AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSICIAN-EDUCATORS: AN EXPLORATION OF EXPERTS' APPROACHES TO TEACHING JAZZ

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the approaches of expert jazz musicians actively involved in teaching, or jazz musician-educators, towards teaching jazz. The participants were six jazz musician-educators, whose experiences cover a wide range of musical styles and educational settings including classroom teaching, big bands, small ensembles, improvisation classes and workshops for Musica Viva in Schools. Semi-structured interviews were used to investigate how each participant taught jazz and jazz improvisation within their individual scenarios. A range of approaches was used for teaching improvisation, with participants focusing on simplicity and student confidence. A number of issues emerged as important to the jazz musician-educators, including the role of listening, style, and the emphases of big and small ensembles. They also felt that the study of jazz helped students' confidence in playing and making music. Recommendations are made for further study, particularly regarding how these expert approaches might be adapted for general music classrooms, where teachers are often not as confident in using jazz as they are with other music styles.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Jazz education in Australia takes many forms, and occurs in both private teaching and school-based situations. Within schools, jazz education is undertaken in the classroom, as well as part of extra-curricular performance activities. Similarly, jazz is taught by a wide range of educators with varying degrees of knowledge and experience in jazz and jazz improvisation. Among these teachers are a small group of 'experts' with extensive jazz experience, who perform professionally and work in educational settings, and in secondary schools in particular. In these situations, they either engage in classroom teaching, or run workshops or direct bands. It is the work of these experts that constitutes the focus of this study.

Jazz in Australia

Australian jazz is generally regarded by critics and jazz musicians as a vibrant and creative centre of activity (Rechniewski, 2008; Shand, 2009). Players have received international recognition through various prestigious awards and prizes, and pre-eminent local players such as Mike Nock have commented on the ever-increasing standard of young players (Shand, 2009). This artistic growth can perhaps be attributed to the educational experiences of these musicians. Such experiences can stem from private instrumental teachers, community bands, events like jazz camps, or classroom and extra-curricular activities in schools. Growth may also be attributed to the influence of current local players on younger musicians.

The development of Australian jazz has been shaped by a number of international factors. While there has naturally been a large influence from the United States of America, where jazz first originated, there have also been many developments from elsewhere, particularly in Europe, that have affected jazz as a music style. Australia's geographical distance from jazz's spiritual home has also been cited by Clare (1995) as having an impact on local jazz. Shand (2009) contends that in the early years of Australian jazz, a lack of recordings from overseas forced local players to create their own solutions to musical problems they encountered, which in turn became a template for future players. This is arguably still the case today, with young players
willing to take ideas from both the historically important players like John Coltrane or Bill Evans, as well as eminent local players like Mark Simmonds or Mike Nock.

Having said this, no consensus exists on what exactly constitutes Australian jazz, since its practitioners borrow from many aspects of jazz and other musics (Shand, 2009). Some Australian jazz musicians, and older players especially, take their inspirations from older styles of jazz such as dixieland\(^1\), and others take theirs from 1930s swing or 1940s bebop. Younger players tend to draw influences from players of the 1960s and later, including free (or avant garde) styles from players such as Archie Shepp, the Art Ensemble of Chicago or Ornette Coleman.

Writing 14 years ago, Clare (1995) believed that while no new jazz styles had necessarily been created in Australia, many players had found their own way of playing within pre-existing idioms. As discussed above, the growth of Australian jazz has also been cyclical, with highly-regarded local players influencing the younger players who attend their concerts, listen to their recordings and, in some cases, learn from them (Shand, 2009) – often in the situations which this study examines.

While local jazz musicians have received much attention, however, jazz as a musical style has fairly limited public exposure in Australia, especially in the media (Clare, 1995). Indeed, Rechniewski (2008) argues that the environment for Australian jazz is in serious trouble, despite recent artistic successes. Performance opportunities – and therefore employment opportunities – are becoming critically limited as a result of a lack of funding, media coverage or a functioning national jazz advocacy body. Although certainly not the only reason, this lack of performance opportunities leads many jazz musicians to engage in some form of teaching to supplement their income.

**Jazz Education in Australia**

While this study focusses on the work of 'expert' jazz musicians in educational roles, jazz is taught in a number of scenarios by a variety of teachers. As well as in extra-curricular activities such as bands, jazz can be included as part of the classroom program – for example, provisions exist in the New South Wales Years 7–10 Music

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\(^1\) Dixieland is an early style of jazz, prevalent in the late 1910s and early 1920s, with collective, polyphonic improvisations from the brass and wind instruments as a main feature (Shipton, 2007).
Syllabus for the study of jazz, either as a stand-alone topic or as part of other units, particularly the compulsory Australian Music topic in years 9 and 10 (Board of Studies NSW, 2003). Some classroom teachers, however, do not feel confident in approaching jazz due to a lack of knowledge about the music (Madura Ward-Steinman, 2007). At the Sydney Conservatorium of Music at least, there is an attempt to rectify this with the inclusion of a unit “Survey of Jazz History” for pre-service music education students (University of Sydney, 2009).

Jazz is also taught at a tertiary level, and along with other factors discussed previously, is perhaps partly responsible for the improved levels of young jazz musicians (Shand, 2009). Students studying jazz are taught by highly regarded professional musicians in areas such as improvisation, jazz harmony, and small and large ensemble skills. By this point, students already have some familiarity with jazz, having passed an audition to enter the course. Teachers can then focus on more advanced areas of jazz, rather than the basic aspects of improvisation and jazz rhythm required for younger and less experienced players. In the last year, the Conservatorium has also introduced a “Jazz Pedagogy” course (University of Sydney, 2009), designed to help young jazz musicians become more proficient teachers, should they choose to teach during their careers.

**Jazz Musician-Educators**

While some jazz musicians who take on teaching roles are involved in private studio teaching only, a second group are involved teaching larger groups of students, particularly in secondary schools. It is this second group that the present study addresses. Some of these jazz 'experts' have the academic qualifications and experience to teach both full time and part time in classroom situations. Some are employed by schools to run extra-curricular band activities, such as big bands, smaller 'combo' groups and improvisation classes. Others conduct workshops through organisations such as Musica Viva in Schools, which can involve working with students who play jazz regularly or have never heard the music before.

