



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

**Curriculum change and teachers' responses:
a NSW case study**

Linda Merewyn Lorenza

**A thesis submitted for fulfillment requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**The Sydney School of Education and Social Work
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
The University of Sydney**

2018

Statement of originality

This is to certify that to the best of my knowledge, the content of this thesis is my own work. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or other purposes.

I certify that the intellectual content of this thesis is the product of my own work and that all the assistance received in preparing this thesis and sources have been acknowledged.

Linda Merewyn Lorenza

Abstract

This thesis reports on the findings of a study into NSW Arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts in the Australian context. From 2015 Australian schools began to engage with a national curriculum in the Arts. There are considerable implications for both practice and policy. Teachers' willingness to adopt a new curriculum and adapt to change is a mitigating factor. This research focussed on NSW drama, music and visual arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change from the state curriculum they currently teach, to the incoming Australian arts curriculum.

Research was qualitative and employed a case study approach (G. Thomas, 2010) including the use of in-depth interview and document analysis. The opinions of the case study participants in this particular study reflect some and oppose other views expressed in consultation reports, which reflect the wide consultation conducted by the Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority (ACARA) during the development of the Australian arts curriculum.

The thesis investigates the teachers' understanding of curriculum change in their particular Arts discipline area through the lens of six influences on Arts education raised by Elliot Eisner in his seminal paper, "Arts education policy?" (2000).

It argues that outside forces within the school, pre-specified outcomes and testing impact the teacher's capacity to teach the Arts. Teachers' backgrounds and personal interest in the artform, accompanied by ongoing skills and knowledge development, contribute to teacher competence to teach the Arts.

The thesis concludes that the teachers were positive and excited about the new curriculum, identifying similarities to their current state syllabus and potential to change practice through the Australian arts curriculum. These findings provide a benchmark of NSW teachers' responses to the incoming Australian Curriculum in the Arts.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the generosity, enthusiasm and curiosity of my research participants Gina, Mel, Paula, Mary, Sarah, Craig, Dean and Errol.

For assistance with proofreading and editing, I gratefully acknowledge the patience and persistence of Dr Robert Howard. I also humbly thank Dr Michael Patton, Dr Joseph Toltz and Mrs Jan Sullivan for generously giving their time and intellect to reviewing and challenging my evolving drafts.

I thank my family and my colleagues for enduring my increasing absence as I undertook this academic journey, which I began with the enthusiastic support of my father, Paul Merewyn Greenwood, himself a passionate educator, and in whose memory I was determined to complete it and thus continue my career in the Arts.

I thank Professor Michael Anderson for his broad conceptual view and Associate Professor Robyn Gibson for her astute eye for detail, and both for their collegial conversations and willingness to explore ideas. I also thank Professor Lina Markauskaite for her tutorials on the use of NVIVO and expert advice regarding qualitative data analysis.

Finally, I thank Dr John Hughes for seeing the potential in me to take on post-graduate research in the field of arts education.

Contents

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Contents.....	vi
Prologue	1
The researcher: my story	1
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	7
Definitions of terms specific to this study.....	13
Chapter 2 Review of literature	16
Introduction	16
Curriculum background.....	17
Twentieth century curriculum – clarity of science or creativity of the Arts.....	17
Twenty-first century curriculum – siding with the Arts	19
Orientations of curriculum.....	19
Accountability, but twenty-first century skills.....	20
Enter Elliot Eisner: Six influences of which testing is one.....	24
The American determiners of curriculum.....	25
The British determiners of curriculum.....	26
The Australian determiners of curriculum	26
Desperately seeking the ‘enjoyable act of learning’	27
Curriculum development in the Arts: rigorous or functional	29
Curriculum development in Australia.....	30
The Arts in Australian curricula.....	32
The accountability focus	36
Teachers, the interpreters of curriculum	38

Chapter 3 The context of the research: Curriculum development in

Australia and NSW	43
Introduction	43
A step towards a national approach.....	43
The politics of education in NSW: The NSW education act 1990.....	45
Decision making: the education authority or the Minister	45
Syllabus.....	46
Key learning areas including the Arts	46
Time allocation	47
NSW primary arts syllabus	48
NSW secondary arts syllabuses.....	49
Development of professional associations: giving arts teachers a voice	50
Developing the Australian curriculum: 2008 to 2014	51
Curriculum shaping	52
Step 1: Initial advice paper for the Arts.....	52
NSW response to the initial advice paper	52
Step 2: Draft Shape Paper: The blueprint for the Australian arts curriculum	53
NSW response to the Draft Shape Paper	53
Time allocations	54
Experiential learning	55
Language: Strand organisers.....	56
Continuum of learning	56
Step 3: Draft Australian curriculum: The Arts	57
NSW response to the Draft curriculum.....	59
Time allocation	60
Experiential learning	60
Language: Strand organisers.....	62

Continuum of learning	63
Step 4: Resolving the Australian curriculum: The arts for foundation to year 10	65
Findings of the review of the Australian curriculum	67
Australian arts curriculum - endorsed.....	68
Arts curriculum development in NSW	69
Chapter 4 Methodology	70
Introduction	70
Why this research?	70
Choosing qualitative research	71
The focus of the qualitative researcher	73
Theories underpinning qualitative research design.....	74
Theory of constructivism.....	75
The researcher.....	76
Choosing a methodology within qualitative research: Case study approach	77
The research question	79
Subjectivity.....	79
Validity and Reliability.....	81
Method of Inquiry.....	83
The researcher.....	84
Participation selection rationale	84
Data collection.....	86
Overview.....	86
Development of the interview schedule.....	86
Interviews.....	86
Procedures.....	89
Ethical considerations.....	89

Recording.....	90
Transcription process	91
Research log.....	91
Data analysis	91
NVivo 10 software package.....	92
Coding of the data	92
Thematic analysis.....	93
Narrative analysis and reconstruction.....	94
Potential limitations.....	95
Limited perspective.....	95
Reliant on teacher responses	96
A change in plans.....	96
Generalisability.....	96
Limitations of the present research	97
Summary	97
Chapter 5 Findings	99
Overview.....	99
Introduction to the participant teachers.....	99
Participant teacher profiles	100
Section 5.1: Reading and responding to curricula	104
Introduction.....	104
Overview	104
Setting the scene	105
Not another “airy fairy” document	105
The need for orientation	110
Facing and fearing change	112
The new curriculum	119

Conclusion	123
Section 5.2: Outside forces within the school affecting the Arts	125
Introduction.....	125
Overview	126
Attitude of the school.....	126
Arts at the centre of learning.....	127
School attitudes affected by economic pressures	129
Creating community.....	133
Lack of specialist teachers.....	135
Isolated arts learning in the classroom.....	140
Conclusion	142
Section 5.3: Impact of national and state standards.....	145
Introduction.....	145
Overview	146
Setting the scene	149
Accountability	156
Conclusion	169
Section 5.4: Impact of testing and the Arts for tertiary entrance.....	172
Introduction.....	172
Overview	175
Teaching to the test.....	175
NAPLAN: A diagnostic tool or revising the intended curriculum?.....	178
Teaching in response to NAPLAN results	181
The Arts have become a tool for the “tested” learning areas	185
High stakes tests create anxiety: The HSC and ATAR.....	186
Conclusion	191
Section 5.5: Teacher competence.....	193

Introduction.....	193
Overview	194
Issues of curriculum.....	195
Teachers	197
Teacher professional learning – the importance of ongoing development	213
Conclusion	215
Chapter 6 Discussion and conclusions	217
Introduction	217
The categories for this study	218
Conclusions.....	223
Finding 1: Arts teachers have a preference for curricula that enables open-ended learning.....	223
Finding 2: Arts teachers believe that outside forces within the school have a larger impact on Arts teaching than curriculum policy.....	228
Finding 3: Arts teachers believe that standards and testing cause <i>anxiety among teachers and fear of failure in students</i>	231
Finding 4: Arts teachers believe that adjusting to high-stakes testing <i>narrows the curriculum</i>	237
Finding 5: Arts teachers have sufficient passion and motivation to comfortably adjust to change	241
Final conclusions	244
Implications for future research considering curriculum policy and teacher practice in the Arts.....	246
Epilogue.....	255
References	256
APPENDIX 1 Interview 1 Schedule	282

APPENDIX 2 Interview 2 Schedule	283
APPENDIX 3 Ethic Approval.....	284
APPENDIX 4 Letters to teacher associations.....	285
APPENDIX 5 Cover letter to individual teacher	290
APPENDIX 6 Participant information and consent.....	291
APPENDIX 7 Outline of questions: Interview 1	293
APPENDIX 8 Outline of questions: Interview 2	294
APPENDIX 9 Example of interview transcript.....	295
APPENDIX 10 Example of themes that arose from the data in the coding process.....	303

List of Tables and Figures

Table 4.1 Attributes of participant teachers	85
Table 5.1 Participant teachers' backgrounds.....	103
Figure 5.2 Digital functionality of the Australian curriculum: Column view	106
Figure 5.3 Digital functionality of the Australian curriculum: pop-up window containing glossary definition of the artform specific term in the content description	107
Figure 5.4 Digital functionality of the Australian curriculum: pop-up window containing examples of learning and teaching for the content description	108
Figure 5.5 Digital functionality of the Australian arts curriculum: icons for general capabilities	109
Table 5.6 Comparison of Australian curriculum and NSW syllabus components	150
Table 5.7 Comparison of the Australian curriculum and NSW creative arts syllabus for visual arts for Years 3 and 4	155

Prologue

The researcher: my story

As a child I loved singing and telling stories. I thought I would be in ABBA. As an adult this love of the Arts evolved into a combined career of performance, teaching and ultimately facilitating the artistic journeys of others.

Growing up there was a piano in the house. In fact, it was a pianola, an ornately carved Wing and Sons player piano built in 1912 and imported by my mother's grandfather. I looked up at this grand instrument desperate to play the keys with my little fingers, when once a week I could sit on my father's lap as he pedaled a roll of my grandmother's favourite foxtrot on a Sunday after family lunch. Finally I began to learn piano at the age of seven from Mrs Betty Greenwood in her small apartment filled with lamps connected to multiple triangular double adaptors, which were then plugged into each other. After two years of tiresome beginner lesson from the John Thompson's *Teaching Little Fingers to Play*, my mother took me to my older brother's clarinet teacher, who also taught piano and with Mrs Crawford I discovered the true joy of the piano, Beethoven, Schubert even Bela Bartok! I continued this instrumental study throughout my schooling in two states, although music at school was not so inspiring.

In Year 1, I was sent back to class from choir weekly by Mrs Beerman, when all I had wanted to do was sing. In Year 3, Mrs Smith let me play the bass drum, but things changed when I vomited on her corduroy skirt in assembly one day. For Years 5 and 6, I changed primary schools to attend 'Opportunity class' which caters "for highly achieving Year 5 and Year 6 academically gifted students who may otherwise be without classmates at their own academic and social level" (NSW Department of Education, 2017a, p. 3), and was taught recorder by our very non-musical class-

teacher, Mrs Gore, whose mantra was “use what you know to find out what you don’t know”. In 1980, I completed Year 6, the final year of primary school in NSW and my father took a job in Townsville, North Queensland. At this time in Queensland, primary school concluded at Year 7 and “a certain stigma was attached to the opportunity school child” (Logan & Clarke, 1984, p. 18). ‘Opportunity’ was a term used for students with learning difficulties, considered disadvantaged and from poorer families. It was suggested to my parents I should enter Year 5 in Queensland, but my parents argued my case and secured me a place in Year 7 in a Queensland state primary school. I was awarded ‘dux’ of the school in 1981 with very little effort, although for the first term no-one could read my handwriting (we had learned to write in italics at ‘opportunity class’ in NSW) and the other students said that I spoke too fast. The next year I began Year 8, the first year of secondary school in Queensland, at an independent co-educational school, which I loved. We swam in the school’s 50 metre pool every week, studied music, art, industrial arts and even watched *Jaws* for an English film study (which put me off swimming on the Barrier Reef). I captained the debating team and would have been very happy to complete my schooling at that school. But in 1983, my family returned to NSW where I entered Year 9, the third year of secondary school in NSW. Courtesy of my NSW primary years at ‘opportunity class’ I had right of return to a place in a selective government state high school, established to “help gifted and talented students to learn by grouping them with other gifted and talented students, teaching them in specialised ways and providing educational materials at the appropriate level.” (NSW Department of Education, 2017b).

Changing schools in Year 9 was torture, especially moving to a single sex girls’ school. I grew up with four brothers, and after school every day there would be nearly ten children for backyard cricket or games in the swimming pool. Now, having been a teacher, I recognise that Year 9 girls are some of the cruelest beings in

our community. They were hard to integrate with in 1983, and even harder to teach some fifteen years later. I studied core subjects, English, mathematics, science, history, geography, French and music until the end of Year 10. For my final two years of school, my father insisted a good HSC (Higher School Certificate) consisted of three unit (or advanced) mathematics, physics and chemistry. Sadly for me, physics and music were timetabled at the same time. I endured and resented two years of physics, ranked second bottom in my year and was surprised by the scaling-up of my HSC examination grade to 60% against my in-school assessment grade of 49% when I completed secondary school. The music teacher always looked sad when I passed her in the corridor. She would have been proud to know I auditioned for a music degree at university before I had even finished Year 12. I played a Brahms Intermezzo to a panel of four and one academic asked me if I was interested in jazz to which I replied, "Of course", although I was not sure what he was talking about.

I finished high school in the first year that school-based assessment was introduced into the NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC). My older brother undertook Year 12 one year before I did when the HSC was a score devised solely from the student's efforts in an external examination. The first year of the assessment and examination combination in NSW was challenging for teachers and for students alike. I recall my teachers commenting that they did not really know what the balance was. By the time I was teaching HSC drama and English a decade later, the NSW syllabus specified weightings for assessment tasks. Teachers were required to provide students with the outline and schedule of these assessment tasks at the commencement of the course. As a teacher, I recall negotiating with the deputy principal in charge of timetables for dates and school term weeks in which to schedule assessment tasks to ensure a balance across subjects for the students. That was no mean feat!

Sadly, my father revised my university selection choices. Although offered a place in the music course for which I had auditioned, I spent one torturous year learning Information Science, which was as awkward as high school physics, at Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education (which in 1990 became a campus of the University of Technology Sydney before its conversion to the Lindfield Learning Village public school in 2017). I transferred to a Bachelor of Arts degree at Macquarie University completing a degree majoring in Linguistics, which earned me a position in Speech Technology research in the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the University of Sydney. An ironic posting as this was where my older brother was completing his final year of electrical engineering. Suddenly his younger sister pulls focus with a job won through her 'arts' degree! My musically trained ear and skill in the spectral analysis of speech acquired in my university degree, enabled the development of the first Australian speech recognition system. This, while distressing to my older brother, reaffirmed renowned artist and educator, Elliot Eisner's (2003a) point that all aspects of what we do are informed by our artistically crafted work. I will return to Eisner later in this thesis.

I sang in a rock band through my high school years, my vocal character somewhere between Chrissy Amphlett and Deborah Harry. My piano teacher referred me to a voice teacher who unlocked my love of singing and discovered the operatic quality I could produce. I continued to learn singing while working in the research role and eventually made my way to the *Sydney Conservatorium of Music* to study opera. Dissatisfied with the Conservatorium program, I successfully auditioned for the *Julliard School* and joined the program in Italy from where I began a freelance career singing professionally in both Australia and in Europe. A broken relationship and resulting financial insecurity led me to full-time teaching. By luck or good fortune, I had enrolled in a Graduate Diploma of Education by distance education when I commenced at the Conservatorium, as a 'fallback position'. A qualification

completed literally by 'distance' on flights between Sydney and Europe. I posted assignments from Europe back to NSW and attended the annual residential programs jetlagged, but enthusiastic.

I spent more than ten years in the classroom, leaving to head up the education arm of *Bell Shakespeare*, Australia's national touring Shakespeare company. From this position connecting theatre practice with drama and English curricula across eight states and territories, I was well-aware of the diversity of approaches in existing curricula and the needs of schools and teachers in each of Australia's eight state and territories. Compelled to be involved in the development of Australian arts curriculum, I tentatively moved into the world of bureaucracy being appointed to the position of Senior Project Officer, the Arts for the Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority (ACARA) at a remarkable period in time when the federal and all state territory governments were all politically aligned. Facilitating the process of curriculum reform in the Arts was a momentous task, and one which I believed would benefit children who, like me, had moved between states and been caught up in the discrepancies of individual state's education nomenclature and misalignment of years of schooling as I had been. My own background combined with this national aspiration inspired me to this PhD research.

The breadth of my background as researcher for this study encompasses "the distinctive forms of thinking needed to create artistically crafted work" which resonated not only to what I experienced and learned as a student, but were relevant to virtually all aspects of what I have done "from the design of curricula, to the practice of teaching, to the features of the environment in which students and teachers live" (Eisner, 2004, p. 4).

It is my own lived experiences as a student, a performing artist and teacher that connect with the backgrounds and individual motivations of the Arts teachers who participated in this study. My experiences provide me with a personal understanding of their responses to curriculum change. Yet, none of the participants has crossed as many layers of arts and education employment as I have. From my beginnings as a student who moved between states and lived through curriculum reform in the 1980s, to becoming a professional singer, then a teacher in both the government and independent school sectors, working across the Arts and schools through my role in national theatre company, and then entering the world of the bureaucracy, to facilitate the development of the national arts curriculum. I have used my diverse and well-rounded life experiences to delve into the motivations and interests of NSW teachers of the Arts, and to consider how these may connect with and inform recent Australian curriculum reform.

Chapter 1 Introduction

In 2008, the Australian federal government commenced the development of a national curriculum. There was and continues to be considerable implications for both practice and policy. The dialogue about what should be taught in schools is the subject of continued debate. Where the Arts fits within curriculum in a time of continual measurement in an age of accountability, is a struggle for many teachers. The recent curriculum development in Australia has seen the endorsement of the first national curriculum for the Arts in five artforms: dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts. In 2013 Australian schools in some states began to engage with the new national curriculum in the Arts. Following a national review of the national curriculum, instigated with the change of federal government, the Australian arts curriculum was endorsed for use nationally in September 2015.

At the time of this study the state of New South Wales (NSW) had not yet begun to engage with the national arts curriculum. The NSW education authority (NESA formerly BOSTES, and prior to that, the Board of Studies) has been vehemently opposed to a curriculum that is apparently not as 'rigorous' as the state's current syllabi (ACARA, 2011a, 2012c). Teachers' willingness to adopt a new curriculum and adapt to change is a further mitigating factor. The Australian curriculum policy reform separates curriculum and pedagogy (O'Toole, 2015), and has potential to constrain teachers' professional authority (Gerrard & Farrell, 2013). This research explores NSW primary and secondary drama, music and visual arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change from the state curriculum they currently teach, to the incoming Australian arts curriculum.

In the twenty-first century, school education remains caught between the binds of accountability and the aspiration of cultivating the individual student (Eisner,

2000). The conflicting views of education in the twentieth century saw opposing positions of science and the Arts (Gibboney, 2006; Glassman, 2001). Thorndike and scientific positivists upheld that we are born with a predetermined amount of intelligence, and one variety of cognitive task cannot impact on another type of cognitive activity (Thorndike, 1910). Whereas, Dewey (1934, 1938) argued that traditional education should not ignore or even direct the spontaneity of imagination which is captured through the Arts, enabling opportunities to problem solve, create and reflect (Efland, 2002). In the twenty-first century, American artist and educator, Elliot Eisner argued against the industrialised nature of American schools and contended that the Arts were essential to students' learning in providing opportunities for reasoning and problem-solving (Eisner & Vallance, 1974). Eisner promoted that students should become the "architects of their own education so they can invent themselves during the course of their lives" (Eisner & Ecker, 1966, p. 5). He challenged the discipline-based structure of curriculum, and the influence of testing on what is taught. Eisner (2000) also identified the lack of an arts curriculum, and primary school teachers with no arts training, struggling with the demands of an overcrowded curriculum.

Australian curriculum development has been enmeshed with international curriculum change (Alexander, 2011), caught in the push and pull of accountability, high-stakes testing and the quest to embrace twenty-first century skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). As governments propose curriculum revision that embraces innovative skills, they continue to demand accountability (Berliner, 2011) in the form of measurable testable curriculum, harping back to Thorndike's positivist view. Thus policy-makers continue to juggle the aspirational views of twenty-first century curriculum with political demands for accountability (Berliner, 2011). Internationally, as governments replicate each others' curriculum policy modification, they simultaneously demand greater accountability from educators

through standardised testing in core subject areas, resulting in a string of policy initiatives defined, developed and thereafter renegotiated in implementation. The drive for a national curriculum in Australia was previously attempted in the 1990s (Ewing, 2012; Piper, 1997). However, as education sits not within the national commonwealth arrangements but rather within the jurisdiction of the eight states and territories, agreement on a unified approach was, and continues to be a challenge (Ewing, 2012). In 2008, the development of a national curriculum began in earnest with the Arts included in the second phase of learning areas to be developed¹. The arts curriculum was developed between 2009 and 2014. It was finally endorsed for use nationally in 2015. One state, NSW, has not yet adopted the new arts curriculum. While there is commentary on teachers' thoughts about the national curriculum in the consultation reports published during the curriculum's development, very few NSW teachers have practically engaged with it. The delay in implementation in NSW could not be foreseen at the time of commencing this study. However, the arts teachers who nominated to participate in this research have shared valuable and justified opinions on the current state curriculum and their perceptions of the incoming national curriculum.

This research asked the question:

What are NSW arts teachers' perceptions of change in the arts curriculum in the Australian context?

It asked two additional focus questions:

What evidence from the data will identify these perceptions?

What factors may account for these perceptions?

¹ The first phase of curriculum development began in 2009 with English, mathematics, science and history.

Eight NSW arts teachers' backgrounds, experiences and views were explored through six influences on arts education identified by Elliot Eisner in his seminal paper, *Arts Education Policy?* (2000).

The data was analysed using categories derived from Eisner's (2000) six influences on arts education policy. It explored teachers' current practice using the NSW creative arts syllabi², their perceptions of the incoming Australian national arts curriculum, and how they might continue to work or change their practice with it. Following this Introduction, Chapter 2: Review of the literature, explores the development of curriculum from the twentieth to twenty-first centuries and the place of the Arts.

Chapter 3: The context of the research: Curriculum development in Australia and NSW, considers the context of this study. It explores the development of curriculum in Australia and NSW, and the position of the Arts within it. It describes the influence of the entrenched state perspective on the development of a national curriculum and the resulting state based syllabus implementation forecast.

Chapter 4: Methodology discusses the methodological approach adopted to explore the NSW teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts. The chapter discusses the appropriateness of qualitative research and identifies the selection of case study as the method for this study.

Chapter 5: Findings presents the key findings of the study. The Introduction summarises the "who, what and where" of the project by presenting the participant details and context as relevant to the aims of the study. It clarifies the presentation

² The NSW Creative arts syllabi includes four artforms: dance, drama, music and visual arts

of the findings through influences originally identified by Eisner and broadened for the purposes of exploring the participating teachers' experiences and views. The findings are divided into 5 subsections:

5.1 Influence 1: Reading and responding to curricula, that is considering how teachers interpret curriculum policy and if they have trouble 'disentangling' policy from their practice as contended by Eisner (2000).

5.2 Influence 2: Outside forces affecting the Arts in schools focuses on the impact of outside forces within the school that impact the capacity of the teacher to teach the Arts.

5.3 Influence 3: The impact of national and state standards explores the use of standards in the Australian curriculum and outcomes in NSW syllabi. It considers how teachers currently work with the NSW syllabus and anticipate working with the Australian curriculum.

5.4 Influence 4: The impact of testing and Influence 5: Tertiary entrance highlights the teachers' perceptions of high-stakes testing in the form of the national literacy and numeracy test, NAPLAN, and the NSW end of school certification, the Higher School Certificate (HSC), and the associated tertiary entrance ranking, Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

5.6 Influence 6: Teacher competence explores teachers' backgrounds and experiences in order to identify the acquisition of knowledge and skills, the development of confidence and how Eisner recognises teacher competence as it moves from certification to reality in the arts classroom.

Chapter 6: Discussion and conclusions revisits the overarching question of the study and suggests that the teachers' interpretation and application of the curriculum is the key to its success or failure. The research identifies that arts teachers have sufficient passion to adjust to change but they prefer the authentic open-ended learning envisioned through their reading of the Australian arts curriculum. Factors referred to as 'outside forces within school' had a greater impact on arts teaching than did curriculum policy. Anxiety among students and teachers was caused by demands of accountability.

Following the exploration of the implications of this research, the final chapter offers recommendations for future research to consider the benefits and possibilities enabled by the Australian arts curriculum, and how NSW teachers may strengthen their practice through its application.

Definitions of terms specific to this study

The following terms are defined for the purposes of consistency across this research. Some terms that are used specifically within the Australian curriculum have been adopted for this consistency.

the Arts

Through this research, the Arts will be capitalised when used as the collective noun for the artforms within it. This has been the decision in the Australian curriculum, whereby the five artforms: dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts sit under the curriculum learning area, the Arts. When the term 'arts' or 'art' is combined with other terms such as arts education, artform or artwork it will commence with a lower case 'a'.

The term artform is expressed as one word in this study.

It should be noted that in NSW this learning area is referred to as "creative arts".

competence

A teacher attains a university qualification which certifies 'competence' to enter the teaching profession. Professional competence is developed over the duration of a career, through ongoing professional development, mentoring and acquisition of knowledge and skills (Eisner, 1995a). Teacher competence combines the components of confidence with solid pedagogical content knowledge and the ability to organise systematic and meaningful learning (Delpont & Browne, 2015).

confidence

Generally speaking confidence is a personality trait of self-assuredness. In the context of this study, confidence is explored in relation to teacher

‘competence’ to teach the Arts. A teacher’s confidence is comprised of strong subject knowledge; self-assuredness to teach and belief in the capacity of their students (Hayes, 2011).

curriculum and pedagogy

For the purposes of this study, the explanation of curriculum will follow that of the *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians* (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008). The curriculum is important in setting out what will be taught, what students need to learn and the expected quality of that learning, that is, curriculum being ‘the what’ and pedagogy ‘the process’ (Reid, 2005; Yates, 2009)

learning areas and subjects

Following the language of the *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians* (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008) this study will refer to ‘learning areas’ and ‘subjects’ to refer as the disciplines within the curriculum.

Foundation, the first year of schooling

‘Foundation’ is the first year of school in the Australian curriculum.

‘Foundation’ was selected as the common term for the first year of school across states and territories, which includes: Kindergarten (NSW), Preparatory (Victoria), Reception (South Australia) and Transition (Northern Territory). Prior to the development of the national curriculum, the first year of schooling in Western Australia and Queensland was Year 1.

generalist and specialist

In Australia, most primary classroom teachers teach across all learning areas in the curriculum and are referred to as ‘generalist’ teachers. A teacher who has specialised in one, or occasionally more, particular disciplines or subjects, is often referred to as a ‘specialist’ teacher. Some primary teachers and all secondary teachers are ‘specialists’.

Primary

For the purposes of this study, ‘primary’ is an Australian term for the first period of schooling for children aged from 5 to 12 years of age. This will be used for this period of schooling that may also be referred to as ‘elementary’.

Shape paper

In the phases of development of the Australian curriculum, the *Shape paper* is a scoping document or ‘blueprint’ developed to map the shape of the curriculum learning area to be developed.

Consultation report

In each phase of development of the Australian curriculum, there was public consultation, conducted via online survey and written submissions. The analysis of the survey responses and written submissions was combined into a published consultation report used to guide the next phase of curriculum development.

Chapter 2 Review of literature

Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature on curriculum theory from the late twentieth century to the current state of twenty-first century curriculum with particular reference to the place of the Arts in curriculum. Curriculum change in Australia has been necessitated by decisions over the last decade to move to a national curriculum. However, any study of Australian curriculum must consider international curriculum development. Australia's response to its place in international rankings, most notably the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) has influenced education reform. Policy makers have sought to replicate the developments in curriculum and testing applied by countries attaining higher rankings in PISA.

In the twenty-first century, the demand for accountability through measurable curriculum outcomes (Alexander, 2011) continues to conflict with stimulation of artistic imagination in students and the development of the individual (Berliner, 2011; Ewing, 2010; O'Toole, 2015). Amidst the expectation that teachers will teach prescribed curriculum, there continues to be a constant struggle by politicians and policy-makers to rationalise their country's status through high-stakes testing and in PISA international benchmarking (Donnelly, 2014). A review of late twentieth century curriculum development and the Arts within it must be considered in order to understand the current conflict between arts education in schools and demands of accountability of twenty-first century curriculum.

A new view on arts curricula internationally accompanies the rationale behind a national curriculum in Australia. In part this contextualises the platform for the current research in that it explores how arts teachers interpret curriculum through

pedagogy. It is, in fact, a study of how teachers respond to change in curriculum since curriculum change necessitates pedagogical change. The emerging findings from the data demonstrate that some of the influences raised by Eisner (2000) in his provocative and influential paper, *Arts education policy?* impact the practice of current teachers of the Arts.

Curriculum background

Twentieth century curriculum – clarity of science or creativity of the Arts

The opposing positions of science and the Arts drove the development of education and curriculum theory in the twentieth century. The scientific positivist camp argued that individuals were born with a specific amount of intelligence and that learning in one type of cognitive task rarely had impact on another cognitive task (Thorndike, 1910). The opposing view highlighted the unquantifiable value of the Arts in education because they developed creativity, self-expression and an appreciation of the expression of others (Dewey, 1919, 1934, 1938). This Thorndike-Dewey rift saw the tension between the clarity of positivism, and the lack of rule or rational intent of artistic imagination. Psychologists including Freud and Jung explored the subconscious. They were less inclined to the constraint of Thorndike's positivism. Rather, they leaned towards Dewey's promotion of imagination containing the blending of interests, connecting the mind with the world, and the old with the new to create new experiences (Efland, 2003; Eisner, 2004). Dewey's stance was that traditional education should not ignore or even direct the spontaneity of imagination which is captured through the Arts, enabling opportunities to problem solve, create and reflect (Efland, 2002). Dewey thus criticised the widespread confusion concerning appropriate meaning of progressive education and back-to-basics education that supported the "limited conception that intelligence only includes verbal and mathematical reasoning and that the Arts are

based on emotions and embodied in those who are talented” (Eisner & Vallance, 1974, p. 12). Dewey’s position was that “children learn by doing, holistically; where knowledge does not come just from the outside in, but the child’s experience forms part of that scaffold for learning” (O’Toole, Stinson, & Moore, 2009, p. 2). Dewey aspired to an integrated curriculum that made education relevant to all children. Yet, in the early twentieth century, the rule and rationale-driven approaches, such as Thorndike’s, defeated Dewey’s vision of the Arts in education. Elliot Eisner, an ardent supporter of Dewey’s position, challenged the positivist position arguing, “It is widely believed that no field seeking professional respectability can depend on such an undependable source” (2004, p. 1).

Although it seemed the scientific positivist position had won the right to rule curriculum, in the latter half of the twentieth century, the experiential and holistical learning philosophy of Dewey was extended by Russian educationalist, Vygotsky. He carried considerable influence. Whilst Dewey and Vygotsky shared similar ideas about the role of everyday social experience in the educational process, Glassman (2001) found distinctions on three specific conceptual issues: social history, experience or culture, and human inquiry. Glassman (2001) affirmed that both Dewey and Vygotsky agreed the role of the educational process was to prepare children for more complex activity in the larger social community. He concluded that educators should consider how and why they use activity in the classroom since education should be an active and context-specific process. In the twentieth century and continuing today, the policy position in many countries is to provide official curriculum which is “testable and measurable” (Gibboney, 2006, p. 170). Not surprisingly, Dewey considered the assumption that students learn only what they are being taught at the time to be the greatest fallacy in education.

Twenty-first century curriculum – siding with the Arts

Siding with Dewey on the importance of imagination and active learning in children's education, Elliot Eisner argued that the Arts were poorly positioned in American schools, claiming "What we are now doing is creating an industrial culture in our schools" (2004, p. 3). Moreover he maintained that students know more than they are able to articulate through the formal platforms of writing and reading. Eisner clarified this assumption claiming that "meaning is not limited to what is assertable" (2004, p. 7), and to enhance the learning of students, opportunities for reasoning and problem-solving such as those presented by the Arts are essential. However, most teachers have been socialised into historical traditions, values and assumptions that are at the root of the nature of our schools (Eisner & Vallance, 1974). Like Dewey, Eisner claimed that a major aim of schooling is for students to develop the capacity to design and manage their own learning in school and throughout their lives (Eisner & Ecker, 1966). Curriculum is understood to be what can be taught to whom, when and how (Eisner, 2004, 2008; Yates, 2009), yet Eisner (2008) challenged curriculum structure, arguing that the "centrality of disciplines interferes with more creative views on how curricula can be selected and organised for students to enable learning" (p. 15). Reflective of Eisner's view, educators challenged the "organisation of the secondary school curriculum as a group of insulated content areas" (Snyder, Klos, & Grey-Hawkins, 2014, p. 3), as "teachers realise the potential curricula have to inspire and challenge". However curriculum decisions have "become politically, socially and economically contested" (Duffy, 2016, p. 37). These contestations influence the orientation of curriculum, that is, towards the student or towards the society.

Orientations of curriculum

Differing social, economic and political beliefs about what schools should do and how students should learn derive the orientation of a curriculum (Eisner, 2008;

Meighan, 1981; Print, 1987; Seddon, 1983). More than forty years ago, Eisner and Vallance (1974) argued that the distinction between the 'child-centred' and the 'society-centred' curriculum is neglected in categorising curriculum orientations. Yet, they provided five orientations for curriculum: cognitive processes; curriculum as technology; self-actualisation or curriculum as consummatory experience; social reconstruction or relevance; and academic rationalism. Twenty years later, McNeil (1996) reduced this to four curriculum orientations: humanistic, social reconstructionist, technological, and academic subject. However, the curriculum orientation debate still swings between two extremes. On the one hand, curriculum enables the student's individual and intellectual autonomy (Eisner & Vallance, 1974), whereby the educational focus is the relationship between the learner and the material. While on the other hand, curriculum is a consummatory experience where the focus is on "acquisition and recall of content" (Cheung, 2000, p. 149), that is, 'what' is taught. Demands of accountability routinely force education systems to focus on the latter, that is, measurable official curriculum.

Accountability, but twenty-first century skills

Educational systems driven by accountability generate and reproduce social inequalities (von Below, Powell, & Robert, 2013). The German model of education has held worldwide influence with its attractive features of free education and a dual system of schooling, which steers students to either a workplace-based vocational training or a trajectory towards tertiary study. The German model emphasises rigorous content upheld by the consummatory and academic rationalist orientation of curriculum challenged by Dewey (1938) in the last century. Furthermore, this model also continues to produce high levels of reproduction and social inequality. Eisner (2000) refuted the reproduction model and argued that ideally a school should foster the student to make, to consume and to respond to intellectual and artistic products. This holistic approach to learning and teaching

stems from Dewey, and is supported by many twenty-first century education researchers (Eisner, 2003b; Glatthorn, 1999; O'Toole, Fleming, & Bresler, 2014)³.

The holistic approach to learning and teaching must encompass both the official and the hidden curriculum. While the 'official curriculum' is the planned learning that students are deliberately exposed to; the 'hidden curriculum' is the students' unplanned but acquired learning (Print, 1987) which encompasses the many attributes of being human and related ways of thinking (Seddon, 1983). Eisner (2004) maintained that the student manages their own learning of the official curriculum alongside their acquisition of the hidden curriculum. Schools should share the common goal of recognising the array of talents that students possess and, to develop and foster competence in a wider range of abilities (Eisner, 2008). In the twenty-first century, this 'hidden curriculum' of talents and abilities has now been incorporated into twenty-first century 'official' curriculum as skills, competencies or capabilities. A further development has been the categorisation of competencies into innovation skills, which Winner, Goldstein, & Vincent-Lankrin (2013) have defined as "three sets of overlapping skills: technical skills (content and procedural knowledge); skills in thinking and creativity (questioning ideas, finding problems, understanding the limits of knowledge, making connections, imagining); and behavioural and social skills (persistence, self confidence, collaboration, communication)" (p. 251). Now more than ever, education and training systems are expected to equip people with 'innovation skills' as governments in many industrialised nations recognise a "connection between these skills, well-being and growth" (Ewing, 2012, p. 104). Furthermore, as education policies strive to make education more innovative, they promote "initiatives based on arts education"

³ For further detail see: Cheung (2000); Eisner and Vallance (1974); O'Toole (2009a); O'Toole, O'Mara, and Bresler (2007); O'Toole et al. (2009)

(Winner et al., 2013, p. 25). “The role of curriculum is changing as the practices of government shift and new technologies of regulation develop” (Seddon, 2001, p. 308). As twenty-first century curriculum policy often incorporates ‘hidden curriculum’ by identifying these desired capabilities, skills or competencies “more and more governments are signing up, often copying each other’s policies in the hope of outperforming them” (Alexander, 2011, p. 265). The ‘hidden curriculum’ is now part of twenty-first century skills evident in recent curriculum developments in Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

In the Australian curriculum, these desired twenty-first century skills are termed ‘general capabilities’⁴ referring to knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions which combined with official curriculum assist students to function effectively (ACARA, 2015a). As an example, the Scottish curriculum connects experiences and outcomes to describe the progress of learning across the eight curriculum areas by incorporating four ‘capacities’: successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors (Baumfield, Livingston, & Menter, 2009). Within the Asian context, Singapore (Lim, 2015) and Korea (Jun-Seok Roh, 2014; National Curriculum Information Center, 2009), each has a national curriculum that proposes desired outcomes and identifies competencies for the holistic development of the individual. Although these competencies appear across learning areas, Eisner (2004) and Ewing (2010) argue they occur frequently and naturally within the Arts. These competencies were recognized by the 2010 OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Ministerial Council

⁴ The general capabilities in the Australian Curriculum are identified through a system of tagging. Each content description in each learning area has been tagged for appearance of any of the general capabilities: [Literacy](#); [Numeracy](#); [Information and Communication Technology \(ICT\) Capability](#); [Critical and Creative Thinking](#); [Personal and Social Capability](#); [Ethical Understanding](#); [Intercultural Understanding](#).

Meeting, along with the need for an appropriate balance between generic skills such as creativity, entrepreneurship and communication, and professional skills (Schmied, 2010; Winner et al., 2013), bringing about collaboration between governments and industry seemingly in the school curriculum space. Similarly, the Arts were included as a core subject in the four framework components promoted by the *United States partnership for 21st century skills* (P21), a consortium of government and information technology companies, which advocated skills through: core subjects; learning and innovation skills (creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and collaboration); information, media and technology skills; life and careers skills (adaptability and flexibility, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility)(Winner et al., 2013). Numerous international and national collaborative projects have followed, identifying '21st century skills' such as the *Assessment and teaching of 21st century skills*, sponsored by the governments of Australia, Finland, Costa Rica, the Netherlands, Russia, Singapore and the United States in conjunction with the information technology companies Cisco, Intel and Microsoft. Trilling and Fadel (2009) report that different countries have incorporated these twenty-first skills into their curriculum policy.

While governments propose curriculum development that embraces innovative skills, they still require accountability in the form of measurable testable curriculum, harking back to the positivist view of Thorndike. Thus policy-makers continue to struggle with the curriculum accountability expectations of their governments. As governments replicate each others' curriculum policy development, they simultaneously demand greater accountability from educators through standardised testing in core subject areas resulting in a string of policy initiatives defined, developed and thereafter renegotiated in implementation (Alexander, 2011; Gerrard & Farrell, 2013; Polikoff, McEachin, Wrabel, & Duque, 2014; Winner et al., 2013).

Ewing (2012) argues that standardised tests are in effect a further 'hidden curriculum' which omits "attributes like creativity, critical thinking, resilience, motivation, persistence, curiosity, empathy, self awareness and self-discipline" (p. 104). However, Alexander (2011) argues "the problem is not so much the tests as what people do with them"(p. 279). A decade prior, Eisner challenged the effect of testing.

Enter Elliot Eisner: Six influences of which testing is one

Almost two decades ago, Eisner (2000) argued that what is tested is what is taught, referring to the official curriculum and the positivist camp of Thorndike. In his seminal paper *Arts education policy?*, Eisner (2000) identified the key influences that limit arts education in our schools:

- Policy is too difficult to disentangle from aims of education or conceptions of appropriate practice;
- Forces influencing arts education are most often from outside it rather than within it;
- National and state standards enforce or lead to uniformity;
- Test scores drive curriculum because what is tested is what is taught;
- Arts are considered as 'elective' by tertiary institutions; and
- Absence of teacher competency to teach the arts.

Eisner (2000) contends that policy is an array of ideas designed to guide practice, yet many policies affecting arts education were not formulated by "arts education supporters"(p. 4). Eisner further argues that the function of schools is "surely not primarily to enable students to do well on a test" (2008, p. 13). Recent national curriculum development in the US, the UK and Australia have all been influenced by

'forces outside' the field of arts education, in their formation and in conjunction with national standards and testing.

The American determiners of curriculum

In the US, the Bush Presidency modelled education on the system in the then-President's home state of Texas (Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010). *The no child left behind* (NCLB) legislation in the US expected that by the year 2000, all students would demonstrate competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. In reality, the NCLB Act (2002) encompassed accountability, assessment, teacher quality, choice and charter schools as examples of curriculum defined by inclusivity and measurable outcomes. Ten years of high stakes testing ultimately resulted in a continual reduction in time allocated for arts education (Heilig et al., 2010). In 2006, the Arts Education Partnership (AEP) argued that, the Arts contribute to "improved students' learning outcomes" and share "equal billing with reading, math, science and other disciplines" as 'core academic subjects' (Heilig et al., 2010, p. 136). Yet, the accountability focus driven by current curricula in the US has been labeled "apartheid education" (Berliner, 2011, p. 296) whereby "classes of students are systematically denied exposure to subjects not covered by the tests" (Heilig et al., 2010, p. 136). Eisner (2000) was rightly concerned about testing impacting what is actually taught.

President Obama's 2011 pledge intended to "help states move forward with education reforms" (Appleby, 2014, p. 187) through provision of 'relief' from the NCLB Act. However, accountability remained the focus of these 'further provisions', which included rewards for progress attached to accountability systems accompanied by evaluation and support for increasing student achievement. Polikoff et al. (2014) argued that the testing was flawed by not taking account of the

diverse socio-demographics across schools, and expecting the “same performance from all schools regardless of their student inputs” thus “penalizing schools for factors they cannot control” (p. 52). A compromise for some schools took the form of a waiver application on the NCLB Act, recommended to ensure the comparison of ‘like’ groups of schools where conditions of student socio-demographics could be considered with the school performance measures.

The British determiners of curriculum

School performance measures and testing for accountability was also driving curriculum in the UK at this time. The Blair government introduced a national curriculum in 1998. Testing of 7 to 11 year olds was introduced as part of the post-1997 standards drive (Alexander, 2011). Media criticism focussed on testing and school starting age, challenging who should start, control and end primary schooling. *The Cambridge Primary Review Research Surveys* (2012) resolved that students should be tested but raised confusion over what should be tested by questioning the continuing validity of ‘basics’ and ‘core curriculum’ and therefore, what constitutes 21st-century basics and cores for the primary phase of schooling. Additionally, the *Review* questioned the balance of “assessment for learning” and “assessment for accountability” (p. 341). Alexander (2011), echoed Eisner (2000), arguing that “the clear implication was that input and outcome are what matters most: manipulate one, measure the other, and that’s education” (p. 267). Accountability through testing and measurable outcomes drove both the US (Heilig et al., 2010) and UK (Alexander, 2011) curriculum development supporting Eisner’s (2000) contention that “what is tested is what is taught” (p. 4).

The Australian determiners of curriculum

Regardless of concerns about testing in the US and the UK, the development of the forward thinking vision of the recent Australian national curriculum was also

accompanied by “national assessments” and collection, management and analysis of “student assessment data and other data relating to school and comparative school performance” (“ACARA Act”, 2008, p.6). Ewing (2012) considers that assessment strategies are necessarily built into any curriculum, but also argues that the Australian National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy or NAP-testing (NAPLAN) preceded the introduction of the national curriculum in Australia and has generated a “growing tendency to regard school performance data as the yardstick of educational excellence”(p. 103) at the expense of students’ enjoyment of learning. Ewing (2012) supports the positions of Eisner (2000, 2002) and Dewey (1934, 1938) that students’ engagement in the enjoyable act of learning is imperative in any educational context.

Desperately seeking the ‘enjoyable act of learning’

At odds with the pressure of testing and accountability, the ‘enjoyable act of learning’ has not been stated as an aim of twenty-first century education policies. Heilig et al. (2010) argue “this current era of accountability has challenged Dewey’s student-centered principles by entrenching accountability’s arguments of incentives, efficiency, and narrowly defined competency...”(p. 144). Australian education policy goes so far as to support the development of “successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens” (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008, p. 8) but does not use the word ‘enjoy’. Yet, Australian researchers, Martin, Mansour, Anderson, Gibson, Liem and Sudmalis (2013) found that arts education is a means of encouraging students to ‘enjoy’ school and motivate them for learning in other academic subjects. This has been supported by numerous mixed method studies that also report students enrolled in arts education courses display a more ambitious attitude to academic work as well as higher levels of commitment and motivation (Alexander, 2010, 2011; Baker Jr., 2012; Winner et al., 2013). However, Gaztambide-Fernández, Nicholls, and Arráiz-Matute (2016)

argue that “we live in a society that does not value the arts” rather “the arts are taken for granted as an important aspect of the education of the elites” (p. 30). An about-face on school reform in the US resulted in the United States President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (2011) reinvesting in arts education through a policy position requiring “governments to move beyond merely ‘allowing’ the arts as an expenditure of a comprehensive education” and “to reinforce the place of arts in K-12 education” (p. viii). Yet, *Reinvesting in arts education: Winning America’s future through creative schools* (2011) enforces the concept of accountability by “employing the arts to increase the rigor of curriculum, strengthen teacher quality, and improve low-performing schools” while “building capacity to create and innovate in our students is central to guaranteeing the nation’s competitiveness” (p. viii).

Policy recognition of the Arts in education has grown, but this has not necessarily translated into practice (Ewing, 2012). In the US, conservative school critics Finn and Ravitch (2007), supporters of school reform including high stakes testing, reversed their previously negative position on the Arts, claiming that the Arts “make us wise, thoughtful and appropriately humble... help our human potential to bloom... are the foundation for a democratic civic polity, where each of us bears equal rights and responsibilities” (Berliner, 2011, p. 292). By contrast to the US move to include the Arts in curriculum, the UK has reduced the Arts in the National Curriculum in primary school to two subjects: art and design, and music. Drama is frequently tied to English. The British justification is that curriculum is considered just “one element of the education of every child, providing a core framework around which teachers can design stimulating lessons” (Department for children schools and families, 2009, p. 2). Winner et al (2013) maintain that “the value of arts for human experience is a sufficient reason to justify its presence in school curricula” (p. 249).

Curriculum development in the Arts: rigorous or functional

While arts education is evident in many countries' school curricula, 'enjoyment and a sense of well-being' were goals of instruction evident in only eight of the thirteen countries' arts curricula reviewed by The College Board (2013) in New York, USA. However, arts education in educational policy in most countries was predominantly "not viewed as being an important part of general education" (Bamford, 2006, p. 66). The College Board (2013) reviewed thirteen curricula finding that all included music and visual arts; only seven included theatre (or drama); merely five included dance; and just one, Australia, included media arts in its own right. The report also found that in most curricula the Arts were functional, being used as tools for cultural understandings; developing skills in critical and creative thinking and problem-solving, and as a form of communication. IJdens (2015) claims that policy research in arts education is not about arts education per se, but actually about "why, how and to which effect the arts education policies are developed, designed and deployed" (p. 440). It follows that in addition to arts curricula motivations already mentioned, some countries promote exposure to the Arts of other cultures and the importance of cultural context in addition to the prevalent theme of arts participation for wellbeing in their arts curricula (Bamford, 2015). South Korea, for example, has taken a broader national approach to well-being through the application of the Arts across the community. Jun-Seok Roh (2014) reported that in response to rising suicide and domestic violence statistics 'teaching artists' were placed in schools, hospitals and the military to develop national well-being (National Curriculum Information Center, 2009). By contrast, another recent trend is the integration of arts education with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEAM) education, whereby inclusion of the Arts is functional as it leverages students' self-confidence and creativity (Winner et al., 2013). Furthermore, in "efforts to revitalize vocational high schools", the South Korean government has

sought “to support students to find out and develop their aptitudes and specialties so that they can realize their dreams without college diplomas” enhancing students’ creativity and innovation through incorporation of the Arts (Jon & Chung, 2013, pp. 23-24). Similarly advocacy in the US, proposed the “integration of arts and design into the national education agenda” to encourage “innovation and economic growth”, with profile US schools implementing this approach “including the Drew Charter School in Atlanta, the Blue School in New York City and Andover Public Schools outside of Boston” (Winner et al., 2013, p. 27). However, Winner et al. (2013) and others maintain that internationally all schools place more focus on the “academic” subjects, such mathematics, history, and science and far less focus on the Arts.

Curriculum development in Australia

The complexity of policy involving the “aims of education”, “the mission of the field” and “ideas about appropriate practice” (Eisner, 2000, p. 4) is evident in the political process of national education policy development in Australia:

National curriculum collaboration is largely a political process, involving the engineering of consent by the States/Territories through the carrot and stick of Commonwealth funding, or through the identification of areas of curriculum commonality. (Reid, 2005, p. 10)

The development of the constitution and consequently educational policy in Australia has led to the current arrangement of eight States and Territories each with their own curriculum and educational aims, although each is funded by the Commonwealth. In 1968, the Minister for Education and Science, Malcolm Fraser, tentatively proposed a higher level of co-operation and uniformity between states “in reducing the unnecessary differences in what is taught in the various States and hence the very real difficulties faced by children who move from one State to another” (Reid, 2005, p. 16). It was not until some twenty years later, in 1989 that the State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education began this

commitment to a framework for national collaboration producing *The Hobart declaration on schooling* (1989). In 1990, the Curriculum Corporation was established to facilitate activities in curriculum development, publish materials and provide curriculum information. That year the Ministerial Council of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET) was established and the first *National report on Australian schooling* was published by the Australian Education Council. In 1991, work began on the national statements and profiles for the eight Key Learning Areas (English, mathematics, science, studies of society and the environment, LOTE, the Arts, technology and health). Finalised and ready for implementation in 1993, their compulsory adoption was rejected by all States and Territories the following year (Ewing, 2013a; Yates, 2008). However, during the 1990s the States and Territories took these national statements and profiles as their definitional framework documents for the compulsory years of schooling with some minor adaptations to existing curricula (Piper, 1997; Yates, 2008).

Another six years passed by before the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) produced *The Adelaide declaration on national goals for schooling in the 21st century*, which superseded *The Hobart declaration*. In 2003, MCEETYA accepted the proposal to develop statements of learning for the four curriculum domains – mathematics, science, civics and English, built on a previous ‘curriculum mapping exercise’ which had identified areas of overlap and difference in the official curricula of the States. MCEETYA subsequently published the report, *Curriculum provision in the Australian states and territories* (Curriculum Corporation, 2003). Nothing further developed on the national front until British Prime Minister, Tony Blair pronounced education as key to his agenda at which point, Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, took up the issue of curriculum and convened a national history summit in 2006 (Yates, 2009). In 2008, a year after the federal election saw Kevin Rudd replace John Howard as

Prime Minister, *The Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians* superseded *The Adelaide declaration*, proclaiming the designing of a world class curriculum to “develop successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens”(Ministerial Council on Education, 2008, p. 2).

The development of an Australian national curriculum was to begin. Curriculum is essential in setting out what will be taught, what students need to learn and the expected quality of that learning, that is, curriculum being ‘the what’ and pedagogy ‘the process’ (Reid, 2005; Savage, O'Connor, & Brass, 2014; Yates, 2009). In Australia, there are clear differences in how different jurisdictions approach curriculum, drawing on historical, geographic or demographic contexts. Whilst South Australia focuses on a social justice concern of inclusivity in curriculum borrowed by the Northern Territory (NT), Queensland has maintained a consideration of the need for diverse approaches to include rural and remote students. New South Wales on the other hand, has continued a focus on standards and maintaining traditions and benchmarks. Both the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and Victoria use curriculum frameworks which give a broad overview of what is to be taught and learned whereas Western Australia and New South Wales provide teachers with a much more comprehensive syllabus prescribing specific content and outcomes. A national curriculum would need to resolve these current differences.

The Arts in Australian curricula

For the purposes of establishing the Australian context for this study, the literature considered in the remaining section of this chapter focuses on the national curriculum developments of the last twenty-five years. The review of developments of arts curricula in NSW is contextual for the cases studies found within this study and are discussed in some depth in Chapter 3: The context - Arts education in NSW.

The educational declarations developed by the coalition of Australian Governments through MCEETYA included some mention of the Arts. *The Hobart declaration on schooling* (1989) included specific reference: “To develop in students an appreciation and understanding of, and confidence to participate in, the creative arts” (Ministerial Council for Education Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, 1989, aim 6.h.). Yet the ‘national collaboration on curriculum development’ and the ‘mapping work’ identified in the declaration did not include the ‘creative arts’. *The Curriculum corporation’s statement of the arts for Australian schools* (Curriculum Corporation & Australian Education Council, 1994, p. 166) distinguished five strands of the Arts: dance, drama, media, music and visual arts. New South Wales was the only state that did not include media as a separate strand or subject in the state’s syllabi, which currently includes dance, drama, music and visual arts.

The Adelaide declaration included the Arts as one of the eight key learning areas:

2.1 In terms of curriculum, students should have attained high standards of knowledge, skills and understanding through a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the compulsory years of schooling encompassing the agreed eight key learning areas: the arts; English; health and physical education; languages other than English; mathematics, science; studies of society and environment; technology ... (Ministerial Council for Education Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, 1999)

However, a halt in movement towards the development of a national curriculum ensued until the Howard government, approaching the 2007 federal election actively sought to revitalise the place of history in the curriculum. Ker (2007) reported that in the 2009 Commonwealth school funding agreement with the States and territories, history would be compulsory. This triggered lobbying by Arts education groups led by the National Advocates for Arts Education (NAAE), which resulted in the inclusion of the Arts in the second phase of learning areas when the Australian Government embarked on the development of a National Curriculum in 2008 (Gattenhof, 2009; NAAE, 2009). The Arts was included in the list of eight

learning areas in the resulting document, the *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians*, adopted by the Ministerial Council in December 2008.

Curriculum policy-makers often focus on the 'big picture' without considering specifically the pedagogical aspect of how the curriculum is taught and resourced in schools (Yates, Collins, & O'Connor, 2008). Teachers, on the other hand, routinely consider the curriculum from a pedagogical perspective. The Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority (ACARA) developed a draft shaping paper for the Arts curriculum and this document was put up for public consultation in 2010.

