation of her role as a music specialist teacher in two locations and her participation, or the “cascading interplay of participation and reification” (Wenger, 1998, p. 51) served to further develop Veronika’s identity as a music specialist teacher. Her formal appointment to continue two established music programs and associated naming as the occupant of these particular social positions shifted her identity from that of a generalist teacher who provided casual relief in this capacity to a primary music specialist teacher.

Tertiary study.

The award of a music education postgraduate qualification served to reify Joanne’s role-identity as a music specialist teacher. This process began when she undertook further university study in the 1990s to convert the two-year teaching certificate to a four-year certification in the form of a Bachelor of Education degree, which was a decision that she attributed to the government’s changing requirements for teacher training and the requirement that teachers have a Bachelor’s degree. While this course of action was initiated in response to these requirements, Joanne stated that the studies undertaken in all Key Learning Areas of the primary curriculum were helpful to her teaching and described the process as “an absolute blessing” as she felt that she had up to date knowledge (Joanne, interview December 19, 2010). Despite her experience as a music specialist teacher, this opportunity further assisted her to develop a perceived identity as a general primary teacher and a sense of belonging within her school community at the time. Another contributing factor to this decision was that she wanted to do further study in music, which was only possible if she held a degree.

In the mid-1990s, Joanne elected to formally retrain as a music teacher by undertaking a Graduate Diploma in Primary Music at a university in Sydney. These courses were offered
by two teacher training institutions in Sydney in order to assist with the implementation of the
*Music (K-6) Syllabus and Support Statements* (New South Wales Department of Education, 1984; Taylor, 1987) and the course undertaken by Joanne was available to teachers with four years equivalent of undergraduate training. Undertaking a diploma solely focused on music served to formalise her self-perceived identity as a music specialist teacher and led to further reification by the school community. According to Joanne, it was at this course that she became aware of the Orff Schulwerk approach, discussed later in the chapter (interview December 19, 2010). The award of a diploma in music education provided reification of her identity as a music specialist and led to a shift in her hierarchy of prominence from generalist teacher to specialist music teacher.

**Music Teacher Role Identities**

The dynamic trajectory of identity development and the emergence of sub-identities further occurred through the participants’ negotiation of the self within the school contexts of the case studies. These contexts encompassed the values of the community and the conceptions and norms that resulted in a certain form of operation (Beijaard et al., 2000). Using McCall and Simmons’s (1978, p. 65) definition of role-identity as “the character and the role that an individual devises for himself as an occupant of a particular social position”, this section examines the music teacher roles devised by the participants that were in operation within these contexts, with reference to socialization that contributed to the enacting of these roles.

**Personal Interpretations of Roles**

Role identities serve as the main source of a person’s actions that are in response to that person’s imagined view of how an occupant of a particular social position acts (McCall & Simmons, 1978) and there is a relationship between professional identity, subject disciplinarity and teacher identity. The pedagogies and classroom experiences that are enacted by music educators are influenced by their role identities, as discussed by Ballantyne and Grootenboer (2012) and Bernard (2004). The interrelation between the participants’ prior musical experiences and their music teacher role-identities as manifested through teaching is discussed below.

**Musical identities.**

Each of the four participants in this stage of the research had prior music experiences that included tuition in, or experimentation with instrumental playing and experiences of belonging to choirs, each of which served to inform their music teacher role identities. These
prior experiences contributed to the way in which the participants expressed their musical identities in classroom settings and through the provision of co-curricular activities.

**Class music teaching.**

In three of the cases, the participants’ prior experiences of formal instrumental tuition, choral training or informal learning of particular instruments influenced the structure and purpose of the schools’ music programs through the participants’ actions in response to their imagined role identities as music teachers. A significant part of the music program at Undala Primary School appeared to be shaped by Veronika’s musical experiences in community ensembles. In addition to the piano tuition commenced during secondary education, Veronika said, “I had been in musicals and choir in high school. I learnt the recorder for the semester at Teachers College and have been a recorder player ever since. I took up the saxophone three weeks ago and that’s my new passion!” (interview, November 14, 2011). The introduction of recorder became integral to the school’s music programs:

> When started at Undala, I had twelve recorders in a box and a box of old red and white tambourines, really basic percussion and a couple of old tenor recorders, an assortment of Sing books from 1967 and tapes. That was all there was. I took the box and did the rounds of every class with it. Pretty quickly, I started making noise that needed to have more resources and I wanted to do this. I was very proactive and keen and did things pretty differently to Jean...Jean did a lot of singing with the kids and a bit of recorder at Undala. Recorder had been a passion of mine for quite a few years at that stage. I put recorder in [the program] from Year 2 up. (Veronika, interview, November 14, 2011)

Veronika’s experience in concert bands also influenced the school music program, and it could be that the students’ learning of the recorder from Year 2 served as a precursor to the introduction of other woodwind or brass instruments for those students who wanted to join the co-curricular band for novice instrumentalists. In the first stage interview, she identified herself as an active musician in the local community context, “We’ve got a music teachers’ adult band up here and I’m the percussionist in that and basically everything else I do is school related (Veronika, interview, November 14, 2011). In addition to the music teachers’ band, Veronika was a saxophonist in the local community Big Band. Her experience in band performance seemed to influence her desired outcomes for the music program at Undala Primary School, with a particular emphasis on students learning to utilise modern staff notation. This was evident in Veronika’s description of planned musical experiences:

> Right from Kindy, the kids are writing little pieces for triangles, xylophones. I’ll give them the first four bars of a little tune and have it all written down and they’ll write the next bars starting and finishing on G with an F sharp. When they’re older they can just go for it and there’ll be kids running around wanting to know what chords and
harmonies work. (Veronika, interview, November 14, 2011)

The emphasis on notation reading was evident during an observation of a music class undertaken with the Stage Two (Years 3 and 4) class:

Veronika begins the lesson by revising rhythms on the board. She allocates tambourines, castanets, triangles and cymbals. The children take their instruments and sit in lines based on their instruments. As the students play through the rhythms, Veronika conducts with a baton. She mentions that six children have just begun learning instruments and will be in the Beginner Band program. Music charts for *Twinkle Twinkle* and *Old MacDonald’s Farm* are displayed on the easel. Veronika refers to things that the children in the co-curricular band program will be learning. She shows a new student how to play the castanet and says, “When you play the castanet, you need to tap it on your hand. Did you do this at your old school?” The children play the rhythms notated on the percussion chart, accompanied by the CD. Colours are used to highlight instruments. Veronika asks the new student, “Did you enjoy playing that? Was that your first time of playing in the band?” She demonstrates how the baton shows when to raise and lower instruments. (Field notes, November 29, 2013)

A similar approach was taken in the Stage 3 (Years 5 and 6) class and the students appeared to be familiar with this process:

Veronika arranges where students will sit on the floor. She revises rhythms on the board with the students, referring to the beats in the bar and the time signature. Veronika reminds them of the meaning of the bottom number in the time signature. She tells them they will have a high school test after five weeks in music. The music teacher always rings her to tell her how well the students have done in music because she has already taught the students most of the test content. The class discusses “quarter notes” and variations on time signatures, for example, 3/8. This class works through the rhythms at a faster rate than other classes. The children clap the rhythms and say the French time names without Veronika’s assistance. Veronika explains that the dot means half a beat and gives an example of dotted minim and dotted crotchet. The chart for the *Chinese Dance* from Tchaikovsky’s *The Nutcracker Suite* is displayed. This is more complex than the chart used with the younger classes. The children play the percussion lines, accompanied by the orchestral backing track. (Field notes, November 29, 2013)

Veronika’s experiences in community ensembles may be have become intrinsically connected to her music teacher role identity and therefore reflected in her enacted pedagogy. This was because of the role music played in the broader Undala community and an understanding that students were being prepared for community participation through the music program. Social relationships also formed through social interactions influence identities that are likely to be invoked across a variety of situations (Stryker, 1980). This also suggested that Veronika’s philosophy of music education was praxial in nature, through the emphasis on what Elliot (1995) describes as the procedural, situated knowledge of musicianship. According to Elliot, the value of music education for enjoyment, knowledge
and self-growth intersects with the values of and benefits to society. The emphasis on preparing students for what the local community perceived as authentic music experiences of belonging to an ensemble suggested Veronika’s music education approach was consistent with the praxial philosophy described by Elliot.

Whereas Bernard (2005) found that elementary music teachers acting as musicians outside the school environment may not be acknowledged for their music-making by school communities, this was not the case in the Undala context and the centrality of the band program to the classroom music program was indicated by John (the principal) when he stated, “The school is very well regarded for our creative arts programs but we are the only small school in this area that runs a band program” (interview, November 11, 2013). Furthermore, should Veronika leave the school, John stated that the community expectation would be to continue with a similar music program.

Veronika’s ability to shape the music program to this extent in harmony with her perceived music teacher identity suggested that the Undala school community was an open social structure where roles could be constructed (Stryker, 1980). This resulted to changes in the class terms or definitions of a music teacher role identity and, should Veronika leave the school at some point in the future, it is possible the redefinition of these terms could lead to a relatively closed social structure for the incumbent, should he or she hold a different conception of music teacher role identity.

Kelly’s experience as a musician was also evident in the instrumental opportunities provided through the music education program at the school, both in the classroom and co-curricular programs. Kelly’s description of her instrumental experiences was as follows:

I play violin, clarinet, and flute. I’m not adept at all of them but can pick up most things. I do a lot with recorder at the school and have just been at the Opera House. Violin I’d rate as my next proficient one after piano. (Interview, June 16, 2010)

During the case study, Kelly was observed playing a keyboard, recorder, ukulele and violin (observations, August 2, 2011, August 4, 2011, August 5, 2011), and it was apparent that the inclusion of the ukulele in the music program was a result of Kelly’s informal learning in the home environment. She thought the instrument would be a suitable size for the children and was able to purchase a class set with the remaining funds from the grant awarded to the school in recognition of the music program (interview, August 2, 2011). The use of ukuleles was evident in the following observation:

While Kelly organises permission notes for the concert and dinner, the Year 5 children get their ukuleles. Individually, students pluck the strings and those who need tuning
go out the front to Kelly. The children sing and play *He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands*. They revise chords on the ukulele and the students sing through the song several times, using the two chords. The resource is a Mike Jackson CD for ukulele. “Adam” stands and walks through the room. Some boys sing in falsetto. The children sing and play *Oh Dear What Can the Matter Be* using the same two chords. They learn the A minor chord and strumming pattern. (Field notes, August 2, 2011)

Kelly elected to showcase the ukuleles during an open day attended by parents:

At 10:00 am students get ukuleles for the Year 6 demonstration lesson as part of the Open Day. Another parent arrives and Kelly tunes ukuleles. They practise F C Am, and then play *He’s Got the Whole World*. Kelly explains to the parents that the children may get callouses. One or two children quietly sing harmonies. (Field notes, August 4, 2011)

Kelly’s commitment to this aspect of the program was reflected in her statement “I would like a parent group to come in to do ukuleles and have a staff group, but time is a factor” (interview, August 8, 2011). This may have been a form of role performance that served to legitimise Kelly’s imagined view of her role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Although this demonstrates that the Parker Primary School environment was also open to the construction of Kelly’s music teacher identity, which could have been assisted by her role as the inaugural music teacher, Kelly was also able to invest funds and make ukuleles integral to the program as this was within what is considered to be a conventional content of a music teacher role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978).

Whereas Kelly and Veronika’s classroom music programs reflected elements of their prior instrumental experiences that were indicative of aspects of their role identities, Rebecca’s significant experience as a performing musical did not appear to be part of her enacted pedagogy in the classroom lessons observed at Wandi Primary School. While Rebecca’s lessons used similar percussion instruments to Veronika’s, preparation for ensemble participation and performance did not seem to be one of the program’s central aims. Instead, Rebecca’s lessons focused on composition and creative expression (discussed later in this section). This decision may have been in response to her understanding of the school context, as Rebecca stated that the program was inhibited by “money, as parents can’t afford extra activities or instrumental lessons” (interview, May 19, 2010). It could also have been indicative of Rebecca’s pupil-centred approach to teaching. Whereas the participants who identified as performers in Bouij’s (1998) study preferred to concentrate on their instruments, Rebecca was willing to facilitate a variety of musical experiences that enabled students to encounter different musical styles.

In contrast to the other participants, Joanne did not describe instrumental experiences
as significant in her prior music experiences or part of her key responsibilities in her role.

The area of music that I’m not particularly strong in is instrumental, like band, because I’m not…um…well, I play trombone but nobody would really jump up and down about my trombone playing! We’re so lucky here because Alice is so brilliant with the strings and has built the strings up. She also takes the concert band with our band coordinator, so this is a blessing of being in a private school that has K-12. (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010)

Nonetheless, instrumental tuition was important to the parent community of the school, and Joanne estimated that approximately 50 percent of the girls received private instrumental lessons (interview, December 19, 2010). The students had small group instrumental tuition as part of the class music program and Joanne was particularly enthusiastic about the Year 2 program:

Every class has 80 minutes [of music] a week, two 40-minute periods. The high school has four teachers over there. Alice is absolutely brilliant and has level four Orff. She started last year and is a brilliant teacher…she’s a great violinist and is our string coordinator. We have a new program that she initiated last year that I think is fantastic. Now every girl in Year 2 has violin or cello for one of those forty-minute lessons and I have the class lessons. (Joanne, interview December 19, 2010)

While some aspects of the instrumental programs in Years 5 and 6 proved to be challenging due to time constraints and structural elements, Joanne’s support of the Year 2 program was contributed to by the similar approach taken to music education by the string coordinator who had been trained in Orff Schulwerk. Alice and Joanne shared constructed definitions regarding music education before entering the situation in which they were to work collaboratively and their interactions served to validate these definitions (Stryker, 1980). This assisted Joanne in developing the affinity perspective aspect of identity through their shared allegiance to the Orff Schulwerk approach (Gee, 2000).

Issues experienced with the other aspects of the instrumental program may have been a result of the lack of shared definitions, although Joanne did note that “We’ve got really lovely tutors because it’s all very well to be brilliant on your instrument but if you don’t know how to teach it’s not much good” (interview, December 19, 2010). In the past, Joanne felt that the instrumental music program reports were focused on the child's character, whereas they should be focused on the child’s competencies. This caused some tension, as Joanne was responsible for producing half of the report and there appeared to be some contradictions (Joanne, interview, May 31, 2012). This may have arisen from the lack of shared definitions with the tutors due to differing experiences and role-identities.
Co-curricular activities.

Each of the music teachers was involved in provision of co-curricular activities, such as choirs and instrumental ensembles. These musical opportunities also revealed aspects of the teachers’ professional identities as manifested through their conducting or organisation of the activities.

A concert band tuition program was in place at Undala Primary School under the auspices of the Parents and Citizens’ association. Through this program, teachers were employed to teach concert band instruments. Due to the regional location of the school and the associated travel for the students, band rehearsals and instrumental lessons occurred during the school day, with rehearsals scheduled for 30 minutes before lunch on Thursday and during the 30 minutes of the scheduled lunch break (Veronika, interview, November 29, 2013). Beginner Band rehearsals also took place during lunchtimes (Undala Primary School, observation, November 29, 2013). The program was a popular initiative, as Veronika reported that more than half of the student population in Years 2 to 6 participated and the children frequently learnt more than one instrument as an incentive to play in the local community Big Band (interview, November 29, 2013). In addition to conducting the ensemble, Veronika was responsible for the employment of all tutors and the implementation of the billing system. In order to teach, she insisted that the instrumental tutors had a Bachelor of Music Education or an AMusA and teaching qualification. These staff were employed at both Undala and Mandumala schools and the tutors received payment whether the students came to lessons or not (Veronika, interview, November 29, 2013). The schools’ ability to obtain and retain tutors of this calibre could be indicative of the standard of music in the broader community, which could either be attributed to the success of school music programs in the region that led to the pursuit of further study in music, or the reputation of the community that attracted relocation of musicians to the area. The formation of this community of music educators within the school provided role support and served to further legitimise Veronika’s enacted pedagogy.

Similarly, the co-curricular program at Parker Primary School seemed to be developed in response to Kelly’s role identity and conceptions of music education. According to Justine (principal), the school had a band program in place when Kelly first began the music RFF program; however, the band program had not been completely successful due to issues with

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19 Parents and Citizens associations are school-based groups of volunteers in NSW Department of Education schools.
the bandmaster. Furthermore, Kelly did not have the knowledge base required to continue to
develop a band program. She was able to develop a violin group within the school and groups
for beginning and advanced instrumentalists were quickly established (Justine, interview,
August 5, 2011).

Kelly’s willingness to begin a string program may have been due to her prior
experience in learning the violin when undertaking Suzuki violin lessons alongside her
daughter (Kelly, interview, August 4, 2011) and she described the Suzuki method as the
approach used to teach the ensemble (interview, August 4, 2011). This method was reflected
in the group approach taken to instruction in the Parker Primary School context, as the
approach was that of an ensemble rather than individual tuition. Kelly reported that most of
the students had commenced tuition at the school, with some progressing to private tuition
outside the school. The recorder ensemble rehearsed with the string ensemble and was also
preparing for an inter-school festival (Parker Primary School, observation, August 4, 2011).
The role of festivals in providing performing opportunities suggests the significance of the
festival networks in shaping Kelly’s role identity, and the likelihood of invocation across
contexts due to her identity salience (Stryker, 1980). This was also evident in Kelly’s
preparation of the school choir for a combined schools’ concert (Parker Primary School,
observation, August 4, 2011) and her ongoing involvement in a regional school choir in which
some students from Parker Primary School were members (Kelly, interview, August 5, 2011).

The experience of teaching the co-curricular string program at Parker Primary School
led to Kelly’s self-realisation that she should invest time in developing her instrumental skills.
This was in response to the “shock” she experienced when accompanying students to a
festival at the Opera House and provided the impetus for her continuation of violin lessons,
with the goal of improving technical skills (Kelly, interview, August 4, 2011). According to
Stryker (1980), when individuals are named as occupants of positions, particular expectations
of behaviour are invoked that are reflexively applied by individuals and Kelly’s self-identified
need to develop her violin skills was in response to her growing understanding of the role
identities of other music teachers or tutors within the festival environment. This was
demonstrated through her statement, “I saw that other schools have string tutors for Opera
House. I wanted to lift the standard and improve my skills for the children” (Kelly, interview,
August 4, 2011). This response also reflects the dynamic trajectory of identity development,
in which a teacher questions who he or she wants to become (Bouij, 2004). As Dolloff (2007)
states, “We negotiate our identities from moment to moment, constructing ourselves in
response to where we find ourselves, what we must do, and whom we are with” (p. 17).

While Rebecca’s background as a violist and violinist was not a key component of her classroom pedagogy, it was evident in the instrumental co-curricular components of her music education role. Rebecca rehearsed a weekly string ensemble, comprised of students who solely learnt their instruments in this school environment. In contrast to her experiences as a chamber musician and orchestral performer, Rebecca’s ensemble work incorporated composition and was very student-centred, as students actively selected repertoire, created arrangements and acted as mentors to each other (Wandi Primary School, observation, October 14, 2011). This mirrored social-constructivist approaches to teaching that focus on enhancing musical understanding, which Davis (2012) describes as valuing the multiple perspectives of students as they participate in collaborative and individual knowledge construction.

