

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE MUSIC PEDAGOGY  
AND ENGAGEMENT IN NSW SCHOOLS

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## **Abstract**

The cultural makeup of Australian school classrooms has become increasingly diverse over recent decades. In responding to this, a number of music educators have employed culturally responsive pedagogy, which respects and values the ethnocultural backgrounds of the students and uses the cultural knowledge and prior experiences of students to make learning encounters more engaging and relevant. This ethnographic multi-case study investigated the use of culturally responsive pedagogy and its impact on student engagement in the context of NSW schools located in the Sydney metropolitan area. The research contexts included two Intensive English Centres, schools that cater for the needs of newly arrived immigrant students with little to no English-speaking proficiency, in addition to a government high school in Sydney's West with a culturally diverse student population. The philosophy and practices of Maple Youth Choir for newly arrived students, many of refugee background, was also examined. Using individual and focus group interviews, observations of lessons and video recordings, this study explored the tenets of culturally responsive pedagogy and their relationship to student engagement in these contexts. The data revealed that students' connection to their ethnocultural identities is layered and complex and that students' self-identity is integral to their decision to participate in music at school and in the broader community. Further, it was evident that empowering students' voices and encouraging students to actively participate in knowledge construction led to deep engagement in learning. Finally, the study explored the philosophical ways that teachers approach culturally responsive pedagogy and the challenges that they face in its implementation. The results of this study promote the need for teachers to be continually reflective of their practice and considerate of the uniqueness of individual identity in acknowledging and empowering student voice.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

Within Australia, the implementation of school curricula is under the jurisdiction of state education authorities<sup>1</sup>. The New South Wales (NSW) Music Years 7-10 Syllabus, for junior secondary students aged approximately 12 to 16, offers teachers the opportunity to engage their students in music of a variety of cultures through the elective topic “Music of a Culture” (Board of Studies, 2003, p. 29) with suggested areas for study including notation, dance, traditional and contemporary styles and fusion of styles. The syllabus also requires that teachers “include an exposure to art music as well as a range of music that reflects the diversity of Australian Culture” (Board of Studies, 2003, p. 15). As our broader Australian society becomes increasingly multicultural it is imperative that teachers respond to not only the musical backgrounds of students but the ethnic, social, and cultural backgrounds too. Indeed, recent census and NSW Department of Education data reveal the increasing variety in language and ethnocultural background of students in the Australian classroom, further demonstrating the importance of cultural competency and responsiveness (Department of Education [DoE], 2017).

Students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE) currently make up 34.2% of the student population in NSW government schools, amounting to 238 different language backgrounds (DoE, 2017). Students from LBOTE are those “in whose home a language other than English is spoken by the student, parents, or other primary caregivers” (DoE, 2017, p. 12). Within the Sydney metropolitan area 53.4% of students come from a LBOTE, with 67% of students from western municipalities in Sydney coming from LBOTE (DoE, 2017). Such statistics are particularly pertinent for NSW schools and further demonstrate the need for educators to respond to the cultures of students in their classrooms by devising and incorporating meaningful and engaging content.

The definitions of culture are myriad and therefore it is important to recognise that although culture is a lens through which humans view and understand the world, “cultures are

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<sup>1</sup> Over the last decade national curriculum documents have been in development, and each Australian state has been in the process of devising state-based syllabus documents in response to this initiative. Currently in NSW secondary schools, music syllabus documents that predate the national curriculum still govern the teaching of music.

*dynamic, complex and changing*” (Banks, 2016, p. 90, original emphasis). Within the context of this thesis, “culture” may be defined as a person’s ethnic, social or religious background, involving the transmission of shared knowledge and understandings, including musical experiences, values and language (Hebert, 2010; Hong, 2009; Martinson, 2011; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). Culture may also be seen as “the behaviours, norms, attitudes, and assumptions that inform a group of people who are joined by common values, myths, beliefs and worldviews” (St Onge, 2013, p. 430). A key feature of all definitions of culture is its shared nature, shared knowledge and shared traditions (Banks, 2016; Jahoda, 2012; Markman, Grimm & Kim, 2009). In regard to music, culture is extremely relevant, as “any musical sound must be judged in relation to its acceptability to a particular society, and a musical culture is framed within processes of music-making that are dynamic and ever changing” (Lum & Marsh, 2012, p. 382). As culture influences the ways in which we view the world, it inevitably influences our perceptions and understandings of music. Definitions of culture and musical culture are explored further in the next chapter.

Understanding culture and its influence on education is particularly relevant to the Australian context as “culture is linked to power in society in multiple ways” (Gurgel, 2016, p. 6). Moreover “dominant groups in societies—economically, politically, and socially—seek to control what is talked about and how” (St Onge, 2013, p. 432). Thus, understanding and respecting culture is important in order to recognise disadvantages and oppression faced by minority groups in our society. An approach to respecting and understanding culture may be explored through culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). CRP is a pedagogy that “not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities in schools” (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 469). The purpose of CRP is to “produce positive relations between the diverse majority and minority groups by changing knowledge, attitudes and actions” (Inglis, 2009, p. 113), all of which require a deep understanding and respect for the cultures of students in the classroom (CRP is defined in more detail on p. 13).

This study is an investigation of the uses of CRP within an Australian musical context, specifically in NSW schools, and its impact on student engagement. It “is a framework that centrally locates the experiences of learners as an influential dimension that helps explain engagement and achievement” (Vass, 2017, p. 453). The successful implementation of this pedagogy to engage students relies on factors such as a dialogic relationship involving

students, teachers, and communities, and recognition of student voice. A number of barriers exist to the successful implementation of CRP, including varied understandings of “culture”, lack of teacher confidence in using CRP, sociocultural differences between students and educators and time and syllabus limitations (Dickar, 2008; Gurgel, 2016; Hall & Martin, 2013; Vass, 2017).

This study will explore the use of CRP in the context of school music classrooms and extra-curricular programs in Sydney, NSW, in order to address an existing gap in the research and literature. Few studies have looked specifically at its use within Australian classrooms (Hynds et al., 2011; Locke & Prentice, 2016; Vass, 2017). The Australian classroom context differs from that of the United States and most classrooms across Europe due to its greater diversity and the number of different language groups and cultures present within any one classroom (Hall & Martin, 2013; Vass, 2017).

### **Significance of the Study**

As stated earlier, CRP, especially in relation to music education, is an under-researched field, and this study aims to significantly explore this area of practice. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the development of music education pedagogies and approaches employed in Australian classrooms, by documenting the experience and methods of predominantly Sydney-based teachers. The study examines the way that teachers approach engaging students from culturally diverse backgrounds and the impact that pedagogy has upon student engagement, specifically in relation to cases of best practice among Sydney-based music educators. Although focussing on the secondary school environment, the study will examine the use of CRP not only in the context of classroom music but in the context of school ensembles with the aim of determining school-wide approaches to CRP.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guide this study:

1. What approaches and attitudes do music teachers have toward implementing CRP?
2. To what extent and in what ways do students engage with music from their own cultural heritage (and that of fellow students) within and beyond the classroom?

3. What do music teachers perceive to be the challenges they face in implementing CRP?

In the following chapter, issues of culture and engagement will be discussed in more depth through a review of the literature pertaining to CRP, student engagement and music education.

## Glossary

To minimise ambiguity, the following definitions will be observed throughout this thesis.

**Culture:** knowledge, understandings, musical experiences, values and language shared by a group of people who come from similar ethnic, national, racial, social or religious backgrounds (Hebert, 2010; Hong, 2009; Martinson, 2011; Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

**Culturally responsive pedagogy:** using the cultural knowledge and prior experiences of students to make learning encounters more engaging and relevant to students; pedagogy which respects and values the cultures of students (Abril, 2010; Gay, 2010; Gurgel, 2016; Karlsen, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 1995b).

**Ethnicity:** membership of a group of people who share the same national, racial, social, or cultural background.

**Ethnocultural:** the term most often relates to ethnicity; however, it also involves the self-identification and connection to culture, nationality, and identity (Dieckmann, 2016). A person's ethnocultural identity is a changeable construct, influenced by environmental factors such as discrimination and opportunities to learn.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following literature review focuses on the topic of culturally responsive pedagogy and its uses and definition within the scope of music education. The review then examines features affecting successful implementation of CRP, including the relationship between students, teachers, and the community, the need to give students a voice, teacher qualities, and the complexities that arise in CRP. Finally, the review also explores how CRP can be used to increase student engagement in classroom content.

### Defining Culture and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

“Culture” is a key term that is critical to this thesis and thus, critical to define; yet definitions of “culture” are innumerable and constantly in flux, being used in many different situations and having varying interpretations, as ideas and perceptions of culture are constantly changing (Hebert, 2010). This thesis considers the broad range of definitions of culture, including Martinson’s (2011), that culture “includes a person’s linguistic possession, citizenship legality status, musical background, school experiences, family configuration, and family priorities and values” (p. 155). Culture is particularly seen to relate to a person’s ethnicity and the varied meanings and understandings of the world that accompany this. However, culture does not simply relate to ethnicity; it may also be defined as “*networks of knowledge*, consisting of learned routines of thinking, feeling, and interacting with other people...shared (albeit incompletely) among a collection of interconnected individuals, who are often demarcated by race, ethnicity, or nationality” (Hong, 2009, p. 4, original emphasis). Further, “culture” also involves an aspect of social interaction, transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next and continuous development and modification over time (Hong, 2009; Taylor & Sobel, 2011). The culture/s within which a person has been raised and with which s/he identifies inform that person’s understandings of the world in concrete, behavioural and symbolic ways (Hidalgo, 1993).

Culturally informed perspectives of the world have a strong role to play in education as all teachers are inherently influenced by their culture and experiences and bring these to their teaching (Hebert, 2010; Hidalgo, 1993; Lind & McKoy, 2016; Pirbhai-Illich, Pete, & Martin, 2017). Schools in Western education systems are deeply influenced by dominant cultures and tend to design curricula to advantage students from the dominant culture, in so doing

disadvantaging students from minority cultures by disparaging these (Pirbhai-Illich et al., 2017). All learning environments are culturally influenced and, as Gay (2010) argues, culture needs to be taken into consideration when devising curricula for ethnically diverse groups of students. It is imperative that teachers question the idea that schools and education systems are fair and democratic, providing all students with equal opportunities to engage and succeed (Bartolome, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Pirbhai-Illich et al., 2017)

In the context of music education, culture has a strong influence, as music is a key element of culture. Music is an inherently cultural activity as many people and cultures around the world are brought together by the shared social and cultural aspects of music (Liu, Hu, & Schedl, 2018; Pascale, 2013). In a study of music listening preferences (Brittin, 2014), it was found that economic, linguistic, cultural, and social factors were key to determining the musical preferences of listeners, demonstrating the importance of people's cultural identity to their engagement with music. Further, music has a significant relationship to community and collective identities as "music becomes a key resource for different cultural groups in terms of the ways in which they make sense of and negotiate the everyday" (Whiteley, Bennett, & Hawkins, 2004, p. 2). Pascale (2013) argues for the inclusion of music from students' cultural heritage in education programs as music has the potential to "define culture, to strengthen connections and to reach the human spirit and bring people together" (2013, p. 130).

The disparity between the musical cultures that students experience at home and in the community, and the musical cultures that form the basis of classroom practice has long been a topic for discussion and research (Abril, 2010; Campbell, 2004; Campbell & Wiggins, 2012; Gurgel, 2016; Karlsen, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a). The development of CRP began in the field of general education and was devised with the intention of bridging the gap between students' experiences at home and at school and of ultimately increasing student engagement in the classroom. In the years that followed the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case, which prohibited segregation in American schools, there was a slow shift in school teachers' perspectives and approaches to teaching as classes began to reflect greater diversity (Banks, 2013; Lind & McKoy, 2016). The term, culturally responsive pedagogy, was initiated in the USA, with the approach emerging in the 1990s as a response to the growing recognition by American educators that the educational needs of African American

students were not being met. The development of CRP in music education was a response to the wealth of literature on multicultural music pedagogies developing from the 1970s. It was seen as the way forward, a new individualised and differentiated pedagogy of inclusion and equality (Gurgel, 2016).

CRP was most notably theorised by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) who is considered one of the founding authors in the field. Ladson-Billings defines CRP as “a pedagogy of opposition...committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment” (1995a, p. 160). Ladson-Billings outlines three main features of the pedagogy: “(a) Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order” (1995a, p. 160). The original focus of CRP was not specific to music education, rather applied to all education more generally.

In the field of music, teachers began to recognise that African American students were disengaged with the music they were being taught in class and as a result, were not engaging or succeeding academically and dropping out of music altogether (Gay, 2010; Gurgel, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995). In music, CRP was intended to develop a new generation of teachers with an ability to bring the music of their students into the classroom in a positive and appreciative way (Gurgel, 2016). However, studies have found that many teachers in a range of national contexts do not feel confident to teach their students in ways that are culturally relevant (Abril, 2010; Cain, 2015; Locke & Prentice, 2016; Roberts, 2010; Salminen, Toivanen, Virkkala, Hankama, & Vahermaa, 2010). A secondary key figure in the literature surrounding CRP is Geneva Gay, who defines culturally responsive teaching as “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (2010, p. 31).

The use of CRP terminology remains uncommon in Australia, despite many of its guiding principles being used and acknowledged<sup>2</sup>, indicating a gap in the literature. There is a great deal of literature dealing with multicultural approaches to education, and music education

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<sup>2</sup> In the Australian context, multiculturalism has been a dominant ideology in Australian education since the late 1970s and 1980s as the effects of immigration have influenced pedagogy (Hill & Allan, 2004).

more specifically; however, there is a need for more research and literature in relation to Australian uses of CRP (Vass, 2017). Although there is a gap in the Australian literature on culturally responsive and relevant pedagogies, the term is still in use. A number of studies have been conducted in Australian and New Zealand contexts which have explored elements of CRP and its use in student engagement and achievement (Ahmad & Awang, 2016; Baskerville, 2009; Hynds et al., 2011; Savage et al., 2011; Vass, 2017). In his Sydney-based study, Vass explored the feelings of preparedness of preservice teacher education students when implementing CRP on their practicums. The study required preservice teacher education students to undertake weekly workshops (as part of their university coursework) in CRP prior to undertaking practicums. The results revealed that “engagement improves when learning is contextualised in the lived experiences of students” (Vass, 2017, p. 453) and that a number of barriers to the successful implementation of CRP exist, including curriculum and school assessment limitations.

In the New Zealand context, Hynds et al. (2011) conducted a study into the use of culturally responsive pedagogies in New Zealand schools. The study aimed to address educational inequalities between Maori students and their European New Zealand peers through the implementation of the Te Kotahitanga programme. This programme “provides a model for culturally responsive, relationship-based pedagogy... [and] has been implemented widely to challenge low expectations for Indigenous Maori students held by mainstream teachers” (Hynds et al., 2011, p. 342). The study extols the importance of teacher-student dialogue and the use of CRP to support Maori students’ learning. Additionally, Locke and Prentice (2016) conducted research into how music teachers have begun to shape policy and pedagogy to respond to the culture of the Maori students in their classes. The research demonstrated that many teachers feel unprepared or ill-equipped in regard to pedagogy and content when teaching music from Indigenous Maori culture. The study also argues for “consultation from community members who are experts...because there is often considerable diversity among indigenous cultures” (Locke & Prentice, 2016, p. 144). This also involves inviting members of the community and culture bearers into the classroom to share music and teach, which may result in changing attitudes towards unfamiliar cultures (Locke & Prentice, 2016). Ultimately, whilst there is a gap in the literature on CRP in Australia there is still evidence of use of the terminology and the application of its principles in the Asia-Pacific context.