Responses to the proposed directions for the Australian arts curriculum were sought through the consultation on the *Draft shape of the Australian curriculum: The arts* (ACARA, 2011a). Feedback suggested that "teachers must develop the capacity to understand, study, and influence curriculum policy" (Jones, 2007, p. 30), reflective of Eisner's (2000) point that policy is difficult to disentangle from the mission of the field. Furthermore, as highlighted by Eisner (2000) and confirmed by Russell-Bowie (2012) primary generalist teachers are expected to teach all curricula including the Arts. Feedback indicated a reticence on the part of teachers facing a new view of arts curriculum. "Generalist primary school teachers need the strong support of assessment tools, rubrics, checklists and work samples. The need for support documents to accompany the curriculum was also emphasised in several survey comments" (ACARA, 2011a, p. 34). A similar situation was encountered in Scotland, with the introduction of the new curriculum whereby teachers initially reported "the Draft Experiences and Outcomes, in general, were 'vague', 'woolly' or 'unclear' on their first attempts at interpretation" (Baumfield et al., 2009, p. 5). There were notably fewer concerns from Scottish teachers who participated in formal trialling of the curriculum indicating the benefit of support and training to teachers interpreting and applying new curriculum. Similarly in Australia, teachers participated in trialling the draft Australian arts curriculum as part of the curriculum development process.

During 2012, as part of the consultation process on the draft national arts curriculum, 32 schools (ACARA, 2012c) participated in a “more intensive engagement program” (ACARA, 2012b, p. 18) with the draft arts curriculum. Teachers tested parts of the curriculum as suitable to the participating year groups and Arts subjects. Following the trial and consultation analysis, recommendations were collated in response to findings, which included that there was “too much content in the primary bands. The collective content across the five Arts subjects in the three bands of primary school is greater than a generalist teacher can reasonably manage” (ACARA, 2012c, p. ii). A point reflective of Eisner’s (2000) concern that the US primary school curriculum in the 1960s contained the equivalent of 200 objectives per school year equating to 1,200 objectives over six school years. In response to the feedback, one major change in the Australian arts curriculum was the reduction of content descriptions in both primary and early secondary years across arts subjects. In primary, all artforms initially contained eight content descriptions per band, except visual arts that contained nine. All five arts subjects were reduced to four content descriptions for the primary years. A further finding was that “language needs to be consistent across the Arts and terminology specific within each Arts subject” (ACARA, 2012c, p. ii). A common organizing thread was inserted across each of the four content descriptions to assist primary teachers with integration or ‘connectivity’ (O’Toole, 2015, p. 191). In Years 7 to 10, there were ten content descriptions in each arts subject, these were reduced to seven for each arts subject in the Australian arts curriculum. A third component of the draft Australian arts curriculum for resolution was the clarity of the achievement standards. “The expectations in the achievement standards are realistic but are too broad and should be more specific” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 20). Following further revision with national consultation, the Australian arts curriculum

was finalised and, after a period of hiatus brought about by political change, was consequently endorsed by all states and territories in September 2015.

The accountability focus

Additional to the national curriculum development, was the development of the Australian National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy, known as NAPLAN. The curriculum and testing regime were policy objectives established during the 2008 education reform agenda of the newly elected Rudd-Gillard Labor government, intended to improve accountability and raise teacher quality, to improve excellence and equity in Australian schools (Rudd & Gillard, 2008). Yet, a high stakes testing regime was problematic and “at odds with a goal of improved education for all Australian children” (Ewing, 2012, p. 98). Furthermore, in the twenty-first century as governments replicate each others’ curriculum policy development (Australia followed the path of the UK and US) they simultaneously demanded greater accountability from educators through testing in core subject areas (Alexander, 2011; Berliner, 2011). Eisner (2000) argued that “what is tested is what is taught. And since the arts are not tested, they can be neglected with greater immunity “ (p. 5). A further challenge for the near-ready for use Australian arts curriculum was another federal election and change of government at the end of 2013.

The incoming Education Minister called for a review of the Australian Curriculum, barely implemented in all eight states and territories since its development began in 2008. The curriculum review and media coverage at the time (Donnelly, 2014; Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a) indicates the rationalist ‘back-to-basics’ position of reviewers, and Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne, whereby the curriculum focused on the provision of classic disciplines (Cheung, 2000; Eisner & Vallance, 1974). Opposed to this view, Power (2014) retorted that the Minister was

determined to “convince Australians to blame the curriculum, bad teachers and a lack of parental engagement for our drop in performance, he will have succeeded in diverting us from the real problem: the inequality of opportunity caused by years of inadequate funding” (2014 para. 26). The Minister’s view coupled with the maintenance of the NAP testing regime, perpetuates Ewing’s (2012) claim of a “growing tendency to regard school performance data as the yardstick of educational excellence” (p. 103). However, one of the Minister’s appointed curriculum reviewers recognised the impracticality of comparing Australian school education with that of another country, such as Finland (Donnelly, 2014), albeit that Donnelly supported the position of academic rationalism, via the curriculum review (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a).

Curriculum disciplines, their apparent importance and their delivery influence students’ engagement in the act of learning in the findings of the most recent curriculum review. However the importance of their actual engagement in school education is not always recognised. Winner et al (2013) report that the US President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities acknowledged that narrowed curricula is resulting in students lack of creative and critical thinking skills when they complete school. Simultaneously the committee identified that teaching the Arts had significant positive effect on overall schooling. Recent studies, including the Arts Education Motivation, Engagement and Achievement (AEMEA 2013) project in Australia, have recognised the links between quality arts education and broader education outcomes, including students’ engagement, and academic motivation and achievement. The AEMEA study reported, “Arts engagement positively predicts adaptive motivation, academic buoyancy, academic intentions, school enjoyment, class participation, self esteem, meaning and purpose, and life satisfaction” (Martin et al., 2013, p. 719). This study occurred before the Australian arts curriculum had been implemented, yet the curriculum reviewers, Donnelly and Wiltshire (2014a),

contended “The way the Australian Curriculum has been developed also fails to adequately reflect the Melbourne Declaration’s belief that a well-rounded, balanced education should deal with the moral, spiritual and aesthetic education of students” (p. 27). But, the AEMEA researchers proposed that “perhaps it is the deeper (cognitive, affective, behavioral) immersion in the Arts that has the capacity to impact deeper values and beliefs about oneself and one’s place in the world” (Martin et al., 2013, p. 721). The Donnelly and Wiltshire (2014a) review however claimed the Arts “should be formally introduced at Year 3” and provide a “rich source of resource material” (p. 219) for the years prior. An ironic proposal considering that prior to commencing school, children express their vast imaginations through singing, dancing and telling stories, before they start school and to learn to read, write and numerate. O’Toole et al. (2009) argue that “early years of childhood are full of dramatic play ...the notion of curriculum is often much more fluid in early years’ contexts” (p. 11). Furthermore, the AEMEA longitudinal study of primary and secondary students (Years 5 to 11) reported that arts engagement significantly predicted the academic outcomes of adaptive motivation, academic buoyancy, and class participation (Martin et al., 2013). Arts engagement also predicted a sense of meaning and purpose with regard to non-academic outcomes. The research further indicated that in-school arts’ learning was more strongly connected with positive academic outcomes than arts tuition taken outside of school, reflecting findings of previous research by Marsh and Kleitman (2002).

Teachers, the interpreters of curriculum

Arts educators claim that by learning in, through and across the Arts, students can learn how to discover not only the possibilities the world offers but also their own possibilities (Brouillette, 2010; Costantino, 2011; Deasy, 2002; Garvis & Pendergast, 2011; Jones, 2007; Oreck, 2006). However, Eisner (1995a) proclaimed that “central to the education of children is the competence of teachers” (p. 99). In Australia,

Russell-Bowie (2012) reports generalist pre-service and in-service teachers lack confidence and competence in relation to arts education in the classroom. Brown and Beswick (2014) add that there is a need for research into the professional learning needs of teachers following recent major curriculum reform in this country. The Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA) stated they “would have welcomed a spectrum and a repertoire of pedagogic skills” (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a, p. 104). Yet, the brief for the Australian curriculum writers was to develop “what content needed to be taught, and what the achievement of this content would entail” with explicit instruction not to “consider what would be assessed nor how” and they “were forbidden to consider pedagogy” (O’Toole, 2015, p. 190). So, the Australian arts curriculum would not include the rich resources hoped for by the APPA or assumed by Donnelly and Wiltshire (2014a). So, many perspectives of what one curriculum can provide, yet in reality, it is the teachers interpreting and applying a curriculum in the classroom who are the key to its success or failure. Recent experience with the newer curricula in the US and the UK indicates that although each new curriculum promoted the development of higher order thinking skills and creativity, the demands of accountability through new standards often inhibit teachers’ use of creative, open-ended explorations and in-depth projects (Costantino, 2011; Oreck, 2006). *Re-investing in arts education: Winning America’s future through creative schools* (President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, 2011) recommended “increased arts integrated curriculum in school and a greater role for teaching-artists” (Costantino, 2011, p. 2). In the UK, Thomson and Sefton-Green (2011) promoted “approaches that allow young people to apply their creativity through making choices about what and how they will learn” (p. 2). This point was supported by Oreck (2006) who found that teachers’ strongest motivation to use the Arts “was their awareness of the diversity of learning styles and needs among their students” (p. 1). In fact, Australian primary teachers reported that they lacked the autonomy and even the time to use the Arts in their

teaching, with one teacher stating, “The preparation [in the Creative Arts] takes time and, as you know, there is not much time in the school day for these sorts of things” (Alter, Hays, & O’Hara, 2009, p. 10).

At the school level there is pressure to justify the Arts’ contribution to “more important subjects” and that “the future of arts teaching and learning in schools may depend on the extent to which arts educators and their organizations are successful in casting achievement in terms of broader goals” (Baker Jr., 2012, p. 24). Salvador and Allegood (2014) raised the further complication for arts education in schools where frequently teachers “who were not ‘highly qualified’ to teach music taught in charter schools because these schools are serving an increasing number of urban students” (p. 90). Moreover Lemon and Garvis (2013) considered teacher self-efficacy in the Arts and identified that “teachers with strong self-efficacy for arts education are more likely to include integrated arts in the classroom” (p. 2).

In Australia, primary teachers are expected to teach across all curriculum learning areas including the Arts (Russell-Bowie, 2012). In some schools notably in the independent sector, there may be a specialist teacher for one or more of the Arts. This is unlikely in outer metropolitan and regional public schools. In rural Australian schools, Jenkins, Reitano and Taylor (2011) found that teachers recognised they lacked the function and resources of large city schools and that students’ expectations are “very traditional/conservative” (p. 90). Feedback from one primary school teacher in response to the draft Australian Arts Curriculum indicated that she felt that the content was reasonable and manageable allowing her to draw “well upon integration in other key learning areas” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 56). However, a year earlier the response to the draft Shaping paper’s suggestion of ‘connectivity’ or ‘integration’ was very different:

Respondents indicated that individual artforms should be acknowledged as unique and distinct. Commentary in response to each particular artform

focussed on the individual practices of each artform, and respondents questioned the Arts being taught as one learning area with a unified single approach structure. The proposed 'integration' or 'connectivity' approach in primary was questioned again with concern for maintaining the individual identity of each artform. (ACARA, 2011a, p. 9)

In the past, it was claimed that teachers' own beliefs about arts and arts practices come from their own acquired knowledge (Bamford, 2006, 2015; Garvis & Pendergast, 2011; Garvis & Prederghast, 2010; Hayes, 2011; Oreck, 2006; Zoss & Smith, 2011). Individual teachers' own development as artists can notably improve their effectiveness as teachers and consequently improve their students' learning (Page, Adams, & Hyde, 2011). Furthermore, the practitioner must have "the confidence to shift both educational and artistic goals" (O'Neill, 2006, p. 121). The potential of the learning can be realised "only when teachers/facilitators are able to hold both the artistry of the form and the intended learning in one hand" (Dunn & Stinson, 2011, p. 618). Ultimately "the personal and professional relationship to arts education impacts the place, value and engagement with arts as a whole" (Lemon & Garvis, 2013, p. 6). Yet, responses to the Australian Arts Curriculum during consultation argued, "It does not assist any teachers with providing curriculum specificity and guidance for implementation" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 129). Prompting one responding teacher to state, "Looking at the draft I did not know where to start teaching, what knowledge was I meant to teach? There is no knowledge listed. Sure, in music we sing, play, listen, respond, reflect, compose but what concepts are we meant to be teaching? Where is the intellectual rigour?" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 129). Eisner (2000) has long argued that the absence of teacher competence to teach the Arts is a key impact limiting arts education in schools. The new Australian Curriculum states, "The curriculum is based on the assumption that all students will

study the five Arts subjects from Foundation⁵ to the end of primary school. Schools will be best placed to determine how this will occur”(ACARA, 2011b, p. 4; 2015d).

The current study adds to the burgeoning field through exploration of teachers’ responses to the new Australian Curriculum in the case study of eight arts teachers.

The next chapter contextualises the educational environment in the state of New South Wales where this study occurred.

⁵ Foundation is the first year of school in the Australian curriculum. ‘Foundation’ was selected as terms for the first year of school across States and Territories include: Kindergarten (NSW), Preparatory (Victoria), Reception (South Australia) and Transition (NT). Prior to the development of the national curriculum, the first year of schooling in Western Australia and Queensland was Year 1.

Chapter 3 The context of the research: Curriculum development in Australia and NSW

Introduction

This chapter reviews the existing arts curriculum in the state of New South Wales (NSW) and describes the NSW input into the development of the national curriculum in Australia. As such, it provides the context for the state-based perspectives in the narratives of the case study teachers involved in this study.

A step towards a national approach

Development of a national curriculum in Australia has long been an aspiration. However, when Australia became a Commonwealth, school education was omitted from the constitution and “state governments have fiercely guarded their right to determine syllabus requirements and assess student learning outcomes” ever since (Ewing, 2013b, p. 4). As the outline of the national agreements from the 1980s to the *2008 Melbourne declaration* was discussed in Chapter 2, the following section advances this discussion into the NSW perspective of a national arts curriculum.

First suggested by Federal Education Minister Malcolm Fraser in 1968, it was not until the 1980s that all Australian States and Territories began working towards a national curriculum. In 1986, the Federal Labor government, established the Australian Education Council (AEC, now MCEETYA) to bring together all state Ministers of Education with the Federal Education Minister at that time (Ewing, 2013b). In 1989, following Education Minister John Dawkins’ federal policy statement, *Strengthening Australia’s schools* (1988), the development of a common framework for all years of schooling that established the key knowledge and skills for students was a catalyst to future action and shared commitment to a national

approach to education (Piper, 1997). The following year, national agreement was recorded in the *Hobart declaration on schooling* with a statement of key learning areas agreed to by State and Federal Education Ministers (Ewing, 2013b). By 1991 the states and territories had settled on statements covering the breadth of the eight agreed learning areas: English, mathematics, science, language other than English (LOTE), the Arts, technology, studies of society and environment, and health. Although there was agreement on the eight learning areas, tension between differing States' approaches to curriculum led to debate between "a child-focused developmentalism and an instrumental economism" (Yates & Collins, 2008, p. 9). So, the determination was for a consistent framework, and an Australia-wide assessment program. The profile writing teams, worked from existing state and territory curricula to define the series of eight developmental levels in each strand in the eight learning areas, identifying what "a child who had reached that level in that strand in that learning area would be able to do" (Yates & Collins, 2008, p. 10). By 1992 additional resourcing and some urgency to move forward saw the completion of the national statements and profiles (Piper, 1997). Yet, in 1993 the State Ministers of Education, lobbied by peak groups such as the Australian Curriculum Studies Association, rejected endorsement of the national statements and profiles, reasoning that to compromise would produce a 'dumbed down' curriculum or 'mediocre' set of standards (Ewing, 2013b). However, all the states and territories adopted ideas from these statements and profiles along with the eight learning areas for their own curriculum revisions in following years. NSW, Victoria and Western Australia then adapted the statements and profiles and adjusted the levels to align with their years of schooling (Yates & Collins, 2008).

The politics of education in NSW: The NSW education act 1990

An Act of Parliament is not a scintillating read. I am sure most NSW teachers have never read the *NSW Education Act 1990*. However, as the *ACARA Act 2008* stands behind the Australian curriculum, the *NSW Education Act 1990* stands behind the curriculum and education system in the state of NSW. During the consultation on the developing national curriculum and, in the case studies that follow, NSW teachers referred to particular components of the NSW curriculum: time, mandatory subjects and syllabus. It is worth exploring the origins of these in the *NSW Education Act 1990* to understand the context of school education in which NSW teachers operate.

The *NSW Education Act 1990* was legislated at the time of the development of the national statements and profiles. It identifies the authority for the state's school education, development of syllabi and their endorsement, and the key learning areas for study. It also identifies the allocation of time, a prominent attribute in NSW education.

Decision making: the education authority or the Minister

Sections 13 and 14 of the *1990 Education Act* detail the delineation of authority in decision-making by the state education authority, formerly the Board of Studies (now known as NESA⁶) and by the Minister for Education for the state of New South Wales. Section 13 also explains that courses of study for students in Kindergarten to Year 10 “may be chosen in a key learning area in order to comply” and “the key learning area to which any such course is allocated are to be determined by the Minister on the recommendation of the Board” (“NSW Education Act 1990”, p.13).

⁶NSW Education and Standards Authority

Syllabus

Section 14 of the Act identifies that the Board may, “develop syllabuses for courses of study or endorse syllabuses developed by schools or other educational bodies” (“NSW Education Act 1990”, p.9). Rather than re-write an existing curriculum into a NSW syllabus framework, the Board is permitted by this Act to endorse a syllabus developed by someone else, say ACARA, that includes:

the aims, objectives and desired outcomes in terms of knowledge and skills that should be acquired by children at various levels of achievement by the end of specified stages in the course, and any practical experience that children should acquire by the end of any such stage ... (p.9)

The Australian curriculum includes: aims, rationales, content descriptions and achievement standards (ACARA, 2013). These are paralleled to the NSW syllabus. (See Table 5.1 (p.154) for an example of Years 3 and 4 (Stage 2) visual arts discussed in Chapter 5.3 The impact of national and state standards).

Key learning areas including the Arts

There are six key learning areas for primary education identified in the *1990 Education Act*: English, mathematics, science and technology, human society and its environment, creative and practical arts and personal development, health and physical education. According to the Act “the minimum requirement for the Arts in the primary curriculum is the study of both art and music” (“NSW Education Act 1990”, p.6), although dance and drama are also included in the key learning area of Creative and Practical Arts. The Act identifies eight key learning areas, of which six must be included for secondary education (Years 7 to 10) and taught according to “a syllabus developed or endorsed by the Board and approved by the Minister” (“NSW Education Act 1990”, p.6). These are English, mathematics, science, human society and its environment, languages other than English, technological and applied studies, creative arts, personal development, health and physical education.

Time allocation

The original early twentieth century primary syllabus in NSW prescribed “what would be taught in each fifteen minute timeslot on each day” (Ewing, 2013b, p. 6) with similar state syllabus documents across the country. The *1990 Education Act* states that “a particular course of study may indicate generally the period of time that should be allocated to the teaching of the course, but is not to make a specific period of time mandatory” (“NSW Education Act 1990”, p.9). The specification of ‘mandatory’ times for subjects in the NSW creative arts syllabi for Years 7 to 10 is identified in the Board of Studies policies through the Assessment Certification Examination (ACE). The ACE provides “enhanced support to schools in their implementation of requirements under the Education Act 1990 (NSW)” (NESA, 2016b). ‘Mandatory’ time allocation for the Arts in Years 7 to 10 is specified as follows:

200 hours to be completed consisting of the Board’s 100-hour mandatory courses in each of Visual Arts and Music. It is the Board’s expectation that the 100-hour mandatory courses in these subjects will be taught as coherent units of study and not split over a number of years. (NESA, 2016b)

There is no mandatory time allocation for dance or drama. It should be noted, however that the NESA website states the following:

All time allocations for the mandatory curriculum requirements are indicative. Indicative time is the time expected for a typical student to achieve the objectives and outcomes of the course. The indicative time for a course is therefore directly related to that course’s objectives and outcomes. (NESA, 2016a)

By comparison, the incoming Australian arts curriculum provides ‘indicative’ times for curriculum writers of each learning areas at each two-year band of schooling in *The curriculum design paper* (ACARA, 2013).

NSW primary arts syllabus

The *NSW creative arts K-6 syllabus* was first published in 2000 and republished with Foundation Statements in 2006. The syllabus includes the following statement indicating the minimum requirements specified by the state legislation:

The Education Act 1990 (NSW) sets out minimum curriculum requirements for primary schools. It requires that courses of study must be provided in each of the six key learning areas for primary education for each child during each year. In particular, the Act states that 'courses of study in both art and music are to be included in the key learning area of Creative and Practical Arts'. This syllabus enables schools to meet this requirement and to broaden students' learning experiences in Creative Arts through Drama and Dance. (Board of Studies NSW, 2006, p. 5)

This statement identifies the priority of visual art and music over dance and drama. The syllabus describes what students should learn and teachers should teach for the stages of learning in the primary years. These stages are defined as: Early stage 1 (Kindergarten), Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) and Stage 3 (Years 5 and 6). The syllabus lists subjects in the Creative Arts as visual arts, music, dance and drama. It provides a summary statement of each subject followed by foundation statements and outcomes. The syllabus is accompanied by *Creative arts K-6 units of work*, which teachers may use to guide lesson preparation, or use as lessons.

The Creative Arts syllabus for primary schools further prioritises arts subjects through the following statements:

This syllabus acknowledges that Dance is a strand of the PDHPE syllabus. Outcomes in Dance include references to the Dance outcomes in PDHPE. It also acknowledges that a number of schools include Drama within their English programs as well as a method across the curriculum. The focus in this syllabus is on Dance and Drama as artforms. (Board of Studies NSW, p. 5)

Following the arrival of the *NSW creative arts K-6 syllabus* in 2000, a number of publications emerged to assist teachers in each of the artforms, developed by specific arts academics and arts experts. Publications included *Drama Journeys* (Mooney & Nicholls, 2004), *Teaching children dance* (Cone & Cone, 2005) and the *ABC Sing!* series initiated in 1975 was extended and revitalized. Several visual arts publications already existed and more were published. These resources used the language of the new creative arts syllabus including terms such as ‘making’ and ‘appreciating’, although not defining time allocation or prescribing lessons.

NSW secondary arts syllabuses

In the secondary school, there is an individual syllabus for each arts subject: visual arts, music, dance and drama in Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8). Additionally the authority specifies schools must program for students to undertake a “mandatory 100 hours” of music and visual arts during the two years in this stage of schooling (Board of Studies NSW, 2004/ 2014, pp. 28,36). Dance and drama are optional. In Stage 5 (years 9 and 10) all arts subjects are elective and many schools limit their offerings at this stage. In Stage 6 (Years 11 and 12) syllabi for Dance, Drama, Music 1, Music 2 and Music extension and Visual Arts are provided (Board of Studies NSW, 2003). At this final two year stage of schooling, students can select subjects from those offered by their school; only English is ‘mandatory’ in Stage 6. These subjects comprise the units, which are counted in the students’ leaving certification, the NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC). The NSW HSC was initially an external examination only. In 1986 the assessment was changed to combine internal school assessment with the final external examination.

Development of professional associations: giving arts teachers a voice

With the formalizing of the Arts subjects into curricula, so began the formation of artform professional associations. Music and visual arts had been recognised in school education prior to the existence of formal curriculum documents. After the successful *UNESCO Conference on Music Education* held in Sydney in July 1965, the Australian Society for Music Education was established in 1967 following discussions between representatives across Australia. "The purpose of ASME is to encourage and advance music education at all levels as an integral part of general education and community life, and as a profession within the broad field of music" (ASME, 2017). Similarly for visual arts, in 1976 the not-for-profit Australian Institute of Art Education was established. It became known as Art Education Australia and as the peak national professional association of visual arts educators "supports and promotes art education at all levels as an integral part of general education and art education research within Australia" (AEA, 2016). The NSW Educational Drama Association (NSW EDA), was Australia's first association of drama teachers established in 1976 (Drama Australia, 2015) and is now known as Drama Australia. For dance, an association was also established. The Australian Association for Dance Education (AADE) began in 1977 in Melbourne, later becoming Ausdance with the mission "to provide a united voice for Australia's burgeoning dance community" (Ausdance, 2012). The most recent professional association is the Australian Teachers of Media founded in 1982 (ATOM, 2004). The National Advocates for Arts Education (NAAE) was formed in 1989 as an affiliation of peak arts bodies with a special emphasis on education (Dyson & Meiners, 2010). However, there is no professional association for primary arts teachers or for primary teachers in general. Although Drama Australia would argue it seeks to support primary drama teachers. At the time of this study it should be noted that

NSW did not recognise media arts as the fifth arts subject. While the professional associations for the Arts were consulted during the development of the Australian arts curriculum, consultation with the primary sector occurred through the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA), not through a teacher-representative association.

Developing the Australian curriculum: 2008 to 2014

Following the election victory of the Labor Party's 'Kevin 07' campaign, in 2008 the newly elected Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, Julia Gillard brought the states and territories together again on a quest for a national curriculum. Reflective of the Curriculum Corporation, the independent authority formed in the 1990 attempt at a national curriculum, the National Curriculum Board (NCB) became ACARA under the ACARA Act 2008. Professor Barry McGaw AO⁷ was appointed chair, and lead writers were announced for the initial advice papers for Phase 1 Learning Areas: English, mathematics, science and history. Following lobbying by peak arts bodies, led by NAAE, the Arts were included in the second phase of the national curriculum development. The development of the Australian arts curriculum followed the four phases of curriculum development: curriculum shaping; curriculum writing; preparation for implementation and curriculum monitoring, evaluation and review, as described in the Curriculum Development Process (ACARA, 2012b).

⁷ Following the Dawkins' federal policy statement of 1988, *Strengthening Australia's schools*, Dr Barry McGaw was director of Australia Council for Educational Research (ACER) and nominated as the proposed combined director of ACER and the Curriculum Corporation for Australia, although this did not eventuate.

Curriculum shaping

Step 1: Initial advice paper for the Arts⁸

After initial work in 2009 by an arts reference group, lead writer, John O'Toole, then Professor and Foundation Chair of Arts Education, Faculty of Arts at University of Melbourne, was appointed to draft the initial advice paper with contributors for each of the five artforms⁹: dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts. It was noted by some NSW lobbyists that there was no representative of NSW on the initial reference group or in the selection of contributors (K. Thomas, 2015). On 3 May 2010, the *Initial Advice Paper* was examined at a national forum, which included over 180 experts, teachers and stakeholders across the education and Arts communities (ACARA, 2012c).

NSW response to the initial advice paper

The *Initial Advice Paper* was not officially published but rather was presented as a draft for the attendees of the May 2010 Forum. Some participants from NSW wrote about the advice paper for their respective professional association publications.¹⁰ Some media coverage¹¹ reported the views of visual arts representatives who had identified concerns about practice, rigour, time allocation, resourcing and rejection that media arts should be considered a separate subject rather than being encapsulated within visual arts and English. However, there was some support for

⁸ The Arts, as per the decision by ACARA outlined in the Definitions, see p.13

⁹ Jeffrey Meiners, Dance; Michael Dezuanni, Media Arts; Margaret Barrett, Music; Elizabeth Grierson, Visual Arts.

http://acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/ACARA_Curriculum_Advisory_Panel_Members_-_Arts.pdf

¹⁰ Art Education Australia is the journal for the professional association of the same name. Members of affiliated State and Territory Organisations receive all information and publications from AEA.

¹¹ See <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/latenightlive/a-new-national-arts-curriculum/3024558>
<http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/we-need-to-look-at-the-bigger-picture-20100606-xn8i.html>

adopting media arts as the fifth arts subject in NSW to create “momentum for the arts to be properly resourced in schools” (Clausen, 2010). But, no authority response to the *Initial Advice paper* was published by BOSTES¹².

Step 2: Draft Shape Paper: The blueprint for the Australian arts curriculum

In 2010, the feedback from the national forum was analysed and the *Initial Advice Paper* redeveloped into the *Draft shape of the Australian curriculum: The arts*. This draft paper was released for national consultation between October 2010 and January 2011. There were 1603 responses to the online questionnaire provided to ACARA with a further 166 written submissions (ACARA, 2011a). The analysis of consultation feedback informed the revision of the draft into the final *Shape of the Australia curriculum: The arts*, which was launched by the then Minister for Education, Peter Garrett and published online in August 2011.

NSW response to the Draft Shape Paper

Formal submissions to the consultation for the draft *Shape paper* were received until 31 January 2011. The Board of Studies, NSW submitted their response in April 2011 (ACARA, 2011a). The consultation report states that the “Board of Studies NSW final submission was not received at time of collating this report. An interim report of the Office’s early findings was provided on 16 March 2011”. (ACARA, 2011a, p. 46) The consultation report identifies 55% or 883 of the 1603 survey respondents self-identified as representing NSW (ACARA, 2011a). Of the NSW respondents, 557 self-identified as secondary specialist teachers and twenty as

¹² The Board of Studies NSW was renamed Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) under the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards Act 2013.

primary teachers. The NSW education authority was the only one of the eight State and Territory education authorities not to acknowledge Media Arts as a subject in the Arts learning area. The key concerns raised by NSW respondents were time allocations; experiential learning; language of the proposed strand organisers and the continuum of learning.

Time allocations

Although the *Shape paper* was a broad mapping document or ‘blueprint’ to guide the curriculum development, allocation of time influenced perceptions of subject priority in NSW. “NSW visual arts respondents and the Board of Studies, NSW, expressed concern that the decrease in hours for implementation and the increase in breadth of curriculum expectations in the Arts will further diminish the quality of arts education experiences”(ACARA, 2011a, p. 9). Visual arts teachers from NSW and other jurisdictions felt that the draft *Shape paper* failed “to match or enhance the quality of the existing arts curriculum” (ACARA, 2011a, p. 10). However the report also suggested that respondents may not have understood the purpose of a shaping paper as a “blueprint for writing curriculum” (ACARA, 2011a, p. 10) rather seeing it as being the actual curriculum.

The allocation of time for the Arts was addressed as follows:

Allocation of time for teaching the Arts learning area will be a school-based decision. Notional hours for each band of schooling will guide the writers of the Australian Arts Curriculum as follows: 120 hours across F–2; 100 hours across Years 3–4; 100 hours across Years 5–6; 160 hours across Years 7–8 and 160 hours across Years 9–10. (ACARA; 2011b, p. 4)

This was followed by the statement, “Schools are best placed to determine how learning in the Arts will be delivered”(ACARA, 2011b, p. 4) and these were “recommendations, not mandated requirements as dictated by government” (de Vries & Albon, 2012, p. 4).

Experiential learning

The Arts are experiential and experiential learning occurs in all artforms (Clausen, 2010; Ewing, 2010). However, the *Consultation feedback report on the draft shape of the Australian curriculum: the arts* provides evidence of differing views held within New South Wales regarding how students should learn in the Arts. An independent co-educational school in Sydney felt that the draft *Shape paper* did not clearly identify the “personal experience” (ACARA, 2011a, p. 16), yet by contrast, the state teacher professional association, Visual Arts and Design Educators Association (VADEA), stated: that “...experiential learning is superficial and incorrectly assumes that students are innately creative...” (ACARA, 2011a, p. 16). There was also evidence of collusion through a pro forma response submitted during the consultation. One page of the *Consultation feedback report on the draft shape of the Australian curriculum: the arts*, quotes both the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (WA) and a survey response from NSW which included identical text about Visual Arts:

... should be defined as a subject in which students develop knowledge, understandings and skills within practice and art world concepts. This statement should also acknowledge the range of beliefs and attitudes students will need to understand in developing their intentions and representing ideas as makers of art, as critics and as art historians (ACARA, 2011a, p. 18)

In terms of a national approach to curriculum development, the coming together of national teacher professional associations in visual arts was an attempt to halt a possible change of status for visual arts which was perceived as “historically privileged, especially in NSW” and furthermore, “...the standing of Visual Arts and Music was under attack” (K. Thomas, 2015, p. 300).

The concerns regarding experiential learning were addressed in the final *Shape paper* published in 2011. Sections 17 to 20 explain the breadth and depth of arts

learning proposed for the curriculum. The *Shape paper* identifies that through the curriculum students will “learn to use artform specific concepts and skills and processes.” They will “make art works by using the elements of an artform... Through disciplined practice, students will learn to use and manage the materials, instruments and skills of the artform.” (ACARA, 2011b, p. 5)

Language: Strand organisers

The structure of the yet-to-be-developed national arts curriculum was described:

Making and responding will provide overarching organisers for the Arts curriculum and will provide a consistent structure for the primary years and for generalist teachers. Within these broad organisers, each subject in the Arts will have specific terminology, concepts and processes that serve as subject organisers. In this curriculum, making will be described in artform-specific ways within each Arts subject. Responding will be described in more general terms, which will be applied across the five Arts subjects. The curriculum will recognise equally the distinctiveness of dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts. It also recognises connections between artforms. (ACARA, 2011b, p. 5)

NSW respondents for dance, drama and music felt the strand organisers: generating, realizing and responding, proposed in the *draft Shape paper* were suitable for their subjects. Visual Arts respondents in NSW indicated differently, one stating, “For visual arts it results in the most unhelpful list of generalised stuff which the teacher will need to invent approaches to.” (ACARA, 2011a, p. 24)

Continuum of learning

The sequential nature of the learning, implied in the *draft Shape paper*, was questioned by some respondents, with regard to music and visual arts. Interestingly the same pro forma text (from above) appeared in this submission from a further visual arts lobby group set up in NSW during the national curriculum development, the Visual Arts consortium (VAC):

In comparison with existing Visual Arts syllabus documents in NSW and other states, this represents an intellectually impoverished and inadequate basis for the development of a national curriculum which should equip and empower students with knowledge, skills and understanding in the practices of art making, art history and art criticism, and with knowledge and understanding about the artworld and arts industries. (VAC) (ACARA, 2011a, p. 37)

The final *Shape paper* addressed these concerns in paragraph 23 that states “... It is important to recognise that some repetition across the bands is necessary because of the progressive nature of skills development in the Arts. Skills specified in early bands will be developed and refined as students move through the bands” (ACARA, 2011b, p. 7). The final *Shape paper* was released on 26 August 2011 at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), with a public announcement by the then Education Minister, Peter Garrett. Thus the development the draft curriculum for the Arts began in earnest.

Step 3: Draft Australian curriculum: The Arts

The writing of the Australian curriculum for the Arts adhered to the broad direction for the curriculum set by the *Shape of the Australian curriculum: The arts*. From October 2011 – June 2012, the Draft Australian curriculum: The arts foundation to year 10 was developed following the steps identified in the *Curriculum development process* (ACARA, 2012b) which involved significant input from teachers, academics, professional teachers’ associations, education authorities and the Arts industry and community.

The *Australian curriculum: The arts foundation to year 10 draft for consultation* (ACARA, 2012a) included a rationale and aims for the Arts learning area, and for each of the five arts subjects. The organisation of the learning area detailed the content structure including the strand organisers: making and responding, the Arts

across Foundation to Year 10, achievement standards and glossary. It provided information pertaining to diversity of learners and implications for implementation, and also outlined two dimensions specific to the new Australian Curriculum: general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities. Both dimensions were considered twenty-first century concepts and connected to learning area content, although general capabilities reflect the 'hidden curriculum' contended by Print (1987); Seddon (1983) and (Eisner, 2004). See Chapter 2 Review of Literature, p 22.

Each subject in the draft arts curriculum contained subject specific rationale and aims; a description of learning in the particular artform using the organising strands, making and responding in the context of the artform; and a description of the elements of the artform. The curriculum covered five bands of years of schooling: Foundation to Year 2, Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6, Years 7 and 8, Year 9 and 10. Content descriptions (what students should learn and do) with accompanying elaborations (examples or illustrations of content descriptions), and the achievement standard (what a student should know and understand by the end of the two year band) for each band of years, were developed for each of the five Arts subjects.

Nationwide consultation on the draft curriculum occurred between 9 July and 25 September, 2012. Following the same procedure as the national consultation on the draft *Shape paper*, feedback was provided through an online survey on the consultation portal of the Australian Curriculum website, and through written submissions sent directly to ACARA. "Feedback was directly sought on rationales and aims, structural coherence, coverage and clarity of content, clarity and coherence of achievement standards, and representation of general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities"(ACARA, 2012c, p. 2). There were 608 responses to the online survey, somewhat fewer than the responses to the online consultation on the

draft *Shape paper*, and 111 written submissions. 205 of the online survey responses were from NSW, barely one quarter of the NSW responses to the online consultation on the *draft Shape paper*. During the consultation period a small selection of schools participated in the ‘intensive engagement’, which involved the trialing of sections of the draft curriculum. The *Draft Australian curriculum: The arts foundation to year 10 consultation report* (ACARA, 2012c) provided a summary of findings for the Arts as a learning area and for each of the five arts subjects from responses to survey questions covering: rationale and aims; learning in the subject; foundation to year 6 content; foundation to Year 6 Achievement standards; Year 7 to 10 content; Year 7 to 10 achievement standards and Perspectives by State and Territory.

NSW response to the Draft curriculum

The *Draft Australian curriculum: The arts foundation to year 10 consultation report* concluded:

Generally it was found the Dance, Media Arts and Music draft curriculums were well received whereas respondents were less satisfied with draft curriculums for Music and Visual Arts. In each subject respondents provided suggestions for improvement. (ACARA, 2012c, p. 94)

Yet, the response to the draft curriculum from representatives of NSW was mixed. Early in the consultation report, an initial strength was noted in the rationale for the Arts as a learning area. “In general this is a very well-reasoned expression of the significant place of the arts in both individual and community development within the school context. (Secondary teacher, NSW)” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 9). However, the concerns raised in response to the draft shape paper reappeared: time allocation; experiential learning; language such as the strand organisers and the continuum of learning. These were summarised in the Perspectives by State and Territory section,

which collated the views of the state education authorities. For NSW, the views were summarised from both the Board of Studies and teacher professional associations.

Time allocation

In addition to comments about the allocation of hours to the learning area, NSW responses indicated concern at the combination of artforms be connected in a single learning area. “There was some concern about the Arts being ‘clumped together’, which for some respondents provided evidence of this supposed diminution of prominence.” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 9) The NSW Board of Studies stated that Media Arts should not be included in the learning area but incorporated “appropriately in all learning areas” and that “its inclusion as a separate subject raises concerns as to its impact on time allocation” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 60).

Experiential learning

The *Draft Australian curriculum: The arts foundation to year 10 consultation report* reflects the mixture of respondents’ interpretations of the draft curriculum with regard to the perception of experiential learning described by content and skills in each of the five subjects. In drama, a NSW Secondary teacher suggested that the curriculum “must mention and highlight that students learn by experience – experientially)” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 41). In Media Arts, there was recognition of innovation in including Media Arts in the Arts learning area and reservation that the draft curriculum focused on “technical and industrial skills rather than creativity and critical thinking” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 51). However the NSW Board of Studies submission indicated a lack of support for the subject as previously described.

In Music, respondents, who were predominantly secondary music specialist teachers, felt that there should be “more differentiation of music from other arts subjects, recognising the unique history, traditions, skills, language and disciplines

associated with Music” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 78). In visual arts, it was suggested there was “too much focus on the experiential features of visual arts at the expense of the critical and intellectual aspects” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 93). The consultation report found that “a strongly held view by many of the respondents was that the draft visual arts curriculum emphasised the self-experiential elements of the subject, at the expense of its critical and intellectual elements” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 84).

Commentary from NSW respondents on the aims for Visual Arts indicated dissatisfaction in that these did not clarify how students ‘know’. A NSW secondary visual arts teacher responded that the aims indicated “a ‘one way’ view of the artist reflecting back to the world through their artwork” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 85). The same teacher suggested that this “minimises the interconnectivity of the world, culture, the audience, artist’s background [which] have influenced the artist themselves” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 85). A further comment identified the distinction perceived between the draft Australian curriculum and the current NSW syllabus in visual arts. “Making is privileged and the practices of the critic and historian are reduced to merely the aesthetic response of an aware audience (NSW Secondary Visual Arts teacher)” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 85) whereas the NSW syllabus identifies the objective, “to critically and historically interpret art informed by their understanding of practice, the conceptual framework and the frames.” (Board of Studies NSW, 2003, p. 11).

Respondents for visual arts repeatedly indicated that the draft curriculum was “overly simplified” and lacked depth in the “practical and conceptual” knowledge understanding and skills (ACARA, 2012c, p. 85).

Language: Strand organisers

The NSW perspective found that in dance, the language used was clear and engaging, showing progression from the shaping paper and the draft dance curriculum that “improves on aspects of existing state curriculum” simultaneously suggesting language “could be further refined and more specific to dance” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 34). With regard to drama, the summation was that language “should be more specific to drama” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 47) with some concern over the adequacy of the two strands, making and responding, suggesting that ‘creating’ could be added. Furthermore, there was also support for moving to the two strands rather than the current three strands (making, performing, appreciating) in the existing NSW drama syllabus. According to one teacher “I don’t mind that performing is subsumed into *making* and *responding*. The critical component of audience is better conceptualised in the whole process of the creating of dramatic meaning”(ACARA, 2012c, p. 42).

The language of media arts was also questioned by the NSW representatives, as it “risks it being seen only as an extension of other subjects like Cultural Studies or English” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 61). With regard to Music, NSW representatives identified significant concern regarding language:

Making of music does not clearly differentiate between performing and composing. How are these two areas going to be divided up? What is the value of each area for assessment? There is no clear link or establishment with assessment and weightings. (NSW Secondary teacher) (ACARA, 2012c, p. 70).

Respondents also called for “use of specific language” associated with music and for the inclusion of specific music content and terminology identified in existing curricula in NSW, Queensland and Western Australia. The perception was that it was “failing to include the recognised and accepted body of knowledge or any pedagogy” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 75), thus undervaluing music as an academic study. In Visual Arts,

the NSW education authority and the state professional association claimed that the “two strands of *making* and *responding* simplify visual arts and are not adequate to describe the intellectual learning and critical reasoning that the study of visual arts can cultivate” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 93). The report identified a general view that the strands were insufficient for organising learning in visual arts: “the strands were simplistic and reductive; that the relationship and balance between the two was not clearly articulated; that the two strands did not adequately reflect the critical and historical practice that is intrinsic to visual arts; and that the current structure did not provide adequate guidance for generalist teachers” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 87). Furthermore, there was a concern about using the strand organisers in visual arts. As one NSW visual arts secondary teacher commented “the language of the content descriptors is not of a standard that allows me as a teacher to challenge my students” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 91).

Continuum of learning

The commentary about each arts subject referred to the continuum or sequential learning in the subjects across the years in the draft curriculum and also to the perceived ‘rigour’. The summary of the NSW perspective found that in drama the curriculum could be more rigorous with a “clearer sequencing of skills” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 47). The Board of Studies stated that “Media arts should not be included as a separate discipline in the arts, it should be incorporated appropriately in all learning areas” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 60), and claimed that “the content descriptions do not reflect understanding of the aesthetic practice of film making” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 59). The recently formed state professional association for media arts, NSW Australian Teachers of Media (N-ATOM), argued that the elaborations were too general and could be read in any subject because they “do not give examples of

learning activities that we consider to be deep learning. Where is the investigation, questioning, meaning making in these elaborations?" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 59).

The response to music notably called for an increased level of detail and "greater emphasis on assessment and the pathways between bands is needed" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 76). A primary teacher identified concern in the three-year band at the beginning of schooling stating, "The 2–3 years of duration for these bands makes it difficult to specify expected progress and outcomes" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 72). Commentary from music specialist teachers maintained the draft curriculum lacked "academic rigour", "sequential development of knowledge and skills" and that the "draft achievement standards did not adequately describe what students should have learned" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 68).

Pertaining to visual arts, the report stated that "points of difference that were cited by respondents included the three areas of content in the NSW syllabus – frames, conceptual framework and practice – as well as its grounding in critical theory and art history, and its more rigorous assessment methods"(ACARA, 2012c, p. 92). The NSW response to visual arts argued that in comparison to the current NSW visual arts syllabus, the draft was "lacking depth" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 91) and did not demonstrate a continuum of learning that would underpin increasingly complex tasks and activities for students. Suggestions included the need for a clear conceptual framework, which was believed to be essential to support teachers to structure tasks and activities for students and, with which to assess their learning and achievement. That said, the aspirations of the rationale and aims were recognised as a strength in the document. "They are comprehensive, but there needs to be a conscious effort to make sure they transfer into the curriculum (Independent NSW Secondary School)" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 84).

One primary teacher said in this review that there was:

No real sense of learning continuum and fails to address scope, depth and sequence of visual arts. The content descriptions fail to address what the areas of content mean at different band levels. Sometimes they emphasise subject matter, sometimes technique. Content descriptors don't describe the knowledge, skills and processes teachers are expected to teach and students to learn. (ACARA, 2012c, pp. 88-89)

Although NSW feedback was skeptical of the continuum of learning in each Arts subject, examples of how content descriptions might be used in the classroom drew support from many respondents in the primary years. Responses to the elaborations across the draft Foundation to Year 2 curriculum included: "Well done! If I were a lower primary teacher it would be very clear to me what context to teach and what sort of activities might help me to teach that context. (Officer, NSW Arts education provider, Theatre venue)" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 56). Other responses recognised that the elaborations drew "well upon integration in other key learning areas (NSW Primary teacher)" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 56).

Step 4: Resolving the Australian curriculum: The arts for foundation to year 10

Validation of the achievement standards for the arts curriculum occurred during 2013. The purpose of validation was "to focus on the extent to which the achievement standards are coherent, well sequenced and pitched appropriately" (ACARA, 2012b, p. 24)

Following validation the final *Australian curriculum: The arts* comprised of content and achievement standards for Foundation through to Year 10 was approved by the ACARA Board for submission to the State, Territory and Federal Education

Ministers. The membership of the ACARA Board at this time included the President of the NSW Education authority, who as part of the ACARA Board approved the curriculum to go to Ministers.

On 30 July 2013, the Ministers formally endorsed the Arts curriculum “subject to further consultation with Western Australia”¹³ (ACARA, 2014). Six days later, the recently reinstated Labor Party leader and Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd called the 2013 federal election. With an election called, ACARA was in caretaker mode which halted release of new publications, including the *Australian arts curriculum*.

Following the election victory by the conservative party, the incoming Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne, ordered a review of the Australian Curriculum, including the as yet unpublished and therefore unimplemented learning areas including the Arts. Issues raised by the state of Western Australia at the time of endorsing the *Arts curriculum* in July, were discussed by the ACARA Board in September 2013 prior to review by senior education officials from all states and territories in November. The *Arts curriculum* was resolved and made available to states and territories for their use via the Australian Curriculum website on 18 February 2014 with the disclaimer “available for use awaiting final endorsement.” This statement remained on the Australian Curriculum website for the duration of the curriculum review that is from January 2014 until the publication of the review on 10 October 2014.

¹³ WA indicated additional requirements for the Arts to be implemented in that state, as stated in the Minister’s Letter to Principals dated 9 January 2015. This included a new State requirement of year by year curriculum, rather than curriculum in two year bands, already agreed to by all States and Territories.

Findings of the review of the Australian curriculum

The review of the Australian curriculum (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a) was undertaken during 2014. As previously mentioned, two subject matter specialists were selected to review the arts curriculum. Although, as the former facilitator for the development of the arts curriculum, I was aware that many contributors to the development of the curriculum were approached and declined to conduct the review. One reviewer of the arts curriculum was the principal of an elite boys school in NSW, and the second was an arts teacher from a government school in South Australia, a state which had already commenced working with the unendorsed national arts curriculum. Interestingly their opposing views are documented in the review of the national curriculum supplementary material (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014b). The review recommended that “core content” in each learning area and subject in the Australian curriculum be “rebalanced” particularly in relation to the “deficiencies” in each subject (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a, pp. 202-203). Further recommendations for the Arts were that the specialist elements be reviewed and that the “mandatory inclusion of five artforms” (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a, p. 141) be removed. Interestingly, the Australian Curriculum never used the term “mandatory”, rather in an effort not to upset the different states and territories the phrase was, “all young Australians are entitled to engage with the five arts subjects and should be given an opportunity to experience the special knowledge and skills base of each”(ACARA, 2011b, p. 4). As identified earlier in this chapter, ‘mandatory’ is a term used in NSW syllabi originating in the *NSW Education Act 1990*.

Some NSW leanings expressed in the curriculum review were the suggestion that music and visual arts be ‘mandatory’, with the other arts subjects considered ‘elective’, to be added to the ‘core,’ “thus augmenting the rich arts programs which most school are already conducting” (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a, p. 219). The

review proposed that media arts could be incorporated into English or could be a separate subject if substantially reduced. The review summarised, “Elements of the current arts curriculum should also be integrated into other learning areas such as English, health and physical education, history and technologies” (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a, p. 219). Components that were new or unknown entities for the reviewers, such as cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities were questioned and further analysis proposed to “identify the extent to which the cross-curriculum priorities have produced repetition of content ... have skewed the content of all the strands, particularly away from Western and other cultures...” (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a, p. 219).

Australian arts curriculum - endorsed

On 18 September 2015, the Education Council endorsed the Australian Curriculum in eight learning areas, including the Arts. On the Australian curriculum website, ACARA reported that it had “listened to feedback about the Australian Curriculum from state and territory curriculum and school authorities and practising teachers. The curriculum has been amended to improve its manageability, simplify its presentation, and strengthen the focus on literacy”(ACARA, 2015b). The track-changed document of the Australian curriculum was published online to identify the changes made to the curriculum¹⁴. Aside from the addition of a generic achievement standard for the Arts as a learning area in each of the primary bands, there were no changes to the arts curriculum.

¹⁴See: https://acaraweb.blob.core.windows.net/resources/Changes_to_the_F-10_Australian_Curriculum.pdf

Since 2015, all States and Territories have adopted the Australian arts curriculum except for NSW. The Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) was renamed the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) on 1 January 2017¹⁵.

Arts curriculum development in NSW

In 2017, NESA began consultation with NSW teachers for the development of the new syllabus for Creative Arts K to 6. Three options were proposed. The first a variation of primary enquiry modeling; the second the visual arts audience, artist, world model and the third a simplification of the Australian arts curriculum, presenting only the strand organisers of making and responding without reference to the full curriculum content and support material including rationale, aims, definitions, bands of learning, content descriptions and achievement standards. The report on the state-wide consultation was published by NESA in March 2018, claiming that:

Feedback from the online survey indicated a substantial variation to other consultation feedback. An increase in support of Option 3 [making and responding] occurred over two days in the last week of the online survey. (NESA, 2018, p. 5)

The following chapter describes the research methodology for this study.

¹⁵ See: <http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/about/who-we-are/our-story>

Chapter 4 Methodology

Introduction

This study aimed to reflect and analyse NSW arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum and curriculum change. The research project considered teachers' perspectives as narrative beside the views identified in the consultation feedback reports published by the Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority (2011a, 2012c, 2015c). It was envisioned that through the distinct qualities of these teachers' stories we can interpret how educational practice in the Arts may be enhanced through curriculum change. Curriculum policy-makers often focus on the 'big picture' without considering specifically the pedagogical aspect of how the curriculum is taught and resourced in schools (Yates et al., 2008). Teachers, on the other hand, often consider the curriculum from a pedagogical perspective. Teachers' willingness to adapt to change is a mitigating factor for the successful implementation of new curriculum. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology selected and to justify the procedures therein for data preparation, collection and analysis to answer the study's research questions.

Why this research?

Australian students' engagement with the Arts comes predominantly through an in-school and frequently an in-classroom experience (Jeanneret, 2009; Martin et al., 2013; Neelands, 2015; O'Toole, 2009a, 2009b). The current study explored teachers' views of arts curricula and how they translate the Arts curriculum into pedagogy to facilitate student learning.

The *what* in this research was teachers' understanding of curriculum change. The *way* this study was researched was through methodology that was both exploratory

and interpretive (Stake, 1995). Its *purpose* was to provide a benchmark of NSW teachers' responses to the incoming Australian Curriculum in the Arts. Research in education must "provide principled bases for 'knowing' to guide practice and policy" (Freebody, 2003, p. 20). To this end, this research connects the big picture of policy-makers with the detailed pedagogical reality of the teachers implementing the curriculum.

This chapter presents the evolution of the research design through the project to address its guiding questions.

Choosing qualitative research

Qualitative research explores "the world of lived experience" where "individual belief and action intersect with culture" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a, p. 2). Digesting a curriculum is a complex collection of conscious processes involving reading, thinking, comparing, training, planning and selection of pedagogies through which to teach it (Lovat & Smith, 2003). Qualitative research allows for complex interaction reflective of the complexity of the gap between curriculum intention and curriculum implementation explored in this study. Qualitative research is "intended to approach the world 'out there', not in specialised settings such a laboratories, and to understand, describe and sometimes explain social phenomenon 'from the inside'" (Flicke, 2007, p. xi).

Qualitative research has the ability to "focus on the impacts or consequences of policy" (Altheide & Johnson, 2011, p. 583). Policy research intends to have an impact on current programs and practices and in education aims to determine what does and does not work (Hammersley, 2005). In this research, the policy is the

introduction of a national arts curriculum for Australian schools. Qualitative research focuses on evidence and its social contexts (Crotty, 1998; Denzin, Lincoln, & Giardina, 2006) thus this study evolved as a means by which teachers' understandings of curriculum change in the Arts could be explored.

Beattie (1995) and Anderson (2002) identified in their respective studies that the methodology applied to answer the research questions could "empower all involved", that is the participants, the researcher and the reader, by exploring the participant teachers' stories through narrative case study. Similarly, this research is qualitative in nature. When something painted out of a picture becomes visible again it is *pentimento* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a). In this research, the *pentimento* metaphor is apt, considering that the consultation feedback reports published by ACARA are built upon statistical measurement and commentary supplied by education authorities or professional associations, possibly obscuring the individual teacher's perspective. This study sought to reveal the perspectives of the individual teachers, which may have been obscured by the official published reports on the development of the Australian Curriculum.

"Researchers can only guess at reasons for these patterns without an understanding of people's own accounts of their behaviours" (Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 27). By interviewing individual teachers, I was able to access the 'inside' world of the teacher, that is, accessing their lived experience. Qualitative research seeks to understand the world from the subject's, that is the individual person's, point of view through their meanings, definitions, and description of events (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander, 1995; Schostak, 2006).

Furthermore, "qualitative design is not usually pre-emptive" (Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 73). Rather, qualitative data is descriptive data consisting of text, written

and spoken words concerned with meaning as seen by the participants and researched through an inductive process (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998; Stake, 1995). Qualitative design incorporates exploration of evolving social experience and cannot rely on quantitative processes such as comparison of frequency or measurement across subjects or categories (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011; Maxwell & Loomis, 2003; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). With this in mind, this research drew upon the meanings and processes through which teachers perceived the differences and similarities between the *NSW creative arts syllabi* and the *Australian curriculum: The arts*. Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) highlight the importance of qualitative inquiry as a means to explore understandings and therefore to extrapolate associated interpretations.

The focus of the qualitative researcher

Qualitative researchers seek to unpick how people construct the world around them, what they are doing or what is happening to them in terms that are meaningful and that offer rich insight. Interaction and documents are seen as ways of constituting social processes and artefacts collaboratively, or conflictively (Gibbs, 2007).

This study sought to ‘unpick’ teachers’ understandings and extrapolate their associated interpretations of the national curriculum in the Arts. Therefore the qualitative paradigm was deemed appropriate to the current study with its intent to “focus on understanding a given social setting, not necessarily on making predictions about the setting” (Janesick, 1994, p. 12). The study is descriptive and interpretive rather than focussed on information that is quantifiable and predictive (Cassell & Symon, 1994). Qualitative methods were selected for this reason, that is to explore different teachers’ points of view about curriculum change in the Arts.