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2 A 'big band', otherwise called a jazz orchestra or stage band, is a large jazz instrumental ensemble, usually with 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, 5 saxophones, piano, bass, drums, and optionally guitar and auxiliary percussion (Dunscomb, 2002). A 'combo' is a small ensemble, where the emphasis is less on written arrangements and more on each player's improvisations.
This group of 'expert' teachers, who identify themselves as both jazz musician and jazz teacher, can collectively be defined as jazz musician-educators. Their backgrounds and areas of activity range widely, from those who mainly teach in classroom (or institutional) situations and only occasionally perform, to those who are more actively involved in performance and whose educational work primarily involves conducting workshops on a freelance basis, often with their own professional band. As such, jazz musician-educators perhaps lie on a freelance–institutional continuum, as shown in Figure 1. This study concerns jazz musician-educators from various points along this continuum, and in particular the range of approaches used by the participants.

![Freelance–Institutional Continuum](image)

**Figure 1: The freelance–institutional continuum**

A similar continuum can be drawn in regard to the musical background of each jazz musician-educator. As musicians perform in and draw influences from different styles of jazz from different eras, this can perhaps affect what they emphasise in their teaching activities. These styles range from older, or more 'classic' styles including swing and the early years of bebop in the 1940s, through to newer, and arguably more free, styles from the 1960s onwards. This continuum is shown in Figure 2.

![Musical Background Continuum](image)

**Figure 2: The musical background continuum**
The Study and its Significance

Using a qualitative approach, this multiple case study focusses on the approaches of a group of Australian jazz musician-educators in teaching jazz and jazz improvisation, focussing on, but not limited to, their work in secondary school scenarios. In particular, the study investigates the teaching approaches they use, as well as what they feel should be emphasised with students of varying abilities. Attention is also given to the role of listening, seen as a cornerstone of jazz education (Berliner, 1994).

This study is significant in that there has been little written on teaching jazz and jazz improvisation in secondary (or primary) school situations. While many studies examine the teaching and assessment of American college students (Madura, 1995), or the organisation of jazz education programs in North American high schools (Dyas, 2006; Mantie, 2004), very few analyse the teacher's role in teaching jazz to pre-tertiary level students. The high school studies in particular focus instead on curriculum and objectives, rather than on the pedagogies jazz teachers employ.

In addition, most of the writing on jazz education has been completed in North America, which makes the Australian perspective of this research valuable in terms of how jazz education is conducted away from the United States of America. As an example of these differences, student jazz festivals prevalent in the United States of America (Goodrich, 2007; Mantie, 2004) provide a focus for many high school bands to work towards. At this stage, such festivals are not as common in Australia, with the exception of the National Stage Band Awards held annually in Mount Gambier, South Australia or the Yamaha Music Festival in Sydney. These do not play quite as great a role in Australia, although many bands still consider them important, and prepare for them accordingly.

On a more practical level, this study will allow for the exploration of what jazz musician-educators do in teaching jazz. This is relevant to established jazz musician-educators, to developing jazz musician-educators, and to general music teachers, who often feel inadequately prepared to teach jazz in the classroom. This study documents approaches used by jazz musician-educators from a range of musical and educational
backgrounds, as well as in a number of educational scenarios. In addition, it will elucidate some of the issues with jazz education in Australian secondary schools that warrant further exploration.

This study also holds personal significance for me as a student researcher. I played jazz throughout my high school years, and have studied jazz performance as part of my university degree. I now identify myself as a developing jazz musician-educator, and through this study, seek to stimulate my own thinking and approaches towards teaching jazz in the variety of situations I may find myself in as I begin working in school situations.

Research Questions

The project is directed by three research questions, designed to explore the approaches of jazz musician-educators in teaching jazz, and the opinions they have about the state of jazz education in Australia:

- In what ways do jazz musician-educators approach the teaching of jazz and jazz improvisation, particularly with secondary school students?
- How do jazz musician-educators view the role of listening in teaching jazz?
- What benefits do jazz musician-educators see in teaching jazz and jazz improvisation to students?
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

A broad range of literature exists in regard to jazz education. Many of these writings focus on methods for teaching and assessing the theory and processes involved in jazz improvisation, with some attention also paid to techniques used by jazz musicians before the advent of institutional jazz courses. However, relatively little exists with a focus outside the United States of America. An Australian focus has been particularly lacking, but comments pertinent to the local situation are emphasised where possible in this review.

Definitions of Jazz and Improvisation

Many authors and researchers have struggled to define jazz as a music – an important consideration when approaching jazz education. Alperson (1988) describes the problems of defining jazz in terms of supposed essential elements such as improvisation, since not all jazz need include improvisation and not all improvisation is performed in a jazz idiom. Challenges exist in adequately verbalising techniques and 'feels' due to their inherently abstract nature, which in turn creates difficulty when attempting to codify the music. In addition, both Alperson (1988) and Prouty (2005) raise the issue of where jazz sits in the musical spectrum and whether it should be regarded as a 'popular' or 'artistic' style.

Similar difficulties emerge in trying to define improvisation (Azzara, 2002; Elliott, 1996; Jones, 1997). Improvisation is seen as either unprepared performance (Azzara, 2002) with an emphasis on expression, or as spontaneous composition with a greater focus on the formation of musical ideas (Jones, 1997). Some suggest, however, that it should be seen as a complex interplay between these two processes (Elliott, 1996). In addition, improvisation is not completely spontaneous, but rather comes as a result of joining previously learned patterns in new and varied ways (Berliner, 1994; Elliott, 1996). It can be argued that these patterns and ideas, once codified in some fashion, become the basis for the methods that permeate modern jazz education practices.

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3 A 'feel' is a player's approach to rhythmic placement and articulation (Berliner, 1994).
Improvisational Approaches

A number of theoretical method books have been historically significant in the development of jazz pedagogy (Aebersold, 1992; Baker, 1983; Coker, 1964). They are all based on the chord-scale theory – a harmonic theory grounded in the interrelationship between scales and chords, which suggests that a scale can be assigned to a chord, depending on how it operates harmonically (Nettles and Graf, 1997). Baker (1983), for example, uses exercises and notated examples of patterns based on appropriate chords and scales, which students are encouraged to learn and memorise.

Aebersold's (1992) 'play-along' method books, where song accompaniments are recorded on CD for students to play along with, are perhaps the most practical examined here. The first of a large series focuses on the basics of jazz improvisation, as does Baker (1983). As well as the notated patterns and examples discussed above, however, it also includes harmonic progressions with appropriate chord scales written underneath as a reference for the student – a format common to many of the other volumes in the series (see Harrell, 1994). An example from Aebersold (1992) is included in Appendix G.