Rebecca’s approach reflected Bouij’s (1998) conception of a pupil-centered-teacher who:

Has a wish to meet the children from a broad musical starting-point. They want to work with children and music to give them a good foundation, not necessarily in music, but maybe for their whole life or the whole personality. These teachers also stress the importance of handling the pedagogical process, a process that is formed during the active meeting between teacher and pupils. (p. 25)

Rebecca experienced a sense of role conflict about her expected role in organising performances held in the school that was consistent with Stryker’s description of role conflict as the existence of “contradictory expectations that attach to some position in a social relationship” (1980, p. 73). The conflict centred on expectations regarding the extent that students would be involved in performances and the time constraints associated with these expectations. In the first interview, Rebecca stated, “One day I was in tears because the strings had to perform but I didn’t have time to tune the violins because I was on playground duty” (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010) and this sentiment was reiterated during the intensive case study: “There is a pressure to perform all the time but no relief time given for rehearsals” (interview, October12, 2011). As well as the difficulties with scheduling rehearsals, it appeared that the contrasting understanding of performance purposes contributed to the role conflict, as Rebecca stated, “It’s always suggested that particular children perform, but I want to include everyone, so that the performances reflect what happens in the music lessons” (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010). It may be that this represented a shift in Rebecca’s identity from performer to teacher and her acknowledgment that different contexts
require different approaches to teaching. Whereas Rebecca valued the music class teaching experiences, it is conceivable that other members of the community viewed the role of a school music education program to be performance-focused, or judged the merits of the program on the basis of performance (Welch et al., 2010). This is unusual, as Rebecca was excluded from participating in other music performance events in the school, such as the musical (Rebecca, interview, October 12, 2011). It is possible that the staff involved in these productions did not recognise the transferability of skills, which could have been because of their lack of understanding or experience in orchestral or other instrumental ensembles. Furthermore, as Rebecca was initially promoted to the school community as an accomplished orchestral member, it provided them with indirect knowledge about Rebecca that preconditioned their views of her due to stereotypes associated with her social position (McCall & Simmons, 1978). It seemed that her background as a performing musician was significant to the organisation through which she was initially employed at the school, as this information was featured in a publication promoting the program (Wandi Primary School, newsletter, September, 2008). This may have influenced Rebecca’s identity as a result of the discursive perspective of identity shaped through interactions and how she was spoken of by others (Gee, 2000).

In contrast, Joanne appeared to relish the many opportunities for musical theatre and choral performances at St Clotilde’s School, many of which she initiated herself. This was because she was able to balance time constraints by integrating performance goals with her class teaching program, whereas Rebecca would not have been able to do this due to lack of consistency in timetabling for music classes and the specific instrumental focus of the string ensemble. Joanne’s ability to integrate the performance goal with her classroom teaching was no doubt assisted by the fact that all girls in the primary section of the school were performing in the musical (Joanne, interview, May 28, 2012). Furthermore, this suggested that Joanne was receiving external role support from the school’s executive and other staff, as cooperation from other staff was needed to ensure the students were available for timetabled rehearsals at lunchtimes and after school, and the supervisors of curriculum were willing for Joanne to make musical theatre a key focus of her teaching program.

An example of the integrated class and co-curricular programs in operation at St Clotilde’s School was the approach taken to preparing for the biennial music production, which, in this instance was to be an opera specifically written for children. The following extract from field notes reveals the incorporation of the musical theatre experience in
Joanne’s classroom teaching:

The Year 6 girls are seated on the floor and each has a libretto for the upcoming opera. Joanne explains they will be composing in compound time today. To prepare, they do a vocal warm up, up and down the scale. Joanne explains that the soft palate needs to lift on the high notes. They turn to a song from the opera with the theme of creatures. Joanne asks the students to name creatures in the song and writes these on the board. She plays a guiro and explains that the bullfrog instrument will be low because it's hollow inside. They compile a list of birds from the song and Joanne says that students who are musically advanced should choose to work with someone who is of a similar ability. Ideas for rhythms in compound time are listed on the board and Joanne links this to the song they have just sung. The girls need to compose a rhythmic sentence using one group of animals listed on the board. (St Clotilde’s School, Field notes, May 28, 2012)

Throughout the period of preparation for the musical, Joanne held frequent lunchtime rehearsals with students undertaking principal roles (St Clotilde’s School, observation, May 28, 2012). Joanne acknowledged the significance of past experiences, “I’m really good at putting on shows because it’s part of my family background”. The combination of this socialization and legitimation of her identity (Dolloff, 2007), manifested through timetable allowances and playground duty rosters further led to Joanne’s contentment in this aspect of her role, despite the time required for rehearsals.

**Teacher Sub-Identity: Adopting Professional Characteristics**

One aspect of identity may be reflected in the adoption of the professional characteristics of a community. Whether teachers choose to enact these traits is dependent on the extent that they value the characteristics (Beijaard et al., 2004). In two of the cases, contrasting approaches to the implementation of school-determined strategies to manage students’ behaviour were observed.

Veronika appeared to have harmoniously assumed the professional teaching characteristics evident in her school context. She participated in the broader life of the school and actively supported the implementation of positive behavioural strategies for students, as was evident in her actions during the school’s assembly:

The school has gathered for the weekly assembly. Veronika plays the piano for the National Anthem, Happy Birthday, and the school song. She also contributes to the other aspects of the assembly. She gives classes echi “ehidna” points for good behaviour and informs the Principal of the students’ excellent behaviour at the assembly the previous week when he was away. During the singing of Happy Birthday, John tells the students to sing loudly. He quickly corrects himself and says they should just say “hip, hip, hooray!” loudly. (Field notes, November 20, 2013)

Both Veronika’s reiteration of the school’s management strategies and John’s self-correction
regarding students singing suggest mutual understanding of meaning that was developed through interaction and negotiation (Wenger, 1998).

In contrast, Rebecca appeared to find some aspects of the school’s teaching culture frustrating, despite her attempts to adopt certain characteristics. This was evident in her application of the school’s discipline strategies. According to Rebecca, the school engaged a teacher to work particularly with students who display concerning behaviours (interview, October 13, 2013). This teacher developed posters displaying the values of respect, responsibility and resilience, and introduced the linking of behaviours to these values. This whole school approach was observed being implemented in Rebecca’s lessons. In conjunction, the school used a system of coloured slips to record ongoing student behaviour and students received blue slips of paper that they were supposed to hand in to another staff member with the intention that parents would be notified once a child had received three blue slips. Rebecca found this system to be ineffective as the children frequently lost the slips. The system was not clearly communicated to staff as students informed Rebecca that yellow slips were supposed to be issued before blue slips. Rebecca tried this process for a period of time but she and the library teacher returned to issuing blue slips. Dissatisfied with the lack of effect it had on student engagement in music, Rebecca introduced a system of positive reinforcement in which the students were given a raffle ticket and become eligible for a prize at the end of a set period of time. Rebecca explained that she required a separate system for music lessons. This may be due to the isolation experienced by not having another class teacher in proximity to her room who could support her when behavioural issues arose. Furthermore, it may be indicative of Rebecca’s emphasis on positive reinforcement as a means through which to motivate and engage students. This approach contrasted significantly with that of other staff members, as demonstrated in the following two extracts from field notes:

After recess, the children are walking to their classroom in lines as Rebecca and I make our way to the music room. A teacher’s assistant stops the group she is accompanying and says in a raised voice, “Get yourself in line and shut up!” The children appear to be a Year 1 group. She is aware I am there as she makes eye contact with me and she appears to be pleased with this statement (Wandi Primary School, field notes, October 15, 2011).

The next class appears to be very unsettled and I can hear the teacher shouting at them outside the room. (Wandi Primary School, field notes, October 14, 2011).

One dimension of identity development through community membership is the form of accountability to the enterprise that makes us look at the world in particular ways, or the
perspectives determined by identity (Wenger, 1998). It appears that the perspectives of
behaviour management held by Rebecca and Veronika influenced the interpretations of
meaning that were manifested in actions, choices and the value of certain experiences.
Rebecca clearly valued the importance of positive reinforcement in her interactions with
students and this was evident in her frequent reference to the school values. It is conceivable
that this was due to influential factors that shaped Rebecca’s identity as a musician in early
and transitional years in her development as a violist. Burland and Davidson’s (2002)
tripartite model of success, developed through the study of musicians in the adult transitional
phase, acknowledges the influence of positive experiences in institutions and with others as a
determinant factor in musical success. Additionally, Mills and Smith (2003) identify
enthusiasm, accomplishment and positivity as key aspects of successful instrumental teaching
in secondary school environments. These may have been traits further reinforced as elements
of Rebecca’s teaching style during her experience as a peripatetic teacher in independent
secondary schools that were then being invoked in this context.

Despite attempts to implement the slip system, Rebecca’s perception of the reduced
effectiveness of the system and perceived lack of clarity regarding its intended
implementation were manifested in her reluctance to engage with this strategy. Her response
revealed tension between the organised expectations of others (the I) and the individual’s
response to the organised attitudes of others (the me) (Mead, 1934/1967). By rejecting some
aspects of the conventional teacher identity within this particular social environment, Rebecca
exhibited personal elaboration of her role identity within the cultural norms of the social
environment (McCall & Simmons, 1978). By striving to implement the school system it
seems that Rebecca was initially seeking new perspectives in response to her self-appraisal;
however, her decision-making was idiosyncratic in nature.

In contrast, Veronika’s actions demonstrated the value she ascribed to the positive
measures in place within her context. This was influenced by the role support she received
from the principal and school community, and her participation in the community of practice
in operation (discussed in Chapter Seven). Veronika’s longevity in the community may well
have enabled her to contribute to the shaping of what is perceived as a dominant culture of
positive reinforcement and respect for students. This is consistent with Stryker’s (1980)
assertion that changes occur in definitions, class terms and possible interactions as roles
change, with the changes eventually leading to variations in the larger social structures in
which the interactions occur.
The whole-school values approach in Wandi Primary School was an intended shift towards a more positive school environment that had not yet been fully enacted by the members of the community, resulting in the dichotomy of positive behaviour management and shouting which led to a sense of conflicted identity for Rebecca. Restricted opportunities to liaise with other staff, or a sense that other teachers were not interested in student behaviour or engagement during music, served to reinforce a sense of isolation from a perceived aspect of the dominant teaching culture. Furthermore, this affected Rebecca’s sense of role identity, as issues with school culture can lead to instability in identity (Flores & Day, 2006). The tension between with social structure and Rebecca’s personal dimension in teaching caused difficulties in defining an identity that was socially legitimated, as described by Coldron and Smith (1999).

**Negotiating Identities**

In social structures, roles invoke expectations of behaviour that are aligned to designated positions (Stryker, 1980). Within some of the contexts, contrasting perceptions of the participants’ role identities were evident through their interactions with school principals. The participants’ interactions with other members of their school communities also revealed that people held conceptions of the primary music specialist role that often directed which of the sub-identities should be prominent in the participants’ hierarchies.

Contrasting conceptions of a music teacher role identity were evident in the Parker case study that revealed differences in identity salience between Kelly and Justine, the principal. Kelly’s experience as a music teacher in primary and secondary settings, coupled with the reification provided by the government award, suggests that her self-perceived identity was that of a music teacher and, at the point of the case study, these sub-identities appeared to be well aligned within her hierarchy of prominence. This alignment contrasted with Justine’s expectation of a primary music specialist teacher’s hierarchy of prominence, as she understood Kelly to be firstly a primary teacher with a responsibility for music at that given time. Justine rationalised this understanding on the basis that the staffing for the school was need-dependent and, should the school require an additional class teacher, Kelly would be expected to fill the role (Justine, interview, August 5, 2011). Justine then stated,

Kelly is a teacher first then a music teacher, so it is my expectation that she comes [to professional learning]. She has to contribute too; if we’re discussing maths, I would expect a contribution from her, as any staff member.

This view was also applied to the teacher librarian, who Justine described as “a teacher first, then a librarian” (interview, August 5, 2011).
Justine’s perception of prominence when referring to categorising these sub-identities as music teacher and general primary teacher was driven by her responsibility to maintain her staff’s professional learning and skills as primary teachers. This reflected her professional identity as a school leader who was responsible for the overall staffing of the school and the professional development of all staff. This was evident in the following extract from the interview:

At any minute, circumstances could change here and she [Kelly] would be expected to step back into a classroom or resign. They’re the two alternatives for her to keep up with everything while she’s teaching music and while she might not see the relevance of it on a day to day basis, I still have to bear in mind that for her own professional development she needs to be aware of everything else because at any given moment I might need her to step up and go and teach a class. (Justine, interview, August 5, 2011)

In contrast, the Head of Junior School\(^{20}\) at St Clotilde’s School, Sally, primarily viewed Joanne as a music teacher, despite Joanne’s training in general primary education. When asked to describe the necessary attributes of a music specialist teacher, Sally identified the importance of musical skills. She stated:

A specialist music teacher needs energy and should be a highly skilled musician, willingness to participate in the broader life of the school. They need to see how music fits within the life of the school, need to understand the child and recognise that music isn't for everyone but foster a love of music and provide opportunities. (Interview, May 29, 2012)

These contrasting conceptions of specialist music teacher identities potentially reflected contrasting prior experiences of these school leaders in their teaching careers. Justine had experience in the creative arts, having studied drama at a tertiary level. Furthermore, she was involved in in the development of a NSW curriculum document. She therefore had increased confidence in teaching creative arts and her ability to provide professional learning to teachers if necessary. At the time of the case study, Justine was undertaking postgraduate study in the field of creative arts (Justine, interview, August 5, 2011), which also indicated the importance she placed on professional learning. Her own identity as a school leader focused on the professional learning of teachers and consequently influenced her perception of Kelly’s desired identity salience.

In contrast, Sally had been employed solely in independent schools where specialist music teachers provided established music programs (Sally, interview, May 29, 2012). Consequently, she was not required to teach music at any stage during her employment as a

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\(^{20}\) Head of Junior School is another term for principal used in this context.
classroom teacher. Her subsequent lack of confidence in teaching music, coupled with an expectation that the school would have a music program, contributed to her support of Joanne’s identity as exclusively a music specialist teacher.

Similarly, John, the principal at Undala Primary School, appeared to view Veronika solely as a music specialist, despite her prior experience as a general primary teacher within that context. When asked for key attributes should he appoint another music teacher, John stated that he “would be looking for someone with band, choir expertise otherwise the program would fold. I’d have to as the program has been running for so many years (John, interview, November 11, 2013). This comment revealed the emphasis on ensemble and choral music and the perception of Veronika as a musician. It also demonstrated the role support of Veronika’s identity as a music teacher within the broader community.

Music teachers need to develop their craft as a teacher. Some sort of system is needed where music teachers don’t come straight out of unit and teach a class, then after five years become a specialist. There is a big need to make sure you can manage students. (John, interview, November 11, 2013)

These statements reflect the value John attributed to the teacher sub-identity in the salience hierarchy. It may be, however, that this issue has not caused tension on this particular context due to Veronika’s experience as a general teacher and their shared ownership of meaning (Wenger, 1998).

**Summary**

This chapter has been devoted to the shaping of the participants’ music teacher role identities, from their early career phases through to their expression of these identities within the contexts of the case studies. The shaping of the music teacher role identities can be considered a dynamic trajectory (Beijaard et al., 2004), as the formation of role identities is an ongoing process, indicating that role identities are dynamic rather than fixed. This dynamic process of identity development is a trajectory of learning because the identities are defined by past experiences and self-perceived understandings of future directions, as discussed by Wenger (1998) or future desired identities, as indicated by Beijaard et al. (2004). Teachers may experience changes in role identity, such as from generalist teacher to specialist teacher, and shifts in sub-identities that include musician and teacher.

The reconciliation of music specialist teachers’ imagined role identities as music teachers and their appraisals of their performance assist in shaping music teacher role identities. Interactions with other music educators contribute to changes in hierarchies of prominence. Discrepancies between music teachers’ imagined identities and the realities of
practice can also contribute to a change in prominence hierarchy, as does the role support provided by colleagues and other school community stakeholders, other members of school communities, and through interaction with external networks. The extent that music teachers remain committed to their identities and receive legitimation by others is also influential.

The role identities of music teachers influence their enacted pedagogy and musical classroom experiences. The selection of music pedagogies reflects the manifestation of an interrelation between their prior musical experiences and music teacher role identities. Specialist music teachers’ musical histories contribute to their design of school music programs, including classroom teaching foci and co-curricular activities.

Specialist music teachers working in primary schools may adopt aspects of the professional characteristics of these communities, depending on the extent that they value the characteristics. This contributes to the shaping of identities, or in cases where specialist teachers reject the characteristics of their communities, may cause role conflict or instability in identity. Identities are negotiated through interaction in school contexts and specialist music teachers may hold different conceptions of their role identities from those of other community members, such as principals. Conflicting perceptions of the place of sub-identities, for example musician and teacher, may cause tension or, alternatively, the negotiation of identity through social interplay may lead to the development of shared meanings and foster the ongoing growth of music specialist teachers’ identities.
Chapter Seven
Community Participation

This chapter builds on the analysis of data pertaining to community participation from the first stage of the research, as revealed in Chapter Five of the thesis, and provides an in-depth analysis of the theme of community experiences in the contexts of the four intensive case study participants. In examining this issue in the context of intensive case studies, I was able to draw from observational data collected during lesson observations and participants’ interactions with other school personnel, which was then compared with data collected through semi-structured and informal interviews with the participants and their principals. These data provided additional illumination of the theme of community participation that was discovered and explored in the first stage of the research and afforded further triangulation, as discussed in the Methodology chapter of the thesis.

The chapter explores the relationship between the participants and their contexts through their experiences of forms of learning communities, and the influence of identity in shaping meaning with these. I begin by investigating the place of music in the practices of the participants’ school communities and the extent that community members were mutually engaged in music education. The provision of supportive structures to facilitate collaboration, such as adequate time allocation and physical resources for music education, is discussed. The place of music in the identity of the school community is examined and the chapter concludes with an analysis of the boundaries of communities and the participants’ experiences of communities that exist beyond the confines of their school settings.

Mutual Engagement

This section of the chapter explores the importance of music in the practice of each case study context through investigation of the extent that members of the school communities jointly participated in the practice of music education. The analysis of data draws from Wenger’s (1998) conception of a practice as the element that distinguishes a community of practice from other types of communities and leads to the coherence of its members. Whereas some forms of learning communities are bounded by the interactions of teaching staff members, in each case study context the specialist music teachers worked alongside other community stakeholders, such as classroom teachers, support staff, peripatetic tutors, school leaders, and parents. Analysis of data revealed differing experiences as to whether these stakeholders engaged in elements of the music program and whether the specialist music teacher participants held insider, peripheral, or marginal statuses in their
communities (Wenger, 1998).

**Staff Engagement**

In each case study location, the participants were observed interacting with other school employees, which facilitated analysis of the collaborative practices shared between the music teacher participants and these personnel, and built upon the descriptions of these issues offered by the music teacher participants in the first stage of the study.

**Teachers.**

Music specialist teacher participants had contrasting experiences of engagement in the practice of music with their generalist teacher colleagues. Kelly described the increasing interest in the music program amongst the class teachers of Parker Primary School (interview, June 16, 2010) and Justine (the principal) also expressed this perception (interview, August 5, 2011). This interest was evident in some of the interactions observed between Kelly and the class teachers, for example, when a class teacher returned to the music room early to collect his class from the music lesson.

Towards the conclusion of a Year 5 class lesson, the class teacher entered the room and Kelly restarted the video clip on the Interactive Whiteboard and explained that the students were using body percussion and their voices. The teacher watched the clip. Following this, the students moved to the verandah area and created a body percussion arrangement of a rain dance, conducted by Kelly, observed by the teacher, who provided verbal positive reinforcement to the students. (Parker Primary School, field notes, August 2, 2011)

According to Kelly, this teacher had a particular interest in music and frequently returned early from RFF in order to view an aspect of the music lesson, as did a Year 3 teacher (interview, August 2, 2011). Similarly, a Kindergarten teacher was observed voluntarily participating in the class, assisting the students by joining in body percussion activities (Parker Primary School, observation, August 4, 2011). Kelly reported that teachers occasionally asked to assist with items for assembly and cited one example when a teacher asked her to “find percussion sounds to go with some poetry” (interview, August 5, 2011). The teacher then attended some of the music lessons to work with the students on the item. Kelly interpreted these interactions positively and believed they were a sign of increased interest and engagement in music amongst the staff.