## **Factors affecting successful implementation of CRP**

There are many factors affecting the successful implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy. These factors relate to dialogue between the students, teacher and community, giving students a voice, and teacher personality, quality and teaching methods.

### **Dialogue between the students, the teacher, and the community**

In order to successfully implement CRP, teachers must maintain positive dialogue with students, parents and the community as these groups can be an important source of knowledge (Abril, 2010; Boshkoff & Gault, 2010; Gurgel, 2016; Shaw, 2016). When teaching in a way that is culturally responsive to the students, maintaining connections with the community will not only increase the knowledge and cultural competence of the teacher but ensure that culturally relevant repertoire is taught appropriately. Moreover, when teachers involve students, parents and the community in dialogue and discussion around students' learning there is a greater chance that students will be more engaged and feel passionately about the music being studied in class (Boshkoff & Gault, 2010; Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003; Shaw, 2016). Thus, teachers may meet with members of the community or culture bearers in order to learn about the musical cultures of students and apply their knowledge to the classroom in the best way possible (Boshkoff & Gault, 2010). Culture bearers "are members of a culture who possess particular musical knowledge derived from that culture" (Lum & Marsh, 2012, p. 387). The involvement of culture bearers in classroom lessons can be used to ensure the trustworthiness and authenticity of content taught to students (Lum & Marsh, 2012).

As previously noted, there is often a dissonance between music students' experience outside the classroom and inside (Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003). Thus, it is the role of the teacher to unify these musical experiences through dialogue with students, parents and the community in order to best engage students in learning.

### **Giving students a voice**

Another important factor affecting the successful implementation of CRP is the need to give students a voice (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a). The literature demonstrated that

students need to be given responsibility and choice, to feel as though they have had their voices heard (Abril, 2010; Gurgel, 2016; Rohan, 2011; Shaw, 2016). Sæther (2008) found that dialogue and conversation between teachers and students was key to choosing appropriate repertoire. Utilising student expertise and knowledge in the teaching and study of repertoire leads to greater engagement with classroom musical experiences and allows for students to feel validated and respected in the classroom (Abril, 2010; Boshkoff & Gault, 2010; Gay, 2010; Gurgel, 2016; Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2017). There is more research needed on the importance of student voice within the classroom as “student voices are underrepresented in research on CRP considering the student-centred premises underlying the approach” (Shaw, 2016, p. 46).

### **Teacher qualities and pedagogical methods**

Teacher qualities, personality and pedagogical methods have an important role to play in the successful implementation of CRP. Teachers should be inclusive, knowledgeable, receptive to student ideas and input, and culturally competent (Abril, 2010; Boshkoff & Gault, 2010; Gay, 2000; Gurgel, 2016; Hall & Martin, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Roberts, 2010). Cultural competence can be defined as “the ability to understand, appreciate and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one’s own” (DeAngelis, 2015, p. 66). It is a key feature of CRP, and culturally responsive music teaching is most effective when teachers understand and appreciate the music they choose to study and its societal and personal context (Shaw, 2016).

Teachers must also be fluid in approach and able to navigate the multiple cultural identities present in a classroom. In a recent study (Shaw, 2016), the ability of the teacher to appropriately and confidently shift between repertoire from different musical cultures allowed students to develop their cultural competence and created collaboration and peer learning between the students. In this study the teacher often met and consulted with culture bearers and community members, resulting in a positive reaction by students. In consulting with experts, the teacher also gained knowledge and “critical consciousness” (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, p. 162). Teachers must also be “supportive and facilitative of students’ intellectual, personal, social, ethnic and cultural development” (Gay, 2010, p. 216). In this way teachers can encourage open mindedness and creative thinking from their students (Cain, Lindblom, & Walden, 2013).

## Challenges present in CRP

Although CRP has benefits, there are also issues that arise when discussing this pedagogy. As previously mentioned, culture is nuanced and complex in itself, and thus teaching students from diverse cultures is a complex task. Research has found a dissonance not only between the musical experiences of teachers and students but a disconnect between the cultural backgrounds, socioeconomic status, family situation, and language of teachers and students (Dickar, 2008; Hidalgo, 1993; Marx, 2008; Smith, 2000; Temmerman, 2005). Because the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of teachers are often different from those of their students, “educators first need to recognise and understand these differences, and then discover ways to manage them effectively” (Baskerville, 2009, p. 461). Perceptions of “Otherness” have a strong role to play in music education. A number of studies have shown that when teachers are perceived as “other” to the culture of their students, they struggle to relate to their class and to maintain engagement (Dickar, 2008; Gurgel, 2016; Hall and Martin, 2013; Marx, 2008; Smith, 2000). Some American research has shown that students from ethnic minority backgrounds may respond better, in terms of emotional and behavioural engagement, to teachers of the same ethnocultural background (Bingham & Okagaki, 2012; Dickar, 2008). More research is needed in this area specific to the Australian sociocultural context. Martinson (2011) argues that there is a need for greater research on the impact of sociocultural factors, such as cultural background, family situations and economic status, on students’ musical experiences, particularly when these factors differ from the experiences of their music teachers.

An additional issue to consider when approaching CRP is the training of music educators. The general educational pathway of Western music educators frequently involves study on an orchestral instrument, success with that instrument in very defined ways and lastly, study in a tertiary institution – most of which are centred around Western Art Music (Temmerman, 2005). Thus, the pathway to becoming a music educator in Western contexts significantly benefits those from advantaged families who have been given the opportunity to succeed in the Western Art Music tradition. In terms of CRP, this means that many music educators are trained largely in the Western Art Music tradition, leading to unfamiliarity with and discomfort in teaching music from varied cultural traditions. This indicates a need for further teacher training in CRP for music educators (Abril, 2010; Cain, 2015; Dickar, 2008; Marx, 2008; Locke & Prentice, 2016; Salminen et. al., 2010; Smith, 2000; Temmerman, 2005).

Another potential area of difficulty is the level of engagement of students in music associated with their cultural background. In Karlsen's (2013) study of the use of "homeland music" (p. 161) in the classrooms of immigrant students in Finland, Sweden, and Norway, it was found that music from students' cultural heritage played a significant role in their home and community lives. However, the use of this music in the classroom context was problematic because, although it engaged and motivated some students to learn, others did not want to be defined simply by the music of their ethnocultural group. The study found that some students reported feeling alienated by this approach. Indeed, as recognised in an Australian study, "ethnic and familial culture may not, in fact, be relevant to students' sense of self at all, and students may not identify with any particular cultural identity we choose to attribute to them" (Cain, 2015, p. 72).

Identity is complex due to the cultural and social systems that we experience and in which we live, particularly in our pluralistic, multicultural Australian society. Music plays an important role in the lives of adolescents and is "a medium through which identities and frames for action are negotiated" (Karlsen, 2013, p. 163). Students may choose not to listen to music from their ethnocultural heritage, rather, as with their peers, opting to listen to globalised music of popular youth culture (Cain, 2015; Sæther, 2008). Music functions on many levels: emotional, social, and cognitive and plays a strong role in the development of an adolescent's sense of belonging and membership to a group (Karlsen, 2013; Kelly-McHale, 2013). Shaw (2016) argues that "students' cultural identities encompass connections with multiple social groups that interact in complex ways" (p. 63), an important factor for teachers to consider when approaching CRP as students may choose to embrace or reject music due to the opinions of peers and social groups. With such considerations in mind, teaching using CRP becomes a challenging task for teachers as they must successfully negotiate many different connections with, and understandings of, cultural identity that may exist in any one classroom. Managing these complexities of cultural expression revolves around teachers' cultural competence, and their ability to communicate with students and the community in order to devise intellectually stimulating content (Cain, 2015; Gay, 2010; Gurgel, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995b; Lind & McKoy, 2016).

## Student Engagement

Student engagement is comprised of four main aspects: cognitive, intellectual, affective and behavioural engagement (Darr, 2012; Pianta et al., 2012). Each aspect of engagement is key to maintaining student interest, motivation, and ultimately, a sense of achievement in students' work. Student engagement can be most simply defined as a student's commitment to activities and learning goals within a school context (Appleton, 2014). Shernoff (2013) defines engaged students as "interested, involved, curious, and, most especially, imaginative – and usually they have a positive self-concept with respect to their domain of interest" (p. 49). Cognitive and intellectual engagement are closely linked and they relate to the need for teachers to plan and design work for students that is cognitively challenging and intellectually stimulating. It involves "thoughtfulness and willingness to exert the effort necessary to comprehend complex ideas and master difficult skills" (Mahatmya, Lohman, Matjakso, & Farb, 2012, p. 47). Further, "cognitive engagement stresses investment in learning, seeking challenge and going beyond the requirements" (Darr, 2010, p. 709). In music, an investment in learning may be demonstrated by students' involvement with performance, composition or musicology activities and a motivation to achieve to the best of their ability in work that is both challenging and achievable, scaffolded by their teachers. Engagement in music lessons occurs when students are given sufficient academic challenges and intellectual stimulation, leading to a sense of achievement and fulfillment in their work (Gurgel, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Additionally, "children and youth are engaged by challenges that are within reach and that provide a sense of self-efficacy and control" (Pianta et al., 2012, p. 370). It is important to understand that one of the key tenets of CRP is that "students maintain some cultural integrity as well as academic excellence" (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, p. 160).

Affective engagement refers to a student's emotional reaction to learning, teachers, classmates and school. It also relates to other emotional factors in engagement such as interest, anxiety, happiness, boredom or sadness (Mahatmya et al., 2012). In relation to CRP, this may also relate to factors such as identity and self-confidence and can be impacted by social pressures. Affective engagement is deeply important to learning as many adolescents are driven by emotion during this period of great change in their lives (Sebastien, Burnett, & Blakemore, 2008). Further, affective engagement in school may impact a student's sense of belonging, confidence, and self-concept. Affective, or emotional, engagement is difficult

to monitor and gauge as it relies on self-reporting from students and may be difficult for teachers to observe (Appleton, 2014).

Lastly, behavioural engagement refers to a student's action and participation in both classroom and extra-curricular activities. Behavioural engagement also "includes behaviors such as effort, persistence, concentration, attention, [and] asking questions" (Mahatmya et al., 2012, p. 47). In the context of a music classroom, behavioural engagement may be seen as appropriate classroom behaviour and attitude, completion of set tasks and active participation in musical performances, both in school or outside of the school context. Behavioural engagement may be observed as on-task behaviours, consistency of effort, and attendance. However, it is difficult to measure behavioural engagement as it is judged solely by teachers and adults, providing only one perspective on the matter and may not consider the different ways students learn (Shernoff, 2013).

Teacher qualities and personality also have a strong role to play in student engagement. Teachers must provide students with learning environments that are supportive and respectful. Students engage in learning when the teacher-student relationship is positive and supportive and when teachers respect and validate student voices (Abril, 2010; Boshkoff & Gault, 2010; Gurgel, 2016; Hall & Martin, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Pianta et al., 2012; Shaw, 2016). Validation of student voices impacts greatly on students' affective engagement as it may develop students' sense of identity and self-concept, encouraging and motivating them to take ownership of their learning. In turn, this may lead to greater cognitive, intellectual and behavioural engagement. Moreover, Cain et. al. (2013) note that students respond well and engage with teachers who display a genuine passion or interest in the music set for study. Their study emphasised the impact of the teacher demonstrating positive qualities such as open dialogue with students, cultural competence and knowledge. These factors can have a significant influence on student engagement as students trust teacher expertise "when the content [is] culturally, socially relevant, ... while infused with academic rigor" (Hall & Martin, 2013, p. 102). Hall & Martin's (2013) study also found that student engagement increased because the content set for study had relevance and connection to the students' lives.

Many students find classroom experiences irrelevant as they do not have any connection with or significance to their everyday lives (Hargreaves & Marshall, 2003; Pianta et al.,

2012; Temmerman, 2005). Teachers must “recognize the students’ experiences, knowledge, and skills and be able to use these as a foundation for learning” (Gurgel, 2016, p. 64). It is imperative to student engagement that teachers connect the contexts of school and home, bringing students’ home musical experiences into the classroom. Furthermore, research demonstrates that a student’s sense of cultural identity plays a role in classroom engagement, as students with a strong sense of identity and belonging are more likely to be engaged in school (Bingham & Okagi, 2012). It has been shown that students who are experiencing a disconnect from their ethnocultural identity have lower emotional engagement in school when racial or social discrimination is present, highlighting the impact of cultural identity and ownership on student engagement (Bingham & Okagaki, 2012). This is a particularly important consideration for teachers seeking to engage second-generation immigrant students, who often feel conflicted, torn between their experiences at school and at home, between mainstream and traditional culture, which may have different values and social codes (Bingham & Okagaki, 2012; Brittin, 2014; Kelly-McHale, 2013). This conflict is highlighted by “cultural discontinuity” (Bingham & Okagaki, 2013, p. 67), the difference in language, behavioural and social norms between mainstream culture and that of one’s heritage. For engagement to occur, the potential for such cultural discontinuity needs to be ameliorated.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the literature review has found that the uses and features of CRP lend themselves to increasing student engagement; however, there are many factors affecting the successful implementation of CRP. These factors include dialogue with students, teachers and the community, elements of teacher personality and teacher qualities and the need to allow students some voice and autonomy in their learning. However, there are difficulties and challenges in implementing CRP, largely related to the complexities that surround individual identity and identification with culture. There is therefore a need for further research surrounding the use of CRP to engage students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, particularly in an Australian context, where research in this area is relatively sparse. The following chapter outlines the ways in which this topic has been addressed in the current study.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This study examined the use of culturally responsive pedagogy and its impact on student engagement within educational music contexts in NSW schools. Therefore, the study sought to determine the skills and methods currently utilised by teachers in the classroom to engage students of culturally diverse backgrounds. It also focused on the experiences of students in these classrooms as they engaged with and learned about music through the lens of CRP. In order to investigate these areas a qualitative approach was employed. Qualitative methodology was well-suited to the study as it can relate to people's "lives, stories, behaviour, but also . . . organizational functioning, social movements, or interactional relationships" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 17).

### **Research design**

The research was designed as an ethnographic multi-case study, with cases that included individuals, groups and institutions. In order to explore individual contexts, circumstances, practices and responses, the project focused on four different cases, predominantly from schools distributed across the Sydney metropolitan area that demonstrate CRP.

As the study sought to understand students' personal experiences and feelings of connection with music, an ethnographic methodology was employed. Ethnographic research "involves the ethnographer participating . . . in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 1). This approach was well-suited to the study as it involved "a strong focus on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena" (Liamputtong, 2013, p. 159), such as student engagement and behaviour. Typically, ethnographic research involves fieldwork, as the researcher attempts to gain access to and learn from the culture, environment or phenomena being studied. In my research with students and teachers from a diverse range of ethnocultural backgrounds it was vital to be conscious of factors such as age, gender and race on my capacity to gain access to the research contexts and to build respectful and trusting relationships with participants in order to develop understandings from an emic perspective (Liamputtong, 2013).