The qualitative research in this study is characterised by concern with understanding human behaviour from the participant's perspective.

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, analysed by themes from descriptions by the participants and reported in the voice of the participant (Minichiello et al., 1995; Wells, 2011).

Theories underpinning qualitative research design

This research was directed by a constructivist approach. Constructivism is contingent upon human practices in the social world. Knowledge being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings so there is neither object reality nor objective truth (M Anderson, 2002; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011b; Kincheloe, 2001; Lincoln et al., 2011). This research took a constructionist view of knowledge whereby "meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting" (Crotty, 1998, p. 43). The study took this view to obtain a subjective understanding of the participants' perspectives. In order to construct intrinsically valuable knowledge (Herron & Reason, 1997) the role of the researcher was "to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge" (Robson, 2002, p. 27). Therefore the research used interviews to explore the participating teachers' personal perspectives about curriculum change.

"Realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific, dependent for their form and content on the person who holds them" (Guba, 1990, p. 102; Lincoln et al., 2011). This research brings together the practices, understandings of and preconceptions about curriculum held by Arts teachers with their discoveries about the new curriculum through the discursive interaction in interviews with the researcher. This means that the reality that these teachers experience with regard to curriculum change is a

constructed one based on their interpretations of their personal experience and their interaction with the research (Sarantakos, 2005).

Theory of constructivism

Within social contexts, meanings are constructed through shared understandings and practices, that is “we construct knowledge through our interactions with other members of society” (Lincoln et al., 2011, p. 103). A constructivist ontology identifies that individual experiences of the same reality present multiple socially constructed realities and provide competing interpretations of the same reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a; Freeman, 2007; Kincheloe, 2001). Meanings emerge from people’s interaction with the world. Stake (1995) defines construction of reality in terms of three realities: that which the individual experiences and interprets, that which we interpret in consultation with others and that which we interpret and verify through a social universe of integrated interpretations. Additionally the “construction of realities must depend on some form of consensual language” (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 71). This means that the reality these teachers experienced in their practice and perception of curriculum change was a constructed reality based on their own interpretations (Sarantakos, 2005). “Particular phenomena can be studied in their own right or to provide information on a broad range of similar phenomena” (Evans & Gruba, 2002, p. 92). Therefore, case study approach is a means to construct theory. The case studies in this research align with constructivism since these interpretive case studies illustrate a standpoint (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a) that being the individual teachers’ views of the Arts within curriculum and how they take curriculum into pedagogy.

The researcher

The many methodological practices of qualitative research may be seen as *bricolage* and the researcher themselves as the *bricoleur*, that is a Jack-of-all-trades (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Lincoln et al., 2011). As bricoleur, the qualitative researcher must weave whatever tools, strategies and materials are available to piece together the complexity and unpredictability of the cultural domain (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Levi Strauss, 1966; Lincoln et al., 2011). By contrast to the scientist or quantitative researcher, the bricoleur acquires and assembles tools and materials, patterns and practices which “elucidate the bricolage which has been constructed to fit the question” (M Anderson, 2002, p. 86). Each is an option kept until it can be used. These tools, materials, patterns, practices and the bricoleur’s purpose are progressively shaped by each other and their properties are uncovered through the process (Freeman, 2007), where in the theoretical domain is connected to the lived world and embraces the multiplicity of inputs to avoid the reductionism of a single-view methodology (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). This allows for “thick description” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 67) to unlock what the experience of the individual would convey avoiding the reductionism of describing just the functional role of the individual (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Lévi Strauss, 1966; Stake, 1995).

Freeman’s (2007) research in public administration explains that bricolage is the everyday practice of policy-makers and practitioners. That is, the gathering and assembling different ways of knowing, and that in knowing that they are doing this offers the prospect of doing so more appropriately and constructively. Similarly Kincheloe and Berry (2004) maintain that the bricoleur’s awareness of the discursive practices in which self or text is embedded and operate create the discourse and context which are the central dimension of the interpretative act. The bricoleur understands the subjectivity of different perspectives and therefore can elicit fundamentally different interpretations.

Di Domenico, Haugh and Tracey (2010) identify the key constructs of bricolage as *making do, a refusal to be constrained by limitations, and improvisation*, accompanied by three further constructs associated with social entrepreneurship which the authors define as, *social value creation, stakeholder participation, and persuasion*. Through their multiple case qualitative study, Di Domenico et al. (2010) propose an extended theoretical framework of social bricolage, which they claim “responds to the unmet needs of communities by making do and creating something from nothing” (p. 699). The current study required the researcher as bricoleur to gather and assemble the different perspectives of the teachers enabling different interpretations of the curriculum thus simultaneously responding to the unheard voices of individual teachers.

Choosing a methodology within qualitative research: Case study approach

The research question required a methodology that enabled teacher voices to be heard and “their stories to create expressively patterned qualities” (Eisner, 1978, p. 198). This qualitative research methodology is case-based study. It requires both description and interpretation of comparable narratives. The intention of a case study, broadly speaking, is to “put in place an inquiry in which both researchers and educators can reflect upon particular instances of educational practice” (Freebody, 2003, p. 81).

Case study “contributes to our knowledge of individual, group organisational, social, political and related phenomena” (Yin, 2009, p. 3). Yin (1994) further defines case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially when the boundaries between the phenomena and the context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). The distinctive features of case study design

were most useful for this study (G. Thomas, 2010). Case study honours the expertise of the individual participants in their unique situations which may present some commonality and provide a sample, which may be representative of a larger population (O'Toole, 2006; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). O'Toole (2006) and Buldu and Shaban (2010) assert that following case study, future research should include a larger sample to improve generalizability. The opinions of the case study participants in this particular study reflect some, and oppose other views expressed in the consultation reports, which collate the wide consultation conducted by the Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority (2011a, 2012c, 2015c).

The main strength of qualitative inquiry in the form of case study is depth of understanding whereas the strength of quantitative inquiry through statistical methods is the measurable breadth (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). The depth of case study enables understanding of context and process, and what causes a phenomenon. High conceptual validity comes from exploring the links between cause and outcome, that is “the complex interrelationships among all that exists” (Stake, 1995, p. 37), whereas statistical methods provide breadth, understanding of how widespread a phenomenon is across a population, measures of correlation for populations of cases and establishes probabilistic levels of confidence (Flyvbjerg, 2011). The narrow perspective enabled through case study fosters new hypotheses and new research questions (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Stake, 1995, 2005). The exploration of a phenomenon, that being individual teacher’s experience, practice and perception of curriculum change, through a series of cases enables better understanding of each case, and supports theorising about a larger collection of cases (Stake, 2005). Flyvberg (2011) contends that case study is no more likely to bias towards the researcher’s preconceptions than any other method of inquiry.

I structured my study according to Stake's (2005) multiple case studies bound by a phenomenon, condition or object in a context or setting. In this research, the cases were the individual teacher's responses to the object, being curriculum, in the context or setting of the state of NSW. Collectively the teacher cases comprise the case study of NSW arts teachers.

The research question

In response to the development of a curriculum in the Arts, the following research question was constructed.

What are NSW arts teachers' perceptions of change in the arts curriculum in the Australian context?

The associated sub-questions were:

What evidence from the data will identify these perceptions?

What factors may account for these perceptions?

In the research question, the word *perceptions*, promotes the anticipatory position of teachers with the curriculum under development and not yet 'lived' by the teachers. This values the breadth of teacher knowledge from the subjectivity of the participant teachers' described realities and lived reflection.

Subjectivity

As the researcher, I was seeking to show how NSW arts teachers perceive curriculum change. Policy consultation reports (ACARA, 2011a, 2012c, 2015c) provide statistical measurement of responses to the surveys on the draft curriculum. This objective reality may satisfy a constructivist view of a general phenomenon, but simultaneously obscures the subjective realities of individual teachers. Whereas such 'objective' reports provide quantitative data of categories of teachers, this

research investigated the subjective realities of these teachers as individuals where through their narratives “the patterns that emerge provide material for contrast, comparison and analysis” (M Anderson, 2002, p. 86). Exploration of ‘subjective’ realities in cases, enables alternative understandings of the same event to be considered, rather than confirming a single meaning (Winston, 2006).

Denzin et al. (2006) identify that the researcher as the moral inquirer who “builds a collaborative, reciprocal, trusting, mutually accountable relationship with those studied” (p. 776). “The characteristics of the interviewer, such as their identity or background influence how the interviewee respond in qualitative research” (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2001, p123). Collins (1998) offers four criteria within the subjectivity of the researcher: primacy of the lived experience; dialogue; an ethics of care; and an ethics of responsibility for interpreting claims of knowledge and truth. O'Toole (2006) argues that “nobody comes to research neutral” (p. 34). The researcher’s own lived experience, empathy, personal beliefs and values, perspectives, ideologies and assumptions will ultimately influence interpretation (Edwards & Maunther, 2002; Gardiner, 2014; Jefferson, 2011; O'Toole, 2006).

Additionally this study was based on individual teachers’ narratives about their views and practices and as such was situated in the subjective realm of the teachers’ lived experience. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) and M Anderson (2002) identify the importance of researchers listening to the subjective experience in people’s stories as means to identify new possibilities that experience may elucidate. Like M Anderson (2002), who was “not seeking an ‘objective’ reality” (p. 104), in this study I was seeking to explore the individual teachers’ subjective responses to the incoming national curriculum for comparison or contrast to the collated subjective findings reported in the consultation reports provided by ACARA (2011a, 2012c).

Validity and Reliability

Testing and increasing the validity, reliability, trustworthiness, quality and rigour are significant to the research in any paradigm if such matters are meant to distinguish 'good' from 'bad' research (Golafshani, 2003).

Qualitative research does not naturally conform to scientific standards of reliability and validity. However, like all credible research it must demonstrate the expected rigorous critical standards (Silverman, 2006; Stake, 1995). Hammersley (2008) identified that all qualitative researchers' claims need to be sufficiently supported by evidence in order to be assessed in terms of validity. Winner et al. (2013) explain that validity in qualitative research is located in the intentions and processes of the research methodologies.

In using narrative accounts from participants, the researcher aims to understand the meanings attached by the participants rather than to discover if the accounts are "accurate reflections of actual events" (Polkinghorne, 2007, p. 479). The researcher's interpretation may not be the only possibility but it must be grounded in the assembled data (Polkinghorne, 2007; Riessman, 2008; Stake, 1995). Additionally, "the divergent and possibly convergent perspectives of the observer and of the observed, as well as the role of the reader of the findings must be resolved during the course of the research to ensure transparency and validity" (Altheide & Johnson, 2011, p. 589).

In the context of case study, Stake (1995) asserts that if the claim is central to making the case the researcher must be certain that it is not contestable. To ensure validity and reliability of qualitative research, consistency of method is required through data collection, data reduction and data analysis (Golafshani, 2003; Yin,

2009). Further, Guba and Lincoln (1985) argue that dependability in qualitative research closely corresponds to reliability in quantitative research. Therefore in this study consistency of method for dependability, was achieved through the following:

Data collection needed all interviews to be conducted with consistent questions, competence level and interview techniques and participants of a suitable quality to allow comparison of interviews.

Data reduction involved accuracy in transformation of interviews into data through audio recording and subsequent transcriptions.

Data analysis required consistency of initial coding and the subsequent use of axial coding to clarify emerging themes in the data.

Crystallisation is a validation technique through which the researcher corroborates results across different methods (O'Toole, 2006; Plummer, 2011). In collective case study, the cross-referencing of findings across individual case studies enables identification of commonalities and differences as well as comparison, contrast and clarification of emerging themes in and across cases (Flicke, 2007; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; O'Toole, 2006; Richards, 2009; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). *Member checking* is the review of drafts by the research participants which helps triangulate the researcher's observations and interpretations in case study research (Richards, 2009; Stake, 1995). As an example, M Anderson (2002) sent the drafts of narratives to his participants to "validate or crystallise the vignettes" (p. 104). Postmodern contexts identify the interweaving of processes in research as crystallization (Lincoln et al., 2011). In the present study, Yin's tactics for testing validity were considered and where suitable incorporated. These four tactics are described in relation to the present study.

Construct validity was applied in this study through using multiple sources of evidence and participants reviewed draft transcripts, described by Richards (2009) as *member checking*.

Internal validity was not applicable to this study as the cases were descriptive and exploratory and not specifically explanatory.

External validity uses replication within multiple case studies. In this study the same interview method was applied for each case study. The findings may support theory through replication of findings between cases and may be representative of a larger population.

Reliability was achieved through case study protocol, that is, the consistent application of a clear process of operational steps for each case study (Yin, 2009).

Method of Inquiry

The overarching research question sought the perceptions of individual teachers and this determined the method of inquiry. The most direct means to gain this information was to ask teachers through an interview process (R. Atkinson, 2012; Gardiner, 2014; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). Qualitative research must be “conducted rigorously and contribute robustly to useful knowledge” (P. Atkinson & Delamont, 2006, p. 749).

The researcher

The researcher is a vital part of the process. They bring their “own personal presence as researchers”, and/or their “experiences in the field” which provides a “reflexivity to the role” (Flicke, 2007, p. xi). Qualitative methodology positions the researcher within the study both personally and politically and therefore the researcher must avoid the pretence of being objective (Flyvbjerg, 2011; Gardiner, 2014). Through the qualitative research paradigm researchers are able to incorporate the idea of multiple realities for the individuals being studied and also for themselves (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The subjective nature of the study requires consideration of the insights and motivations that stem from the researcher’s academic, personal and professional experience (Altheide & Johnson, 2011; O’Toole, 2006) . Given the subjective nature of this study, the researcher’s identity and associated lenses must be revealed (Beattie, 1995; Saunders, 2015).

Participation selection rationale

Participants for this study were selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling uses the judgement of an expert using set criteria and key attributes in selecting cases for a specific purpose (Neuman, 2006; Richards & Morse, 2007). All participants were selected because they illustrated specific features and processes of interest to this study (Silverman, 2006).

The eight case study participants were purposefully sampled according to the following criteria:

- Currently teaching in NSW;
- Compelling information-rich cases chosen to deepen understanding and knowledge;

- Representative of the range of teachers who may interact with the Australian Arts curriculum.

The intended selection of participants was:

3 primary generalist teachers including 1 visual arts specialist

1 secondary visual arts teacher

1 secondary drama teacher

1 secondary media arts teacher

The resulting selection of participants was:

3 primary teachers including 1 visual arts specialist (one with personal interest in drama and visual arts, and one with personal interest in drama)

2 secondary drama teachers

2 secondary visual arts teachers, one teaching primary school, and one with drama

1 secondary music teacher

Table 4.1 Attributes of participant teachers

Attribute	Teacher *denotes personal interest							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Primary			X	x	x	X		
Secondary	X	x	X				x	x
Drama	X	x		x*		x*	x	
Visual arts			X		x	x*	x	
Music								x

Data collection

Overview

To address the research question, interviews were used to collect the necessary data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Minichiello et al., 1995; O'Toole, 2006; Schostak, 2006).

Consistent with interpretive methodology in qualitative research, interview is a method which engenders acumens essential to addressing the research questions (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori, 2011; Schostak, 2006).

A review of relevant literature on teachers' approaches to arts in curriculum identified specific themes regarding how teachers bring pedagogy and curriculum into their practice and factors which affect them doing so (Buldu & Shaban, 2010; Ewing, 2010; Jeanneret, 2009; O'Toole, 2009a, 2009b; Oreck, 2006). Questions were then developed through application of these themes for an interview schedule, which aimed to identify teachers' personal views of the Arts in their practice and in current and incoming curriculum.

Development of the interview schedule

Prior to conducting the interviews, a schedule was developed for Interview 1 (see Appendix 1). The schedule for Interview 2 was developed after reviewing data from Interview 1 and the release of the *Australian curriculum: The arts* (see Appendix 2). The interviews were conducted between 27 June 2013 and 11 July 2014.

Interviews

Interviews were the most appropriate method for collection of data as they enabled the researcher to "reach areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible" (Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori, 2011, p. 529). Interviews provide first hand accounts of participants' experiences without constraints such as time or writing space (Gray,

2009). The aim of the interviews in this study was to give prominence to these teachers' voices and experiences (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Participants were able to elaborate upon their responses with more detail than by written response such as a questionnaire or journal (M Anderson, 2002; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The in-depth, semi-structured interviews in this research enabled the researcher to access the participants' subjective experiences and attitudes to their current curriculum and the incoming Australian curriculum. O'Toole (2006) claims that the semi-structured interview provides opportunity for collection of the unexpected insight among arts educators who are collaborative by training and nature. This study broadened that practice and philosophy to teachers in the Arts, not just drama. In research where the primary data is the interview, O'Toole (2006) advises the researcher can use existing policy documents to structure the interviews. In this study, participating teachers responded to current and incoming curriculum documents, which included the *Shape of the Australian curriculum: the arts* (ACARA, 2011b) and the draft and final *Australian curriculum: the arts* (ACARA, 2012a, 2015a). Rapley (2007) contends that in studying texts:

... you are also interested in the rhetorical work of the text how the specific issues it raises are structured and organised and chiefly how it seeks to persuade you about the authority of its understanding of the issue. (p. 113)

Individual semi-structured interviews were held at locations convenient to the participants. For some this was at their school and for others this was in their home. The one regional teacher undertook both interviews via *Skype*. When interviews took place in school grounds, my presence was registered with the school and the Principal was notified. Two of the second interviews involving three of the participants were undertaken at my workplace for two reasons. Firstly, due to delays in the release of the Australian arts curriculum the interviews occurred during school holidays and my workplace facilities meant the participants could view the new curriculum on a large screen for reference during the interview. Due

to delays in the release of the Australian Arts Curriculum Sarah and Craig agreed to attend together in order to complete the interview before teachers were away on vacation. Their commentary indicates they are both familiar with each other's approach to curriculum and their responses seemed to influence each other during the interview to the extent that they often appeared to focus on similar concerns. However, by being interviewed together they still recognised that they had differing levels of confidence and could provide examples of teachers' collaborative practice in their school.

The interactional context in which the interview occurs may also affect the collection of data (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009; Nikander, 2012). In the situation of both interviews, participants were able to incorporate anecdotes from their daily classroom practice. Observation was conducted through the participants sharing examples of their students' work, as a means by which to demonstrate their Arts teaching practices (Buldu & Shaban, 2010). As Angrosino and Rosenberg (2011) explain, "... the observation-based researcher will be able to provide a rounded account of the lives of particular people, focussing on the lived experience of specific people and their ever-changing relationships" (p. 476).

The time allocation for each interview was not limited by the researcher to ensure participants could respond freely to the themes and texts presented to them. Consequently the interviews lasted between 30 and 90 minutes. The interview schedule consisted of key questions derived from the themes that emerged from relevant literature.

The first interview followed the approach of Buldu and Shaban (2010) to establish the participating teachers' background and experience, including their qualification/s, years of teaching experience, subject matter knowledge and

pedagogical and professional content knowledge regarding current curriculum. It also enabled the respondents to discuss their own perceptions of the value of the Arts in school education, their teaching practices, major influences on their current teaching practice and their knowledge of the proposed national Arts curriculum. Through the first interview, respondents were asked to discuss their current perceptions of what a national Arts curriculum would mean to their practice.

The second semi-structured interview was conducted with each participant to explore their understanding and perception of the draft *Australian curriculum: The arts* after its online publication in February 2014 since the researcher must endeavour to explore the 'whole story' for each participant (Rapley, 2007). The second semi-structured interview explored each participant's experiences, views and responses to the new curriculum through interview questions intentionally devised in response to themes that arose during the first interview and to encompass concepts identified in the published consultation reports (ACARA, 2011a, 2012c).

Procedures

Ethical considerations

Prior to commencement of the research ethical approval was sought from and approved by the Sydney University Human Ethics Committee (see Appendix 3). Once research permission was acquired, invitations to teachers were distributed initially through the relevant teacher associations (see Appendix 4). Teachers self-nominated by emailing the researcher and were selected using purposive sampling as previously described. The first and second interviews were scheduled as previously described.

To comply with professional and ethical standards of research, the following measures were applied throughout the present study:

- Identifying and other sensitive information of informants was kept confidential;
- All participants were provided signed consent forms for their involvement (see Appendix 5). Participation was made voluntary;
- All participants were made aware both verbally and in writing that there was no obligation to participate in all stages of the study and that they could withdraw at any time without reason or consequence (see Appendix 6);
- Participants were made aware of the purpose and goal of research prior to consent (see Appendix 6);
- Views expressed by participants were recorded accurately and clarified if there was any uncertainty.

Recording

Interviews were audio-recorded using software, *Garageband* on a *Macbook Air* laptop computer. Files were converted to MP4 and then transcribed by an external transcription service. The transcriptions were reviewed by both the researcher and the participants. As the research was not interventionist and the focus of the analysis was on participants' background and perceptions, that is the content of their interviews, rather than manner of the interview, video was not used and ethics application for video was not requested.

During the course of the interview phase participants were asked whether they felt comfortable with the process. No objections were raised. Participants seemed to become more relaxed from the first interview to the second. Having reviewed the transcripts of the first interview in the intervening period seemed to relieve any

concerns. (See Appendix 7: Outline of questions Interview 1; Appendix 8: Outline of questions Interview 2).

Transcription process

Initial transcription of the MP4 files of the interviews was undertaken by a professional transcription service. The transcripts were reviewed in conjunction with the audio files for accurate reflection of the discourse in the transcripts. The researcher made any corrections to the transcripts for accuracy. Transcripts were provided to the participants for review prior to analysis. Aside from the professional transcription, the only person to listen to the audio files was the researcher following ethics procedures. (See Appendix 9 Sample transcript)

Research log

The use of logs is employed extensively to develop students' reflections in the Arts classroom. They are also an effective tool for the qualitative researcher (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 421). In this study, the journal was not used for the teachers to record incidents of interest that occurred between the interviews as the focus was on their immediate reflections and opinions during interview. I also recalled Anderson's comment that participant "logs were completed with limited success" (2002, p. 99). That said, the log was a device of considerable benefit for me as the researcher, to note times and context for interview and thoughts arising during interview and upon re-visiting interviews in transcription review and analysis. This information was imperative for the development of the findings around the teachers' narratives in Chapter 5 in this thesis.

Data analysis

Data analysis is the search of collected data to bring together patterns, recurrent behaviours, objects or ideas (Freeman, 2007; Peräkylä & Ruusuvuori, 2011;

Silverman, 2006). All interviews were audio-recorded with permission and transcribed. The audio file and the transcriptions were entered into QSR NVivo Version 10 (QSR 2013) software package to facilitate later analysis through qualitative methodologies including coding and descriptive analysis.

NVivo 10 software package

NVivo 10 is qualitative data analysis software package designed to support the various ways qualitative researchers work. It assists in the efficient analysis of unstructured or semi-structured data (Bazeley, 2007). The software enables the researcher to collect, organise and analyse content from interviews, focus group discussions, surveys, audio, social media, videos and webpages (QSR International, 2014). For this study, the NVivo 10 software assisted in the management of data, management of ideas, querying of data, exploration of relationships between data, maintaining the researcher's log and reporting on the data. This method enabled the efficient examination of the patterns and themes that arose from the data.

Coding of the data

A code is an abstract representation of an object or phenomenon (Bazeley, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Coding data in qualitative research is data retention and the organisation of information (Richards, 2009). In quantitative research coding focuses data reduction. Coding is frequently combined with narrative and thematic analyses in qualitative research (Charmaz, 2006, 2011; Richards, 2009).

Audio files and accompanying interview transcripts were coded to develop initial themes and concepts. Combining review of the audio with the visual text in the transcripts assisted the researcher to consider any nuance in the discourse. NVivo enabled the creation of nodes, which were sorted to identify relationships between

different concepts and connections between cases in the study (Cantali, 2013; Richards, 2009; Richards & Morse, 2007; Saldana, 2009).

After initial coding, each interview was reviewed for consideration of emergent themes. Qualitative analysis involves the classification and categorisation of individual pieces of data explore through a retrieval system (Babbie, 2007; Richards, 2009; Richards & Morse, 2007). At this stage the emerging descriptive analysis informed the second round of analysis and guided the development of the questions for the second interview.

Thematic analysis

O'Toole (2006) explains that in fairly open methodologies analysis and interpretation is working in action and that “you cannot plan in advance the criteria by which you will interpret the unplanned” (p. 141). The analysis in this study commenced with a ‘start list’ of concepts for the investigation “derived from a strong sense of the literature and a theoretical basis” (Bazeley, 2007, p. 76). As concepts and categories emerged during the coding of the data similarities and differences in the cases were identifiable in a process, Patton (2002) refers to as sensitizing. Themes emerged from the concept categorisation that directed the narrative reconstruction of the data.

The research evolved during the extended period of data collection from 27 June 2013 and 11 July 2014. The first interview followed the model of questioning developed by Buldu and Shaban (2010). The data from the first interview was analysed using inductive coding in Nvivo10 identifying key themes that arose from the participant teachers’ responses to each question (See Appendix 10 Example of themes that arose from the data in the coding process). The second interview conducted during 2014 explored how teachers viewed and considered the new

Australian curriculum in comparison and contrast to the NSW syllabus. The analysis of these responses and the themes identified in the first interview were manually categorised within Eisner's six influences on arts education. These six influences were applied as a lens across the first and second interview data to reconstruct the data into the resulting categories of findings.

Narrative analysis and reconstruction

The point of the life story interview is to enable people to tell their story in their way, "so we learn from their voice, their words, their subjective meaning of their experience of life" (R. Atkinson, 2012, p119). Squire (2008) argues that narratives are a way in which individuals make sense of themselves and the world. Within the subjective field of the teacher's personal experience, narrative is defined commonly in relation to events and therefore the individual teachers' stories of events convey meaning to a particular audience (Wells, 2011). When interpreted by the reader, narrative weaves together experiences, actions, thoughts, events and interpretations to create meanings and new versions of reality (Ely, 1991; Jefferson, 2011). These bring to the fore the multiple realities sought for exploration by the researcher (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Narrative methodology is powerful in its ability to reflect the unique circumstances of teacher's lives. It allows multiple interpretations from the same narrative (Goodfellow, 1997).

As the interviews in this study were semi-structured using open-ended questions the narrative analysis encompassed the narrative, the content within the narrative, and also the discourse of the interview and its context (Krippendorff, 2004; McAdams, 1993, 2003; Wells, 2011). Stories are the primary source of data in narrative analysis that examines the content, context and structure as a whole (Wells, 2011). Within the narrative content analysis enables the exploration of

independent themes (Krippendorff, 2004). Through narrative analysis of the response to open-ended questions at interview, the researcher seeks to understand the participant's own way of making sense of their life, establishing their life story (McAdams, 1993, 2003).

Narrative reconstructions were composed for each teacher for each of the emergent themes. The particular view of each teacher was reflected in their narrative, and not all teachers had narratives under all emergent themes. Some themes had a narrative from only one teacher. For instance, Errol's experiences as an actor, while not shared by the other teachers, illuminated his context and raised some important issues in his pedagogical approach to arts curriculum relevant to the research question.

Potential limitations

Every study has its limitations. In this study the limitations are defined as: limited perspective; reliance on teacher response; a change in plans and limited scope for generalisability.

Limited perspective

This study set out to describe the personal view and responses to the new Australian Arts curriculum of eight NSW Arts teachers. Whereas Gardiner (2014) identified the limited number of cases narrowed the perspective in his study, the current study does have the breadth of comparison to other views identified in the consultation reports published by ACARA. Additionally the perspective of the researcher can be considered a limitation as it is not possible to see the study from every possible lens of reality.

Reliant on teacher responses

The data from the interviews was reliant on teacher responses to the interview questions. The second round of data collection required the participants to review the published curriculum online. In some cases participating teachers responses indicated they were not particularly familiar with the new curriculum. This was in part due to the delay in its online publication held over from ministerial endorsement in July 2013 until online publication in February 2014. The NSW education authority has since indicated the arts curriculum will not be implemented in NSW until 2018 or sometime thereafter, removing any immediacy for teachers to engage with the new curriculum.

A change in plans

“Flexibility is an essential part of research design and implementation”
(Ely, 1991, pp. 113-119)

Factors beyond the researcher’s control affected the timeline and process of this study. The publication of the Australian Arts curriculum was stalled by federal government elections in both 2010 and 2013. Additionally ACARA’s negotiations with stakeholders were extended way beyond proposed timelines due to complexity of stakeholder concerns and the strategies used to voice concerns during the curriculum development phase.

Generalisability

Data collection occurred over one year prior to the implementation of the curriculum in NSW, which limits its scope in comparison to longitudinal data. Future studies in this area may benefit from the collection and analysis of such longitudinal data (Cohen, 2007). The narratives in this study are those of individuals. When corroborated with data in the consultation reports, there is potential for

generalisability. However, it should be considered that further research will be required to provide hard evidence.

Limitations of the present research

Case study was a most effective tool for this research, however, the limited number of participants does not provide grounds for generalisability of the findings.

Although some of the findings of the case studies do reflect the findings in the consultation reports published by ACARA. The case studies provide the expertise of the individual participants in their unique situations, so that this study presents some commonality and provides a sample, which may be representative of a larger population.

The data was dependent upon teacher interviews intended to be timed around the delivery dates of the Australian arts curriculum. Factors beyond the researcher's control affected the timeline and process of this study.

Summary

The present study aimed to contribute to the growing body of research on teacher's responses to curriculum development in the Arts. The process of *bricolage* to combine interview, case study and narrative reconstruction approaches, enabled the qualitative researcher to fulfil the aims of the research question (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; O'Toole, 2006). The study intended to explore potential perspectives of curriculum change in the Arts that may be related to the personal and professional backgrounds and views, as well as the pedagogical practices of the participants. To this end, this research sought to apply a methodology that supported the voices of the participant teachers in a study that also acknowledges collaboration with the

researcher without hiding the researcher's presence behind the pretext of objectivity (O'Toole, 2006).

The following chapters present the key findings of this study.

Chapter 5 Findings

Overview

This chapter contains the key findings of my research. It is divided into five sections. Each section considers the case study teachers' responses through the lens of Eisner's six influences on the Arts in education detailed previously.

Section 5.1, Reading and responding to curricula explores teachers' response to current and incoming national curricula in light of Eisner's contention that policy is difficult to disentangle from ideas about the aims of education. Section 5.2, Outside forces affecting the Arts in schools details the outside forces within the school setting that impact the teacher's capacity to teach the Arts. Section 5.3, The impact of national and state standards documents the impact of standards or outcomes on the teaching of the Arts. Section 5.4, The impact of testing and tertiary entrance explores the impact of high-stakes testing, the National literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN), and the NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC) and the sway of tertiary entrance ranking (ATAR). Lastly, Section 5.5, Teacher competence delves into the teachers' backgrounds and training and how they have developed knowledge, skills and confidence to become competent teachers of the Arts.

Introduction to the participant teachers

The interviews were conducted in 2013 and 2014 at which time the teachers were using the existing New South Wales syllabi for the creative arts. At the time of writing that is, 2017, NSW teachers had yet to be advised when they would commence using the new Australian arts curriculum. As mentioned previously, the Australian arts curriculum was completed in 2014 and endorsed nationally in 2015.

An outline of the participating teachers' backgrounds is provided in Table 5.1. Participants' backgrounds (see p.101). This table includes the participant teacher's alias names, gender, the school's context and location (regional or metropolitan), their age bracket, influences that led them to become a teacher, tertiary training, years of teaching experience and the school level and artform specialty, as an overview of their teaching experience. While this study did not focus on gender, there was an attempt to reflect the socio-demographic nature of the teaching profession. Consequently the identification has been included in the table showing both genders participated but no further differences in attitudes were evident according to gender. The profile of each teacher is also described below.

Participant teacher profiles

Mary trained at the College of Fine Arts (COFA)¹⁶ in Sydney in visual arts. Initially she wanted to become a gallery curator, but realised these jobs were rare. She travelled overseas then returned to undertake her Bachelor of Education. She had a total of thirteen weeks practicum teaching during her studies and is has been casual teaching in metropolitan government primary schools for almost two years.

Sarah trained at a teachers' college in Sydney after completing her secondary school leaving certificate. Her main interest has always been visual arts. She has continued to learn different arts and crafts throughout her life. Sarah has been a primary school teacher for more than thirty years, commencing as a casual swimming teacher. She became the relief-from-face-to-face (RFF) visual arts teacher at the same school and has taught in various government schools in Sydney. Currently she

¹⁶ now a part of the University of NSW

is a primary classroom teacher who specialises in visual arts in a metropolitan government primary school. She teaches at the same school as Craig.

Craig had learning difficulties and trouble reading in his primary schooling. He learned through drama inspired by his Year 1 teacher. He left secondary school in Year 10 and trained to become a cabinet-maker. Within two years, he returned to complete his Higher School Certificate (HSC) at TAFE (Technical and Further Education). He was influenced to become a teacher by his older sister who was a teacher. Craig trained in early childhood education before undertaking a primary education degree. He has been teaching for five years in a metropolitan government primary school. He is classroom teacher who uses drama for learning and teaching. He coordinates the annual school production and performs in amateur theatre.

Gina completed her education degree in visual arts and history at The University of Sydney after which she attended a teachers' college in Sydney to acquire practical teaching skills for visual arts. Her interest in teaching came from her father, who was a teacher, and from her own teachers in secondary school. Gina taught history at TAFE before teaching in an independent girls school in Sydney for a short period. She moved to a regional NSW town, where she became a visual arts teacher. She studied drama at another university and became the Head of the Creative and Practical Arts (CAPA) faculty in a regional government secondary school where she teaches both drama and visual arts. Gina has been teaching for more than thirty years.

Paula studied history and drama in her teaching degree at university. She has always been interested in visual arts, studying visual arts at TAFE and continuing to learn different methods and media of art throughout her life. She is a primary

classroom teacher who specialises in visual arts and drama in a metropolitan government primary school. Paula has been teaching for more than twenty years.

Errol grew up in a regional Victorian town. He wanted become an actor, inspired by drama classes in his early school years. He completed an education degree in English, and taught English and media in a regional secondary school in Victoria before auditioning for a recognised performing arts academy in another state. He completed his actor training and moved to Sydney for more acting opportunities. Errol used teaching as a means of financial support. He has been a drama teacher and head of the drama faculty in an independent metropolitan performing arts specialist school for more than ten years.

Mel worked in the vocational sector at TAFE for some years after completing secondary school. She returned to university to study for personal interest and discovered drama education. She completed her teaching degree in drama and English. Mel has been teaching drama for more than ten years at an independent metropolitan school.

Dean grew up in Tasmania. At school he was interested in music and graphic arts. He particularly enjoyed teaching music while he was in secondary school. He began his university studies in music in Tasmania before completing his degree in music education in Sydney. He is the head of the music faculty in a large independent metropolitan school, and has been teaching for more than ten years.

Table 5.1 Participant teachers' backgrounds

Teacher alias¹⁷	Male/ Female	School context	Age	Influences to teaching	Tertiary training	Teaching experience	Training/ specialty
Mary	F	casual teaching, primary metropolitan government	20-30	Limited jobs in art curating	Tertiary visual arts	Recent graduate, 1-2 years	secondary, visual arts
Sarah	F	primary classroom and visual arts specialist metropolitan government	50-60	Teachers college straight from finishing school	Teachers college	More than 30 years	primary, visual arts
Craig	M	primary metropolitan government	20-30	Older sister	Tertiary education early childhood; Masters of teaching	5 years	early childhood, primary, drama
Gina	F	secondary regional government	50-60	Father and teachers who taught her	Tertiary education; TAFE visual arts	More than 30 years	visual arts, drama
Paula	F	primary metropolitan government	40-50	Education degree straight from finishing school	Tertiary education, history drama; TAFE visual arts	More than 20 years	primary, drama, visual arts
Errol	M	secondary metropolitan independent	40-50	Regional location meant no acting opportunities	Tertiary education, music, performance	More than 10 years	drama
Mel	F	secondary metropolitan independent	40-50	Mature aged student after working in vocational sector	Tertiary education, drama, English	More than 10 years	drama
Dean	M	secondary metropolitan independent	40-50	Graphic arts or music education	Tertiary music, education	More than 10 years	music

¹⁷ all names are pseudonyms

Section 5.1: Reading and responding to curricula

Introduction

This first section reports upon the study's findings in terms of how teachers read, and then respond to curriculum. Eisner's (2000) first influence on arts education considered that "policy is difficult to disentangle from ideas about the aims of education"(p. 4). Arts education has evolved from children making attractive objects to a field that enables students to say something important about the social, political and economic world they inhabit. Eisner (2000) recognised that "policy represents an array of ideas to guide practice" and claimed that the complexity of policy affected the "mission of the field" (p. 4). I consider the latter to be the goals that many teachers hold for their students. Yet Eisner also considered that this disentangling of policy affected appropriate practice, that is, the teachers' pedagogy. Australian researcher, Yates (2008) argues that curriculum policy-makers do not consider the pedagogical aspect of how curriculum is taught in schools. John O'Toole, lead writer for drama in the Australian arts curriculum, was perplexed by this tension during the curriculum development. He mused, "... we were also forbidden to consider pedagogy, how the content would be taught" (O'Toole, 2015, p. 190).

Overview

In this section I explore the participant teachers' reports of how they worked with the existing NSW curriculum to teach the Arts, and how they envisaged working with the new Australian arts curriculum. For some teachers the new Australian arts curriculum inspired a change in practice. For others they saw no major differences between the NSW and Australian arts curricula and intended to maintain their existing approach to teaching the Arts. However, when teachers had a glimpse of the new Australian curriculum, they were more enthusiastic about the prospect of

curriculum change. Concerns such as, “Will this be another airy fairy document?” that is, another policy to disentangle, were alleviated as teachers reviewed the new curriculum online and drew comparisons with the existing NSW curriculum.

Setting the scene

In 2012, in response to the draft national arts curriculum, only 13% of 632 respondents to the online consultation survey identified as primary teachers, whereas 39% represented as secondary teachers. The remaining respondents comprised 19% professional associations and 27% education authorities with 1% representing the arts industry and 1% the university sector (ACARA, 2012c). My study provides the opportunity to explore the individual views of four primary teachers in a more in-depth manner than was evident in the limited primary teacher responses in the consultation report published by ACARA. This study also details the perspectives of four secondary arts teachers from four different school contexts.

Not another “airy fairy” document

In her second interview, primary teacher of more than thirty years experience, Sarah initially commented, “I hope this doesn’t change too much because you know how sometimes it can be so ‘airy fairy’” (Int2: April 17, 2014). Sarah was surprised at her ability to read the Australian arts curriculum online. See Figure 5.2 (p.104). “I really liked it. I’m not very good on the computer, and I thought it was very user-friendly. I thought if I can use it, anyone can use it. That’s what I thought” (Int2: April 17, 2014). Similarly, primary teacher, Paula, also found the Australian arts curriculum easy to access as a digital document. She stated, “I think this one’s easier to read and easier to navigate” (Int2: July 11, 2014). Craig, a primary teacher of five years experience who teaches at the same school as Sarah, stated, “I’m more from a technological background so I can understand what Sarah says, if she can use it anyone can use it. So it’s good for me” (Int2: April 17, 2014).

Figure 5.2 Digital functionality of the Australian curriculum: Column view

The screenshot shows the Australian Curriculum website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs for 'F-10 Curriculum', 'Senior secondary curriculum', 'Parent information', 'Student diversity', and 'Resources/publications'. A search bar is located on the right, and a 'Download content' button is in the top right corner. The main content area is divided into three columns, each representing a different subject: Dance, Drama, and Music. Each column has a header for 'Years 3 and 4' and a sub-header for the subject. Below the header is a 'Years 3 and 4 Band Description' section, followed by a 'Years 3 and 4 Content Descriptions' section. The 'Content Descriptions' section is expanded, showing a list of content descriptions with associated ScOT Terms and Elaborations. The interface is designed to be user-friendly, with clear navigation and a focus on providing detailed information about the curriculum.

Aware of the diversity of schools and their approaches to curriculum, Mary graduated as a secondary visual arts teacher in 2013. She has since been working as a casual teacher in primary schools and reinforced Sarah's and Craig's position on the incoming national arts curriculum. "I think also the structure of what I've read in the new syllabus is more accessible to teachers" (Int2: June 9, 2014). She argued that "a primary generalist teacher who doesn't have any art training or drama training" could understand the curriculum. Mary insisted that the Australian arts curriculum "has been done in a way that it's accessible for all teachers and all

students as well.” Likewise Sarah maintained, “I thought the real test would be, if I could read through, say dance and understand what they were talking about”. See Figures 5.3 (p.105) She added, “it’s so plainly written it’s easy to understand and doesn’t look too scary and, yes I understand that” (Int2: April 17, 2014). In terms of the actual practice of teaching dance, Sarah extended her response:

what would scare me, if I was doing dance, would be to have 30 kids all jumping around all over the place because I don’t know what I’m doing and they would sense that. But you know this was quite good. Showed you the different steps to go through (Int2: April 17, 2014).

See Figure 5.4 (p.106).

Figure 5.3 Digital functionality of the Australian curriculum: pop-up window containing glossary definition of the artform specific term in the content description

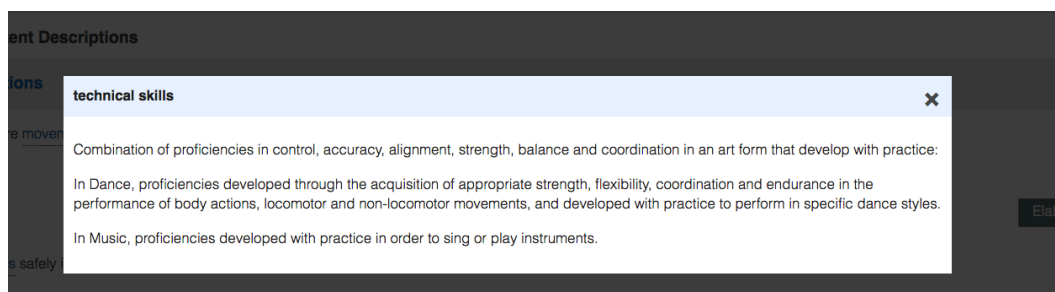


Figure 5.4 Digital functionality of the Australian curriculum: pop-up window containing examples of learning and teaching for the content description

Dance / Year 3 and 4

[View on Australian Curriculum website](#)

acara AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING AUTHORITY

Curriculum content descriptions

Improvise and structure movement ideas for dance sequences using the elements of dance and choreographic devices (ACADAM005)

Elaborations

- using contrast and repetition to explore and generate new movement in response to stimuli such as stories, memories and the environment
- exploring known movements to find alternative ways of performing them, for example, waving hello or shaking hands and then doing the same action at a different level, in a different direction, bigger/smaller, using a different body part
- altering movements in a set, teacher-directed or student-devised dance using the elements of space, time, dynamics and relationships to express ideas, for example, increasing the size of a movement to represent growth
- selecting and combining movements using choreographic devices such as contrast and repetition, for example, combining movements learned in a dance from Asia with other dance movements, or repeating movement to show emphasis
- Considering viewpoints – forms and elements: For example – How did the/does your dance begin? Was/is there a middle part? How did/does the dance end? What shapes did you see/make? (individual and group)

General capabilities

- Numeracy
- Critical and creative thinking

ScOT terms

Spontaneous movements

Refine results by

Year level

3-4

Resource type

- ☒ All types
- ☒ Interactive resource
- ☒ Tablet friendly
- ☒ Image
- ☒ Audio
- ☒ Video
- ☒ Collection
- ☒ Teacher resource
- ☒ Assessment resource
- ☒ Dataset
- ☒ Text
- ☒ Mobile app

Learning area

Arts

[Apply filters](#)

Refine by source

Shared resources [1];

Web resources [4];

Teacher reference materials [5];

5 direct matches to ACADAM005

Sort: [Relevance](#)

Bangarra Dance Theatre: 'Moth'

TLF-ID M014335

This is a video of a contemporary dance created and performed by members of Bangarra Dance Theatre, which represents a story of spiritual inheritance and spiritual existence. It also reflects the last stage of a lifecycle and the birth of a new creature. The video is accompanied by information about the background and vision ...

[View details](#)

[View resource](#)

Learn the alphabet dance - item 1 of 2

TLF-ID M012498

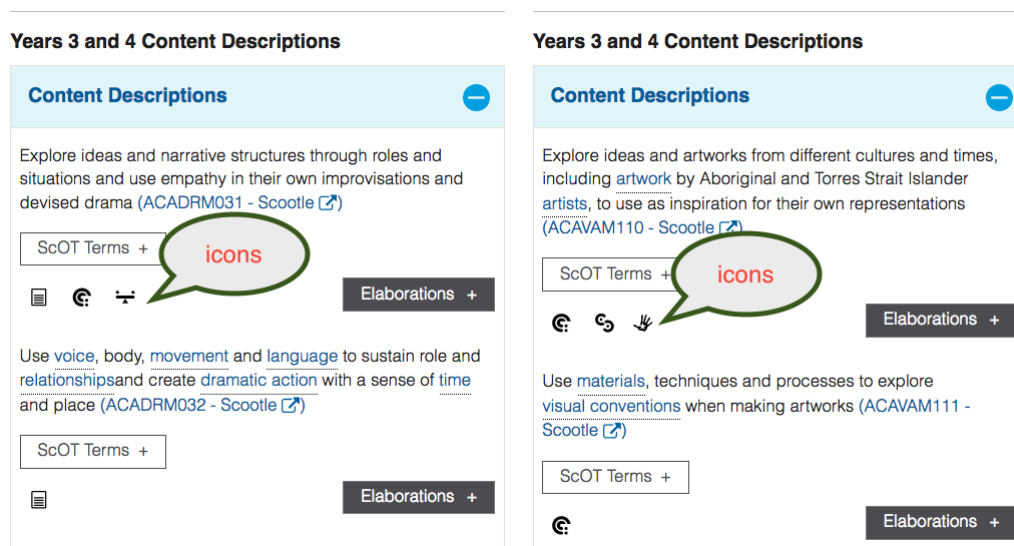
This is a teaching and learning resource that outlines a process for using different movements to represent the letters of the alphabet, structure simple dance sequences and identify the cultural and social influences of dance movements. The resource includes a video featuring musician Gillian Howell and dancers creating ...

[View details](#)

[View resource](#)

Further to Sarah’s positive response, Craig likened teachers approaching the new curriculum to starting a new job, where it’s someone’s “job to show you through the place, orientation.” Upon looking at the general capabilities (or competencies) tagged in the Australian arts curriculum, Craig suggested, “It’s teachers trying to pretend they are the experts in the syllabus, but they don’t have that understanding of general capabilities unless someone has shown them general capabilities and how it links to the syllabus.” He pointed to the screen and stated, “Teachers will see little icons but have no understanding of what it is” (Int2: April 17, 2014). See general capability icons identified in Figure 5.5 (p.107).

Figure 5.5 Digital functionality of the Australian arts curriculum: icons for general capabilities



Just as Craig considered the use of icons, teachers also considered the choice of organisation and terminology. Gina, while supportive of the Australian arts curriculum, challenged the organisation of the arts curriculum into two key strands, ‘making and responding’. She explained, “I think they’re trying to make it all fit into a box that it all doesn’t necessarily fit into.” Gina was concerned that “the uniqueness of each of those subjects is being sacrificed for the desire to get it all neatened up”

(Int2: June 3, 2014). By contrast, Errol was comfortable with the organising terms ‘making’ and ‘responding’. In fact, he preferred ‘responding’ to ‘appreciating’ which is currently used in the NSW syllabus. He stated, “I love the word responding; getting students to respond to drama.” Errol elaborated that when he takes students to a performance he wants “them to have a reaction to it; I want them to respond to it through conversation or through writing down a review or some other response to it”. By contrast to appreciating, he explained, “responding is a term which requires more of the students giving up a reaction rather than just sort of nodding and liking and disliking” (Int2: April 29, 2014).

Head of music at an independent metropolitan school, Dean was not perturbed by changes in terminology. He saw “the correlations between the ‘elements’ [Australian curriculum] and the ‘concepts’ [NSW syllabus] of music” (Int1: November 9, 2013). In fact Dean reported that his school “has already encouraged various subject areas to apply some of the variations to their programs” meaning teachers were working simultaneously with both the Australian arts curriculum and the NSW music syllabus. The approach to implementation at Dean’s school closed the gap between planning, policy and actuality (Bamford, 2015). Snyder et al (2014) and Bamford (2015) identified collaborative planning and collegial co-teaching accompanied by commitment from the school administration as essential components for best-practice in delivery of arts education. Previously Aprill and Burnaford (2006) found that programs characterised by constructivist learning including teacher collaboration are more likely to transform teaching across a school as appears to be the case in Dean’s school.

The need for orientation

In my role at ACARA, as Senior Project Officer for the Arts, I found that most teachers did not seek out policy documents beyond the sections of the curriculum

associated with what they were required to teach. Consequently teachers would comment negatively on the new curriculum without having read it. As Craig recognised earlier, teachers need 'orientation'. This was clearly identified in response to feedback on the draft Australian arts curriculum. ACARA reported "The need for support documents to accompany the curriculum was also emphasized in several survey comments" (ACARA, 2011a, p. 34). A similar situation occurred in Scotland, with the introduction of the new curriculum when teachers initially reported "the Draft Experiences and Outcomes, in general, were 'vague', 'woolly' or 'unclear' on their first attempts at interpretation" (Baumfield et al., 2009, p. 5). There were notably fewer concerns from Scottish teachers who participated in formal trialing of the curriculum indicating the benefit of support and training to teachers interpreting and applying new curriculum.

Trialing the draft Australian arts curriculum was part of the curriculum development process¹⁸. During the 2012 consultation on the draft national arts curriculum, 32 schools participated (ACARA, 2012c), testing parts of the curriculum as suitable to the participating schools' and teachers' year groups and arts subjects. Following the trial, recommendations were collated and one major change was the reduction of content descriptions in both the primary and early secondary years across arts subjects. In primary, all artforms initially contained eight content descriptions per band, except visual arts that contained nine. All five arts subjects were reduced to four content descriptions. A common organizing thread was inserted across each of the four content descriptions to assist primary teachers with integration or 'connectivity', as "the word 'integration' became taboo" (O'Toole,

¹⁸ As part of the consultation on the draft curriculum, ACARA selected up to 50 schools to participate in a more intensive engagement program with the draft curriculum for each learning area. (Typically one or two teachers in each school are selected/nominated to trial the curriculum, that is, a maximum of 100 teachers in total). (ACARA, 2012b, p. 18)

2015, p. 191). In Years 7 to 10, there were ten content descriptions in each arts subject. These were reduced to seven for each arts subject in the Australian arts curriculum endorsed in 2015.

Facing and fearing change

Prior to ACARA's establishment and the development of the new curriculum, teachers in NSW had worked with secondary arts curricula published and unchanged since 2003, and the Creative arts syllabus for primary schools dated back to 2000. The extensive process of consultation and curriculum development led by ACARA enabled teachers to provide feedback individually through online surveys and also collectively through their professional associations. However, after so many years working with one curriculum teachers may have felt threatened by change. Influences on teachers' interactions with curriculum include factors such as state and local traditions; pre- and in-service experiences and the roles of professional organisations and governments within processes of curriculum development and implementation (Erickson, 2004).

Regional secondary school visual arts and drama teacher, Gina reported strong awareness of the development of the national arts curriculum. She recalled reading the *Shape paper* in 2010 when "the Queenslanders were all celebrating" and "the New South Wales visual arts teachers were all crying" (Int1: June 27, 2013). She was aware of different state priorities through her geographical location and her membership of the visual arts and drama teacher professional associations. Gina's view was supportive of a national curriculum, "it's an admirable thing to try and create a system for the whole country" (Int1: June 27, 2013).

In Australia, secondary school specialist teachers, like Gina, have subject-specific teacher professional associations. Teachers can seek information about

requirements for their particular curriculum through their association. For the Arts, there is an association for each artform: dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts in each state or territory. Additionally these associations have a national board with representatives from across the country. Associations communicate to their constituents through annual conferences, email newsletters and online social media groups. During the development of the national curriculum, secondary teachers turned to these associations for information and to express their views. ACARA consulted with these associations and their feedback was reported upon in the consultation reports published by ACARA (2011a, 2012c). However, Hayes, Christie, Mills, and Lingard (2004) contend that “professional learning communities may be used to drive towards consensus in ways which are inherently undemocratic and do not recognise legitimate differences in teacher’s views” (p. 523). To mitigate ACARA reported upon individual teacher’s responses to the draft curriculum through online consultation surveys, enabling individual teachers to remain anonymous. O’Toole (2015) reported “most teachers’ groups and organisations we consulted responded to our draft proposal with approval” (p. 191). He noted opposition from “dissident visual arts specialists, and the primary principals association, both believing that generalist teachers are not capable of gaining the skills and understanding to teach all five arts” (pp. 191-192).

Yet Mary, teaching casually in primary schools, demonstrated knowledge of both the current NSW syllabus and the incoming national curriculum. She surmised that the Australian arts curriculum was “incorporated into five artforms: drama, art, dance, music, and media arts.” She clarified, “throughout the school, all students will get a taste of all five of those artforms.” She continued, “but it’s not saying that teachers have to do every single one of them” (Int1: April 12, 2013). Supporting Mary’s point, Gina recalled that a speaker from ACARA (at a visual arts teacher conference in 2013) explained that the teachers would be required to teach the five subjects in the

arts curriculum across the primary years, Kindergarten to Year 6. Gina affirmed “I do think that’s a good thing to make the creative arts an integral part of K to 6 because I think there are some states in Australia that have really missed out on that.” She claimed that in NSW, “the one area where they’re really missing the boat is music” (Int1: June 27, 2013). Gina reported that Victoria and Queensland “teach music much better than NSW does.” She felt that in terms of actual curriculum development, “New South Wales should probably not prevail in that area” as Victoria has “a much better system of organising things”. Gina claimed that this is why it is often difficult to entice music teachers to her regional area “because Victoria has a great system where they have a lot of sessional teaching in state schools and the government pays for it whereas in NSW you just get your classroom teacher who is bound to do everything” (Int1: June 27, 2013). She continued:

I worry about the way they’re going to deliver the creative arts in the primary school. NSW has had a creative arts curriculum for a number of years and I don’t think that’s being taught very well. I know my own children got very poor visual arts, music, dance, drama in primary school. The school would put on a musical, they’d all tick the box and that’d be it. I don’t see how they’re going to change that (Int1: June 27, 2013).

As a recent graduate, Mary reflected upon her knowledge of visual arts in both the Australian curriculum and the NSW syllabus. She claimed, “when you’ve studied for that long, it’s very difficult to look and not see how it [the Australian arts curriculum] relates to the [NSW creative arts] syllabus in a way” (Int1: April 12, 2013). At the time of this study, Mary was working as a casual relief teacher. Of the lessons the classroom teachers provided for her to teach she observed, “I’m pretty sure they could still keep their same lesson and look at the new curriculum and still pick the arts content” (Int1: April 12, 2013). She surmised that the new Australian arts curriculum “could be related to the content of the existing New South Wales creative arts syllabus” (Int1: April 12, 2013).