A common criticism of these method books is their reliance on note and scale choices, with only superficial mention of other musical considerations. Coker (1964) focuses on the intellectual and technical aspects of improvisation, and emphasises theoretical aspects such as harmony, with only a single chapter on the swing feel – and even then, placed in the context of a theoretical exercise in articulation. Both Aebersold (1992) and Baker (1983) have a similar focus, with many elements such as feel only touched upon briefly. However, Baker does go further than Coker (1964) in encouraging 'musical' solos by explaining the use of dramatic devices.

Although these method books have been widely used since their inception, many authors (Jones, 1997; Witmer & Robbins, 1988) have expressed concerns about their over-reliance on note and scale choices, formulas and exercises. Other essential aspects such as 'feel' and articulation are ignored or dealt with superficially (Witmer & Robbins, 1988). Ake (2002) argues that exclusively using chord-scale theory,
especially in academic settings, prevents students from perceiving musical motion over longer chord progressions. Others suggest that reliance on theoretical knowledge leads to students merely playing scales and patterns, rather than creating imaginative, original improvisations (Herzig, 1995; Witmer & Robbins, 1988).

Such observations can also be applied to instructional articles in publications such as *Music Educators Journal* and the now-defunct *Jazz Educators Journal*. For example, Tomesetti's (2003) article on teaching beginners to play over the 12-bar blues takes a formulaic approach, even to aspects such as phrase structure and dramatic shape. Much like Baker (1983), exercises are set in a prescribed order. In addition, teachers are warned against using anything other than the blues scale\(^4\) until students are ready to move on – a restriction that may preclude students from perceiving alternate melodic lines through the chord progression.

Some interest has been expressed in alternative methods of improvisational pedagogy that provide a greater focus on ensemble skills and personal expression. Books, such as Vella (2000), designed for teaching improvisation in broader musical and compositional contexts, contain ideas that could easily be used for improvisation in a jazz idiom. Borgo (2007) advocates for the use of free jazz\(^5\) in the classroom. He feels that it can be used effectively with its attention on ecological modes of thinking (Borgo, 2007), which involve connecting knowledge with its environment and related activity. By removing the focus on chords and scales, students are forced to listen to each other, rather than relying on rehearsed patterns.

Similarly, Hickey (2009) promotes free improvisation, not just in teaching jazz but for all aspects of music. She feels that traditional ways of teaching improvisation with short, tonally-centred patterns may hamper efforts to develop students' creativity. Instead, teachers should start with a freer approach that aims to encourage students to be positively disposed toward improvisation, rather than teaching it as a skill. However, as with Borgo's (2007) proposition, teachers are perhaps less willing to utilise this style of teaching. Unless they have a reasonable understanding of free

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\(^4\) The blues scale is a 6-note scale comprising of scale degrees 1, b3, 4, b5, 5 and b7.

\(^5\) Free jazz is a jazz style that eschews traditional notions of harmony and structure in preference for less rigid, more individual expressions of music making (Tirro, 1993).
jazz processes, teachers may be uncertain of their role in the classroom, or ways of assessing students' performances.

**Listening and Transcribing**

Numerous authors discuss the importance of listening in understanding how master jazz players created their music (Aebersold, 1992; Ake, 2002; Baker, 1983; Berliner, 1994; Coker, 1964; Jones, 1997). The three improvisational method books examined previously all place at least some credence in listening to recordings. At the end of every chapter, for example, Baker (1983) lists a series of related recordings, while Aebersold (1992) makes the claim that listening will provide students with all the information they need.

The issue with these suggestions, however, is that they do not encourage focussed listening. Witmer and Robbins (1988), for instance, argue that students need to learn to recognise those aspects of recordings that will help them develop their 'vocabulary', such as sound melodic ideas or phrasing. However, the article's scope does not extend to suggesting how this should be done beyond calling for systematic programs for these elements of jazz.

Through listening activities, jazz students are exposed to new vocabulary, gain a better understanding of jazz 'feels', and better understand the historical development of the music. Berliner's (1994) fifteen-year study of jazz improvisation and jazz musicians utilised interviews with many highly-regarded musicians, and participants widely acknowledged the impact of listening on their own solos. Similarly, extensive listening was important for Australian jazz musicians in preparing for improvisations, particularly in providing improvisational prototypes (Jones, 1997).

Transcription is another important part of learning jazz and jazz improvisation. Jazz musicians acknowledged the importance of transcribing and learning to play solos to better understand the vocabulary used (Berliner, 1994). Transcribing solos was also a common strategy used by the three Australian saxophone players interviewed by Jones (1997). Further implications in this study were perhaps limited by the small

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6 In jazz, transcription involves listening to recorded solos repeatedly, often notating them, and learning to play them as close to the original recording as possible, so that students can analyse their phrases and better understand the vocabulary and stylistic elements used (Hill, 2002)
sample size and the homogeneity of interview participants, but the findings were consistent with the rest of the literature in supporting the use of listening and transcription in developing improvisational vocabulary.

**Jazz in Tertiary and Secondary Institutions**

While a reasonable amount of literature exists regarding the formal learning and teaching of jazz, most of it focusses on post-secondary study, particularly in America. In his overview of learning and teaching jazz, Ake (2002) focusses almost exclusively on pedagogies prevalent in American college systems, including the reliance on chord-scale theory and the incompatibility of free jazz with established methods. There is presently little evidence to support it, but similar comments could perhaps be made about Australian secondary jazz education.

Much of the research on jazz education, particularly at a tertiary level, focusses on assessing students' abilities and knowledge (Madura, 1995; May, 2003). May's (2003) quantitative study of factors influencing improvisational achievement investigated correlations between theoretical and musical knowledge, and students' ability to improvise over simple chord progressions. Aural and self-evaluation skills were shown to be the best predictors of improvisational ability, suggesting that musical skills have a bearing on, and should be taught concurrently with, improvisation. Similar findings were reported by Madura (1995) in regard to vocal jazz, as well as in other studies highlighted by Azzara (2002) in his review of improvisational research.

Although not as great in number, some research has been conducted concerning secondary students (Coy, 1989; Dyas, 2006; Goodrich, 2007). Many of these have focussed on exemplary high school jazz programs and some of the factors that have led to their success. Goodrich's (2007) single case study of a successful high school big band examined the role of peer mentoring through interviews and observation of rehearsals. The study highlighted how an organised mentoring program could be a highly effective way of increasing the musical abilities of individual students and the band as a whole. This collaborative approach is found traditionally in jazz (Berliner,
1994) and other genres of music, such as in Green's (2001) study of how popular musicians learn to play their chosen styles.