## **Sampling Procedures**

Cases and participants were selected through a combination of purposive and snowball sampling (Stake, 2008). Potential schools were identified from 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census (ABS, 2016) data indicating Sydney suburbs with high immigrant populations, as schools in such suburbs were more likely to meet the criteria for participation. Once specific areas were chosen, I identified public schools in the area, and, using publicly available information online, assessed specific information in regard to music at the school. These schools were also examined using the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority's (ACARA) My School website (ACARA, 2019), in order to determine percentages of students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE) and an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) level. Schools that appeared to be potentially appropriate for the project were contacted via email and a letter of introduction (see Appendix K) was sent to the school principal, using the email address listed on the school website. If the school chose to participate, the principal was asked to contact the music department in regard to teachers' and students' involvement, and Participant Information Statements and Participant Consent Forms (See Appendices A through I) were distributed to the parents of students involved in music at the school by the school's standard means. Teachers involved in the study were invited to participate based on set criteria, including (1) their use of elements of CRP, whether in the classroom or in an ensemble setting and (2), a willingness to participate in interviews and observations. The Maple choir was selected for inclusion in the study through purposive sampling. After research into the background and context of the choir, the director was contacted to participate in an interview via email.

## **Research Contexts and Participants**

In addition to teachers and the choir director as described above, the participants in the study were students from Years 7-12 whose teachers utilised elements of CRP within their classrooms. The participants also included students who engaged with music related to their own ethnocultural heritage within the broader context of school life, in ensembles or at concerts.

Altogether, the participants included 5 teachers and 56 students whose classes were observed. A smaller number of students from each class were asked for group or individual interviews, totalling 8 students. The basis of selection for individual interviews included willingness to take part in an interview and the student's participation in musical activities, determined through consultation with teachers.

This study examined three different cases from schools across the Sydney metropolitan area that demonstrate the use of CRP in the Australian school context. The fourth case comprised a choir for newly arrived students of high school age, most of whom come from Intensive English Centres. Details of the four case study contexts from which the participants were drawn are outlined below.

### **Greenhill Intensive English Centre<sup>3</sup>**

The first research context is an Intensive English Centre (IEC) which caters to the needs of newly arrived immigrant and international students. Students participate in a variety of classes and a wide range of subjects with a focus on developing English speaking and reading skills. Students attending Greenhill IEC may be enrolled from anywhere between 10 weeks to a full school year. Typically, students will attend for around six months before moving on to a regular public high school. IECs do not follow the New South Wales school curriculum as the focus is on developing English speaking and writing proficiency; therefore, music is not a required subject.

My study followed the work of Susilo, a School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) at both Greenhill IEC and Oak Park IEC who co-ordinates the music programs at both schools for students who choose to participate in music as their extra-curricular activity. Susilo is a trained percussionist, originally from Indonesia, who has been living in Australia for a number of years. Susilo has been working at Greenhill IEC for 14 years and has created and implemented the music program at the school. In 2018 Susilo held a forum for IEC teachers across Sydney who were interested in implementing music programs at their schools. The forum focused on helping teachers discover and nurture students with musical talents in order to put together a concert with students from a number of IECs performing group and

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<sup>3</sup> All names of individuals, schools and organisations are pseudonyms.

solo items. The concert was a collaborative performance project with students and teachers from a variety of IECs joining together to present individual and joint performances in music, dance and drama.

### **Oak Park Intensive English Centre**

The second research context, Oak Park IEC, is an IEC situated in the northern suburbs of the greater Sydney region. Susilo works at Oak Park IEC alongside two qualified music educators, Megan and Helena. Oak Park IEC and Greenhill IEC have both worked closely together in the past to present joint concerts, including the collaborative performance project with a number of other IECs in Sydney.

### **Baxter High School and Baxter IEC**

A contrasting research context is Baxter High School and the adjoining IEC. Baxter High School is a public high school in Sydney's west. It is a culturally diverse school where students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English comprise 65% of the school population (ACARA, 2019). As the school is connected to an IEC there is a constant influx of students with little to no English-speaking proficiency. My study at the school has involved an interview with the head of Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA), Timothy, who graduated from a specialist music teaching degree and postgraduate degree in NSW. Timothy has been working at the school for the past year and has previously taught at another school with a culturally diverse school population. My study also included an interview with an EALD (English as an Additional Language or Dialect) and English teacher, Maya, who previously worked in the IEC but is currently working in the high school. Maya also runs a choir for Pasifika students during lunchtimes and has run a variety of music and dance ensembles for students from both the IEC and high school.

### **Maple Youth Choir**

Lastly, my study has involved a choir for newly arrived culturally diverse young people including refugee students of high school age. The choir began with five members and has since grown to around 35 students between the ages of 13 and 18. The data collected from Maple Youth Choir consisted of an extended teacher interview with Naomi, the choir's main

director. Some publicly available video footage of the choir was also used. A more detailed discussion of data collection methods is found in the following section. A table listing all participants can be found on p. 30.

## **Data Collection**

Data were collected through the use of several ethnographic methods in order to achieve triangulation (Liamputtong, 2013). Triangulation refers to “a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation” (Stake, 2008, p. 133), allowing for increased validity, dependability and credibility of results. The data consisted of fieldnotes made during classroom or ensemble rehearsal observations; video and audio recordings of individual and focus group interviews with student participants; and video and audio recordings of interviews with teacher participants. Both within method and between method triangulation were used. Within method triangulation involves the use of multiple instances of the same form of data collection within multiple contexts and/or with multiple participants (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). Between method triangulation was also used as it “involves the use of more than one method in the pursuit of a given objective” (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 114), highlighted by the use of observational fieldnotes, interviews and focus groups.

### **Fieldwork Observations**

Observations of classroom music lessons and ensemble rehearsals were conducted throughout the study. I carried out observations and made fieldnotes in regard to the use of CRP and its impact on student engagement. The level of student engagement was determined through observation of their behavioural, cognitive and affective investment in learning during lessons or rehearsals. Student engagement also “includes observable behaviours such as positive conduct, persistence in learning and involvement in school life” (Darr, 2012, p. 709), all of which may be ascertained through interviews with students and classroom observations. The relationship between teachers and students is regarded as key to understanding engagement (Gurgel, 2016; Pianta et al., 2012; Sæther, 2008). Thus, observation of the interactions between teachers and students and “behavioral indicators such as the frequency and quality of teachers’ affective communications with students” (Pianta et al., 2012, p. 378) provided insight into student engagement.

Observation of participants requires “establishing and maintaining genuine relationships with other people and being able to converse comfortably with them” (Yin, 2015, p. 117). In order to successfully undertake observations of the natural, undisturbed learning environment it was imperative that I establish and maintain a positive relationship with the participants. To do so I had to be aware of presenting a professional and respectful demeanour, portraying an authentic sense of self with transparency in research goals and always asking the participants’ permission (Yin, 2015). In addition, demonstration of cultural competence and sensitivity was integral to my fieldwork. When undertaking participant observation, it was also important that I consider my personal attributes, motives and biases as a researcher, as these might influence my perceptions of what I observed. This was also critical during interviews as “interviewers and interviewees alike bring their own, often unconscious experiential and biographical baggage with them into the interview situation” (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 121).

In ethnography it is the role of the researcher to acknowledge and recognise their own personal identities and potential bias, values, and interests based on their prior experiences (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Liamputtong, 2013). My research was influenced by my involvement in the music and cultural life of Western Sydney, in which some of my research contexts were based. As a person of Croatian-Australian background, I have had a strong involvement in music, dance and other aspects of my ethnocultural traditions outside of the classroom, and my experience was that these traditions were not endorsed or included within my schooling contexts. This formed the impetus for my research, as my personal interests and experiences aligned with the research topic. Due to my prior cultural knowledge and experiences, I was positioned both as an insider and outsider, having my own experiences to draw upon but acknowledging that these were not identical to those of my participants. My own prior knowledge allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of the experiences of my participants; however, I still remained a cultural outsider in relation to the perspectives of those participants.

### **Individual and Focus Group Interviews**

Interviews were conducted with all teachers involved in the study and selected students were asked to participate in individual interviews. Interviews were semi-structured, providing

participants with the opportunity to voice their ideas and opinions and speak to tangential matters, while enabling me to guide the topic, thus “obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (Liamputtong, 2013, p. 53).

Focus group interviews were also conducted with student participants. These were intended to encourage student participants to feel comfortable to speak and give their opinions whilst allowing me to observe the dynamic of group interactions. Group interviews “have the advantage that they may make the interview situation less strange for interviewees and thus encourage them to be more forthcoming” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 144). As the research involved interviewing participants of high school age, focus group interviews encouraged participants to engage and express opinions within their social milieu. Details of observations, and individual and focus group interviews are provided in Tables 1 and 2.

#### **Interview and Observation Record<sup>4</sup>**

**Table 1: Observation and Interview Record**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>School/ Organisation</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
Susilo	SLSO and music co-ordinator	Greenhill IEC	Class Observation	April 4 <sup>th</sup>
Susilo	SLSO and music co-ordinator	Greenhill IEC	Individual interview	April 4 <sup>th</sup>
Naomi	Choir Director	Maple Youth Choir	Individual Interview	April 12 <sup>th</sup>
Timothy	Head of CAPA	Baxter High School	Individual Interview	May 24 <sup>th</sup>
Maya	EALD and English teacher	Baxter High School	Individual Interview	May 24 <sup>th</sup>
Susilo and Megan	SLSO and music co-ordinator, music teacher	Oak Park IEC	Class Observation	June 14 <sup>th</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix J for Interview and Focus Group questions

Susilo and Megan	SLSO and music co-ordinator, music teacher	Oak Park IEC	Class Observation	June 14 <sup>th</sup>
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**Table 2: Student Interviews**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Ethnocultural Background</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
Sharon	Aboriginal, Maori	Year 12 student	Baxter High School	Individual Interview	June 13 <sup>th</sup>
David	Filipino	Year 12 student	Baxter High School	Individual Interview	June 13 <sup>th</sup>
Lachlan, Lillian, Melanie, Ella, Sally and Sam	Spanish, Maori, Tongan, Persian, Thai and Indian-Fijian	Year 12 students	Baxter High School	Group Interview	June 6 <sup>th</sup>
Lachlan, Lillian, Melanie	Spanish, Maori, Tongan	Year 12 students	Baxter High School	Group Interview	June 6 <sup>th</sup>

### **Ethical Considerations**

As this study involved working with children and young people, it entailed particular ethical considerations. The study was carried out in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (The National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007) and with ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Sydney and State Education Research Applications Process (SERAP) of the NSW Department of Education (see Appendix A for ethical approvals). All participants were made aware of the voluntary nature of the study and were reminded throughout the study of their ability to withdraw at any time. Particular care was taken to obtain written consent for each participant, as those who were involved in interviews or focus groups were audio recorded in order to aid transcription.

## **Data Analysis Methods**

Data were coded according to grounded theory principles (Charmaz, 2006) which entail “the process of identifying themes or concepts that are in the data” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 86), specifically for use with qualitative research. It involves the process of initial coding to define what the data collected is about, labelling, summarising and categorising the data, thereby generating categories and themes that emerge (Ezzy, 2002). Grounded theory is a multi-stage method, involving gathering of data, analysis of data, frequent comparisons and categorisation until a theory has been developed to its full extent (Oktay, 2012). Initial coding entails remaining open to all possibilities and themes that may be present in the data, beginning with a broad understanding of the topic and moving into more finite detail as the coding progresses. In this process, I discovered a number of emerging themes which were further refined as data collection and analysis continued, helping to guide ongoing data gathering (Ezzy, 2002). In grounded theory, coding “shapes an analytical frame from which you build the analysis” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 45) and it is through coding that the data begins to form an argument. The following chapter will outline the findings of this study in relation to a number of key themes that emerged from the data.

## **Chapter 4: Results and Discussion**

This chapter outlines the findings of the study according to the themes that arose in the data and is divided into three main sections. In the first part of the chapter, the impact of student identity upon engagement with music of students' ethnocultural heritage is explored, followed by the consideration of how CRP empowers student voices and ownership of learning. Finally, this chapter investigates the approach to the pedagogy, its success and challenges.

### **Ethnocultural Identity and Musical Engagement**

Connection to ethnocultural identity and the complexities surrounding belonging and membership of a group emerged as having a clear impact on student engagement in the classroom within several research contexts. At Baxter High School, a number of students spoke of the intricacies of their individual identities and how these were formed and shaped by their musical experiences within the school context and outside of school. Students discussed the impact of stereotypes, insecurity, and a sense of belonging on their engagement with music from their ethnocultural backgrounds. At Baxter High School teachers faced challenges in navigating the difficulties surrounding identity and positionality of themselves and students when implementing a CRP program. In Maple Youth Choir and at Greenhill IEC the power of music to serve as a common ground, bringing together students and teachers of varying ethnocultural backgrounds was apparent. Examples of these issues are discussed in the following section.

#### **Ethnocultural Identity and Musical Engagement at Baxter High School**

Baxter High School, and the adjoining IEC, is a culturally diverse school located in an area where 56.2% of local residents are first-generation immigrants with both parents having been born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016). The ethnocultural make-up of the school reflects this diversity, with many students coming from Maori, Samoan, Filipino, Indian, Fijian and Indigenous Australian backgrounds. The large number of Pasifika students at the school has resulted in the creation of a Pasifika Choir, a culture group for students to learn about music and dance from a number of Pasifika nations. The school also runs a program for its Indigenous students called Solid Ground, which invites Aboriginal musicians, artists and dancers to participate in mentoring activities with students involved in

the Creative Arts at the school. The school has a strong music department with a large cohort of students engaging with music and the performing arts. During this study I followed members of the Year 12 music class as they prepared for performances at the school's Harmony Day<sup>5</sup> concert and observed students who were involved in the Pasifika Choir and Solid Ground program.

Although issues of teacher qualities, student voice, and dialogue between teachers and students are seen as the key tenets of CRP and engagement, the data in this study revealed that one of the most important factors relates to musical identity and culture. Engagement in musical activities at school that are relevant to students' ethnocultural background is dependent on the students' self-identity and positionality within their community. Students demonstrate the difficulty of asserting their identity when faced with social challenges such as discrimination and lack of confidence. As music teacher, Timothy, stated, "student feelings and emotions and connections to their culture are a personal thing and each student has that life story that makes how they respond" (Interview, 24 May, 2019), therefore requiring that teachers learn about each individual's self-identity, as exemplified below.

Lillian is an Australian-born Maori student in Year 12 at Baxter High School. She feels that because her first language is English she "know[s] nothing really of my culture" (Group Interview, 6 June, 2019). During a class observation prior to the Harmony Day performances Lillian spoke of her anxiety about singing a Maori language song in front of the school community of peers, teachers and family. Her music teacher, Timothy, stated that "she [Lillian] can speak the language but she doesn't necessarily understand all of it... she probably felt that she was not necessarily in the best position to communicate it from a starting point". He considered that she might have felt pressured to reach a high standard of performance, as another student who had performed the song previously "was on a much deeper level engaged with her culture... so that was a totally different cultural experience with the song for her because she centred it, it was truly *grounded* in culture" (Interview, 24 May, 2019). Timothy's awareness of his students' relationships to their ethnocultural identities is indicative of his lengthy experience of teaching culturally diverse students. Lillian's disconnect from her ethnocultural heritage can be typical of second- or third-

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<sup>5</sup> Harmony Day is an event that is celebrated on March 21<sup>st</sup> every year. It is an event that celebrates Australia's cultural diversity and promotes inclusivity and respect for all people (NSW Department of Education, 2019).

generation immigrants, who “often struggle to negotiate the borders between home and school, popular culture and traditional culture” (Kelly-McHale, 2013, p. 200).