The growing interest in music education and fledgling collaborative partnerships were acknowledged by the principal of Parker Primary School, Justine, who believed it was a means for the teachers to “up-skill themselves” (interview, August 5, 2011). Justine said, “I think they [class teachers] have learnt more than they think they have, and Kelly would be
surprised at how much the teachers have learnt through observations”. This comment suggested that the interest and increasing engagement in music was a byproduct of having a music specialist teacher, rather than a planned area of school development. While this might have raised awareness of music education and gradually contributed to the mutual engagement of the teaching staff in music, the approach may have been constrained by some of the systems in place, as the children in classes that finish music lessons prior to recess and lunch were not collected by a teacher because they moved directly to the playground (Kelly, interview August 2, 2011). In order for music to develop as part of the practice, consideration for the structures in place would need to occur, as “whatever it takes to make mutual engagement possible is an essential component of any practice” (Wenger, 1998, p. 74).

Nonetheless, it seemed that a community of practice focused on music was emerging. This is consistent with the evolutionary nature of a community of practice, whereby the community is defined by the practice that may change depending on its membership (Wenger, 1998).

Although there appeared to have been emerging interest in the music classes at Parker Primary that suggested that music was emerging in the practice of the community, this did not appear to be the case at Wandi Primary School. While the generalist teachers were mutually engaged in some aspects of school music performances, this did not seem to include any aspects of the classroom music education program or performances organised by Rebecca, who had initially reported that the teachers showed little interest or understanding of what happened during the music lessons. In the first stage of the research, she provided the following illustration as an example of this mindset:

There was a boy who struggled in some areas of the curriculum, but he was really enjoying a movement activity [in music] because he could express himself in a different way. I told the class teacher and offered to share my ideas about how music could be really help this boy in the classroom. The teacher seemed to be interested, but never followed it up. (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010)

The teacher might have lacked the confidence or self-efficacy to implement the strategies, or there may have been a lack of time available for further consultation. Nonetheless, Rebecca interpreted this as limited value for her contribution to the student’s education that could have been indicative of differences in perceived roles and responsibilities for student learning.

Bresler (1998) states that music teachers may feel a lack of support from generalist teachers, which can be manifested in behaviours such as interruptions to music lessons or not collecting the class on time. This was evident at Wandi Primary school, as classes were observed coming late to the music lessons (observations, October 13, 14, 2011). Furthermore,
students were frequently withdrawn from music lessons for disciplinary matters not associated with their behaviour during the music lesson (observations, October 13, 14, 2011), or to perform administrative tasks such as counting the receipts collected as part of a corporate program whereby a large supermarket chain would credit donated shopping receipts for play equipment (observation, October 13, 2016). Additionally, a teacher used some of the music lesson to collect excursion notes not associated with a music activity (observation, October 12, 2011). These instances of interruption to the students’ learning in music may have occurred in response to a lack of administrative time experienced by classroom teachers. However, the occurrences also devalued the importance of the music lessons and therefore suggested that the classroom music program was not incorporated in any community of practice in operation, as communities of practice consist of people who find value in their interactions and become bound by the importance of learning together (Wenger et al., 2002), which was not the case in this school. Moreover, these interruptions suggested that the music education program was not considered something for which the teaching staff held collective responsibility (Hord, 1997) and instead abdicated responsibility to Rebecca. It is conceivable that this stance was also influenced by the contrasting role identities of Rebecca and the generalist teachers, as discussed in the previous chapter.

Despite the apparent lack of engagement in aspects of the music program, there did seem to be elements of music in which the generalist teachers were engaged, although Rebecca was excluded from active participation in these activities. At the time of the case study, the school was preparing for a musical production; however, despite her musical expertise, Rebecca was not consulted about this event. This was discussed in the previous chapter, with reference to the generalist teachers’ perception of Rebecca’s role identity. This situation was also indicative of the lack of mutual engagement between the specialist teacher and generalist teacher that inhibited the development of a music-centred practice. The concert was based on a popular musical that was, at the time, being performed professionally in a large city in New South Wales. Rebecca described the process of organisation as follows: “This year the teachers wanted to do a show and the person who wrote it only did it three weeks before the end of [the previous] term. The teacher wasn’t even aware of copyright when I spoke to her about it” (interview, October 14, 2011). While she would have preferred to use the choir’s and string ensembles’ skills as an integral component of the performance, these groups were added late in the schedule of planning. Rebecca also wanted to investigate options for live musical accompaniment, rather than backing tracks, but this was prohibited.
by the lack of consultation. Rebecca believed that the concert “reflected the musical taste of the staff” (Rebecca, interview, October 10, 2011). The planning for the concert also disrupted the music program, as a prior booking for students to attend an orchestral excursion was cancelled because of the preparations.

The differences in musical preferences that appear to have affected engagement in music education were also reflected in the attitude of many of the staff members, who organised an annual contemporary popular music concert for parents each year in which each grade performed. Rebecca said that, on previous occasions, if she suggested what the staff perceived to be classical music, they thought she was arrogant (interview, May 19, 2010). Rebecca’s commitment to a classical repertoire stemmed from her musician sub-identity as an instrumentalist. It may have been that the classroom teachers responsible for organising the concert had a different perspective of music education, whereas Rebecca’s perspective was influenced by her prior experiences and identity as a classically trained musician. Rebecca said, “I am willing to compromise and be involved. For example, I could help improve the musical aspects of the performances, but they [generalist teachers] don’t seem to want my input” (interview, May 19, 2010). Although she was willing to compromise, in order to show the teachers that she was supportive and could have encouraged opportunities in which they could have learnt from each other as they interacted (Wenger, 1998), the lack of ongoing consultation from other staff members prohibited this from occurring. These events suggested that the place of music in the practice of the staff community was limited to certain types of performance. It also indicated that Rebecca was a marginal member of any community of practice in operation; although, had opportunities for further consultation or collaboration failed to develop, Rebecca could have continued on a trajectory to become an outsider.

Whereas any collaboration in the practice of music was limited to special events at Wandi Primary School, Joanne described “music as a major part of the school day” at St Clotilde’s School (interview, December 19, 2010). She expressed contentment in operating as the sole music specialist in the Junior School and generally chose to collaborate when approached by other classroom teachers. This was evident in her description of collaborative processes:

The classroom teachers might come to me and ask me to do a song about something. If they are doing a performance for the big assembly, some teachers might ask me to contribute something. So I collaborate when the teachers ask. (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010)
The Head of Junior School, Sally, tacitly supported this approach, for while she believed that Joanne tried to incorporate cross-curricular themes in teaching, Sally stated that music “should be taught for music’s sake” (interview, May 29, 2012). She indicated that more collaboration could be done here; however, her perception was that Joanne preferred to teach music without the involvement of other staff members. This preference may have been due to Joanne’s confidence in her role identity as a music specialist that resulted from her experiences as a sole practitioner in the two other school contexts prior to commencing at St Clotilde’s School. Although Sally identified the possibility of further mutual engagement in music, her solution was to consider developing a Junior School music department, as opposed to increasing generalist teacher participation in music. This was reflected in her statement:

It would be good to have another part-time specialist in the Junior School, but I can't see this happening. I have seen other situations where there has been more than one [music] teacher in the Junior School and this has worked well. (Interview, May 29, 2012)

Sally’s prior experiences of working in schools with established music programs contributed to her expectation that music belonged to the practice of the music department, rather than the practice of the staff as a whole.

Joanne partially attributed her experience of three highly valued music programs to her willingness as a specialist to respect the time constraints of other teachers. She believed it was important to have “lots of give and take” and was naturally wary of organising a specialist rehearsal that would interrupt her colleagues’ teaching time (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010). Joanne considered this as part of the natural respect she had for others in the school community and she strove to organise her own time effectively so that deadlines were met (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010). This was indicative of her prior experiences as the sole music teacher in two other school environments and the reification through her role title as music specialist teacher that music be part of her practice, rather than that of the other teachers. It may also have stemmed from her training as a generalist teacher and the study she undertook to upgrade her general primary teaching qualifications, as discussed in the previous chapter. In this sense, Joanne felt comfortable operating with the Junior School staff due to her shared identity as a teacher with general primary education training and she did not need to mutually engage in the practice of music education with her colleagues in order to feel a sense of belonging.

Despite the perception that Joanne chose to not to seek out collaborative partnerships with the Junior School teachers in which music was part of the practice, she did have
opportunities to mutually engage in music education with the other members of the school’s music department who were primarily located in the secondary school. Joanne described the benefit of having a music department spanning Kindergarten to Year 12 as a positive aspect of St Clotilde’s School, particularly as it enabled her to access knowledge and resources that she may not possess herself. It did seem, however, that Joanne might have been a peripheral member of any community of practice operation within the music department:

Sometimes they can upset the applecart a bit when they want to run something or they think something should be happening in the Junior School and they don’t let me know because I’m not part of their staff meetings. I don’t know when I would fit it in so I’m hardly ever at a music meeting because the music meeting is, well, they’ve got four staff over there plus two helpers and there’s just me here. And so, sometimes they cook up something that might be happening and I might be the last person to know, which is not often, but does happen occasionally. (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010)

Her peripheral membership could have been due to time constraints; however, it also seemed to be influenced by contrasting aspects of role identity. In the first stage of the research, she had described her collaboration with one of the music teachers, Alice, as discussed in the previous chapter (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010). In the period of time between the first and second stages of the study, Alice had resigned from her position at St Clotilde’s School and it did not seem that Joanne had forged a similar partnership with the other music teachers. Joanne felt comfortable interacting with the staff of the Junior School, due to her prior experiences working in primary schools and her sub-identity as a generalist music teacher. Therefore, she felt included within the Junior School staff community and her confidence in teaching music to primary school children may have lessened her desire to collaborate with teachers whom she perceived as being predominantly secondary school music specialists.

In contrast to the approach taken at St Clotilde’s School, collaborative practices of music education were evident in the interactions of all the teaching staff at Undala Primary School. This mutual engagement was evident in the willingness of teachers to incorporate aspects of music education beyond the music classroom. Veronika was usually the sole teacher present during the class music lessons, but other teachers sometimes chose to become involved in specific music activities. At the beginning of a music lesson, Raquel (the Kindergarten teacher) returned some hand bells that she had borrowed from Veronika in order to rehearse songs the children had learned in music as part of their preparation for a concert at a local preschool. Veronika and Raquel discussed the arrangement of the songs together, and
Raquel updated Veronika regarding the children’s progress (Undala Primary School, observation, November 29, 2013). She also remained for part of the music lesson in order to assist with the rehearsal:

Raquel and Veronika have a quick conversation about the music for the upcoming preschool concert. Veronika has sent her the backing tracks for the preschool concert, but Raquel commented that the children found doing the echoes too fast, so she sang it to the class and they did the echoes without accompaniment. (Field notes, November 30, 2013)

Other interest in the music program and support from teachers was observed, for example, when the teacher of the composite Year 1 and 2 class collected the children from music early enough to watch the end of the lesson and reinforced Veronika’s instruction for them to keep reading the music notation displayed (Undala Primary School, observation, November 29, 2013). These observations demonstrated that music was part of the regular practice of the members of the school community and Veronika was an insider in a community of practice.

The most obvious form of mutual engagement in music occurred at Undala Primary School during the singing sessions timetabled for infants (Kindergarten to Year 2) and primary (Years 3 to 6) grades. Throughout the sessions, the teachers not only assisted Veronika but also were also actively engaged in the content and processes, as revealed in the following excerpts from field notes:

The teachers are seated in front of the group of students. Veronika explains to the children that sometimes the focus will be on learning medleys for performances throughout the year, such as Senior Citizens Week. At the moment, they are having sing-alongs from the Sing! books. Veronika chooses the songs and the children and teachers sing together. Veronika mentions that one of the Christmas songs in the book is the one Mrs Alastair [Susan] sang last week. The CD isn’t working, so Veronika plays the piano and Susan sings to the students. The children then try to sing the song. (Field notes, November 29, 2013)

The two class teachers sit in front of the students with Veronika. Veronika speaks the words of the song, using the correct rhythm, and the teachers echo with the children. The teachers lead the singing as Veronika plays the piano. When the song requires two parts, the Kindergarten teacher stands on the rostrum to direct Kindergarten while the other teacher sings the part of Years 1 and 2. (Field notes, November 30, 2013)

These vignettes demonstrate the place of music in the practice of the teaching community at Undala Primary School. In contrast to the other case studies, collective responsibility for student learning in music (Stoll et al., 2006) belonged to the teaching staff, of which Veronika was a central member. To this end, Veronika also acted as a mentor to the generalist teachers and implemented strategies that have been found to develop the confidence and self-efficacy of generalist teachers in other contexts (Holden & Button, 2006; Russell-Bowie, 1999). The
timetabling factors that facilitated this mutual engagement are discussed later in the chapter.

Collective responsibility and engagement in music education were also evident in the support from other staff received by Veronika in coordinating participation in a choral festival held in Sydney, approximately 12 hours’ bus travel from the school’s location. In order to prepare for the concert, rehearsals were held on Tuesday evenings and two of the school’s staff members assisted by attending these rehearsals out of school hours (Veronika, interview, November 29, 2013).

The collaborative partnerships observed at Undala Primary School were facilitated by the small size of the school’s population and consequent small number of teachers with whom Veronika had to liaise. Wenger et al. (2002) state that communities with fewer than 15 members are intimate in nature, whereas those that are larger may have a different structure, such as by sub-topic in order to engage more participants. In contrast to the community of practice at Undala Primary School, it was more problematic for Rebecca and Kelly to identify with the larger staff populations of Parker Primary School and Wandi Primary School.

**Support staff.**

In three of the case study contexts, the music specialists had opportunities to interact with other practitioners who attended music lessons, as school learning support officers were employed at Wandi Primary School, Parker Primary School and St Clotilde’s School. The role of a learning support officer in NSW schools is to assist with classroom activities and the management and care of students with special needs (New South Wales Department of Education), including students with confirmed disabilities. In each setting, the intended purpose of the learning support officer’s attendance at music lessons was to assist students with additional needs to participate in the music lesson, in the context of mainstream classes or support classes.

At Wandi Primary School, students with disabilities were catered for in mainstream classes to which the learning support officers were allocated, or in the context of a support class for students with mild intellectual disabilities. Rebecca’s collaboration with the learning support officers employed at Wandi Primary School, and their engagement in music education practices, appeared to be limited, both in the mainstream classes attended by the

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21 The term disability includes children with an intellectual disability, physical disability, vision impairment, hearing impairment, language disorder, mental health conditions or autism.

22 Students with a confirmed disability may be enrolled in regular classes (under regular enrolment procedures), support classes in regular schools or special schools. Placement in support classes or special schools is subject to panel placement procedures.
learning support officers to provide the support necessary for individual children to access the curriculum, and the lessons involving the support class. Throughout the case study, children were observed being withdrawn from music lessons by learning support officers in order to participate in a reading program (Wandi Primary School, observations, October 12, 13, 2011). Rebecca stated that this was frustrating, as the learning support officers were allocated full-time to the class and were aware of any specific behavioural issues, which could prove beneficial for classroom management in music had they remained with the class (interview, October 12, 2011). The decision to withdraw students from music for literacy assistance could be attributed to the increasing prioritisation of literacy and numeracy as a result of NAPLAN, an annual assessment that is administered nationally, from which individual school results are made freely available and published online. Because of the socio-economic conditions of the school community, a focus on improving current low levels of literacy and numeracy meant that music was not seen as a priority.

The lack of mutual engagement in music was further observed during a lesson in which Rebecca was teaching students from a support class that caters for students with mild intellectual disabilities (observation, October 13, 2011). In classes such as these, learning support officers are generally assigned to individual or groups of students with the intention of enabling students to participate fully in school programs. Several learning support officers attended this lesson at various times. The main method of student behavior management observed was withdrawal from the lesson, resulting in varying numbers of students being present in the classroom at different times throughout the session, which made it difficult for Rebecca to sequence activities. Furthermore, a learning support officer was observed encouraging joint play on an iPhone, rather than participation in the music learning experiences. One student became distressed and the lesson was interrupted during a violent outburst in which the student persistently hit the glass walls and required restraint.

Rebecca felt that the role of the learning support officers in relation to the music classes was not clear, particularly as they did not regularly attend the music lessons (interview, October 13, 2011). At times, she had been left alone with the support unit class, which was detrimental to fostering working relationships with other staff members and developing collective responsibility for student learning in music. While Rebecca clearly thought that the students were capable, the practical difficulties in working with the learning support officers limited the potential for student achievement. Consequently, the lack of communication and establishment of clear goals and expectations hindered student
participation, as demonstrated in the following vignette from a music lesson with a mainstream Year 2 class.

Jarrod has a truck with him today, which his class teacher tries to remove but he insists it remains with him. The learning support officer is five minutes late to the lesson and asks Rebecca if the children are settled. They are, so the learning support officer says she will “get some children from a group and keep popping in”. Charlton refuses to follow instructions and, when the learning support officer returns, Rebecca indicates this to her. The child is removed from the lesson. Jarrod gathers beaters around him and takes two from the boys next to him. He uses them to make stick figures. The boys ask for them back but are ignored. Jacob becomes cross. I observe the learning support officer watching the interchange, but she then looks away. Meanwhile, this group of boys has not participated in the last part of the lesson. (Field notes, October 26 2011)

In contrast, the lessons conducted with the support class at Parker Primary were more cohesive. The learning support officer at Parker Primary School, Brooke, supported the students in their participation by becoming a participant in the lesson:

The children are seated in a circle, each holding a djembe. Brooke joins the circle and a child gives her a djembe. Brooke swaps where some of the students are seated and tells Kelly that this is for behavioural reasons. Kelly talks about making a “thick sound of texture” with the djembes. Kelly tells children to answer by playing their djembes when she calls their names. Brooke is included in the activity and responds when her name is called. (Field notes, August 5, 2011)

For a period of six years, Kelly was employed as a teacher of a support class prior to teaching secondary music (Kelly, interview, June 16, 2010) and her ease in working collaboratively in the support class environment was indicative of this aspect of her role identity. It is likely that her work as a teacher of the support class entailed interacting with learning support officers on a daily basis and this experience could, therefore, have not only led to Kelly being comfortable in mutually engaging with these practitioners, but also have normalised these interactions as part of her teaching role. In contrast, Rebecca had limited time with which to consult with the support staff at Wandi Primary School that may have impeded the development of identification and negotiation between her and the learning support officers. To facilitate this through engagement, provision for time to interact was necessary (Wenger, 1998).

**Executive staff.**

As well as interacting with teaching staff, the participants work with members of their schools’ leadership teams, including principals and assistant or deputy principals. Despite the increasing engagement in music as part of the actions of an emerging community of practice at Parker Primary School, Kelly was aware that further engagement in the music events that
were held outside school time could occur. She noted the actions that the school’s principal, Justine, and the assistant principal had taken in order to support the students. In referring to an upcoming concert at the Sydney Opera House, Kelly said,

The assistant principal will come to watch the concert and will sit with the children and another teacher will do the same. The principal sometimes comes, but the other teachers don’t. I think this is a shame because the children had to audition to participate. (Interview, August 2, 2011)

The assistance of the two executive staff members demonstrated their support of the growing music program. Similarly, it was Justine’s suggestion that the music ensembles perform each morning during a week of education celebrations when parents would be present in the school playground (Kelly, interview, August 5, 2011). This suggested that despite their contrasting conceptions of role identity discussed in the previous chapter, Justine and Kelly were becoming committed to the same social enterprise, which was shifting the emerging community of practice through a trajectory from a potential community of practice to coalescence as members built connections (Wenger et al., 2002).