Dyas (2006), on the other hand, conducted a multiple case study into two exemplary high school jazz programs in the United States of America, focussing on their course structure. Although the two schools differed in how systematic and thorough they were, both taught roughly the same content, such as improvisation, harmony, history and ensemble skills. Top performing students from both schools were deemed to be of a similar high standard.

This is not to say that all high school jazz programs are of a comparable quality. Mantie's (2004) study of the incorporation of secondary school jazz programs in Manitoba, Canada, used interviews with local jazz experts – including jazz musician-educators working at tertiary institutions – to examine their views on the state of Manitoba jazz education. The study found that most jazz programs focussed on large ensemble playing with little or no emphasis on other fundamental aspects of jazz, such as improvisation or the roles of different instruments.

In the context of his study, Mantie proposes a praxially-based method which focusses on 'doing' or playing (Elliott, 1991), rather than the aesthetic approach to jazz education mandated in Manitoba. This study raises questions about the philosophical underpinning of jazz education. While the historical method of learning and teaching is certainly praxially-based, this has not transferred into the classroom. Likewise, the position of jazz education on a formal–informal continuum (Folkestad, 2006) needs to be considered. Whereas traditional methods have been more informal with a focus on playing and listening with others (Berliner, 1994), modern classroom pedagogy is more formally structured, with the teacher delivering most of the content. Again, similarities exist with Green (2001), where until recently, informal learning methods of rock and popular music had not been adopted by classroom teachers.

**The Role of Teachers**

The role and importance of teachers and other mentors – that is, jazz musician-educators – is apparent throughout the literature (Berliner, 1994; Dyas 2006), although few studies examine the specific approaches jazz musician-educators use.
Scott's ethnographic study (2004) of Barry Harris' informal 'jam sessions' is an exception. In these sessions, Harris demonstrates short, idiomatic phrases – not unlike those found in Baker (1983) – which can be learned and adapted by students in subsequent solos. Black (2008) also looked at the role of teachers in helping tertiary jazz students establish ensemble skills, particularly in regards to listening to each other and engendering an effective performance culture through this.

Other studies, such as that of Coy (1989), examined the role of tuition styles in helping students use a pedagogical kit developed for the study. Middle school students were given kits for six weeks to help them learn to solo over a 12-bar blues progression. The experimental group, who received prescribed teacher instruction, improved significantly more than the control group who had no teacher instruction, thus suggesting that teacher support was beneficial in helping students learn jazz.

A major issue through the literature is the teacher's ability, willingness and confidence in approaching jazz (Ake, 2002; Baker, 1983; Mantie, 2004). In particular, Madura Ward-Steinman (2007) explored how confident American pre-service and in-service music teachers were in teaching improvisation after participating in a jazz vocal improvisation workshop. Statistical analysis, albeit with a small subject sample, showed that such instruction helped improve confidence in teaching improvisation. This issue of confidence has led to a number of articles aimed at non-jazz specialists (Tomassetti, 2003), similar to those aimed at helping to teach other aspects of music – such as composition – outside of many teachers' comfort zones (Wilson, 2001).

Another related issue is that of the teacher's identity as teacher and musician, regardless of musical background. Mills' (2004) study suggests that musicians' professional identities are complex, with participants ranging from career performers also involved in teaching, through to career teachers who only kept playing to maintain their performance standards. The study does not take into account professional performers who teach as guest artists or clinicians. Similar complexities exist for jazz musicians, even when only considering performances aspects of their identities (MacDonald & Wilson, 2005). This study suggests that owing to the many
sub-styles jazz musicians are expected to play, different aspects of their musical identity come to the fore depending on the group they are with.

**Gaps in the Literature**

Research on jazz pedagogy canvasses a wide range of issues and approaches, however a number of gaps exist in the body of knowledge. Chief among these is the lack of work conducted outside the United States of America. While small numbers of studies are conducted abroad, particularly in Britain (Whyton, 2006), the vast majority of research has taken place in the United States of America. Whyton (2006) is perhaps one of the few to argue that differences do exist between what he calls the canonic 'American' approach and the more eclectic and flexible 'European' approach. Whether Australian approaches differ from those in America has yet to be examined.

From both historical and modern pedagogical perspectives, the literature highlights listening and transcription as key components of learning how to improvise and play in a jazz idiom. However, little has been written on how such activities can be effectively structured to help students learn jazz 'vocabulary'. According to those in Berliner's (1994) study, most listening was self-directed or social in nature, rather than prompted by teachers, and more work may be beneficial in this area.

The majority of studies into secondary jazz pedagogy tend to examine course content and organisation, especially within established and well-regarded jazz programs teaching relatively experienced students. Further research is warranted in secondary jazz education, especially in the application of current findings to burgeoning programs, as well as to students who are only starting to play jazz. Studies looking at teacher roles within these programs are also in the minority, with most focussing on curriculum and assessment rather than teaching strategies.

Other gaps in the literature also exist, particularly surrounding the use of methodologies other than those reliant on theory, and the use of 'traditional' jazz teaching methods in the classroom. A number of these issues form the basis of this study, the methodology of which is examined in the next chapter.
Chapter 3: Method

The Qualitative Design

In order to examine participants' opinions and approaches towards jazz education, this study utilised a qualitative, multiple case study design. The qualitative paradigm adopted here seeks to perceive the world through the interpretations and meanings people attribute to various phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). It is often multidisciplinary and open to multiple world views, adopting a post-positivist attitude in which a number of methods are used to capture and approximate as much of reality as practicable (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Such a multifaceted paradigm is suited to the multiple realities concerning the many approaches to jazz education implicit in the existing literature.

The multiple case study was adopted because of its applicability to examining and interpreting events through participants' points of view (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Each participant was representative of jazz musician-educators as defined for this study, and although their work scenarios and preferred musical styles differ, many share experiences with other participants, often as a result of working for the same organisations. This allows some links to be made between participants, although it may be difficult to easily generalise any theories or results to a wider population. That, however, is not the intent of this study – rather, the multiple case study is used to explore the various approaches and opinions held by the individual participants towards jazz education, and draw some connections between those involved (Stake, 2006).

Participants and Sampling

The project focussed on a sample of six jazz musician-educators based in the Sydney metropolitan area. This number was based on the relatively small population of jazz musician-educators in Sydney, as well as constraints of time placed on this study. As outlined in Chapter 1, participants are involved in various forms of jazz education, such as classroom teaching and band or workshop direction, in both private and public school systems, and at curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular levels.
This focus on jazz musician-educators borrows somewhat from studies such as those of Mantie (2004) and Goodrich (2007), in that participants are actively involved in both jazz performance and jazz education, and can speak from first-hand experience about the issues surrounding jazz education and teaching jazz, while still actively performing.