Similarly, secondary drama teacher, Mel initially reported little difference between the Australian curriculum and the NSW creative arts syllabus in drama. “I don’t think they’re overly different” (Int2: April 23, 2014). However, she noted that wording in the Australian curriculum “is much simpler, it’s much easier for people who aren’t drama teachers and for students who are learning terms to understand” (Int2: April 23, 2014). Additionally, Mel, as the only drama teacher in her school commented, “I’m more likely to look at what’s relevant to me, I guess.” She considered that if she “had drama in Years 7 and 8, then in order to program I would probably go back and look at what they’re supposed to do in primary” (Int2: April 23, 2014). Mel’s view reflects that of many teachers who will tend to read only the sections of the curriculum relevant to the years they are required to teach. Mary contextualised her belief about the importance of access to the Arts with comparison to historic views considering that previously “only the bourgeoisie visited art galleries. The average working class person couldn’t have an appreciation for art” (Int1: April 12, 2013). She proposed that the Australian arts curriculum is “helping the Arts to be more accessible for everyone” (Int1: April 12, 2013). Gina recollected secondary teachers asking probing questions at the visual arts conference in 2013. “Well what’s going to happen to visual arts and music which are compulsory in NSW in Years 7 and 8?” (Int1: June 27, 2013) She reported that the speaker inferred the arrangement for Years 7 and 8 in New South Wales would remain unchanged. In NSW, The Education Act 1990 No 8¹⁹ requires music and visual arts to be taught for 100 hours in Years 7 and 8 (Board of Studies NSW, 2004/2014; NESA, 2016b). Gina believed that to “ensure that the Arts are taught across the state” ACARA should have stated that the Arts are ‘mandatory’ or compulsory, as is the case for mathematics and English. This concern was evident in the report on

¹⁹ Formerly known as the Education Reform Act 1990

the draft Australian arts curriculum consultation. "Music needs the support of mandatory face-to-face hours in a weekly timetable" (ACARA, 2012c, p. 75).

Like Gina, Mary was familiar with the state regulation for music and visual arts in Years 7 and 8. Acutely aware of teachers' sensitivity to change, Mary added, "New South Wales teachers have their knickers in a knot because, at the moment, Year 7 and Year 8 it's compulsory to have visual arts and music" (Int1: April 12, 2013). Similarly, as head of drama, Errol was also focused on what would be 'mandatory', as he considered, "with this new national curriculum, how do you decide what's important and what's not?" (Int2: April 29, 2014). Yet Errol supported the motivations for a national curriculum in Australia, "it makes sense that there is a national curriculum and that the whole country is all on the same page." He concluded, "it will be interesting to see how it all plays out." (Int2: April 29, 2014).

Also seeing positive outcomes in the new curriculum, Gina was "glad" that the Australian arts curriculum acknowledged that the arts subjects are "all distinct". She continued, "I like the fact you can explore one and see the crossovers with another artform." However, she didn't know "how that will come about in reality, given the way high schools are structured" (Int2: June 3, 2014). She identified a notable distinction between the Australian curriculum and the NSW syllabus. She stated that the Australian curriculum contains "a lot of the open ended stuff which is great." This observation is affirmed by Ewing (2010) who reported that when learners are "engaged actively in authentic activities that challenge existing knowledge and understandings" (p. 33) learning seems less effortful. Gina explained that this open-endedness "frightens teachers when they don't know where it's going." She reported an experience with some NSW tertiary pre-service teaching students, "they worry so much about controlling the outcome, about making sure they get a certain outcome". However Gina was glad that "sometimes what the kids will come up with is far

better than anything you could imagine and if you try and steer them too far into one direction you're going to miss that" (Int2: June 3, 2014). For Gina, learning and teaching in drama was participatory and social (Neelands, 2009). Her approach to teaching drama enabled the open-ended learning she noted in the Australian curriculum, in which the creative process is inherently social and also experimental (Munday & Anderson, 2016).

As a secondary drama teacher, Mel was also skeptical as to how the NSW authority would incorporate the new arts curriculum. She reported, visual arts and music were "being valued over things like drama" (Int2: April 23, 2014). She elucidated, "it will be all performing arts can do dance. Visual arts can do media arts." Mel said the NSW authority claimed that visual arts "do that sort of stuff anyway." These comments reflected an official position that media arts should not become a fifth subject in the Arts²⁰. Mel mimicked the NSW education authority stating, "drama can be trucked into English, we already do all of that." She concluded that in response to the incoming national arts curriculum, the NSW education authority believed, "We don't have to change anything we do" (Int2: April 23, 2014). While Mel anticipated the NSW education authority would neither promote the national arts curriculum nor change the existing state curriculum, Dean, head of music at his school, took a more holistic view. He was aware of some teachers' fear of change. He reviewed the whole Australian arts curriculum for music, Foundation²¹ to Year 10 and reported, "some teachers are nervous about that transition." He unpacked this concern postulating that change is necessary to advance learning areas:

²⁰ In consultation on the developing Australian arts curriculum the NSW education authority stated, "Media Arts should not be included as a separate discipline in the Arts, it should be incorporated appropriately in all learning areas." Consultation feedback report – The Arts, ACARA. (ACARA, 2012c)

²¹ Foundation is the term for the year before Year 1 in the Australian Curriculum. In NSW the term used is Kindergarten.

People are saying, 'Oh why can't it be the same?' But you know the same means you're just doing the same thing over and over again. There needs to be points where the things change in order to advance all the subject areas (Int1: November 9, 2013).

Dean felt it was also his responsibility as a leader in his school to embrace change and he recognised his own development as teacher:

I think as a leader and being someone that's driven by syllabus or curriculum design, you need to be open to lots of different changes, or different ways of looking at things. If I compare my thought processes from where I am now, to a lot earlier on, I think my approach earlier on would have been a lot more narrow-minded (Int1: November 9, 2013).

Dean described how his school has condensed the mandated Years 7 and 8 music syllabus into a one year course in Year 7 and programmed a music elective in Year 8. He believed that this enabled students to explore their own interest in performing, composing or organising sound, listening or deconstructing music, "giving kids that opportunity to know that they can actually develop their musical skill in those different areas" (Int1: November 9, 2013). Dean explained that in seeming to reduce the creative subjects on offer, the principal was "not limiting the creative subject. He was actually inspiring other subject areas to think more creatively on how they deliver their content" (Int1: November 9, 2013). Dean identified that the approach in his school was more concerned with the students' learning experience than fulfilling pre-specified curriculum outcomes. He concluded "whether people excel in it or not, that shouldn't be the driving factor" (Int1: November 9, 2013). By contrast, Mary, Gina and Errol were frustrated by possible limitations, due to the mandated or compulsory arts subjects of music and visual arts in New South Wales. However, Dean emphasized that a leader needs to be open to change. This view of leadership and change combined a focus on pedagogy, a culture of care and related organizational processes which comprised "productive leadership" (Hayes et al., 2004, p. 521). Dean also felt that "principals should promote dispersal of leadership"

as suitable to their style and local conditions (Hayes et al., 2004, p. 535). Dean's demonstrated attributes of leadership for curriculum change were also evident in the leadership decision of his principal: "re-thinking teaching responsibilities", "engaging in reflective inquiry", "undertaking personal examination", "building learning communities", and inspiring "public imagination" in quality education to deepen democracy in education (Henderson & Slattery, 2008, p. 3). The positive teacher collaboration Dean reported was in stark contrast to the principal-directed approach to implementation discussed by Sarah and Craig. Both were scathing of their principal's directive of teacher "teams for everything" (Sarah Int2: April 17, 2014) in their school. Their annoyance was apparent in Craig's frustrated comment that "we can't cope" (Craig Int2: April 17, 2014). Their sentiment and commentary suggested that the transformational result of collaboration and collegiality evident in Dean's school was not occurring within their school.

The new curriculum

Secondary drama teacher, Mel, was concerned by the complexity of explaining the NSW syllabus outcomes in assessment tasks to her students. "It takes me ages to explain it to them. It's not as easy for them to understand, whereas they would understand this" (Int2: April 23, 2014) indicating the Australian arts curriculum. She claimed that her students "would fully understand" requirements for drama in the Australian curriculum as "you can link your outcomes or your content descriptions more directly and more explicitly in terms of what you give kids for assessments" (Int2: April 23, 2014).

Like Mel, primary classroom teacher, Paula identified the similarities between the national curriculum and the NSW creative arts syllabus. She explained these through anecdotes of her primary classroom practice in drama. "The similarity is what they

expect that the children can learn” at the stage or band, for example “the basic characters, costume, setting and all that” (Int2: July 11, 2014). She considered that the students may not understand all of the elements of drama, but “they understand where their character is, what their character wears, but then they don’t understand we have to use emotion.” In considering her own students and her approach to drama in the primary classroom, Paula “liked the content” and felt reaffirmed by the Australian curriculum for drama, “because all these things that I’ve looked at, but I didn’t realise I was doing” (Int2: July 11, 2014). Paula was reading the curriculum in terms of her own teaching practice and making sense of it. O’Toole (2015) stated that the national curriculum writers were directed not to include pedagogy, suggestive of Yates’ (2008) contention that policy makers do not consider the pedagogical aspect of how the curriculum is taught. Regardless of these disagreements, Paula understood the new curriculum through her pedagogy. Furthermore, Paula and Mel’s interactions with the incoming national arts curriculum demonstrated they could work “flexibly and purposively” with curriculum in the Arts as purported by Eisner (2004). This is in fact, contrary to Lingard, Hayes, and Mills’ (2003) claim that “policy and structural conditions work against the valuing of teachers and their work”(p. 399).

As we explored the Australian curriculum in the second interview, Paula identified the goal of a recent integrated drama activity was for students to identify and consider different perspectives, using de Bono’s six thinking hats²² in a drama development. In her example, Paula combined drama with de Bono’s theory to explore the story of *Goldilocks*. She reported that the interactive interrogation of the

²² A teaching tool for thinking applied in schools and used in organisational management training. The six metaphorical hats enable participants to experience the six levels of thinking: white for information, red for feelings, black for weakness, green for strengths, yellow for creativity, and blue for managing the thinking.
[processhttp://www.parade.vic.edu.au/md/teacher_research_guide/defining/defining_debono.htm](http://www.parade.vic.edu.au/md/teacher_research_guide/defining/defining_debono.htm)

story was so effective that “every story we read from now on, we have to look at the six hats. I don’t have to sit there explaining this is what this hat meant because they already know.” Paula’s approach integrated curriculum requirements in English and drama with critical and creative thinking skills (general capabilities) and the process enhanced her students’ confidence and performance. She surmised, “They want to perform everything now. They want to be on the stage again. They’re happy and they like being videotaped. They want to do it themselves” (Int2: July 11, 2014).

As she reviewed the new Australian drama curriculum online, Paula strongly agreed with the Years 3 and 4 band description statement that students “extend their understanding of role and situation as they offer, accept and extend their ideas in improvisation”(ACARA, 2015a). This resonated with Paula’s recent practice, “because with the six thinking hats, they were able to think further than just this is a little girl going into a house” (Int2: July 11, 2014). Paula’s integrated approach clearly demonstrated Eisner’s (2008) belief that problems the average citizen assessed were “multidisciplinary” and “often require modes of thought that are not defined within a specific discipline” (p. 15). Likewise Dunn and Stinson (2011) found in drama that when teachers are able to effectively manage the combination of artistic and teacher roles in “both the macro and micro levels of planning and implementation” the student learning is “optimized”(p. 630). At the same time, they concluded that a “teacher’s approach was shaped by the context in which they work and the understandings of curriculum and pedagogy underpinning that context”(p. 630) as evidenced by Paula.

Eisner (2004) himself stated, “As experienced teachers well know, the surest road to hell in a classroom is to stick to the lesson plan no matter what.”(p. 6) Yet, in considering the current and incoming curriculum, Craig determined that he would fit the curriculum to what he does rather than alter his practice to fit the curriculum.

As he compared the two curricula Craig pondered, "Is the expectation of the outcomes different? Possibly. But I'll just try and work them into what I do. So that's how I will adapt with the new curriculum" (Int1: October 1, 2013). Similarly, Sarah, with many years teaching experience, said, "I don't really use the NSW creative arts syllabus that much, to be honest" (Int1: October 1, 2013). Her attitude was reflected in another study by Power and Klopper (2011) who found that up to 20% of NSW respondents reported not using the syllabus documents in planning creative arts learning experiences for their primary students. Sarah offered, "I know it's there and I know what I should be doing". She offered, "I'd probably start using it as a starting off point and then I sort of go out, not on a tangent, but I could expand on it" (Int1: October 1, 2013).

Craig initially didn't think the change to the Australian arts curriculum would impact on him at all. He considered if he would change his practice with the introduction of the new Australian Arts curriculum, "Have I read it? The whole thing? The draft? No. Will it change the things that I want to do in school? Probably not" (Int1: October 1, 2013). During his first interview, Craig and his colleague, Sarah both inferred they did not rigidly adhere to the current NSW syllabus. Craig revealed, "because I think drama will always be there. Dance will always be there. Singing will always be there." In summary, the Arts are part of Craig's day-to-day teaching practice. He concluded, "So I know it won't really impact on me a lot" (Int1: October 1, 2013). However, in the second interview, upon reviewing the Australian arts curriculum online, Craig commented,

I think that's what the new curriculum is all about, it's about getting children to reflect on what they're learning and then how their learning is going to assist them as individuals in the twenty-first century. (Int2: April 17, 2014)

To which Sarah responded, "You're teaching them how to learn. That's what you're doing" (Int2: April 17, 2014). Sarah was determined on this point, "You should be

fostering a love of learning without a reward at the end.” Her view recognised the “potential curricula have to inspire and challenge” (Duffy, 2016, p. 37). Both Sarah and Craig already had one or more of the Arts embedded into their daily practice. They did not foresee change in their classroom teaching with the incoming Australian arts curriculum rather the new curriculum endorsed their existing arts practice.

Paula, Sarah and Craig’s approaches all supported Yates’ (2008) conclusion that teachers view curriculum policy through a lens of pedagogy. Craig, Sarah and Mary each indicated intent to adapt to the incoming curriculum by connecting their existing practices to the curriculum, rather than devising completely new lessons. Within the Australian context, Alter et al. (2009) reported considerable consistency across existing state and territory primary arts curricula. The researchers identified that each jurisdiction’s curriculum included the three processes of making, presenting and responding. Each curricula document included ‘stage statements’ identifying expected student achievement at the end of each level of development. It follows that the teachers in this study did not find vast differences between the Australian arts curriculum and the existing NSW creative arts syllabus.

Conclusion

The participant teachers were positive and excited about the new curriculum after reviewing the Australian arts curriculum online. Both primary and secondary teachers found that it was not completely different to the current NSW syllabus and therefore not threatening. Whereas in the national consultation some teacher professional associations tended to be negative about the incoming Australian curriculum, in one-to-one conversation individual teachers were motivated to explore the Australian arts curriculum and positively anticipated working with it in its digital form. While primary teachers reported backward mapping the New South

Wales syllabus to arts activities they undertook in the classroom, they saw opportunities to work from the new Australian arts curriculum influenced by its potential to enable authentic learning opportunities. One primary teacher and one secondary teacher particularly noted the opportunities for open-ended learning activities provided by the new curriculum, in contrast to the pre-specified outcomes prescribed in the existing New South Wales arts curricula (this will be discussed in Section 5.3: The impact of national and state standards). Teachers did not seem to have difficulty disentangling the policy from their practice as contended by Eisner (2000). They identified the potential to change practice through the Australian arts curriculum enabling them to encourage students to reflect on how they're learning and to develop students' love of learning.

The following explores participant teachers' perceptions of the outside forces that impact their capacity to teach the Arts, the second of the influences highlighted by Eisner.

Section 5.2: Outside forces within the school affecting the Arts

Introduction

In the preceding section, I examined Eisner's contention that policy is difficult to disentangle from the aims of arts education through the participating teachers' responses to current and incoming arts curriculum. I found that the participants did not find any major differences between the old and the new curricula and were generally positive about the incoming national curriculum. In reality, they did not report any marked difficulty in disentangling the curriculum policy from the aims of arts education.

The second influence noted by Eisner (2000) was that policies affecting arts education were often developed by people from outside the field. The recently-developed Australian arts curriculum (endorsed Sept. 2015) was written by arts educators, arts experts and arts supporters. Although developed by and for arts curriculum users, i.e. teachers, students and academics, in the Australian arts curriculum there is an essence of the 'tightening up' that Eisner (2004) claimed was inherent in educational policy. He argued that there was "an effort to create order, to tidy up a complex system, to harness nature ... so that our intentions can be efficiently realized"(pp. 3-4). This 'tidying up' in terms of the Australian curriculum can be observed in the use of an established curriculum design as described in *The curriculum design paper* (ACARA, 2013). This document was initiated for English, maths, history and science, the first four learning areas or subjects to be developed in the national curriculum. In the process of developing the Australian arts curriculum, it was evident that the curriculum structure dictated by this curriculum design was not ideal for the Arts. "A key problem for curriculum design based on

subjects is how to add new kinds of knowledge or additional expectations to the curriculum” (Brennan, 2011, pp. 264-266). Despite this, the arts curriculum contributors worked efficiently to develop an arts curriculum that the teachers in this study have found accessible and functional as described previously.

Overview

In the following, I report on the outside forces at work within the school. These include the school’s attitude to the Arts; economic pressures; lack of specialist teachers; and expectations of control in terms of students’ behaviour or outcomes. These outside forces within the school, impacted the capacity of the eight participant teachers to teach the Arts. The teachers considered whether these may change with the incoming national arts curriculum. The attitude of the school towards the Arts is the primary factor affecting a teacher’s capacity to effectively teach the subject in the classroom, and broader school settings (Eisner, 2004). Ultimately, however the way the school chooses to incorporate the Arts into the classroom curriculum and wider community life of the school dictates the allocation of resources for the Arts. Resources in this instance, refers to the allocation of time, staffing, facilities and materials. The school’s attitude combined with appropriate resources clearly influences students’ interest in and enthusiasm for the Arts. The experiences of the eight teachers involved this study present a range of schools’ attitudes towards the Arts.

Attitude of the school

As a result of their interviews, I unearthed a range of attitudes to the Arts from the school experiences described by the participant teachers. Primary school teacher Craig noted, “You’ve got different schools, each has got their own agenda” (Int2: April 17, 2014). The ‘agenda’ emanates the school values. Richerme (2016) claims these values may be managed by individuals within the school or may be whole

school values led by the principal and reflected in parent and community involvement. In my case studies, the range of school attitudes to the Arts varied from the very positive arts-focus across curriculum at Dean's school to the mostly negative at Mel's school. Yet, pivotal in each case was the determination and value of the Arts held by each individual teacher.

Arts at the centre of learning

Dean's school is an independent, co-educational K to 12 school which valued the Arts. Dean claimed, "I'm really, really fortunate that the Arts has a strong focus at my school, and I think it has had for a long time. It really plays a vital role in that school motto, which is 'all-rounder'" (Int1: November 9, 2013). Dean expanded that an all-rounder can be perceived as a "Jack of all trades, master of none". However, at his school this mantra encouraged students to develop "a broader perspective, or [become] a person who is able to create and think creatively" (Int1: November 9, 2013). Dean connected this to the curriculum, "I think that's why the principle value is creativity, not just as a separate body of subjects that sits outside of the Arts, writing and arithmetic and all that." The principal of Dean's school noted that the students who come top of the school academically were also the students who participate:

[P]laying in the school orchestra, or they're acting in the school play, or they're part of the dance program, and they're involved in sport; and they compete and they do all these things. And then actually the top kids are those kids that are involved in all of that (Dean Int1: November 9, 2013).

His principal also stressed that participation was beneficial to student achievement at school. Those students who achieved the top academic results also participated in arts and other activities across the school curriculum and community. Participation in the Arts contributed to "adaptive motivation, academic buoyancy, and class

participation”(Martin et al., 2013, p. 721). Moreover, the principal’s approach to Arts in the school reflected Eisner’s contention that:

the distinctive forms of thinking needed to create artistically crafted work are relevant not only to what students do, they are relevant to virtually all aspects of what we do, from the design of curricula, to the practice of teaching, to the features of the environment in which students and teachers live (2004, p. 4).

Further, the creative experience highlighted by Dean’s principal was one of the “strategic goals” of the school:

one of the strategic goals of the school is to give that opportunity to kids. There are a whole lot of different educational pedagogies that we focus on as a school, dimensions of learning; habits of mind, making thinking visible. Higher order thinking, so that whole creative experience that you might think you just get through the arts, no it's beyond that. It's creative thinking in a mathematics classroom. It's creative thinking in a science experiment ... it's a mindset (Dean, Int1: November 9, 2013).

Dean acknowledged the strong support of the school leadership for the Arts and creativity. As head of the music faculty, Dean was a leader within his school. His use of terms such as “strategic goals” and the phrase “that we focus on as a school” denote the considered, collegial, forward-planning inspired by the school’s principal. Brundrett and Duncan (2015) found that “the judicious and strategic use of all staff in a joint endeavour directed towards the implementation of any revised curriculum” is an essential “leadership skill in curriculum innovation” (p. 758). Dean summarized “We are creative in an arts-focused school, but hopefully that influence of creative thinking applies to all of the subject areas” (Int1: November 9, 2013).

As described in the previous section Dean’s school principal enabled the condensing of the ‘mandatory’ music curriculum for Years 7 and 8 into one year, Year 7. This enabled students the choice to elect another arts subject in Year 8. Dean explained

“Year 9 then becomes the extension of that elective program” and identified that students “would have completed 200 hours [of music] by then”. The NSW creative arts syllabus mandates that students complete 100 hours of music and visual arts in Years 7 and 8 (Stage 4). The restructuring of the mandated music course in Years 7 and 8 at Dean’s school removed the stigma students attached to being forced to devote two years to a subject that does not interest them. Simultaneously, this approach enabled students who did have a passion for a particular artform to hone that interest from their second year of high school. This includes music and visual arts, as well as dance and drama.²³ The innovative culture in learning and teaching adopted by Dean’s school demonstrated improvement in students’ academic outcomes. It also developed certain “creative dispositions and other social and emotional skills” often associated with arts education (Winner et al., 2013, p. 25).

School attitudes affected by economic pressures

Similarly, Errol’s school approached the Arts in an innovative way that did not adhere to the specifications of the current NSW arts curriculum. Errol teaches at an independent performing arts secondary school for Years 7–12. The attitude of his school was that the students actively participate in their chosen performing arts discipline: dance, drama or music. Errol explained, “each semester has a performance outcome”. He claimed, “We’re fortunate that we’re in a school environment where six hours a week is offered for kids in their chosen discipline. It is fantastic. They can certainly get a lot out of it” (Int1: September 13, 2013). Whereas Dean’s school valued the Arts to contribute to the growth of the student as a whole, an “all-rounder”, Errol’s school focused on the student’s development as a performer within their chosen artform.

²³ In NSW the study of both music and visual arts is compulsory in Years 7 and 8, while drama and dance are optional and decided by the individual school.

As a committed drama teacher, Errol emphasised “frustration” in response to several factors at his school, which has a stated aim of helping students to realise their performing arts potential. Firstly, the economic pressure to maintain student numbers as many other independent schools were “competing for the same client base.” He recounted that as a consequence, the school was “taking a lot of kids who aren’t necessarily kids who excel in the chosen arts discipline.” He continued “there are students in the school studying dance who do not have the physique, or studying drama but do not have the aptitude.” This argument runs counter to the expectations of the current NSW arts curriculum. It should be noted that the school allocates two hours per day of specialist performing arts training in the student’s chosen artform. This training occurs in addition to the regular school day. Errol claimed that the students in his school were “not particularly well-travelled” or experienced outside their immediate school situation. He acknowledged that “to be a successful actor, you have to draw on life’s experiences.” He surmised, “certainly the kids that I work with in my particular place of employment don’t have those experiences, which makes it very hard to draw on some sort of palate that they can really fly or soar with.” However, his overriding personal philosophy as a drama educator was that “drama education gives you some confidence and somewhere to focus their energies or their eccentricity, and to succeed” (Int1: September 13, 2013). Errol’s struggle was with the limitations of his school’s attitude to the Arts against his own philosophy and practice as an arts educator. He described “a frustration that I have with a lot of these kids, whether they’re doing the performing arts class or whether they’re doing the drama Stage Six, is that they don’t see a lot of live theatre. It’s extremely frustrating.” Errol, a theatre enthusiast, was aghast that students who attended the specialist school wanting to develop skills in the performing arts did not attend live performances. He held that these students were “operating from a position of ignorance”. He argued:

we offer them opportunities to participate in theatre clubs and to come and see live theatre as a group. And it's always very rewarding because you know a lot of the kids are surprised at how engaged they become and think they should do it more (Int1: September 13, 2013).

Errol was striving against a kind of student apathy. His aim was to nurture and develop students' learning across both the cognitive and the affective domains through drama, and in so doing enable the vibrant connection of emotion and thought which Dunn and Stinson (2012) maintain is "the heart of quality arts education, and the standard practice of arts educators"(p. 217).

Similarly struggling with her school's attitude to the Arts was Mel, the sole drama teacher in a secondary independent, co-educational school where she believed that drama was not a priority for the leadership at her school. She reported teaching the NSW drama syllabus to Years 9 to 12, but stated, "We don't have Years 7 and 8 drama in our school" (Int1: September 3, 2013). She described running an after-school theatre sports course that students in Years 7 and 8 paid to attend. She maintained that this was yet "another out-of-school experience" she provided, but that "the parent community recognized the value of drama." Mel claimed that "the school was getting frustrated with kids wanting to swap out of one subject and then change to drama" as a result of students' out-of-school drama experiences. She argued "if you don't offer it as a 'taster' during Year 7 and 8, how do you expect kids to make a choice?" (Int1: September 3, 2013). In NSW, in Years 7 and 8, music, visual arts and languages are "mandatory" (NESA, 2017) and must be studied for 100 hours (Board of Studies NSW, 2004/ 2014). "Drama is an elective course that can be studied for 100 or 200 hours at any time during Years 7 to 10" (Board of Studies NSW, 2004/ 2014, p. 10).

As drama was not offered at her school in Years 7 and 8, Mel claimed the school's leadership was not as supportive of drama as of other subjects. Like Errol, Mel's school was driven by the economics of student enrolments. She noted that at her independent school, the minimum number of student enrolments required for a course to be offered varied between subjects. "I still fight to have my subjects run every year though." Mel maintained that her school had a commitment to "run music, visual arts and languages, regardless of student numbers" (Int1: September 3, 2013). She explained that this predominantly occurred in Years 9 and 10 when all arts and languages subjects were termed "electives." She recalled "last year French got four students" while there were "ten or eleven students who wanted to do drama." She mused, "they wouldn't run drama because they wanted twelve and I didn't get it, but they ran French with four?" (Int1: September 3, 2013). This enrolment strategy at Mel's school is an example of curriculum that privileges languages as well as mathematics and science over the Arts (Ewing, 2010; Miller & Saxton, 2011; Robinson, 2001). Schools may also allocate lower priority to learning areas not directly associated with high-stakes testing in order to maintain "economic competitiveness in the twenty-first century" environment (Berliner, 2011, p. 291). In response to economic pressure, independent schools use high-stakes test results, such as NAPLAN and the HSC to promote the school and compete for student enrolments, as raised by both Errol and Mel. (The impact of test scores is discussed in section 5.4).

In response to this privileging of some subjects over others, Mel like Errol was frustrated by her school's attitude. As a result, she felt this 'outside force' affecting the school's attitude to the Arts could potentially hinder many schools in NSW fully implementing the incoming Australian arts curriculum:

my biggest frustration with all of this is that schools won't actually implement the arts explicitly across those stages, and that just annoys me and frustrates me because I think it's really important (Int2: April 23, 2014).

By contrast to the arts-focused approach in Dean's school, Mel's school demonstrated that some "schools value what is valued by the economic culture of the country" (Russell-Bowie, 2012, p. 61). Errol's school on the other hand, exemplified that "schooling markets prioritize the needs of valued 'customers'" (Hayes, 2013, p. 3). In both schools "economic efficiency continues to trump imaginative efficacy" (Miller & Saxton, 2011, p. 120).

Creating community

Unlike Errol's and Mel's schools where the attitude to the Arts was driven by the economics of student enrolments, Gina reported a different experience in her regional government secondary school. As head of Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) with a school population of 1100 students, she described the school's diverse student population:

600 of them would come from middle class to upper middle class families. 400 of them would come from very very poor housing commissions. There's about 100 new English-speaking refugees, new migrants, people from Bangladesh, India, that sort of thing. And then there's about 80 to 100 kids who come and go, transients, they come 'cause they live with mum and they leave and they're with dad and they come back again and they're a drain on our whole system (Int2: June 3, 2014).

Gina was particularly concerned for the students she called 'transient'. She mused, "If we could just keep them in one place we could teach them something" (Int2: June 3, 2014). She realised she could not reach students who were not present at school and recognized that considering this cohort, the school "gets really good results". However, she added "... now that we have to keep kids at school 'til seventeen²⁴, it's

²⁴ "On 1 January 2010, the minimum school leaving age in NSW was raised from 15 to 17 years of age. It is now compulsory for young people to complete Year 10 or turn 17 years of age... If they complete Year 10 but are not yet 17 years of age they must remain at school until they are at least 17 years of age". The impact of the raised school leaving age, Department of Education and Communities, 1 November 2012.

much harder.” Gina had autonomy and considered her principal supportive. “Having a boss that doesn’t get in your way, and gives you support but also gives you good guidance when you need it” (Int1: June 27, 2013). She reflected upon her experience of principals in previous schools:

I’ve had a lot of really good principals, and a principal will just set such a good tone sometimes, that you know that you have support, and you know that he’s got your back (Int1: June 27, 2013).

Gina referred to the principal “setting a good tone” which was similar to Dean’s experience in his school. Both participant teachers recounted evidence that exemplified leadership structures that “positively impact learning in the classroom” as detailed by Brundrett and Duncan (2015, p. 759).

Gina, like Mel, was also involved in drama activities outside of the school day. Of particular note was the annual regional drama camp held in the school holidays.

Gina explained:

We try and encourage kids from very small schools to go as well, ‘cause often those kids haven’t got other kids that they can ‘play’ with. And we try and encourage boys. And the main things are, make sure the kids have got things, make sure isolated kids get a chance, make sure boys, particularly in the arts, because often they’re in a small town where people idolise football. (Int2: June 3, 2014)

Gina identified that geographic isolation and lack of community interest impacted the students’ ability to participate in the Arts, and this limited her capacity to teach the Arts in her school. By providing the school holiday drama camp and thereby engaging these isolated students in a learning community, Gina was able to effectively teach drama. She stressed the importance of this holiday drama activity for bringing students together from isolated regional locations, particularly boys who were interested in the Arts, but were often alone in their interest. This out-of-

school drama activity was essential for these regional students to have an opportunity to explore and learn in drama within a community of like-minded peers. By contrast, in Mel's metropolitan situation she was frustrated because the school could not consistently offer drama within the school timetable, which impacted her capacity to teach drama across sequential years. However, both Gina and Mel were intent on engaging their students in drama that demonstrated "cognitive, affective and behavioral immersion in the arts has the capacity to impact deeper beliefs and values about oneself and one's place in the world" (Martin et al., 2013, p. 721). These two teachers found ways to work around the outside forces impacting their situations in order to enable their students to experience learning in and through the Arts.

Lack of specialist teachers

Beyond the attitude of the school, Gina identified a further external factor impacting the delivery of arts education was the limited availability of specialist arts teachers in the region. Consequently the sharing of visual arts teachers between the secondary and primary schools was one strategy to maintain visual arts learning and teaching in both the primary and secondary schools. Gina described this linkages strategy:

One of our art teachers goes down to a primary school every week during sport. She teaches art to different classes. She starts with an artwork and then they end up making something. So they respond to the artwork that she's shown them by doing some activity. (Int2: June 3, 2014)

While the sharing of visual arts teachers was enabling the teaching of visual arts to occur across primary and secondary schools, Gina was aware other arts subjects did not have access to specialist arts teachers. She was scathing of the use of the 'all-school musical' in primary schools, claiming the quality of the Arts was lacking. Gina

did not see this changing with the incoming national arts curriculum and explained why this limitation on quality Arts teaching was occurring in regional areas:

proper visual arts teaching and drama teaching and music teaching should be going on in those primary schools, but a lot of those primary school teachers are getting quite old and none of them want to change their ways. Many of them are afraid of mess and afraid of the kids being out of control. Really, what they're afraid of is the open-ended project, which is really what makes you something when you're a kid, 'what if I want to look at this instead of doing what she wants me to get that result?' " (Int1: June 27, 2013)

Teachers who need to maintain control exemplify Eisner's (2004) observation that "we place a much greater emphasis on prediction and control than on exploration and discovery" (p. 6). Further to the difficulty in attracting specialist arts teachers to regional areas Gina observed the problem of ageing teachers. She claimed older teachers preferred control in classroom. They expected specific outcomes from students, which was often detrimental to students' experiences in arts education in primary school. She noted that many secondary visual arts teachers were using the same programs year after year. "I've been telling them to modify things and get kids excited about things, but they do the same thing every year" (Int1: June 27, 2013). So in this instance, even having specialist arts teachers was a further outside force impacting Gina's vision for arts education in her context. Gina's summation of her region demonstrated that the inequities in the "life chances of many Australian children" was impacted by the inadequacies of structure, including the design, staffing and resourcing, of many schools (Ewing, 2012, p. 101).

By contrast to Gina's negative recollections of her own children's primary school musicals, Craig's suburban primary school was using the annual whole school musical production to bring the school community together. Craig identified that the school community valued the Arts. Similarly to Gina and Mel, Craig was in a school that allocated time out-of-class for the Arts, in this case, preparing for the school

musical production. He explained, “We have afternoon practices” and “in our school, a lot of people get on board, they value it, they see opportunities for the children” (Int1: October 1, 2013). He continued, “we provide a lot of opportunities for the kids who’ve got beat. You know, musical theatre, it could be sport, it could be aerobics, it could be chess club.” Craig noted that for a large school, “we have next to zero” problems with student behaviour “because they’re so busy”. For Craig, the busy-ness of the Arts activity in the school was “a good thing” as it eradicated the need for behaviour management. According to Neelands (2009) the process of ‘making’ as part of an ensemble effectively raises students’ self-esteem and improves behaviours, while also raising the quality of the students’ work.

In his metropolitan school, Craig described the Arts as a normal component of school activity. Each teacher was involved in the Arts in their daily classroom practice and in preparation for the out-of-school musical production. By contrast to Gina’s observation of primary teachers in her region who wanted students to fulfill a particular outcome, Craig highlighted:

Is there a lesson plan written for each time we do it? No. It’s just more of the, ‘Right, this is our play. We’ve got to get it done. These are rehearsal schedules and we pull it together.’ (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Craig’s commentary identified that there was a performance focus, rather than in-class subject-based lessons. He stated, “teaching to the exact outcome or statement, that doesn’t really happen. But it’s more the exposure to the children” (Int1: October 1, 2013). This ‘exposure’ of the Arts was part of Craig and his school’s holistic approach to teaching the whole child in primary school context. Craig concluded, “they’ll probably get more exposure to something like that than they would in the classroom. That’s what my belief is” (Int1: October 1, 2013). Craig’s whole school approach was, in a way, like that of Dean’s school, that is to “cultivate the

individuality of students” (Eisner, 2000, p. 4) although this occurred outside the classroom.

This approach to arts education in primary schools such as Craig’s case may well be a common phenomenon. B. Power and Klopper (2011) reported that respondents in their study of primary creative arts in NSW indicated that no time at all was allocated to dance and drama. “A further indication of curriculum expectations not being met”(p. 18). The researchers also found that more than one quarter of respondents identified “teaching learning experiences in creative arts as isolated events as opposed to sequences of lessons”(p. 18). In contrast to these findings, both Craig and Gina created communities of students through the arts activities they undertook outside of class. Each contained learning in the particular arts subject, but also learning through the artform. These two examples resonate with Ewing’s (2010) observation that “a community of participants pursuing a shared goal through engaging in arts activities enjoy the social benefits” that include “the creation of a sense of community identity, and the building of social capital and organisational capacity”(p. 15).

A school culture derives from its community. Within this context are the teachers and their approaches to learning and teaching. As demonstrated by Gina and Craig, participation in the Arts has been linked to greater sense of community or civic engagement in the school (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012; Martin et al., 2013). Furthermore, in both situations these teachers enabled students to engage in arts activities through in-school and outside of school arts education. Curriculum is reliant upon teachers’ choices about what is presented and consequently how students respond to it (Eisner, 2008). Gina’s and Craig’s approaches reflect the “innovative culture in teaching and learning in order to improve students’ academic outcomes... creative dispositions and other social and

emotional skills” (Winner et al., 2013, p. 25). They used the Arts with consideration “for students living in a rapidly changing world, [since] the arts teach vital modes of seeing, imagining, inventing, and thinking” (Winner & Hetland, 2010, p. 31). Yet, persistent in Gina’s and Craig’s experience, and that of the other participant teachers in this study, is that the situations in which they teach the Arts are multilayered with “interrelated issues of time and the quantity of curriculum material requiring coverage” overlaid by demands of “accountability” (Alter et al., 2009, p. 10). Each participant teacher works in a school situated within a particular geographic, social and economic perspective that contributes to the school’s attitude towards the Arts which ultimately impacts the teachers’ capacity to teach the Arts.

Combining the individual school situation with the complexity of curriculum change and expectations of school leadership is evident in the experiences of Craig and his colleague, Sarah. They reported a school leadership approach to curriculum implementation, which on the surface implied “strategic use of all staff in a joint endeavour directed towards the implementation of any revised curriculum” (Brundrett & Duncan, 2015, p. 758). However, the situation at Sarah and Craig’s school contrasts to the leadership approach promoting collegiality reported earlier by Dean at his arts-focused independent school. Craig and Sarah spoke negatively about their principal’s delegation of ‘teams’ of teachers to manage the different focus activities within the school. Craig listed some existing teacher teams: “thinking hats”; “gifted and talented”; “enrichment”. During their interview, Sarah interjected, “In fact teams for teams, teams for everything” (Int2: April 17, 2014). Terms such as “gifted and talented” and “enrichment”, “reveal the institutional character” of schooling and are “generalizing statements that do not tell us about actual young people or their experiences, but about how they may be segregated and assigned to particular interventions and allocated

targeted resources” (Hayes, 2013, p. 6). Craig concluded, “There’s so many things. We’re sitting in the classroom. We can’t cope anymore. There’s too much” (Int2: April 17, 2014). The principal’s’ delegation of teacher teams to manage change (Hayes, 2013), demonstrated a “top-down” approach to school improvement. This was “another dubious assumption” whereby policies may change but schools “continue on their merry way” (Eisner, 2008, p. 16). Contrary to the successful collegial approach to curriculum change developed in Dean’s school, unless teachers “buy into reform efforts, little is likely to happen” (Eisner, 2008, p. 16).

Isolated arts learning in the classroom

As a primary teacher with over twenty years experience, Paula also felt disconnected from the school leadership and decision-making in her metropolitan primary school. She relayed two occasions that demonstrated a lack of support for visual arts in the school. She recounted her tactical approach for securing resources for visual arts. “It was coming up to Christmas and there’s no white paint left.” She asked her students, “What could we do?” The students identified that they had black paper and coloured paint. Paula exclaimed, “we all painted orange snowmen, yellow snowmen, pink snowmen and gave them to the principal.” She smirked, “The next day, we’ve got an order for white paint” (Int1: October 1, 2013). Paula’s playful anecdote demonstrated that “the arts teach students to act and to judge in the absence of rule, to rely on feel, to pay attention to nuance, to act and appraise the consequences of one’s choices and to revise and then to make other choices” (Eisner, 2004, p. 5). While she was successful in obtaining resources for the upcoming festive season, Paula recollected a second occasion when she wanted to hang students’ artworks from the ceiling in the library but “the librarian didn’t want it” (Int1: October 1, 2013). In this example, the librarian’s view restricted the exposure of the students’ artworks and limited the broader benefit of the art-making. Paula

recognised that exhibitions of students' work in the school was "essential to promoting visual art and its role in developing student self-esteem and academic success" (Davis, 2008). The devaluing of the Arts by other staff directly impacts on the perceived value of the Arts within the school and "a lack of value and support for the Creative Arts in learning at a systemic level can perpetuate already low levels of esteem for the Creative Arts amongst teachers" (Alter et al., 2009, p. 3).

Paula was negatively impacted by the librarian's unwillingness to exhibit students' art works. By contrast, Craig was enthused by his school building a "culture of community" (Munday & Fleming, 2016, p. 156) through student participation in the whole school musical production. He reported more students wanted to participate, "next year we're looking at probably about 400 kids in the next production. So it's just getting bigger and bigger and bigger" (Int1: October 1, 2013). Craig's students felt they were contributing to and were part of a larger community through participating in the Arts (Caldwell & Witt, 2011).

However, school expectations and their delivery of arts experiences can negatively impact student attitudes and behaviour. This, in turn, can affect the individual teacher's capacity to teach the Arts. While Craig explained that students in his school were "too busy" with a range of arts activities to have "behavioural problems", through casual teaching in both primary and secondary schools Mary saw firsthand the distinction between school expectations of student participation in visual arts:

Secondary students were all more autonomous because they basically went into the classroom and just started continuing on with what they'd already been doing ... like making, painting or sculpture, whatever they'd been working on the previous few lessons. Whereas Year 5 and 6, I mean it was definitely where I had to control the class a bit more (Int1 April 12, 2013).

Mary contrasted the student autonomy of secondary students with teacher-directed learning for primary students. As previously noted by Gina, in many instances primary teachers were “afraid of kids being out of control” in art lessons. In Mary’s experience there were two considerations. Firstly, the existing learned behaviours of students during visual arts activities in the primary classroom, and secondly, students reactions to a replacement, i.e. casual teacher. The “controlled outcomes” as reported by Gina were part of the visual arts experiences of students in the primary schools Mary experienced. As a recent graduate, Mary’s approach was to enable open-ended visual arts experiences. She thought the students’ enjoyment in the act of making was depleted “if kids are just ‘doing’, I think, with those assessment kind of bodies of work that the teacher would set for them.” Mary considered, “I think also for primary, it’s the enjoyment factor as well” (Int1: April 12, 2013). So for the primary students she casually taught Mary found she needed to “control the class a bit more”.

Conclusion

The teachers’ capacities to teach the Arts were influenced by outside forces within the school. These outside forces commenced with the school’s attitude to the Arts, which flowed through from the school leadership, usually the principal, and also included economic and regulatory pressures; teacher autonomy; lack of specialist teachers; resources and student interest.

In each of the eight participating teachers’ situations, it was clear that the school attitude to the Arts influenced shifts in curricula decision-making. Economic, and in one case geographic factors particular to the school, contributed to this leadership attitude. Teachers reported that arts practice in primary schools was impacted by the attitude of the school, demonstrated by school leadership or other staff. One

primary teacher experienced a devaluing of the Arts and a sense of isolation through negative views expressed by other staff. Two primary teachers from the same school disliked their school principal's institutional top-down approach to curriculum and school management, which put more of the onus onto the teachers, who consequently felt overwhelmed.

Two independent schools held the Arts at the centre of the school's approach to learning and teaching, however one of these schools was also beholden to economic pressure to maintain student enrolments. Similar economic pressure impacted the drama teacher at a third independent school where numbers of student enrolments and curriculum regulation directly influenced the decision to schedule drama classes. The capacity of secondary arts teachers to develop sequential learning across the years of secondary school was impacted by the regulation of "mandated" subjects taking precedence over other "elective" Arts subjects in Years 7 and 8. One school used an alternative approach to scheduling to provide access to dance and drama, as well as music and visual arts, across Years 7 and 8.

In three schools, teachers reported that Arts programs often occurred outside of school time. These programs enabled learning communities to engage and support students learning in the Arts. In each school there were expectations of controlled outcomes in arts learning activities, and in primary schools limited availability of specialist teachers in the Arts. Ideally teachers, as demonstrated by Dean and Gina in particular, need to remain open to learning and teaching situated in a "vast, interrelated web of ideas, texts, personalities, architectural structures, literary narratives and much more" (Barrett, 2015, p. 160). The teacher's sense of autonomy enabled them to work within the parameters of their school context. Ultimately the school attitude to the Arts determined allocation of resources including time, teachers, facilities and materials. Likewise, students' interest in the Arts was

influenced by the school's attitude combined with associated resources. Students' interest and school values were shared or challenged through the determination of each individual teacher to preserve and promote the value of the Arts in their school.

The following section explores participant teachers' perceptions of the impact of state and national standards on the Arts in schools, the third of the influences identified by Eisner.

Section 5.3: Impact of national and state standards

Introduction

In the previous section, I reviewed the outside forces, that is, the factors beyond a teacher's control, that impact upon their capacity to teach the Arts. These related to Eisner's (2000) second influence on arts education in schools. His third influence on the field of arts education was "the impact of national and state standards" (p. 4). The following reports on and analyses the study's findings concerning teachers' views of standards or prescribed outcomes.

Standards and outcomes

Eisner (2000) contended that a standard implies "a means of teachers' and students' accountability to pre-specified outcomes" (p. 5). Arts educators recognised that to compete for time and resources, politically they needed to board the "standards bandwagon" and measure students' learning in the Arts (Eisner, 2000, p. 5). As a result, Eisner (2000) claimed "National and state standards enforce or lead to uniformity" (p. 4). There has continued to be a worldwide movement towards standards-based reform, in which standards are externally imposed; curriculum is prescribed and common subject knowledge is emphasised, all without consideration of the context and needs of the individual student (Hargreaves, Earl, Moore, & Manning, 2001).

An "outcomes-oriented centralised curriculum" reduces the scope for teachers to use their own individual approach to content (Smyth & Dow, 1998, p. 297).

Furthermore, this fulfils the goal of policy makers "preoccupied with predicting and measuring the outcome of teaching and learning" (Smyth & Dow, 1998, p. 301). This focus on measurement is the accountability that Eisner (1995b) referred to when he claimed that such standards failed to recognise the individuality of students.

However, outcomes that tend to be broader and less exclusively subject-based demand a great deal of interpretation by the teacher. The perceived benefits of outcomes-oriented curricula are predictable, measurable learning outcomes, which are sensible, objective and practical. The perpetuation of standards-based reform has seen students increasingly disengaged from their schooling. Additionally, if outcomes are highly specific, they become “too numerous and cumbersome” (Hargreaves et al., 2001, p. 25). The standards in arts curriculum developed in the United States in the 1960s resulted in a primary teacher needing “to cope with 200 objectives over the forty-week period. A school of six grades would have 1,200 objectives to attain” (Eisner, 2000, p. 5).

When curriculum contains “clearly defined learning standards or outcomes”, teachers think more clearly about what “their students can and will learn” (Hargreaves et al., 2001, p. 44). Eisner (2000) has continually espoused the importance of “cultivating individuality” through arts education (p. 4). More than a decade later, in Australia, Ewing (2012) also rejected the application of mandated student achievement. She claimed that teachers need to be provided with adequate resources and funding to transform curriculum so that “all children can be more engaged in learning and thinking processes, and therefore more likely to develop much needed creative thinking” (p. 108).

Overview

In this section, I explore the impact of standards or outcomes, upon the teacher’s capacity to teach the Arts. In recent Australian curriculum development, an achievement “standard” describes “what students are typically able to understand and do” (ACARA, 2013, p. 5). The current NSW creative arts syllabi use the term

‘outcomes’. However, there is no definition of the term ‘outcomes’²⁵ provided on the NSW Education Authority (NESA) website or any syllabus documents. The Australian curriculum achievement ‘standard’ and the NSW syllabus ‘outcome’ both reflect the student’s ‘knowledge’ (or what they ‘understand’), and ‘skills’ (or what they can ‘do’). In effect, the terms ‘outcomes’ and ‘standards’ are interchangeable in this instance.

A comparison of the Australian arts curriculum and the NSW creative arts syllabus for Kindergarten to Year 6 identified similarities in standards and outcomes in each curriculum. The Australian curriculum focuses upon the student’s learning process whereby the achievement standard does not demand a specific end-product. By contrast, the NSW syllabus expected completion of a predetermined set of outcomes. Eisner (2000) argued that pre-specified outcomes were the result of a focus on accountability. Such outcomes restrict the teacher’s capacity to cultivate creative learning and thinking for the individual student, consequently limiting the potential of the student to explore, learn and develop (Ewing, 2012). Furthermore, orientation materials designed to assist the primary generalist teacher in using the curriculum become a lesson plan perceived to fulfill the prescribed outcome thereby not cultivating the individual student but often enforcing “rote-learning” (O’Toole, 2015, p. 191), even copying. Such outcomes-focused lesson plans are often repeated from year to year.

In addition to promoting ‘rote-learning’, pre-specified outcomes enforce a fear of making mistakes among students who have learned that success is equated with fulfilling pre-determined outcomes. Evident particularly in the senior secondary years, prescribed content for the NSW Stage 6 syllabus encourages teachers to use

²⁵ According to the Education Act 1990, (updated in 2017) a course syllabus “is to indicate the ... desired outcomes in terms of knowledge and skills...”

the same units of lessons annually knowing that these fulfill pre-determined outcomes. Furthermore, the complexity of standards or provision of too many outcomes, especially in the primary years, overwhelms teachers. Consequently many primary teachers use standard activities in an attempt to fulfill curricula requirements.

Participating teachers discussed how they applied the current 'outcomes' in the NSW creative arts syllabi and envisaged using the 'achievement standards' in the incoming Australian arts curriculum. Primary teachers, Paula, Sarah and Craig, were concerned with the actual day-to-day learning experience of the student, acknowledging Eisner's (2000) point that the goal of arts learning should be "cultivating individuality" (p. 4). The teachers described how they engaged the student in learning in the Arts as prescribed by the curriculum, and also identified using the Arts as a pedagogical tool for integration of other curriculum learning areas. Secondary teachers, Mel and Gina, reported working through syllabus outcomes collaboratively with their students to ensure students understood the requirements. Dean and Errol, whose "arts rich" secondary schools' programs deviated from the specifics of the NSW syllabus, did not report limitations of prescribed outcomes. This section concludes that the current NSW syllabus outcomes tend to "lead to uniformity" in lesson plans, which limits the teacher's capacity to cultivate the potential of the individual student's learning in the Arts. By contrast teachers found the Australian arts curriculum standards were more 'open-ended' giving the teacher and students greater scope for cultivating individual student learning. Teachers reported students fearing making mistakes where there was a perceived pre-specified outcome. In primary school, orientation materials become a lesson plan when primary generalist teachers do not have the knowledge of the curriculum content. A curriculum that prescribes too many standards, or outcomes, overwhelms teachers, particularly in primary schooling. Finally, the

teachers reported that learning and teaching was most successful using a flexible student-centred approach to teaching the Arts.

Setting the scene

Eisner (2000) observed that the US primary school curriculum in the 1960s contained the equivalent of 200 objectives per school year equating to 1,200 objectives over six school years. By comparison, curriculum content has effectively been reduced for the teachers involved in this study. The NSW creative arts syllabus explains that the ways of thinking developed in the Arts “provide orientation to this syllabus” and “underpin the foundation statements, outcomes and indicators, staged content and approaches to assessment” (Board of Studies NSW, 2006, p. 6). The Australian curriculum for each arts subject and the NSW creative arts syllabus each include comparable components as listed in Table 5.6 (p.149).

Additionally, the Australian Curriculum includes links to statements about student diversity, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities (ACARA, 2015d). For the purposes of this section’s exploration of ‘standards’ and ‘outcomes’, where the Australian curriculum refers to ‘achievement standards’ and ‘content descriptions’ the NSW creative arts syllabus refers to ‘outcomes’ and ‘indicators’ respectively.

Table 5.6 Comparison of Australian curriculum and NSW syllabus components

Australian curriculum	NSW syllabus
Rationale and aims	Rationale and aims
Structure for learning, including organising strands (e.g. making, responding)	Overview of learning in creative arts including organising strands (e.g. making, appreciating)
Band descriptions	Foundation statements
Content descriptions	Indicators
Achievement standards	Outcomes
Content elaborations	Units of work
Implications for teaching, assessing and reporting	General principles for planning, programming, assessing, reporting and evaluating in creative arts
Examples of knowledge and skills	Scope in the artforms
Glossary	Glossary
Statements about student diversity	None
General capabilities	None
Cross-curriculum priorities	None

Table 5.7 (p.154) is an example provides alignment of curriculum content for Year 3 and 4 (Stage 2) visual arts, from the Australian arts curriculum and the NSW creative arts syllabus. Note that some components of the Australian curriculum have been reordered to more effectively demonstrate this alignment. The NSW creative arts syllabus provides eight indicators[#] which parallel with four content descriptions[^] in the Australian curriculum. For example, the activity involved in the NSW indicator, “learn about how artists, including themselves, have intentions that affect the look of the work and its details” is similar to that for the Australian curriculum content description, “explore ideas and artworks from different cultures and times, ... to use as inspiration for their own representations”. The NSW syllabus

phrases the outcome from the position of student as observer who may make art, “artists including themselves”; whereas the Australian curriculum²⁶ phrases the content description from the position of student as artist and observer simultaneously, by the verb ‘explore’ as opposed to “learn about how” and, “for their own representations”, as opposed to “artist, including themselves”. The inclusion of “including artwork by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists” is a specific requirement within the cross-curriculum priorities; one of the three components defined in the *Shape of the Australian curriculum*: “learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities” (ACARA, 2010, p. 16).

The NSW syllabus requires teachers to identify student progress against four outcomes^{##} two for ‘making’ and two for ‘appreciating’. By contrast, the Australian curriculum requires teachers to identify students’ progress against one achievement standard^{^^} containing two parts: ‘understandings’ and ‘skills’. Again, there are clear alignments between the content in ‘making’ and the content in ‘skills’, and likewise between ‘appreciating’ and ‘understandings’. This structure is repeated in the Australian arts curriculum and the NSW creative syllabus for each of the included Arts subjects. NSW includes visual arts, music, drama and dance (in that order). The Australian curriculum for the Arts includes dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts, intentionally in alphabetical order as advised by the Curriculum

²⁶ The language in the Australian arts curriculum was negotiated by a national panel of representatives of education authorities in each state and territory in an effort to find terms agreeable and functional for teachers in all states and territories.

“The primary audience for the Australian Curriculum is teachers. The curriculum is concise and is expressed in plain language while preserving a complexity appropriate for professional practitioners. Consistency in terms of language and broad structure supports teachers in and across learning areas.” <http://australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/structure/>

Advisory Panel,²⁷ and listed in the *Shape of the Australian curriculum: The arts* (ACARA, 2011b).

The NSW creative arts syllabus contains four pre-specified outcomes for each of the four arts subjects that primary school teachers are expected to teach. This equates to sixteen outcomes in the NSW creative arts syllabus. The Australian curriculum for the Arts contains one achievement standard for each of five arts subjects, totaling five standards. The Australian arts curriculum also provides the option of a generic Arts learning area achievement standard for each two-year band of the Arts in primary school, reducing the standard to one per two-year band. For example, for Years 3 and 4, the Arts learning area standard is:

By the end of Year 4, students describe and discuss similarities and differences between artworks²⁸ they make and those to which they respond. They discuss how they and others organise the elements and processes in artworks. Students collaborate to plan and make artworks that communicate ideas.²⁹

However, primary teachers also have seven other learning areas to teach: English, mathematics, science, humanities and social sciences, technologies, health and physical education, and languages. Therefore, combining the required outcomes or standards for all eight learning areas may still be as daunting a total of outcomes or standards as the 1,200 objectives over six school years previously reported by Eisner (2000).