At Wandi Primary School, Rebecca also desired greater input and interest in the music program from the school’s executive staff. For example, when the choir was selected to participate in a music festival in the nearest city, Rebecca was required to drive a bus and was not accompanied by any other staff members. Furthermore, neither the staff nor the principal attended, whereas Rebecca stated that the principal generally attended all sporting events (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010). The lack of role support from the principal and other staff described in Chapter Six and the perceived low prioritisation of music at Wandi Primary School contributed to the difficulties in communication experienced between Rebecca and the executive staff. Although the principal initiated the music program, Rebecca claimed that she was frequently not consulted with regard to changes to music events and excursions, reflecting the lack of value for music education in the broader community. For example, a school concert was rescheduled to a date when Rebecca had already arranged for students to attend a concert arranged by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra education unit and her excursion was subsequently cancelled. The concert was again moved to a different date; however, the excursion was already cancelled and the students were unable to attend (Rebecca, interview, October 10, 2011). Similarly, an excursion to the Australian Ballet that had been booked at the beginning of the school year was cancelled, as a class teacher decided to take the students on a different excursion. In response, the principal and deputy principal confirmed that Rebecca’s excursion was cancelled, although they eventually conceded that it
could take place if she was prepared to take half the number of students than originally planned. Unfortunately, the school office staff did not distribute the excursion note until after the company required payment and the excursion was again cancelled (Rebecca, interview, October 13, 2011).

Situations such as these resulted in a lack of empowerment for Rebecca and both reduced her voice in decision making and her legitimacy in influencing the organisation, which is countercultural to a prospering community of practice (Wenger et al., 2002). These situations also suggested that the school’s executive staff did not prioritise engagement in music education experiences. Knowledge is not static in a community of practice, and members must work as a community to update knowledge through interaction (Wenger et al., 2002). It seemed that the executive staff did not consider developing the musical field of knowledge was a priority, either for staff or through their own interactions with Rebecca.

In contrast, Veronika received considerable support from the principal of Undala Primary School, John. He provided substantial assistance in administrative tasks associated with an overnight excursion so the students could perform in the Sydney Opera House, located approximately 10 hours’ drive from the school and requiring the students to stay overnight in the city. John’s encouragement of participation in this event and his provision of time and resources reflected the processes required to develop an environment in which a community of practice can prosper by removing barriers and encouraging participation (Wenger et al., 2002). John’s actions led to Veronika volunteering to relieve him of his teaching load for an unspecified period of time (Veronika, interview, November 29, 2013), which signals the personal relationship and established ways of interacting they had developed through their participation in the community of practice (Wenger et al., 2002).

Peripatetic staff.

In addition to interacting with generalist teachers and executive members of staff, Veronika and Joanne interacted on a regular basis with the tutors who were employed to teach instrumental lessons. The music program at Undala Primary School required Veronika to work collaboratively with the peripatetic music tutors employed to teach students band instruments. Veronika said that the same tutors were employed at both Undala Primary School and Mandumula Primary School and her role included administering and overseeing all aspects of their employment and the implementation of the billing system.

Similarly, Joanne was required to work collaboratively with the peripatetic tutors who were responsible for the instrumental component of the music program at St Clotilde’s. As
was noted in Chapter Six, some tension had been experienced through these negotiations in the past, as Joanne felt that the instrumental music program reports were focused on the child's character, whereas they should be focused on the child’s competencies. This required resolution in order to reduce contradictions in the students’ reports (Joanne, interview, May 31, 2012). Whereas Veronika found that collaboration with the peripatetic tutors was a smooth process, Joanne’s experience of this aspect of the music program was more problematic, despite valuing their contributions to the students’ education. This was possibly because of the contrasting musician role identities of Joanne and the tutors, as discussed in the previous chapter. Joanne’s focus on improvisation and musical creativity contrasted with the tutors’ focus on developing instrumental proficiency in the instrumental lessons. In contrast, the tutors at Undala Primary School may have experienced a role identity more broadly shared with Veronika through her involvement in bands (see Chapter Six). Veronika also had greater responsibility for the employment of tutors than Joanne, which enabled the selection of staff members with whom it would be easy to form collaborative relationships. Her role in overseeing the billing system and employment processes also provided opportunities to converse with the tutors. These interactions could have facilitated discussion about teaching that revealed their alignment to a common focus and commitment to a music pedagogy that was aimed at developing instrumental proficiency. Wenger (1998) describes this as alignment through convergence, which occurs when community members are united through shared allegiances.

Parent Engagement

Literature relating to learning communities in schools generally emphasises the collaboration occurring between members of the teaching staff (see Hord, 1997; Stoll, 2006). Parental engagement or interest in elements of the music programs investigated in this study proved significant, as it tended to coincide with the attitudes towards music education revealed by the teaching staff in the participants’ contexts.

Kelly described the music program as being “highly ranked” amongst the parent body of Parker Primary School, saying, “the parents are very supportive and parents want children in the violin program” (interview, June 16, 2010). The expectation that music was part of the practice of Parker Primary School was evident in the parents’ response when the school’s executive considered discontinuing the music program in order to introduce another specialist area. According to Justine, the parents expressed their satisfaction with the program and did not want to “see Kelly’s talents wasted” (interview, August 5, 2011).
During the fieldwork period, many parents attended an open day on which demonstration lessons were provided in the music room (Parker Primary School, observation, August 4, 2011). It was noted that the largest group of parents attended the session when the ensembles performed. Despite their attendance, Kelly would have preferred to have more outside performances to raise the awareness of music groups for parents who did not watch the demonstration lessons, as had happened in the past (interview, August 4, 2011). Kelly found the Years 5 and 6 demonstration lessons were disappointing as they were scheduled at the same times that these students’ classrooms were open to parents. This could have been indicative of the lack of collaboration between the music teacher and the principal.

Throughout the case study fieldwork period, parents were observed visiting the music room in an informal capacity, and Kelly indicated that these parents were usually those whose children were involved in co-curricular activities. To raise the profile of the class music program, Kelly stated that she would like to initiate a parent group for learning the ukulele; however, she cited time as a factor in inhibiting this plan (interview, August 5, 2011). To this end, it seemed that Kelly was considering how to invite parents to participate in the practice of a community centred on music, in order gain their active involvement in this social enterprise (Wenger, 1998).

Similarly, according to Sally, the parent body of St Clotilde’s demonstrated their support of the music program through their willingness to attend performances (Sally, interview, May 29, 2012). She described the parents as very appreciative of the program and happy to help with costuming for the musical. Music was considered an “enticing element” as opposed to the reason parents chose to enroll their children in St Clotilde’s School. It is possible that because the school was well resourced, parents were not as involved generally in the day to day operations of the school and the existence of a music department lessened the need for regular parental involvement. Nonetheless, the presence of a music department confirmed that music was part of the school’s identity and acted as a signal to parents that music was therefore part of the domain of the school. In turn, this may have led to an increased perception amongst the parent body of the value of music. The many performances, including the musical production that Joanne was involved in provided opportunities to increase the visibility of the music programs to the parent community. In fact, the musical production could be considered a process of reification, as central aspects of Joanne’s music program were given a form that was observable to parents. This mirrors the conception of reification as an understanding taking form and becoming a focus for negotiated meaning.
In contrast, music was not part of the practice in which the parental community of Wandi Primary School was mutually engaged and Rebecca believed that this was partly due to the socio-economic profile of the local area (Rebecca, interview, October 13, 2011). She found that most parents in the area were unable to afford instrumental lessons for their children and there was a lack of value attributed to classical music. For example, Jayden (a Year 6 student) was learning cello only at school, beginning in the year of the case study, and Rebecca taught him during the ensemble time and during the extra rehearsals on Tuesday afternoons in preparation for a string ensemble performance. Rebecca said, “He probably won’t continue when he leaves because he’d have to buy an instrument” (interview, October 13, 2011). She also described the availability of music programs in the local high schools as limited, with few students undertaking elective music.

In instances when Rebecca was involved in preparing concerts for the local community, few parents attended (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010). Rebecca reported that the parents of students in the ensemble appreciated the music program; however, she described them as “a tiny drop” in the school’s population and expressed concern that she did not know how to increase parental interest or engagement (interview, October 13, 2011). Only two parents attended an inter-school choral concert, despite it costing only four dollars and transport to and from the concert being made available (interview, October 12, 2011).

In addition to the socio-economic factors, Rebecca attributed the parents’ lack of interest or engagement in the music program to be a result of their own limited past experiences with instrumental tuition or specialist primary music programs. It is possible that the parents’ collective musical identities, developed through prior experiences, may not have incorporated experiences with composition, musical analysis, choral work or other activities offered in the music program. Consequently, Rebecca did not receive the same degree of role support from parents that she had experienced in her previous schools when teaching peripatetic instrumental lessons. Furthermore, Rebecca was enacting a music role that was idiosyncratic in the context of this community, as the music program did not fit within the cultural conventions of the school community (McCall & Simmons, 1978). This may have served to limit Rebecca’s engagement with the parental community of the school.

In contrast, the practice of music at Undala Primary School was part of the parents’ expectation and Veronika’s role received support from the parent body, particularly the Parents and Citizens association, from which operated a subcommittee to oversee the band.
program (Veronika, interview, November 29, 2013). The role of music in the broader community was indicated in Veronika’s statement that “lots of former students go on to study music at conservatoriums and many end up in the arts industry” (interview, November 29, 2013). As a result, Veronika was often able to call on former students to play in the bands when students were not available, a process that she believed was valuable in assisting the students to see the lifelong aspect of musical involvement.

The support offered by Veronika’s friend and a former parent at the school, Vera, was discussed in Chapter Six. This support was supplemented by the assistance of other parents, including Jackie who had four children attend the school. Jackie volunteered to attend the weekly Beginner Band rehearsals in order to assist Veronika and the children, as observed during the fieldwork period:

There are around twenty students in the Beginner Band. I see Adam who Veronika had previously told me has difficulty reading. He has all the names of the notes pencilled in his Beginner Band score. The children set up and some begin playing while Jackie checks they all have their books. The band practises playing a five-note scale, holding each note for two beats. As they play their first piece, Jackie points to the notes for Adam and writes in any that are missing. (Field notes, November 29, 2013)

The endorsement of the music program was also revealed in the parental support of the school’s biennial participation in a festival held in Sydney. Despite the prohibitive cost for some families, Veronika enabled each student to have the opportunity to participate during their time at the school, which was made possible through the generosity of staff members who assisted in meeting the financial costs associated with the excursion (Veronika, interview, November 29, 2013). The close interaction between Veronika, the teaching staff and parent community may have been a result of the small nature of the regional community where the school is located. This environment served to forge interpersonal relationships that extended beyond the school and into the broader community, as parents and staff encountered each other outside the school environment. In this regard, the community of practice extended beyond the boundary of the school to form part of a landscape of practice. Veronika’s involvement in community bands, two schools and her membership as a citizen of a small regional town may have enabled her to be connected to the whole landscape and reinforced the habits of collaboration between these stakeholders across the landscape (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015).

Factors Affecting Engagement

In each case study context, there were factors that influenced the likelihood of
interactive partnerships developing between the music specialists and other members of the school communities. Hord (1997) identifies the existence of supportive structures as a key element in facilitating collaboration and shared learning amongst staff in order to improve outcomes for students. These include physical structures, such as teaching spaces or areas for collaborative work, or abstract structures, such as time allocations. Professional dialogue is facilitated by the provision of suitable spaces, such as staffrooms, and the physical proximity of colleagues’ classrooms (Stoll et al., 2006). It is conceivable that these elements are also significant in inhibiting or facilitating mutual engagement in the enterprise of a community of practice, as Wenger (1998) writes of the facilities of engagement that include physical spaces and time for interaction. The data revealed the impact of structures such as these on community participation in music education.

**Facilities.**

When I interviewed Kelly in the first stage of the research, her classroom was located adjoining the school hall and she described herself as “being on her own” in the music room (interview, June 16, 2010). In some ways, this location was advantageous as it allowed access to the hall as a breakout space and was adjacent to the school’s computer room, which enabled Kelly to integrate ICT resources. As a result of a government funding initiative for school building projects, Kelly moved to a refurbished room adjacent to the playground and the area in which the children assembled each morning. This location provided teachers with opportunities to see and hear learning experiences in the music classroom, raising the profile of music within the school. It also allowed parents to talk with Kelly before the morning assembly. However, her experience of the room’s location was sometimes negative, due to noise created by children playing instruments. I observed a lesson being interrupted by another teacher, who requested that the children stop playing as a test was being undertaken in a neighbouring classroom. The drumming was an integral part of the planned lesson and Kelly later confirmed that this has happened on more than one occasion (Parker Primary School, observation, August 2, 2011). While the new location enhanced the profile of music in the school it limited its implementation in some ways.

At Wandi Primary School, Rebecca had a designated teaching space; however, she had moved music rooms three times during her tenure at the school. Her location during the case study period was removed from the central hub of classrooms and was adjacent to a room that was mainly used by the school’s behaviour specialist teacher for withdrawal groups, which reduced noise restrictions, but also reduced staff awareness of the activities
taking place in the music room. Despite this, the room’s proximity to the playground enabled students to readily interact with Rebecca during recess and lunch sessions as observed during fieldwork (Wandi Primary School, observations, October 12, 13, 14, 2011).

At lunchtime, Tiahna comes into the music room from the playground to ask Rebecca about the next choir rehearsal. Two other girls join her and Rebecca asks them to find some other students who would be happy to introduce the choral item at the upcoming assembly. Tiahna and her friends exit the music room and Tiahna later returns with four students. Rebecca asks if they would all like to speak at assembly. The girls agree, and then the conversation turns to a presentation at the end of the year when the choir will need to sing. One of the students, Jayde, suggests they sing a song by the artist, Adele, as Jayde has an Adele book for piano. Rebecca says she will have a look at it. (Wandi Primary School, observation, October 13, 2011)

Although the classroom’s location adjacent to the playground proved beneficial in engaging students in musical activities during lunchtimes, it further prohibited Rebecca’s participation in collegial conversations in the staff room.

As was suggested in the previous section of the chapter, Undala Primary School was well resourced with the Creative Arts Centre that consisted of two large classrooms, one of which was allocated for the purpose of music lessons. The room contained storage for a variety of percussion and band instruments and had a large teaching space and a large screen television (Undala Primary School, observation, November 29, 2013). According to John, (principal), the space was a community initiative, for which the government provided half of the necessary funding and the remainder was raised by the community for the purpose of designating and refurbishing a dedicated space for visual arts and music (interview, November 11, 2013). This served to contribute to the success of the community of practice through intentional design for its evolution (Wenger et al., 2002) by putting in a building structure to precipitate the ongoing development of music in the community’s domain.

Similarly, Joanne had a music room that was developed as part of a recent building program. The music room was located in a building on the opposite end of the Junior School to the main block of classrooms. This enabled Joanne to have a large space in which to teach and store instruments; however, it did create physical distance between the activities in the music classroom and the rest of the school. Sally revealed that it had been Joanne’s decision to move into the new building on its completion, whereas the music room had previously been located in the main building that also housed the Junior School’s administrative offices. Sally acknowledged that this decision served to potentially reduce awareness of the music program, saying, “The Music Centre is great, but I miss being able to hear them [students] practising on the lawn” (interview, May 29, 2012). Furthermore, the distance from the staff common room
may have limited Joanne’s time for interaction with other staff members.

Despite the provision of designated music rooms in all four schools, Rebecca appeared to be most affected by isolation due to the location of the music room away from administrative and other staff areas in the school, which was consistent with the findings of Sindberg and Lipscomb (2005) who identified that the location of the music room was most likely to be a factor for those who had taught in a school setting for fewer than 10 years. In contrast, Joanne’s choice to relocate to the other side of the school seemed to be indicative of her confidence resulting from many years of teaching experience. In order for the participants to communicate regularly with other staff and to develop the shared history required in the formation of a community of practice (Wenger, 1998), they needed to be operating within physical proximity (Stoll et al., 2006). Thus, the music room locations potentially impeded these interactions for Rebecca and Joanne. In contrast, the location of Kelly’s new music room further facilitated interactions with parents and colleagues, though these interactions were not always positive.

**Time.**

Kelly sometimes experienced difficulty in participating in the teaching community collected in the staffroom because the music room was frequently open to students at lunchtimes. Kelly chose to remain in the music room during most recess and lunch breaks and was rarely observed socializing with the other teachers (Parker Primary School, observations, August 2, 4, 5, 2011; Kelly, interview, August 5, 2011). This approach enabled students to use the music room during these breaks. For example, during the fieldwork period, on two separate occasions, students were observed in the music room. More formally, the Creative Percussion group voluntarily used the music room and, on a more ad hoc basis, four younger students asked to play the drum, woodblocks, and marimbas at lunchtime (observation, August 2, 2011; observation, August 5, 2011). Kelly stated that children frequently “dropped in” at lunch, including students from the support class who also enjoyed watching ensembles rehearse, which Kelly felt was important (interview, August 2, 2011). As this approach was voluntary, it is possible that Kelly had formed a community of practice with students that compensated for her need to interact with her peers. Although Kelly was capable of participating in more than one community of practice within the school’s landscape and did not appear to be deliberately hiding her practice from other staff, ongoing focus on a community of practice with the students potentially created a boundary between Kelly and the other staff because of her limited time availability for social interactions. As is
identified by Wenger et al. (2002), leadership at the boundaries of communities is required so that they remain open. This sense of isolation from the staff had been observed by Justine, who believed it must be addressed to ensure that Kelly did not become overworked (Justine, interview, August 5, 2011). In contrast, Kelly may have preferred to work independently, as a result of her many years of teaching experience and confidence in her role identity and her ability as a teacher.

Similarly, Rebecca did not have opportunities to consult with other staff in the school’s common areas, due to the extra-curricular activities in which she was involved during break times. While this was beneficial to many of the students, it may have lessened her feeling of belonging within the community. Rebecca also had students visit the music room regularly during scheduled breaks (Wandi Primary School, observations, October 12, 13, 14, 2011). During the fieldwork period, it seemed that the music room was possibly operating as a retreat for students who preferred not to be in the playground, rather than interacting with their peers in the playground. Although Rebecca had discussed the isolation she felt within the school (interview, May 19, 2010; interview, October 14, 2011) it is likely that these interactions with students may have provided an alternate community of practice, as students voluntarily engaged in music at times beyond the timetabled music classes.

The principal of Undala Primary School played a significant role in facilitating the mutuality of engagement in the practice of the community and role of music in the community’s domain of knowledge by facilitating participation in events that also provided opportunities for the teachers and Veronika to collaborate. The alignment of activities to fit broader structures (Wenger, 1998) was evident in the approach taken by the principal in structuring the timetable to enable the teachers’ active participation in the practice of music education through the infants and primary singing sessions, thus developing the community of people and the domain of knowledge. This served to develop a negotiation of a repertoire in which a personal history of participation was developed that then became part of the identity of the participants, as discussed by Wenger (1998).

This approach may have addressed the need for greater collaboration between generalist and specialist teachers to enhance the music curriculum, as identified by Frego (2004). The collaboration experienced between the generalist and specialist teachers at Undala Primary School had addressed the issue of generalist teachers’ competency and self-efficacy in teaching music, a desire that was expressed by generalist teachers in the research undertaken by Holden and Button (2006).
Administrative time.

Connection with others is considered a significant component of a successful school, which is generally evident when teachers are provided with time to share their goals with others and engage in collaborative practices (Stoll et al., 2006). The provision of time for these enterprises is considered an essential element of a learning community and a key responsibility of a school’s principal (DuFour, 2001).