Participants with a wide range of experiences in a number of situations were sought, so as to more fully explore the approaches used in each scenario. Sampling procedures primarily involved purposive sampling – deliberately choosing the sample based on criteria such as the definition of jazz musician-educators (Burns, 2000). Aspects such as professional reputation and availability were considered in selecting the sample for this study.

Participants were initially contacted by email or telephone with the exception of two, who were approached in person following a performance workshop at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in which I participated. They were provided with electronic copies of the Participant Information Statement (see Appendix C) and then later contacted to confirm their willingness to participate and organise interview times. At all times, they were reminded that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw if they so desired.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the study came about as a result of my own experience with jazz education, and it benefited from my background as a pre-service jazz musician-educator. In fact, I have a pre-existing relationship with two of the participants. I studied with one participant during my high school years, while the other was involved with the Arts Unit at a time when I was a member of one of its ensembles. This gave me further insight into their approaches, particularly where they concerned my own formative experiences. However, during the course of interviews, I sought to maintain a level of impartiality, only invoking our relationship when investigating a particular point. Indeed, in many cases it was the participant themselves who raised issues pertaining to our prior relationship. As discussed in the section on theoretical sensitivity below, the same applied during coding and analysis.

The Arts Unit is part of the New South Wales Department of Education and Training, and provides a number of ensembles, including jazz bands, concert bands and orchestras, to give students in public schools additional performance and learning opportunities. (The Arts Unit, 2006).
Table 1: Participants, instruments and teaching scenarios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Scenarios</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drums</td>
<td>Musica Viva in Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>Musica Viva in Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trombone</td>
<td>Full-time classroom teacher in public school, formerly with NSW Performing Arts Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saxophone</td>
<td>Musica Viva in Schools, Sydney Improvised Music Association, improvisation and composition classes at private school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guitar</td>
<td>Runs jazz program at public school, casual classroom teaching, runs private jazz studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singer</td>
<td>Part-time classroom teacher in public school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

Interviews

Data collection methods used during this project included interviews. Interviews with all six participants were the main method of data collection, with the aim of eliciting perceptions about various aspects of jazz education. As Burns (2000) suggests, interviews can allow participants to describe their thoughts in their own words, as well as giving participants equal status to the researcher to help build trust.

Interviews were semi-structured in nature, or what Cohen et al (2000) refer to as an interview guide approach, which allowed each interview to focus on the issues of the study while maintaining a level of flexibility in questioning (Burns, 2000). An interview protocol was used (see Appendix F), based on the research questions and emergent themes and issues in the literature, to provide a basic outline of topics. This was then adjusted through the course of each interview, depending on the experiences and opinions of each participant. The use of open-ended questions also allowed participants to more provide their thoughts more individually on the topics raised, rather than being constrained to set answers.

To collect the data for later transcription and coding, interviews were recorded as audio directly onto my laptop using the audio program Logic Pro 8. They were digitally backed up onto an external hard drive for safekeeping. As a physical backup in the event of audio files becoming corrupted, interviews were also recorded onto
audio tape. Field notes were taken during and immediately after interviews, in particular focusing on visual observations, such as physical surroundings, location and non-verbal activity such as body language that cannot be captured by audio recording (Burns, 2000). Field notes were also used to note any personal reflections on points raised throughout the interviews, which could be useful in the analysis process or the adaptation of the interview schedule for further interviews. In addition, field notes allowed me to take down points for further exploration so that I did not have to interrupt a participant's response to another question (Seidman, 1998).

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis was based on grounded theory, where data are examined systematically in order to generate categories of information, which can then be used to build and develop theories in relation to the research questions (Creswell, 2003). Such theorising is an iterative and reflexive task – it occurs over and over as new possibilities come to light, and will often feed back into data collection, prompting the researcher to alter or modify aspects of the collection process (Creswell, 2003; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Such data analysis is consistent with the qualitative paradigm employed in this research project.

Interview data was first transcribed from the audio recordings in preparation for coding. Open coding involved labelling and categorising phenomena that arose through the interviews. Axial coding sought to create links between categories and subcategories created in open coding. This work was then drawn together to create core categories and theories through selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Through the use of open, axial and selective coding, used in a reflexive way as new ideas came to light, theories began to emerge that helped to explain some of the key approaches and opinions of the jazz musician-educators participating in this project.

**Validity, Reliability and Ethical Considerations**

**Validity and Reliability**

Triangulation was used in this study to help enhance validity, although some argue that triangulation is not a tool of validity, but rather an alternative to it (Denzin &
Lincoln, 2005). The process of triangulation allows researchers to find multiple instances of meanings through the data, so as to give assurance to the researcher that these meanings are the intended ones (Stake, 2006). In a multiple case study, this particularly occurs across individual cases. Within-methodology, or across-case, triangulation was utilised through the interviews of the six jazz musician-educators. In the instances where several participants shared experiences, such as those in the Musica Viva in Schools program, triangulation also allowed for the expression of the multiple realities of the one event (Stake, 2006).

**Theoretical Sensitivity**

Throughout the analysis process, theoretical sensitivity – that is, having an awareness of subtleties of meaning within data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) – came to the fore as an essential consideration. Personal experience and, to a lesser extent, professional experience played a role in determining theoretical sensitivity, with my background as a jazz musician and my self-identity as a developing jazz musician-educator bearing on my analysis of data. I strove to keep a balanced view of the data and the emerging theories by periodically reviewing my analysis against the data, maintaining scepticism about unproven theories, being aware of tendencies to commit to preconceived theories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and following the research and analysis procedures outlined in this chapter (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this way, the effect of my personal biases on the analysis of data was reduced.

**Ethical Considerations and Requirements**

The main ethical considerations for this research project concerned the consent of those involved in being interviewed and recorded. Ethics approval was sought and granted from the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix A), as well as the NSW Department of Education and Training for those participants working in the public school system (See Appendix B). Participants were asked for their consent to participate and be recorded at the outset, and were always given the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any time without recrimination. Throughout this study identities were concealed for anonymity, with participants referred to by their instrument, as shown in Table 1 and throughout
Chapter 4. Participants were also offered the opportunity to view the final results and conclusions once the research had finished.