²⁷See for members of the curriculum advisory panel: http://docs.acara.edu.au/resources/ACARA_Curriculum_Advisory_Panel_Members_-_Arts.pdf

²⁸ “Generic term for a performance or an artwork in each of the five arts subjects. When referred to generically this curriculum uses the term ‘artwork’. Within each arts subject, the subject-specific terms are used. Artworks are also frequently described with reference to forms or styles.” <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/glossary/?letter=A>

²⁹ Generic learning area standard for The Arts in Years 3 and 4: <http://australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/curriculum-filter/?subject=12718&subject=12727&subject=12736&subject=12745&subject=12754&year=Year+4>

In the *DRAFT Australian curriculum: The arts foundation to year 10 consultation report* (ACARA, 2012c) half of respondents indicated the “explanation and nature of the achievement standards” was clear (p. 7). However, they indicated that the clarity of the achievement standards decreased for each of the subsequent years of schooling, concluding that the “achievement standards are too generic and need to clearly identify the knowledge, understanding and skills students are expected to demonstrate by the end of the band” (ACARA, 2012c, p. iii). According to Jacobs (2010), “an examination of syllabus material can only take us so far; the brevity of curriculum documents prevents articulation beyond general statements” (p. 46). The published consultation report resolved, “The expectations in the achievement standards are realistic but are too broad and should be more specific” (ACARA, 2012c, p. 20). Following the analysis of feedback from the 2012 consultation on draft curriculum, the Arts curriculum was further revised with national consultation and consequently endorsed by all states and territories in 2015.

Paula and Craig, reported that “more academic” primary students tended to “copy” or replicate what they perceived was the expected result, in order to fulfill an outcome. Craig argued that his more academic students tended to “copy something”, that is mimic the vocal presentation style they perceive to be required, in the way they read aloud the narration in a drama class. Paula reported students were effectively trained to produce identical artwork in visual arts through standardized or “one-size fits all” activities such as book covers. From an early age, students are measuring themselves against a pre-specified outcome. Furthermore, of secondary visual arts students, regional visual arts and drama teacher, Gina noted “the kids in the top class, they’re so frightened of making those mistakes that they often want to rub everything out” (Int2: June 3, 2014). The students held preconceptions of what would fulfill the requirements of pre-specified outcomes. Ross (1986) argued that allowing assessment “absolute sovereignty over curriculum” devalues the Arts and

particularly removed the child's "right to fail in a system that equates failure with worthlessness"(p. viii). A position reiterated some thirty years later by Duffy (2016) who reported that an over-reliance on summative assessment provides "replicable data on what students have learned and effectively reduces meaningful learning"(p. 38).

Table 5.7 Comparison of the Australian curriculum and NSW creative arts syllabus for visual arts for Years 3 and 4

NSW Stage 2 <i>Indicators</i> [#]		Australian Curriculum Years 3 and 4 <i>Content description</i> [^]
<i>Learn to:</i>	<i>Learn about:</i>	<i>Making</i>
develop their artistic intentions in artmaking and consider how these affect the look of the work, its details and an audience’s response	how artists, including themselves, have intentions that affect the look of the work and its details	explore ideas and artworks from different cultures and times, including artwork by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to use as inspiration for their own representations
select and explore different aspects of subject matter in particular ways in their making of artworks	how artists think about what an audience may think about their work when they make art	use materials, techniques and processes to explore visual conventions when making artworks
use particular artistic traditions guided by the teacher’s instruction in artmaking and experiment with techniques, tools and graphic schema (eg in drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking and digital works)	how artists, including themselves, can interpret the world in particular ways in their artmaking traditions associated with different forms such as drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking and digital works	present artworks and describe how they have used visual conventions to represent their ideas
interpret the meaning of artworks by taking into account relationships between the artwork, the world and the artist	how pictures and other artworks invite interpretations from audiences	<i>Responding</i> identify intended purposes and meanings of artworks using visual arts terminology to compare artworks, starting with visual artworks in Australia including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
<i>Outcomes</i> ^{##}		<i>Achievement standard</i> ^{^^}
<i>Making</i> represents the qualities of experiences and things that are interesting or beautiful* by choosing among aspects of subject matter. <small>*‘Beautiful’ within this outcome does not simply mean ‘pretty’ but rather something that excites and arouses awe, wonder, fascination and delight.</small>		<i>Skills</i> Students collaborate to plan and make artworks that are inspired by artworks they experience. They use visual conventions, techniques and processes to communicate their ideas.
uses the forms to suggest the qualities of subject matter.		
<i>Appreciating</i> acknowledges that artists make artworks for different reasons and that various interpretations are possible.		<i>Understandings</i> Students describe and discuss similarities and differences between artworks they make, present and view. They discuss how they and others use visual conventions in artworks.
identifies connections between subject matter in artworks and what they refer to, and appreciates the use of particular techniques.		

Accountability

Reflections from both the primary and secondary teachers in this study indicated that their students were aware of being assessed or measured. Eisner's (2000) concern that standards have the potential to "lead to uniformity" (p. 5) is supported by Henderson and Slattery (2008) who argued against "one-size-fits-all solutions, ideological agendas, and/or sorting mechanisms" claiming these "must be critically challenged" (p. 2). Yet, the recollections of Craig, Paula and Gina, demonstrate pre-specified outcomes are evident in the NSW syllabus. By contrast, Gina found that secondary drama students actually liked to learn from the process of self-assessment and reflection, even making mistakes. Although teachers considered the achievement standards in the Australian arts curriculum "more-open ended" (Gina Int1: June 27, 2013), how these are interpreted will only become evident during implementation.

In reviewing the implementation of the arts curriculum in New Zealand, E. Anderson (2010) found, "while initial implementation was positively embraced, it was not long or extensive enough to translate into sustainable embedded practice" (p. 68). The Australian arts curriculum as endorsed in 2015 extends only to Year 10 and does not provide assessment tools in the form of pre-specified assessment tasks or tests. By contrast, outcomes are specified in the NSW curriculum for each arts subject (visual arts, music, dance and drama). By the senior secondary years, Years 11 and 12, each subject is measured by a combination of weighted assessment tasks and examination reflective of the US Common Core State Standards which include standardized assessments "to measure student performance annually that will replace existing state testing systems" (Richerme, 2016, p. 88).

Recent experience with the newer curricula in the US and the UK indicates that although each new curriculum promoted the development of higher order thinking skills and creativity, the demands of accountability to “test and judge” through new standards inhibited teachers’ use of creative, open-ended explorations and in-depth projects which “support and develop” student learning (Cullen, 2015, p. 3).

Consequently, assessment in arts education has moved to “measurement of technical knowledge, interpretation, critical analysis and evaluation” particular to the artform (Jacobs, 2010, p. 46) from previously being a “measurement of competencies through the role played by arts in educational settings” (Ewing, 2010, p. 17). In Australia, the national curriculum has been developed in response to a perceived policy need and by an act of Parliament, defined in the *National Education Agreement* (Council of Australian Governments, 2008). Shieh (2012) reported that the National Standards in the United States demonstrated a tension between the demands of policy and aspirations of “teachers agency” regarding curriculum renewal (p. 55). However, in Australia, the “increased focus on accountability and assessment in schools has prompted many leadership teams to allocate funds away from arts programs in their schools” (de Vries & Albon, 2012, p. 9). In fact, teachers reported that they lacked the autonomy and even the time to use the Arts in their teaching as revealed by Sarah. “There’s just too much in the curriculum at the moment and visual arts is just shoved under the carpet” (Int1: October 1, 2013).

In their teaching, primary teachers, Sarah, Craig and Paula, combined the Arts with other learning areas, notably HSIE³⁰, mathematics and English, which established “meaningful connections” and teaching “across disciplines”, enabling them to

³⁰ Human Society and Its Environment <https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/>

overcome issues with a crowded curriculum (Gibson, 2016, p. 145). The teacher's expertise in curriculum interpretation and pedagogy is imperative to a student's success and requires more than fulfilling standards or outcomes. Yet, as experienced primary teacher, Paula recounted, she did not "make a conscious decision to do that, it just happens" (Int2: July 11, 2014). Teachers also found that arts pedagogy engaged students who were "not academic" (Craig Int1: October 1, 2013).

Standardized arts activities in Primary

Primary teachers, Paula and Sarah sought to inspire their students through visual arts. Although they both reported that they were expected to adhere to a predetermined, across-school "arts' activity" consisting of standard or pre-specified activities consistent across primary schools in NSW. Paula recollected:

I was so depressed because when I'd go into a room, they all used the same book and they all went to the same first page. The page where you put your foot on the page, trace around it and then put Aboriginal designs inside (Int1: October 1, 2013).

Paula was aghast that "every school" she went to had "the exact same stuff". She determined, "there's got to be more to visual arts than that." She recalled that "every school only had some coloured paper, some paint and pencils and that's about it" (Int1: October 1, 2013). She appreciated at least having some resources, although these were staples for visual arts. Eisner (2000) contended that the provision of common sets of materials was further evidence of schools boarding the 'standards bandwagon'. Paula was perplexed as she thought of the students:

I don't know if you know, Kindergarten 'til Year 4, they will draw you anything... as soon as they hit late Year 4, Year 5 and 6, they'll stop drawing because they think, "nup, this is rubbish, I'm not going to do it" (Int1: October 1, 2013).

Boone (2008) identified that children believe artistic ability improves with age and that they have strong views about their own artwork. "If a child is dissatisfied with art, s/he does not want it to be displayed because viewers might perceive them as artistically inadequate" (p. 34). Compounding older students' dissatisfaction with their own art work, Dinham (2007) reported that most primary school teachers themselves had "no experience of visual arts beyond primary and few had visual arts to Year 8" (p. 21). Cutcher (2014) stressed that primary teachers need to understand that visual arts comes from an experiential perspective, a position practised by Paula. Yet Paula acknowledged that other teachers in her school relied entirely on the prescribed *Creative arts K-6 units of work* (Board of Studies NSW, 2000) resulting in a standardisation of visual arts activities. Consequently, visual arts learning for those students, was uniform and stagnant and often resulted in them 'copying the model'.

Reinforcing Paula's experience, Sarah described an activity occurring across NSW schools in Stage 1 (Kindergarten to Year 2) and Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4). She recounted, "Everyone had this generic book cover" (Int1: October 1, 2013) for Year 2 that duplicated Paula's experience in another school. Sarah disliked the activity, stating "they were boring, they had the school emblem on the front". She claimed, "I was the only teacher who said, 'I'm not doing it. I just will not have those books'" (Int1: October 1, 2013). Sarah wanted to provide an authentic visual arts experience for her students. She informed the students, "this is an opportunity to do really nice artwork and put it on your book." She recalled, "Everyone knows what I'm like and they just said, 'Okay Sarah you go off and you do that' ... Fortunately in Stage 1 that's what we do anyway. We make artwork to put on our books." Although the book covers were a standard activity across the classes, Sarah reiterated, "the horrible

generic book covers fizzled out, thank goodness. I'm a bit like that. I like to do my own thing." (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Further to Sarah's and Paula's concern regarding the use of standard activities in primary visual arts, as a casual relief teacher in primary schools, Mary suggested that primary generalist teachers "possibly do visual arts at a very low level, say colouring in a picture." She observed teachers using the *Creative arts K-6 units of work* (Board of Studies NSW, 2000) "to guide them as to how to create an art lesson plan" (Int1: April 12, 2013). Concern for the quality of arts education in primary schools extended to music. Secondary visual arts and drama teacher, Gina, was disturbed by the limited approach to music in NSW primary schools.

I think there are some schools around here that don't get very much music or if they do they get a recorder that's been dipped in disinfectant so that the germs of the previous child have gone. A horrible thought. A terrible image when you think about it. (Int1: June 27, 2013)

Supporting Gina's view, (Petrova, 2012b) reported that Australian primary school music education was "in a state of crisis: There are simply too many primary schools without music"(p. 422). Furthermore, Petrova noted that nationally, music was taught by generalist primary teachers in the government school sector, a situation particularly evident in NSW. Gina's assumption that all primary students learned recorder and the visual arts practices reported by Paula, Sarah and Mary demonstrated that "used foolishly curriculum can sterilise practice and make the classroom a boring place" (Glatthorn, 1999, p. 28).

Flexibility and cultivating creativity

Flexibility in approaching the Arts was important to the participating teachers.

Dean, head of music in an independent K to 12 school in NSW, claimed:

You can instill in them [the students] an understanding and an appreciation of different styles of music. And you can get them to question how they view things, and to be able to describe that (Int1: November 9, 2013)

A number of researchers including Gibson (2016) have identified the importance of flexibility in approaches to learning and teaching the Arts in the classroom. Teachers realise that different students learn in different ways and that the integration of the Arts “into the academic content curricula provides a logical approach to address the variety of students’ intelligences that are reflected in their different learning styles” (Snyder et al., 2014, p. 3). Furthermore, teachers have had to reconsider their own positions. For example, one teacher in West’s (2012) study pointed out: “I think that you have to decide that you’re not preparing students to be phenomenal violinists. I’m teaching violin because I want them to appreciate music” (p. 77). This American teacher, like Dean, recognised that music teachers in schools need to adapt their expectations to inspire students’ and as Dean stated he sought to instill in students “an understanding and an appreciation”.

West’s (2012) study found that approaches to music learning and teaching in the US schools were not achieving adequate yearly progress against the new “standards” associated with the *No child left behind* (NCLB) policy, Snyder et al. (2014) found that a whole school approach to arts integration had a positive impact on students achievement, student-teacher relationships and student attendance. Similarly, the holistic view at Dean’s school encouraged flexibility and prioritized cultivating the individual student’s curiosity and creativity, which included developing an understanding of music that was not limited to pre-specified outcomes. The music program at Dean’s school has developed across the years of schooling:

From Kindergarten all students are involved in a singing experience, so choral is a real important thread of that learning experience. They are also involved in an instrumental program from Year 1, right up through to Year 6.

And that changes in a variety of different forms as they move through the different year groups. (Dean Int1: November 9, 2013)

Dean explained that music at the school enabled “students to find their own voice” and to “develop an appreciation of music and understanding of style.” In fact, he did not refer to syllabus “outcomes” at all. Consequently, students understood “what was expected of them in terms of the quality” and that “sustained effort is required to achieve such results” (Gibson, 2016, p. 148) because the learning was meaningful to them. The flexible student-centred approach at Dean’s school clearly demonstrated that “schools are best placed to determine how the Arts are delivered” (ACARA, 2011b, p. 4). A position supported by de Vries and Albon (2012) who claimed that this flexibility does not decrease standards, rather it upholds the importance of considering the context of the learner as identified by individual teachers, schools and communities.

Secondary school arts: Fulfilling outcomes or cultivating individuals?

In her interview, secondary drama teacher, Mel, noted the personal skills development enabled in drama:

I don't teach drama because I want to produce the next Nicole Kidman or Hugh Jackman or, that I think acting itself as a career is an incredibly difficult career ... The thing that I like about teaching drama, and I see it in music and visual arts and dance, is the confidence and the presentation skills (Int1: August 14, 2013)

Yet, Mel’s school’s approach was driven by curriculum requirements in contrast to the student-centred learning approach evident at Dean’s school. Furthermore, Mel inferred that the pre-specified outcomes in the current NSW drama syllabus were

convoluted by comparison to the content descriptions in the Australian curriculum for drama. Mel's explanation of preparing students for an assessment task in Year 9, demonstrated that the "teachers' own feelings" and "their relationships with their students" can influence how they plan and use outcomes (Hargreaves et al., 2001, p. 35):

I go through those [NSW drama outcomes] with the kids. It takes me ages to explain them, because the wording is not as easy for them to understand, whereas they would understand this [Australian drama curriculum]. (Mel Int2: April 23, 2014)

Cognisant of the requirement to fulfil curriculum outcomes, Gina also reviewed outcomes with students prior to the commencement of tasks. "Before I get them to evaluate anyone's work, we work out what all the bands mean, the descriptors." Gina's approach in defining the task with her students made the "feedback much more useful" when students received their grading on assessment tasks. She recounted the process undertaken with one Year 9 drama class:

Before I gave them their marks back I asked them where they think they stood. And I had two or three kids who came in on the day and said, "I know I'm an E, because I laughed all the way through it and I couldn't remember my lines and I was not a character at all." And I said, "Well, yep. But the good thing is you can do it again. Come back next Monday and do it again and you can get a higher mark. Because you're in Year 9, you know, I think that's more important." And they were great. They came back. They were all organised. I don't think I'm ever going to have that hassle again, because they certainly don't want an E again. (Int2: June 3, 2014)

In this situation, Gina enabled students to review and evaluate their own work and decide if they wanted to revise their work to achieve improved grades. This approach fulfilled Eisner's goals of cultivating the individual student and demonstrated "a climate for achievement as well as instructional practices...

characteristic of arts-rich schools and may account for their advantages” (Catterall, 2009, p. 11).

Aware of the importance of student achievement, Mel felt the need to justify drama by convincing students “that it is not a bludge subject or a subject that's a soft option”. She also identified the broader benefits of studying drama, “It actually gives kids so much confidence and skills for any workplace and any situation, not just work, but any situation they find themselves in throughout their lives” (Int1: September3, 2013). Although arts participation in schools is recognised as influencing student motivation, confidence and learning (Martin et al., 2013), these benefits do not directly fulfill the pre-specified outcomes or ‘standards’ used to measure student achievement. K. Thomas (2015), a supporter of the current NSW pre-specified outcomes-based syllabus, and opponent of the imposition of national standards in Australia, reported that students’ creative autonomy “continues to be legitimised paradoxically in the state-based normative assessment regime that rewards students’ individual performance”(p. 305). However, pre-specified outcomes encourage students to learn skills by rote which historically they could not apply in different situations (O'Toole, 2015). The approach taken by Gina and Mel to define the required outcomes in collaboration with the students combined fulfilling the pre-specified outcomes with cultivation of the individual student’s ability to reflect upon their learning process and apply skills accordingly. Gina’s Year 9 students revised their work and through resubmission, demonstrated they could improve their drama performance and resulting grading for the pre-specified outcome.

Gina’s approach resonates with Catterall’s (2009) research which found that arts-rich high schools “do more collaborative learning” and “much less teacher lecturing

than arts-poor schools”(p. 122). Catterall’s scale of ‘arts richness’ drew on individual school scores finding that “indicators of educational attainment and achievement were significantly higher for the arts-rich school participants” (Ewing, 2012, p. 16).

Gina related that her school “gets really good results” demonstrating that engagement in the Arts in schools is strongly connected to “enhanced academic performance and to social values later in life” (2012, p. 12). A point stressed by drama teacher, Mel:

People have their academic background in our particular industry, but the people that we want in leadership and management positions don't have the soft skills necessarily to lead people, to think creatively, to work in teams, to strategize effectively, all those kinds of skills that people need in everyday life. I think drama teaches kids those skills and teaches them to be self-sufficient and creative in how they approach things, how to work in groups, and effectively work with other people who they don't necessarily get on with socially, but can work together to produce a fantastic outcome. (Int1: August 14, 2013)

Nonetheless, both Gina and Mel reported ongoing challenges beyond fulfilling curriculum outcomes in teaching drama in their schools. As neither school offered drama in Years 7 and 8, both teachers identified the limitations of beginning to study drama in later years of secondary school, when commencing in the early years could “empower teacher capacity to build student engagement in the Arts” (Snyder et al., 2014, p. 5).

By contrast Errol taught drama in a specialist performing arts school that should demonstrate “arts richness” (Catterall, 2009), yet the school’s academic results did not reflect this. In considering the students’ sensitivity in performance assessment Errol stressed:

Prepare them for the feedback, which you’re going to give them because in the performing arts there’s so much of themselves in the work which they produce and when they hear criticism it can be very soul destroying to them

sometimes. Well it's certainly not meant to be that way. But because there's so much of themselves invested (Int1: September 13, 2013)

Although the students were presenting performance to fulfill pre-specified outcomes, Errol noted the students' heightened sensitivity to criticism. He contrasted their responses to feedback on their drama performance with criticism of the students' written submissions, stating, "They can step back from an essay, its only words on a page". The response of Errol's drama students to assessment contrasts to Gina's Year 9 drama students who identified their own shortcomings and willingly resubmitted their performance to prove they could attain a higher grade. However, another comparison could be drawn between Errol's drama students and Gina's visual arts students who "feared making a mistake." These students along with Craig's more "academic" primary students who "copy" held a pre-determined expectation of what was required to fulfil a standard or pre-specified outcome. In effect, these students missed out on the teacher's "cultivation of the individual" which Eisner expected.

Cultivating individuality in the primary classroom

Paula discovered a further thread in "cultivating individuality" among her students as she explored the Australian Curriculum for drama. She considered,

It's a new way for teachers to look at drama. It's not just for me give it to them, the students need to have ownership. Then they say, "Can we do this? Can we suggest that? Why don't we do this?" ... and then it makes it theirs. (Int2: July 11, 2014)

By adopting this collaborative approach, Paula changed her classroom practice. The sharing between the teacher and students, enabled open-ended creative opportunities, as identified in the Australian arts curriculum. Of sharing the development of the creative work with her students, Paula asserted, “that’s a hard jump to take”. She recalled that handing her script over to the students was challenging. “It’s mine, I wrote it”. She added that she wanted the students “to perform it the way I want it.” Yet, she recalled the students’ suggestions as they asked, “But why can’t we do this? Why can’t we wear that?” and ultimately recognised that the students “added to the play”. Paula concluded emphatically, “and now it’s ours, not mine.” She reported that this collaboration with students was something she “had never done before”. According to M. Anderson, Fleming, and Gibson (2016), “High-quality arts classrooms featured a form of pedagogy where the tools of creation were shared between the students and the teachers in a range of approaches”(p. 60). Paula’s realisation about the students owning their learning suggests curriculum implementation at school level may see a change in focus from static memorisation or learning by rote to critical thinking as reform shifts instruction from teacher-centred to student-centred models (O’Toole, 2015).

Similarly, primary teacher Craig, used drama to engage and enable students in his class. By contrast to Paula and Sarah, Craig did not talk about standards or set activities. He focused on the students’ preconceptions of required achievement at school, identifying that the “more academic students” considered drama as “just something they were expected to do”. He claimed, “It’s not organic”, whereas he noted other “less academic” students would “go with the flow”. Craig recounted:

In my play recently, it was the children who aren’t the brightest or the ones who seem to not be talented at anything else, they seem to shine a lot more than others. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Craig explained that he cast “the more academic” students as the narrators “because they could read beautifully but they wouldn’t give enough dramatic expression.”

Craig identified that as early as Year 3 some of his students already had a preconception of what was expected in a drama performance, and they would tend to ‘copy’ this. This student preconception of outcomes was also evident in Paula’s claim that by Year 4 children stop drawing because they think their drawing is “rubbish”. Maras (2008) reported in terms of visual arts that by nine years of age, children recognised “culturally agreed practice” and can produce reasons for “inclusion and rejection”(p. 349). To Craig, the reading by the more academic children was “beautiful” but just “not appealing”. Later in his interview, he went so far as to say, “It’s like those people at lectures – Highly intelligent people, but boring” (Int1: October 1, 2013). Ultimately Craig focused upon cultivating the potential of the “less-academic” students through the story-telling opportunities afforded them through drama. He gave the example of a student:

She has the idea that she wants to be the actor. She wants to be the dancer. She’s not very good at it but you can see that, if you see her on stage, she’s the one who stands out because she really enjoys it. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Craig cast these “less academic” students in the character roles as he considered, “I think if some children aren’t academic and they’re not sporty then perhaps it’s the artistic that they’ll excel in.” As an arts teacher, he sought to cultivate any artistic attributes in his students. It could be drawing. “It could be painting. It could be drama. It could be dance. It could be singing.” Through this approach, Craig was actually “cultivating the individuality of students” (Eisner, 2000, p. 4).

Conclusion

In this section, I have explored the third influence on arts education as identified by Eisner (2000), that is, standards or pre-specified outcomes. Standards or outcomes in the Arts curriculum are required by policy makers and politicians, but simultaneously limit the arts teacher's capacity to inspire the individual student.

"Education policy makers and organisations posit overarching standards and assessments as paramount to forming a twenty-first century workforce" (Richerme, 2016, p. 88). In an era of accountability, schools tend to fluctuate between a drive for organisation and the goal of flexibility enabling teachers "to be more responsive to the changing needs of students who live in a complex, fast-paced and technologically sophisticated society" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 69). Eisner (2000) determined the teacher's focus should be on cultivating the individual rather than on fulfilling pre-specified outcomes.

As a result of interviews with the participant teachers, I found that a curriculum that demands accountability in the form of a specific end-product prescribed by predetermined outcomes, limits the teacher's capacity to cultivate the individual student's potential, thus limiting the student's learning. The participant teachers perceived the expected outcomes to which the curriculum held them accountable limited the breadth of creative learning they could explore with their students. They also reported that students feared making mistakes and assumed they must fulfill expectations of pre-specified outcomes. This resulted in students replicating a perceived end-product, and for rote learning, leading to the "uniformity" so feared by Eisner. Additionally, in some instances, teachers reported the recurrent use of standard activities, lessons, or units of work, to fulfil the requirements of pre-specified outcomes. Standard arts activities were dismissed by all three primary

teachers in this study with Mary, a secondary-trained visual arts teacher working casually in primary schools, noting the limited capacity of primary generalist teachers to teach visual arts often leading them to adhere to prescribed materials provided to accompany the state syllabus. Furthermore, teachers were overwhelmed if there were too many outcomes or standards, with both primary and secondary teachers finding the Australian arts curriculum easier to read and more manageable than the NSW curriculum. However, I found that teachers who worked collaboratively with students were able to adapt their approach to pre-specified outcomes enabling the cultivation of the individual student and supporting open-ended opportunities in student learning.

In this exploration of the participant teachers' reflections upon standards or "pre-specified outcomes" as defined by Eisner (2000). While it has long been evident that primary teachers focus on "cultivating the individual" whereas secondary teachers focus on the requirements of the subject as prescribed by the curriculum, the participating teachers reported examples of both cultivating the individual and fulfilling standards or outcomes across primary and secondary schooling. The cultivation of individuality was enabled through collaborative practice. The teachers' "pedagogical artistry" involved the "reconceptualisation of educational standards" and a democratic approach to learning and teaching (Henderson & Slattery, 2008, p. 3). The secondary specialist teachers reported discussing analysis of outcomes with students prior to commencing any learning and teaching. Collaboration between teacher and students in the primary years enabled creative learning resulting in an open-ended outcome, rather than a teacher-focus on pre-specified outcomes. The additional benefit was the students' sense of ownership of their learning.

The following section discusses the related influence of the impact of testing on teachers' capacity to teach the Arts, Eisner's fourth influence on arts education.

Section 5.4: Impact of testing and the Arts for tertiary entrance

Introduction

In the last section I discussed that in response to standards and pre-specified outcomes, the primary teachers practice centred around cultivating the individuality of students, whereas the secondary teachers focused on fulfilling the pre-specified curriculum outcomes. That said, some secondary teachers effectively combined cultivation of the individual student with fulfilling outcomes through a collaborative approach to learning and teaching. Similarly, some primary teachers were drawn to the specificity of their chosen artform, although they maintained a focus on the needs and development of the student rather than fulfilling expectations directed by the artform. Having argued in the previous section that teacher-student collaborative learning and teaching positively influenced the students' sense of ownership of their learning and, their capacity to fulfill requirements of standards or outcomes, this section considers Eisner's (2000) fourth influence on arts education, that of testing, and his fifth influence relating to the Arts and entrance to tertiary study.

Testing

The testing³¹ movement originated in scientific psychology where its earlier application was to identify the suitability of individuals for either ordinary army service or for officer training in World War I. Eisner (2000) explained,

Since psychometrics has become a highly sophisticated field. It is a field that has given us intelligence testing, standardized achievement tests, and the SATs. Performance on those tests is what the public uses to judge the quality

³¹ More on the development of testing is discussed in Chapter 2 Literature Review see: p37

of education that students receive. They are hardly that. Test scores drive curriculum because what is tested is what is taught. And since the arts are not tested, they can be neglected with greater immunity than those fields that are. (p. 5)

Eisner (2000) further argued that “an idea and a practice become, in effect, a policy” (p. 5) that is, what students know becomes the ‘idea’ to be ‘measured’ and the ‘practice’ is to invent ways to measure it. In the twenty-first century as governments replicate each others’ curriculum policy development, they simultaneously demand greater accountability from educators through testing in core subject areas (Alexander, 2011; Berliner, 2011). In Australia, Ewing (2012) supported the visionary goal of improved education for all Australian children through the development of the national curriculum. However, she argued that “the mandated high stakes testing regime and current initiatives to improve teacher quality, however, seem at odds with such vision” (p. 98). The Australian National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy, known as NAPLAN, was established during the 2008 education reform agenda of the Rudd-Gillard³² government to improve accountability and raise teacher quality. NAPLAN has been reported annually on the *My School* website since 2009. Although “Governments will not themselves devise simplistic league tables or rankings and privacy will be protected” (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008, p. 17), NAPLAN has enabled comparison of schools through such tables. This has resulted in “associated performance pressure” felt by schools and teachers accompanied by “the desire to be ranked highly” which has impacted “the curriculum choice” and “the style of pedagogy” adopted by teachers (Thompson, 2013, p. 82). Keddie (2017) identified that in Australia, as in the UK, “student performance on standardized tests is audited

³² One of the policy objectives of the Labor Government following the 2007 Australian Federal election was to deliver an “Education Revolution” to improve excellence and equity in Australian schools.(Rudd & Gillard, 2008)

and converted to a public ranking of schools with school 'effectiveness' additionally policed and regulated"(p. 3). NAPLAN testing occurs in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9, impacting both primary and secondary teachers. Furthermore, secondary teachers also focus on requirements of NSW syllabus outcomes, for the senior secondary years, Years 11 and 12. These outcomes contribute to assessment and testing for the Higher School Certificate (HSC), which is used to create a student's university entrance rank or ATAR³³. Consequently, the public routinely use NAPLAN and the HSC to judge the quality of education received by students in NSW.

Primary teachers are consistently confronted by demands to prioritise measuring literacy and numeracy through high stakes testing over the teaching of "what some believe are 'less academic' subjects", for example the Arts (Gibson, 2016, p. 145). Baker and Astell (2015) reported "the impact of standardised testing such as NAPLAN on the narrowing of classroom curriculum and marginalisation of areas that are not tested"(p. 9), supporting Eisner's assertion that "the arts are not tested". Yet, across senior secondary curricula in Australia, students' learning in the Arts is assessed in three broad areas: "creation (of the art), presentation (or performance of the art) and response (or critical analysis of dimensions of one's own and others' art)" through "moderation of work, external examination and the use of common assessment tools" (Jacobs, 2010, p. 50). Previously, Hanley (2003) posited that on the one hand, assessment in the Arts may inhibit the student's imagination, creativity and originality, yet simultaneously claimed that to ascertain levels of

³³ ATAR: The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is a number between 0.00 and 99.95 that indicates a student's position relative to all the students who started high school with them in Year 7. So, an ATAR of 80.00 means that you are 20 per cent from the top of your Year 7 group (not your Year 12 group). <http://www.uac.edu.au/atar/>

student achievement, assessment in the Arts was imperative. So, just as the Arts joined the standards trend, they have also climbed aboard the ‘testing’ bandwagon.

Overview

In this section, I explore the impact of testing upon the participant teachers’ capacity to teach the Arts as revealed in response to the open-ended questions used in both interviews (See Appendices 7 and 8). Two predominant factors evolved. Firstly, that test results influenced what was taught, including that in primary school, where teaching the Arts was used to support the teaching of other prioritized learning areas. Secondly, high stakes tests caused anxiety for teachers, students and school leaders because the public often judges the quality of education through these test results, representative of Eisner’s concern. Additionally, the high stakes tests at the end of secondary school in NSW convert to the student’s university entrance ranking. Eisner (2000) maintained that university admission criteria did not acknowledge the Arts as cognitive but rather “personally expressive.” As a result more “solid” subjects such as mathematics, science, history and social sciences were considered better preparation for university entrance (p. 5). This position is challenged by the examples of Australian tertiary entrance ranking provided by one of the participant teachers.

Teaching to the test

Regional secondary drama and visual arts teacher, Gina, was scathing of the national literacy and numeracy testing. “I really think that at the bottom of it all it’s the

expectations of NAPLAN, and everybody's attempts to make NAPLAN the be-all and end-all" (Int2: June 3, 2014). Like Ewing (2012), Gina felt that the national testing was 'at odds' with the goal of improving the educational opportunities for all Australian children. She reported that a school in her region was scheduling NAPLAN practice days:

You know, it really frightened me when I read recently someone at a particular school said they couldn't do something on a particular day because all the kids had to do a practice NAPLAN. Now why would you make them go through it twice? That is just horrible. (Int2: June 3, 2014)

This school's practice was, in effect, fulfilling Eisner's concern that what is tested is what is taught. By scheduling student "practice NAPLAN", the school leadership and therefore, the teachers, succumbed to the political pressure of this high stakes testing (Baker & Astell, 2015; Cutcher, 2014). In fact, the identified school was proof that NAPLAN was "likely to encourage the teaching of 'testwiseness'" (Klenowski, 2010, p. 11). Furthermore the pressure caused by the testing "results in teachers engaging in vast amounts of test preparation with their students" as evident in the school described by Gina. Furthermore, such 'testwiseness' may also cause "the validity of high stakes testing to be problematical" (Berliner, 2011, p. 288). In reality more attention should be given to the contextual factors of the school (Birenbaum, Kimron, & Shilton, 2011) when considering the detrimental effects of accountability testing (Berliner, 2011). Gina described her own regional school leadership's response to the school's NAPLAN result:

Our school is saying things like "the Year 7 and 8 kids vocabulary is not good enough, we'll have to give them some work in vocabulary". Well, I don't believe that at all. I think they've just got to make sure that every class they [the students] go to has a rich vocabulary, because all those other classes are what's going to inform the kids' understanding and knowledge and skills. It's not just English. (Int2: June 3, 2014)

Gina determined that in teaching the whole curriculum the students' vocabulary should improve. She did not believe vocabulary should be taught in isolation in response to the test results. Cutcher (2014) found that "omnipotence of standardized testing of literacy and numeracy in Australia" has led to a perception that such a test decrees what the community values in school education (p. 74). Primary teacher, Craig observed, "a lot of children see school as a chore. They don't see the reason behind it" (Int2: April17, 2014). So, in the context of literacy testing within NAPLAN, he considered:

... there is a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence, they know that but ... they don't know what the impact is if they don't do it. Well the impact is they get a low mark. It's not the end of the world... until there is big impact on them in Year 10, 11 or 12 when they want to do something or get a job. Then, it starts to get hard. (Int2: April17, 2014)

Craig's consideration demonstrates that teachers are responsible for imparting all curriculum, although only the "written" and "tested" curriculum are seen to be of importance in "standardized tests, competency tests and performance assessments" (Glatthorn, 1999, p. 29). The "undue weight" given to the current literacy and numeracy testing regime in Australia is more than that attributed to students' "end of school achievement" (Ewing, 2012, p. 104), which, in NSW, is the HSC. Primary teachers reported that learning areas not tested by NAPLAN were marginalised or not included in classroom curriculum (Baker & Astell, 2015). As Craig's colleague, primary teacher, Sarah stated, "visual arts is being swept under the carpet" (Int1: October 1, 2013). Craig's students' disinterest in NAPLAN testing and their feeling that school was "a chore" highlighted Ewing's (2012) contention that "pedagogy which connects with both emotional and feeling brain functions is more likely to

increase levels of attention, retention and enjoyment in the act of learning and facilitate deeper learning and understanding” (p. 105). Sarah, fully aware that *the* “goal of assessment should be to advance learning” (Birenbaum et al., 2011, p. 36), liked to make learning enjoyable, claiming that if students “don’t think they’re learning anything, it’s fun” (Int2: April 17, 2014). Whereas Craig was somewhat pragmatic:

You can’t make everything fun. Eventually that’s going to become a chore. So you get the kids in that regimented state where you’re doing maths the same way and you throw in a game, then “ah this is different.” So they find it fun. (Int2: April 17, 2014)

While Craig and Sarah considered how much ‘fun’ could be incorporated into learning maths, and Gina’s school’s was determined to increase students’ vocabulary, some schools used NAPLAN results to identify areas for students’ development, and allocated associated professional learning for teachers to support students’ development in the area of concern.

NAPLAN: A diagnostic tool or revising the intended curriculum?

Even though NAPLAN means nothing, it means something.
(Paula, Int2: July 11, 2014)

At primary teacher, Paula’s school, NAPLAN test results indicated that reading comprehension was weak. The student population is a mix of cultural backgrounds with many of the students second, third or fourth generation born in Australia. Luke (2010) criticised high stakes testing arguing that it can fail students from linguistically diverse backgrounds, and lead schools to implement “scripted standardised pedagogy” which results in “basic rule recognition and compliance” (p. 180). Paula recounted:

The parents are happy their child can read but then I have to tell them, “yes, he can read but he doesn’t understand a single thing he’s read.” So then it’s that next layer of comprehension, which is a big, huge step because now maths is the same way. (Int2: July 11, 2014)

Paula did not report any pressure from parents in response to NAPLAN results, by contrast to the issue of public judgment raised by Eisner (2000) and reported by Thompson (2013). It was likely, that being from linguistically diverse backgrounds, the parents themselves did not understand the concept or perceived significance of the testing, reflective of Luke’s point. In her interview, Paula described the new comprehension strategy that was to be introduced at the next staff development day. “Instead of kids just reading and writing answers on a piece of paper, it’s more interacting... more talking about it” (Int2: July 11, 2014). Paula followed this with an example of the comprehension required within a maths question. “There were 37 people walking down the street, they each bought an ice block for \$1.20, how much did they pay altogether? How much change from \$100?” She found the student response was “I didn’t understand the question.” Paula extrapolated the issue for the students was a lack of comprehension and identified the learning and teaching approach was to be applied to combat this:

They read it but didn’t understand it. And that’s what we’re doing now, reciprocal numeracy. So to me, this reading strategy is like reciprocal literacy.
‘Cause that’s what they’ve [the school] found that they’ve [the students] gone down in NAPLAN. Even though NAPLAN means nothing, it means something. (Int2: July 11, 2014)

The decision at Paula’s school to train teachers in a new strategy in response to NAPLAN results demonstrated that “teachers’ capacity to use the learning power of assessment to improve the outcomes for all students should be enhanced” (Klenowski, 2010, p. 11). Using such insights in schools, however, “creates a tension

with the current fragmentation of the syllabus and the increasing focus on high stakes testing as a measure of educational success” (Ewing, 2010, p. 10). Similarly, the school at which Dean was head of music, also responded to NAPLAN results with teaching strategies. By contrast to Gina’s view that all teachers should “make sure that every class they [the students] go to has a rich vocabulary”, Dean’s school established an action-learning project. It looked at the importance of ICT in the classroom and how it could enhance learning and teaching focused on literacy. Collectively in Dean’s faculty, the music teachers “focused on an area that needed improvement through NAPLAN which was spelling” (Int1: November 9, 2013). Dean described the project and how the technology was used to engage the students in learning vocabulary:

We used technology based on meta-cognition words in music, applying the topic of studying questions that would be asked by an online testing system that happened every two weeks. So through a program called Edmodo, which is like a Facebook for students, every kid in Year 7 or Year 8, or Year 9 had a series of questions that they had to answer based on their learning experiences over the last fortnight. This was testing their understanding of a term or a definition, but also required them to answer that question with the correct spelling. So for example: What do you call the combination of short and long notes? The answer was rhythm. (Int1: November 9, 2013)

At first glance this action-learning project implied enhancement of teachers’ capacity to use the “learning power of assessment” as claimed by Klenowski (2010). However, the rote-learning of spelling that resulted saw students “walk[ing] around the school going, ‘Oh no, r - h - y - t - h - m’ as they dictated to themselves the correct spelling”. Dean reported that students had two weeks to reflect on any word incorrectly spelt as the online testing system would say, “No, this is incorrect.” He maintained, “this really motivated students ... then they had the opportunity to answer that question again [two weeks later]” (Int1: November 9, 2013). Year 7

spelling results improved following this action-learning project. Although the directive from the school leadership was for all teachers of Year 7 to “focus on improving their spelling across the board”, the intervention technique Dean described was unique to Year 7 music. The music teachers collectively “participated in improving the spelling result of Year 7.” He considered that the issue of spelling was addressed “in a practical way and the whole action learning project is value added” (Int1: November 9, 2013), benefitting students learning and engaging teachers in the use of technology for different learning purposes. Yet, Thompson (2013) argued that this focus on vocabulary and spelling is a “direct teaching method”, “narrowing the curriculum focus”, both “unintended consequences” of testing (Thompson, 2013, p. 64) reflecting Eisner’s (2000) concern that “what is tested is what is taught.” Evidently, test items for NAPLAN were developed through a methodical process, which does not replicate authentic student learning and, “after exposure to the NAPLAN error, students used the misspelling when trying to spell the word” (Klenowski, 2010, p. 11). By contrast, the application of the ICT approach over a period of time in Dean’s school resulted in students learning the correct spelling.

Teaching in response to NAPLAN results

A further reaction to this improvement in Year 7 spelling, was that the music teachers looked at their “formal approach in spelling” and actually compared student achievement in response to alternative teaching methods. In addition to the ICT method, these included dictation, and writing words on the board to be copied by the students into their books. After applying these two other traditional teaching

methods, and the student preferred ICT³⁴ approach, the teachers ran spelling tests.

Dean summarised their findings:

We found that the most improved result was through this ICT program where kids actually got it wrong, and then they were frustrated with the fact that they spelled it incorrectly by one letter. And that instilled [in] them [determination] to go and find out [the correct spelling] (Int1: November 9, 2013)

The actual comparison came between three different testing periods. As he tracked the results, Dean identified a significant improvement in students' vocabulary and spelling in music. He concluded that it was not solely attributable to the ICT application:

... it's getting kids when they learn something and look at something, to actually be accurate. "So how do I actually really spell that word, because next time if I type that in and it's incorrect I'm going to get it wrong again." ... It really forced them to think about their answer and to think about their spelling, which could translate to them paying more attention to detail consistently in the context of learning. (Int1: November 9, 2013)

Evident in Dean's description was that students needed to "develop habits of mind and behaviours in their learning including persistence and metacognition" (Ewing, 2012, p. 107), that is, as Dean stated, "paying more attention to detail consistently". The process behind the application of ICT actually challenged the students to develop accuracy in their spelling and demonstrated "the use of assessment to focus on the quality and support of learning, rather than the simple measurement of it" (Klenowski, 2010, p. 13). Dean's observations highlighted the need for learners to "self-regulate and monitor their performance with the application of various tools to

³⁴ Balasubramanian, Jaykumar, and Fukey (2014) found that students preferred Edmodo as a "responsible learning platform" p417

make the learning explicit” (Birenbaum et al., 2011, p. 36). Where the learning was ‘explicit’ for Dean’s Year 7 students, by comparison Craig’s concern that his primary students had neither developed the skill of paying attention to detail, nor had they acquired skills in self-regulation.

While the students at Dean’s school were learning persistence and to pay attention to detail through accurate spelling of musical terms, Thompson (2013) argued that the teachers were revising the curriculum to suit the test. If the only goal was that students would attain a better result in spelling in the next NAPLAN test, then yes, teachers were ‘teaching to the test’. Alexander (2011) reported that in the UK a direct response to the perceived demands of the testing regime was the narrowing of the primary curriculum. In fact, the British primary curriculum contracted to such an extent that “in many schools children’s statutory entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum was seriously compromised” (p. 270). Similarly in the US, “the pressure of high stakes testing clearly results in a narrowing of the curriculum” (Berliner, 2011, p. 291). However, Dean felt that his students’ development of skills was a positive side effect of the action-learning project for improving spelling. Further to this, to ensure equity for all students in music examination and assessment in Year 7, Dean adopted consistency in allocation of teaching staff:

Year 7 all had this particular composition teacher, and they were all taught exactly the same thing. So when it came to reflecting on what they've learnt at the end of the topic, or what they've learnt as a result of seeing their results in an assessment or an examination, you knew that no one was disadvantaged, because that teacher actually had taught it. (Int1: November 9, 2013)

Dean pointed out that this allocation of teachers according to their speciality within music enabled teachers to teach to their strengths, and simultaneously created equity for all Year 7 students in the learning and teaching of the music curriculum.

Dean explained the approach to scheduling utilised the teachers' specialisations in the key components to be taught in music:

Composition, listening, performing are actually divided between three different teachers. So if you were in Year 7 or Year 8 or Year 9, you won't just have one music teacher that year. We actually have three different teachers in those areas of specialisation. (Int1: November 9, 2013)

He recognised that "some teachers are more popular with some students and others aren't." This allocation of teaching staff according to specialty ensured that students would work with each teacher and "have a consistent approach" for learning in music. The "improved coordination and collaboration" (Thompson, 2013, p. 19) of teaching strategies at Dean's school in response to the NAPLAN results for literacy and numeracy enabled consistency and opportunity for students. The "inquisitive disposition of staff embracing new instructional materials and approaches" combined with school climate and professional learning contributed to positive classroom assessment culture (Birenbaum et al., 2011, p. 43). The collaboration and positive influence of the approaches adopted by Dean's school removed the perceived threat of the external testing and complemented the practice of teachers and the learning by students (Birenbaum et al., 2011). However, Ewing (2012) claimed that testing, such as NAPLAN, "is highly contentious" arguing that potentially a school's whole education program "can be reduced to literacy and numeracy test results" (p. 103). Berliner (2011) maintained that "under pressures from high stakes testing, educators make decisions that reflect compromised ethics, if not a complete loss of their humanity." (p. 291). Dean's recollection does not suggest the focus on improving students' spelling in Year 7 demonstrated a reductive effect upon the whole school's education program. The NAPLAN diagnosis created a focus on improving general literacy through music, and across the curriculum, at his school.

The Arts have become a tool for the “tested” learning areas

In this era of high-stakes testing, primary visual arts teacher, Sarah stressed the importance of visual arts for all primary students. “I think it's really beneficial in the classrooms especially for children who are not high achievers because you're not ‘wrong’, nothing's wrong.” (Int1: October 1, 2013). The Arts provide a viable starting point for engaging and educating, especially for under-achieving students (M. Anderson et al., 2016) enabling the development of learning, self esteem and confidence (Martin et al., 2013). Sarah felt that students were always “seeing things as right or wrong” possibly due to their experience of testing and an outcomes-focused curriculum (as discussed in the previous section on standards). She found there was limited time for visual arts in the classroom, so she would, “tie Maths into craft ... because I had to measure things and count stitches” and also “language, like forwards, double stitch, and things like that. I try to integrate it as much as possible” (Int1: October 1, 2013).

Schools allocate more time to English and mathematics “in the hope of having their test scores go up” (Berliner, 2011, p. 289), which results in reduced allocation of time for other “less academic” subjects. Although arts education in and of itself, is regarded as “an important part of a holistic education” (Garvis & Prederghast, 2010, p. 8), time pressure sees primary teachers like Sarah integrating the Arts with other curriculum content. In fact “school activities that might foster citizenship have been cut because of the need for more time in reading and mathematics” (Berliner, 2011, p. 290). Enjoying school is reportedly an academic benefit for students considered “academically low-achieving” according to their NAPLAN results, and these students tend to “benefit more from arts engagement than high-achieving students”

(Mansour, Martin, & Liem, 2016, p. 97). As she reflected on her experience casual teaching in primary schools, Mary noted the importance of enjoyment for primary students:

I think also for primary, it's the enjoyment factor as well. If kids are just doing those assessment bodies of work that the teacher would set for them, I think one of the reasons that you would do that, is it's kind of sugar coating maths. Or you're making science more fun in a way by throwing in creating a diorama (Int1: April 12, 2013)

Mary was well aware of the “integrative capacity of the arts for teaching other learning areas” (Garvis & Prederghast, 2010, p. 8), evident in the experiences recounted by Dean, Paula and Sarah. However, teachers were hindered teaching the Arts “by pressures to cover the prescribed curriculum and to prepare students to undertake standardized tests” (Russell-Bowie, 2012, p. 61), as Sarah pointed out. Literacy and numeracy “sort of take priority... that’s the tragedy of it all” (Int1: October 1, 2013). Secondary drama teacher Errol, like Gina, was dismissive of the focus on literacy and numeracy caused by NAPLAN testing, “I don’t think in a drama report I need to be commenting on literacy or numeracy.” (Int 2: April 29, 2014)

High stakes tests create anxiety: The HSC and ATAR

In NSW secondary schools, dance, drama, music and visual arts are included as curriculum learning areas for the HSC that are assessed and tested alongside the apparently “more academic” subjects such as mathematics and science. Secondary drama specialist, Mel was acutely aware of assessment demands to fulfill pre-specified outcomes for the HSC. The extreme anxiety students felt to achieve against the prescribed criteria was evident. “Students always want to rehearse extra, so

you're constantly spending free time with them rehearsing for assessment tasks" (Mel, Int1: August 14, 2013). Similarly, secondary drama teacher Errol noted the importance of measurement for HSC drama in that "a certain number of hours" was required to be given to each of the syllabus outcomes with "weightings in the assessment" (Int2: April 29, 2014). In fact Errol was frustrated by the need to be:

... always mindful when teaching and planning the courses to cover all that [weighting and time requirements], and I guess it gets in the way of my teaching sometimes, I think, because you do have to make sure that there's a weighting of this percentage for performing and for making (Int2: April 29, 2014).

The anxiety teachers felt in response to testing and assessment also accounted for "test-induced stress" among students (Alexander, 2011, p. 270) demonstrated by Mel's students who wanted to constantly rehearse. Furthermore, evaluation and standardized testing limit teachers' autonomy and "influence teachers' motivation" (Firestone, 2014). In music at Dean's school, the strategy of allocating the same teachers to teach the specific components in music created equity for students and alleviated the associated anxiety of assessment and testing felt by those students. It also helped reduce teacher anxiety, by enabling the teacher to teach to their particular specialization or strength, thus reducing teacher anxiety.

Reflecting upon the anxiety experienced by students and teachers around the high-stakes HSC, regional teacher Gina remarked "I can see it in the media. Things like we should be making maths compulsory to the end of Year 12" (Int1: June 27, 2013). Gina was annoyed that students were pressured to study subjects considered to be more "academic". "I think it's terrible that maths and science still seem to dominate". Gina's point reiterated Eisner's (2000) fifth influence on arts education policy that the Arts were seldom conceptualized as a fundamental part of preparation for

tertiary study. Rather English, science, mathematics, history or social sciences were perceived as essential for entrance into tertiary study (Eisner, 2000). Gina reflected upon her own children's achievements in the HSC:

I've got two children, neither of whom did maths or science for the HSC. Both of whom got [an ATAR] over 90. They both did drama and music... my son was tenth in music, ... and his mate came first in Music 1...to have two kids in the one school in the bush coming first [in the state] ... what are Newtown [Performing Arts High School] doing with their music? What's Hunter [Performing Arts High School] doing with their music? Why aren't they coming first and tenth? Why is a country school like this managing to get those kids up to that level... (Int1: June 27, 2013)

Gina questioned the academic status given to these two selective performing arts high schools, considering that they did not produce the top ranking students in music. The public judgment of education based on the HSC has resulted in greater emphasis placed upon each school's academic achievements in the HSC and associated ATARs. Keddie (2017) claimed that "these external forms of accountability have become increasingly 'high stakes' given that a school's reputation and effectiveness are based on its performance on these measures" (p. 3). Fleming (2016) reported that as a step towards increasing an independent school's ranking and academic achievement, the school principal raised the profile of arts education within the school's culture. Yet, by comparison, arts education was already well established at Gina's regional government school, as reflected in the achievements of its students in the HSC and associated ATAR. Like Gina, Hanley (2003) questioned the priority given to standardized testing and claimed that when it comes to testing, "students are last on the list of beneficiaries", clarifying that "it comes down to what politicians think the voters (read parents and even more so, corporate interests) want" (p. 35). However, as Ewing (2010) explained it is near impossible to compare affective outcomes across arts-based programs because this

requires longitudinal tests which are costly and therefore rarely receive funding. Consequently the qualitative evidence that presents the benefits of quality arts learning remains of less interest to politicians who, via the media, continue to stir public judgment of school education on the basis of standardized test results, such as NAPLAN and the HSC.

Gina maintained a focus on the challenges for students and teachers in regional areas such as limited resources and access to live performances. However, the benefits of learning and teaching in regional schools included smaller classes, better teacher-student relationships and more leadership opportunities for teachers (Jenkins et al., 2011). Gina continued to highlight the achievements of her own children as regional students studying drama:

Both my kids did drama, absolutely loved drama. I think their first love affairs were with their drama students, and they both did incredibly well at what they did. And I think that it didn't hurt them one bit not doing maths and science. They've gone on to university where they've had to do courses where they use maths and science and they go and find someone to help them do things and they've managed to do that. Because I wasn't going to make them do it at high school when they absolutely hated it and where the teaching, particularly maths, at our school, was pretty mediocre. (Int1: June 27, 2013)

Gina's own children were both accepted into university, even with drama as a subject in their ATAR score. Gina's view was that her children should enjoy school and grow as individuals, rather than endure the study of the more 'academic' subjects perceived to be essential to a university entrance rank or ATAR. She recalled one student at her regional secondary school, who excelled in the school drama production, but hated mathematics and science, which he was compelled to study for the HSC:

He says he hated year eleven and twelve 'cause it was only about maths and science and the saving grace was the fact that he was offered the role in *Death of a Salesman*, which is the one thing everyone remembers him for because he did such a great job. (Int1: June 27, 2013)

As an art teacher, Gina recognised the priority afforded learning areas of mathematics, science and English, even commenting “you can see it in the media”. Further to this, Gore et al. (2017) reported that students were fully aware that for certain careers they needed to be ‘smart’:

... when weighed alongside standardised test scores and the entrance scores for some degrees, are clearly having an impact on student interests. Indeed, in teaching, science and medicine, students’ perceptions of their relative academic performance was an important predictor of occupational interest. (p. 16)

Gina disagreed with the perception that science and mathematics were essential for a students’ ATAR for acceptance into university. She also challenged how subjects such as mathematics and science are taught in schools:

Well if you’re going to make it compulsory to the end of Year 12 teach it in a different manner. Don’t just hand kids a textbook and expect them to finish the exercises, that’s why kids hate it. You know if it was enlightened teaching I’m sure they would adore it just as much as they adore lots of other things (Int1: June 27, 2013)

Reflecting upon her own altruistic approach to teaching, Gina suggested that even these more “academic” subjects could be made more interesting perhaps creative for students?

Conclusion

The participant teachers reported that testing did impact their capacity to teach the Arts as claimed by Eisner (2000) in his fourth influence on arts education policy. In fact, he claimed that standardised tests drive curriculum. Participant teachers described the focused activities applied to learning and teaching across curriculum to address particular aspects of literacy or numeracy as identified by test results. Teaching the Arts was often used to support the teaching of other prioritised learning areas particularly through an integrated approach in primary school. This, to some degree, suggested support for Eisner's contention that what is tested determines what is taught. Although, one teacher was adamant that the school leadership should not dictate particular focuses on literacy and numeracy to be applied across learning and teaching on the basis of NAPLAN results. In schools where the NAPLAN test results were being used as a diagnostic tool, the teachers reported development of students' skills such as attention to detail and reading for understanding through incorporating approaches to address areas for improvement identified by the test.