Rebecca cited lack administrative time for liaising with other teachers, as an element hindering the music program. Her perception that the teachers were not interested in what she did with the students contributed to a sense of professional isolation within the school. She was involved in several co-curricular activities that were not counted as part of her teaching load, yet she had the same number of playground duties as the other teachers (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010). Rebecca believed that, as no one was aware of what happens in the classroom, the program was being judged on the basis of performances. This contributed to a feeling of pressure to have the students perform all the time. Rebecca seemed to be experiencing intellectual isolation as a consequence of being the only music educator on staff, an issue that was identified by Krueger (1999) in a study of beginning music teachers.

Rebecca’s experience of staff development also highlighted her isolation, as she was not invited to the professional development sessions that occurred within the school and was expected to relieve other teachers while they attended. If she wanted to liaise with other teachers, perhaps to discuss possible ways in which she could incorporate themes being explored in the classroom in her own lessons, she had to attend meetings in which the majority of information discussed was not relevant to her role (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010). Rebecca felt that the lack of administration time allocated to her hindered her ability to work cooperatively with other staff members. Additionally, this sense of isolation may demonstrate that Rebecca was a peripheral member of any communities of practice that were operating within the school and had not had opportunities to develop shared histories with other community members. In order for this to happen, she needed relief from playground duties to allow her to interact with other staff, as she frequently had rehearsals and playground duties during the times in which other teachers tend to interact socially and professionally.

Similarly, Kelly frequently remained in the music room during recess breaks to perform administrative tasks associated with co-curricular activities. For example, she spent one recess session on the telephone arranging bus transportation to a choral performance (Parker Primary School, observation, August 2, 2011). Kelly also remained in the classroom
during a scheduled break in order to distribute T-shirts to an ensemble of students who were preparing for a concert and to collect their permission notes (Parker Primary School, observation, August 5, 2011). Consequently, arrangements such as these reduced Kelly’s availability to spend time with other staff and share the information, advice and insights that would could bind them together through the value of learning (Wenger et al., 2002). Therefore, more administrative time was needed or tasks delegated to administrative staff in order to create an environment in which Kelly was able to liaise more effectively with other school personnel.

In contrast, Veronika participated in conversations in the staffroom during her breaks, despite the location of the music room being the furthest distance from the staff room than other buildings in the school and the scheduling of lunchtime rehearsals during the first half of lunchbreak (Undala Primary School, observations, November 29, 30, 2013). The fact that there were provisions in the timetable for some band and choir rehearsals to occur during class time allowed her to spend some time in the staffroom in the remaining parts of lunchbreaks, thus reinforcing her ability to connect socially and professionally with other teachers during break times. The small size of the school and the small number of teachers working in this environment also assisted in developing rapport amongst the staff and the creation of a sense of community, enabling Veronika to maintain her insider participation in the community of practice.

**Membership**

The four case studies offered contrasting versions of communities of practice in which music was part of the practice. Both St Clotilde’s School and Undala Primary School had operational communities of practice in which people were mutually engaged in music education; however, the participation of the music specialist teacher in the actual communities of practice contrasted. A community of practice was evident in its early stages of development at Parker Primary School, whereas Rebecca operated in isolation at Wandi Primary School and while there may have been other communities of practice within the school, they did not have music as part of the practice.

A community of practice was functioning at Undala Primary School that included the music specialist teacher, principal, generalist teachers, parent volunteers and peripatetic teachers (Figure 7.1.).
Figure 7.1. The community of practice at Undala Primary School.

While it is typical for communities of practice to contain peripheral members who display a mix of participation and non-participation, this community seemed to largely be comprised of core and active members, although it is conceivable that additional peripheral members were not identified during the case study. John fluctuated between peripheral and active membership, depending on Veronika’s identified agenda for the music program and her need for assistance.

Although the music department at St Clotilde’s School may well have been considered a community of practice as illustrated in Figure 7.2., Joanne preferred to operate more independently from the secondary music teachers.
Figure 7.2. A community of practice at St Clotilde’s School.

As Joanne was actively involved in music education in the school, she could be considered an active member of this group through her participation in the practice of music; however, she did not seem to drive the agenda of the music department as a whole and could not, therefore, be considered at its core. Instead, Joanne served as a core member in other communities within her landscape of practice that are discussed in the section of the chapter entitled Interconnected Communities. Her involvement in these constellations of practice may have contributed to her confidence in reducing participation in the community of practice amongst the other members of the music department. It is conceivable that she may have been more involved in the school-based community of practice when her colleague, Alice was working at the school, perhaps due to their shared identities as Orff practitioners. Upon Alice’s departure; however, Joanne may not have identified as closely with other members of the department, thus causing a shift from core to active member, or even active to peripheral member.

Whereas Undala Primary School and St Clotilde’s School had established communities of practice, a community of practice was gradually emerging at Parker Primary School, of which Kelly was the core member (Figure 7.3.).
The community was in the process of developing from a potential community, where participants begin to see a common ground for connectivity, to the coalescing stage in which members begin to share useful knowledge (Wenger et al., 2002). For this community of practice to continue its generation, more opportunities for Kelly to interact with the generalist teachers were needed, so that they could move from peripheral status to a more active membership.

In contrast to the other three participants, Rebecca tended to operate in isolation at Wandi Primary School and a community of practice had not emerged in which she could be considered an active or core member. Instead, Rebecca seemed to be a marginalised, peripheral member of the community of practice in operation amongst the generalist teachers (Figure 7.4.).
Any community of practice that did focus on music involved preparation for concerts and did not invite participation from Rebecca. As Rebecca was not included in preparation for music events organised by class teachers, she could be considered a peripheral member, possibly on an outbound trajectory outside the community of practice. Furthermore, her exclusion from professional learning experiences and limited opportunities to develop social histories with other staff members through interactions in the staffroom made it unlikely that she was a member of other communities of practice operating within the school.

**Community Identity**

This section explores the extent that music was considered part of the identity of the four schools in which the intensive case studies were undertaken through the influence of the domain of the communities of practice described in the previous part of the chapter. Mutual engagement of the community members in the practice of a community leads to the negotiation of a domain, or purpose, of the community that brings the members together, serves to guide their learning and creates a sense of common identity (Wenger et al., 2002). Just as the shared repertoire of a community of practice includes combinations of participation and reification, so too does its shared history. Learning occurs through the
processes of establishing relationships to enable mutual engagement, collectively defining the
domain and developing a shared repertoire of resources. Analysis of data revealed that music
was entrenched in the domains of the communities of practice in St Clotilde’s School and
Undala Primary School and, therefore, influenced the identities of these school communities,
as domains of knowledge become visible parts of organisations (Wenger et al., 2002). Music
was developing in the domain of an emergent community of practice at Parker Primary
School and was not part of a domain of knowledge, nor the identity, of the community of
Wandi Primary School.

Through mutual engagement in the practice of music, it appeared that music was part
of the domain of the community of practice in operation at Undala Primary School. John, the
principal, referred to music as part of the school’s identity:

The school is very well regarded for our creative arts programs but we are the only
small school in this area that runs a band program. We were one of the only small
schools that ran a really successful choir program, winning awards and that sort of
thing. (John, interview, November 11, 2013)

He then reiterated the support of music by the staff and its centrality to the school’s purpose
and attributed this to the contributions of the teaching staff:

Whilst there is that specialist half hour of music for singing time, for our musicals, for
our big concerts, the Stuart House concert that was on this year, all the staff is
involved. They all support and they follow up on days that Veronika’s not here.
When we’re getting ready for a concert, they’re rehearsing their songs in class.
Teachers losing their musical skills isn’t a problem here!” (Interview, November 11,
2013)

In addition to the administrative and collegial support for music education at Undala Primary
School, the physical structure of the school was further indicative of the role of music in the
joint enterprise through the provision of the Creative Arts Centre. Consequently, the
provision of a music specialist program had become a community expectation, as was
suggested in an interaction with a former student:

Veronika recounted a conversation she had with a former student who had recently
become a parent for the first time. He asked Veronika if she planned to continue
teaching at Undala. When Veronika asked why, he said when he held his new child in
his arms, he experienced the same feeling he used to have when singing in the school
choir and he wanted his daughter to forever experience that. (Undala Primary School,
field notes, November, 13, 2013)

Veronika’s longevity in the school had contributed to the establishment of music as part of the
domain of knowledge. This longevity had also enabled her to develop a body of shared
knowledge with the teachers, as discussed in the first section of the chapter, that enabled the
Whereas Undala Primary School had an established music program and music was entrenched in its domain, music was beginning to emerge in the domain of Parker Primary School. This became evident when consideration was given to a change in the focus of the designated RFF program. Towards the conclusion of 2009, Justine (principal) began discussions with the executive staff regarding the future of the music program, with the possible intention that the program would continue for another year, after which the RFF program would focus on another area of identified need in the school, such as technology or Science. To allow Kelly to make a decision regarding her future employment, Justine had advised Kelly of the plan to discontinue the specialist music program in 12 months’ time. Parents and staff subsequently became aware of this possibility, as a result of which Justine described her situation as being “in trouble” with the staff and the Parents and Citizens association. Following discussions with the various stakeholders, a decision was made to continue with the program, and the staff indicated they were willing to develop the other areas of need in alternate ways rather than through the inclusion in the RFF program. As Justine recalled in the interview, her response was, “It’s not a big deal. If that’s the feeling of everyone in the school, staff and parents, then fine. We’ll look at other ways to meet the need” (interview, August 5, 2011).

According to Justine, music was not the primary reason parents choose Parker Primary School for their child’s primary schooling; however, it was something they endorsed. Traditionally, the school had experienced students transferring to other schools following placement in selective classes for gifted students in Years 5 and 6 known as Opportunity Classes that, according to Justine, were particularly appealing to members of the parent body of various Asian heritages. An increasing number of students had declined placement in the opportunity classes due to the music, debating, and public speaking programs at Parker Primary School. Furthermore, surveys distributed prior to the development of the school’s annual report suggested that around 80 to 90 percent of the parent body rated music and sport as the two most outstanding aspects of the school (Justine, interview, August 5, 2011). This was indicative of the growing perception that music was part of the domain of Parker Primary School that distinguished it from other local primary schools, which is likely as a community’s identity eventually becomes more visible within an organisation and helps to shape the organisation’s identity (Wenger et al., 2002). To consolidate this and further promote the music program to parents, Justine initiated performances in morning assemblies.
throughout Education Week, an initiative Kelly was keen to continue (Kelly, interview, August 5, 2011; Parker Primary School, observation, August 5, 2011). This was a perceived shift in value of the program from the interview in the first stage of the research when Kelly described the potential discontinuation of the program, reflecting the growing place of music in the domain of Parker Primary School (interview, June 16, 2010).

Music also seemed to be part of the identity of St Clotilde’s School, although the mutual engagement in the practice of music was generally undertaken by music education staff, including teachers and peripatetic tutors, as other practitioners within the school tended to be peripheral members of a music-centred community of practice or be outside the community. The place of music in the domain could possibly be attributed to the longstanding tradition of music programs within the school and the existence of the music department, which may have served as a form of reification of the practice of music. Despite engagement in music appearing to be mainly by those appointed as music staff, music was integral to the functions of the school. To further develop the role of music in the school, and to increase student participation, Joanne introduced a House Cup competition, for which the students were allocated points for participation in ensemble musical activities. Joanne described music as “a major component of the school day” (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010) and this sentiment was echoed by Sally, who stated that a key attribute of any primary music specialist was the willingness to participate in the broader life of the school and to “realise how music fits within the life of the school” (Sally, interview, May 29, 2012). In this regard, the practice of music was not confined to the classroom, but was enacted in other contexts within the school.

In contrast to these schools, music was not part of the domain of Wandi Primary School. Although the principal had initiated the specialist music program and was involved at an administrative level, lack of support for Rebecca’s class programs and her instrumental and choral concerts meant that music had not emerged as part of the competence, or knowledgeability, of the community. As was stated earlier in the chapter, Rebecca believed that the principal was usually unable to attend events outside the school in which the students were involved. Having to arrange transport for the students herself and the lack of attendance of other staff members contributed to her perception that music was not valued as highly as other subject areas, such as sport. During the period of fieldwork, teachers were observed talking throughout the choir’s performance in assembly and a video of a recent concert performance was lost, despite it being integral to the planned schedule for the assembly
(observation, November 29, 2011). These examples of lack of engagement demonstrated that the community was not willing to mutually engage in music; therefore, music could not be considered as part of the community’s identity.

This section of the chapter has explored the extent that music education had become part of the social fabric of each case study context. The four cases offered contrasting perspectives of this issue. Both Undala Primary School and St Clotilde’s School had communities of practice in operation in which music education was the domain of the knowledge, thus contributing to the place of music in these respective schools’ identities.

**Boundaries and Interconnected Communities**

The body of knowledge in the profession of music teaching consists of intersecting communities and the boundaries between them, also known as landscapes of practice (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Therefore, this section explores the participants’ experiences of learning communities beyond any in operation in their school contexts. The objects that might have acted as boundaries are identified in addition to the factors that contributed to the participants’ overlapping or peripheral memberships of communities.

**Constellations of Practice**

Beyond their school contexts, the participants were involved in communities that were too diffuse to be considered a single community of practice. Instead, these could be viewed as constellations of communities of practice as they were communities that intersected and overlapped (Wenger, 1998). Networking opportunities with other music practitioners may overcome the isolation experienced by some practitioners when the opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues within the school are limited (Krueger, 1999). The participants in these case studies had divergent experiences of membership in constellations of practice, with Veronika, Joanne and Kelly acting as brokers across the landscapes of practice and Rebecca remaining on the periphery of a community beyond the school.

Veronika participated in constellations of communities of practice through her interactions with other schools and music teachers in the region. In addition to the community of practice in operation at Undala Primary School, Veronika was involved in a similar community of practice amongst the staff of Mandumala Primary School. In working across these two school contexts, boundary objects such as teaching programs, terms and concepts around music education may have connected the two communities through reification (Wenger, 1998). Similarly, it is likely that Veronika introduced elements of
practice between these communities, thus playing the role of broker (Figure 7.5.).

![Figure 7.5. Veronika acting as broker between the school contexts.](image)

Veronika was also involved in the band organised by local music teachers, which provided her with more collegial support. Her participation in the band of music teachers (discussed in Chapter Six) also could be considered a form of participation in a constellation community. John (principal) described another community in which Veronika was involved for the previous three years that centred on a network of small schools:

Veronika’s managed to get together with schools as small as 26 kids and has taken one or two of those budding little singers. She has given them things that they have learnt with singing they wouldn’t have otherwise because they’re just in a small school that doesn’t have the level of expertise that we have… It was something that I know she’d been thinking about for a number of years. I felt bad that I’ve got such amazing talent here with Veronika and the art teacher and I know the small schools don’t get. To have that shared around in that small school group is just amazing and I know that the other small schools really appreciate it. (Interview, November 11, 2013)

In the cases of the small schools’ choir and the music teachers’ band, Veronika acted as a broker, by sharing expertise gleaned from her own experiences and through those of the other music teachers, with the participants in the small schools’ choir (Figure 7.6.).
Within the small schools’ community, Veronika’s role was that of a mentor, which might have assisted teachers working in isolation in the small schools’ environment.

Similarly, Joanne benefited from belonging to communities beyond St Clotilde’s School that could be considered communities of practice. One such community was the Orff Schulwerk Association, the professional community of music educators who align themselves to Orff Schulwerk, that was discussed in Chapter Five. Joanne became aware of this teaching approach while studying postgraduate music education and subsequently completed a sequential process of professional learning provided by the professional association (see Chapter Six). Joanne’s participation in this community included participation in national conferences and her service on the executive for a period of four years (Joanne, interview, December 19, 2010). This suggested that Joanne was an active and central member of this particular community, as opposed to holding a peripheral position.

The integration of the Orff approach in Joanne’s teaching at St Clotilde’s and the collaborative partnership established with Alice, who had also undertaken the Orff levels courses (see Chapter Six), reflects the boundary relations between the school and the organisation through Joanne’s membership of both communities. Orff repertoire, terms and concepts served as a form of reification interconnected between the two communities, reflecting the boundary objects described by Wenger (1998). Similarly, Joanne may have acted as a broker between the communities by introducing elements of the practice of the Orff-based community to St Clotilde’s School.

This brokering also occurred through Joanne’s interactions with the group of independent schools’ music teachers that was discussed in Chapter Five. The group consisted
of teachers from school that formally belong to a network of independent schools. Each term, a professional development afternoon was held for the music teachers of these schools and Joanne’s description of the benefit of these events suggested that she was an active participant in the group:

You get to meet up with other teachers you’ve got to know and quite a few have done their levels in Orff Schulwerk and they’re just a nice group of people. You share ideas and people bring resources or other people want help with something so they get different people in to do workshops. (Joanne, interview December 19, 2010)

This description further reveals the significance of Orff Schulwerk in Joanne’s music teacher role identity, as discussed in the previous chapter. It is conceivable that her active participation in this group may have been aided by the affinity in role identity with those members whom she described as having Orff Schulwerk training. Joanne had hosted meetings and had the opportunity to present an Orff Schulwerk workshop. Furthermore, the role support afforded through these interactions and the opportunity to present an Orff-based workshop may also have provided an opportunity to form a role as a broker between the Orff network and this community of music teachers (Figure 7.7.).

![Figure 7.7. Joanne’s role as a broker between the music teacher group and the Orff network.](image)

As a broker between the landscapes of practice of the music teacher group and Orff network, Joanne facilitated the relationships required to develop shared understandings across the two contexts. A broker does not merely distributed information, but helps people to make sense of information in order to assist them to determine how it can be applied in their own contexts (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Joanne’s participation and initiation of Orff-based activities within the music teachers’ group enabled other music teachers to apply this teaching approach within their schools, just as Joanne had distilled the information she obtained through the Orff Schulwerk network and applied it within the context of St
Clotilde’s School.

Unlike Joanne, Kelly was not aware of any other music specialists in her area and consequently had not been able to develop the collaborative partnerships with other local music specialists as she wished; however, her association with choral festival networks had enabled her to experience participation in a community of practice beyond Parker Primary School (Kelly, interview, June 16, 2010). The impact of the regional choral network on Kelly’s role identity was discussed in the previous chapter. The network also affected the practice of music at Parker Primary School, as students were beginning to voluntarily join the regional choir that Kelly conducted, as was revealed in the following excerpt from field notes:

Kelly is talking to Natalie, a Year 6, about writing a report for the school’s magazine. Natalie has a student leader position and she recently attended the School Ambassador’s Ceremony where the regional choir performed. Kelly says that four students from Parker Primary School were involved in the choral performance. (Field notes, August 5, 2011)

In this regard, Kelly acted as a broker between the two communities (Figure 7.8.).

![Figure 7.8. Kelly acting as a broker between the regional choir and Parker Primary School.](image)

Kelly’s role as a broker may have been to share knowledge developed through her participation in the regional choir network with the students of Parker Primary School, thus contributing to the knowledgeability of that emerging community of practice.

In contrast to the other participants, Rebecca did not seem to have had the same opportunities to collaborate with music teachers in settings beyond Wandi Primary School. Her experiences in liaising with other teachers in preparation for a regional festival were disappointing, as she was the only music specialist and she felt that the other teachers were focused on having their repertoire suggestions included in the program (Rebecca, interview, May 19, 2010). As Rebecca appeared to remain on the periphery of this group, neither fully
inside nor outside, longer-serving generalist teachers on the organising committee did not realise the expertise she could offer as a music specialist nor how this could contribute to their learning (Figure 7.9).