This chapter has outlined the methodology by which this study was conducted. The findings of the study, and the themes that emerged from the data, are discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter 4: Discussion of Findings

Jazz musician-educators work in a number of situations, from leading small jazz 'combos' to teaching large music classes. As discussed in this chapter, although choices surrounding approaches and material vary from participant to participant, a number of common links can be found, particularly in regard to the role of jazz in the wider musical sphere. This chapter presents the findings of the study through a number of themes discussed by the participants, including essential aspects of the music, key teaching approaches, and reasons why jazz is so important to teach. Improvisation is seen by all participants as one of the most important aspects of jazz, so this chapter begins with a discussion of how they teach this area of the music.

Teaching Improvisation

When asked what the most important aspect of jazz was to teach, the saxophonist answered in this way:

Saxophonist: I'd say improvisation, because I think that's a truly wonderful way of making music.

Even if its position as an essential element of jazz is debated by authors such as Alperson (1988), improvisation is of prime importance in jazz as a music style. Indeed, the guitarist commented that improvisation is “almost unique to jazz these days”, making its role in the music even more important.

The Role of Simplicity

While all the participants emphasised the importance of improvisation, approaches to teaching it differed between them. The three participants who tended to work most in freelance settings reported quite an open approach to teaching improvisation, with a greater focus on simplicity. For example, the bassist used the example of creating improvisations using just the pitches of Mary Had a Little Lamb:

Bassist: What if I mix [the notes] up? And what about if we add some rhythm? Using three notes and adding some rhythm, you've got something that actually sounds not too bad.
Freelance participants also encouraged students just to create sounds and enjoy the process. The drummer commented that the technical and theoretical aspects of music are so complex, many teachers often forget about simply letting students play anything within their capabilities:

   Drummer: It's about sound and enjoying playing a sound, and that often isn't taught that much, I don't think.

This approach to teaching may have its background in the drummer's work in the Musica Viva in Schools program, and how his band aims activities to students' capabilities, whether they be primary, junior secondary or senior secondary students.

**Improvisation in the Musica Viva in Schools Program**

As mentioned in Chapter 3, three of the participants are involved in a jazz ensemble connected with Musica Viva in Schools. The band's workshop, which participants referred to as a 'show', runs mainly in primary schools, but they are also presented in secondary schools. The show comprises performances of a number of set pieces, which are broken down by the band into constituent parts such as melody, harmony and rhythm, before students become actively involved through improvisation activities, culminating in a group composition.

Many of the improvisational activities employed in the Musica Viva in Schools show have a more conversational or programmatic focus. The participants involved will often use the idea of a conversation to structure an otherwise free improvisation:

   Bassist: You say something and then you listen and respond … as if you are talking to each other, but you're using notes. They get onto that really easily.

The band then use these short improvisations as the basis of a larger composition, created and performed by the students and band as a whole. These change from performance to performance, and both the drummer and bassist regarded this as the most exciting aspect of their show.
Improvisation in the Classroom

By comparison, participants regularly working in institutional situations, particularly in classrooms, tend to use more formally structured improvisational activities. These are based on simple chord progressions, such as the 12-bar blues. The singer, for instance, implements a unit on jazz with her Year 10 class, and includes improvisation within that unit. She plays typical jazz chord progressions on the piano, with her students sitting beside her as she accompanies their solos:

Singer: We play through a 12-bar blues, or we play through something like *Blue Moon*, if we're doing ii-V-I progressions. And then each person gets one chorus, and then we move on.

The trombonist's classroom improvisation activities are also structured, and utilise the notion of scaffolding, as suggested by Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), to gradually increase the complexity of students' improvisations. He starts by playing short patterns on his trombone and having students copy them on their own instruments, before letting students create their own patterns. This serves to start the development of students' improvisational vocabulary. At first the note choice for these patterns is very limited, using only two or three notes, but it soon grows to include all the degrees of the blues scale:

Trombonist: We'll do the tonic and then the flat 3 and then the flat 7 underneath the tonic. So we'll just use three notes to start with, and then expand to four, and then 5, and then eventually I just let them go.

These different approaches – the freer style adopted by those in the Musica Viva in Schools program, and the more structured style described in the classroom – reflect the dichotomies of teaching improvisation suggested by Hickey (2009). While the pedagogies often employed in classroom scenarios focus on giving students the skills to improvise, the freer approaches are more concerned with encouraging creativity and enjoyment of the process. Interestingly, the instrument each participant plays has little impact on the strategies he or she employs – for example, both the saxophonist and the drummer place an emphasis on students creating sound without being too concerned about formal considerations. Instead, their approaches tend to be influenced more by the situations in which they work.
Chord-Scale Theory and Other 'Scaffolding' Systems

Systems of choosing notes, such as the chord-scale theory promoted by Aebersold (1992), do play a part in teaching students how to improvise. The guitarist in particular is a proponent of this method – not only as a system of teaching improvisation, but also of helping students learn their scales and instruments:

Guitarist: Improvising is a way of practising a scale … You're just playing the notes in a different order. In fact, it's probably more useful than just the up and down, up and down thing, because you have to understand the scale … it involves a higher level of thinking and understanding.

He referred to using this both in his classroom teaching and with his regular small ensembles. Using the chord-scale theory as a basis, he starts with simple songs using only one chord, and slowly builds up to include more complex chord progressions and patterns as students become more confident in improvising.

Issues with Reliance on Chord-Scale Theory

While acknowledging the importance of learning how to use chords and scales in creating improvisations, however, many of the participants expressed concerns about students neglecting the musicality of their solos. A number of participants suggested that students' solos could become too formulaic if they only think about the scales they should play over various chords:

Singer: I know a lot of people can play all their modes\(^8\) and play all their scales, but then when it comes to playing a solo, it sounds like [they are playing] modes and scales.

She tended to favour melody over theoretical detail, perhaps because of her background as a singer, and her comments were consistent with that of Kenny and Gellrich (2002) in their overview of the psychology of improvisation. In their view, the deliberate practice of scales and chords as working material for improvisation could lead to students merely playing notes with no personal reasons for their

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\(^8\) Modes are forms of scales originally derived from medieval music theory. They rose to prominence in jazz particularly with Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue* (Shipton, 2007), and have since been used for pedagogical purposes.
choices. The singer was perhaps more concerned with helping students find a personal voice through their improvisations.

Others expressed a view that knowing the harmonic structure of a song does not equate with knowing how to use that knowledge:

Saxophonist: I do think that in general, jazz education has probably got a bit too hung up on chords and scales. People have to know guide tones\textsuperscript{9}, but I have a lot of students who can play guide tones through any song that they've learned, and have no idea what to do with them.