Eisner's (2000) further claim that what is not tested is not taught pertained to the Arts more generally. Primary school teachers reported integrating the Arts with other learning areas as a means of assisting students in those prioritised 'more academic' learning areas, i.e. mathematics and science, while also engaging 'less academic' students as they covered curriculum and responded to test findings in limited time. The participant secondary teachers, being arts specialists reported upon NAPLAN and HSC expectations in terms of their Arts subject. Moreover, I found evidence that high stakes tests, such as the HSC, created anxiety for both teachers and students. This was evident in teachers' references to subject

prioritization, weightings and time allocation and, where in preparation for the HSC, students of drama sought extra rehearsal with the teacher. A challenge inferred by the teachers in this study was that the demands of accountability established by high stakes tests limited teacher capacity to cultivate the learning and development of the individual student through the Arts and, created anxiety among teachers and students exacerbated by public judgment of education based upon reported performance in high-stakes tests.

For students completing secondary school, their HSC result becomes their university entrance rank (ATAR). Eisner's (2000) fifth claim was that university admission criteria did not acknowledge the Arts but focused on more 'solid' subjects like mathematics, science, history and social sciences. One teacher provided evidence that students who studied Arts subjects, such as drama and music, included in their HSC could attain a high ATAR or university entrance ranking and commence tertiary study without either mathematics or science. However, the teacher did acknowledge that mathematics and science still seem to dominate perceptions of university entrance requirements.

The following section explores the sixth and final influence raised by Eisner, that being teacher competence to teach the Arts.

Section 5.5: Teacher competence

Introduction

In the last section, I discussed the impact of testing and found that this did affect what was taught and, in some cases, increased teacher and student anxiety.

Additionally I explored some participant teachers' commentary on university admission criteria and found anecdotal evidence that some students studying the Arts for the HSC attained high ATARs enabling university entry, although there is still an assumption that the study of mathematics and science increases the student's ATAR and is therefore required for university entrance. These were Eisner's fourth and fifth influences on arts education policy.

Impacts on teacher competence

Eisner's (2000) sixth influence on arts education policy was the lack of teacher competence to teach the Arts. Eisner identified that teachers often felt overwhelmed with an already crowded curriculum while simultaneously reporting that there was no arts curriculum to speak of in primary schools in many parts of the United States. Additionally, he noted that there were limited arts teachers in many schools and/or few arts consultants to support generalist teachers. Eisner further maintained that there was no training in arts education in the majority of education programs for pre-service primary school teachers. In fact, three years earlier, he had identified that primary generalist teachers were expected to "teach what they did not know and did not love" (Eisner, 1997, p. 17). A point reiterated by B. Power and Klopfer (2011) who reported that a large percentage of primary generalist teachers had "limited experience" and were "not personally interested in the artforms" they were

required to teach (p. 21). Australian researchers, Alter et al. (2009) also found that for teachers a lack of knowledge coupled with a lack of confidence to teach the Arts is a “substantial hindrance” to teaching the Arts in primary schools (p. 3). According to Alter et al. (2009) five factors compound a primary teacher’s confidence to teach the Arts: time and quantity of curriculum; accountability to other learning areas; the broad scope of the Arts curriculum; self-evaluation of the teacher’s own knowledge, skills and confidence and the value and status attributed to the Arts in the school and its community.

Some years earlier, Eisner (1995a) explained that “competence in teaching is intimately connected with” and “central to... the kind of education that we think students should receive”(p. 99). He reasoned that teacher competence is actually developed in the long-term context of the school where the teacher grows and reflects upon their practice. Although university teacher education programs “certify competence, the state issues the license” to teach in schools (p. 103). Eisner (1995a) further claimed that “to get better at the complex and subtle art of teaching, one needs to have constructive feedback on one’s work”(p. 104). He surmises that “artistry and intuition are enormously important aspects of all forms of teaching and teachers need the space and encouragement to use both in their work”(p. 103). Eisner’s concerns seem universal when examining Western educational systems and therefore relevant in the context of teachers in Australia.

Overview

Throughout this final section of Chapter 5, I explore the participant teachers’ backgrounds and interest in the Arts, as well as the university training they undertook to become a teacher. These experiences are considered in light of

concerns that Eisner claimed impact teacher competence to teach the Arts. The teachers in this study reported training in the Arts during their university studies, additional arts training undertaken for personal interest, and professional learning that contributed to their arts knowledge and skills, confidence and competence³⁵. The primary teachers recognised they worked with an overcrowded curriculum which impacts how they teach the Arts. However, the curriculum they use does include the Arts. Eisner's concern, more than a decade ago, was that there was no arts curriculum, limited arts teachers or consultants, and no arts training in teacher education programs, which all impacted a teacher's competence to teach the Arts.

Issues of curriculum

Like many arts researchers, Eisner (2000) contended that the primary curriculum was overcrowded and, at that time there was no arts curriculum. By contrast, the participant primary teachers in this study had been working with the existing state curriculum in the Arts, first published in 2000. They were now looking towards a transition to the national arts curriculum (as discussed in section 5.1).

With more than thirty years experience, primary teacher Sarah recognised the limitations on teaching the Arts in a primary school. Through necessity, she incorporated visual arts into other learning areas, but ultimately felt overwhelmed by the demands of the current curriculum:

You've got so many things on your plate. You get used to one thing. It's just easy to use the same way of thinking for something different. ... This is the thing there's not enough time or money. (Int2: April 17, 2014)

³⁵ Often 'confidence and competence' are discussed together as identified by Alter et al. (2009). In this study, I use these two terms conscious of the fact that they are not the same but often connected. Refer to Definitions of terms specific to this study (see p14).

Sarah was frustrated by the lack of time she could allocate to the learning and teaching process in class, as she would have preferred to prepare a unit focused solely on visual arts material. A reasonable consideration “in a world that is becoming increasingly more visual, there is a greater need to educate children to better understand images” (Pavlou & Athanasiou, 2014, p. 1). Yet Sarah reasoned, “It’s hard to fit it in because you know you’ve got to get through all this other stuff” (Int1: October 1, 2013). Like Eisner, Alter et al. (2009) also found that teachers believed that the curriculum was “over-crowded” and they “felt overwhelmed by the demands placed upon them to teach an extensive list of curriculum subjects” (p. 10). Sarah integrated visual arts as a means of managing the overcrowded curriculum. In so doing, she demonstrated that teachers who “have strong self-efficacy for arts education ... are more likely to include integrated arts in the classroom” (Lemon & Garvis, 2013, p. 2). In teaching visual arts, Sarah set goals, anticipated outcomes, considered her own actions as she taught, and reflected on her personal effectiveness in teaching the artform (Garvis & Pendergast, 2011). However, while she was confident in her visual arts knowledge and skills, and had developed competence through many years teaching visual arts to primary students, Sarah acknowledged that teaching another artform such as dance “would scare” her (Int2: April 14, 2014). She did not have any experience or training in dance either from her university training or professional learning following graduation. Likewise, Sarah knew that other primary generalist teachers who were “really frightened of doing visual arts... because they don’t know what to do and they’re too scared and they, like the Year 6 kids, don’t know if they’re doing it right” (Int1: October 1, 2013).

Teachers

Sarah highlighted Eisner's point that the primary generalist teacher was expected to teach all curriculum content including the Arts, which the teacher "may not know or love." In 2000, Eisner argued that there were limited arts consultants available and there was no preparation in arts education included in teacher training. Nearly twenty years since Eisner's observation, the situation has progressed in the Australian context. Many teachers who teach the Arts have "personal confidence and professional competence in arts education" (Russell-Bowie, 2012, p. 71). Although there is still a need to provide a "professional learning community" so that pre-service and new teachers "can learn from more experienced in-service" teachers (Wong, 2014, p. 210). Furthermore the status afforded the Arts in the school accompanied by the teacher's evaluation of their own knowledge, skills and confidence clearly contribute to a teacher's competence or lack thereof (Alter et al., 2009). Each of the teachers in this study, had personal interest in one of more artforms which, to use Eisner's words, "they know and love".

In their respective interviews, each of the teachers reported personal experiences in childhood, at school and during university studies that established their interest in an artform and, ultimately influenced their decision to become a teacher. Music teacher, Dean summarized the importance of the teacher's own childhood experience:

All those little fragments of experiences as a kid and opportunities later on in life, present themselves in a different form, and have actually allowed you to be the person who you are. (Int1: November 9, 2013)

Dean's comment encapsulates the recollections of each teacher. Previous experiences demonstrated their personal discovery and subsequent interest in the

Arts, which contributed to their confidence and development of the knowledge and skills to engage students in arts learning and teaching.

Development of confidence, knowledge and skills

Craig, a primary classroom teacher with five years experience revealed, “I didn’t think I had the confidence to do drama because I wasn’t a good reader” (Int1: October 1, 2013). However, he recalled that his discovery of drama was through a teacher in his own early years at primary school:

My whole interest in dramatic arts started in Year 1. And that’s when I had a teacher named Mr. Smith – he’s still a teacher – and he was interested in drama, film and the dramatic arts of Shakespeare. And it was with him, in Year 1, that I started to develop that same interest. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

The ‘interests’ of his teacher inspired Craig’s confidence to participate in drama, although he reported early reading difficulties. Similarly, Gina, head of the creative arts faculty in a regional secondary school identified a lack of self-confidence in her artistic skills while at high school. “I think with visual arts the difficulties I always had was [that] I never really felt as if I was very good at painting or drawing or any of those things but I actually was” (Int1: June 27, 2013). Like Craig, Gina lacked confidence in her own ability although she recalled the beginnings of her interest in the Arts as a child with older and younger siblings:

I was the only one who could draw and I could make things. ... I spent a lot of time by myself. I spent a lot of time making things, making cubby houses, dog’s clothing, inventing games, writing plays, telling stories, all that sort of thing, and painting and drawing and I’m very happy in my own company. I really don’t need anyone else to entertain me. (Int1: June 27, 2013)

Gina's description of her childhood arts experiences suggests she was an independent and self-contained learner, although she lacked confidence in her artistic ability. In her interview, Gina connected her awe of her high school visual arts teachers to her own decision to become an art teacher:

...and so, initially I set out to be an art teacher, 'cause I thought, I had these great art teachers at high school. I thought, wow, I just want a job like that, to get paid to do that. (Int1: June 27, 2013)

Gina and Craig were both positively influenced by the arts teachers they encountered in their own schooling. B. Power and Klopper (2011) identified that educators in many cases enter their teacher education degrees with an initial lack of background experiences and content knowledge in one or more areas of arts education. They reported that 93.9% of participants in their study believed that a "teacher's personal experience in an artform" (p. 19) impacted their teaching of it. Both Craig and Gina identified experiences in their own childhood and schooling that inspired their interest in the Arts and contributed to their desire to become a teacher.

Also identifying an interest in drama from early on, was Errol, a secondary school drama specialist teacher, who "grew up in a very small town in country Victoria, population 8000" (Int1: September 13, 2013). He reminisced about his own school experience in regional Victoria:

...any interest in the Arts was looked upon as you're being a bit of a poof if you didn't have any interest in sport. I didn't have any interest in sport. I was dreadful at sports, but I excelled in drama. And that was available at school in those days due to a very enthusiastic English teacher, who might have turned last period on a Friday into a drama class, which was always one of the highlights of the week. (Int1: September 13, 2013)

Whereas Craig and Gina lacked confidence in their artistic abilities in childhood, Errol was confident, claiming that he “excelled in drama”. He recalled strong memories of drama in his early primary school years and described his recognition of the passion to become an actor:

... we had a class on occupations, “what do you want to be when you grow up?” and kids were drawing astronauts and plumbers and doctors and firemen and all that sort of thing. And I vividly remember this, I drew a picture of a clown. I wanted to be a clown in the circus. Where that came from? Who knows, but there you go. So that stayed with me and I always wanted to be an actor. (Int1: September 13, 2013)

Errol recognised that his interest began in his childhood. Gore et al. (2017) found that in Year 3, many children aspired to having a career as an Arts professional albeit an actor, musician, writer or artist, thus supporting Errol’s claim that even as a child he knew he wanted to become an actor.

Music teacher, Dean, like Errol, had considered a career as a professional musician and discovered his love of the Arts in his childhood. Dean recounted his childhood arts experiences began both at home and in the community. “I suppose combining my background in learning piano from the age of six, and then at the age of ten, I picked up the trumpet” (Int1: November 9, 2013). He continued, “Mum and Dad were both into their music and very creative individuals actually. So I think it probably stems a little bit from that sort of environment at home.” By contrast to Gina who described playing alone as a child, and Errol, who lived in a community with a culture of sport, Dean recognised that his parents’ involvement in the local church influenced his musical experience and interest. Family support influences some pre-service teacher decisions (Alter et al., 2009). Dean noted that he “loved to draw” and “was always quite creative with colour”. He concluded, “So probably my strengths as a student if you look back at my report would have been, ‘Really good at

art, music, loved dramatics’.” (Int1: November 9, 2013) Reflecting upon his secondary schooling, Dean recalled being in the first year to undertake Year 11 at a new and growing school. “Luckily for me a lot of those kids who did Year 11 and 12 were arts-based. So that was offered ... [if] it was predominantly mathematics I probably might not have had that same sort of creative opportunity” (Int1: November 9, 2013).

In addition to being an art-focussed year group, while at school Dean had an early experience of teaching, which influenced his decision to become a music teacher. “That probably stems back to as a kid in Year 10, I started teaching privately as well, and I got a real buzz out of teaching these little kids about what I knew of the piano” (Int1: November 9, 2013). By contrast, Errol who as a child aspired to be an actor, was “a bit scared about going to a big city” to pursue acting. He claimed, “if I couldn’t be an actor I guess I wanted to be a teacher” (Int1: September 13, 2013). Errol completed a Bachelor of Arts in English at a Victorian regional College of Advanced Education and taught English and media in a regional independent school for five years. During this time Errol reported:

I was participant in local amateur productions and directing the school play at school every year and all that sort of thing and, it got to a stage when I was about 25 when I thought I have to do something about this hobby before it becomes too late. So I auditioned for all of the acting schools. And was lucky enough to get into a leading tertiary academy of performing arts. (Int1: September 13, 2013)

Consequently, Errol completed the three years training at the performing arts academy and pursued a career in acting. He claimed that, “you really had to move to the east coast to have a career in the Arts so I moved to Sydney” (Int1: September 13, 2013). He subsequently described acting as a very “trying occupation” and that he “kept food on the table ... when I was acting because I worked as a casual teacher

in many different schools around Sydney” (Int1: September 13, 2013). As an actor, Errol’s situation was not unique. “Amongst all artists, actors spent the least time on creative work, the least time on total arts work, and the most time on non-arts work” (Throsby & Zednik, 2010, p. 39). Although, according to Throsby and Zednik (2010), Errol’s working as a casual drama teacher qualifies as working at another paid occupation connected with the Arts³⁶.

Whereas Errol overcame his initial fear of leaving a small regional town to move to the city to follow his passion and train as an actor, Dean had the option to pursue graphic arts or a career as a performing musician:

I thought about it long and hard, and actually came back to the roots of what I really, really was passionate about. So I chose the Bachelor of Music/Bachelor of Education degree, with the reality of, "Yeah I can do pure performance." But it's such a cut-throat industry I knew that I was probably being sensible in doing an educational degree at the same time. Not to say that I wasn't a performer, but I really, really did enjoy teaching, that was the simple thing about it. (Int1: November 9, 2013)

Dean knew he was passionate about teaching, while for Errol acting was his priority and teaching was a practicality. In comparison, for primary teacher Paula, her interest in the Arts developed after completing school. In her interview, she described her own journey of study at university. “I did my diploma of education ... and I had to major in subjects so I majored in history because I loved history” (Int1:

³⁶ Throsby and Zednik (2010) reported that paid occupations connected with the Arts involve 9% of actors most of the time, 42% of actors work in their preferred artistic occupation most of the time. By comparison, 51% of visual artists, 41% of dancers and 47 % of musicians work in their preferred artistic occupation with 12%, 28% and 22% respectively working, like Errol, at another paid occupation connected with the Arts.

October 1, 2013). So Paula began her tertiary degree with what she “loved”. She explained that she was encouraged not to take English but to study drama instead.

... I was going to major in English but when I went to the first day, the lecturer said, “Oh, don’t do English, it’s really hard. You have to read novels like this. Why don’t you do drama?” And at the time, I went, like anyone else, “Oh, you know, why not? Drama sounds interesting”. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Paula was consistently enthusiastic about learning and positive about her experiences at university. As she recalled her university studies, Paula exuded enthusiasm:

So my first year at university, was the History of Drama, you have to go back, do French, Shakespeare, everything. That was good. Then the second year it was the different styles. The different genres in drama, and that was really interesting, but it wasn’t until the third year when it was totally unexpected. We had psychiatrists come in. It’s like a therapist came in telling us that the world’s a stage and we’re all actors, fine, and then you’ve got James’ Transactional Analysis where people respond to other people in three ways, as a parent, as an adult, as a child. And that blew me away! (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Her passion for drama was a direct result of her tertiary experience demonstrating that a teacher’s determination to teach the Arts is often impacted by their personal experience in the Arts (B. Power & Klopper, 2011). Similarly, Sarah was fascinated to learn about visual arts and to teach it. She explained that she took art for her leaving certificate³⁷:

I got A levels in that and I was always interested in visual arts. Then when I went to uni, I did as much visual arts there as I could. I’ve just always been interested in visual arts and always keen to learn something different. So I made it a mission of mine to go to as many different craft groups and learn as

³⁷ Leaving certificate: the certification of completion of school in New South Wales from 1913 to 1966. In 1967 the leaving certificate was replaced with the High School Certificate, still in use at the time of this study.

<http://www.governmentsschools.det.nsw.edu.au/examinations.shtm>

many different crafts as I could, ... and the only one I think that I haven't covered is lead light windows. I've done everything. I just love learning to do it and I love teaching it. I think it's really beneficial in the classrooms especially for children who are not high achievers because in visual arts nothing's wrong. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Sarah, like Paula, was personally interested in her chosen artform, as was Mary, who graduated as a secondary school visual arts specialist in 2012. She shared Sarah's love of the visual artform. She clearly recalled participating in creative and performing arts, as well as piano lessons and, attending speech and drama lessons in her primary schooling. She reported:

I always liked visual arts, I wasn't that fond of the actual art making side of things because I'm not a very good painter or drawer, like that technical capability, but, I really enjoyed learning about art and researching art. And then, I guess, when I got into the upper levels of Year 12, I realized art wasn't just about that, painting and drawing, there were other sort of aspects and I found that I really more accomplished with, you know, 3D and 4D kind of things with, construction and building ... (Int1: April 12, 2013)

Having realised she did not want to make art, after completing secondary school, Mary was unsure of what she wanted to do so undertook a Bachelor of Art History and Theory. She claimed "I absolutely loved the course. I thought it was fantastic ...". Russell-Bowie (2012) has reported that the pre-service teacher's enthusiasm for the artform contributes to their commitment to arts education, as evident in Mary's enthusiasm for her university experience in visual arts. Furthermore, when "prospective teachers develop an awareness of their own responses to experiences in the Arts, they can be better prepared for noticing and crafting their own aesthetic teaching practice" (E. Anderson, 2016, p. 1). This is demonstrated by Paula, Sarah and Mary in their enthusiasm for their tertiary arts experiences and, by Dean and Errol in their consideration of becoming professional performing artists or teachers.

The case study teachers' recollections of entering the teaching profession demonstrated the influence of others or personal passion for the arform. The teachers were influenced by family members who were teachers or had participated in arts experiences themselves (Alter et al., 2009). Family support in the arts contributed to Dean's positive arts experiences, while Gina and Craig had family members who were teachers. Parsons, Vaughn, Malloy, and Pierczynski (2017) argue that "the best teachers are passionate about teaching, and they know why they are passionate" (p. 23). Mary and Sarah were driven by their love of visual arts, as were Gina and Paula, who had developed a passion for drama, and continued to learn and acquire skills after completing their own teacher training.

Each of the teachers had a range of previous arts experiences, which positively impacted on their confidence towards teaching the Arts. Upon completing their teacher training, each participant teacher recalled different journeys into the classroom. Arts and career experiences along the way continued to develop their arts knowledge and build confidence that contributed to future teacher competence. Arts experiences whether positive or negative from childhood through to adulthood, have been found to influence both a teacher's knowledge and their overall confidence or lack thereof (Alter et al., 2009). Eisner (1995a) highlights that teaching occurs in "highly contextual situations" where the teacher makes decisions most appropriate to the "particular circumstance at that particular time" (p. 103). A competent teacher has the ability to apply knowledge and skills in the classroom for effective learning and teaching to occur.

After graduating, Paula continued to expand her knowledge and skills by undertaking practical visual arts courses through TAFE.³⁸ She revealed that “I had to wait three years for a job and then, well, six months before I got my [full time] job, I got a job as a casual everywhere ...”(Int1: October 1, 2013). Similarly, Gina did not begin teaching immediately. She explained that the university course she undertook “at that time had no practical component” by which to learn the skills and techniques of visual arts and therefore how to teach it. In fact, many Australian university teacher education courses contain limited practical learning activities (Alter et al., 2009), which led Gina to study at Teachers’ College in order to acquire practical skills:

... we walked in, all graduates from Sydney University when, the guy said “right, you girls need to know how to pack a kiln, you need to know how to do this, how to do that”, and we did double art method, and they taught us everything. They taught us survival skills in an art classroom. (Int1: June 27, 2013)

After gaining these practical visual arts skills, Gina travelled, taught history at TAFE in Sydney and “went to Sydney College of the Arts for a year, but I ran out of money” (Int1: June 27, 2013). Through a contact she made while teaching at TAFE, Gina secured a teaching role in an independent girls’ school, where she reported “it was actually a very good learning experience, to learn your craft with two really good practitioners in a place where there were no behaviour problems. No classroom behaviour problems” (Int1: June 27, 2013). Gina was able to develop both her confidence and competence in teaching visual arts under the mentorship of experienced teachers. These collegial interactions and collaboration in professional

³⁸ TAFE: Technical and Further Education: *TAFE* is just one part of VET (Vocational Education and Training). VET covers all vocational training in Australia.
<https://www.tafecourses.com.au/resources/what-is-tafe/>

communities are essential to a teacher's professional development (Driel & Berry, 2012). Paula and Mary, both worked as casual teachers, which developed their confidence and competence in the classroom. In these situations each teacher was being mentored, that is, another teacher was observing and critiquing how they teach in the live context of the school (Eisner, 1995a), seen as essential to developing the teacher's competence.

Mary, like Gina, also studied at a specialised visual arts college, and in 2008, armed with her degree, Mary aspired to work in art curation. "I really wanted to get into some sort of museum work or curatorial type things" (Int1: April 12, 2013).

However, she quickly discovered such roles were rare and extremely difficult to attain:

but all those positions ... it's not entry level. You need to be doing something for a very, very long time. But, at that stage, I really wanted to possibly end up working at the MCA [Museum of Contemporary Art] or, I was looking at getting work at one of the smaller galleries... (Int1: April 12, 2013)

As a result, in the short term, Mary worked in cafes and undertook some freelance art writing before she travelled overseas. Returning after five months, she decided to retrain and in 2009 began a Bachelor of Art Education at the same tertiary institution she had attended previously. Attaining this second degree in 2013, Mary disclosed that she had undertaken thirteen weeks of practical teaching and, like Paula, while unable to find a permanent teaching position, found casual teaching in primary schools. Primary schools frequently employed her as:

they wanted someone that was high school trained because they were more willing to teach year five and six and possibly maybe got along with them [the students] a bit better or ... And you had classroom management a little bit better because it was like taking on a year seven class rather than, you know, a year two class (Int1: April 12, 2013)

Mary's training as a secondary teacher with thirteen weeks practical experience had developed her competence, and was seen as beneficial in terms of her classroom management strategies with upper primary classes.

Sarah also began her teaching career in an alternative role, as a relief from face-to-face³⁹ (RFF) teacher at a government primary school. She explained that she had a certificate in teaching swimming, which was seen as an advantage, and this inadvertently led to a visual arts role:

They got me out there to run their swimming team but when they found out I was good at visual arts, they put me in charge of the visual arts as well and then I did visual arts for a lot of the teachers as well as part of the RFF program. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Sarah held the RFF position for five or six years. The low status of arts education in many schools means that "arts education is randomly given to any teacher" (Delpont & Browne, 2015, p. 366). In Sarah's situation, she taught the unusual combination of swimming and visual arts. However, through this RFF position, she was able to focus upon and develop her pedagogical content knowledge in visual arts, which developed her understanding of "how students learn, or fail to learn" (Driel & Berry, 2012, p. 26). She maintained a strong view that visual arts enables every student to have a positive experience as there is no definite right or wrong. A view reiterated by primary art teacher, Harriet Smith who claims that "because with the Arts... there's no failure" (Gibson, 2016, p. 140). Teachers, through visual arts, engage and

³⁹ RFF (relief from face to face): In NSW government schools, full-time primary classroom **teachers** are entitled to 2 hours (0.084 FTE) [1] of relief from face to face each week. For regular classroom **teachers** 0.042 FTE of this entitlement is derived from the **RFF** formulae allocation and the remaining 0.042 FTE is derived from the Part-time and **Teacher** Librarian allocations. <http://www.teach.nsw.edu.au/documents/staffingformulaeguidelines.pdf> p5

challenge their students to remain on task for a sustained period of time, enabling students to learn how to overcome frustration, such as perceived errors, and continue to develop/refine their artwork (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013). Eisner (2004) surmised:

The arts teach students to act and to judge in the absence of rule, to rely on feel, to pay attention to nuance, to act and appraise the consequences of one's choices and to revise and then to make other choices. (p. 5)

Sarah emphasised that in visual arts “nothing’s wrong” which enabled her students to make choices, revise and change their developing artwork. Her position also highlighted that visual arts was a point of access and beneficial to students who lack confidence, have learning difficulties or are disengaged.

By contrast, Craig, who recognised his own learning difficulties as a school student, reported, “I got to a stage that I hated school and I don’t know why. I just wanted to leave.” (Int1: October 1, 2013) Although he attended a performing arts high school and continued to participate in drama outside of school, Craig left secondary school at Year 10 and “became a cabinet maker” (Int1: October 1, 2013). After 14 months, Craig left cabinet making, determined to become a primary school teacher. His sister was a teacher and Craig thought, “Well, maybe I could do that as well.” He completed Year 11 and 12 in nine months through TAFE and joined a local theatre group. Although he did not achieve the required HSC marks to attain the ATAR to study primary teaching at university, Craig’s back-up plan was “children’s services ... a childcare worker. So I did 2 years of that, excelled in that because I wanted to be a primary school teacher. I just wanted to get there so I completed that in two years.” (Int1: October 1, 2013) Craig then undertook his university degree to become a qualified primary school teacher.

Craig knew that “discovering artistic strengths can lead to self-confidence and well-being” (Winner et al., 2013, p. 265). In his interview for a teaching position with the NSW Department of Education, Craig recalled being a student with learning difficulties and the benefit drama had been to him. “ [I] talked about drama, talked about sport and how ...it [drama] can increase children’s participation in school in all learning areas” (Int1: October 1, 2013). Research suggests that arts integration that explicitly employs drama can improve students’ behavioural engagement as well as their creative and critical thinking skills (A. Anderson & Berry, 2014). Craig expanded:

I pushed how I had this interest with drama and you could see the benefits and how children can react and bring out children who have learning difficulties. Because all through primary school I couldn’t read... And it wasn’t till about maybe Year 8 that it all clicked and I think the key for me was the scripts, learning the lines. So I remembered words ... probably can’t spell them but I just remember the way they look. So that’s probably ... why I’ve excelled in that way. It’s because of drama. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Subsequently Craig was ‘targeted⁴⁰’ by the Education Department and began his primary teaching career with a determination to use drama in his classroom. Like Craig, each teacher in this study held personal views about arts education in schools. These directly contributed to the teachers’ confidence and competence in their classroom practice.

Teacher visions and examples of competence

⁴⁰ In NSW graduates may be “targeted’ for positions in schools in the Department of Education (the government school system), “the graduate recruitment list (as the top match or part of the interested pool)” from http://www.teach.nsw.edu.au/grp/orientation/eo-permanent_appoint.htm

Sarah explained her 'vision' (Parsons et al., 2017) for her primary students. "I like originality, I don't like them to copy." By 'copy' Sarah was emphatic that the students must not replicate the artwork she presented as a stimulus, but create their own appropriation or interpretation of it. She explained:

I show them something that I've found on Pinterest ...[and say], "I want to do something like this. I don't want to *do* this, I want to do something *like* this. This is that person's interpretation, let's do our own." Sometimes you're really opening a can of worms, you get everything and you think "Oh what have I done". Sometimes you get some really creative ideas and then you can show [the students' artworks], you say, "Well look at this." (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Sarah created a dynamic learning environment in which the teacher used narrative and connectedness to enable students to develop their imaginations, explore context and develop understanding in visual arts (Gibson, 2016). Sarah encouraged students to view each other's work and to share "constructive criticism":

It's a good practice for the kids to stand up and go on and have a look around everyone else's work and we only talk about constructive criticism, we don't bag each other's work. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

She maintained a positive classroom environment and supported the development of students' non-academic skills (Parsons et al., 2017) enabling less-confident students to gain confidence:

The kids that are really struggling or have learning difficulties see other people's work and think "mine's as good as that". Just to see their faces, "look what I've done". Isn't that lovely? That's giving them self-confidence. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

She paid particular attention to building the self-confidence of non-academic students. Paula also reported on the benefits of visual arts for some students. She

said, “everything is English, maths, science. We don’t think about anything else.

They’re the most important things” (Int1: October 1, 2013). Paula explained:

... I’ve got a boy in my class who’s not very good academically but in the visual arts, he’s definitely smart here. And I told him, “I know you can’t tell someone to think outside the box” but, he and another girl do think outside the box and it makes the other kids think outside the box and not see things as only 2D but so ... you know what, [he said] “I don’t want to use that colour. Oh, I’ll make a nice colour,” ... “ah, you made your own colour, fabulous”. You know, I want them ... to keep going with that. Not just to be rigid and have the same [as everyone else] (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Paula recognised that this student had an interest and showed ability in visual arts, beginning with this example of mixing his own colours. She saw the importance in enabling his interest in visual arts, regardless of the ‘more important’ curriculum learning areas. This consideration of the ‘less-academic’ student was evident in Craig’s practice. He recalled:

I always try and develop a play with the kids. So it could be linked to HSIE⁴¹. In Year 3 we had the Captain Cook play ... we watched a lot of documentaries and then developed our own play based on that. And what I found, it’s particularly the children who get more involved are the ones who are not good at sport or ... they’re not academic. They’re the children who ... use the left side of the brain more. They’re more of the artistic ... they’re a bit more hyperactive. ... they might be on the spectrum. They might be, someone who goes to someone in [learning] support. (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Craig consciously drew on his own learning experiences as a primary school student in his approach to integrating drama with HSIE. He knew from his own experience that drama would help the less-academic students learn and gain self-confidence. He reported, “It’s those children who you see the biggest impact with”. Craig was “able to transfer into quality arts instruction in the classroom”, the “positive arts experiences” that had contributed to his “acquisition of skills, knowledge and

⁴¹ HSIE: Human Society and its Environment is the Key Learning Area in the New South Wales curriculum, which includes the *History K–10 Syllabus* and *Geography K–10 Syllabus*

confidence”(Alter et al., 2009, pp. 16-17). Moreover he recognised the different capabilities of his students and used drama to explore and navigate collaboratively with them in the learning process (Gallagher, 2016). In fact Craig claimed that the less-academic students “get the script, they remember the lines, they don’t know how to spell any of the words but they can remember them, and then ... that’s their time to shine on stage” (Int1: October 1, 2013).

Sarah, Paula and Craig demonstrated confidence in their subject knowledge, were self-assured in their teaching and, believed in their students’ capacity to learn (Hayes, 2011). Their knowledge of content and suitable pedagogy with the ability to organise meaningful learning (Delpont & Browne, 2015) confirmed their competence.

Teacher professional learning – the importance of ongoing development

Sarah acknowledged that there was always more for her to learn. “There’s not enough in-servicing. There’s not enough time.” (Int1: October1, 2013) Ever-passionate about doing and teaching visual arts, Sarah expressed her disappointment at missing out on contributing to the development of the new national curriculum, demonstrating her commitment to the subject:

... two or three teachers from here went into help write it and I was a bit peeved off because I was away the day that they there were asked. I thought I should have been in there because I had all the ideas (Int1: October 1, 2013)

Sarah’s confidence in her ideas and approach to visual arts is testament to her pedagogical artistry, which along with professional development and curriculum

leadership defines areas for a teacher's ongoing self-evaluation and development (Henderson & Slattery, 2008). Similarly, as Head of creative arts in a regional secondary school, Gina explained that she was "forcing them [her staff] to go and look at their programs. I've been telling them they have to modify things and get kids excited about things, but they do the same thing every year." (Int1: June 27, 2013) Gina maintained the benefit of professional learning opportunities to change the practice of the visual arts teachers in her school:

.... this national partnerships money that we've been given at our school has meant that one of the art teachers has started to really reflect on what she's doing. She's actually going to lead a change in that area (Int1: June 27, 2013)

She found that enabling professional development for teaching staff contributed substantially to teachers' competence when it actively engages teachers in "collaboration with colleagues" (Broome, 2016, p. 70); "challenges teachers intellectually" (Firestone, 2014, p. 103) and "that providing teachers with specific input can contribute to the development of their PCK [pedagogical content knowledge]" (Driel & Berry, 2012, p. 27). Professional learning also reinforces learning through practice and creates opportunities for teachers to review and resolve instructional concerns (Firestone, 2014, p. 103). Each case study teacher's confidence and competence to teach the Arts grew from their own interest and prior experience in the Arts. Beyond their teacher education training, teachers' confidence and competence was enhanced by their ongoing classroom practice, self-reflection and professional learning.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that many of the concerns impacting teacher competence to teach the Arts, raised by Eisner almost twenty years ago, remain. However, some of the findings reveal that progress in curriculum and schools has been made with inclusion of arts education, and as a result, there are teachers who are competent to teach the Arts within our schools.

The commentary of the primary teachers support Eisner's claim of an overcrowded curriculum in the primary years. Whilst Eisner (2000) purported there was no arts curriculum at all, the primary teachers in this study access and use the state arts curricula, first published in 2000.

Eisner's further concern impacting teacher competence to teach the Arts was that there was no arts training in teacher training programs at university. All the participating teachers developed knowledge and skills in their chosen artforms throughout their school and university studies. Many of the teachers also recounted early experiences of the Arts from their own childhood. Moreover they acknowledged the importance of developing teacher confidence and competence to teach the Arts through teaching experience, ongoing skills development, personal reflection and mentorship.

The participating primary teachers all loved their particular artform contradicting Eisner's concern that primary teachers "may not know or love what they must teach". It should however be noted that the primary teachers who volunteered to participate in this case study all did so because they love and value the Arts.

The following and final chapter unpacks these findings in relation to issues facing arts teachers in Australia and internationally. Hence, Chapter 6 presents an argument that when arts teachers interpret curriculum through pedagogy then the effects of curriculum reform may be better supported and understood. The argument is underpinned by understanding Eisner's (2000) six influences on arts education policy in the context of twenty-first century arts education in schools. It also considers the tension between the teacher's desire for open-ended learning and the demands of external testing for accountability, and presents implications for future research to consider curriculum policy and teacher practice in the Arts.

Chapter 6 Discussion and conclusions

Introduction

The previous chapter gave the reader an insight into the participant teachers' perceptions of curriculum change through categories derived from Eisner's (2000) six influences on arts education policy. It also reflected upon the ways each teacher's own experiences and interests in the Arts contributed to their interpretation of curriculum and their resulting teaching practice. These were considered in relation to the current NSW syllabus and the incoming national arts curriculum.

This final chapter explores these findings in relation to curriculum reform and the resulting issues faced by arts teachers in NSW schools. It argues that when arts teachers interpret curriculum through pedagogy then the effects of curriculum change may be better supported and understood. It further contends that arts teachers need to be given scope to present open-ended learning and teaching opportunities to enable students to discover their own creative capacity as well as the ability to learn authentically.

The teachers' responses in the first interview (see Appendix 7) contextualised each teacher's situation and introduced their personal backgrounds and interests in the Arts. In the second interview (see Appendix 8) teachers revealed how their approach to curriculum was interpreted through the lens of pedagogy. As the researcher, I found that the participant teachers regarded the curriculum itself as a less important influence on their ability to teach the Arts than associated factors related to their context, i.e. the attitudes of the school's leadership and community

towards the Arts, accountability requirements and the individual teacher's competence and confidence.

The focus of this study was on teachers' perceptions of curriculum change. To this end, this research asked an overarching question: What are NSW arts teachers' perceptions of change in the arts curriculum in the Australian context?

It further explored two additional questions: What evidence from the data will identify these perceptions? What factors may account for these perceptions?

These questions shaped and as a result created the new knowledge proposed by this study. The teachers' answers and anecdotes from the interviews were integral to the investigation. However, this chapter is not an analysis of those commentaries, although they do form part of the discussion responding to the overarching research question: What are NSW Arts teachers' perceptions of change in the Arts curriculum in the Australian context? My study takes account of teachers in NSW today who have some training in the Arts and work with an arts curriculum, in stark contrast to the time of Eisner's seminal paper, *Arts education policy?* (2000) which identified that teachers in California had neither arts training nor an arts curriculum. To explore the teachers' perceptions, I now return to the six influences raised by Eisner (2000), as these concerns are universal to examination of Western educational systems, and therefore relevant in the context of teachers in Australia.

The categories for this study

Eisner's propositions were penned almost two decades ago and much has changed in the education space since that time. In his paper, *Arts education policy?*, Eisner (2000) identified six concerns that limited arts education in schools:

1. Policy is too difficult to disentangle from aims of education or conceptions of appropriate practice;
2. Forces influencing arts education are most often from outside it rather than within it;
3. National and state standards enforce or lead to uniformity;
4. Test scores drive curriculum because what is tested is what is taught;
5. Arts are considered as 'elective' by tertiary institutions; and
6. Absence of teacher competency to teach the Arts.

As I explored Eisner's (2000) six influences on arts education policy, I discovered that they needed to take account of more recent research. This includes the Australian study of the impact of arts participation on students' academic and non-academic outcomes (Martin et al., 2013), as well as teachers' conceptualisations of twenty-first century skills (van de Oudeweetering & Voogt, 2017) and their self-confidence to teach the Arts (de Vries, 2017). This led to some variation in the criteria chosen by Eisner. My revised list is as follows:

1. Reading and responding to curricula;
2. Outside forces affecting the Arts in schools;
3. The impact of national and state standards;
4. The impact of testing and tertiary entrance ranking;
5. Teacher competence.

The first of Eisner's (2000) influences was that "policy is too difficult to disentangle from aims of education or conceptions of appropriate practice" (p. 4). Here I moved to the broader position of reading and responding to curricula. In the first interview, the participant teachers associated their curriculum knowledge with the existing

state syllabus and initially interpreted the incoming Australian arts curriculum against this background. In the second interview, teachers gave more specific consideration to how they read and interpreted the incoming Australian arts curriculum in their current school context, although the curriculum was yet to be implemented.

The second influence was that “forces influencing arts education are most often from outside it rather than within it” (Eisner, 2000, p. 4). At the time of Eisner’s paper, US arts education policy was limited, and existing policy was “formulated by people outside the field to influence schools” (2000, p. 4). The process of curriculum development in the Australian context in 2012 differed markedly to that in the US as reported by Eisner (2000). Australian curriculum development occurred within a documented and transparent curriculum development process (ACARA, 2012b) and included consultation with state and territory education authorities, arts teachers, arts education academics, arts education policy-makers and other arts specialists. As a result, I revised the concept of ‘outside’ forces to focus upon outside forces *within the school* affecting the teacher’s capacity to teach the Arts. In the first interview, teachers were asked to talk about the “major influences and limitations on their current practices in teaching the Arts” (see Appendix 7). In their responses teachers identified those factors within the school, but *outside* the Arts, that impacted their teaching practice.

Eisner’s (2000) third influence was that “national and state standards enforce or lead to uniformity” (p. 4). Here I retained the gist of Eisner’s assertion about the impact of national and state standards. Within the Australian context, although the adoption of national statements and profiles was rejected in the early 1990s (Ewing, 2013a), each of the States and Territories incorporated these national statements

and profiles into existing curricula (Piper, 1997; Yates, 2008). Consequently, comparison of the incoming national arts curriculum with the current NSW state syllabi for creative arts revealed many similarities, but some differences. Of note, the incoming national curriculum described achievement ‘standards’ in contrast to the prescribed ‘outcomes’ in the current state syllabus. Here teachers identified a distinction between the open-ended learning approach enabled by the Australian arts curriculum in contrast to the product-oriented outcomes focus of the existing NSW Creative Arts syllabi.

The fourth influence proposed by Eisner (2000) was that “test scores drive curriculum, because what is tested is what is taught”(p. 4). Australia is one of many countries using results in standardised and high-staked testing from PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) results and OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) ranking to measure its international educational standing. Within Australia, literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN) was introduced nationally in 2009. Prior to this in NSW, the Higher School Certificate (HSC) was the existing high-stakes test for the end of school certification and the Basic Skills Test (BST) to test the literacy and numeracy of year 6 students across the state against a common scale⁴² had been introduced in 1989. NAPLAN joined these existing tests.

For NSW students, completing secondary school, the HSC is converted into the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank, ATAR. Perceptions of subject ranking and weighting in the HSC and subsequent ATAR were evident when the participant secondary teachers’ described students’ experiences in subject choices for their final year of schooling. The teachers conveyed how much or how little the students

⁴² <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/series/18928>

enjoyed the final two years of their schooling, and how this subject selection contributed to their eligibility for university study. Eisner's fifth influence was that the "Arts are considered as 'elective' by tertiary institutions" (2000, p. 5). Reflective of the participant teachers' commentary, I connected high-stakes testing and university entrance ranking to create a combined lens: the impact of testing and the Arts for tertiary entrance.

The sixth and final influence Eisner (2000) identified was an "absence of teacher competence to teach the Arts" (p. 6). At the time, Eisner's focus was on primary school teachers in the state of California, USA. My study took place in the Australian state of New South Wales, where primary generalist teachers are expected to teach all of the Arts. Research has identified that many of these teachers do not have the knowledge, skills or confidence to teach music (de Vries, 2017; Petrova, 2012b). A situation which has not improved in more than fifteen years, "...teacher education in music needs to be improved" (Temmerman, 1997, p. 32). Few primary teachers have the confidence, knowledge or skills to teach dance or drama (Lemon & Garvis, 2013). Of all of the Arts, primary teachers were more likely to teach visual arts than any other artform (Alter et al., 2009; B. Power & Klopper, 2011). Historically teachers have had more access to units on visual arts through their tertiary training, although their visual arts knowledge may be at or below the level of a Year 8 student (Dinham, 2007). I found disparity across the participant teacher's reported self-confidence to teach different artforms reflective of each teachers' "self-image as artistic individuals who recognise the value of the arts in children's education" (Davies, 2010, p. 635). However, each of the teachers recounted how they addressed their own perceived deficit knowledge or skills by seeking assistance from a more experienced colleague or associate, or by undertaking additional training.

The findings of the study under the five categories developed from Eisner's (2000) six influences on arts education policy, has informed the assertions in the following conclusions of the study.

Conclusions

The general conclusion is that *it is the teachers' interpretation and application of the curriculum that is the key to its success or failure*. The following discussion explores the prominent findings of the study.

Finding 1: Arts teachers have a preference for curricula that enables open-ended learning

The participant teachers saw the potential for authentic open-ended learning through the Australian arts curriculum. Eisner's view that "education is a process of learning how to become the architect of our own education" (p. 9) was confirmed by the 'visions' (Parsons et al., 2017) for student learning held by the case study teachers. They carefully considered how they would apply the Australian arts curriculum in the classroom with their students. However, the teachers identified a distinction between the pre-determined outcomes in the NSW syllabus, and the open-ended learning opportunities in the foreshadowed Australian arts curriculum. They reported a sense of restriction in working with the current NSW creative arts syllabi. This may well have been because they had become conditioned to fulfilling pre-determined outcomes in the NSW syllabi, by adhering to standardised learning approaches, such as set units of work in primary school, or repeated programs of lesson plans in secondary school. This was a concern raised by Eisner (2004) in that

“we place a much greater emphasis on prediction and control than on exploration and discovery” (p. 6). Accountability demands often inhibit teachers’ use of creative, open-ended explorations and in-depth projects (Costantino, 2011; Oreck, 2006). It is possible that even working with the perceived ‘open-endedness’ of the Australian arts curriculum, after a period of time, teachers may build a repertoire of standardised or uniform approaches to learning and teaching. The danger, as teachers strive to fulfil accountability requirements, is that these previously innovative approaches become routine and even stale.

Quality arts learning provides flexibility (Gibson, 2016) and involves collaborative learning by the student and teacher (E. Anderson, 2016). However, collaborative and student-centred approaches to learning and teaching (Eisner, 2000; Ewing, 2012) are frequently limited by expectations to fulfil the requirements of pre-determined outcomes. The primary teachers in my study were not completely restricted by the pre-determined outcomes in the current NSW state syllabus, as they reported backward mapping their learning and teaching activities to fit the prescribed outcomes in the NSW creative arts syllabi. Nevertheless, they saw something even better in the Australian arts curriculum; the vision of an open-ended artistic process, which was not attached to a predetermined end-product. In allowing students to make their own choices about what and how they will learn (Thomson & Sefton-Green, 2011) teachers challenge existing knowledge, and learning becomes student-focused (Ewing, 2010). Often, both the students and the teachers enjoy the learning experience when students ‘own’ their learning supporting Eisner’s (2004) view that the student is empowered when they design their own learning.

Curriculum is understood to be what can be taught to whom, when and how (Eisner, 2004, 2008; Yates, 2009). The teachers in this study found the new Australian arts curriculum easy to read and interpret. That said, the Australian curriculum has remained structured into disciplines which “interferes with more creative views on how curricula can be selected and organised for students to enable learning” (Eisner, 2008, p. 15). Through the digital functionality of the Australian curriculum, primary teachers were able to explore possibilities for integration of arts subjects with other curriculum learning areas by using the column view option. This presented three subjects across one screen, and could be scrolled across to display up to five subjects in one view. See Figure 5.2 (p104). If the teacher sought further explanation of the content description, the ‘definitions’ were accessed by the click of the mouse, revealing a pop-up window containing the glossary definition of the artform specific term in the content description. See Figure 5.3 (p105). The digital curriculum also provided examples of learning and teaching, referred to as ‘elaborations’, for each content description. Elaborations were accessed by clicking the hyperlinked content description code, producing a new window containing the elaborations and links to related online learning and teaching resources. See Figure 5.4 (p107).

The digital functionality of the Australian curriculum provided teachers with immediate options not available in the existing printed NSW syllabi for the creative arts. A separate publication, *Creative arts K to 6 units of work*, accompanied the existing NSW creative arts syllabus, providing sample lessons, which some teachers used verbatim. Reflecting upon how she read and responded to curriculum, primary teacher Sarah observed, “You get used to one thing. It’s just easy to use the same way of thinking for something different” (Int2: April 17, 2014). Participant teachers sought to simultaneously engage students and efficiently present required

curriculum content. When they identified an approach that worked it was often repeated year to year. However, Eisner (2004) argued, “as experienced teachers well know, the surest road to hell in a classroom is to stick to the lesson plan no matter what” (p. 6). The participant teachers recognised opportunities to develop unique and open-ended arts learning experiences in the Australian arts curriculum, noting that they could work “flexibly and purposively” (Eisner, 2004, p. 10) with the new curriculum.

In addition to developing the student’s knowledge and skills in each curriculum learning area, teachers also nurtured the student’s understanding of how to learn, and the student’s developing talents, skills, abilities and dispositions (Print, 1987; Seddon, 1983) that evolve through their day to day experience at school. These other abilities, dispositions, skills and talents comprise the ‘hidden’ curriculum, now considered to be twenty-first century skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Winner et al., 2013). Eisner (2004) maintained that the student manages their own learning of the official curriculum alongside their acquisition of the hidden curriculum. The participant primary teachers, in particular, reported using the Arts to identify and develop the talents and interests of students who were frequently considered less-academic. Primary teachers also used the Arts to engage students with a diversity of learning styles (Oreck, 2006), cultivating each student’s individuality (Eisner, 2000) and instilling in their students a love of learning. By contrast, the appointed reviewers of the Australian arts curriculum and the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA) believed that primary teachers do not have the knowledge, skills, experience or capacity to teach the Arts in an integrated manner (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a). Conversely, the primary teachers who participated in this study, read and interpreted the new arts curriculum through their own pedagogical approaches, even though curriculum contributors “were forbidden to consider

pedagogy” (O’Toole, 2015, p. 190). The participating primary teachers utilised the Arts to unlock the various talents and abilities they noticed in their students. Primary teacher, Craig recalled a student in his class who wanted to be a dancer. “She’s not very good at it, but if you see her on stage, she’s the one who stands out because she really enjoys it” (Int1: October 1, 2013). Teachers sought opportunities for students to participate through the Arts, which developed the student’s self-confidence and positively influenced their academic motivation (Martin et al., 2013). The teachers in this study also used the Arts as an effective pedagogical tool for some students. Again, primary teacher, Craig, used drama with his students to co-create a play for HSIE⁴³. He found this approach involved the students who were less confident as they were “not good at sport” and “were not academic” (Int1: Oct 1, 2013). By engaging and involving these students through drama for HSIE learning, Craig was building their self-confidence and academic motivation (Martin et al., 2013) as he cultivated each individual’s potential. Through increasing the student’s self-confidence with arts-based pedagogies, the teacher found the students were willing to try learning in other curriculum areas which they sometimes found difficult or challenging.

In this study, the participant teachers conveyed self-confidence and were suitably experienced and competent in their arts specialty. These teachers read the new national arts curriculum through their pedagogy and identified the benefits and opportunities it provided. They particularly liked the opportunities for open-ended learning in the Australian arts curriculum in preference to the outcomes focus in the current NSW creative arts syllabus. But, is this blue-sky dreaming? Since the advent of the Australian curriculum, mandatory reporting of student achievement on a five-

⁴³ Human Society and Its Environment <https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/>

point scale required by the Commonwealth and defined by the state education authority has been adopted by states such as South Australia and Victoria. The style of reporting is determined by the school “in consultation with parents and communities” (ACARA, 2013, p. 16). In an effort to reduce the perceived demands of the arts curriculum, APPA recommended a generic learning area achievement standard for the arts curriculum in the primary years (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014a). Teachers could then report on one learning area rather than up to five individual arts subjects. Like their counterparts in other states, NSW teachers will continue to be required to account for learning achievements, even with a new curriculum that promotes open-ended learning. It remains to be seen, but this compulsory reporting as determined by the NSW education authority may repeat the style of reporting in the current State syllabus, forcing teachers to adopt an outcomes-oriented approach to learning and teaching to fulfil reporting requirements.

Finding 2: Arts teachers believe that outside forces within the school have a larger impact on Arts teaching than curriculum policy

School attitude towards the Arts

Participant teachers claimed that the school’s attitude to the Arts was the main influence on their capacity to teach the Arts. However, the participant primary teachers’ personal and professional relationship to arts education also contributed to the place and value of the Arts within the school (Lemon & Garvis, 2013).

Primary schools identify and hone the artistic interests and abilities of their teachers, as was evident in the experiences of the participant primary teachers. For example, Sarah’s first school combined her certification to teach swimming with her

personal interest in visual arts, while Craig was given the responsibility of the school production based on his own experience with drama. Teachers like Craig and Sarah are “resourceful, demonstrate agency and develop positive management strategies” to “overcome adversity” (Bowles & Arnup, 2016, p. 16) within the school. These primary teachers’ own beliefs in the value of the Arts contributed to their school’s attitude towards the Arts. So, in some situations, the school’s attitude to the Arts, stemmed from within the broader school community rather than being derived solely from the views held by the school leadership.

In many schools the way the Arts are viewed within the school most frequently derives from the principal (Cutcher, 2014). In some instances the views of other staff and the broader school community also contribute to the manner the Arts are perceived in the school. The teacher’s capacity to effectively teach in and through the Arts is supported or deterred by the school’s attitude to the Arts. It was evident that the principal’s leadership style influenced how participant teachers felt about their role as arts specialists within the school. Teachers felt valued when the Arts were valued across their schools.

In two cases, the teachers reported the Arts were marginalised in their schools. Arts activities were held outside of school time and students’ artworks were not being shared with the school community. These teachers considered that their school executives did not value the Arts, and consequently the Arts were not valued by their schools. By contrast, productive school leadership was evident at Dean’s school. The principal’s collaborative approach to rethinking teaching responsibilities and how curriculum was interpreted in the school, deepened the democracy in education and empowered the teachers (Hayes et al., 2004). Primary teachers, Sarah and Craig reported feeling overwhelmed by managerial demands, which

undermined and devalued their teaching expertise. They felt they “couldn’t cope”. Clearly, their principal’s autocratic leadership style depleted teacher enthusiasm for their craft and diminished the teacher’s willingness to utilise the student-centred potential of the open-ended learning available in the Australian arts curriculum.

Regulatory language in NSW curricula

The Australian arts curriculum avoids the use of terms such as ‘mandatory’ and ‘elective’ and because of this is at odds with the regulatory language of the NSW syllabus. Music and visual arts are ‘mandated’ in Years 7 and 8. Consequently, school leadership and the broader school community perceived music and visual arts to be more important than the other arts subjects – drama and dance (media arts is not included in the NSW creative arts syllabi). This perceived hierarchy of arts subjects was also evident in the 2014 *Review of the Australian curriculum* that prioritised music and visual arts in the same way that these arts subjects are prioritised in the current NSW creative arts syllabus. The school’s response to this regulation was evident in resourcing and timetabling which directly impacted arts learning and teaching. Time, materials and facilities also influenced students’ perceptions of the value of the different Arts subjects.

In schools where the Arts were not strongly valued Arts, teachers sought academic justification of the Arts (Gallagher, 2016). In these schools, teachers also presented out-of-school activities, particularly in drama, to engage and support students. Furthermore, secondary teachers preferred continuity of learning and teaching enabled by commencing the Arts subject in Year 7 within the school timetable. Yet, in primary schools, the allocation of required time for prioritised subjects (i.e. mathematics and English) limited the time teachers could allocate to teach the Arts. Lack of time often resulted in the integration of the Arts in learning and teaching,

but this then impacted how primary teachers taught the Arts and often made them feel pressured (Alter et al., 2009). This also challenged primary teachers to integrate the Arts in differing ways for the benefit of students' engagement and learning. Notwithstanding, the participant teachers were confident and able to adjust their use of curriculum to suit the learning needs of their students and thereby fulfill the intended artistic goals of the Arts curriculum (Dunn & Stinson, 2011; O'Neill, 2006). However the school's attitude to the Arts was also influenced by accountability through measureable outcomes (Alexander, 2011) and compulsory high-stakes testing (Berliner, 2011) (see Findings 3 and 4 following).