In a group interview with another Pasifika student, Melanie, Lillian spoke of the difficulties in navigating her sense of identity within school and outside of school, in the broader Maori community. Lillian revealed that she used to be involved in a Kapahaka group, a culture group, where she learnt traditional dances, how to dress in traditional costumes and how to use poi. She explained: “it was hard for me to learn because a lot of people in my Kapahaka group, they were strong in their culture whereas I wasn’t. They had more experience” (Group Interview, 6 June, 2019), highlighting how students face pressures from cultural stereotypes. For Lillian, this stereotype is that all Pasifika students are good singers, dancers and deeply connected to their culture. This stereotype is further confirmed by Maya, an Anglo-Australian teacher who runs the Pasifika choir at school, a singing and dance group for all students of Pacific Island heritages. Maya recalled that the Pasifika students at school are “quite well-known for being wonderful singers and at the end of every show everyone goes ‘Oh the Polynesians are wonderful, really great singers’ and they get a lot of positive feedback” (Interview, 24 May, 2019). Although the students receive positive feedback from the school community, some students, such as Lillian and Melanie, feel as if this puts pressure on their own performances and expression of cultural identity:

Lillian: Plus, with Islanders, me and Melanie are Islanders, they are known as good singers so that sets a standard for us and, if we don’t reach it ...

Melanie: People just find it disappointing if you say you can’t sing.

Timothy: Everyone expects that if you’re Pasifika that you can sing.

Researcher: Do you think people’s expectations impact how you feel before a whole school concert?

Lillian: Yes, definitely and family are the most judgemental people; that’s why I don’t invite them. (Interview, 6 June, 2019)

The students reveal the fear and pressure they face when performing for a community that already holds an expectation of their abilities. Students with a level of disconnect from their ethnocultural identity are more likely to be affected by racial and social discrimination and stereotypes, and therefore less likely to engage in school music making that involves their

ethnocultural heritage (Bingham & Okagaki, 2012). Paradoxically, when students such as Lillian and Melanie perform well at school and community performances, they further reinforce cultural stereotypes. Lillian and Melanie also explain that judgement and pressure also comes from *within* their cultural community – parents and other students. In particular, the students noted the judgement they perceive from the students attending the IEC:

Researcher: Why aren't you in the Pasifika Choir?

Melanie: It's not that I didn't want to be in it. It's just that a lot of people from the IEC are in it and they're more experienced in the culture and I feel like if I go I'll feel like...

Lillian: intimidated.

Melanie: ...an outsider even though we're the same culture because they came directly from the Island. I've only been there once. (Interview, 6 June, 2019)

The differing levels of connection to culture are clear as the students highlight feelings of exclusion and inexperience. The implications of this for CRP are that some may consciously choose to avoid music at school, as with Lillian and Melanie's avoidance of the Pasifika choir. In choosing her song for the Harmony Day performance, Lillian was reassured by her teacher, Timothy, and his support was integral to her choice. Timothy encouraged her to choose a song that was both musically challenging and culturally responsive to her ethnocultural identity and experiences. After the Harmony Day performance, Lillian felt proud of her performance, overcoming her fears and insecurities surrounding singing in Maori language, and went on to choose a Maori language song of her own volition. Adolescence is a period of cognitive, affective and behavioural changes in a student's life and young people face a number of pressures in and outside of school, affecting the formation of their identities (Sebastian, Burnett, & Blakemore, 2008; Sinha, 2004). Therefore, it is vital that all students feel safe and supported to explore their identities and engage, behaviourally, emotionally, and cognitively.

Sharon is a Year 12 student at Baxter High School who identifies as Australian, Maori and Aboriginal. She has performed songs in language, including Pasifika languages and a variety of Australian and Maori Indigenous languages, for the school community a number of times, was previously involved in a Maori choir outside of school and is currently involved in the

Pasifika choir and Solid Ground program at school. Most recently, Sharon joined a group of students and music teachers to work with Emma Donovan to craft a performance of Yil Lull by Joe Geia. The program allows students from within the school to learn together in a supportive environment with Aboriginal mentors. Sharon exemplifies a student who is strong in her connection to her heritage, even in the context of discrimination:

Sharon: My culture has always just been my culture. I'm not the sort of person to honestly care what other people think. I take pride in my culture, I genuinely take pride. Anything I can do to present what I've grown up on and what I've experienced, what my uncles have experienced, my family have experienced, my mum has experienced, I like to share that with people. I'm not very afraid to do that. (Interview, 13 June, 2019)

She reveals how her culture is a source of pride; she has committed to sharing her culture with others. In an interview she spoke about how in her previous high school she did not engage with any music, she felt pressured to fit in with other students and was bullied about her background:

Sharon: I was bullied quite heavily because I do have a Maori background but I'm pakeha, which means 'white'. A typical Maori can speak the language, looks like a Maori, has the Maori accent. Me, I don't have the accent and I can only say some words in Maori and well, sadly I'm white. Well, I shouldn't be saying sadly but that's what I feel like, sadly I'm white. (Interview, 13 June, 2019)

Sharon disclosed the previous difficulties in affirming her identity as she faced judgement from others within and outside the community, which could potentially limit her engagement in the musical cultures with which she identifies. However, at Baxter High School, the music teacher's facilitation of the Solid Ground program, which is led by an Indigenous singer and is collaboratively co-constructed with the students, creates a safe environment in which students have the opportunity to explore their identity and reconnect with their heritage.

### **The Importance of Identity for Newly Arrived Students**

Across the IEC research contexts, it was clear that identity played an important role in the musical lives and expression of students. In speaking to the teachers at Oak Park IEC,

Greenhill IEC, and Maple Youth Choir it was clear that their students had a deep personal connection to their ethnocultural backgrounds which formed a significant part of their identity and shaped their engagement with music. Naomi, the artistic director and conductor of Maple Youth Choir, spoke about how she began the choir initially with the intent to provide a space for newly arrived migrants to come together to make music and to assist refugee students through the settlement process. Since the choir began, it has grown to include refugee and migrant students from several locations and has performed a number of concerts for the broader community.

In an interview Naomi discussed the importance of understanding the multifaceted identities of the students in her choir, saying “I was really aware that they aren’t ‘boxed’ because that’s what happens; as a migrant I understand” (Interview, 12 April, 2019). She draws on her own experiences of being a migrant to connect with the students in her choir and to understand how they may be feeling. Further, Naomi’s statement affirms that even newly arrived students may not always identify with music from their ethnocultural heritage and educators need to be aware of this in their teaching. The implications of this are drawn out in Karlsen’s (2013) study which confirms that students’ identities are not clear-cut, and that students may choose to engage at school with music from mainstream culture rather than their cultural heritage.

However, in her teaching, Naomi places a strong emphasis on engagement and inclusivity, encouraging all students to discover their self-identity in a safe environment, saying, “the whole point is to get them engaged... integrate into main society and their new environment” (Interview, 12 April, 2019). Naomi highlights the difficulties for students arriving in a new country, learning about the culture and how to manage the development of their own individuality in a new context. The students want to create new experiences, in order to build a new community and a new identity in Australia, as Naomi states: “refugees don’t go around saying ‘we are refugees!’, they want to move forward, they want to move on” (Interview, 12 April, 2019).

Stereotypes and discrimination go beyond ethnocultural identity; they can be socio-cultural, relating to prejudice against refugees, immigrants and people of different social and economic classes. For many students in Maple Youth Choir, everyday life is an exercise in “Otherness” as the students learn to live in an unfamiliar world where there are many

different layers to their own identity, including their new identity as refugee. These experiences shape students' lives and have an impact on how they choose to engage with learning. In music, this may result in very disparate responses to music of a student's ethnocultural background – engagement or disengagement, pride or shame, connection or disconnection. The emerging scholarship on “refugeity”, highlights “the non-static nature of ‘refugee’ identities and circumstances as a fluid, rather than rigid, condition” (Marlow, Harris & Lyons, 2013, p. 3) and the importance of acknowledging that the experiences as refugees do not define them in their entirety.

Although the students in the choir are from a wide variety of backgrounds, they are building a new community together in Australia. Naomi believes that their shared experiences have “brought people together because they just shared this common bond” (Interview, 12 April, 2019) and have helped the students settle into their new lives. Moreover, she explained how students want to share their music and their heritage because it is deeply meaningful to them and the choir gives them a space to communicate that, to take leadership, and engage in peer-led learning. According to Naomi, this has resulted in not only their musical engagement but engagement in all learning, with some of the students from the choir taking on leadership projects at their schools.

### **Music as Common Ground in IECs**

The data in this study has demonstrated that although the students in any one class may come from a variety of ethnocultural backgrounds, music may be a uniting activity, especially for students in IECs with varying levels of English-speaking ability. As co-ordinator of the music program at both Oak Park IEC and Greenhill IEC, Susilo facilitated a forum for IEC teachers in 2018 and 2019, resulting in a joint concert in which students from IECs across the Sydney metropolitan region came together to learn and perform music. The music performed at the concert was a mix of globally disseminated mainstream popular music and music from the students' ethnocultural backgrounds. In an interview, Susilo stressed the importance and the power of music to unify, a point similar to that made by Naomi in her discussion of Maple Youth Choir. Susilo considers that all students can be involved in music-making at school because “music is the main ground, the main common ground, common sense. Music is important” (Interview, 4 April, 2019). Like Naomi, Susilo believes that music may be used as a common activity to build a sense of community and belonging for

students who may have suffered significant upheaval during immigration and may feel alienated in a new country and community.

For students in the IECs, having the opportunity to learn music also provides a time in the day that requires less pressure to speak and learn English. The Pasifika Choir at Baxter High is made up of students from the high school and adjoining IEC. As Maya, the choir conductor, highlights:

Maya: To come into a room voluntarily at lunch and to be with your cultural group and not have to speak English is important for them and you can see them fitting in socially a bit easier after that, smiling and laughing. (Interview, 24 May, 2019)

For newly arrived students, music can help to connect across and within cultural groups. Immigrant and refugee students face a number of challenges when they arrive in Australia, including loss of identity, difficulties learning language, social isolation, and behavioural issues. Marsh's (2012) study reveals that music and dance can be an alternative form of communication for students with varied language backgrounds, enabling social and musical integration.

As with members of Maple Youth Choir, the opportunity to engage in music is especially important for the students at Greenhill IEC as it is a chance to be involved in a community and to begin to develop a new sense of identity in Australia. Regardless of students' backgrounds, Susilo believes that music is a tool that can be used to understand one another:

Susilo: You know like, music is basic heartbeat, doesn't matter where you are coming from, the heartbeat is always the same. That's why I'm teaching them, look, everyone's got the same heartbeat, doesn't matter if you're black, white, or yellow, whatever, green, your heartbeat is the same. Music is common ground to understand each other. (Interview, 4 April, 2019)

The sentiment that music is common ground to understand each other is a powerful tool when working with students in IECs. Music is a chosen extra-curricular activity in IECs and students from a variety of musical and cultural backgrounds are involved. The study demonstrates that students in IECs actively want to participate in music as a way to find

belonging and acceptance from a new country and culture. Through music, students are motivated to share their history with each other and the broader community, as Susilo considers:

Susilo: I think every ethnicity who is coming to Australia like to introduce their culture. You know, if their culture is respected and accepted in the community, they feel good. You see, like if people talking about Indonesian gamelan, I feel really good, it's the same if someone talking about your musics you feel really good, accepted you know. (Interview, 4 April, 2019)

Although CRP argues for pedagogy which responds to the cultures of students in the classroom, this study has demonstrated that creating collective musical experiences with students can also be highly valuable for their engagement. Often these musical experiences involve globally disseminated popular music or songs with which all the students are familiar. This has proven to be particularly effective for newly arrived immigrant and refugee students who strive to form a new sense of self and identity in their new home.

However, as Susilo and Naomi note, is equally important that teachers understand the ethnocultural backgrounds of their newly arrived students, and enable them to share their culture and heritage, as this strengthens their sense of self in spite of the challenges they face when moving to a new country. This is especially pertinent for students in IECs as many are seeking to start afresh, leave behind traumatic pasts and build relationships with new communities and people in Australia.

### **Empowering Student Voices**

In addition to being identified in the literature, the importance of empowering students' voices and choices when implementing CRP has emerged as a key theme in the study. The study has demonstrated that when students' voices are validated by their teachers they can be encouraged to participate in music. Additionally, performance provides students with the opportunity to be represented and accepted in the broader school community.

## Ownership of Learning

One of the key findings of this study has been the importance of student ownership of learning, specifically, the ways in which teachers act as facilitators of learning, encouraging a student-led pedagogy. Ownership of learning refers to when students' voices are endorsed by teachers, and students are therefore motivated to engage in self-directed learning, leading to academic achievement (O'Connell & Vandas, 2015). When students are able to exercise *choice* to take part in music from their cultural heritage, this leads to feelings of empowerment and ownership of learning.

It is the role of the teacher to understand and respect students' voices, giving students power to make decisions about curriculum and how things are taught and learnt. As Timothy, the head of CAPA at Baxter High, states, "they're [the students] definitely self-aware of who they are, so by including that and championing it, it really does make a big difference" (Interview, 24 May, 2019). Timothy demonstrates the notion that when students are confident in their identities, teachers need to respond to this by shifting the power balance that exists between teachers and students. This creates a classroom where teachers share power *with*, not *over* students, resulting in the "democratization of student/teacher power relations" (Campbell, 2018, p.77). Timothy states:

I think that it [repertoire choice] comes from the students and I like to use it as a method of self-empowerment and also a leadership opportunity for students to take direction and not feel as though they are being taught this but as if they're sharing. (Interview, 24 May, 2019)

When teachers act as facilitators for students to share music from their ethnocultural background, knowledge construction becomes a collaborative process entailing intellectual stimulation, emotional involvement and intrinsic motivation (Bempechat & Shernoff, 2012). Students who are given the opportunity to lead learning are more likely to see the relevance of classroom activities to their everyday lives, changing their perception of learning and enabling them to have a greater affective connection to the learning. Further, when teachers validate their students' voices and incorporate their lived experiences into curriculum, they create an empowering school culture which engages students cognitively and emotionally. The increase of cognitive and affective engagement in turn improves academic performance

and behavioural engagement, indicated by levels of attendance and participation in classroom or extra-curricular activities.

Timothy is a strong advocate for students taking ownership of their learning and making the choice to participate with others of similar ethnocultural background in the school context. A Year 12 student in his class, David, identifies as Filipino, and sang 'Gitara' by Filipino band *Parokya ni Edgar* with another Filipino student playing guitar at the Harmony Day Concert. Speaking about David, Timothy states: "having that accessibility of having other cultural members to support it [the performance] was quite good to empower him and his choice to make it happen" (Interview, 24 May, 2019). Here student choice was demonstrably a motivating factor leading to affective engagement, as the student was more deeply motivated to learn and achieve when music was relevant to his life and experiences. David commented:

David: I feel like I am able to express what I feel about the song and how it goes and how it should be played and, plus it's of your culture so I feel proud when I sing it. I feel like I'm introducing another culture to other students without teaching them or saying anything to them, just by a song.

Researcher: Do you think it would have been the same kind of feeling, of connection, if you were performing with a different guitarist? Of a different cultural background to you?

David: I don't think so because if I would have done it with other guitarists they would have felt different about the song because they don't understand and they don't know about it. (Interview, 13 June, 2019)

Research has found that emotions such as pride, positive attitude and interest are indicators of engagement, with pride being associated with greater achievement and success (Bempechat & Shernoff, 2012). Thus, David's affective language in regard to pride and personal expression demonstrate his emotional engagement in the performance as he was given an opportunity to express his voice, take ownership of learning, and be a collaborator in learning with support from his teacher and classmates.