![Figure 7.9. Rebecca on the periphery of the regional choir committee, adapted from Wenger (1998, p. 114).](image)

**Summary**

This chapter has described and discussed the experiences of specialist music teachers in communities of practice within their school contexts and those communities situated more broadly in a landscape of practice. The participants’ experiences varied from participation in established communities of practice, those that were on a trajectory of evolution, to non-participation due to the absence of a music-focused community of practice within the school.

Specialist teachers may engage in the practice of music education with other stakeholders in the school community, including generalist teachers, specialist music teachers, peripatetic tutors, executive staff and parents. Engagement with generalist teachers is more likely when mutual identification occurs, through the realisation of elements of shared role identities. In schools in which music is not important to the members, the music teacher is less likely to initiate or participate in collaborative projects.

Some primary music specialist teachers may prefer to work independently and have autonomy, particularly if they are involved in other communities beyond the school. In contrast, other specialist teachers may be isolated as a consequence of being the only music specialist practitioner on the staff. This intellectual isolation may need to be addressed in order to ensure that the professional learning community functions effectively. Mutual engagement is affected by the location of music classrooms in relation to administrative spaces and common areas. Provision for primary music teachers to have sufficient time to interact with other teachers is also vital to develop effective collaborative partnerships. The
willingness of primary specialist music teachers to organise extra music activities during break times reduces the opportunities for them to collaborate and socialise with other community members.

The findings presented in this chapter indicate that the place of music in the domain of knowledge of a community of practice within a school influences the identity of a school community. Those schools with communities of practice in their mature form are likely to be known as schools in which music is a vital and functional element of the school’s identity. In schools in which music is in the process of emerging as part of the practice, in order for music to emerge as part of a school’s identity, support needs to be given by the school’s leadership and consideration to the musical identities of the parent community should be given. In a school in which music education is not considered a priority within the shared vision and values, the members may not share a collective responsibility for student learning, which potentially leads to a specialist music teacher’s sense of isolation within the workplace.

Specialist music teachers operate within landscapes of practice, with individual communities bounded by their practices. Music education practitioners can act as brokers that cross the boundaries of practice of these communities by introducing elements of one practice to another. The experiences of primary specialist music teachers are profoundly affected by their participation in learning communities, the status of music in a school’s domain of knowledge, and their integration with communities beyond school boundaries.
Chapter Eight
Conclusions and Implications

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of specialist primary music teachers working in NSW, Australia. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the conceptions held of a “primary music specialist” in a NSW primary school?
2. What do primary music teachers perceive their role identities to be?
3. In what forms of learning communities do specialist music teachers in NSW primary schools participate?
4. How does participation in learning communities shape specialist music teachers’ experiences?

The use of a qualitative multicase study design, undertaken in two stages, enabled the exploration of these experiences within the naturalistic settings of the participants. The case studies were undertaken with 16 music teachers, of whom five represented the independent school system, two were from Catholic systemic schools and nine from schools administered by the NSW Department of Education. In addition, three professional learning providers and three principals furnished further data.

Through in-depth analysis of data, the two broad themes of identity and community were developed. In investigating the specialist primary music teachers’ role identities and their experiences of learning communities, further sub-themes emerged that are broadly summarised in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

Role Identity

Literature regarding symbolic interactionists’ interpretations of role identity formation (Blumer, 1937; McCall & Simmons, 1978; Stryker, 1980) afforded a useful lens for the thematic analysis of music teacher identities. The development of role identity was found to be ongoing, shaped by context and manifested in music pedagogical practices.

Identity formation.

The dynamic process of identity development formed a learning trajectory as the participants’ identities were defined by their past experiences and their future desired identities (Beijaard et al., 2004) or their understandings of future directions (Wenger, 1998). The formation of the participants’ identities involved shifts in the prominence of the sub-
identities that constructed their individual hierarchies of prominence, consistent with the theory of McCall and Simmons (1978). The evident sub-identities within their broader music specialist teacher identities were mostly in keeping with those revealed in music education literature and included musician, performer, or teacher sub-identities (Ballantyne et al., 2012; Bernard, 2004; Pellegrino, 2010). It was also found that sub-identities became more or less likely to be enacted across contexts due to either the increase or decrease of the sub-identity in the individual’s identity salience (Stryker, 1980). Whereas much of the music education literature focuses on the teacher and musician sub-identities (see Ballantyne & Grootenboer, 2010; Bernard, 2004; De Vries, 2010; Isbell, 2009), this study addressed a gap in the field of knowledge by investigating the changes in identity when secondary trained music teachers assumed primary music teacher identities. The pertinent, contributing factors to such identity changes were the availability of employment opportunities and a desire for broader teaching experiences, self-perceived intensity of full-time secondary music teaching, and changes in personal family circumstances. Dissatisfaction with secondary teaching experiences was also found to be significant, particularly if secondary music teachers did not receive intrinsic gratification through performance in a secondary music teacher role identity, or perceived differences between their imagined role identities and actual selves. Some participants found further study in general primary education to be beneficial in solidifying a primary-focused music teacher identity, potentially due to the reification of the learning process and the achievement of a recognised, formal degree (Wenger, 1998).

The study also contributed to the understanding of generalist primary teachers who become primary music specialist teachers, which is an area that does not have a wide representation in music education literature. It was found that generalist teachers could adopt music specialist teacher role identities when elements of a musician identity are recognised by others and a role is made available that allows for this element of identity to be enacted. The findings demonstrate that generalist teachers are assisted in their identity development to that of music specialist teacher by informal mentoring from music teacher colleagues, and benefit from further professional learning that either develops the musician sub-identity or music pedagogical practices.

These findings have implications for tertiary training programs and inservice professional learning. The provision of tertiary music education can provide a broad range of experiences that contribute to the identity trajectory of a potential primary music specialist teacher, by facilitating the development of the musician and teacher sub-identities and
particularly allowing for exploration of these within a primary school context. At the time of writing, there is no specific tertiary education pathway in NSW for preservice music teachers who wish to specifically focus on primary music education (see Chapter One). Similarly, the contact hours for music education in Australian generalist primary teaching degrees are generally considered to be inadequate (Jeanneret, 2006; Pascoe et al., 2005; Temmerman, 2006). Consequently, a tertiary training program, or specifically designed professional learning sequence, would be of benefit to generalist teachers who wish to develop their music pedagogical frameworks in the context of primary education. Similarly, the study reveals a need for secondary music teachers to receive additional support when assuming primary music teacher roles. This could occur through formal mentoring programs or targeted professional development that addresses aspects of teaching pertinent to general primary education. Alternatively, increased opportunities for preservice music education teachers to engage in practicums in primary schools could be beneficial, as Isbell (2009) identifies the positive effect of such placements on the realignment of career aspirations.

The reconciliation of the participants’ self-appraisals of their performance with their imagined role identities contributed to the formation of their primary music teacher role identities throughout the trajectory of identity development (McCall & Simmons, 1978). Where there were discrepancies between music teachers’ imagined identities and the realities of practice, the conflict between these elements also assisted in creating a change in their individual hierarchies of prominence. Furthermore, such disparities were shown to cause role conflict that affected self-efficacy. The study confirmed that the interactions of these practitioners with their contexts affected identity formation, and the specialist primary music teachers’ perceptions of such interactions were reflected in their self-efficacy, motivation, satisfaction and commitment to the occupation, as discussed by Canrinus et al. (2011).

Role support from music educators and teaching colleagues was found to be influential in the process of identity formation, as recognition of a specialist primary music teacher as a potential occupant of a primary specialist music teacher position invokes expectations of behaviour with regard to the positional designations of music teachers (Stryker, 1980). The recognition of participants as the occupants of music teaching positions provided role support that assisted them in creating internalised expectations of their positions and the resulting organisation of their behaviour in accordance with these expectations (Stryker, 1980). This is similar to the findings of Draves (2012) and reflects the discursive perspective of identity development that is identified by Gee (2000) whereby the
characteristics of identity develop through the way in which an individual interacts with and is spoken of by others. The provision of time and forums for music specialist teachers, generalist teachers and principals to share their expectations of a music teacher’s role is, therefore, important in establishing mutual understandings that contribute to the self-appraisals and internalised expectations of music teachers. These conversations could help to clarify the perceptions of stakeholders about the objectives of a music program, for example, the balance of focus on public performances, instrumental programs or creative classroom experiences. Creating commonly held expectations could assist in the reduction of a music teacher’s role conflict, particularly where a harmonious understanding of role interpretation occurs, as is discussed in the next part of this section.

**Role interpretation.**

A subsidiary finding of the theme of identity was the varying interpretations of role identity held by specialist primary music teachers and the impact of these on pedagogical practices. The dynamic trajectory of identity development and the emergence of sub-identities further occurred through the participants’ negotiation of the self within their school contexts, encompassing the values of the community, and the conceptions and norms that result in a certain form of operation (Beijaard et al., 2000). It was found that specialist music teachers’ conceptions of their role identities sometimes varied from those held by other community members, such as principals. Tension occurred where there were conflicting perceptions of the place of musician and teacher sub-identities, or generalist teacher and music teacher sub-identities. In some cases, the negotiation of identity through social interplay led to the development of shared meanings and encouraged the continuum of identity development. A key recommendation of the *National Review of School Music Education* was that school principals should “provide classroom generalist teachers with guidelines and professional development about the role of specialist teachers and expected models of collaboration” (Pascoe et al., 2005, p. xxv). My research demonstrates that exploration of the different conceptions of a primary music specialist’s role would be beneficial, through consultation with the specialist primary music teacher, generalist teachers and executive staff. It is advised that school principals give consideration to the joint development of role expectations and consideration to the musical identities of other community stakeholders, such as parents. Parental support can influence the success and longevity of music programs and the support may be garnered when parents mutually identify with musical components of the learning experiences.
Two contrasting rationales for music education were evident amongst the specialist primary music teachers in this study. Some participants interpreted the specific focus of a self-designed program to be the development of instrumental proficiency and notational skills, whereas others interpreted music education as an experiential process that is intended to facilitate the development of creativity. The participants’ role identities influenced their design of school music education programs, including their enacted pedagogies, classroom teaching foci and co-curricular activities. The specialist music teachers’ prior experiences of formal instrumental tuition, choral training or informal learning of particular instruments influenced the structure and purpose of their schools’ music programs as a result of the participants’ actions in response to their imagined role identities as music teachers. This reflects the notion of identity development explored by Sachs (2005) as occurring through experiences and is similar to the findings of Ballantyne and Grootenboer (2012), as the participants’ pedagogical practices were influenced by the learning trajectory of past events (Wenger, 1998).

An Orff Schulwerk approach to music education and the Kodály method (albeit to a lesser degree) were found to be associated with a conventional primary music teacher role identity in NSW, despite some participants remaining critical of these pedagogical influences. This is attributed to the categorisation of the social position of primary music specialist teacher, and subsequent internal and externally derived expectations (McCall & Simmons, 1978). These teaching approaches form part of identity construction through internalised role expectations. The conceptualisation of the identity leads to role choices that are influenced by the organisation of identities within the salience hierarchy (Stryker & Burke, 2000). This element of role identity consequently influenced the teaching behaviours of the primary music specialist teachers in this study, although the degree to which this occurred was dependent on the value placed on the approach or method within the individual teacher’s role identity.

This finding supports that of Pascoe et al. (2005) who reported the widespread influence of Orff Schulwerk in Australian schools, and is likely a result of the longevity of the approach in Australia since its introduction to Australian contexts in the 1960s (Southcott, 2012), the establishment of a NSW Orff Association in 1972 (Gerozisis, 2002), and the widespread exposure to Orff Schulwerk in primary music education (Temmerman, 1997). The pedagogical influences of Orff and Kodály were evident throughout the study, despite advances in the understanding of human development that challenge the philosophical and methodological bases on which the approaches are grounded (Marsh, 2008). The findings of
this study reveal the widespread use of these pedagogies, with limited critical evaluation arising from the participants.

The impact of past musical experiences on role identity and the prevalence of Orff Schulwerk and the Kodály method has implications for future practice and research. Offering a broad range of musical experiences during preservice teacher training could assist in the development of comprehensive music programs by expanding the scope of preservice music teachers’ imagined identities. In recent years, 21st century pedagogical approaches such as social constructivist teaching for musical understanding (Wiggins, 2015) have been influential in the field of music education. To assist with the dynamic trajectory of identity development and primary music teacher role conceptualisation, further investigation into how these teaching approaches can be disseminated to specialist primary music teachers in NSW, particularly through avenues such as professional learning networks, could be beneficial.

The specialist primary music teacher participants’ adoption of the professional characteristics of their school communities was also dependent on the extent that they valued the characteristics, which is consistent with the analysis of identity formation offered by Beijaard et al. (2004). The attributes of the communities included whole school approaches to managing students’ behaviour within and beyond the classroom settings. In cases where specialist teachers rejected the characteristics of their communities, the result was role conflict or instability in identity. In contrast, acceptance of the professional characteristics further developed the participants’ role identities, particularly with regard to the teacher sub-identity. Including specialist music teachers in educational discussions and the planning of whole school initiatives beyond music education could assist with their role stability and the development of the teacher sub-identity. It could also provide a forum in which the specialist music teacher could voice concerns prior to the implementation of school-wide projects, thus reducing role conflict.

Community

A key recommendation of the National Review of School Music Education was further research regarding the models of collaboration between music specialist teachers, generalist teachers and other partners (Pascoe et al., 2005). This study informs the understanding of specialist primary music teachers’ participation in learning communities and has resulted in the identification of three key aspects: participation, the status of music in communities, and engagement in intersecting communities. The elements of community participation were found to mirror aspects of social learning theory identified by Wenger (1998) and literature
regarding professional learning communities.

**Participation.**

The findings demonstrate that primary specialist music teachers may engage, albeit to varying degrees, in the practice of music education with other stakeholders in the school community, including generalist teachers, specialist music teachers, peripatetic tutors, executive staff and parents. The specialist primary music teachers’ experiences of engagement in communities varied from those who engaged in established communities of practice, those that were on a trajectory of evolution, and those who experienced non-participation due to the absence of a music-focused community of practice within the school. In schools where music was not important to the members, it was found that the music teacher was less likely to initiate or participate in collaborative projects. In some cases, the music teacher participants preferred to work autonomously and independently in the school context. This issue of preferred isolation has been previously reported by Bresler (1998). In the current study, it was found that this was more likely to occur with participants who were involved in other communities beyond the school, whether those associated with professional learning groups, festivals or practising musicians. In contrast, other participants experienced involuntary isolation as a consequence of being the only music specialist practitioner on the staff.

Mutual engagement in music education practices between specialist primary music teachers and generalist teachers was more likely to occur when music teachers and generalist teachers experienced mutual identification through the realisation of elements of shared role identities. Mutual engagement between specialists and generalists was also influenced by the degree of confidence held by generalist teachers in teaching music, which supports the findings of Holden and Button (2006). The participants in my study experienced limited engagement with generalist teachers in music-centred communities of practice where the confidence of generalist teachers to engage in music education was limited. These issues of confidence were potentially addressed by the provision of professional learning for generalist teachers through the support of a music specialist in a classroom setting and provision of sustained interactions through professional development. Previous studies have focused on the benefits to generalist teachers of collaboration with or mentoring by a specialist music teacher (Russell-Bowie, 1999; Wiggins & Bodoin, 1998). Expanding a specialist music teacher’s role to include consultancy and the provision of professional learning for generalist teachers within the school environment could enhance the experience of the specialist teacher
through increased participation in the practice of music and the development of a shared repertoire of resources that creates meaning for the community of practice (see, for example, Australian Youth Orchestra, n.d.).

Literature regarding the establishment of professional learning communities reveals the importance of suitable spaces for collegial conversations, including the proximity of teaching areas to each other (Stoll et al., 2006). This issue has been identified in music education literature by Sindberg and Lipscomb (2005), and my study supports their finding that the location of music teaching facilities within the school can contribute to isolation. However, this study also revealed further influences of the availability and location of music teaching facilities on participation in musical practices. A centrally located music classroom can assist the visibility of the music program and facilitate engagement in the practice between specialist music teachers and generalist teachers. Similarly, music-teaching spaces that are used for other purposes by generalist teachers may be potential boundary objects that connect the practice of a specialist teacher’s practice to that of the other teachers.

The availability of time to interact with other school personnel proved to be influential in the membership status of specialist primary music teachers in learning communities. The responsibility of implementing co-curricular music activities often impeded the interaction between music specialist teachers and other staff during break times, thus reducing opportunities for the sharing of insights and information that bound communities together through learning (Wenger et al., 2002) and increasing the isolation of music specialists. Similarly, the participants reported time-related pressures affecting generalist teachers that restricted their availability to work collaboratively with music specialist teachers. Time limitations were found to reduce the place of music in communities of practice, or restrict the emergence of music-focused communities of practice. These findings have implications for the planning of the school timetable and the provision of administrative support for specialist and generalist teachers. Where specialist music teachers are responsible for extensive co-curricular programs, the provision of relief from other playground duties could facilitate interactions with other staff members that are otherwise impeded.

**Status.**

The findings of my research demonstrate that the extent to which teachers were mutually engaged in the practice of music and the place of music influenced the status of music in the school’s domain of knowledge. The place of music in the domain of knowledge affected the identity of a school, due to the domain of knowledge becoming a visible part of
the organisation (Wenger et al., 2002). Where there were communities of practice centred on music in operation, these communities progressed through various stages of development, from a potential community, where participants began to see a common ground for connectivity, to the coalescing stage in which members shared useful knowledge, to a mature and sustained form of community (Wenger et al., 2002).

The longevity of the specialist music teacher’s participation in the community can affect the place of music in the domain, as a school with a longstanding music program is more likely to have a community of practice in a mature form. This time enables the music practitioner to develop a body of shared knowledge with the teachers, that assists the community to deal with its domain (Wenger et al., 2002). When music-based communities of practice are in an emergent phase, support from a school’s executive staff is necessary for its continued trajectory of development. Furthermore, consideration to the musical identities of the parent community should be given, as well as their potential inclusion in a community of practice, as this can be an influential force in music gaining traction as part of a school’s identity.

In some cases in this study, music education was not considered a priority within the shared vision and values of communities, and the teaching staff and executive did not, therefore, share a collective responsibility for student learning. Instead, generalist teachers perceived that the role of the specialist music teacher was as a provider of RFF for the generalists. The findings indicate that this can result in professional isolation within the workplace for the specialist primary music teachers. This is in keeping with research undertaken by Krueger (1999), who reports that beginning music teachers experience intellectual isolation as a result of being the only music specialist teacher on staff. The review of literature revealed the importance of mentoring relationships, particularly in assisting specialist music teachers to avoid isolation (see Blair, 2008; Conway, 2003, Conway, 2015, Krueger, 1999). In the cases investigated through my research, mentoring relationships tended to be incidental and could be considered part of the role support received by colleagues. Consequently, consideration should be given to the establishment of mentoring programs for specialist primary music teachers in NSW. These would also assist in addressing the isolation experienced by sole music education practitioners.

**Intersecting communities.**

Interactions between music teachers who work in different schools can be a source of beneficial learning interactions (Sindberg, 2011) and reduce teacher isolation (Krueger, 1999).
The findings of this study show that primary specialist music teachers expand their practice through connections with other music education practitioners through engagement in communities beyond their school context that contribute to their landscapes of practice. Some of the participants’ communities were developed through connections formed as a result of participation in professional learning networks, consistent with the findings of Stanley et al. (2014) whose participants revealed that collaborative professional learning can establish personal and professional networks, resources and contacts that provide avenues for implementing new ideas and classroom change through feedback from colleagues. This echoes Conway’s (2007) call for professional learning that enables teachers to spend time interacting informally and sharing ideas and teaching experiences. This has implications for geographically distributed communities of practice that are made up of people from different organisations. Within such communities, allowing adequate time to interact and crystallize the domain of the community could reduce the likelihood of specialist music teachers becoming marginalised and either maintaining a peripheral membership or continuing on an outbound trajectory.