**Finding 3: Arts teachers believe that standards and testing cause
*anxiety among teachers and fear of failure in students***

As the national arts curriculum was a new policy for arts education in Australian schools, Eisner's (2000) position that policy represents a collection of ideas "designed to guide practice" (p. 4) provided a logical starting point for this study. The priority given to mathematics and science in the Australian curriculum maintains the scientific-positivist view that only mathematical and verbal reasoning comprise intelligence, and is suggestive of the belief that only some students will have the emotional capacity for the Arts (Eisner & Vallance, 1974). This view harks back to the demands of the industrial revolution and the emphasis on training for jobs. Twenty-first century curricula challenge this positivist position, and return us to Dewey's view that children learn experientially; that through experience the child develops the capacity to learn (Eisner, 2004; O'Toole et al., 2009). The regulation of twenty-first century curriculum has increased the demands of accountability through curriculum standards and the additional demands of high-stakes testing

(Alexander, 2010; Ewing, 2012; Hall & Ozerk, 2010). Furthermore, the hierarchy of priority attached to specific learning areas restricts what teachers can do with curriculum. Dewey aspired to an integrated curriculum that made education relevant to all children. In the twenty-first century, although the adherence to positivist approaches for mathematics and science remains, a new view on arts curricula internationally positions the Arts as central to curriculum and promotes the student as art-maker, audience, critic and historian (M. Anderson, 2014). This is a feature of the new national arts curriculum in Australia.

The demands of outcomes and standards

Eisner (2000) predicted that curriculum developed in conjunction with standards and testing would hold teachers and students “accountable for the realisation of pre-specified outcomes” (p. 5). This is evident in the most recent development of national curriculum and testing in the US, the UK and Australia. Justifying the Arts as “bootstraps for escalating academic performance” in other learning areas (Eisner, 2000, p. 4), arts educators have brought this accountability upon themselves.

While arts education research frequently reports the “transferable skills” (Crossick & Kaszynsky, 2016) that the Arts contribute to other learning areas (for example, learning a musical instrument improves mathematical learning), both the primary and secondary teachers in my study recognised the benefits of learning in the Arts for its own sake. That said, both the primary and secondary participant teachers were also acutely aware of reporting requirements for accountability in core subjects such as mathematics. Consequently, as a means of measuring student achievement in the Arts, teachers apply similar reporting strategies for the Arts as for other key learning areas like mathematics, in accordance with the pre-specified outcomes in the current NSW creative arts syllabi. Similarly, ‘achievement

standards' have been developed for each of the arts subjects in the Australian arts curriculum. Standards or outcomes are "predicated on assumptions of uniformity and predictability" (Eisner, 2000, p. 4) and do not enable the cultivation of the individual student's creative learning and thinking. The focus is on attainment of the outcome not the student's learning experienced during the creative process. Therefore, prescribed outcomes or standards often lead to 'uniformity' in the approach to learning and teaching, and ultimately restrict deeper exploration of the Arts. Teachers interviewed in my study noted that the focus on the processes of 'making' and 'responding' in the Australian arts curriculum were in contrast to the NSW syllabus, and better enabled students to explore creative processes.

Expectations fuel a fear of failure

It emerged from my interviews with both primary and secondary teachers that students feared making mistakes in the Arts, and that primary students in particular learned early that they were required to fulfil expectations. Students approached arts learning activities with a tendency to 'copy' or 'replicate' what they perceived to be the required outcome, not with a natural curiosity to explore the artform. In drama, students mimicked a vocal style, and in visual arts, students literally reproduced an artefact, rather than using an idea as a stimulus for individual exploration of form using materials and techniques. Primary and secondary arts teachers recognised that children learnt through experience (Cutcher, 2014), but they also knew that expectations about measurable outcomes drove their interpretations of the curriculum, and promoted rote-learning by students (O'Toole, 2015).

Participant secondary teachers also reported that because students feared making mistakes they avoided risk-taking or experimentation, particularly in visual arts and

drama. Drama students in a specialist performing arts school, revealed a “heightened sensitivity to criticism” about their performances, but were not perturbed by feedback on their written work. By contrast, drama students in a non-specialist school combined criticism of their performances and written work with their understanding of the syllabus outcomes, using this to revise and improve their performance. Although in both situations, the teachers had prepared their students for the task through exploration of the syllabus outcomes. The teacher from the performing arts school stressed the students’ sensitivity to criticism, was because “there’s so much of themselves in the work” (Errol Int1: September 13, 2013). These students were pressured by personal and school expectations to achieve high grades in actual performance. This was in fact the priority of the school, and how the school aimed to be perceived by the public (Gaztambide-Fernández et al., 2016). In this situation, the school’s attitude to the Arts was driven by public expectations of the school and fuelled students’ anxiety.

The guiding document for the development of the Australian Curriculum, *The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (2008) is limited in that it does not acknowledge that making mistakes is an essential part of learning. *The Melbourne Declaration* states the curriculum aims to develop “successful” learners (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008, p. 8). Yet PISA examines how students extrapolate and apply their knowledge. Surely that involves students taking risks and working out resulting problems. A curriculum that prioritises assessment does not enable students to experience failure and the resolution of mistakes (Ross, 1986). In fact, such a curriculum develops a reliance on replicable data and reduces meaningful learning (Dufficy, 2005), which results in the uniformity feared by Eisner (2000). Such a curriculum encourages teachers to develop and rely upon repeatable learning experiences that cover curriculum

content and fulfil outcomes. It also promotes accountability that demands and may even inhibit teachers' competence to teach the Arts in more flexible and creative ways.

Competent teachers strive to inspire students to a curiosity and love of learning which reaches beyond merely fulfilling pre-determined outcomes. Although the teachers in this study recognised and were pleased by the forward-thinking and twenty-first century approaches in the new Australian arts curriculum, once accountability requirements are applied, this curriculum does not explicitly address the above concerns in equipping students to become successful learners. So in an age of accountability and measurement, the Australian curriculum, like the NSW syllabus, has the potential to set students up for disappointment and fear of failure. Learning through making and overcoming errors was recognised by the participant teachers themselves, "there's no mistakes in art" (Sarah, Int1: October 1, 2013).

Overcrowded curriculum

A further complication of the Australian curriculum is the apparent overcrowding in the primary years. Eisner (2000) raised this concern nearly twenty years ago. APPA voiced this concern on behalf of primary during the Australian curriculum development consultation of 2012 and again in the *Australian curriculum review of 2014*. The complaint was aired most particularly during the second and third phases of curriculum development. Additionally, policy identified a hierarchy of prioritised disciplines, whereby the learning areas were "not of equal importance at all year levels. English and mathematics are of fundamental importance in all years of schooling" (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008, p. 14). As a result, English, mathematics, science and history gained more space in the new curriculum and the Arts, following after them, was considered to need reduction.

Teachers were sensitive to the hierarchy of disciplines, which continues to be maintained through the reporting requirements and reflected in the demands of standardized literacy and numeracy testing (see Finding 4 following). English, mathematics, science and history were prioritised in curriculum development, comprising the first phase. The second phase of curriculum development included geography, languages and the Arts. Phase three comprised health and physical education (HPE), information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology (D&T), economics, business, and civics and citizenship (ACARA, 2010). This hierarchical ordering of learning areas for development was interpreted to indicate the value attributed to each, with those developed first considered more important. Furthermore, the continued emergence of more draft curriculum for consultation led to 'consultation fatigue' across the education sector. The general belief that the primary curriculum was overcrowded fuelled teacher anxiety in response to reporting requirements to fulfil accountability demands. During my time working on the national curriculum development I was asked if I would have done anything differently. I replied that I would have developed the primary curriculum as a whole first, before contemplating the secondary curriculum. Primary teachers teach the whole student, secondary teachers teach the individual subject. These are two distinct philosophical approaches that should have been considered separately and the associated reporting should also reflect this consideration.

Governments continue to hold schools, and therefore teachers and students, accountable through standards and testing (Alexander, 2011; Keddle, 2017), although twenty-first century curriculum policy incorporates desired competencies or capabilities, considered to be innovative skills, alongside discipline-based

content. The function of schools is more than teaching students to take a test (Eisner, 2008). Eisner (2000) determined the teacher's focus should be on cultivating the individual student rather than on the accountability of fulfilling pre-specified outcomes, that is, the student's acquisition of the official curriculum. A premise supported by the case study teachers. However, while teachers preferred to cultivate each student's individual development, they were compelled by demands of accountability to fulfil curriculum outcomes and ensure students' academic and arts performance lived up to expectations determined by their respective school. Accountability to reporting against set outcomes in the Arts limited the students' enjoyment of learning and restricted the teacher's capacity to cultivate the learning and development of the individual student.

Finding 4: Arts teachers believe that adjusting to high-stakes testing narrows the curriculum

Eisner (2000) claimed the Arts were not considered in university entrance criteria, limiting acceptance of the valuable contribution of the Arts to the student's development. But in NSW, students can undertake arts subjects for the HSC and these are considered part of their university entrance. Although teachers in this study insisted that the Arts contributed to their students' development academically and holistically, the public misperception remained that only 'academic' disciplines, such as mathematics and science, enabled high HSC scores. There is a belief that HSC scores are 'scaled' according to a subject hierarchy for ATAR ranking. But, secondary visual arts and drama teacher, Gina, was adamant that students were able to attain high results through arts subjects, citing music and drama, in her students' HSC and subsequent ATAR scores.

In NSW, the Higher School Certificate (HSC) signifies the end of secondary school. The student's HSC results are scaled to become the student's Australian Tertiary Admission Rank or ATAR. Dance, drama, music and visual arts are curriculum subjects assessed and tested alongside 'more academic' subjects, such as mathematics and science. Public judgment of education based on the HSC has resulted in greater emphasis placed upon each school's academic achievements in the HSC and associated ATARs (Klenowski, 2010). Three of the secondary specialist teachers in my study reported different examples of students' subject selection for the HSC. One teacher claimed that the students who opted to study drama and music, which they liked, rather than undertaking mathematics or science for the HSC, enjoyed their final years of school, attained high ATAR scores and had no difficulty with entrance to university. A second teacher recalled a student who intentionally studied mathematics and science to fulfil university entrance requirements, but disliked these academic classes in his final years of school. In fact, his teacher claimed that this student's most positive experience in Year 12 was performing a role in the non-curricula school play. The school community remembered him for his performance in the play not for his HSC score. The third teacher described a group of students studying drama for the HSC who, anxious about fulfilling the required outcomes, sought additional rehearsal time with the teacher. Only the students reported by the first teacher 'enjoyed' their learning. In the other situations, the students' active engagement of learning was inhibited by accountability demands forcing a focus on fulfilling pre-specified outcomes for the high-stakes end of school certification.

The NSW HSC, and similar high-stakes tests, such as NAPLAN, promote the teaching of 'testwiseness' (Klenowski, 2010). The national standardised test in literacy and

numeracy, NAPLAN, was introduced in 2009 before the Australian arts curriculum was developed. All learning areas are expected to teach literacy and numeracy. In my study, the arts teachers reported that the leadership in their schools directed them to specifically address 'areas for improvement' in literacy as identified by the school's NAPLAN results. Participant teachers followed school directives and incorporated the literacy concerns identified by the NAPLAN test results into their arts lessons. That teachers were expected to explicitly incorporate literacy and numeracy into their learning and teaching, in response to the schools' NAPLAN results, is contentious. One teacher in my study was adamant that every subject should be addressing literacy and numeracy concerns identified by NAPLAN, "because all those other classes are what's going to inform the kids' understanding and knowledge and skills" (Gina, Int2: June 3, 2014).

Other teachers in the study included aspects of literacy, spelling and comprehension within their arts teaching. One school adopted collaborative approaches to developing literacy in response to NAPLAN results, but this tended to detract from the true intention of the arts curriculum. Students lost interest when arts learning and teaching became focussed on 'teaching to the test' (Eisner, 2000). In these ways a school's whole education program could be narrowed by focussing on literacy and numeracy test results (Ewing, 2012), something that ran counter to the ideals of arts education held by teachers in my case study. Arts education "has been challenged to prove itself" to be "worthy of inclusion in the academic day" (Baker Jr., 2012, p. 23) because of the focus on testing and measuring. Part of this 'worthiness' is that the Arts have again become the 'bootstraps' for teaching other curriculum areas.

When teachers incorporated vocabulary development into their arts teaching, they reported improvement in students' self-confidence to undertake the external

literacy and numeracy test, NAPLAN. This was a more productive and positive approach for the students, than the practice of schools holding 'NAPLAN practice days' that focussed purely on students learning how to take the test, or 'testwiseness' (Klenowski, 2010). Public judgement of educational 'quality' based on school performances in standardised tests compromises teachers 'visions' (Parsons et al., 2017) for their students. Standardised tests originated in the scientific psychology of Thorndike (Eisner, 2000) and although psychometrics has become a "highly sophisticated field" (Eisner, 2000, p. 5), psychometric tests, such as NAPLAN do not truly measure quality. In fact, Eisner claimed such tests drive curriculum, to the extent that what is tested becomes what is taught. Ultimately this limits the teacher's ability to cultivate the individual student and drives 'uniformity' in school education.

School is a microcosm of society and is a place where students learn to operate within a community. As students imbibe curriculum content, they learn how to function as individuals before they move into the real world beyond the boundaries of school. While students acquire knowledge and skills defined by the 'official curriculum', they also develop the behaviours or capabilities formerly considered the 'hidden curriculum' (Eisner & Vallance, 1974; Print, 1987) and now referred to as 'twenty-first century skills' (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). These included critical and creative thinking and are identified as 'general capabilities' in the Australian curriculum (ACARA, 2017). It is these capabilities or twenty-first century skills beyond the 'official curriculum' that enable a student to function in society, not their NAPLAN or HSC score. But, the incessant demands of publicly reported high-stakes testing forces students and teachers to focus on such tests, thus reducing the attention given to the holistic development of the individual student.

It is worth recalling the guiding document for the national curriculum in Australia, *The Melbourne Declaration*. This claimed that it is the aim of the curriculum that students become “successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens” (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008, p. 7). Such a statement anticipates that the school experience must involve more than fulfilling high-stakes test requirements. Teachers in my study explored the new arts curriculum through pedagogy, and with reflection upon their own experiences and those of their students, rather than through application of standardised testing. This was testament to their focus on the cultivation of the individual student through, and also beyond learning and teaching in the Arts.

Finding 5: Arts teachers have sufficient passion and motivation to comfortably adjust to change

The situation in Australia, twenty years since Eisner’s claims, is that primary generalist teachers are still expected to teach all curriculum, including the Arts, although most primary teachers have limited experience of the Arts (Alter et al., 2009; de Vries, 2017; Dinham, 2007). This situation creates anxiety and often limits teachers’ willingness to teach the Arts. But, the teachers who volunteered to participate in my study did so because they ‘love’ and use the Arts in their every day practice. Although they are not necessarily representative of the wider teacher population, their reflections on their practice testify to their competence to teach the Arts. Their experiences also demonstrated that a teacher’s interest in and approach to teaching the Arts is a very personal choice. “Competence in teaching is intimately connected with” and “central to... the kind of education that we think students should receive” (Eisner, 1995a, p. 99).

The personal experiences of the Arts that teachers bring with them from their own childhoods, school and tertiary studies contributed to their knowledge, skills and ultimately their competence (Buldu & Shaban, 2010; de Vries, 2017) to interpret curriculum and teach the Arts. “Artistry and intuition are enormously important aspects of all forms of teaching and teachers need the space and encouragement to use both in their work” (Eisner, 1995a, p. 103). However, the knowledge and skills teachers possess when they enter the profession do not remain constant for the duration of their teaching career. Teachers learn and grow with their students. Teachers, who ‘love learning’ and are themselves, ‘lifelong learners’, are the people we want teaching our children. Ongoing professional development throughout a teacher’s career, particularly through in-school mentoring is vital to the teacher’s development and practice (Broome, 2016). Ongoing constructive feedback on the teacher’s work enables the teacher “to get better at the complex and subtle art of teaching” (Eisner, 1995a, p. 104). Eisner (1995a) reasoned that although university teacher education programs “certify competence, the state issues the license” (p. 103) to teach in schools, teacher competence is actually developed in the long-term context of the school where the teacher develops and reflects upon their practice.

I was impressed by the extent to which the teachers surveyed were excited and motivated by the new Australian arts curriculum. This was in contrast to the negative views expressed by some NSW teachers, some professional associations, and the state’s education authority in the curriculum consultation reports published by ACARA. Eisner (2000) claims that teachers often have difficulty adjusting to new curriculum. But my study found that the participant teachers were so passionate and motivated to teach the Arts that the novelty of a new curriculum was not a problem for them; rather it was an inspiration. Furthermore, the case study

teachers' reflections on their practices in schools revealed their competence and their determination to effectively teach the Arts.

The primary teachers' strongest motivation to use the Arts in their teaching "was their awareness of the diversity of learning styles and needs among their students" (Oreck, 2006, p. 1). Secondary arts specialist teachers sought to cultivate students' individuality (Eisner, 2000) beyond predetermined curriculum outcomes. The participant teachers' own childhood and school experiences in the Arts influenced their support for the broader learning benefits enabled by the Arts, such as developing students' self-confidence and academic motivation (Martin et al., 2013). Further to this, the case study teachers were determined to instil a love of learning in their students. Teachers knew that arts participation (Martin et al., 2013) and flexible approaches to learning and teaching (Gibson, 2016) were essential to encouraging student achievement (Catterall, 2009) and fostering an interest in 'life-long learning' in their students.

As they read the new curriculum, participant teachers came to realise that the "student-centred model" (O'Toole, 2015, p. 191) of learning and teaching that it contained was different from the teacher-centred model they had been used to in the NSW syllabus. They were attracted by a change in instructional focus from static memorisation, or "learning by rote" (O'Toole, 2015, p. 191), to critical and creative thinking and welcomed the fact that this would enable students to 'own' and potentially design their learning for themselves. The teacher's own arts experiences and consequent enthusiasm for the artform contributed to their commitment to arts education. As teachers become aware of and develop their own responses to arts experiences they can become "better prepared for noticing and crafting their own aesthetic teaching practice" (E. Anderson, 2016, p. 1) and thus enhance the artistic

experience of their students. When teachers enjoy their own learning in the Arts they impart this enthusiasm and excitement to their students.

Final conclusions

Eisner's (2000) article on arts education policy was a landmark statement and I've used it as a framework for my study of how a group of arts teachers in NSW have responded to the new national arts curriculum in Australia. My study is one about teachers today who have arts training and an arts curriculum. By contrast Eisner (2000) wrote about a situation in California nearly twenty years ago, where teachers lacked any arts training and there was no arts curriculum to speak of. My study suggests that when it comes to interpreting curriculum, teachers are suitably qualified and experienced to hold particular views about what works and what does not work. They have developed and refined their views of curriculum through their own practices. On the basis of my study, it is suggested that what makes for good arts learning teaching are: student-centred models of open-ended learning; school attitudes that value the Arts as demonstrated through collaborative school leadership (Henderson & Slattery, 2008); adequate resourcing (Alter et al., 2009), time allocation (Lemon & Garvis, 2013), and interested students (Zoss & Smith, 2011). The teachers were passionate, well-motivated, and had a ready acceptance of the new curriculum. They were especially welcoming of the emphasis on open-ended learning in the new arts curriculum.

The teachers in this study identified that it is not the curriculum itself, but rather other factors within the school, but outside of the Arts, that determine how well the

Arts may be taught. School attitudes to the Arts, leadership styles, resourcing and time allocation impacted teachers' capacity to teach the Arts, as did the demands of external testing. High-stakes testing in the form of the HSC has existed for decades in NSW, moving from external examination to a combination of school-based assessment and external examination in 1986. Following the BST introduced in 1989, NAPLAN was introduced nationally in 2009, before the Australian arts curriculum had been developed. This external literacy and numeracy testing was a separate entity to the curriculum being taught in schools. How a school responds to such tests impacts how teachers work with the Arts curriculum. At the time of this study, governments demand increasing accountability from educators through external literacy and numeracy testing in addition to testing in core subject areas (Alexander, 2011; Berliner, 2011). Arts teachers are not immune to demands of accountability. In the schools where the teachers in my study taught, it is clear that "what is tested is what is taught" (Eisner, 2000, p. 5). Although Eisner (2000) argued as "the arts are not tested, they can be neglected with greater immunity" (p. 5), I argue that the Arts are not immune. In fact, the Arts are subject to compromise as they become a vehicle for 'testwiseness' (Klenowski, 2010). In Australian schools Arts teachers are expected to use the Arts to teach the numeracy and literacy components required by the high-stakes testing. By teaching in and through the Arts, teachers engage students in the act of learning, which often motivates learning in other academic subjects (Martin et al., 2013). Effective participation in the Arts contributes to student achievement in other 'more academic' learning areas (Baker Jr., 2012). But, in schools that seek to develop "successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens" (Ministerial Council on Education, 2008, p. 7), surely, the facility of arts learning and teaching develops students' abilities to encompass communication that otherwise cannot be put into

words (Dewey, 1934) should take preference over accountability to stand-alone literacy and numeracy tests.

The findings of this study question the expectations of curriculum in an age of standardised testing, and are testament to the resilience of arts teachers who work in creative ways with all manner of obstacles and intrusions. They uphold the value of the Arts to cultivate the potential of the individual student and to inspire students to a love of learning.

Implications for future research considering curriculum policy and teacher practice in the Arts

The findings and limitations of the present study suggest that future research in the area of teachers' responses to curriculum in practice should be explored as the new curriculum is implemented in NSW. A study of a larger cohort of teachers is required to establish if the distinctions identified by teachers in this case study are universal to the state of NSW or even nationally.

While I acknowledge that the teachers participated in this study volunteered out of interest, it is worth considering whether teachers who did not participate would have held vastly different responses to the Australian arts curriculum. Eisner argued that primary generalist teachers were expected to “teach what they did not know and did not love” (1997, p. 17). The majority of primary generalist teachers in NSW have limited experience in any of the Arts, and often have low general confidence to teach the Arts. This stems from limited experiences in childhood coupled with limited or no specialised training (de Vries, 2017) to teach the Arts. It is therefore reasonable to assume that they may lack ability and inclination to teach the Arts.

Compounded by restrictions on time and resources available for the Arts within the school, a teacher who does not have knowledge, skills and competence in the Arts teach the Arts “sporadically”, treat them as an “add on” to other curriculum activities (de Vries, 2017, p. 4) or may not teach the Arts at all. By contrast a competent teacher, as evident in the participant teachers, can negotiate their way around limitations and restrictions they face in their school.

Three distinctions of particular note for further research consideration have evolved from this study.

1. Is it likely the open-ended learning opportunities foreshadowed in the Australian arts curriculum will evolve into repeatable sets of lessons with predictable outcomes?

The creative process through which an artist explores, devises, responds, revises and develops their artwork until it evolves is evident in the open-ended approach of the content descriptions in the Australian arts curriculum. By contrast, the NSW creative arts syllabus presents a step-by-step outcomes-oriented approach to learning and teaching in the Arts. The problem is that many schools do not have the time and resources to allow students to explore and experiment in the Arts in the manner promoted by the open-ended approach to learning and teaching in the Australian arts curriculum. A comparative study of schools that facilitate this ‘student-centred’ approach to learning and teaching in contrast to schools that adhere to a step-by-step outcomes-oriented approach is one option for future research. Additionally, a longitudinal observation of arts practice in a sample of schools implementing the Australian arts curriculum could explore whether the

teachers maintain the open-ended approach to the Arts or whether teachers develop a repeatable series of lessons that evolve into a step-by-step outcomes-oriented approach. Such studies would contribute to future arts curriculum policy development.

2. Will teacher-student collaborative learning in the Arts be developed through effective application of the Australian arts curriculum?

Teachers are the facilitators of learning in the twenty-first century classroom. They may be subject matter experts, but are no longer expected to be the single source of knowledge. Primary teacher, Paula, discovered this change in perception of the teacher's role when she collaborated with her students in drama. Through contributing their own ideas to the script, the students were more enthusiastic and involved in the learning than they were if a completed script had been written and provided by the teacher. The students were proud of the drama they developed together with their teacher. Co-created works in the Arts enhance the students' interest and motivation (Martin et al., 2013; Zoss & Smith, 2011). Paula cultivated her students' individual curiosity and through the collaborative process in drama inspired them to explore different ways to combine their knowledge and skills, enabling sustained engagement and meaningful enquiry-based learning (Luna Scott, 2015). Secondary teacher, Gina challenged teachers of mathematics and science, "if it was enlightened teaching I'm sure they [the students] would adore it just as much as they adore lots of other things" (Int1: June 27, 2013), rather than resorting to repeated textbook learning exercises. Collaborative learning and teaching (Zoss & Smith, 2011) gives both the teacher and the students confidence to explore the unknown and to share ideas. Adoption of a collaborative approach to learning and

teaching across curriculum learning areas in a school has the potential to change teaching practice, motivate students to want to learn thus instilling a love of learning in more students.

3. Regardless of the curriculum, will schools continue to respond to high-stakes testing should by 'teaching to the test'?

Teaching to the test or 'testwiseness' (Klenowski, 2010) has been a long-held habit in NSW schools. As a secondary teacher, I recall upper-secondary school students of English and drama asking for the examination question in advance, so they could prepare and memorise their responses in order to regurgitate them in the examination room. The students saw the process of writing a response in the examination as nothing more than recalling information. There was no consideration given to the thinking, planning and responding process. Similarly, teaching students to take the NAPLAN test, which sits outside of the arts curriculum, perpetuates the disconnectedness of testing and also limits the time available for teaching the actual curriculum. The benefits of teacher-student collaborative learning and the open-ended learning inspired through the Australian arts curriculum are likely to be rendered impossible if teachers continue to feel pressured by accountability to external testing.

On an international scale, Australian education policy-makers uphold the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment, or PISA, ranking as a key benchmark against which to measure Australian school education. However, PISA assesses the extent to which 15-year-old students, have "acquired key knowledge and skills that are essential for full participation in modern societies" (OECD,

2018a). By contrast to my former students who planned to memorise and regurgitate essay answers in an examination, PISA explores how well students can use what they know to find out what they don't know. This examination of how students extrapolate and apply their knowledge encompasses the students' experience both within and outside of school. This test of how students apply knowledge extends beyond the PISA assessment that focuses on science, reading and mathematics, considered to be core school subjects. PISA replicates the fact that "modern economies reward individuals not for what they know, but for what they can do with what they know" (OECD, 2018a).

Finland's PISA ranking was identified as the ideal to which Australian education should aspire, during the 2014 review of the Australian Curriculum (Donnelly, 2014). The 2015 PISA results indicate that Singapore and Hong Kong maintain a higher ranking across mathematics, science and reading than Finland. These two countries, like Finland, occupy a small geographic footprint and present smaller populations than that of Australia. Singapore and Hong Kong have lower proportions of immigrants and disadvantaged students than found in other countries, such as Australia. Therefore, policymakers need to take into consideration the educational contexts of such countries, including how the learning and teaching occurs in their schools, before proclaiming them the benchmark for educational achievement in Australia. Policy borrowing from Finland or any other country must take account of the contextual factors of the country's education system. In Finland, "the correlations between students' engagement, self efficacy and reading habits with their cognitive outcomes are higher than any other country" (Väljärvi & Sulkunen, 2016). Finland's PISA success is rooted in the country's historical, cultural, societal, and political context (Chung, 2010). Unlike some Australian schools that schedule practice days ahead of the annual NAPLAN tests (see Section

5.4, Teaching to the test, p174), Finland does not use a process of recurrent testing accompanied by teaching the test. In fact, such an approach is not used in the education approaches of any of the other top-ranking countries. Furthermore, teachers in Finland teach nearly 300 hours less per year than Australian teachers in primary and secondary schools (OECD, 2017). So, the approach to learning and teaching and how student educational achievement is measured demands consideration.

Learning and teaching in Australia should be approached more effectively and efficiently, as is demonstrated in the PISA measures for Finland. Removing the focus on high-stakes testing, altering school leadership perceptions of test preparation and actively enacting the Australian arts curriculum will ultimately improve Australian students' academic motivation, self-confidence and aptitude in PISA and other high-stakes testing. Schooling in Finland involves play-based learning. The Australian arts curriculum is founded in the creative process, which is 'play-based' learning. Arts participation has positive effects on learning, remembering and problem-solving processes (Crossick & Kaszynsky, 2016; Mansour et al., 2016; Martin et al., 2013). Primary teacher, Paula's concern that her students could read, but did not understand the NAPLAN question which combined language, context and mathematics (see Section 5.4, Teaching to the test, p174) is evidence that her students could not extrapolate knowledge and apply it in an unfamiliar context. However, the Australian curriculum intentionally hones twenty-first century skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009) in the form of 'general capabilities' across all learning areas (ACARA, 2017), which include development of communication skills and social competency skills. As previously mentioned, such personal competencies have much greater impact on the life of the individual than within "the narrower area of formal attainment in standardised tests" (Crossick & Kaszynsky, 2016, p. 116).

Australian teachers and policy makers need to look further than annual high-stakes tests and required curriculum content in mathematics, science and English (literature), to develop the capabilities of Australian students for the future. PISA reports that “a mathematically literate student recognises the role that mathematics plays in the world in order to make well-founded judgments and decisions needed by constructive, engaged and reflective citizens” (OECD, 2018b). Paula’s students struggled to recognise the mathematics in a question that described a story containing the mathematical problem. They could not understand, use and reflect upon the text in the question. Paula’s students’ limitations are addressed in the PISA report that Reading performance “measures the capacity to understand, use and reflect on written texts in order to achieve goals, develop knowledge and potential, and participate in society” (OECD, 2018c). Similarly, PISA reports that scientific performance “measures the scientific literacy of a 15 year-old in the use of scientific knowledge to identify questions, acquire new knowledge, explain scientific phenomena, and draw evidence-based conclusions about science-related issues” (OECD, 2018d).

Each of the three core areas assessed through PISA demand students comprehend, extrapolate and apply knowledge in new situations. NAPLAN also expects students to comprehend and apply knowledge. But, not all schools enable learning and teaching suitable to this requirement. We do not know the jobs that today’s learners will undertake in the future. Enabling the development of skills and dispositions for the twenty-first century (Luna Scott, 2015) is the most logical preparation for these unknown jobs. Approaches to learning and teaching that nurture students’ self-confidence and academic motivation are more effective and deserve greater recognition for the broader benefits they provide the individual students and the

broader community. Pedagogy needs to facilitate development of skills such as critical and creative thinking, effective communication, innovation and collaborative problem solving (Luna Scott, 2015). Research to consider the educational effects of these pedagogical approaches, will enable policymakers to recognise the broader benefits of arts learning and teaching for holistic achievement and the betterment of society. Policy-makers should reconsider the current belief that testing is the only option for measuring student achievement. In addition to the acquisition of these competencies, the increasing awareness of STEAM⁴⁴ rather than STEM highlights the important contribution of creative skills to student learning and societal development. Currently the state education authority in NSW promotes STEM along with its existing outcomes-based creative arts syllabi. By contrast, other states that have implemented the national arts curriculum have moved to STEAM.

The Australian Curriculum was fully endorsed by all states and territories, just three months after I left ACARA in mid-2015, even after the sudden (and somewhat superfluous) national review called by then Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne. Yet, as I complete this thesis, NSW has not yet commenced to work with the Australian arts curriculum. A state notoriously slow to change curriculum, the current creative arts syllabi are nearing twenty years of age, last revised at the turn of the century. The in-fighting across secondary arts teachers' associations continues: NSW visual arts factions argue for a focus on criticism and history while the 'newer' arts subjects, dance and drama maintain a need for 'play-based learning', that is the experiential learning inspired by Dewey last century. The secondary music factions are torn across both philosophies. Amongst it all, primary teachers

⁴⁴ STEAM: science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics
STEM: science, technology, engineering, mathematics

continue to bear the brunt of teaching everything. There is hope for change, on 14 May 2018, the NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Education Minister Rob Stokes announced a review of the NSW school curriculum from Kindergarten to Year 12⁴⁵. The future looks brighter for the primary teachers of NSW.

⁴⁵ <https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/the-premier/media-releases-from-the-premier/nsw-launches-school-curriculum-review/>

Epilogue

Now what?

Five years since commencing this study, I have returned to the Arts industry, to music. I am now a director with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. I now devise professional learning to support primary teachers in the practical teaching of music. Children should make, listen to and enjoy music, as they should every artform. They should be encouraged to use what they know to find out what they don't know. This is how children play and learn before they begin formal schooling. This learning should continue throughout schooling and life. After all, when you travel to another country is it the curriculum you seek out? No, it is the music, the Arts, the dance and theatre; the culture of its people. We explore it before school, we should continue to learn it within school, but also in our years beyond school.

With the closing of this thesis, I will continue to support the Arts in our schools, although I am excited to return to my own music-making. I desire nothing more than to open the piano and reinvigorate my voice to now explore the jazz I was invited to discover, beyond Brahms back in 1986. I will use what I know to discover what I don't know!

References

- ACARA. (2010). *Shape of the Australian curriculum*. Sydney: Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority Retrieved from http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/Shape_of_the_Australian_Curriculum.pdf - [xml=http://search.curriculum.edu.au/taxis/search/pdfhi.txt?query=melbourne+declaration&pr=www.acara.edu.au&prox=page&rorder=500&rprox=500&rdfreq=500&rwfreq=500&rlead=500&rdept](http://search.curriculum.edu.au/taxis/search/pdfhi.txt?query=melbourne+declaration&pr=www.acara.edu.au&prox=page&rorder=500&rprox=500&rdfreq=500&rwfreq=500&rlead=500&rdept).
- ACARA. (2011a). *Consultation feedback report on the draft shape of the Australian curriculum: the arts*. Retrieved from Sydney: http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/Consultation_Feedback_Report_-_The_Arts.pdf
- ACARA. (2011b). *Shape of the Australian curriculum: the arts*. Sydney: Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority Retrieved from http://acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/Shape_of_the_Australian_Curriculum_The_Arts_-_Compressed.pdf.
- ACARA. (2012a). *Australian curriculum: the arts foundation to year 10 draft for consultation*. Sydney: Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority.
- ACARA. (2012b). *Curriculum development process*. Sydney: Australian Curriculum Assessment Reporting Authority, Retrieved from http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/_resources/ACARA_Curriculum_Development_Process_Version_6.0_-_04_April_2012_-_FINAL_COPY.pdf.
- ACARA. (2012c). *Draft Australian curriculum: The arts foundation to year 10 consultation report*. Retrieved from Sydney: http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/learning_areas/arts.html
- ACARA. (2013). *The curriculum design paper*. Sydney: Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority.
- ACARA. (2014). Australian curriculum made available online [Press release]
- ACARA. (2015a, 16 December 2015). Australian Curriculum. Retrieved from <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/curriculum/overview>
- ACARA. (2015b). Curriculum. Retrieved from <http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum>
- ACARA. (2015c). *Draft changes to Australian curriculum F - 10 consultation report*. Retrieved from Sydney:

https://acaraweb.blob.core.windows.net/resources/Consultation_Report_-_30_September_2015.pdf

- ACARA. (2015d). Understand how the arts works. Retrieved from <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/>
- ACARA. (2017). Australian curriculum: General capabilities. Retrieved from <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/>
- AEA. (2016, March 2 2012). Art Education Australia Inc. Retrieved from <https://www.arteducation.org.au/about-aea/aims-and-objectives>
- AEP. (2017). *What school leaders can do to increase arts education*. Retrieved from Washington, USA: <http://www.aep-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/What-School-Leaders-Can-Do-To-Increase-Arts-Education.pdf>
- Alexander, R. A. (2010). Curriculum past and present. In R. A. Alexander (Ed.), *Children, their world, their education : final report and recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review* (pp. 203-236). Abingdon; New York: Routledge.
- Alexander, R. A. (2011). Evidence, rhetoric and collateral damage: the problematic pursuit of 'world class' standards. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 41(3), 265-286. doi:10.1080/0305764X.2011.607153
- Alexander, R. A. (2012). *The Cambridge primary review research surveys* (R. A. Alexander, C. Doddington, J. Gray, L. Hargreaves, & R. Kershner Eds.). UK: Routledge.
- Alter, F., Hays, T., & O'Hara, R. (2009). Creative arts teaching and practice: critical reflections of primary school teachers in Australia. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 10(9), 1-21.
- Altheide, D., L., & Johnson, J. M. (2011). Reflections on interpretive adequacy in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 581-594). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Anderson, A., & Berry, K. A. (2014). The influence of drama on elementary students' written narratives and on-task behavior. *Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 20(3), 143-157. doi:10.18666/LDMJ-2014-V20-I3-5885
- Anderson, E. (2010). Voices via Delphi : experts reflecting on the critical dimensions of effective drama teaching. *NJ (Drama Australia Journal)*, 33(2), 67-78.

- Anderson, E. (2016). Learning from an artistically crafted moment: Valuing aesthetic experience in the student teacher's drama education. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 17(1), 1-19.
- Anderson, M. (2002). *Journeys in teacher professional development: Narrative of four drama educators*. (PhD), University of Sydney, Sydney.
- Anderson, M. (2014). Arts participation and students' academic outcomes Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ebEQpRJK14&t=40s>
- Anderson, M., Fleming, J., & Gibson, R. (Eds.). (2016). *How arts education makes a difference*: Routledge.
- Angrosino, M., & Rosenberg, J. (2011). Observations on observation: Continuities and challenges. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 467-478). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Appleby, M. (2014). Education in the United States of America. In M. A. Brown & J. White (Eds.), *Exploring childhood in a comparative context: An introductory guide for students*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Aprill, A., & Burnaford, G. (2006). *Long term arts education partnerships as an effective strategy for systemic school improvement*. Paper presented at the World Conference on Arts Education, Lisbon.
- http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/29792/11380325291Arnold_Aprill_and_Gail_Burnaford.htm/Arnold%2BAprill%2Band%2BGail%2BBurnaford.htm.
- ASME. (2017). Australian Society for Music Education. Retrieved from <http://www.asme.edu.au/asme/>
- Atkinson, P., & Delamont, S. (2006). In the rolling smoke: Qualitative inquiry in contested fields. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 19(6), 747-755.
- Atkinson, R. (2012). The life story interview as a mutually equitable relationship. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, A. B. Marvasti, & K. D. McKinney (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft* (2 ed., pp. 115-128). Thousand Oaks CA: SAGE Publications.
- ATOM. (2004). ATOM. Retrieved from <https://web.archive.org/web/20040614011627/http://www.atomvic.org:80/>

- Ausdance. (2012). Network/ National Advocates for Arts Education. Retrieved from <http://ausdance.org.au/network/details/naae>
- Babbie, E. (2007). *The practice of social research* (12th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Baker Jr., R. A. (2012). The effects of high-stakes testing policy on arts education. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 113(1), 17-25.
doi:10.1080/10632913.2012.626384
- Baker, W., & Astell, S. (2015). *Visual arts education, teacher choice, accountability and curricula in Tasmanian K-6 primary schools*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) Conference.
- Balasubramanian, K., Jaykumar, V., & Fukey, L. N. (2014). A Study on "Student Preference towards the Use of Edmodo as a Learning Platform to Create Responsible Learning Environment". *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 144(Supplement C), 416-422.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.07.311>
- Bamford, A. (2006). *The WOW Factor: Global research compendium on the impact of the arts in education* Germany: Waxman Verlag.
- Bamford, A. (2015). Making it happen: Closing the gap between policy and practice in arts education. In M. Fleming, L. Bresler, & J. O'Toole (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of the arts and education* (pp. 388-397). Oxon, UK: Routledge.
- Barrett, J. (2015). Innovation in the music curriculum. In M. Fleming, L. Bressler, & J. O'Toole (Eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of the Arts and Education* (pp. 159-169). Abingdon; New York: Routledge.
- Baumfield, V., Livingston, K., & Menter, I. (2009). *Curriculum for excellence draft experiences and outcomes collection, analysis and reporting of data, final report*. Retrieved from Glasgow:
http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/GUfinalreport_tcm4-539659.pdf
- Bazeley, P. (2007). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Beattie, M. (1995). *Constructing professional knowledge in teaching: A narrative of change and development*. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Berliner, D. (2011). Rational responses to high stakes testing: the case of curriculum narrowing and the harm that follows. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 41(3), 287-302. doi:10.1080/0305764X.2011.607151
- Birenbaum, M., Kimron, H., & Shilton, H. (2011). Nested contexts that shape assessment for learning: School-based professional learning community and classroom culture. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 37, 35-48.
- Board of Studies NSW. (2000). *Creative arts K-6 units of work*. Sydney: Board of Studies NSW Retrieved from http://k6.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/41dc0e7d-e4fc-4202-b9e8-be706242a2c4/K6_creatart_uw.pdf?MOD=AJPERES.
- Board of Studies NSW. (2003). *Visual arts years 7-10 syllabus*. Sydney: Board of Studies NSW Retrieved from <http://www.bostes.nsw.edu.au>.
- Board of Studies NSW. (2004/ 2014). *Years 7-10 syllabus course descriptions*. Sydney: Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW Retrieved from <http://www.bostes.nsw.edu.au>.
- Board of Studies NSW. (2006). *Creative arts K-6 syllabus*. Sydney: New South Wales Board of Studies.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.). Needham Heads, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Boone, D. J. (2008). Young children's experience of visual displays of their artwork. *Australian Art Education*, 31(2), 22-45.
- Bowles, T., & Arnup, J. L. (2016). Early career teachers' resilience and positive adaptive change capabilities. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 43(2), 147-164. doi:10.1007/s13384-015-0192-1
- Brennan, M. (2011). National curriculum: A political-educational tangle *Australian Journal of Education*, 55, 259-280.
- Broome, J. (2016). Assessing the professional development needs of arts instructors working in multi-age classrooms. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 117(1), 65-72. doi:10.1080/10632913.2016.1107395
- Brouillette, L. (2010). How the arts help children to create healthy social scripts: Exploring the perceptions of elementary teachers. *Arts Education Policy Review*(1), 16-24. doi:10.1080/10632910903228116
- Brown, N., & Beswick, K. (2014). Policy and curriculum research in the context of change. In N. Fitzallen, R. Reaburn, & S. Fan (Eds.), *The future of educational*

- research. *Bold visions in educational research* (pp. 3-11). Rotterdam: SensePublishers.
- Brundrett, M., & Duncan, D. (2015). Leading curriculum innovation in primary schools project: a final report. *Education 3-13*, 43(6), 756-765.
doi:10.1080/03004279.2014.975408
- Buldu, M., & Shaban, M. S. (2010). Visual arts teaching in kindergarten through 3rd-grade classrooms in the UAE: Teacher profiles, perceptions, and practices. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 24(4), 332-350.
doi:10.1080/02568543.2010.510073
- Caldwell, L. L., & Witt, P. A. (2011). Leisure, recreation, and play from a developmental context. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2011(130), 13-27. doi:10.1002/yd.394
- Cantali, R. (2013). *Boys' school connectedness — An Australian perspective: The impact of social capital on school connectedness of year 10 Muslim male students of Lebanese background*. (PhD), The University of Sydney, Sydney.
- Cassell, C., & Symon, G. (1994). Qualitative research in work contexts. In C. S. Cassell, G. (Ed.), *Qualitative Methods and Analysis in Organizational Research: A Practical Guide* (pp. 1-13). London, UK: SAGE Publications.
- Catterall, J. S. (2009). *Doing well and doing good by doing art: The long-term effects of sustained involvement in the visual and performing arts during high school*. Los Angeles: Imagination Group.
- Catterall, J. S., Dumais, S. A., & Hampden-Thompson, G. (2012). *The arts and achievement in at-risk youth: Findings from four longitudinal studies*. Washington DC: National Endowment for the Arts.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Charmaz, K. (2011). Grounded theory methods in social justice research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4 ed., pp. 359-380). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Cheung, D. (2000). Measuring teachers' meta-orientations to curriculum: Application of hierarchical confirmatory factor analysis. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 68(2), 149-165.
- Chung, J. H. (2010). Finland, PISA, and the Implications of International Achievement Studies on Education Policy. In A. W. Wiseman (Ed.), *The Impact of*

- International Achievement Studies on National Education Policymaking* (pp. 267-294): Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, M. (1994). Personal experience methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 413-426). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a landscape of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Borderland spaces and tensions* (pp. 35-75). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Clausen, M. (2010). Critics expected but arts overhaul is a positive step. Retrieved from <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/critics-expected-but-arts-overhaul-is-a-positive-step-20100829-13xo0.html>
- Cohen, B. (2007). The children's voice: Postwar collection of testimonies from child survivors of the Holocaust. *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, 21, 73-95.
- Collins, P. H. (1998). *Fighting words: Black women and the search for justice*. Minneapolis: University of Minesota Press.
- Cone, T. P., & Cone, S. L. (2005). *Teaching children dance* (2nd ed.). Champaign IL: Human Kinetics.
- Costantino, T. (2011). Researching creative learning: A review essay. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 12(7), 1-5.
- Council of Australian Governments. (2008). *National Education Agreement*. Council of Australian Governments Retrieved from <https://www.coag.gov.au/node/302>.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Crossick, G., & Kaszynsky, P. (2016). *Understanding the value of arts & culture: The AHRC Cultural Value Project*. Retrieved from Swindon, Wiltshire, UK: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk>
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.
- Cullen, D. (2015). *The Northern Districts Education Centre (Sydney) Churchill Fellowship to research school reform to facilitate the implementation of the Australian Curriculum- UK, Ireland, Canada, USA*. Retrieved from Australia: https://www.churchilltrust.com.au/media/fellows/Cullen_D_2015_Facilitate_the_implementation_of_the_Australian_curriculum.pdf

- Curriculum Corporation. (2003). *Curriculum provision in the Australian states and territories: Research report for the ministerial council on education, employment, training and youth affairs 2002-2003*. Retrieved from Melbourne, Victoria:
- Curriculum Corporation, & Australian Education Council. (1994). *The arts : a curriculum profile for Australian schools / a joint project of the States, Territories and the Commonwealth of Australia initiated by the Australian Education Council*. Carlton, Vic: Curriculum Corporation
- Cutcher, A. (2014). Drawing on experience: The challenges that generalist teachers face in delivering visual arts effectively in primary school *Australian Art Education*, 36(1), 65-83.
- Davies, D. (2010). Enhancing the role of the arts in primary pre-service teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(3), 630-638.
- Davis, D. (2008). *First we see [electronic resource] : the national review of visual education / Diana Davis*. Canberra: Dept. of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
- Dawkins, J. (1988). *Strengthening Australia's schools: A consideration of the focus and content of schooling*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- de Vries, P. (2017). Self-efficacy and music teaching: Five narratives. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 18(4).
- de Vries, P., & Albon, N. (2012). Taking responsibility for music education in the primary school: a case study. *Victorian Journal of Music Education*, 1, 3-11.
- Deasy, R. (2002). Themes and variations: Future directions for arts education research and practice. In R. Deasy (Ed.), *Critical Links*. Washington, USA: The Arts Education Partnership.
- Delpont, A., & Browne, E. (2015). Arts education in South African township schools: teacher realities. In S. Schonmann (Ed.), *International yearbook for research in arts education: The wisdom of the many* (pp. 363-367). Munster: Waxmann.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011a). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 1-20). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc.

- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011b). Paradigms and perspectives in contention. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (4th ed., pp. 91-95). Thousand Oaks CA: SAGE Publications.
- Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S., & Giardina, M. D. (2006). Disciplining qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 19(6), 769-782. doi:10.1080/09518390600975990
- Department for children schools and families. (2009). *Changes to the primary curriculum: A guide for parents and caregivers*. Nottingham, UK.: DCSF Publications Retrieved from <http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/>.
- Dewey, J. (1919). Imagination and expression. *Teachers College Bulletin*, 10(10), 7-15.
- Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as experience*. New York: Penguin.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York: Collier.
- Di Domenico, M., Haugh, H., & Tracey, P. (2010). Social bricolage: Theorizing social value creation in social enterprises. *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, 34(4), 681-703. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6520.2010.00370.x
- Dinham, J. (2007). Delivering primary visual arts education: Where rhetoric meets reality *Australian Art Education*, 30(1), 16-30.
- Donnelly, K. (2014). Apples and oranges: Comparing our education system with other countries doesn't always work. *The Conversation*, (September 4, 2014). Retrieved from The Conversation website: <http://theconversation.com/apples-and-oranges-comparing-our-education-system-with-other-countries-doesnt-always-work-31174>
- Donnelly, K., & Wiltshire, K. (2014a). *Review of the Australian curriculum final report*. Retrieved from Canberra: <http://docs.education.gov.au/node/36269The>
- Donnelly, K., & Wiltshire, K. (2014b). *Review of the Australian Curriculum Supplementary Material*. Retrieved from Canberra: <https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/review-australian-curriculum-supplementary-material>
- Drama Australia. (2015). Drama Australia: History. Retrieved from <https://www.dramaaustralia.org.au/history.html>
- Driel, J. H. V., & Berry, A. (2012). Teacher professional development focusing on pedagogical content knowledge. *Educational Researcher*, 41(1), 26-28. doi:doi:10.3102/0013189X11431010

- Dufficy, P. (2005). *Designing Learning for diverse classrooms*. Newtown: Primary English Teaching Association.
- Duffy, P. (2016). Theatre curriculum in the US: a great tasting sandwich on stale bread. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 21(1), 37-41. doi:10.1080/13569783.2015.1127147
- Dunn, J., & Stinson, M. (2011). Not without the art!! The importance of teacher artistry when applying drama as pedagogy for additional language learning. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 16(4), 617-633. doi: 10.1080/13569783.2011.617110
- Dunn, J., & Stinson, M. (2012). Learning through emotion: Moving the affective in from the margins. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 44(2), 203-218. doi:10.1007/s13158-012-0058-x
- Dyson, J., & Meiners, J. (2010). *The national advocates for arts education – advocacy strategies for a 21st century curriculum*. Paper presented at the UNESCO, Seoul.
<http://www.unesco.org/culture/en/artseducation/pdf/presentation104jeffmeinersjuliedyson.pdf>
- Edwards, R., & Maunther, M. (2002). Ethics and feminist research: Theory and practice. In M. Maunther, M. Birch, J. Jessop, & T. Miller (Eds.), *Ethics in qualitative research* (pp. 14-31). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Efland, A. D. (2002). *Art and cognition: integrating the visual arts in the curriculum*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Efland, A. D. (2003). Imagination in cognition: The purpose of the arts. *International Journal of Art Education*, 1(1), 26-50.
- Eisner, E. (1978). Humanistic trends and the curriculum field. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 10(3), 97-204.
- Eisner, E. (1995a). Preparing teachers for schools of the 21st century. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 70(3), 99-111. doi:10.1080/01619569509538837
- Eisner, E. (1995b). Standards for American schools: Help or hindrance. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(10), 758-760.
- Eisner, E. (1997). Art education today: Neither millennium or mirage. *Art Education*, 50(1), 13-19.
- Eisner, E. (2000). Arts education policy? *Arts Education Policy Review*, 101(3), 4-6. doi:10.1080/10632910009600242

- Eisner, E. (2002). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs* (3rd ed.). London: Pearson Education.
- Eisner, E. (2003a). The arts and the creation of mind. *Language Arts*, 80(5), 340-344.
- Eisner, E. (2003b). Questionable assumptions about schooling. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 84(9), 648-657.
- Eisner, E. (2004). What can education learn from the arts about the practice of education? *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, 5(4), 1-13.
- Eisner, E. (2008). Questionable assumptions about schooling. In B. Slater Stern & M. L. Kysilka (Eds.), *Contemporary Readings in Curriculum* (pp. 11-20). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Eisner, E., & Ecker, D. W. (1966). *Readings in art education*. Waltham, Massachusetts: Ginn-Blaisell Publishing Company.
- Eisner, E., & Vallance, E. (1974). *Conflicting conceptions of curriculum*. Berkeley, California: McCutchan Publishing Corporation.
- Ely, M. (1991). *Doing qualitative research: Circles within circles*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Erickson, M. (2004). Interaction of teachers and curriculum. In E. Eisner & M. Day (Eds.), *Handbook of research and policy in art education* (pp. 467-486). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Evans, D., & Gruba, P. (2002). *How to write a better thesis*. Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press.
- Ewing, R. (2010). The arts and Australian education: Realising potential. *Australian Education Review*, 76. Retrieved from <http://research.acer.edu.au/aer/11/>
- Ewing, R. (2012). Competing issues in Australian primary curriculum: learning from international experiences. *Education 3-13: International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education*, 40(1), 97-111.
doi:10.1080/03004279.2012.635059
- Ewing, R. (2013a). *Curriculum and assessment: Storylines* (2nd ed.). South Melbourne: Oxford University Press
- Ewing, R. (2013b). National curriculum storyline *Curriculum and assessment: Storylines*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Finn, C. E., & Ravitch, D. (2007). Not by geeks alone. *The Education Gadfly*, 7(30).
- Firestone, W. A. (2014). Teacher evaluation policy and conflicting theories of motivation. *Educational Researcher*, 43(2), 100-107.
doi:10.3102/0013189X14521864

- Fleming, J. (2016). Arts education and school leadership: A case study. In M. Anderson, J. Fleming, & R. Gibson (Eds.), *How Arts Education Makes a Difference* (pp. 186-204): Routledge.
- Flicke, U. (2007). *Managing quality in qualitative research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2011). Case study. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 301-316). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (1994). Interviewing: The art of science. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 361-376). California: Sage.
- Freebody, P. (2003). *Qualitative research in education: Interaction and practice*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Freeman, R. (2007). Epistemological bricolage: How practitioners make sense of learning. *Administration & Society*, 39(4), 476-496.
doi:10.1177/0095399707301857
- Gallagher, K. (2016). The social habitus of drama: the Ontario drama curriculum in theory and practice. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 21(1), 20-36.
doi:10.1080/13569783.2015.1126172
- Gardiner, P. D. (2014). *Teaching playwriting: dramaturgy, creativity, and agency*. (PhD), University of Sydney, Sydney. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2123/12069>
- Garvis, S., & Pendergast, D. (2011). An investigation of early childhood teacher self-efficacy beliefs in the teaching of arts education. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 12(9), 1-17.
- Garvis, S., & Prederghast, D. (2010). Does arts education have a future in Australia against literacy and numeracy? *The International Journal of the Arts in Society*, 5(2), 111-120. doi:10.18848/1833-1866/CGP/v05i02/35832
- Gattenhof, S. (2009). Positioning the arts in the Australian national curriculum. *Lowdown Magazine: Youth Performing Arts in Australia*, 31(4), 6-9.
- Gaztambide-Fernández, R., Nicholls, R., & Arráiz-Matute, A. (2016). For what purpose the arts? An analysis of the mission statements of urban arts high schools in Canada and the United States. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 117(1), 29-42. doi:10.1080/10632913.2014.966287

- Gerrard, J., & Farrell, L. (2013). Remaking the professional teacher: Authority and curriculum reform. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 1-23.
doi:10.1080/00220272.2013.854410
- Gibboney, R. (2006). Intelligence by design: Thorndike versus Dewey. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, 88(2), 170-172.
- Gibbs, G. (2007). *Analyzing qualitative data*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Gibson, R. (2016). The primary visual arts classroom: The imperative of narrative. In M. Anderson, J. Fleming, & R. Gibson (Eds.), *How Arts Education Makes a Difference* (pp. 136-150): Routledge.
- Glassman, M. (2001). Dewey and Vygotsky: Society, experience and inquiry in educational practice. *Educational Researcher*, 30(4), 3-14.
doi:10.3102/0013189X030004003
- Glatthorn, A. A. (1999). Curriculum alignment revisited. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 15(1), 26-35.
- Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 8(4), 597-607.
- Goodfellow, J. (1997). Narrative inquiry: Musings methodologies and merits. In J. Higgs (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Discourse on methodologies* (pp. 61-74). Sydney: Hampden Press.
- Gore, J., Holmes, K., Smith, M., Fray, L., McElduff, P., Weaver, N., & Wallington, C. (2017). Unpacking the career aspirations of Australian school students: Towards an evidence base for university equity initiatives in schools. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 1-18.
doi:10.1080/07294360.2017.1325847
- Gray, D. E. (2009). *Doing research in the real world* (2nd ed.). London, UK: SAGE Publications.
- Greene, J. C., Caracelli, V. J., & Graham, W. F. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 11(3), 255-274.
- Guba, E. G. (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.
- Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (2009). *Analyzing narrative reality*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

- Hall, K., & Ozerk, K. (2010). Primary curriculum and assessment: England and other countries. In R. Alexander (Ed.), *The Cambridge Primary Review Research Surveys* (pp. 375).
- Hammersley, M. (2005). The myth of research-based practice: The critical case of educational inquiry. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(4), 317-330. doi: 10.1080/1364557042000232844
- Hammersley, M. (2008). *Questioning qualitative inquiry: Critical Essays*. Thousands Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Hanley, B. (2003). Policy issues in arts assessment in Canada: "Let's get real". *Arts Education Policy Review*, 105(1), 33.
- Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hargreaves, A., Earl, L., Moore, S., & Manning, S. (2001). *Learning to change: Teaching beyond subjects and standards*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Hayes, D. (2011). Ways of knowing and teaching: How teachers create valuable learning opportunities (pedagogical capital) by making knowledge the means and not just the ends in classrooms. In J. Sefton-Green, L. Bresler, K. Jones, & P. Thomson (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of creative learning* (pp. 200-210): Routledge.
- Hayes, D. (2013). Customization in schooling markets. *International Journal on School Disaffection*, 10(2), 3-22.
- Hayes, D., Christie, P., Mills, M., & Lingard, R. (2004). Productive leaders and productive leadership: Schools as learning organisations. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 42(5), 520-538.
doi:10.1108/09578230410554043
- Heilig, J. V., Cole, H., & Aguilar, A. (2010). From Dewey to no child left behind: The evolution and devolution of public arts education. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 111(4), 136-145. doi:10.1080/10632913.2010.490776
- Henderson, J. G., & Slattery, P. (2008). Evaluating a pragmatic understanding of artistry, development, and leadership. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 5(2), 1-9. doi:10.1080/15505170.2008.10411694
- Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2001). *Qualitative research methods*. London: SAGE Publications.