The importance of choice as a factor affecting engagement and ownership of learning is further demonstrated by Melanie. As previously outlined, Melanie is a Tongan student in Year 12 at Baxter High School who considers the pressures she faces from her own

community to be the biggest barrier to her engagement with music at school. At school it is Melanie's personal choice to participate in music:

Melanie: I think, for me, I always neglected my culture because my parents don't force it too much and I'm like "nah I'm good". For me it's a choice. I think it's better for me to think more culturally and have that cultural mindset at school because I have a choice whether I want to do it or not. It's more comforting at school because people are more accepting of it rather than people who say "you have to do this". (Interview, 6 June, 2019)

In her decision to perform a song at the Harmony Day Concert she took ownership of her learning and unconsciously demonstrated leadership, becoming a role model for other students in the school. Melanie notes that when engaging a cultural frame of mind at school she feels more accepted than in the broader community due to the empowering school culture generated by Timothy who approaches teaching culturally diverse students with a pedagogy of equality and honouring students' differences. In order for this school culture of equality to emerge, teacher-student relationships are key. As Timothy observed, "you sort of need to build that relationship first...the relationship with teachers and their students is at the centre of my personal pedagogy" (Interview, 24 May, 2019). The importance of this relationship cannot be overlooked as research demonstrates that engagement intensifies when the teacher-student relationship is positive, supportive, and collaborative (Abril, 2010; Gurgel, 2016; Shaw, 2016).

Lachlan, a Spanish student in Year 12 at Baxter High, participates with music-making in a number of ways outside of the school classroom, creating hip hop tracks in his home studio that mix English and Spanish language. As Lachlan states:

Lachlan: I think singing in my language is way easier because, I don't know, I feel like the English songs, the singers..., they have better vocals .... But in Spanish it's more like .... rapping. It is way easier to sing in my language. (Group Interview, 6 June, 2019)

His choice to sing and rap in Spanish also minimises the barrier of language, which could disrupt intellectual engagement if students lack English-speaking proficiency. However, intellectual engagement involves work that is cognitively challenging and intellectually

stimulating and the linguistic code switching in Lachlan's hip hop tracks entails both of these attributes<sup>6</sup>. Other students in Lachlan's class have also composed and performed songs in their first languages. The students have this choice as Timothy has enabled them to have the freedom to be creative in any way they choose. Interestingly, the students also use this opportunity to engage with cross-cultural music-making projects as Lachlan often raps in Spanish over the top of other students' compositions. Because all students feel supported and safe with their teacher, they trust him to support them musically, academically, and culturally. This example demonstrates the success of an equality-based pedagogy which discourages stereotypes and discrimination, honouring the importance of differences and valuing multiple voices.

### **Student Leadership**

In taking on leadership roles, students are given the choice to influence curriculum and take part in the realisation of pedagogy, enabling them to be more active participants in learning, and to respond autonomously to culturally relevant situations that arise within the school. Sharon from Baxter High School felt a strong sense of ownership of her culture and, subsequently, her learning about it. She outlined an occasion at school where she took on a leadership role:

Sharon: I saw a girl being picked on in the playground the other day, white as snow but has Maori background just like me. She was getting picked on because she was speaking in Maori, fluently mind you, I wish I could have been taught. But, she had an Australian accent while she was doing it and some of these people were picking on her calling her a 'plastic' Maori, like a 'plastic' Islander because she was white and didn't have an accent. (Interview, 13 June, 2019)

Drawing on her own experiences of being an outsider, Sharon spoke to the girl about her own sense of identity and her struggle to be accepted, encouraging her to join the Pasifika choir, taking pride in her identity and control of her learning. Sharon unintentionally became a leadership figure for students in the school community who empathised with her experiences and were inspired by her choice to overcome discrimination and become an active member of the Pasifika Choir. Student leadership, fostered by the open and inclusive

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<sup>6</sup> In relation to language use, code switching is the alternation between at least two languages within a conversation.

educational culture in the school furthers student-led learning which ensures the focus is on students as active, participatory, emotionally engaged learners.

Students in Maple Youth Choir have also used the platform of the choir to take on leadership roles, developing their skills of creativity and initiative whilst building a community of peers with similar experiences. The director, Naomi, says:

Naomi:           What we are doing with this is also creating a cohort that's respectful and all of them to be leaders in their own way so they have more team spirit. You see this beautiful relationship between students because they get to respect each other's cultures and the various languages and how they're pronounced. It's like this new appreciation. (Interview, 12 April, 2019)

The students in the choir have led the choir, teaching songs of their choice from their ethnocultural backgrounds. In this way students not only took on leadership but took ownership of their learning, drawing upon their personal experiences with music to participate in collaborative knowledge construction. As the songs chosen were from the students' everyday lives, they held particular emotional meaning. Naomi states, "one thing about them [the students] is that they have to know that the song has a deeper meaning" (Interview, 12 April, 2019). The students who led the song learning were emotionally engaged with the music as they drew upon their home language and spoke to their peers about the significance of the song. As a result, the other students in the choir were cognitively engaged, having to learn a new language and its pronunciation.

The choir gives students the opportunity to have a voice, both literally and metaphorically. The opportunity to lead develops students' confidence, pride, sense of belonging, and inclusion. Naomi regards the students' engagement to be deeply connected to emotion as "the light in their faces that I see when I take out a piece of music from their own countries is like 'Oh my god! You know that?!'" (Interview, 12 April, 2019). In a video on the choir's public YouTube channel one student spoke about the importance of the choir, stating:

We value each other's passions, beliefs, backgrounds, fears, frustrations and hopes. Everything that we do is built on the indispensable experiences of our histories and foundations which encompass war, joy, displacement, love, belonging, discrimination and most importantly, empowerment. Who we are represents the inclusion we wish to see in Australian society. True inclusion

for the wholeness of our identities is not pushed aside, but rather embraced.  
(Video, 22 June, 2019)

This statement clearly demonstrates the powerful impact of the choir for the community of students whose voices are being heard and validated in their new community in Australia. The implications of this for music educators are significant as it highlights that students should be given more opportunities to express their voices, connect with aspects of their lives that are emotionally significant, and share this in a safe, nurturing environment.

### **Engagement Through Performance**

For recently arrived students in IECs, performance is a chance for all students to play a role, be represented in the community and be involved. At Greenhill and Oak Park IECs Susilo ensures that every student who has chosen to participate in music is given a role of equal importance and has their voice heard. He considers the importance of performance to be the sense of achievement that students feel:

They start to, normally they got homesick, they are in a new environment and they like to have recognition from the new society. If they can perform something and they are going on stage then they're proud and feel belonging, there's sort of like the audience, the society, accepts them if they love their performance, they feel really great on the day.... Performance is like an achievement for them. (Interview, 4 April, 2019)

Performance opportunities are a way for teachers to visibly observe engagement. Students are quite strongly in favour of performances because through the process of rehearsing, they develop an emotional connection to the music, are challenged cognitively and, in performance, are heard, validated and accepted by the community.

At Baxter High School, involvement in ensembles is largely driven by social factors. Maya recalls that although the students enjoy performing, many are not motivated to rehearse unless there is the extrinsic motivation of a performance for a public audience. She also notes that many in the choir look to the more socially popular students to determine if they will participate. Maya also discusses the differences in motivation between the High School and IEC students at Baxter:

The IEC kids in general are a lot more focused, they have a lot more intrinsic motivation because they've come from places that don't necessarily have really rigid education with lots of opportunities so when they get here they're like "I want to soak up everything" whereas, in the high school there is a greater sense of apathy. (Interview, 24 May, 2019)

The study demonstrates that although students may be engaged in music of their ethnocultural heritage there are a variety of intrinsic and extrinsic reasons for their motivation and teachers need to be aware of these. The opportunity to be represented on a public stage is more uniquely important to newly arrived students, implying that teachers need to encourage performance and use it as an opportunity to give all students a platform for expression of self.

In conclusion, at Baxter High School, students make a conscious choice to engage with music from their ethnocultural heritage in a school context, highlighting the students' ownership of their learning. By making this choice, students become role models for others in the school community who choose not to engage for fear of discrimination, social isolation or stereotyping. In Maple Youth Choir, students have taken on leadership roles, demonstrating student-led learning which emotionally engages students by empowering their voices.

## **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and its Challenges**

Within the contexts of this study, key tenets of CRP have emerged as trust, equality and inclusion. Teachers have identified a number of factors that lead to the success of CRP in the classroom including implementing a student-led pedagogy, ensuring content is musically challenging as well as culturally responsive and continuing professional development. A number of challenges have also emerged, including, positionality, lack of knowledge and the challenge of differentiation.

### **Pedagogy and Philosophy**

At the centre of CRP are teachers, and the effectiveness of this pedagogy relies on how they approach it. Teachers across the four research contexts identified the importance of acting as a facilitator, allowing the students to take leadership and explore their ethnocultural

identities through music. Timothy stated that “I generally find with my teaching of cultural music that I’m not the teacher, I’m more of a learner and an enabler to allow that culture to come into my room without any issues” (Interview, 24 May, 2019), highlighting the importance of teachers remaining open to learning from their students. If teachers act as role models and demonstrate qualities which encourage equality, an empowering school and social culture will emerge.

In contrast, Maya prefers to employ a partially teacher-led approach when teaching the Pasifika Choir, stating:

I’m a bit of a bossy boots so I tend to take the lead role. In terms of dancing, there is a year 11 student who takes a lead in the dancing because I’m not quite there with my Samoan moves yet. In terms of the singing, their auditory is good but in terms of actually communicating with each other about what they want, musically, they’re a little limited. (Interview, 24 May, 2019)

Her divergent approach recognises the needs of her students and how these might best be met, demonstrating that CRP is not a strict pedagogy, but is adaptable to different groups of students. In this context, Maya recognises her lack of skills in certain areas and encourages her students to take leadership as she learns from them and the knowledge and experience they bring into the learning environment. However, teachers need to be aware that students may demonstrate idiosyncratic musical knowledge that may not necessarily fit with teachers’ broader, and sometimes stereotypical, assumptions. Teachers cannot rely on the students to be experts in their own ethnocultural backgrounds, they need to be equally willing to learn and grow in their professional knowledge, highlighting the importance of the relationship between teachers and students as teachers need to know their students well before involving them in the learning process.

Students in Australian classrooms come from a wide variety of backgrounds and some refugee students come into school with trauma from their migration circumstances. In order for students to feel safe and respected at school it is imperative that teachers create safe spaces in their classrooms and develop trusting relationships with dialogue between teachers and students. Naomi states that:

One thing with these kids is that they’re very deep, they have instincts, they know when someone really means it and when someone doesn’t. I think you need to be

respectful to where they come from, study their backgrounds, get to know them, get to know the parents which is very, very important, gain their trust. Gaining trust takes a *long* time. You could take a lot of time doing that and then you can actually get into the work. (Interview, 12 April, 2019).

Trust may take time to gain as students need to respect the teacher and have proof that their teacher equally respects them. In order for teachers to gain students' trust, they should be seen as culturally competent, knowledgeable, and kind, features of Naomi's own personal philosophy of teaching. These teacher attributes are not specific to CRP, rather they form part of a larger philosophy about best practice teaching. It is especially important for teachers to be knowledgeable, kind and fair when working with students of diverse ethnocultural backgrounds as many students face discrimination and stereotypes in their everyday lives and the role of the teacher should be to provide spaces where students feel safe.

CRP is not solely focused on being responsive to the students' ethnocultural backgrounds. Teachers must also consider that content needs to be both musically challenging *and* culturally responsive for engagement to occur. For CRP to be effective students must be engaged cognitively, through musical challenges which are appropriate to their skill level and ability, and emotionally, by the relevance of the music to their everyday lives. As Timothy states, "you're not just looking for that happy feeling of 'this is from my own culture', it's about 'this is good for me as a music student' as well" (Interview, 24 May, 2019). The role of the teacher is to facilitate this balance, enabling students to learn and achieve. This involves an active collaboration between teachers and students, which Timothy demonstrates in his pedagogy as he collaborates with his students to choose their performance repertoire. This collaboration gives the students power to express their identities and feel a connection to the music whilst being guided by their teacher, who comments on the musical skills required to perform the students' choices. In collaborating with students to choose repertoire and guide their learning, Timothy demonstrates honesty and openness. His student, Sharon, reinforces the importance of Timothy's honesty stating, "he tells it to you straight and that's why people love him. He is the definition of a leader" (Interview, 13 June, 2019). By demonstrating the qualities of a culturally responsive teacher, Timothy enables a truly collaborative learning space to develop in his classroom.

In this study, teachers of IEC students stressed especially the importance of equality and developing an environment in which students feel accepted and included. Across all the

research contexts, teachers agreed on the importance of trust between teachers and their students at the core of their philosophy towards teaching diverse groups of students and developing a culturally responsive pedagogy. Teachers regarded the relationship of open dialogue with their students to be the central factor in their effectiveness as culturally responsive educators. Ultimately, CRP is a frame of mind, rather than a strict pedagogy. The key tenets of equality, acceptance and trust are adaptable and should be used as a way for teachers to shape their individual pedagogies. CRP is based on a philosophy of responsiveness to individuality in order to create a pedagogy of social justice which honours the differences of both students and teachers, valuing multiple perspectives as valid and important. Teachers such as Timothy confirm that CRP “is a way of thinking. It’s just a mindset of not controlling it, just allowing it to be and to respond to what’s around you as opposed to assert what you think everyone should do” (Interview, 24 May, 2019). This approach towards CRP emphasises the importance of reflexive practice, as teachers need to reflect on their own practice in order to grow and best respond to the individual needs of their students.

## **Challenges**

When implementing CRP, teachers also face a number of challenges including cultural, musical and social aspects. When faced with a culturally diverse class, teachers are not always from the same ethnocultural background as their students and may not have relevant knowledge to draw upon. Teachers do not necessarily have the skills to speak multiple languages, or knowledge about all cultures, which poses the first challenge. As Naomi states, the first step to overcoming this challenge is to be willing to learn:

I think we should be very sensitive, don’t go in with the intention of “we’re going to teach music *our* way”. I think to be very sensitive about that fact that, look can you teach us and it should be more of a partnership. (Interview, 12 April, 2019)

By partnering with students and the broader community teachers can build their network of sources, minimising the challenge that a lack of knowledge presents. Further, networks of culture bearers and community members should be used to inform a teacher’s practice. Connecting with the students and their experiences outside the classroom can be a valuable experience for teachers trying to implement CRP. However, knowing each student’s ethnocultural background and spending the time to learn about their community and

experiences can be a difficult task. Teachers have added challenges due to the administrative aspects of teaching, syllabus limitations and time constraints. Indeed, Maya indicated that teachers often feel overworked as they take on extra activities such as pastoral care or ensembles, both of which have been seen to have value in implementing CRP.

The cultural positionality of teachers needs to be taken into consideration as a potential challenge. As Timothy stated:

I acknowledge my whiteness, it's something that I'm upfront about with the students and I think that makes a big difference. I think that's an important part of culturally responsive pedagogy, noting your position and not trying to assume or dominate the inclusion of it, not to assert your white control or privilege. (Interview, 24 May, 2019)

Timothy explained the importance of teachers understanding their own bias as educators, to be culturally aware not only of their students but of how their identity and sense of self may be interpreted by the students. Moreover, Timothy's acknowledgement of his "whiteness" has had a positive impact for the students, who appreciate his authenticity and openness:

Sharon: He's just a legend. Even with our Aboriginal group when we were learning Yil Lull, like the way he says it is so funny and we all laugh because he just sounds like the biggest white boy ever but we love him for it because he's trying. (Interview, 13 June, 2019).

Positionality potentially poses a challenge for educators as a disconnect between students and teachers in regard to ethnocultural backgrounds may mean that students struggle to trust their teacher's knowledge and understanding of their identities. However, as demonstrated by Timothy, this challenge can be overcome by teachers demonstrating an openness and willingness to learn and a commitment to maintaining cultural competence.