Participation in intersecting communities can address the issue identified by participants in research undertaken by Sindberg and Lipscomb (2005) who experienced isolation due to a lack of available opportunities to share subject-specific information within the workplace. However, the findings of my research show that such external communities may not always be harmonious due to conflicting perceptions of music teacher role identities and their influence on pedagogical practices. Although conflict can be an inherent part of a functional community of practice (Wenger, 1998), such conflict was found to contribute to membership status. Where there are overlapping practices between communities, boundaries can be based on shared histories of engagement in a particular practice, which can also lead to marginalisation and peripheral membership if these histories are not shared. This research shows the role that specialist primary music teachers could play as brokers between communities of bounded practices by crossing the boundaries of practice of these communities through introducing elements of one practice to another. The inclusion of a range of pedagogies to broaden the professional communities available could also lead to greater coherence in communities and assist members to feel that they belong.

As the study revealed certain geographic and financial restrictions that affect music teacher’s engagement in distributed learning communities, an investigation of the development of online communities of practice established through virtual professional
development and online mentoring programs could be explored. Such communities have been used to connect music educators, for example, the use of online weblogs by undergraduate music education students to facilitate interactions leading to community development (Fitzpatrick, 2014) and the establishment of an online Irish traditional music community (Kenny, 2013). Wenger et al. (2002) identify the use of the internet as a means to connect distributed communities and recommend the use of asynchronous tools to enable members to communicate at a time that suits them. To avoid disconnection from other members as a result of limited face-to-face interactions, Wenger et al. advocate that communities such as these conduct regular teleconferences or local meetings.

**Limitations of Findings**

The uniqueness of each specialist primary music teacher’s context resulted in limitations on the findings of this study. Therefore, the findings are not intended to be generalised across all social and cultural settings in which specialist primary music teachers operate, but instead provide a depiction of the experiences of those in a range of NSW primary schools. Although the purposive sampling approaches described in the methodology chapter were intended to provide a broad cross-section of teacher participants’ experiences, there were certain pragmatic factors that influenced the selection of cases. In order to conduct research in NSW primary schools, ethics approval was not only required from the University of Sydney, but also from the NSW Department of Education and each diocese of the Catholic Education Office. In these school systems, the principal of a school had to then grant permission before the potential music teacher participant could be contacted. It is recognised that this process of negotiation with gatekeepers in order to gain access to the field (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007) may have limited potential participation.

During the study, it became apparent that some specialist primary music teachers might have been involved in learning communities within their schools that did not have music as part of the practice. For example, some participants taught other key learning areas, which necessitated regular collaboration with generalist teachers. This aspect of community participation was not included in the focus of the research due to the limitations in contact with other staff members in the field schools and it is acknowledged that this may have narrowed the representation of the participants’ community experiences.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have woven together the main findings from the multiple cases examined in the study. Implications for the future training of specialist primary music
teachers, the design and implementation of professional learning experiences, the growth of music-centred learning communities, and the subsequent development of music teacher role identities have been demonstrated in this research. Through exploration of the participants’ varied experiences, the study has illuminated the empirical social worlds of primary music specialist teachers:

This world is the actual group life of human beings. It consists of what they experience and do, individually and collectively, as they engage in their respective forms of living; it covers the large complexes of interlaced activities that grow up as the action of some spread out to affect the actions of others... The empirical social world, in short is the world of everyday experience, the top layers of which we see in our lives and recognize in the lives of others. (Blumer, 1986, p. 35)
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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Teachers

Pre-service training
Where did you complete your tertiary training and what degrees do you hold?
When did you graduate?
During your undergraduate or post-graduate studies, how many music subjects did you study?
What was the focus of these subjects?
How adequately did your training prepare you for your role as a primary music specialist?
Do you have any other certificates or musical accomplishments?
Are you involved with any music groups outside the school (e.g. choirs, orchestras)?

Music Teacher Role
At which schools have you taught as a music specialist?
Do you have other teaching experience?
How did you become the music teacher at this school?
Are there any other specialist teachers?
What is your teaching load?
What facilities are available to you to teach music at this school?
Tell me about any extra-curricular music activities you are involved in at this school.
How would you describe the socio-economic status of the students at this school?
How would you describe the status of music in this school?
What do you think is beneficial about your role?
What are the factors that contribute to the success of the music program?
What are the factors that inhibit the music program?
Do you use a particular music teaching approach or methodology?
In your programming, do you use support materials, for examples units of work or lesson plans, from music education organisations? Why or why not?

Curriculum
Describe the way you use the NSW Creative Arts syllabus when developing your program.
Does your program reflect content from any other Key Learning Areas?
How would you describe the status of music in NSW primary schools?
Appendix A (continued)

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Teachers

During your career as a music teacher, has your teaching load been affected by changes to curriculum?

How do you think the National Curriculum will affect your current role?

Are you accredited with the NSW Institute of Teachers? Describe your experiences of going through the accreditation process as a specialist teacher.

Professional Learning

How often do you attend professional development courses?

How do you find out about professional development courses?

Who are the providers of the professional development courses you attend?

How do you choose the courses you will attend?

When you attend a professional development course, what are you hoping to gain?

How effectively do professional development courses meet your needs as a primary music specialist teacher?

Describe the ‘in-house’ professional development that takes place at your school (e.g. staff meetings). How relevant do you find these to your role as the music teacher?

Collaboration

Do you have any experience of being mentored or mentoring another teacher?

Do you have opportunities to collaborate with other music teachers, either within or outside the school?

Describe your working relationship with other staff members at this school. Do you have opportunities to work collaboratively with other non-music staff members?

What are the factors that enhance or hinder collaborative relationships?

Are you a member of any support networks for music teachers?

Would you be interested in being the focus of a case study?
Appendix B

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Professional Learning Providers

Angela
Where did you complete your tertiary training & what qualifications do you have?
How did you become involved in music education in primary schools?
At which schools have you taught as a music specialist? Did this include any primary music teaching?
From your interactions with primary music specialists, what things do you think are most beneficial about this role?
What factors do you think conducive to the success of the music program?
What factors inhibit the music program?
For how long have you been involved with this music education organisation?
How did you become involved?
Describe your role.
What does the organisation provide for teachers?
How do schools find out about the organisation?
Is there a balance of Catholic, government & independent schools using the program, or does it attract schools from a particular system?
In the process of developing the teaching resources, do you provide for specialist & generalist teachers?
What level of musical expertise does a teacher need to use the teaching resources?
Do you think a specialist teacher would use the resources in the same way as a generalist teacher?
How do the resources reflect the NSW syllabus?
Do the activities reflect a particular music teaching methodology or approach?
How do you think the National Curriculum will affect the teaching resources?
What are the aims of the professional learning courses?
Who is the target audience?
Where in NSW do the courses take place & how is that determined?
Do many specialist music teachers attend the courses?
Describe the activities that generally take place at a PL course.
Appendix B (continued)

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Professional Learning Providers

What do you think specialist teachers are looking for in a professional development course?
How do these needs differ from those of generalist teachers?
How are these needs reflected in the content of professional learning courses?
What sort of feedback do you get from specialist teachers about the courses?
Through your involvement in music education, what changes have you seen take place?
What are the factors that have influenced these changes?
What support networks are there available to specialist primary music teachers? How could these be improved?
What do you think are the greatest challenges facing specialist primary music teachers in NSW?
Appendix B (continued)

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Professional Learning Providers

Kathy

Where did you complete your tertiary training & what qualifications do you have?
At which schools have you taught as a music specialist? Did this include any primary music teaching?
From your interactions with primary music specialists, what things do you think are most beneficial about this role?
What factors do you think contribute to the success of a primary school music program?
What factors inhibit a primary school music program?
For how long have you been involved with the Education Program?
How did you become involved?
Describe your role at the Education Program.
What does the Education Program provide for teachers?
How do schools find out about the Education Program?
Is there a balance of Catholic, government & independent schools using the program, or does it attract schools from a particular system?
How is the repertoire for the concerts chosen?
Where do the concerts take place and how is this determined?
Do most primary teachers who attend the concerts also attend the seminars?
Describe the process that takes place in developing the teaching kits.
In the process of developing the teaching kits, do you provide for specialist & generalist teachers?
What level of musical expertise does a teacher need to use the teaching kit?
Do you think a specialist teacher would use the kit in the same way as a generalist teacher?
How do the kits reflect the NSW syllabus?
Do the activities reflect a particular music teaching methodology or approach?
How do you think the National Curriculum will affect the teaching kits?
What are the aims of the seminars?
Who is the target audience?
Where in NSW do the seminars take place & how is that determined?
Do many specialist music teachers attend the seminars?
Appendix B (continued)

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Professional Learning Providers

Describe the activities that generally take place.
What do you think specialist teachers are looking for in a seminar? How do these needs differ from those of generalist teachers?
How are these needs reflected in the content of the seminars?
What sort of feedback do you get from specialist teachers about the courses?
Through your involvement in music education, what changes have you seen take place?
What are the factors that have influenced these changes?
What support networks are there available to specialist primary music teachers? How could these be improved?
What do you think are the greatest challenges facing specialist primary music teachers in NSW?
Appendix B (continued)

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Professional Learning Providers

Mary
Where did you complete your tertiary training & what qualifications do you have?
How did you become involved in music education in primary schools?
At which primary schools have you taught as a primary music specialist?
What did you find most beneficial about this role?
What factors were conducive to the music program?
What factors inhibited the music program?
How did your tertiary training prepare you for this role?
Tell me about your teaching experience at university in training generalist primary teachers.
Tell me about your teaching experience at university in training specialist primary music teachers.
For how long were you involved with the Education Program?
How did you become involved?
Describe your role at the Education Program.
What did the Education Program provide for teachers?
How did schools find out about the Education Program?
Was there a balance of Catholic, government & independent schools using the program, or did it attract schools from a particular system?
How has the education program changed since you were involved?
How did you become involved with the Orff Schulwerk Association?
What does the Orff Association offer teachers?
What are the aims of the Orff professional development courses?
Who is the target audience?
Where in NSW do the courses take place & how is that determined?
Do many specialist music teachers attend the courses?
Describe the activities that generally take place at an Orff course.
What do you think specialist teachers are looking for in a professional development course?
How do these needs differ from those of generalist teachers?
How are these needs reflected in the content of Orff professional development courses?
Appendix B (continued)

Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Professional Learning Providers

Do you have any other experiences in mentoring specialist primary music teachers or teachers in training?
Through your involvement in primary music education, what changes have you seen take place? What are the factors that have influenced these changes?
What support networks are there available to specialist primary music teachers? How could these be improved?
What do you think are the greatest challenges facing specialist primary music teachers in NSW?
Appendix C
Interview Protocol: Semi-structured Interviews with Principals

At which schools have you taught?
When did you become the principal of this school?
Tell me about your musical background?

Conception of Music Teacher Role
For how long has this school had music RFF?
Do you anticipate that the music program will continue in the future?
How would you describe the status of music in this school?
How important is the music program to the parent body?
How involved is the parent body in the school?
What skills and attributes do you think are important for a primary music teacher to have?
What do you think is beneficial about having music for RFF?
What are the factors that contribute to the success of the music program?
What are the factors that inhibit the success of the music program?
Extra-curricular music activities
What processes are in place to ensure that the music program is meeting the requirements of the Board of Studies syllabus?

Learning Communities
How often does the music teacher attend professional development courses?
Does the music teacher participate in ‘in-house’ professional development that takes place at your school (e.g. staff meetings)? Describe the participation.
Is there a formal mentoring program at the school?
Does the music teacher have opportunities to collaborate with other music teachers, either within or outside the school?
In what ways would the music teacher work collaboratively with the other teachers in the school? What are the factors that enhance or hinder collaborative relationships?
How would you describe the status of music in NSW primary schools?
How do you think the Australian Curriculum will affect the music program?
## Appendix D

### Coded Interview Transcripts

#### Open Coding: Latent Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Collaborative practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME</td>
<td>Musician experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD</td>
<td>Role description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF</td>
<td>Resources - facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSM</td>
<td>Resources - support materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Status of music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Teaching approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Interview Transcript Containing Latent Codes

**Daniel, interview, June 23, 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:53</td>
<td>Trained in the late 1970s Dip Mus Ed 4 year course, Graduated 1980.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:19</td>
<td>Music librarian for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>Bridging course to convert to BMusEd, graduated 1985. One year course at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>Did a lot of practice teaching in primary schools. Good grounding in primary &amp; early childhood in first year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:50</td>
<td>Opera Singer. Principal with for 12 years. No teaching during this time. Went OS for just over a year &amp; taught in Italy in a local primary school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:17</td>
<td>2001 returned to Australia. They’d had a good music program here and it sort of stopped and then the Principal wanted to build it up again. That’s when she asked if I’d be interested in starting up a new music program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:53</td>
<td>Both children had started school here. I did it part-time, expanded over 3 to 4 years. Applied for a classroom teaching position but the principal had been able to work it so I’m teaching music 80% of the time. I see all the students K-6 and then I run the music ensembles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:38</td>
<td>1 music lesson per week per class for 30 minutes. 4 classes get 1 hour because of RFF.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:22</td>
<td>I’m full time. I’ve asked for it not to be face to face music teaching all the time, so I do a bit of ICT. Too exhausting to do face to face all the time. Physically demanding. Full time music is too exhausting and physically demanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>3 choirs, string ensemble, recorder ensemble. I help the band teacher who is full time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:40</td>
<td>All students do recorder Years 1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:56</td>
<td>There are lots of teachers who actually use what I do on the class again in their own lessons. We’ve tried to implement it in such a way that they get a little bit of professional development. Teachers get some PD as they don’t get enough in their undergrad courses. My anecdotal evidence is that most teachers don’t feel confident about teaching any part of Creative Arts, especially music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:45</td>
<td>They sit in the class and watch the lesson. If they don’t know how to read music, I’ll teach them a little bit about music literacy and I’ll point out things they can do if they have five or ten minutes, two or three times between music lessons. It generally revolves around recorder.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:24</td>
<td>Status of music within community &amp; school is high. Profile has been lifted &amp; he has liaised with the parents to show how important music is. Speaks at the Kindergarten orientation days about the music program. Has to be proactive about communicating the value of music education &amp; being aware of the politics so music isn’t taken for granted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:25</td>
<td>Singing, piano (7th/8th grade). Can play other instruments. Had to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
do strings & woodwind during undergrad training. Learned a lot about orchestral things at [SSO].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10:05</th>
<th>Success of program is it being ongoing &amp; sequential. Becomes part of everyday life. See other students performing in ensembles or class.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:50</td>
<td>Recording compositions &amp; podcasting. Sending to the SSO – links in with Australian composition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:31</td>
<td>Used the SSO teacher’s kit for composition activity about a scorpion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:10</td>
<td>Crowded curriculum &amp; lack of time hinder the program. Would like ten minutes every day for singing and playing. Already happening in five or six classes because the teachers are very supportive. Generally teachers of younger grades are more flexible with time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:30</td>
<td>Ticking off boxes with outcomes, used to be able to do projects for six weeks. A teacher went to a six-week course on music education and freely implemented a project, which couldn’t happen now because of time constraints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:38</td>
<td>Doesn’t have a classroom at the moment. Across any public school it’s unusual for a music teacher to have a room in a public school. I was teaching mostly out of the hall, but if there were other events on, I would go from class to class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:05</td>
<td>Percussion, xylophones stored in the hall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:19</td>
<td>Saw the potential of the Education Revolution &amp; lobbied the principal to get a hall &amp; expand an area to teach specialist art/craft &amp; music. Very supportive principal. Had to keep explaining his position during the design process &amp; explain rationale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:30</td>
<td>Towards end of 2010 the building should be ready. Wanted a space connected to the hall and not next to a classroom for sound separation. Open space. Extended an old building to give more design flexibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:20</td>
<td>Instrumental loan scheme unsatisfactory, lease hire arrangements in place for expensive instruments. Lower cost instruments under $200 parents buy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:40</td>
<td>I was trained in Orff &amp; Kodály. I was very fortunate to have great</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 245 | |

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
teachers e.g. Richard Gill, Deanna Hoermann. Supervised very closely as a student compared with lack of supervision today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20:51</td>
<td>We had a very strong foundation in Orff and Kodály but I blend those music education methods. I believe in working from doing (playing singing) and then I build up a raft of songs, movement and dance and when they are performing them well, we start unpacking them, sometimes doing some moving, composition &amp; explaining skills they’re developing. It’s a bit of a Kodály basis of lots of skills from repertoire, singing is the foundation. Teaching the skills out of a repertoire of songs. Kindergarten does singing and movement &amp; composition through singing. I start with composition. Use the word ‘composition’. Becomes more formalised, looking at non-traditional &amp; traditional symbols.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:45</td>
<td>Uses the SSO support materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:55</td>
<td>Couldn’t have Musica Viva this year because of the building program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23:09</td>
<td>Used to write teachers’ kits for Richard Gill when he was there. Oz Opera comes to the school, but not this year because of building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23:50</td>
<td>Budget $30 per student. Cost more this year because they couldn’t do any incursions due to building program and had to factor in transport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24:22</td>
<td>Oz Opera, 2 x Musica Viva &amp; a drama performance per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25:28</td>
<td>Uses outcomes &amp; indicators from syllabus. Used old syllabus when returning to teaching as a framework of sequential development. Uses own content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26:26</td>
<td>Attends SSO &amp; Musica Viva courses. Most PD for music teachers is geared for high school. DET paid for music technology through University of Newcastle online. Enrolls in whatever the DET offers. Learn to Teach course by Intel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29:19</td>
<td>Hoping to gain from PD: knowledge of content, different ideas &amp; approaches, games, structuring lessons. Writing units of work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30:36</td>
<td>Musica Viva courses are targeted at generalist &amp; specialists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31:05</td>
<td>Practical PD courses help you understand what it’s like to be one of the students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31:17</td>
<td>PD takes place at school all the time. Not targeted at music education. Work done on reporting &amp; assessing, which is helpful. We have a very good team here, so if you’re unsure of a particular area, there’s usually someone who can help and support you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31:54</td>
<td>Supportive teachers, always willing to help. When I first came back into teaching I needed assistance with programming. At the moment the reporting system doesn’t differentiate between the different strands of CAPA. Teachers help with reporting skills etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33:40</td>
<td>Musica Viva workshops provide opportunities to collaborate with other music specialists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performing Arts Unit workshops for concerts, liaises with other teachers but is focused on recorders, strings or choirs. PAC recorder program. Used her as a sounding board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34:06</td>
<td>Music Director for Sydney region choral festival. Often works with generalist teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Occasionally does project based cross-curricular work e.g. Harmony Day. Works with the Chinese teacher to build repertoire of Chinese songs. Similar with Italian teacher. Liaises with Year 6 teacher on audiovisual projects to develop a soundtrack.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37:55</td>
<td>Distinguish between music education &amp; performance. Music education is doing things that are bite size and progressive and they are always leading on to another skill. Performance - lot of rote and drilling and just getting the sound right, the words right, the movements right. It’s a whole different set of things. If you get stuck into that, what happens is you’re not doing music education. You’re doing drilling. I don’t want to use up all music education time for performance preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other teachers are overwhelmingly supportive. Comes from the leadership of the school. Very positive work environment &amp; constructive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40:02</td>
<td>Status of music in NSW is generally patchy in DET schools. Very high standard at the high end, nothing happening at the low end.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40:38</td>
<td>Some people at a departmental level think having a choir or being involved in School Spectacular is a music education program. Principals think a band program is a music education program. It’s extra curricula and doesn’t involve all students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent schools have music specialists because of the difference music education makes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42:01</td>
<td>More resources needed K-6 rather than in high schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42:27</td>
<td>Concerned about National Curriculum. Has written to Julia Gillard &amp; local member. Drama should fall within English syllabus. Most classroom teachers include it in English. Includes dance in the music program. Dancers need to have a musical response, so it should start with music education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44:40</td>
<td>Music is innate and should form a critical part of early education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45:02</td>
<td>National Curriculum may affect role. Doesn’t understand the role of media in creative arts. Concerned music education will be diluted. Has already happened when CAPA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46:36</td>
<td>Dance &amp; drama tends to focus on performance in primary school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D (continued)
Coded Interview Transcripts

Selective Codes

Rebecca, interview, October 12, 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Interview Summary</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/10/11</td>
<td>Moved classrooms three times. This classroom the Smartboard doesn’t work – no speakers. Has told the exec but nothing has happened. Wants to show video from strings concert but can’t because of no sound.</td>
<td>CS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/10/11</td>
<td>Isn’t consulted about the music concert. Each grade is performing an item to <em>Mary Poppins</em>. Role has been to help the organiser by telling them they need a run through. Not the music she would have chosen. Her expertise has not been used. She would have preferred to have strings and a choir integral to the performance but they are an add on. Doesn’t like kids singing to backing tracks. Will be expected to help kids practise in music time but might do her own program. Items reflect musical taste of the staff.</td>
<td>CC, RI, SIM, P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Ethical Approval

Ref: PB/AS

17 December 2009

Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh
Sydney Conservatorium of Music – C41
The University of Sydney
Email: kmarsh@usyd.edu.au

Dear Kathryn

Thank you for the correspondence received 2 December 2009 from Michele Benn addressing comments made to you by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). After considering the additional information, the Executive Committee at its meeting held on 11 December 2009 approved your protocol entitled “The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity”.