- Herron, H., & Reason, P. (1997). A participatory inquiry paradigm. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3, 274-294.
- Hetland, L., Winner, E., Veenema, S., & Sheridan, K. (2013). *Studio thinking 2: The real benefits of visual arts education* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- IJdens, T. (2015). Comparative policy research in arts education. In S. Schonmann (Ed.), *International yearbook for research in arts education* (Vol. 3, pp. 439-445). Germany: Waxmann.
- Jacobs, R. (2010). Performance footprints across Australia : assessment in senior secondary drama. *NJ (Drama Australia Journal)*, 33(2), 45-55.
- Janesick, V. J. (1994). *The dance of qualitative research design: Metaphor, methodolatry, and meaning*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Jeanneret, N. (2009). Education in the arts: Teaching and learning in the contemporary curriculum. In C. Sinclair, N. Jeanneret, & J. O'Toole (Eds.), *Learning in the arts* (pp. 13-21). South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Jefferson, M. (2011). *Film learning as aesthetic experience: Dwelling in the house of possibility*. (PhD), The University of Sydney, Sydney.
- Jenkins, K., Reitano, P., & Taylor, N. (2011). Teachers in the bush: supports, challenges and professional learning. *Education in Rural Australia*, 21(2), 71-85.
- Jon, J., & Chung, H. (2013). *Consultant report securing Australia's future STEM: Country comparisons*. Retrieved from <http://acola.org.au/wp/PDF/SAF02Consultants/Consultant Report - Korea.pdf>
- Jones, P. M. (2007). Hard and soft policies in music education: Building the capacity of teachers to understand, study, and influence them. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 110(4), 37-41.
- Jun-Seok Roh. (2014). *Arts and culture education policies and programmes in Korea - Building infrastructure to support teaching artists*. conference presentation. Division of School Arts & Culture Education, . Korea Arts and Culture Education Service. unpublished. Retrieved from <http://itac2.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/ITAC-Program.pdf>
- Keddie, A. (2017). Why Australia should not follow (English politician) Nick Gibb's advice on how to run our school. Retrieved from

<http://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=2153>

<http://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?author=17>

- Ker, J. (2007, October 1). Howard rewrites history curriculum. *Sydney Morning Herald*.
- Kincheloe, J. L. (2001). Describing the bricolage: Conceptualizing a new rigor in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(6), 679-692.
doi:10.1177/107780040100700601
- Kincheloe, J. L., & Berry, K. S. (2004). *Rigour and complexity in educational research: conceptualizing the bricolage*. Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Klenowski, V. (2010). Are Australian assessment reforms fit for purpose? Lessons from home and abroad. *QUT Professional Magazine*, 10-15.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Lemon, N., & Garvis, S. (2013). What is the role of the arts in a primary school?: An investigation of perceptions of pre-service teachers in Australia. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(9), 1-9.
- Levi Strauss, C. (1966). *The savage mind*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lim, L. (2015). *Knowledge, Control and Critical Thinking in Singapore: State Ideology and the Politics of Pedagogic Recontextualization*. New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 97-128). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Lingard, B., Hayes, D., & Mills, M. (2003). Teachers and productive pedagogies: contextualising, conceptualising, utilising. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 11(3), 399-424. doi:10.1080/14681360300200181
- Logan, G., & Clarke, E. (1984). *State education in Queensland: a brief history*. *Monographs on the history of education in Queensland no. 2*. Brisbane: Department of Education, Queensland Retrieved from <http://education.qld.gov.au/library/docs/edhistory/stateedu.pdf>.

- Lovat, T., & Smith, D. (2003). *Curriculum: Action on reflection* (4th ed.). Tuggerah, NSW: Social Science Press.
- Luke, A. (2010). Documenting reproduction and inequality: Revisiting Jean Anyon's 'social class and school knowledge'. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 40(1), 167-182.
- Luna Scott, C. (2015). The futures of learning 3: What kind of pedagogies for the 21st century? *Education Research And Foresight Working Papers*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002431/243126e.pdf>
- Mansour, M., Martin, A., & Liem, G. (2016). School, home and community arts participation and students' outcomes. In J. Fleming, R. Gibson, & M. Anderson (Eds.), *How Arts Education Makes a Difference* (pp. 87-105). Oxon: Routledge.
- Maras, K. (2008). *Mapping children's theory of critical meaning in visual arts*. (PhD), UNSW, College of Fine Arts. Retrieved from http://www.unswworks.unsw.edu.au/primo_library/libweb/action/search.do?vl%28freeText0%29=Maras%2c+Karen+Elizabeth%2c+Art+History+%26+Art+Education%2c+College+of+Fine+Arts%2c+UNSW&vl%28121359344UI0%29=creator&vl%28295537872UI1%29=all_items&fn=search&tab=default_tab&mode=Basic&vid=UNSWWORKS&scp.scps=scope%3a%28LRS_UNSWWORKS%29%2cscope%3a%28UNSWWORKS_MODS%29&ct=lateralLinking
- Marsh, H. W., & Kleitman, S. (2002). Extracurricular school activities: The good, the bad, and the nonlinear. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72, 464-514.
- Martin, A., Mansour, M., Anderson, M., Gibson, R., Liem, G. A. D., & Sudmalis, D. (2013). The role of arts participation in students' academic and nonacademic outcomes: A longitudinal study of school, home, and community factors. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 105(3), 709-727. doi:10.1037/a0032795
- Maxwell, J. A., & Loomis, D. M. (2003). Mixed methods design: An alternative approach. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social science & behavioural research* (pp. 241-272). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- McAdams, D. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York: William Morrow.
- McAdams, D. (2003). Personalogical assessment: The life story of Madeline G. In J. Wiggins (Ed.), *Paradigms of personality assessment* (pp. 213-225). New York: Guilford Press.

- McNeil, J. D. (1996). *Curriculum: A Comprehensive Introduction* (5th ed.). New York: Harper Collins.
- Meighan, R. (1981). *A Sociology of Educating*. Eastborne, East Sussex: Holt, Rinehart & Winston Ltd.
- Miller, C., & Saxton, J. (2011). To see the world as if it were otherwise' : brain research challenges the curriculum of 'organized chunks. *NJ (Drama Australia Journal)*, 35, 118-132.
- Minichiello, V., Aroni, R., Timewell, E., & Alexander, L. (1995). *In-depth interviewing: Principles, techniques, analysis* (2nd ed.). Melbourne, Victoria: Longman Australia.
- Ministerial Council for Education Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs. (1989). The Hobart declaration on schooling. Retrieved from <http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/EC-Publications/EC-Publications-archive/EC-The-Hobart-Declaration-on-Schooling-1989.aspx>
- Ministerial Council for Education Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs. (1999). The Adelaide declaration on national goals for schooling in the 21st century. Retrieved from <http://scseec.edu.au/EC-Publications/EC-Publications-archive/EC-The-Adelaide-Declaration.aspx>.
- Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs,. (2008). *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians*. Melbourne, Vic: MCEETYA, Retrieved from http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/National_Declaration_on_the_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf.
- Mooney, M., & Nicholls, J. (2004). *Drama Journeys*. Sydney: Currency Press.
- Munday, C., & Anderson, M. (2016). Understanding the social aesthetic. In M. Anderson, J. Fleming, & R. Gibson (Eds.), *How arts education makes a difference* (pp. 123-135). Abingdon, Oxon and New York, NY: Routledge.
- Munday, C., & Fleming, J. (2016). The drama classroom: The practices of learning within community. In M. Anderson, J. Fleming, & R. Gibson (Eds.), *How Arts Education Makes A Difference* (pp. 151-168): Routledge.
- NAAE. (2009). *Draft Arts Advocacy Paper*. Retrieved from Canberra: http://www.ausdance.org.au/professional_practice/naae.html
- National Curriculum Information Center. (2009). *Primary-secondary school (2009.12) Framework I. The framework of the curriculum design 1. The vision for the educated person*. Seoul, Korea: KICE Retrieved from

<http://ncic.kice.re.kr/english.kri.org.inventoryList.do;jsessionid=48E5A86E88157D9ED07F01ECBAA55B9E>.

- Neelands, J. (2009). Acting together: Ensemble as a democratic process in art and life. *RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 14(2), 173.
doi:10.1080/13569780902868713
- Neelands, J. (2015). Art makes children powerful: Art for the many not the few. In M. Fleming, L. Bresler, & J. O'Toole (Eds.), *The Routledge international handbook of the arts and education* (pp. 410-417). Oxon, UK: Routledge.
- NESA. (2016a). Mandatory curriculum requirements for the record of school achievement – indicative time. Retrieved from
<https://ace.nesa.nsw.edu.au/ace-4006>
- NESA. (2016b, 27 September 2016). Mandatory curriculum requirements for the record of school achievement ACE 4007. Retrieved from
<https://ace.nesa.nsw.edu.au/ace-4007>
- NESA. (2017). *Languages K-10 framework*. Sydney: NSW Education Standards Authority Retrieved from <http://www.educationstandards.nsw.edu.au>.
- NESA. (2018). *Creative arts K – 6 Draft directions for syllabus development consultation report*. Sydney: NESA.
- Neuman, L. N. (2006). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson, Allyn and Bacon.
- Nikander, P. (2012). Interviews as discourse data. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, A. B. Marvasti, & K. D. McKinney (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft* (2 ed., pp. 397-413). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- NSW Department of Education. (2017a). Selective High Schools and Opportunity Classes: Gifted and talented students. Retrieved from
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/general-information/gifted-and-talented-students>
- NSW Department of Education. (2017b). What are selective high schools? Retrieved from <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/selective-high-schools-and-opportunity-classes/year-7/what-are-selective-high-schools>
- O'Neill, C. (2006). *Artists and models. In structure and spontaneity: The process drama of Cecily O'Neill*. Stoke on Kent, UK: Trentham Books.
- O'Toole, J. (2006). *Doing drama research: Stepping into enquiry in drama, theatre and education*. City East QLD: Drama Australia.

- O'Toole, J. (2009a). Art, creativity and motivation. In C. Sinclair, N. Jeanneret, & J. O'Toole (Eds.), *Education in the arts: Teaching and learning in the contemporary curriculum* (pp. 4-12). South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- O'Toole, J. (2009b). The arts and creativity: A manifesto for schools. In C. Sinclair, N. Jeanneret, & J. O'Toole (Eds.), *Education in the arts: Teaching and learning in the contemporary curriculum* (pp. 284). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- O'Toole, J. (2015). Establishing drama in the curriculum. In M. Fleming, L. Bresler, & J. O'Toole (Eds.), *The Routledge International Handbook of the Arts and Education* (pp. 185-193). Abingdon; New York: Routledge.
- O'Toole, J., Fleming, M., & Bresler, L. (2014). *The Routledge International Handbook of the Arts and Education*.
- O'Toole, J., O'Mara, J., & Bresler, L. (2007). *International Handbook of Research in Arts Education*.
- O'Toole, J., Stinson, M., & Moore, T. (2009). *Drama and curriculum: A giant at the door* (Vol. 6): Springer.
- OECD. (2017). Education at a glance: Teachers' teaching and working time (Publication no. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/d3ca76db-en>). Retrieved 17 April 2018 <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/content/data/d3ca76db-en>
- OECD. (2018a). Education GPS - PISA 2015: Full selection of indicators. Retrieved from <http://gpseducation.oecd.org/IndicatorExplorer?query=2&indi...>
- OECD. (2018b). *Mathematics performance (PISA) (indicator)*. Retrieved from <https://data.oecd.org/pisa/mathematics-performance-pisa.htm>
- OECD. (2018c). *Reading performance (PISA) (indicator)*. Retrieved from <https://data.oecd.org/pisa/reading-performance-pisa.htm>
- OECD. (2018d). *Science performance (PISA) (indicator)*. Retrieved from <https://data.oecd.org/pisa/science-performance-pisa.htm>
- Oreck, B. (2006). Artistic Choices: A study of teachers who use the arts in the classroom. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 7(8), 1-26.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2011). *Germany: Once Weak International Standing Prompts Strong Nationwide Reforms for Rapid Improvement*. Retrieved from Paris:
- Page, T., Adams, J., & Hyde, W. (2011). Emerging: The impact of the artist teacher scheme on students' pedagogical and artistic practices. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 34(3), 277-295. doi:10.1080/02619768.2011.565324

- Parsons, S. A., Vaughn, M., Malloy, J. A., & Pierczynski, M. (2017). The development of teachers' visions from preservice into their first years teaching: A longitudinal study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 64, 12-25.
doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.01.018>
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3 ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Pavlou, V., & Athanasiou, G. (2014). An interdisciplinary approach for understanding artworks: The role of music in visual arts education. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 15(11), 1-25.
- Peräkylä, A., & Ruusuvuori, J. (2011). Analyzing talk and text. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (4th ed., pp. 529-543). Thousand Oaks CA: SAGE Publications.
- Petrova, I. (2012a). *What Makes Good Music Programs in Schools? A Study of School Music Across Australia and a Comparison With England and Russia* (PhD), UNSW, Sydney. Retrieved from
http://www.unsworks.unsw.edu.au/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?vid=UNSWORKS&docId=unsworks_10525
- Petrova, I. (2012b). *What makes good music programs in schools? A study of school music across Australia and a comparison with England and Russia*. (PhD), UNSW. Retrieved from
http://www.unsworks.unsw.edu.au/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?vid=UNSWORKS&docId=unsworks_10525
- Piper, K. (1997). *Riders in the chariot: Curriculum reform and the national interest 1965-1995* (J. Angus Ed. Vol. 38). Camberwell, Vic.: The Australian Council for Educational Research.
- Plummer, K. (2011). Critical humanism and queer theory. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed., pp. 195-211). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Polikoff, M. S., McEachin, A. J., Wrabel, S. L., & Duque, M. (2014). The waive of the future? School accountability in the waiver era. *Educational Researcher*, 43(1), 45-54. doi:10.3102/0013189X13517137
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (2007). Validity issues in narrative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13, 471-486.

- Power, B., & Kloppe, C. (2011). The classroom practice of creative arts education in NSW primary schools: A descriptive account. *International Journal of Education & the Arts*, 12(11), 1-26.
- Power, R. (2014). Whose values?: On the national curriculum review. Retrieved from <http://wheelercentre.com/dailies/post/9098cf639ac1/>
- President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. (2011). *Reinvesting in arts education: Winning America's future through creative schools*. Retrieved from Washington, DC: http://www.pcah.gov/sites/default/files/PCAH_Reinvesting_4web_0.pdf
- Print, M. (1987). *Curriculum development and design*. North Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- QSR International. (2014). NVivo10 for Windows. Retrieved from http://www.qsrinternational.com/products_nvivo.aspx
- Rapley, T. (2007). *Doing conversation discourse and document analysis*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Reid, A. (2005). *Rethinking national curriculum collaboration: Towards an Australian curriculum*. Retrieved from Canberra, ACT: <http://LORENZA FULL THESIS 28 May 2018.docx>
- Richards, L. (2009). *Handling qualitative data: A practical guide* (2nd ed.). London UK: SAGE Publications.
- Richards, L., & Morse, J. M. (2007). *Readme first for a user's guide to qualitative methods* (2 ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Richerme, L. K. (2016). Uncommon commonalities: Cosmopolitan ethics as a framework for music education policy analysis. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 117(2), 87-95. doi:10.1080/10632913.2015.1047002
- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Robinson, K. (2001). *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative*. West Sussex, UK: Capstone Publishing.
- Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers* (2nd ed.). Oxford, UK: John Wiley & Sons.
- Ross, M. (1986). *Assessment in arts education: A necessary discipline or a loss of happiness?* Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Rudd, K., & Gillard, J. (2008). *Quality education: The case for an education revolution in our schools*. Canberra.

- Russell-Bowie, D. E. (2012). Developing preservice primary teachers' confidence and competence in arts education using principles of authentic learning. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(1), 60-74.
- Saldana, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London, UK: SAGE Publications.
- Salvador, K., & Allegood, K. (2014). Access to music education with regard to race in two urban areas. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 115(3), 82-92.
doi:10.1080/10632913.2014.914389
- Sarantakos, S. (2005). *Social research* (3rd ed.). Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Saunders, J. N. R. (2015). *School drama: a case study of student academic and non-academic outcomes*. (MEd (res)), University of Sydney. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2123/13948>
- Savage, G. C., O'Connor, K., & Brass, J. (2014). Common core state standards: Implications for curriculum, equality and policy. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 11(1), 18-20. doi:10.1080/15505170.2014.908436
- Schmied, C. (2010). *OECD Education Ministerial Meeting Investing in Human and Social Capital: New Challenges*. Retrieved from Paris: <http://www.oecd.org/site/edumin10/46335575.pdf>
- Schostak, J. (2006). *Interviewing and representation in qualitative research*. Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Seddon, T. (1983). The hidden curriculum: An overview. *Curriculum Perspectives*, 3(1), 1-6.
- Seddon, T. (2001). National curriculum in Australia? A matter of politics, powerful knowledge and the regulation of learning. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 9(3), 307-331. doi:10.1080/14681360100200127
- Shieh, E. (2012). Can music professional associations build capacity for curricular renewal? *Arts Education Policy Review*, 113(2), 55-67.
doi:10.1080/10632913.2012.656502
- Silverman, D. (2006). *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analysing talk, text, and interaction* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Smyth, J., & Dow, A. (1998). What's wrong with outcomes? Spotter planes, action plans, and steerage of the educational workplace. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 19(3), 291-303. doi:10.1080/0142569980190302
- Snyder, L., Klos, P., & Grey-Hawkins, L. (2014). Transforming teaching through arts integration. *Journal for Learning through the Arts*, 10(1), 2-24.

- Squire, C. (2008). Experience-centred and culturally oriented approaches to narrative. In M. Andrews & M. Tamboukou (Eds.), *Doing narrative research* (pp. 41-63). Los Angeles CA: Sage.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 443-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (2003). Glossary. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research* (pp. 703-718). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Temmerman, N. (1997). An investigation of undergraduate music education curriculum content in primary teacher education programmes in Australia. *International Journal of Music Education*, 15(1), 26-34.
doi:10.1177/025576149703000104
- The College Board. (2013). *International arts education standards: A review of standards, practices and expectations in thirteen countries and regions*. Retrieved from New York, NY:
<https://nccas.wikispaces.com/file/view/CB+Intl+Standards+Aug+2013+%281%29.pdf>
- Thomas, G. (2010). *How to do your case study: A guide for students and researchers*. London, UK: SAGE Publications.
- Thomas, K. (2015). The practice of collaboration as ethical activity in art/s education? *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 14(3), 296-308.
doi:10.1111/jade.12085
- Thompson, G. (2013). NAPLAN, MySchool and Accountability: Teacher perceptions of the effects of testing. *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, 12(2), 62-84.
- Thomson, P., & Sefton-Green, J. (2011). Introduction. In P. Thomson & J. Sefton-Green (Eds.), *Researching creative learning: Methods and issues*. London: Routledge.
- Thorndike, E. L. (1910). The contribution of psychology to education. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1(1), 5-12.

- Throsby, D., & Zednik, A. (2010). *Do you really expect to get paid? An economic study of professional artists in Australia*. Retrieved from Strawberry Hills NSW: http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/research/do_you_really_expect_to_get_pa-54325a3748d81.pdf
- Trilling, B., & Fadel, C. (2009). *21st Century Skills. Learning for Life in Our Times*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Väljärvi, J., & Sulkunen, S. (2016). Finnish School in International Comparison. In H. Niemi, A. Toom, & A. Kallioniemi (Eds.), *Miracle of Education: The Principles and Practices of Teaching and Learning in Finnish Schools* (pp. 3-22). Rotterdam/ Boston/Taipei: Sense Publishers.
- van de Oudeweetering, K., & Voogt, J. (2017). Teachers' conceptualization and enactment of twenty-first century competences: exploring dimensions for new curricula. *The Curriculum Journal*, 1-18.
doi:10.1080/09585176.2017.1369136
- von Below, S., Powell, J. J. W., & Robert, L. W. (2013). Educational systems and rising inequality: Eastern Germany after unification. *Sociology of Education*, 86(4), 362-375.
- Wells, K. (2011). *Narrative Inquiry*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- West, C. (2012). Teaching music in an era of high-stakes testing and budget reductions. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 113(2), 75-79.
doi:10.1080/10632913.2012.656503
- Winner, E., Goldstein, T., & Vincent-Lancrin, S. (2013). *Art for art's sake?: The impact of arts education*. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264180789-en>
- Winner, E., & Hetland, L. (2010). Art for our Sake School Arts Classes Matter More than Ever- But Not for the Reasons You Think. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 109(5), 29-32.
- Winston, J. (2006). Researching through case study. In J. Ackroyd (Ed.), *Research methodologies for drama education*. Stoke on Trent, UK and Sterling USA: Trantham Books.
- Wong, J. (2014). Establishing a school-based drama programme: supporting non-specialists to plan and teach a drama programme. *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 19(2), 208-212.
doi:10.1080/13569783.2014.911512

- Yates, L. (2008). *School knowledge, working knowledge and the knowing subject: A review of state curriculum policies 1975-2005*. Retrieved from <http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/curriculumpoliciesproject/trajectory.html>:
- Yates, L. (2009). From curriculum to pedagogy and back again: knowledge, the person and the changing world. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 17(1), 17-28.
- Yates, L., & Collins, C. (2008). *Australian Curriculum 1975-2005: What has been happening to knowledge?* Paper presented at the AARE Conference, QUT Brisbane.
- Yates, L., Collins, C., & O'Connor, L. (2008). Australian curriculum making. In L. Yates (Ed.), *Australia's curriculum dilemmas* Vic, Australia.
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Applications of case study research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed. Vol. 5). USA: SAGE Publications.
- Zoss, M., & Smith, D. (2011). Finding 'my kind of teaching': How a drama project became a teacher's expressive teaching moment. *English in Education*, 45(2), 161-175.

APPENDIX 1 Interview 1 Schedule

Pseudonym	Learning Area/role	Years	Interview 1	Venue
Gina	HT Creative and Performing Arts	Years 7-12	June 27, 2013	skype
Dean	Coordinator of Music	Years K-12	November 9, 2013	home
Errol	Head of Acting/Drama	Years 7-12	September 13, 2013	home
Mel	Drama	Years 7-12	August 14, 2013, September 3, 2013 <i>(split due to time constraints)</i>	school
Paula	Primary Vis Arts, Drama	Year 3-4	October 1, 2013	school
Craig	Primary Drama	Years 5-6	October 1, 2013	school
Sarah	Primary Visual Arts	Year 1	October 1, 2013	school
Mary	Secondary, Primary Visual Arts	Years 5 to 10	April 12, 2013	home

APPENDIX 2 Interview 2 Schedule

Pseudonym	Learning Area/role	Years	Interview 2	Venue
Gina	HT Creative and Performing Arts	Years 7-12	June 3, 2014	skype
Dean	Coordinator of Music	Years K-12	N/A	home
Errol	Head of Acting/Drama	Years 7-12	April 29, 2014	home
Mel	Drama	Years 7-12	April 23, 2014	school
Paula	Primary Vis Arts, Drama	Year 3-4	July 11, 2014	school
Craig	Primary Drama	Years 5-6	April 17, 2014	school
Sarah	Primary Visual Arts	Year 1	April 17, 2014	school
Mary	Secondary, Primary Visual Arts	Years 5 to 10	June 9, 2014	home

APPENDIX 3 Ethic Approval



Research Integrity

Human Research Ethics Committee

Wednesday, 27 February 2013

Dr Michael Anderson

Fac Ed & Soc Wk - Research; Faculty of Education & Social Work

Email: michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

Dear Michael

Your request to modify the above project submitted on 12 February 2013 was considered by the Executive of the Human Research Ethics Committee at its meeting on 20 February 2013.

The Committee had no ethical objections to the modification/s and has approved the project to proceed.

Details of the approval are as follows:

Project No.: 2012/1149

Project Title.: What are NSW Arts teachers perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts?

Approved Documents:

Date Uploaded	Type	Document Name
11/02/2013	Advertisements/Flyer	Cover letter to ASME PDF
11/02/2013	Advertisements/Flyer	Cover letter to Association of Primary Principals PDF
11/02/2013	Advertisements/Flyer	Cover letter to ATOM PDF
11/02/2013	Advertisements/Flyer	Cover letter to Drama NSW PDF
11/02/2013	Advertisements/Flyer	Cover Letter to individual teacher PDF
11/02/2013	Advertisements/Flyer	Cover letter to VADEA PDF
11/02/2013	Questionnaires/Surveys	Outline of questions V1 UNCHANGED
11/02/2013	Participant Info Statement	Participant Information Statement V2 PDF
11/02/2013	Participant Info Statement	Participant Information Statement V2 TRACKED

Please do not hesitate to contact Research Integrity (Human Ethics) should you require further information or clarification.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. J. Assinder'.

Dr Stephen Assinder

Chair

Human Research Ethics Committee

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), NHMRC and Universities Australia Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2007) and the CPMP/ICH Note for Guidance on Good Clinical Practice.

Research Integrity
Research Portfolio
Level 6, Jane Foss Russell
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 Australia

T +61 2 8627 8111
F +61 2 8627 8177
E ro.humanethics@sydney.edu.au
sydney.edu.au

ABN 15 211 513 464
CRICOS 00026A

APPENDIX 4 Letters to teacher associations



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Michael Anderson
Associate Professor
Associate Dean, Strategic Communications
Faculty of Education and Social Work

21 September 2012

Dear Primary Principals Association NSW

The Australian Arts curriculum is under development. We are undertaking a study to explore NSW primary teachers' and secondary Arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts. Please find attached information about the research which we invite you to post on your association's website for interested teachers. Teachers are invited to nominate themselves if they would like to take part in the study.

Yours sincerely,

Faculty of Education and Social Work
808, Education Building (A 35)
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 Australia

T +61 2 9351 7810
F +61 2 9351 4580
E michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

ABN 15 211 513 464
CRICOS 00026A



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Michael Anderson
Associate Professor
Associate Dean, Strategic Communications
Faculty of Education and Social Work

21 September 2012

Dear ATOM NSW

The Australian Arts curriculum is under development. We are undertaking a study to explore NSW Arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts. Please find attached information about the research which we invite you to post on your association's website for interested teachers. Teachers are invited to nominate themselves if they would like to take part in the study.

Yours sincerely,

Faculty of Education and Social Work
808, Education Building (A 35)
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 Australia

T +61 2 9351 7810
F +61 2 9351 4580
E michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

ABN 15 211 513 464
CRICOS 00026A



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Michael Anderson
Associate Professor
Associate Dean, Strategic Communications
Faculty of Education and Social Work

21 September 2012

Dear VADEA

The Australian Arts curriculum is under development. We are undertaking a study to explore NSW Arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts. Please find attached information about the research which we invite you to post on your association's website for interested teachers. Teachers are invited to nominate themselves if they would like to take part in the study.

Yours sincerely,

Faculty of Education and Social Work
808, Education Building (A 35)
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 Australia

T +61 2 9351 7810
F +61 2 9351 4580
E michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

ABN 15 211 513 464
CRICOS 00026A



Michael Anderson
Associate Professor
Associate Dean, Strategic Communications
Faculty of Education and Social Work

21 September 2012

Dear ASME NSW

The Australian Arts curriculum is under development. We are undertaking a study to explore NSW Arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts. Please find attached information about the research which we invite you to post on your association's website for interested teachers. Teachers are invited to nominate themselves if they would like to take part in the study.

Yours sincerely,

Faculty of Education and Social Work
808, Education Building (A 35)
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 Australia

T +61 2 9351 7810
F +61 2 9351 4580
E michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

ABN 15 211 513 464
CRICOS 00026A



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Michael Anderson
Associate Professor
Associate Dean, Strategic Communications
Faculty of Education and Social Work

21 September 2012

Dear Drama NSW

The Australian Arts curriculum is under development. We are undertaking a study to explore NSW Arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts. Please find attached information about the research which we invite you to post on your association's website for interested teachers. Teachers are invited to nominate themselves if they would like to take part in the study.

Yours sincerely,

Faculty of Education and Social Work
808, Education Building (A 35)
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 Australia

T +61 2 9351 7810
F +61 2 9351 4580
E michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

ABN 15 211 513 464
CRICOS 00026A

APPENDIX 5 Cover letter to individual teacher



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Michael Anderson
Associate Professor
Associate Dean, Strategic Communications
Faculty of Education and Social Work

21 September 2012

Dear teacher

You are invited to participate in a study of Arts teachers in NSW. This is case study research that will contribute to a PhD. With the Australian Curriculum for the Arts under development this is an ideal time to explore the views of teachers in NSW. We are interested to hear your thoughts about your training, experiences and current practice as an Arts teacher in NSW in one or more of the following areas: dance, drama, media, arts, music and visual arts.

Please review the attached Participant Information Statement and complete the Participant Consent form to nominate to take part in this study.

The study seeks to explore teachers' perceptions through up to 8 case studies. Teachers who self-nominate will be contacted and selection will be by receipt of application.

Yours sincerely,

Faculty of Education and Social Work
808, Education Building (A 35)
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 Australia

T +61 2 9351 7810
F +61 2 9351 4580
E michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

ABN 15 211 513 464
CRICOS 00026A

APPENDIX 6 Participant information and consent



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Faculty of Education & Social Work

ABN 15 211 513 464

Associate Professor Michael Anderson
*Chief Investigator / Associate Professor, Drama
Teaching and Learning, Associate Dean for
Strategic Communications*

Room 808
Building A35
Faculty of Education & Social Work
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: +61 2 9351 7810
Facsimile: +61 2 9351 4580
Email: michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

Web:
http://www.sydney.edu.au/education_social_work/

What are NSW Arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts in Australia?

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is the study about?

You are invited to participate in a study of Arts teachers in NSW. It will explore your understandings and perceptions of change to the state curriculum as the draft Australian Arts curriculum is made available for public consultation in 2012. This study has evolved as a means by which teachers' understandings of curriculum change in the Arts could be explored.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Linda Lorenza and will form the basis for the degree of PhD at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Associate Professor Michael Anderson.

(3) What does the study involve?

- The study will involve two face to face interviews.
- The first interview will ask respondents to discuss their background, their current curriculum and current perceptions of what a national Arts curriculum will mean to their practice.
 - The second interview will explore their understanding and perception of the draft Australian curriculum: The Arts, some time after it has been released for public consultation in the middle of 2012.
 - Each interview will take 90 to 120 mins.
 - Interviews will take place at the University of Sydney at times mutually convenient to the participant and the researcher in the period July to October 2012.
 - Each interview will be audio/video recorded for transcription purposes and recordings will **not** be published or made publically available.
 - Participants will remain anonymous being identified by pseudonyms and not by their real names in the transcripts and final report for the study.

What are NSW teachers perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts in Australia?

Version 1 21 September 2012

Page 1 of 2



ABN 15 211 513 464

Associate Professor Michael Anderson
*Chief Investigator / Associate Professor, Drama
Teaching and Learning, Associate Dean for
Strategic Communications*

Room 808
Building A35
Faculty of Education & Social Work
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: +61 2 9351 7810
Facsimile: +61 2 9351 4580
Email: michael.anderson@sydney.edu.au

Web:
http://www.sydney.edu.au/education_social_work/

What are NSW Arts teachers' perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts in Australia?

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is the study about?

You are invited to participate in a study of Arts teachers in NSW. It will explore your understandings and perceptions of change to the state curriculum as the draft Australian Arts curriculum is made available for public consultation in 2012. This study has evolved as a means by which teachers' understandings of curriculum change in the Arts could be explored.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Linda Lorenza and will form the basis for the degree of PhD at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Associate Professor Michael Anderson.

(3) What does the study involve?

- The study will involve two face to face interviews.
- The first interview will ask respondents to discuss their background, their current curriculum and current perceptions of what a national Arts curriculum will mean to their practice.
 - The second interview will explore their understanding and perception of the draft Australian curriculum: The Arts, some time after it has been released for public consultation in the middle of 2012.
 - Each interview will take 90 to 120 mins.
 - Interviews will take place at the University of Sydney at times mutually convenient to the participant and the researcher in the period July to October 2012.
 - Each interview will be audio/video recorded for transcription purposes and recordings will **not** be published or made publically available.
 - Participants will remain anonymous being identified by pseudonyms and not by their real names in the transcripts and final report for the study.

What are NSW teachers perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts in Australia?

Version 1 21 September 2012

Page 1 of 2

APPENDIX 7 Outline of questions: Interview 1

Outline of questions to be asked at interview

Using the model for semi-structured questioning from Buldu and Shaban (2010), teachers will be asked to talk about:

- (1) their educational and professional background including their own education and interest in the Arts. (i.e., degree, key learning areas and subject matter knowledge, pedagogical and professional content knowledge, years of teaching experience);
- (2) their perceptions of the value of the arts in education of school students;
- (3) their arts teaching practices (i.e., current Arts teaching in NSW, how they work with the current syllabus, how the arts are taught, teaching styles, resources available, parent/family and community involvement);
- (4) the major influences on and limitations of their current practices in teaching the arts; and
- (5) what they know about the Australian Arts curriculum including talking about related documents they have read or heard about .

What are NSW teachers perceptions of curriculum change in the Arts in Australia?
Version 1 21 September 2012

APPENDIX 8 Outline of questions: Interview 2

1. After looking through the curriculum online, tell me about your initial response to it
 - a. digital presentation
 - b. curriculum content
 - c. what in particular appeals to you? (can you tell me more about this)
 - d. What is similar or different to the NSW syllabus? (organisation and the way you read it, language, intention?)
2. Thinking about your class (subject), look at the art/s subject in that band:
 - a. Tell me about what you see and think of in relation to your class and your teaching
3. In the last interview I asked you about your thoughts on the value of arts in education and to describe your practice, how you use the syllabus resources and what you do with your students.
 - a. Tell me about ideas you have for your teaching when you look at the AC.
4. What do you think is beneficial for teachers and for students in this curriculum?
(Less/more prescriptive; autonomy; integration opportunities; breadth/depth)
 - a. What is similar or different to the NSW syllabus? (organisation and the way you read it, language, intention?)
5. In your view, as a NSW teacher,
 - a. what has influenced the development of the Australian Arts curriculum?
 - b. What is the source for teachers to receive updates and information about curriculum?
 - c. how do you share their thoughts on curriculum development?
6. Have you heard of or read the Melbourne declaration?
 - a. Do you think the Australian Arts curriculum will help:
All young Australians become:
 1. successful learners
 2. confident and creative individuals
 3. active and informed citizens

APPENDIX 9 Example of interview transcript

LINDA Sarah, what I'm interested to know about is your background. What was your educational background and what has led you to where you are today as a primary teacher who is also a visual arts specialist.

SARAH Okay, so I went to high school and I did elective art in high school.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH I took that until year 12. Which is six form in those days and I got A levels in that and I was always interested in visual arts. Then when I went to Uni, I did as much visual arts there as I could. I've just always been interested in visual arts and always keen to learn something different. So I made it a mission of mine to go as many different craft groups.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH ..and things and learn as many different crafts as I could.. and the only one I think that I haven't covered is lead light windows [00:01:04].

LINDA Oh wow.

SARAH I've done everything.

LINDA Wow.

SARAH I just love learning to do it and I love teaching it. I think it's really beneficial in the classrooms especially for children who are not high achievers because you're not this, nothing's wrong.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH Do you know what I mean?

LINDA Yep.

SARAH Nothing's wrong and if they do something that they don't like, we can always fix it and I use a lot of language in my visual arts and I think the children think that they're not learning anything... 'oh what did you do today?' we just did painting but in actual fact they've learned words like the different colors and reflect, putting things into the distance, in foreground, background, and all those sorts of terms. I think they haven't learned anything, they'd just have fun...

LINDA ..but they've actually learned visual arts terminology.

SARAH .. Visual arts terminology, yeah and that's why I love visual arts because anyone can do it.

LINDA And so if we go back to when you were at Uni, were you intentionally doing an education qualification or ..

SARAH ..yes..

LINDA .. were you doing something else?

SARAH No, I was doing the ... What was it called? It was called general primary, that's what it was called. I went to Sydney and it was called general primary, we just did all the subjects but we had a chance to do visual arts as well.

LINDA Okay.

SARAH I really enjoyed doing that but that also involved things like sewing.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH Which I like doing, or any craft or any ... I just love doing. It's just my favorite thing.

LINDA How do you find that with all of the other things as a primary teacher that you have to teach?

SARAH Well, at first I thought it's a bit of a drag but um [laughter] ... because I enjoy it because you have like ... I don't know. It was all ... When I have difficult classes, I always use to write down on the board. "Right. We've got to do this, we've got to do that, and got to do that. Then at the bottom here, we've got some visual arts. If you want to get through all, if you want to get to the visual arts, you've got to get through all of these and we've got to do it properly".

LINDA It was almost a reward system.

SARAH It was a reward system for those children. I try to tie Maths into craft as well because I had to measure things and count stitches and language like forwards, double stitch, and things like that. I try to integrate it as much as possible.

LINDA Okay.

SARAH Only because I just love it and it's just I would teach ... In the olden days, we used to do English units and everything would come out of that. All the other KLAs would come out of that and I love doing that as well...

LINDA Yeah

SARAH ... and I thought wouldn't it be great if you could do visual arts and have it all coming in at visual arts or the language and the Math's and everything coming out of that.

LINDA Have you found a way to do that with the NSW syllabus?

SARAH No, it's very sad because there's just too much in the curriculum at the moment and visual arts is just shoved under the carpet.

LINDA Okay.

SARAH You feel that you sort of "I can't really tie it in unless we've got a really good topic in HSIE and, or Science." As I go out of my way to make a unit on visual arts doing famous artist and Van Gogh and looking at things like that. Or being involved with not just a brush or something like that, otherwise it's really hard to fit visual arts in these days.

LINDA Okay.

SARAH Even though a lot doing it.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH It's hard to fit it in because you know you've got to get through all these other stuff.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH It sort of takes priority.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH That's the tragedy of it all.

LINDA How long have you been working as a prim-... I assume as a primary teacher and...visual arts

SARAH thirty four years.

LINDA Wow.

SARAH Yeah, I was an RFF teacher at Peakhurst West for about five or six years. They actually employed me, they have a swimming pool over there and I have a ... certificate in teaching swimming. They got me out of there to run their swimming team but when they found out I was good at visual arts, they put me in charge of the visual arts as well and then I did visual arts for a lot of the teachers as well as part

of the RFF program. Which I found was enjoyable but very hard.
Preparation alone was ...

LINDA To do it as an RFF ...

SARAH It killed you.

LINDA Because you just got so many different classes that you've got to be ready for all the time.

SARAH Even though I was working three days a week, it was like 5 days of week work.

LINDA Because you actually that preparation.

SARAH So much ... so much preparation.

LINDA Okay, I think that's working. Yup.

SARAH Okay.

LINDA Perfectly I need question two which is what are your perceptions with the value of arts education in school? So thinking of the students that you've taught, what you've noticed about how they learned with the different art approaches that you used with them?

SARAH Well, I think it's really important because I think a lot of children have difficulty in the academic. They may not be good at Maths, they may not be good at English and they may especially the older kids they may now start feeling self conscious about not being good at those things. I think through art, because they let all their ... They're just good, what's the word? That all the defenses down in art, that they can relax and they really get into it. They're actually learning as they go along and they don't even know they're learning. They get to achieve things and "Oh look, I can do this." There is no mistakes in art and they start to, involuntary almost, start to use the language and then put a bit of Maths in there like perspective and stuff like that. They don't even realize that they're using all these other skills. They think that they're painting...

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH .. a scene and they don't know that they're planning ahead. They're putting things in sequence, they're using the language, they're using the Maths by putting things in the background making them smaller .. And as they get older, you can use different skills by actually measuring out all the different things and using the equations to measure out perspective and stuff like that. It's kind of like incidental learning. I think it's really exciting because um ... they get to feel good about themselves 'cause they have achieved something.

LINDA Right.

SARAH You know I can't do multiplication but you look at these beautiful drawing that I've done. This nice piece of craft that I've done where I had to measure out the lengths of things to do .. and so they don't realize they're doing it.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH That's why I like it so much.

LINDA Yeah. Wow.

SARAH Yeah.

LINDA Do you find then, that they make connections if they're learning something else in class that they might apply? If they had that idea of perspective and then they're in Maths they might make that connection or is it that the kids that you teach, they're kind of too young at this stage to make that?

SARAH No, I taught all the keys and sometimes I think they might make the connection growth. Actually a lot of kids they kind of put it in boxes. They go "Oh this is Math, that's in that box," and "This is English and that's in that box," and "This is visual arts and that's in that box." You don't sort of mix them up and you don't want to put it away on the shelf. The box away on the shelf, you don't need to use that again.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH I think they really realize that it's more incidental unless you point it out to them, you know?

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH In your Maths lesson you say, "Remember we did this, well it's the same thing," and that is sort of revelation. "Oh yeah" and I don't see too many get that, putting the connection together themselves.

LINDA Yeah. Yeah.

SARAH With the guide...

LINDA Okay, so thinking about your teaching practice and how you use arts. Arts and your art and other artforms in school, how do you work with the current New South Wales Syllabus? What sort of resources are available and what's the community of the school like in terms of supporting that?

SARAH All right, to tell you the truth I don't know that much about the new syllabus.

LINDA No, no, no the current New South Wales Syllabus.

SARAH Oh current one.

LINDA The current state syllabus that you're using.

SARAH Well, I kind of, I don't really use it that much. To be honest. I sort of ... Well I know it's there and I know what I should be doing but I kind of ... I'd probably start using it as a starting off point and then I sort of go out not on a tangent but I sort of expand on it.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH I get to use it, it depends on what I'm doing especially in Year two, we don't really do visual arts as a lesson. We integrated with everything else ...

LINDA Okay..

SARAH So we don't really have a separate visual arts program. When you look around here it's all to do with the ... we did PD Health yeah so that sort of like a Ken Done kind of thing. You just try and mix it in. We did sea animals so we did pointalism. We did printing and I'm more or less teaching them the skills of the different things at the moment and at where you've been, you sort of talk about the artist, that also work like that and you say sorts of things. What else have a got around here we're doing 3D shapes (looking around classroom) see that's Maths, making cylinders,. This one here the whirly-gig thing that's just ..I said we're just going to do that one, for fun. So I don't really have a set visual arts program but because I'm familiar with all the different things, I sort of tie into all the other subjects. In the senior classes, what I used to do is I used to pick an artist and I used to do a lot of work on that particular artist and then when we do examples of work going with that artist and different styles. That's how I used to work ...

LINDA Any particular artist that seem to be really appealing to the kids?

SARAH They're like the bright sorts of ... you know the Picasso's and bright works, Kandinsky, they like the Ken Done because it's bright. I did a

whole unit on Zen tangles I don't know what artist uses those but do you know what they are?

LINDA No.

SARAH Well if you look at the girl that won the Archibald, this year. I can't remember her name, she's done um artwork of ... [LINDA that was the Hugo Weaving with the cat] Well she ... yeah, Hugo holding the cat. In the background she's got all the dots so that's ... she said she wasn't influenced by Aboriginal people but it's like an Aboriginal kind of artwork but all that other work is like done with black pen and it's all lines, so Zen tangles are like that. You start off with just using black line drawings to make patterns and you just repeat the patterns. So I did a whole unit of work with year 4 because I was helping someone, we did whole unit on Zen tangles and when we finished that I just moved on to another artist. I just get Ideas.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH I just expand on that but they're not just a brush. This year, I got an idea from Brett Whitely. [LINDA Yeah].

SARAH He did need some ... a rubber thong that he turned into an owl and stuck it on a pole.

LINDA Oh yes I've seen that as it's done. Yeah, yeah.

SARAH Well they're only exhibition at the moment and works with the idea for me. Bringing your rubber thongs and we'll decorate those and put them on a tomato stake. Get ideas you know? Like that and yeah.

LINDA That's wonderful. Right.

SARAH I'm not really a book person so I know it's in the syllabus because I've used it all the time but I don't kind of stick to it.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH You know. I'll probably very naughty that way. Just like be very creative.

LINDA How wonderful for the students though? Because they must pick up on your enthusiasm and your curiosity.

SARAH Yeah. I get a lot of ideas from them too so if I'm stuck to something I'll say "oh, what are we going to do with this? I want to put it here but it doesn't seem to be working" and they'll say "well why don't we do this?" "Well we could do that I suppose.. no I've got a better idea", sort of trying to get a bit of discussion out of them that way as well.

LINDA They collaborating and problem solving together?

SARAH Yeah but I don't know they're doing that.

LINDA Yeah. Subliminal learning, it's fabulous isn't it [laughter].

LINDA We touched on this a little bit, what would you say the major influences on your current practice the way you're using art in the classroom? And what do you think might be the limitations on that?

SARAH Well materials, time, time's a big constraint. It's a shame you'd have to do other subjects really. I could do it all day long ... um and art materials are just so expensive and it's not like another subject where English you can buy a kit and it lasts for years and years. Art materials are disposable, you just got to keep buying them and that's the main limitations I find.

LINDA What are the influences on what you do? You were talking about how you just get ideas from things around you. Are there influences from within the school, from the school community as well?

SARAH Not really, I don't think so. We do our ... at the beginning of the year we do our cultural sort of time when we're sorting at classes we do that, a unit on the Chinese new year and things like that so we might do a lot of art work to do a Chinese artwork. Or one year I went to the art gallery and I saw a lot of Islamic art so I came back with lots of ideas about Islamic art. We got quite a few of Moslem kids here so I did a bit or work on that but ... I suppose because the school's near the ocean we do, often a lot of the classes do a lot of things about the sea and that is a unit of work anyway in Stage one, that's a popular one. I kind of like to do my own thing ... and if there's something else out there that fits in with what I want to do and there's the resources to do it then yeah I'll go with that.

LINDA Yeah.

SARAH We got a garden down the back here so we went and made a little scare crow, things to put in the garden to get the birds off our strawberries.

LINDA Did they work?

SARAH Ah well. Yes and no. [laughter]

LINDA I just know the Sydney magpies these days and they're pretty determined they don't actually need to be scared of anything.

SARAH You know, it just depends on what we're doing. That's the way I work.

LINDA Yeah, okay. It's wonderful.

SARAH I don't like ... I remember when I was doing stage two. I don't like to be told what I have to do, like for book covers for instance. Everyone had this generic book covers and they were boring, they had the school emblem on the front and I was the only teacher that said, "I'm not doing it. I just will not have those books "... I said "this is an opportunity to do really nice art work and put it on your book." Everyone knows what I'm like and they just said "okay Sarah you go off and you do that". Fortunately in Stage one that's what we do anyway. We make artwork to put on our books and the horrible generic book covers fizzled out thank goodness, but yeah, I'm a bit like that. I like to do my own thing [00:18:42].

LINDA So, I wonder what the students are been picking up in that too, are they becoming quite independent in the way they think and the way they portray themselves.

SARAH Yeah, and I like originality, I don't like them to copy. I said well if I show them something that I've found say on Pinterest or something like that, so well all I want to do something like this. I don't want to do this, I want to do something like this. This is that person's interpretation, let's do our own. Sometimes you're really opening a can of worms, you get everything and you think "Oh what have I done". Sometimes you get some really creative ideas and then you can show, you say, "Well look at this." It's a good practice for the kids to stand up and go on and have a look around everyone else's work and we only talk about constructive criticism, we don't bag each other's work. The kids that are really struggling or have learning difficulties, see other people's work and think "mine's as good as that". Just to see their faces, look what I've done". [LINDA Isn't that lovely? That's giving them self-confidence] [00:20:01]

SARAH Self-confidence yeah and I think when they're young it's good because they haven't had it drummed into them this is right, this is

wrong so they're still creative. By the time they get older, they're worried, "is this, am I doing it right, is this the right thing?" They're very hung up about what's right and what's wrong and I give them a sheet of art paper [00:20:27] and I say "now that's five cents. That's what that's worth, if you make a mistake, you're not getting another sheet. If you make a mistake we're going to fix it up, we're going to change it, because there's no mistakes in art". I show them I've got a big poster of Blue Poles and I put them up there and I go "look at that" and they go, "That's just a lot of blobs," and I said, "That's worth lots of money." [laughter]

You can tell them the number and whenever you too, I don't know the difference between \$5 and \$500 and \$5,000. You tell them that's like worth a lot of money, look at that and all we can do something better than that. They're like they have to their beautiful artwork and they've made a mistake, we just fix it up, we paint over it or we change it and make it fit in with what we're doing. Whereas when they get older, "Oh I made a mistake," throw out the piece and start again. It's got to be right because they've got that hang up about doing the right thing, where they creative and this is sort of thing is being squashed out of them.

LINDA

Yeah.

SARAH

That's what's sad.

LINDA

Yeah. Well that's interesting though and it's so refreshing to hear.

SARAH

Good.

LINDA

That's lovely. So the last big question.

SARAH

Oh dear.

LINDA

This is totally fine because it leads into the second interview anyway. What do you know or what have you heard about the Australian arts curriculum that's still unpublished. You're not expected to have prepared anything so it's really just what you've heard or ...

SARAH

The only thing I know was last year, two or three teaches from here went into help write it and I was a bit peeved off because I was away the day that they there were asked. I thought I should have been in there because I had all the ideas and it's virtually all I know.

LINDA

Okay.

SARAH

Yeah.

LINDA

We can change that.

SARAH

I hope this doesn't change too much because you know how sometimes they can be so airy fairy. There's a lot of teachers, they're really frightened of doing visual arts because they don't know what to do and they're too scared and they like the Year 6 kids, they don't know if they're doing it right.

LINDA

Exactly.

SARAH

They're too scared to try it and they say "Oh Sarah, you're such a natural" and it's my favorite subject. I just go, and I just teach it. I know from experience, the first thing I do is I show them how to use the different types ... I teach I show them, this is your brush and this is what this part's called and this is how water brushes, water colour brushes you use in a different way to your other brushes that we have. Don't stand them up like this ... and I teach them all the rules about painting and then if we're doing faces or bodies then I teach them about the proportions and so this are certain rules in art and you always get a good face if you do this rule, the eyes are half way

down the head, the top of the eyes with the ear and all this sort of thing. There's certain rules and if you want to make it really stick and I teach that sort of thing and I just know that. Just comes out like verbal diarrhoea but a lot of teachers are really hung up with that because I say, "Well I don't really know all that." They're frightened to attempt it because they think it won't work out and they don't know what else to do.

LINDA
SARAH

Yeah.

I think I hope it's the ... it's going to be easy to read, like user-friendly. You know what I mean? It's not going to be too daunting and have too many expectations.

APPENDIX 10 Example of themes that arose from the data in the coding process

NSW Arts teachers 9 Feb 2015 nvivo12 (NVivo 11).nvp - NVivo Plus

Nodes	Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Nodes	whole year or school focus		4	6 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
best quotes	memorising lines in Drama		1	1 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	13/01/2014 5:09 PM	LL
Eisner influences and imp	focus in drama		4	4 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
Cases	ongoing training self development		1	1 27/01/2014 10:46 PM	LL	27/01/2014 10:46 PM	LL
CASES	opportunities for student learning		4	6 27/01/2014 10:48 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
Sentiment	visual arts concerns		1	1 27/01/2014 10:56 PM	LL	27/01/2014 11:33 PM	LL
Relationships	students lack confidence		1	1 27/01/2014 10:58 PM	LL	27/01/2014 11:43 PM	LL
Node Matrices	students need to practise		1	1 27/01/2014 11:27 PM	LL	27/01/2014 11:29 PM	LL
	flexibility on part of the teacher		3	4 27/01/2014 11:45 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
	teaching strategies		4	7 28/01/2014 12:18 AM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
	skills development		3	3 19/02/2014 6:50 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
	limited years have Arts		2	2 19/02/2014 11:04 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
	3b. resources		2	2 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	9/08/2014 9:18 AM	LL
	parent community involvement		5	5 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
	community involvement		3	3 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	9/08/2014 9:18 AM	LL
	offsite venue		2	2 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	9/08/2014 9:18 AM	LL
	student experience		2	2 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	9/08/2014 9:18 AM	LL
	school resources and expectations		6	7 27/01/2014 10:10 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
	lack of access to arts		1	1 27/01/2014 10:57 PM	LL	27/01/2014 11:26 PM	LL
	arts industry		1	1 27/01/2014 11:15 PM	LL	27/01/2014 11:16 PM	LL
	supportive principal		3	4 27/01/2014 11:17 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
	lack of money		2	2 19/02/2014 11:34 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP
	lack of space		2	2 19/02/2014 11:34 PM	LL	26/02/2015 5:41 PM	KP