Maya also recognises the importance of positionality:

You also have to be really careful about cultural exploitation and remember that I am a privileged white girl getting up on stage or teaching them how to sing Polynesian music when the reality is that they're teaching me, inherently teaching me and you need to be aware of that. (Interview, 24 May, 2019)

She reflects on how her ethnocultural background and socio-economic position is markedly different to some of her students, creating potential pedagogical pitfalls. It is clear that teachers need to be fundamentally aware that whilst students come into class with their own cultural experiences, so do the teachers. Teachers should be reflective of how their ethnocultural identity is perceived by students and culturally aware of the bias and opinions a teacher inherently imposes on the students.

Ultimately, there are many challenges a teacher may face when implementing CRP, ranging from administrative to cultural, and these may change with every unique situation or student. However, it is the way that teachers approach overcoming these challenges that demonstrates the true qualities of a culturally responsive educator.

## **Conclusion**

The experiences of students and teachers in this study support the argument that students can be empowered and engaged when classroom music content is relevant to their lives and experiences, specifically to ethnocultural musical experiences. However, not all students engage with music of their ethnocultural heritage for various reasons, including positionality, insecurity, and a sense of belonging, or lack thereof. The study also shows that students' sense of their ethnocultural identity is often complex and layered, affecting their engagement and ultimately resulting in either a sense of pride or disengagement with music. Further, students are empowered and motivated to learn when given autonomy and ownership over learning. Finally, the data has revealed the different ways that teachers approach CRP, balancing the philosophy of the pedagogy with the challenges inherent in its implementation. The data highlights that dialogue between teachers and students, within an environment of trust and openness, is key to developing a curriculum that is responsive to students' experiences and ultimately, engaging.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusion**

Conducted as an ethnographic multi-case study, this research aimed to explore CRP and its impact on student engagement in four culturally diverse contexts. The study was conducted in three schools, including a public high school in Sydney's West and two Sydney Intensive English Centres catering for newly arrived immigrant and international students. Data were collected through individual and focus group interviews with students, individual interviews with teachers, lesson observations and video recordings. The study also incorporated an extended interview with the director of Maple Youth Choir whose members encompassed newly arrived, culturally diverse young people.

The data revealed the numerous ways that students engage with music from their ethnocultural heritage inside and outside of the school context. Several influences upon student engagement with music were identified, indicating the complex nature of this engagement. The connection that students have to their ethnocultural identity became clear as a significant factor in their choice to engage, or disengage, with music at school. Some students with a strong connection to their ethnocultural identity were more likely to engage with music at a deeper, culturally responsive level and encourage others to do so by acting as role models. Identity emerged as a highly individual and complex construct, which did not necessarily equate with stereotypical assumptions regarding each student. The study also found that music played an important role in the lives of newly arrived students who wished to have their identities validated and accepted in a new environment. Further, the study revealed the potential for music to act as a common ground between students from different cultures, particularly in the IEC setting, allowing students from multiple backgrounds to come together in a shared activity and goal. The study also demonstrated that when students' voices are validated by their teachers they can be empowered to participate in music and that performances provide vital opportunities for students to be seen and represented in the broader school community. Finally, the study has illuminated the ways teachers approach CRP and the challenges they face in its implementation, as further discussed in the following sections.

## **Implications for Practice**

The data revealed that there are many benefits to incorporating CRP as an approach to engage students in learning. The music teachers considered the importance of their philosophy and pedagogy in creating a curriculum and delivering lesson content that was differentiated to meet the different cultural needs of their students. The following paragraphs outline the main findings and the implications for classroom practice.

In this study, students' connection to their ethnocultural identity and the complexities surrounding belonging and membership of a group have emerged as having a clear impact on student engagement in the classroom. The implications of this for CRP are that some students may not engage with music of their ethnocultural heritage at school and may make a conscious effort to avoid it. Contrastingly, students with a strong sense of connection to their ethnocultural identity may engage strongly with music at school. Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the differing levels of connection to culture that may exist in their classroom and support students to explore music from their ethnocultural background in a safe and nurturing environment. It is also vital that teachers never assume a student's skill set or expertise in relation to their cultural background and instead, genuinely familiarise themselves with their students' varied experiences. Teachers should learn about all their students, their skills, interests, and involvement in music outside of school.

The significance of music for newly arrived students provides an arena for purposeful planning by teachers. Teachers should ensure that music is used to create shared goals and activities, incorporating every student in collaborative learning. This could be done through whole class activities, involving students in the process of decision-making. Teachers should differentiate learning in order for all students to be involved in music-making or performance, regardless of English-speaking proficiency, and provide multiple opportunities for collaborative learning projects.

The integral role of empowering student voices can be clearly seen in the findings of this study, the implications of which are significant for educators, who should encourage their students to look to peers for leadership, to express their opinions and to take on performance opportunities as ways to experience acceptance and inclusion in the school community. As discussed in the previous chapter, some students in the high school context choose not to

participate for fear of discrimination. In order to combat this, teachers must develop a school culture of student empowerment by encouraging student-led learning where teachers act as facilitators, giving power to students to make decisions and to participate in ways that they deem appropriate. Developing an empowering school culture relies on teachers demonstrating humility in their actions and a willingness to learn from their students. It also relies on developing positive relationships with students, where students feel trusted to give their opinions. Teachers must also ensure that classroom content is responsive to the everyday lives of their students, as students will have a deeper emotional connection to material over which they perceive to have ownership.

The research has also demonstrated the importance of performance, as it offers an occasion for students to be represented and validated in the broader school community. In order to respond to this, teachers must enable their students to feel confident to take on every available opportunity to perform. Teachers need to develop a culture of openness and dialogue with their students through modelling the characteristics of fairness, inclusion, and equality. In response, students will begin to feel more comfortable in performance situations and will develop the confidence necessary to express their musical and ethnocultural identities through music. Teachers should also facilitate opportunities where students may perform, and actively encourage schools to endorse and support musical performances. Harmony Day may serve as a significant event for students who wish to perform, and it is the role of the teacher to ensure that this day is not seen as tokenistic but rather, a continuation of multiple regular classroom and extra-curricular opportunities for the celebration of diversity within a school. Performance opportunities should be embedded throughout the school year, providing students with the opportunity for larger and smaller performances so that confidence can be built gradually. These opportunities will also encourage an ongoing culture of acceptance, contributing to the dissipation of discrimination. Collaborative performance ventures with other schools, community mentors and community groups will help to broaden students' feelings of acceptance beyond the confines of the school.

A key implication of the study has been that teachers cannot assume knowledge about their students' musical preferences and musical and cultural expertise. In a social justice-based approach to CRP teachers must reflect on how to approach teaching culturally diverse students in ways that honour, respect and champion individual differences whilst valuing

multiple perspectives. As discussed in earlier chapters, students who have a greater involvement in their learning and decisions about curriculum are more intrinsically motivated to learn, leading to deeper engagement in learning. Therefore, teachers should actively involve students in making decisions about lesson content and curriculum.

A number of challenges to implementing CRP, encompassing musical, cultural and social aspects, were also identified by teachers. As the study revealed, teachers may not be experts in all the musical cultures of their students and may struggle to learn about the individual identities of each of their students in depth due to time constraints. Therefore, teachers should devise support systems with colleagues and peers in order to find mentors who can guide teachers in culturally responsive pedagogy. Teacher-support and peer observation can be an invaluable source of knowledge for teachers faced with the challenge of teaching a culturally diverse class. The importance of experiential learning cannot be overlooked. Teachers need to engage with the community, learn from community experts and more experienced teachers, as well as their students, and model the key aspects of CRP in all their teaching.

### **Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Further Research**

The study was conducted in four research contexts, which included two Intensive English Centres, one high school and an extended interview with the director of Maple Youth Choir. Therefore, research findings are specific to these contexts only. Further research should include schools with a broader demographic and institutional range, including state high schools, independent schools and Intensive English Centres. Additional studies could also include schools that are largely monocultural, which would contribute to the understanding of how students with differing connections to their ethnocultural identity engage with music. As this study was focused on schools in the Sydney metropolitan region, research could be conducted with schools situated in regional and rural NSW. Further research should also include a larger sample size of participants in order to develop a more generalised perspective of CRP and student engagement, and could focus more specifically on the differences in engagement with music between newly arrived, and first, second and third-generation migrant students. Further studies could explore the impact of social and community music-making groups on students' development of identity and expression of musical identity within the school setting.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that a number of factors are significant influences on students' decision to engage with music from their cultural heritage at school and that CRP can be very successful in engaging students to learn when it is approached as a philosophy of social justice and equality. At its core, CRP is a pedagogy of differentiation which places students at the centre, reminding educators that the relationship with students is vital to every other aspect of teaching. The study has demonstrated the powerful role of music in the lives of culturally diverse and newly arrived students in my study, as music has the power to bring a sense of belonging, develop a sense of self and engage students to achieve and succeed. Music that is culturally responsive to the students, to their lives and experiences, can hold deep emotional significance and should be incorporated into learning within school. Students should be given the opportunity to have some autonomy over their learning, in an environment with teachers who are supportive and collaborative. The voices of students came through clearly in this study and confirmed the crucial impact of their teachers on their musical and cultural development. Students and teachers alike agreed on the importance of experiential learning, that in order to understand CRP, it must be lived and modelled. As the following statement from teacher participant Timothy outlines, ultimately, CRP is most successful when teachers are fundamentally aware of the importance of their relationship with their students:

it's not like I'm some saviour who's come into the school and brought culture out but at least students know that they can trust me... that relationship is at the centre of my personal pedagogy (Interview, 24 May, 2019).

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# Appendix A: Ethics Approval Letters



Research Integrity & Ethics Administration  
HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 13 February 2019

Dr Michael Webb  
Music Education Unit; Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
Email: michael.webb@sydney.edu.au

Dear Michael,

The University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has considered your application.

I am pleased to inform you that after consideration of your response, your project has been approved.

Details of the approval are as follows:

**Project No.:** 2018/907  
**Project Title:** Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Student Engagement in NSW Schools  
**Authorised Personnel:** Webb Michael; Rakuljic Isabel;  
**Approval Period:** 13 February 2019 to 13 February 2023  
**First Annual Report Due:** 13 February 2020

#### Documents Approved:

Date Uploaded	Version Number	Document Name
29/01/2019	Version 2	Letter of Introduction
29/01/2019	Version 1	PIS - Principles/Schools
29/01/2019	Version 2	PIS Child - Current Version
29/01/2019	Version 1	Letter of Invitation to Teachers
29/01/2019	Version 2	PIS Parents - Current Version
29/01/2019	Version 2	PIS - General Current Version
29/01/2019	Version 2	PIS Easy English - Current Version
29/01/2019	Version 2	Interview Schedule
01/11/2018	Version 1	Participant Consent Form Easy English
27/10/2018	Version 1	Participant Consent Form Parents and Carers
27/10/2018	Version 1	Participant Consent Form General

#### Special Condition/s of Approval

- It is a condition of approval that permission is obtained from the Principals of all participating schools, the Department of Education (SERAP) and if necessary, the Catholic Education Office prior to research commencing. The documentation does not need to be provided to the Ethics Office.
- Please submit certified translations of public documents when languages are identified

#### Condition/s of Approval

- Research must be conducted according to the approved proposal.
- An annual progress report must be submitted to the Ethics Office on or before the anniversary of approval and on completion of the project.
- You must report as soon as practicable anything that might warrant review of ethical approval of the project including:
  - Serious or unexpected adverse events (which should be reported within 72 hours).
  - Unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

Research Integrity & Ethics Administration  
Research Portfolio  
Level 3, F23 Administration Building  
The University of Sydney  
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T +61 2 9036 9161  
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W sydney.edu.au/ethics

ABN 15 211 513 464  
CRICOS 00026A



- Any changes to the proposal must be approved prior to their implementation (except where an amendment is undertaken to eliminate *immediate* risk to participants).
- Personnel working on this project must be sufficiently qualified by education, training and experience for their role, or adequately supervised. Changes to personnel must be reported and approved.
- Personnel must disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest, including any financial or other interest or affiliation, as relevant to this project.
- Data and primary materials must be retained and stored in accordance with the relevant legislation and University guidelines.
- Ethics approval is dependent upon ongoing compliance of the research with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, applicable legal requirements, and with University policies, procedures and governance requirements.
- The Ethics Office may conduct audits on approved projects.
- The Chief Investigator has ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the research and is responsible for ensuring all others involved will conduct the research in accordance with the above.

This letter constitutes ethical approval only.

Please contact the Ethics Office should you require further information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Associate Professor Stephen Assinder  
Chair  
Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC 1)

The University of Sydney of Sydney HRECs are constituted and operate in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2007\)](#) and the NHMRC's [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2007\)](#)



Miss Isabel Rakuljic  
32 Luke Avenue  
BURWOOD NSW 2134

DOC19/212778  
SERAP 2018831

Dear Miss Rakuljic

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in NSW government schools entitled *Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Engagement in NSW Schools*. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved.

You may contact principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation. **You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to principals.**

This approval will remain valid until 28 March 2020.

The following researchers or research assistants have fulfilled the Working with Children screening requirements to interact with or observe children for the purposes of this research for the period indicated:

Researcher name	WWCC	WWCC expires
Isabel Rakuljic	WWCC0916973E	21-Feb-2021

I draw your attention to the following requirements for all researchers in NSW government schools:

- The privacy of participants is to be protected as per the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.
- School principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time. The approval of the principal for the specific method of gathering information must also be sought.
- The privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- The participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school's convenience.
- Any proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the research approvals officer before publication proceeds.
- All conditions attached to the approval must be complied with.

When your study is completed please email your report to: [serap@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:serap@det.nsw.edu.au). You may also be asked to present on the findings of your research.

I wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Sanci Simpkins  
Director, School Policy and Information Management

27 March 2019

School Policy and Information Management  
NSW Department of Education  
Level 1, 1 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010 - Locked Bag 50, Darlinghurst NSW 1300  
Telephone: 02 8214 5062 - Email: [sa.simp@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:sa.simp@det.nsw.edu.au)

## Appendix B: Participant Information Statement (Parent)



**School:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
**Faculty:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Professor Kathryn Marsh**  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education*

Room 2130  
C41  
The University of Sydney  
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NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: 0414560014  
Email: [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)  
Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

### STUDY NAME:

Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Student Engagement in NSW Schools

### PARENTAL INFORMATION STATEMENT

#### (1) What is this study about?

Your child is invited to take part in a research study about the uses of culturally responsive teaching to increase a student's engagement with music education. This study will focus on a student's engagement with music of their cultural background, within both the classroom and wider school environment. The study will also evaluate the actions taken by classroom music teachers to engage students in music of their cultural backgrounds.

It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the development of music education pedagogies and approaches employed in Australian classrooms, specifically, the way that teachers approach engaging students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Your child has been invited to participate in this study because your child's school has chosen to participate in this study as they fit the following criteria:

- Schools in which teachers are using elements of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)
- Schools which connect to the music of student's cultural backgrounds through extra-curricular ensembles or community involvement

This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to let your child take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary.

By giving your consent you are telling us that you:

- Understand what you have read.
- Agree for your child to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- Agree to the use of your child's personal information as described.

You will be given a copy of this Parental Information Statement to keep.