Details of the approval are as follows:

Ref No.: 12-2009/12347
Approval Period: December 2009 – December 2010
Authorised Personnel: A/Prof Kathryn Marsh
Ms Michele Benn

The HREC is a fully constituted Ethics Committee in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans-March 2007 under Section 5.1.29

The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. We draw to your attention the requirement that a report on this research must be submitted every 12 months from the date of the approval or on completion of the project, whichever occurs first. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of consent for the project to proceed.

Chief Investigator / Supervisor’s responsibilities to ensure that:

(1) All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

(2) All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.
Appendix E

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Ethical Approval (continued)

(3) The HREC must be notified as soon as possible of any changes to the protocol. All changes must be approved by the HREC before continuation of the research project. These include:
   - If any of the investigators change or leave the University.
   - Any changes to the Participant Information Statement and/or Consent Form.

(4) All research participants are to be provided with a Participant Information Statement and Consent Form, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee. The Participant Information Statement and Consent Form are to be on University of Sydney letterhead and include the full title of the research project and telephone contacts for the researchers, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee and the following statement must appear on the bottom of the Participant Information Statement. Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 8627 8176 (Telephone); (02) 8627 8177 (Facsimile) or human.ethics@sydney.edu.au (Email).

(5) Copies of all signed Consent Forms must be retained and made available to the HREC on request.

(6) It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

(7) The HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the Approval Period stated in this letter. Investigators are requested to submit a progress report annually.

(8) A report and a copy of any published material should be provided at the completion of the Project.

Yours sincerely

Associate Professor Philip Beale
Chairman
Human Research Ethics Committee

cc: Ms Michele Benn, mben4759@uni.sydney.edu.au

End. Approved Participant Information Statement
Approved Teacher Participant Information Statement -- Stage 1
Approved Teacher Participant Information Statement -- Stage 2
Approved Parent Information Statement
Approved Participant Consent Form (Stage 1)
Approved Participant Consent Form (Stage 2)
Approved Principal - Participant Consent Form
Approved Parental Consent Form
Approved Request for Expressions of Interest (principal)
Approved Request for Expressions of Interest (teacher stage 1)
Approved Request for Expressions of Interest (teacher stage 2)
Approved Interview Topics
Appendix F

NSW Department of Education and Training Ethical Approval

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND
PROGRAM EVALUATION BUREAU

A/Prof Kathryn Marsh
Sydney Conservatorium of Music
Building C41
University of Sydney
SYDNEY NSW 2066

Dear A/Prof Marsh

SERAP Number 2009136

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in NSW government schools entitled
The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved. You may now contact the Principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation.

This approval will remain valid until 17-12-2010.

No researchers or research assistants have undertaken Working with Children Check to interact with or observe children for the purposes of this research.

You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools.

I draw your attention to the following requirements for all researchers in NSW government schools:

- School Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time. The approval of the Principal for the specific method of gathering information for the school must also be sought.
- The privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- The participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school’s convenience.
- Any proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the Research Approvals Officer before publication proceeds.

When your study is completed please forward your report marked to General Manager, Planning and Innovation, Department of Education and Training, GPO Box 33, Sydney, NSW 2001.

Yours sincerely

Dr Max Smith
Senior Manager
Student Engagement and Program Evaluation
February 2010

NSW Department of Education and Training
Student Engagement and Program Evaluation Bureau
Level 3, 1 Oxford Street * Locked Bag 53 * Darlinghurst NSW 2010
T 02 9244 5019 * F 02 9266 8233 * E serap@det.nsw.edu.au
Appendix G

Catholic Education Office Ethical Approval

Ms Michele Benn

8 February 2010

Dear Michele,

Thank you for your Application to Conduct Research in Parramatta Diocese which we received on 21/01/2010. We have now reviewed your ethics approval. I am happy for you to approach in order to carry out research on ‘The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools’.

We always stress the following points in relation to research requests:
- It is the school principal, who gives final permission for research to be carried out in his school.
- Confidentiality needs to be observed in reporting and must comply with the requirements of the Commonwealth Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.
- There should be some feedback to schools and a copy of the findings of the research forwarded to this office.
- This letter of approval should accompany any approach to schools.

I look forward to the results of this study and wish you the best over the coming months. If you would like to discuss any aspect of this research in our diocese, please do not hesitate to contact me on 02 9407 7079 or john.decourcy@parra.catholic.edu.au.

Yours sincerely,

Dr John DeCourcy
Head of Strategic Accountabilities Services
Catholic Education Office
Diocese of Parramatta
Appendix H
Request for Expressions of Interest: Principals

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Research Project
Title: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools

Dear Principal,

I would like to invite your school to participate in the first stage of a project that seeks to develop understanding of the experiences of teachers who work with music in a specialist capacity in NSW primary schools. The study is being conducted by Michele Benn and will form the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education.

This study seeks to develop further understanding of the effects of curricula and communities of practice on teachers working with music in a specialist capacity in NSW primary schools and other factors that inform their professional practice and teaching approach. Through observation and analysis of the experiences of these teachers and their teaching programs, the study will investigate the effectiveness of available pre-service and professional learning programs to support career development of primary music teachers. It will explore the communities of practice available to and developed by these practitioners and the ways in which they are affected by changes in curricula and educational policies.

This first stage of the study involves your school’s K-6 music teacher being interviewed about his/her experiences of teaching music in a specialist capacity in a NSW primary school. The interview will be 45-60 minutes in length.

Following the interview, should you be interested in your school becoming the focus of a case study in the second stage of the project, a separate information sheet and consent form will be provided.

Should you wish to be involved in this project, please contact me at the email address below and I will send the relevant participant information statements and consent forms.

Yours sincerely,

Michele Benn
michele.benn@sydney.edu.au
Appendix H (continued)

Request for Expressions of Interest: Principals

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KATHRYN MARSH
CHAIR OF MUSIC EDUCATION

Sydney Conservatorium of Music
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia
Tel: +61 2 9351 1333
Fax: +61 2 9351 1287
Email: kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au
Web: www.usyd.edu.au

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
Research Project
Title: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in
New South Wales primary schools

Dear Principal,

I would like to invite your school to participate in the second stage of a project that
seeks to develop understanding of the experiences of teachers who work with music in a
specialist capacity in NSW primary schools. The study is being conducted by Michele Benn and
will form the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney under the
supervision of Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education.

This study seeks to develop further understanding of the effects of curricula and
communities of practice on teachers working with music in a specialist capacity in NSW primary
schools and other factors that inform their professional practice and teaching approach.
Through observation and analysis of the experiences of these teachers and their teaching
programs, the study will investigate the effectiveness of available pre-service and professional
learning programs to support career development of primary music teachers. It will explore the
communities of practice available to and developed by these practitioners and the ways in
which they are affected by changes in curricula and educational policies.

This second stage of the study involves your school’s K-6 music teacher being the
focus of a case study undertaken at your school. This will involve observation of four music
lessons and observation of an extra-curricular music activity, where applicable. Additionally, I
will interview the music teacher and analyse his/her teaching program and other documents
relevant to the school’s music program. As part of this stage of the study, I would like to
interview you about music education in primary schools. It is anticipated that I will spend up to
five days at your school.

Children who do not receive permission from a parent or guardian to be observed will
participate as normal in music lessons or activities. The researcher will not make any field
notes or base any material on children who have not been given consent by a parent or
guardian.

Should you wish to be involved in this project, please contact me at the email address below
and I will send the relevant participant information statements and consent forms.

Yours sincerely
Michele Benn
michele.benn@sydney.edu.au
Participant Information Statement:

Title: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools

Stage 1

(1) What is the study about?

This study seeks to develop further understanding of the effects of curricula and communities of practice on teachers working with music in a specialist capacity in NSW primary schools and other factors that inform their professional practice and teaching approach. Through observation and analysis of the experiences of these teachers and their teaching programs, the study will investigate the effectiveness of available pre-service and professional learning programs to support career development of primary music teachers. It will explore the communities of practice available to and developed by these practitioners and the ways in which they are affected by changes in curricula and educational policies.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Michele Benn and will form the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education.

(3) What does the study involve?

This stage of the study involves being interviewed about your experiences of teaching music in a specialist capacity in a primary school. Topics will include your teaching approach, employment history and training, curricula and forms of professional support. Should you be interested in becoming the focus of a case study later in the project, a separate information sheet and consent form will be provided.

(4) How much time will the study take?

The interview will be 45-60 minutes in length and it will be audio recorded.
Appendix I (continued)
Participant Information Statements and Consent Forms: First Stage of Research

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study. You will have the opportunity to preview results or interview transcripts before they are used. You will have the opportunity to withdraw or amend any information anytime during or at the end of the interview.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. Interview transcripts, recordings and field notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office and destroyed after seven years. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants and locations will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

It is anticipated that the results of this study will assist in improving the experiences of teachers who work with music in a specialist capacity, through the development of recommendations regarding professional development and the establishment of communities of practice.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

You are free to discuss your participation in this study with others.

(9) What if I require further information?

When you have read this information, Michele Benn will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education on 93511333.

(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 8627 8176 (Telephone); (02) 8627 7177 (Facsimile) or human.ethics@usyd.edu.au (Email).

This information statement is for you to keep.
Appendix I (continued)
Participant Information Statements and Consent Forms: First Stage of Research

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (Stage 1)

I, .............................................................................[PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project.

TITLE: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) or the University of Sydney now or in the future.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

5. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.
Appendix I (continued)

Participant Information Statements and Consent Forms: First Stage of Research

7. I consent to: –

i) Audio-taping      YES ☐ NO ☐

ii) Interviewing     YES ☐ NO ☐

iii) Receiving Feedback YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answered YES to the “Receiving Feedback Question (iii), please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

Feedback Option

Address: ______________________________________________________

Email: ______________________________________________________

Signed:.................................................................................................

Name:...................................................................................................

Date:.....................................................................................................
Appendix J

Teacher Information Statement and Consent Form: Second Stage of Research

ABN 15 211 513 464

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KATHRYN MARSH
CHAIR OF MUSIC EDUCATION

TEACHER - PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT
Research Project

Title: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools

Stage 2

(1) What is the study about?

This study seeks to develop further understanding of the effects of curricula and communities of practice on teachers working with music in a specialist capacity in NSW primary schools and other factors that inform their professional practice and teaching approach. Through observation and analysis of the experiences of these teachers and their teaching programs, the study will investigate the effectiveness of available pre-service and professional learning programs to support career development of primary music teachers. It will explore the communities of practice available to and developed by these practitioners and the ways in which they are affected by changes in curricula and educational policies.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Michele Benn and will form the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education.

(3) What does the study involve?

Participants will be observed teaching four music lessons, preferably one from each Key Stage, followed by an interview about the researcher's observations. Additionally, you will be observed taking an extra-curricular music activity, if that is part of your usual job description. The researcher will read your teaching program and other relevant documents related to the music program in the school and discuss your approaches to teaching music.
Appendix J (continued)

Teacher Information Statement and Consent Form: Second Stage of Research

(4) **How much time will the study take?**

It is anticipated that the researcher will spend up to five days at your school. This allows for a 45 minute interview, observation of four lessons and time spent reading teaching programs. Following this, the researcher may return for another 45-minute interview in six months time. The interviews will be audio recorded.

(5) **Can I withdraw from the study?**

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

(6) **Will anyone else know the results?**

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. Interview transcripts, recordings and field notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher’s office and destroyed after seven years. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants and locations will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) **Will the study benefit me?**

It is anticipated that the results of this study will assist in improving the experiences of teachers who work with music in a specialist capacity, through the development of recommendations regarding professional development and the establishment of communities of practice.

(8) **Can I tell other people about the study?**

You are free to discuss your participation in this study with others.

(9) **What if I require further information?**

When you have read this information, Michele Benn will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact, Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education on 93511333.

(10) **What if I have a complaint or concerns?**

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 8627 8176 (Telephone); (02) 8627 7177 (Facsimile) or human.ethics@usyd.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (Stage 2)

I, .................................................................[PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project

**TITLE:** The experiences of teachers working with music in a specialist capacity in New South Wales primary schools

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) or the University of Sydney now or in the future.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

5. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.
Appendix J (continued)

Teacher Information Statement and Consent Form: Second Stage of Research

7. I consent to: –

i) Audio-taping
   YES ☐ NO ☐

ii) Interviewing
    YES ☐ NO ☐

iii) Observation of music lessons
     YES ☐ NO ☐

iv) Observation of extra-curricular music activity
    YES ☐ NO ☐

v) Analysis of teaching program and other relevant documents
   YES ☐ NO ☐

vi) Receiving Feedback
    YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answered YES to the “Receiving Feedback Question (vi), please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

Feedback Option

Address: __________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Email: __________________________________________________________

Signed: ...........................................................................................................

Name: ...........................................................................................................

Date: ...........................................................................................................
Appendix K
Principal Information Statement and Consent Form: Second Stage of Research

Principal - PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT
Research Project

Title: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools

Stage 1

(2) What is the study about?

This study seeks to develop further understanding of the effects of curricula and communities of practice on teachers working with music in a specialist capacity in NSW primary schools and other factors that inform their professional practice and teaching approach. Through observation and analysis of the experiences of these teachers and their teaching programs, the study will investigate the effectiveness of available pre-service and professional learning programs to support career development of primary music teachers. It will explore the communities of practice available to and developed by these practitioners and the ways in which they are affected by changes in curricula and educational policies.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Michele Benn and will form the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education.

(3) What does the study involve?

This stage of the study involves being interviewed about your experiences of teaching music in a specialist capacity in a primary school. Topics will include your teaching approach, employment history and training, curricula and forms of professional support. Should you be interested in becoming the focus of a case study later in the project, a separate information sheet and consent form will be provided.

(4) How much time will the study take?

The interview will be 45-60 minutes in length and it will be audio recorded.
Appendix K (continued)

Principal Information Statement and Consent Form: Second Stage of Research

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study. You will have the opportunity to preview results or interview transcripts before they are used. You will have the opportunity to withdraw or amend any information anytime during or at the end of the interview.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. Interview transcripts, recordings and field notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher's office and destroyed after seven years. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants and locations will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

It is anticipated that the results of this study will assist in improving the experiences of teachers who work with music in a specialist capacity, through the development of recommendations regarding professional development and the establishment of communities of practice.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

You are free to discuss your participation in this study with others.

(9) What if I require further information?

When you have read this information, Michele Benn will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education on 93511333.

(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 8627 8176 (Telephone); (02) 8627 7177 (Facsimile) or human.ethics@usyd.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep
Appendix K (continued)

Principal Information Statement and Consent Form: Second Stage of Research

PRINCIPAL - PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (Stage 2)

I, ............................................................ [PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project

TITLE: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) or the University of Sydney now or in the future.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

5. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.
Appendix K (continued)

Principal Information Statement and Consent Form: Second Stage of Research

7. I understand that children who do not receive permission from a parent or guardian to be observed will participate as normal in music lessons or activities. The researcher will not make any field notes or base any material on children who have not been given consent by a parent or guardian.

8. I consent to: –

i) Audio-taping

ii) Interviewing

iii) Receiving Feedback

If you answered YES to the “Receiving Feedback Question (iii), please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

Feedback Option

Address: _________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________

Email: _________________________________________________________

Signed: ............................................................................................................................

Name: ..............................................................................................................................

Date: ...............................................................................................................................
Appendix L
Parent/Guardian Information and Consent Form

PARENT (OR GUARDIAN) INFORMATION STATEMENT
Research Project
Title: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools

(1) What is the study about?
This study seeks to develop further understanding of the effects of curriculum documents and support networks on teachers working with music in a specialist capacity in NSW primary schools and other factors that inform their teaching. Through observation and analysis of the experiences of these teachers and their teaching programs, the study will investigate the effectiveness of available teacher training and professional learning programs to support career development of primary music teachers. It will explore the support networks available to and developed by these practitioners and the ways in which they are affected by changes in curricula and educational policies.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?
The study is being conducted by Michele Benn and will form the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education.

(3) What does the study involve?
Your child will be observed participating in a school music lesson, taught by the school’s music teacher and/or an extra-curricular music activity, for example band, choir. If you do not wish to give consent, your child will still participate in his/her usual music lessons or activities but the researcher will not record any notes or base any materials on him/her.

(4) How much time will the study take?
The observation will occur during your child’s regular music lesson and/or scheduled rehearsal.
Appendix L (continued)

Parent/Guardian Information and Consent Form

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw your child at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. Field notes will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the researcher’s office and destroyed after seven years. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants and locations will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

It is anticipated that the results of this study will assist in improving the experiences of teachers who work with music in a specialist capacity, leading to improvements in primary music education that may affect your child.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

You are free to discuss your child’s participation in this study with others.

(9) What if I require further information?

When you have read this information, Michele Benn will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Associate Professor Kathryn Marsh, Chair of Music Education on 93511333.

(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Deputy Manager, Human Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 8627 8176 (Telephone); (02) 8627 7177 (Facsimile) or human.ethics@usyd.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep.
PARENTAL (OR GUARDIAN) CONSENT FORM

I, ........................................................ agree to permit ......................................................, who is
aged ................................... years, to participate in the research project –

TITLE: The experiences of teachers working in a specialist music capacity in New South Wales primary schools

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. I have read the Information Statement and the time involved for my child’s participation in the project. The researcher/s has given me the opportunity to discuss the information and ask any questions I have about the project and they have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I understand that I can withdraw my child from the study at any time without prejudice to my or my child’s relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

3. I agree that research data gathered from the results of the study may be published provided that neither my child nor I can be identified.

4. I understand that if I have any questions relating to my child’s participation in this research I may contact the researcher/s who will be happy to answer them.

5. I acknowledge receipt of the Information Statement.

...........................................................
Signature of Parent/Guardian

...........................................................
Please PRINT name

...........................................................
Date