To counteract this formulaic tendency, a number of participants preferred to have their students focus on creating melodies over the chord changes, rather than just playing scales as suggested by method books such as those of Aebersold:

Saxophonist: I think learning how to free your imagination and your ears to develop a melodic idea … is important.

Bassist: Rather than going for scales and patterns over scales, make up tunes over that. Actually make up [a] melody.

Both of these participants mentioned activities they have used where students will play the notes of a scale over a tonic drone to hear the relationship between each note and the tonic. These activities encourage students to listen to what they are playing, in order to appreciate which notes work well. In doing so, it may also help students better understand the harmonic underpinnings of these relationships.

**Use of Accompanying Resources**

Although the Aebersold method books have been very successful, particularly as a way of helping less experienced teachers to scaffold learning experiences, many of the participants have reservations about relying on them too much. Along with issues of formulaic tendencies, they were also critical of the accompanying CDs. Concerns often related to the fact that accompaniments are not live, cannot respond to the

\textsuperscript{9} Guide tones are notes that help identify the quality of a chord – for instance, whether it is a dominant seventh or a minor seventh. Generally defined as the third and seventh of a chord, they also help players outline chord progressions while improvising (Frampton, 1993).
soloist's performance as live performers can, and do not allow as many students to be actively involved:

Trombonist: I hardly use [Aebersold play-alongs], because I'd rather use the kids playing it. And even if it means a bass player just playing the tonic, it's still better than putting the CD on and playing to the CD.

The CDs were also criticised by some participants for not being directed towards students' needs. It may be the case that live performers in a class or ensemble, directed by the jazz musician-educator, can create accompaniments more suited to the specific demands of the students in the group – for instance, by slowing the tempo or spelling out key harmonic movements to give students extra guidance. Such direction is also important when approaching listening activities, which are closely related to learning improvisation.

**Listening and Repertoire**

Every participant saw listening as one of the most important activities for teaching jazz, helping students to assimilate and understand the vocabulary of the music:

Guitarist: Learning to play jazz is like learning a foreign language. If you grow up [in Australia] but you want to learn how to speak French, and you want to speak it well, you're going to have to go to France, and hear it spoken by expert speakers. The same thing with jazz.

Saxophonist: I think listening to recordings, listening to live music, even listening to yourself, is absolutely number one.

Asked what her most important goal was in teaching jazz, the singer responded:

Singer: Ears. I think being able to listen objectively and to actually enjoy listening to it.

It is interesting that she raised both objective and subjective goals in using listening as a teaching strategy. She felt it was important for her students to enjoy the act of listening, much as the drummer commented on the enjoyment of playing and making sound in the context of teaching improvisation. Objective listening, on the other hand, was associated with the analysis of solos, arrangements and the like. She drew
links between listening in a jazz context and listening in Higher School Certificate music examinations, where students are expected to recognise greater detail with each playing of the excerpt. In the same way, in order to fully understand the details of jazz recordings, repeated listening is employed.

**Repeated Listening**

Repeated listening arose as a common technique across participants. The saxophonist uses such an approach in her workshops. She asks her students to listen to a piece numerous times, each time focussing on a different instrument in the group. In this way, students not only hear the piece repeatedly, but they are also forced to focus on instruments other than their own. Moreover, she sets up directed listening questions, tailored to the level of the group. Experienced students might comment on levels of interaction between members of the band, whereas less confident groups may simply outline the structure of the piece:

Saxophonist: Just get them to clap [at the beginning] of each chorus. Get them to try and keep the melody in their head as the solo's going past, as a way of helping them follow the form\(^\text{10}\).

Listening for the form is something the drummer also emphasised, particularly for drumming students, whom he felt should memorise the melody of the pieces they listen to and play. They should listen for how players establish the rhythmic feel, especially with the ride cymbal, where he considers the band's focus should be. Both of these ideas contribute to his notion of playing with musicality, as well as learning how to fulfil the drummer's role in a band:

Drummer: If you've got structure, and you know your role playing with the rhythm section\(^\text{11}\) or the bass player, then you're covering what you're going to be doing a lot of the time.

Getting students to listen to pieces they are playing can also be beneficial. The bassist recalled hearing one student group play Miles Davis' *All Blues* in duple time –

\(^{10}\) In jazz a 'chorus' refers to the main section of a song, the harmonic outline of which is used for improvisations (Tirro, 1993). The form, as well as referring to the overall structure of a song, can also denote the chorus (Kernfield, 1995).

\(^{11}\) The rhythm section of a band generally consists of piano, guitar, bass and drums. It is responsible for providing the rhythmic and harmonic accompaniment.
even though the original recording was in triple time – because students had not referred to the original to see how it was performed. The same strategy can be used for big bands, and the guitarist employs it in his rehearsals. He commented that listening helps the band sound better than if they only read the chart:

Guitarist: If we're playing a chart, and there's a good recording available, we'll play it and make sure they listen to it. It can save a lot of teaching time. You don't have to go through phrase by phrase. The recording's done that for you.

Again, with proper direction, students learn about jazz by referencing original recordings and attempting to copy them. Other participants commented that students should always be directed to original recordings to guide their own performances, particularly of classic repertoire. For instance, the saxophonist felt that a band playing a Duke Ellington composition should go to the source and “listen to Duke Ellington”. In this way, students are not only learning to play the material in a more authentic manner, but they are also being exposed to the tradition of the music.

Listening as Jazz History

The participants saw listening as a way of exposing students to the history of jazz. Some viewed it as a web, with links between different albums, players and styles:

Drummer: When teaching, if they haven't heard much jazz or played any jazz, I always tell them to get [Miles Davis' album] Kind of Blue. Then I say, “You know all the people that are on that record? You can buy all of their records [too].”

Listening gives an indication of how various players have approached their instrument at different periods, and opens new possibilities for students. The bassist, for example, has directed piano players to listen to Miles Davis albums featuring pianist Herbie Hancock. On these albums, Davis encouraged Hancock not to “comp” (that is, not to play any accompanying chords), thereby creating a sparser texture than normal:

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12 A chart is a written arrangement of a song, both in big band and small ensemble scenarios (Nettles & Graf, 1997).
Bassist: I wish more piano players would take note of *Nefertiti* or *ESP*, where every solo that Herbie does is just single notes, and through other people's solos there's no comping.

As well as perhaps being an aesthetic comment from the bassist, it also highlights how jazz musician-educators direct students to certain recordings, emphasising specific aspects of the music for students to focus on and try playing themselves. This is comparable to the concept of attentive listening in classroom work, where students listen for certain elements of the music they hear (Campbell, 2004).