**(2) Who is running the study?**

The study is being carried out by the following researchers:

Isabel Rakuljic is conducting this study as the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Music Education) at The University of Sydney. This will take place under the supervision of Professor Kathryn Marsh, Professor Emerita in Music Education at the University of Sydney, Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

**(3) What will the study involve?**

The study will involve observation by the researcher of classroom music lessons and school music ensembles. Your child will be asked to participate in a focus group interview with the researcher. They may also choose to participate in an individual interview, however, this is not mandatory. During focus groups, your child will be asked a number of questions in regards to their engagement with classroom music lessons and ensembles at school. Questions in individual interviews will be more specific to your child and their personal experiences of engagement with music at school. Interviews and focus groups will be audio and video recorded.

All interviews and focus groups shall be conducted during school time and your child will not miss out on any lessons.

**(4) How much time will the study take?**

The study will occur over 3 visits by the researcher to the school. Observation of lessons will occur in your child's usual lesson time. All interviews and focus groups with your child will occur at recess and lunch and take no more than 20 minutes of their time. Your child may be asked to participate in a focus group and/or interview twice.

**(5) Who can take part in the study?**

The participants in the study will be students from Years 7-12 whose teachers utilise elements of culturally responsive pedagogy within their classrooms. The participants will also comprise of students who engage with music of their own cultural background within the broader context of school life, for example, students who partake in cultural music ensembles.

**(6) Does my child have to be in the study? Can they withdraw from the study once they've started?**

Being in this study is completely voluntary and your child does not have to take part. Your decision whether to let them participate will not affect your/their relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney, now or in the future.

If you decide to let your child take part in the study and then change your mind later (or they no longer wish to take part), they are free to withdraw from the study at any time. If you wish to withdraw from the study, you can do this by contacting Professor Kathryn Marsh ([kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)) or Isabel Rakuljic ([irak477@uni.sydney.edu.au](mailto:irak477@uni.sydney.edu.au)) from the University of Sydney.

Your child is free to stop the interview at any time. Unless you say that you want us to delete them, any recordings will be kept and the information your child has provided will be included in the study results. Your child may also refuse to answer any questions that they do not wish to answer during the interview.

If your child takes part in a focus group, they are free to stop participating at any stage or to refuse to answer any of the questions. However, it will not be possible to withdraw their individual comments from our records once the group has started, as it is a group discussion.

If your child withdraws from the study, we will not collect any more information from them. Any information that we have already collected, however, will be kept in our study records and may be included in publications.

**(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?**

Aside from giving up their time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study for your child.

**(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?**

We cannot guarantee that your child will receive any direct benefits from being in the study. However, it is hoped that the findings will contribute to the development of music education pedagogies and approaches employed in Australian classrooms, specifically, the way that teachers approach engaging students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

**(9) What will happen to information that is collected during the study?**

The following types of information will be collected and used as part of this study:

- Personal responses to interview questions
- Video and audio recordings of interviews and focus groups

All electronic and hardcopy data collected as part of this study will be stored during and after the study in a confidential folder on the University of Sydney Research Data Store. Only the investigators of this study will have access to this data. This data will be kept for 20 years or until the participants reach 25 years of age, in compliance with relevant legislation from the State Records Authority of NSW.

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about your child for the purposes of this research study. Their personal information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless you consent otherwise. The results of the study will be published as a student honours thesis.

Your child's information will be stored securely and their identity/information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. All personal and identifiable information collected as part of this study will be kept confidential. All names will be changed to maintain privacy. Study findings may be published, but your child will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

**(10) Can I or my child tell other people about the study?**

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

**(11) What if we would like further information about the study?**

When you have read this information, please feel free to contact Professor Kathryn Marsh ([kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)) or Isabel Rakuljic ([irak4777@uni.sydney.edu.au](mailto:irak4777@uni.sydney.edu.au)) who will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you or your child would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact Professor Kathryn Marsh – Professor Emerita in Music Education at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music by email at [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au) or by phone at 0414 560 014.

**(12) Will we be told the results of the study?**

You and your child have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can tell us that you wish to receive feedback by ticking YES on the Participant Consent Form. This feedback will be in the form of one-page summary of the findings and a copy of the finalised thesis. You will receive this feedback after the study is finished.

**(13) What if we have a complaint or any concerns about the study?**

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney. Protocol number: 2018/907. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you (or your child) are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** [human.ethics@sydney.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@sydney.edu.au)
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

*This information sheet is for you to keep*

## Appendix C: Participant Information Statement (Child)



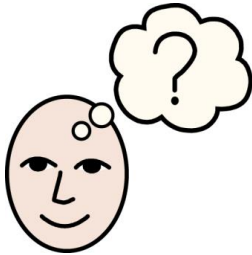
**School:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
**Faculty:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Professor Kathryn Marsh**  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education*

Room 2130  
C41  
The University of Sydney  
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: 0414560014  
Email: [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)  
Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

### Study Information Sheet: Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Engagement in NSW Schools



Hello. Our names are

- Professor Kathryn Marsh and,
- Isabel Rakuljic

We are doing a research study to find out more about how music teachers teach music from students' cultural backgrounds in the classroom and whether this is engaging for students.

We are asking you to be in our study because your teacher is teaching music from the cultural backgrounds of yourself or your classmates and your school has chosen to participate.

You can decide if you want to take part in the study or not. You don't have to - it's up to you.

This sheet tells you what we will ask you to do if you decide to take part in the study. Please read it carefully so that you can make up your mind about whether you want to take part.

If you decide you want to be in the study and then you change your mind later, that's ok. All you need to do is tell us that you don't want to be in the study anymore.

If you have any questions, you can ask us or your family or someone else who looks after you. If you want to, you can call us any time on +61 2 93511332.

#### What will happen if I say that I want to be in the study?

Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Engagement in NSW Schools  
Version 3, 1.3.19

1

If you decide that you want to be in our study, we will ask you to do these things:

- Allow the researcher (Isabel Rakuljic) to sit and observe your music lesson
- Participate in a group interview with your classmates
- The interview will not go for more than 20 minutes and will take place during recess or lunch so you will not miss out on any classes. A teacher will be present during the interviews.
- You may also choose to do an individual interview which will not be longer than 20 minutes. You will be asked questions about your enjoyment and engagement with music at school.

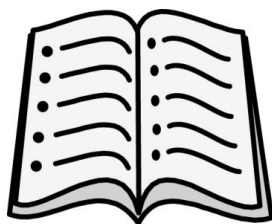
When we ask you questions, you can choose which ones you want to answer. If you don't want to talk about something, that's ok. You can stop talking to us at any time if you don't want to talk to us anymore.

If you say it's ok, we will record what you say with a tape recorder.

If you say it's ok, we will make a video of you with a video recorder.

When you talk with us and other people in a group, we won't be able to take out the things you say after you have said them. This is because you will be talking in a group and our notes will have all the things that everyone else said as well.

#### **Will anyone else know what I say in the study?**



We won't tell anyone else what you say to us, except if you talk about someone hurting you or about you hurting yourself or someone else. Then we might need to tell someone to keep you and other people safe.

All of the information that we have about you from the study will be stored in a safe place and we will look after it very carefully. We will write a report about the study and show it to other people but we won't say your name in the report and no one will know that you were in the study, unless you tell us that it's ok for us to say your name.



#### **How long will the study take?**

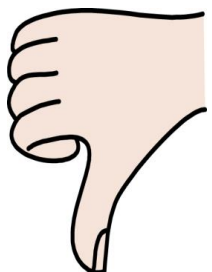
The researcher (Isabel Rakuljic) will visit your school 2 to 3 times during one term. She will sit in on 1 or 2 of your music lessons. If you choose to participate in the interviews these will take place during recess or lunch and the interviews will not be longer than 20 minutes.

**Are there any good things about being in the study?**



This study may be helpful for music teachers across Australia who teach students from multicultural backgrounds. It might help music teachers create better and more engaging lessons. You won't get anything for being in the study, but you will be helping us do our research.

**Are there any bad things about being in the study?**



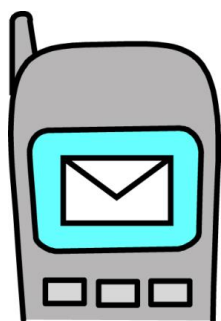
This study will take up some of your time, but we don't think it will be bad for you or cost you anything.

**Will you tell me what you learnt in the study at the end?**

Yes, we will if you want us to. Circle Yes below if you would like us to mail a copy of what we learnt to your parents.

YES

**What if I am not happy with the study or the people doing the study?**



If you are not happy with how we are doing the study or how we treat you, then you or the person who looks after you can:

- Call the university on +61 2 8627 8176 or
- Write an email to [human.ethics@sydney.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@sydney.edu.au)

**This sheet is for you to keep.**

The pictures we used in this sheet are from Microsoft Clip Art and from the people at Inspired Services Publishing ([www.inspireservices.org.uk](http://www.inspireservices.org.uk)). They said it's ok for us to use them.

## Appendix D: Participant Information Statement (General)



**School:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
**Faculty:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Professor Kathryn Marsh**  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education*

Room 2130  
C41  
The University of Sydney  
Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: 0414 560 014  
Email: [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)  
Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

### STUDY NAME:

Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Student Engagement in NSW Schools

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

#### (1) What is this study about?

You are invited to take part in a research study about the uses of culturally responsive teaching to increase a student's engagement with music education. This study will focus on a student's engagement with music of their cultural background, within both the classroom and wider school environment. The study will also evaluate the actions taken by classroom music teachers to engage students in music of their cultural backgrounds.

It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the development of music education pedagogies and approaches employed in Australian classrooms, specifically, the way that teachers approach engaging students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a teacher or student at a school that has chosen to participate because they meet the following criteria:

- Schools in which teachers are using elements of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)
- Schools which connect to the music of student's cultural backgrounds through extra-curricular ensembles or community involvement

This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary.

By giving your consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described.

You will be given a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep.

**(2) Who is running the study?**

The study is being carried out by the following researchers:

Isabel Rakuljic is conducting this study as the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Music Education) at The University of Sydney. This will take place under the supervision of Professor Kathryn Marsh, Professor Emerita in Music Education at the University of Sydney, Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

**(3) What will the study involve for me?**

The study will involve observation by the researcher of classroom music lessons and school music ensembles. You will be asked to participate in an interview with the researcher. You will be asked a number of questions in regards to your pedagogy and practice, specifically focussing on the use of culturally responsive pedagogy. Interviews will be recorded to allow for depth of data analysis.

**(4) How much of my time will the study take?**

All interviews shall be conducted during or after school time and will not take more than 30 minutes. Observations will occur during your normal music lessons.

**(5) Who can take part in the study?**

The participants in the study will be teachers who utilise elements of culturally responsive pedagogy within their classrooms. The participants will also comprise of the students of said teacher and students who engage with music of their own cultural background within the broader context of school life, for example, students who partake in cultural music ensembles.

**(6) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I've started?**

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your/their relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney, now or in the future.

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind later, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. If you wish to withdraw from the study, you can do this by contacting Professor Kathryn Marsh ([kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)) or Isabel Rakuljic ([irak477@uni.sydney.edu.au](mailto:irak477@uni.sydney.edu.au)) from the University of Sydney.

You are free to stop the interview at any time. Unless you say that you want us to delete them, any recordings will be kept and the information you have provided will be included in the study. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer during the interview.

If you withdraw from the study, we will not collect any more information from you. Any information that we have already collected, however, will be kept in our study records and may be included in publications.

**(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?**

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study.

**(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?**

It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the development of music education pedagogies and approaches employed in Australian classrooms, specifically, the way that teachers approach engaging students from culturally diverse backgrounds

**(9) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?**

The following types of information will be collected and used as part of this study:

- Personal responses to interview questions
- Video and audio recordings of interviews

All electronic and hardcopy data collected as part of this study will be stored during and after the study in a confidential folder on the University of Sydney Research Data Store. Only the investigators of this study will have access to this data. As this study involves working with children, the data will be kept for 20 years or until the student participants reach 25 years of age, in compliance with relevant legislation from the State Records Authority of NSW.

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about you for the purposes of this research study. Their personal information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless you consent otherwise. The results of the study will be published as a student honours thesis.

Your information will be stored securely and your identity/information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. All personal and identifiable information collected as part of this study will be kept confidential. All names will be changed to maintain privacy. Study findings may be published, but you will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

**(10) Can I tell other people about the study?**

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

**(11) What if I would like further information about the study?**

When you have read this information, please feel free to contact Professor Kathryn Marsh ([kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)) or Isabel Rakuljic ([irak4777@uni.sydney.edu.au](mailto:irak4777@uni.sydney.edu.au)) who will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact Professor Kathryn Marsh – Professor Emerita in Music Education at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music by email at Professor Kathryn Marsh [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au) or by phone at 0414 560 014.

**(12) Will I be told the results of the study?**

You have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can tell us that you wish to receive feedback by ticking YES on the Participant Consent Form. This feedback will be in the

form of one-page summary of the findings and a copy of the finalised thesis. You will receive this feedback after the study is finished.

**(13) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?**

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney. Protocol number: 2018/907. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** [human.ethics@sydney.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@sydney.edu.au)
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

*This information sheet is for you to keep*

## Appendix E: Participant Information Statement (Easy English)



**School:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
**Faculty:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Professor Kathryn Marsh**  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education*

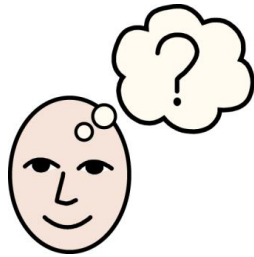
Room 2130  
C41

The University of Sydney  
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: 0414560014

Email: [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)

Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

### Study Information Sheet: Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Engagement in NSW Schools



Hello. Our names are

- Professor Kathryn Marsh and,
- Isabel Rakuljic

We are doing a research study to find out more about how music teachers teach music from students' cultural backgrounds and if this is engaging for students.

We are asking you to be in our study because your child's teacher is teaching music from the cultural backgrounds of yourself or your classmates and your school has chosen to participate.

You can decide if you want your child want to take part in the study or not. You don't have to - it's up to you.

This sheet tells you what we will ask you to do if you decide to take part in the study. Please read it carefully so that you can make up your mind about whether you want to take part.

If you decide you want to be in the study and then you change your mind later, that's ok. All you need to do is tell us that you don't want to be in the study anymore.

If you have any questions, you can ask us or your family or someone else who looks after you. If you want to, you can call us any time on 0414560014.

#### What will happen if I say that I want to be in the study?

If you decide that you want to be in our study, we will ask your child to do these things:

- Allow the researcher (Isabel Rakuljic) to sit and observe their music lesson

1

- Participate in a group interview with their classmates
- The interview will not go for more than 20 minutes and will take place during recess or lunch so they will not miss out on any classes. A teacher will be present during the interviews.
- Your child may also choose to do an individual interview which will not be longer than 20 minutes. They will be asked questions about their enjoyment and engagement with music at school

When we ask your child questions, they can choose which ones they want to answer. If they don't want to talk about something, that's ok. Your child can stop talking to us at any time if you don't want to talk to us anymore.

If you say it's ok, we will record what they say with a tape recorder.

If you say it's ok, we will make a video of your child with a video recorder.

When your child talks with us and other people in a group, we won't be able to take out the things you say after you have said them. This is because they will be talking in a group and our notes will have all the things that everyone else said as well.

#### **Will anyone else know what I say in the study?**



We won't tell anyone else what your child says to us, except if they talk about someone hurting them or about them hurting themselves or someone else. Then we might need to tell someone to keep your child and other people safe.

All of the information that we have about your child from the study will be stored in a safe place and we will look after it very carefully. We will write a report about the study and show it to other people but we won't say their name in the report and no one will know that they were in the study, unless you tell us that it's ok for us to say their name.

#### **How long will the study take?**



The researcher (Isabel Rakuljic) will visit your child's school 2 to 3 times during one term. She will sit in on 1 or 2 of the music lessons. If your child chooses to participate in the interviews these will take place during recess or lunch and the interviews will not be longer than 20 minutes.

2

Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Engagement in NSW Schools

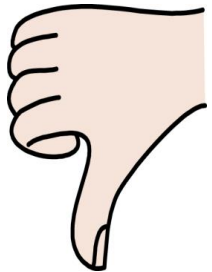
Version 3, 1.3.19

**Are there any good things about being in the study?**



This study may be helpful for music teachers across Australia who teach students from multicultural backgrounds. It might help music teachers create better and more engaging lessons. You won't get anything for being in the study, but you will be helping us do our research.

**Are there any bad things about being in the study?**



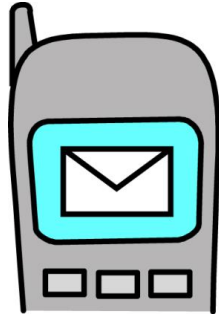
This study will take up some of your time, but we don't think it will be bad for you or cost you anything.

**Will you tell me what you learnt in the study at the end?**

Yes, we will if you want us to. Circle Yes below if you would like us to mail a copy of what we learnt.

YES

**What if I am not happy with the study or the people doing the study?**



If you are not happy with how we are doing the study or how we treat you, then you or the person who looks after you can:

- **Call** the university on +61 2 8627 8176 or
- Write an **email** to [human.ethics@sydney.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@sydney.edu.au)

**This sheet is for you to keep.**

The pictures we used in this sheet are from Microsoft Clip Art and from the people at Inspired Services Publishing ([www.inspireservices.org.uk](http://www.inspireservices.org.uk)). They said it's ok for us to use them.

## Appendix F: Participant Information Statement (Principals/Schools)



**School:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
**Faculty:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Professor Kathryn Marsh**  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education*

Room 2130  
C41  
The University of Sydney  
Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: 0414 560 014  
Email: [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)  
Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

### STUDY NAME:

Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Student Engagement in NSW Schools

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

#### (1) What is this study about?

Your school is invited to take part in a research study about the uses of culturally responsive teaching to increase a student's engagement with music education. This study will focus on a student's engagement with music of their cultural background, within both the classroom and wider school environment. The study will also evaluate the actions taken by classroom music teachers to engage students in music of their cultural backgrounds.

It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the development of music education pedagogies and approaches employed in Australian classrooms, specifically, the way that teachers approach engaging students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Your school has been invited to participate in this study because your school meets the following criteria:

- Schools in which teachers are using elements of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP)
- Schools which connect to the music of student's cultural backgrounds through extra-curricular ensembles or community involvement

This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if your school wants to take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary.

By giving your consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described.

You will be given a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep.

**(2) Who is running the study?**

The study is being carried out by the following researchers:

Isabel Rakuljic is conducting this study as the basis for the degree of Bachelor of Music (Music Education) at The University of Sydney. This will take place under the supervision of Professor Kathryn Marsh, Professor Emerita in Music Education at the University of Sydney, Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

**(3) What will the study involve for me?**

The study will involve observation by the researcher of classroom music lessons and school music ensembles. Your teachers and students will be asked to participate in an interview with the researcher. Teachers will be asked a number of questions in regards to their pedagogy and practice, specifically focussing on the use of culturally responsive pedagogy. Students will be asked a number of questions in regards to their engagement with music of their cultural background within the classroom context. Interviews will be recorded to allow for depth of data analysis.

The school would also be responsible for providing a teacher to sit in on interviews with students and making arrangements for alternative lessons for students who choose not to participate in observations by the research of classroom lessons.

**(4) How much of my time will the study take?**

All interviews shall be conducted during or after school time and will not take more than 30 minutes. Observations will occur during normal music lessons. The study will be conducted over the course of a term, totalling to no more than 3 hours on 3 occasions.

**(5) Who can take part in the study?**

The participants in the study will be teachers who utilise elements of culturally responsive pedagogy within their classrooms. The participants will also comprise of the students of said teacher and students who engage with music of their own cultural background within the broader context of school life, for example, students who partake in cultural music ensembles.

**(6) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I've started?**

Being in this study is completely voluntary and your school does not have to take part. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your/their relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney, now or in the future.

If your school, any student or teacher decide to take part in the study and then change your mind later, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. If you wish to withdraw from the study, you can do this by contacting Professor Kathryn Marsh ([kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)) or Isabel Rakuljic ([irak477@uni.sydney.edu.au](mailto:irak477@uni.sydney.edu.au)) from the University of Sydney.

Students and teachers are free to stop any interview at any time. Unless you say that you want us to delete them, any recordings will be kept and the information you have provided will be included in the study. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer during the interview.

If you withdraw from the study, we will not collect any more information from you. Any information that we have already collected, however, will be kept in our study records and may be included in publications.

**(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?**

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study.

**(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?**

It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the development of music education pedagogies and approaches employed in Australian classrooms, specifically, the way that teachers approach engaging students from culturally diverse backgrounds

**(9) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?**

The following types of information will be collected and used as part of this study:

- Personal responses to interview questions
- Video and audio recordings of interviews

All electronic and hardcopy data collected as part of this study will be stored during and after the study in a confidential folder on the University of Sydney Research Data Store. Only the investigators of this study will have access to this data. As this study involves working with children, the data will be kept for 20 years or until the student participants reach 25 years of age, in compliance with relevant legislation from the State Records Authority of NSW.

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about your teachers and students for the purposes of this research study. Their personal information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless consented otherwise. The results of the study will be published as a student honours thesis.

The information will be stored securely and your identity/information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. All personal and identifiable information collected as part of this study will be kept confidential. All names will be changed to maintain privacy. Study findings may be published, but you will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

**(10) Can I tell other people about the study?**

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

**(11) What if I would like further information about the study?**

When you have read this information, please feel free to contact Professor Kathryn Marsh ([kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)) or Isabel Rakuljic ([irak4777@uni.sydney.edu.au](mailto:irak4777@uni.sydney.edu.au)) who will be

available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact Dr Kathryn Marsh – Professor Emerita in Music Education at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music by email at [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au) or by phone at 0414 560 014.

**(12) Will I be told the results of the study?**

You have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can tell us that you wish to receive feedback by ticking YES on the Participant Consent Form. This feedback will be in the form of one-page summary of the findings and a copy of the finalised thesis. You will receive this feedback after the study is finished.

**(13) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?**

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney. Protocol number: 2018/907. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** [human.ethics@sydney.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@sydney.edu.au)
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)

*This information sheet is for you to keep*

## Appendix G: Parental Consent Form



**School:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music

**Faculty:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Professor Kathryn Marsh**  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education*

Room 2130  
C41  
The University of Sydney  
Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: 0414 560 014  
Email: [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)  
Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

### STUDY NAME:

Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Engagement in NSW Schools

### PARENT/CARER CONSENT FORM

I, ..... [PRINT PARENT'S/CARER'S NAME], consent to my child  
..... [PRINT CHILD'S NAME] participating in this research study.

In giving my consent I state that:

- I understand the purpose of the study, what my child will be asked to do, and any risks/benefits involved.
- I have read the Information Statement and have been able to discuss my child's involvement in the study with the researchers if I wished to do so.
- The researchers have answered any questions that I had about the study and I am happy with the answers.
- I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary and my child does not have to take part. My decision whether to let them take part in the study will not affect our relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney now or in the future.
- I understand that my child can withdraw from the study at any time and that the information provided whilst in the study will remain part of the study unless requested otherwise.
- I understand that my child may stop the interview at any time if they do not wish to continue, and that unless I indicate otherwise any recordings will be kept and included in the study. I also understand that my child may refuse to answer any questions they don't wish to answer.
- I understand that my child may leave the focus group at any time if they do not wish to continue. I also understand that it will not be possible to withdraw their comments once the group has started as it is a group discussion.
- I understand that personal information about my child that is collected over the course of this project will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that I have agreed to. I understand that information about my child will only be told to others with my permission, except as required by law.

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- I understand that the results of this study may be published, and that publications will not contain my child's name or any identifiable information about my child.

I consent to:

- **Audio-recording of my child** YES  NO
- **Video-recording of my child** YES  NO

Would you like to receive a copy of the overall results of this study?

YES  NO

If you answered **YES**, please fill out your email address below:

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's/carer's signature:**

.....  
Signature

.....  
PRINT name

.....  
Date

**Child's signature:**

.....  
Signature

.....  
PRINT name

.....  
Date

## Appendix H: General Consent Form



School: Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
Faculty: Sydney Conservatorium of Music

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Dr Kathryn Marsh**  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education*

Room 2130  
C41  
The University of Sydney  
Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: 0414 560 014  
Email: [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)  
Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

### STUDY NAME:

Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Student Engagement in NSW Schools

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I, ..... [PRINT NAME], agree to take part in this research study.

In giving my consent I state that:

- I understand the purpose of the study, what I will be asked to do, and any risks/benefits involved.
- I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been able to discuss my involvement in the study with the researchers if I wished to do so.
- The researchers have answered any questions that I had about the study and I am happy with the answers.
- I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary and I do not have to take part. My decision whether to be in the study will not affect my relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney now or in the future.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time and that the information provided whilst in the study will remain part of the study unless requested otherwise.
- I understand that I may stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, and that unless I indicate otherwise any recordings will then be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study. I also understand that I may refuse to answer any questions I don't wish to answer.
- I understand that personal information about me that is collected over the course of this project will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that I have agreed to. I understand that information about me will only be told to others with my permission, except as required by law.
- I understand that the results of this study may be published, and that publications will not contain my name or any identifiable information about me.

I consent to:

- **Audio-recording**

YES

NO

- **Video-recording**

YES

NO

I would like to review my interview transcripts

YES

NO

Would you like to receive a copy of the overall results of this study?

YES

NO

If you answered **YES**, please fill out your email address below:

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
**Signature**

.....  
**PRINT name**

.....  
**Date**

# Appendix I: Easy English Consent Form



**School:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music  
**Faculty:** Sydney Conservatorium of Music

ABN 15 211 513 464

**Professor Kathryn Marsh**  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education*

Room 2130  
C41  
The University of Sydney  
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA  
Telephone: 0414 560 014  
Email: [kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)  
Web: <http://www.sydney.edu.au/>

## Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy and Engagement in NSW Schools

### Consent Form

If you are happy to be in the study, please

- **write your name** in the space below
- **sign your name** at the bottom of the next page
- put the **date** at the bottom of the next page.

You should only say 'yes' to being in the study if you know what it is about and you want to be in it. If you don't want to be in the study, don't sign the form.

I, .....[PRINT NAME], am happy to be in this research study.

In saying yes to being in the study, I am saying that:

- I know what the study is about.
- I know what I will be asked to do.
- Someone has talked to me about the study.
- My questions have been answered.
- I know that I don't have to be in the study if I don't want to.
- I know that I can pull out of the study at any time if I don't want to do it anymore.
- I know that I don't have to answer any questions that I don't want to answer.

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- I know that the researchers won't tell anyone what I say when we talk to each other, unless I talk about being hurt by someone or hurting myself or someone else.

**Now we are going to ask you if you are happy to do a few other things in the study. Please tick (✓) 'Yes' or 'No' to tell us what you would like.**

Are you happy for us to make **videos** of you?      Yes       No

Are you happy for us to **tape record** your voice?      Yes       No

Do you want us to tell you what we **learnt** in the study?      Yes       No

.....  
**Signature**

.....  
**Date**

## Appendix J: Interview Questions

### Questions (students)

The questions for interviews and focus groups will be very similar. Focus groups will be less structured and will allow more space for the participants to discuss and take the conversation on tangents. Individual interviews will be more structured and questions may be targeted towards the individual's specific experience.

- Have you ever studied music from your cultural heritage in music classes at school? If so, did you enjoy this and why?
- Do you enjoy learning about music from yours or others' cultural heritage? Is that important to you? Why or why not?
- Has there ever been an opportunity for the performance of music of your cultural heritage at school (outside the classroom)? Did you participate? What did the event mean for you?
- Do you engage with music from your cultural heritage outside of school? If so, in what ways? E.g. Do you listen to music on your phone or iPod, sing with your family or friends, play a traditional instrument or engage in folkloric music and dance? If you do not engage with music from your cultural heritage in any way, is that by choice or for some other reason?
- If the school runs extra-curricular music ensembles: what types of music do you learn in x ensemble? Do you ever learn music from your cultural heritage? If yes, do you enjoy learning this music? Why? Do you feel excited or motivated to learn this music more than other styles? Why or why not?

### Questions (teachers)

- What do you understand the term, “culturally responsive pedagogy” (or CRP) to mean?
- Do you, or have you ever, used elements of CRP in your own teaching?
  - Do you use this pedagogy within your own classroom?
  - Do you see the use for this pedagogy within your classroom?
- Have you observed others teaching using elements of CRP?

- Do you see this pedagogy having any use for ensemble programming within schools?
- Do you think CRP has the potential to be useful in multicultural Australian classrooms?
- What challenges would teachers face in implementing a CRP? Further, have you encountered any of these challenges yourself?
- What would you say constitutes 'best practice' when approaching a multicultural classroom? Which techniques and pedagogies work and why, do you think? Which ones don't?
- Do you feel that your students engage with music of their cultural heritage? On what do you base your answer?
- In your opinion, is using music of students' cultural heritage important? Are students more engaged in this music compared to other music used in the classroom?

## Appendix K: Letter of Introduction



**Sydney Conservatorium of Music**  
[C41 - Sydney Conservatorium of Music](#)  
The University of Sydney  
Tel: 0414560014  
[kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)

(3.3.19)

### LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Sir/Madam/Name,

This letter is to introduce Isabel Rakuljic who is an Honours student undertaking a Bachelor of Music (Music Education) at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (University of Sydney). She is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis on the subject of Culturally Responsive Music Education and Engagement in NSW Schools.

Isabel would like to invite your school to assist with this project by allowing students and teachers involved in music to be observed during ordinary class activities and participate in interviews and focus groups which address aspects of this topic. No more than 3 hours on 3 occasions would be required. Interviews will not exceed 20 minutes in length for students and 30 minutes for teachers. If your school would like to participate, a Letter of Invitation to teachers has been provided. More information on the study is attached as a Participant Information Statement.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis. You are, of course, entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Any enquires you may have concerning this project should be directed to myself at the address, email address or by the telephone number given above.

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Kathryn Marsh,  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education, University of Sydney*  
[kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)

## Appendix L: Letter of Invitation to Teachers



**Sydney Conservatorium of Music**  
[C41 - Sydney Conservatorium of Music](#)  
The University of Sydney  
Tel: 0414 560 014  
[kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)

(3.3.19)

### LETTER OF INVITATION TO TEACHERS

Dear Sir/Madam/Name,

This letter is to introduce Isabel Rakuljic who is an Honours studying a Bachelor of Music (Music Education) at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (University of Sydney). She is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis on the subject of Culturally Responsive Music Education and Engagement in NSW Schools.

Isabel would like to invite you to assist with this project as you demonstrate elements of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in your classroom music teaching. You are asked to allow the researcher to observe a classroom lesson and to partake in an interview. No more than 3 hours on 3 occasions would be required. Interviews will not exceed 30 minutes in length for teachers. More information on the study is attached as a Participant Information Statement.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis. You are, of course, entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Any enquires you may have concerning this project should be directed to myself at the address, email address or by the telephone number given above.

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Kathryn Marsh,  
*Professor Emerita in Music Education, University of Sydney*  
[kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au](mailto:kathryn.marsh@sydney.edu.au)