For those working in classroom situations, listening also forms the backbone of their study of jazz history – perhaps because the enculturation of jazz through mainstream media has not been to the same extent as other styles of music, especially popular styles (Green, 2001). These teachers felt that the quality of the pieces they selected was very important. The trombonist, for instance, was proud of the fact that his school had a collection of classic jazz recordings published by the Smithsonian Institute:

Trombonist: So our students have the best quality. And they're the original recordings, so the kids are getting the best recordings.

The jazz musician-educators varied in the repertoire they chose for their students to listen to. Within her classroom program, for instance, the singer uses nothing recorded after the early 1970s, instead focussing on each era from the advent of jazz to that point. Largely, this was due to the programs and resources already available at the school, but her personal musical preferences may also have played a part in this choice (see Figure 2). By contrast, the trombonist placed no immediate limits on what styles he chose for his students:

Trombonist: [Only using certain styles] would be limiting students' access to jazz. I go straight from the roots of jazz right through to modern times.

His choice of repertoire was based more on which musical concepts he needed to address with his students. For example, his Year 9 jazz unit included songs that use typical jazz song forms, such as Duke Ellington's *Don't Get Around Much Anymore*. 
This emphasis on structure suggests a greater use of earlier styles of jazz, when these song forms were more prevalent.

**Focus on Prominent Artists**

Many of the participants did mention a prominence of jazz from the late 1940s to mid 1960s in their listening repertoire, from eminent artists such as Charlie Parker, Miles Davis and John Coltrane. Since these players are regarded as being so influential on the style, they are seen as perhaps deserving a greater emphasis in study and listening. This raises questions about the possible canonisation of jazz, much in the same way as Nettl (1995) saw the canonisation of classical music in American music schools.

However, these classic recordings are not used exclusively, with a broad and eclectic range also employed. These often link with the jazz styles each participant plays. For instance, the guitarist's style is influenced by late 1930s swing and the beginnings of bebop in the early 1940s, and his choice of listening repertoire tends to reflect this. On the other hand, the saxophonist, perhaps as a result of her wide range of playing tastes, uses a more open and broad-reaching repertoire. In describing her work in designing a professional development kit for music teachers without expertise in jazz, she described the importance of choosing repertoire from everywhere:

Saxophonist: And then choosing some suitable repertoire, and I'm going to definitely be trying to have a mix of Australian and international music.

Interestingly, none of the participants mentioned any Australian artists by name with reference to listening repertoire, although most used Australian repertoire in their teaching. This perhaps suggests that Australian artists, as well-regarded as they are by participants, are not seen as being as influential as the 'canonised' players.

**Transcription**

As discussed in Chapter 2, previous research has emphasised transcription as an important part of teaching jazz and jazz improvisation. Many participants encourage
students of all ages to transcribe short, simple phrases. Indeed, the singer does this on a regular basis as a classroom aural exercise, even with her junior classes:

   Singer: In all the years … I play a phrase and they actually have to repeat it back [on glockenspiels] and then write it down, transcribe it. And I start that right from year 7.

This seemed to indicate that she expects a lot from her students. Like many of the approaches to teaching improvisation discussed previously, she starts very simply – for instance, the notes of a major triad – and gradually increases the complexity. This is comparable to the trombonist's students aurally copying short phrases to learn improvisation vocabulary.

The saxophonist found transcription a very useful tool for teaching, since it allows students to analyse many aspects of the music. In her classes, she creates lists of suggested transcriptions for players of different instruments and levels. The act of transcribing improves students' aural skills, gives them ideas for their jazz vocabulary, and allows them to study how melodies have been constructed:

   Saxophonist: [Transcription] gets them to hear a lot of the subtlety in the music that they might miss if it's going past quite quickly, [and helps them in] analysing how the line links up with the harmonic movement.

This use of transcription would suggest that students need at least some familiarity with jazz harmony. However, as the saxophonist indicated, transcription also has its use beyond these harmonic aspects, helping students to understand how different players approach articulation and phrasing.

**Live listening**

In addition to recordings, the participants felt it important for students to hear jazz performed live. The guitarist in particular noted how it can open students' eyes to the possibilities of the music. Travelling one year to the National Stage Band Awards in Mount Gambier, his school's big band heard a number of high-level student bands, showing them just what can be achieved with practice and hard work:
Guitarist: They heard [student] bands that played like professional bands. That was the standard, and they were kids the same age or younger. And suddenly it opened their minds.

Of course, professional performers would have an even greater influence. He also understood that live performance has a different energy and impact to listening to a CD, and that students should experience and learn from this. Such experiences might include how a band deals with mistakes and difficulties without the benefit of being able to stop and start again.

Live performance constitutes a large part of how the participants involved in Musica Viva in Schools operate, since their workshops are based largely on performing for the students, as well as getting them to play and compose themselves. Playing live allows the band to break the music down immediately, the predominant pedagogical technique used through the Musica Viva in Schools program:

Bassist: Half the show is spent playing pieces of music. Each piece of music is designed to highlight musical elements. So, for instance, the first piece of music helps us to talk about, and isolate, the elements of melody, harmony, rhythm and beat.

The benefit of this technique is that small excerpts can be examined by the musicians, and members can explain how their part fits with the rest of the band. For instance, they can take the bassist's part, explaining and analysing how it works:

Drummer: Well, what is he doing there? Oh, he's playing on every beat of the bar, and this is the chord progression.

Much of this analysis stems from students asking questions of the band or highlighting musical aspects band members might not have previously considered. The program is also designed so that the elements discussed through performance can be used in the improvisation and composition activities.

Live performance also seems to enthuse students about jazz. The trombonist, for instance, recalled when Australian jazz musicians James Morrison and Don Burrows came to his school for an informal concert at the end of term, and he invited all staff
and students to attend. The performance, which included Burrows relating a number of stories about his experiences, kept the students and teachers enthralled:

**Trombonist:** The students, even the non-music students, and even some of the harder students in the school, sat there flabbergasted with Don's stories about yesteryear and throwing in a tune.

As with the guitarist's comments, encouraging students to see live performances seems to help with students' interest and engagement with jazz, rather than just listening to it on CD or in the classroom. It also introduces students to elements of the jazz 'scene', and increases their understanding of the culture of jazz in a meaningful way, as suggested by Salamone (2009).

**Availability of Jazz**

One issue surrounding jazz listening, and live listening in particular, is the access students have to it. In many cases, students have not heard a large amount due to its lack of exposure in the mainstream media, and it is the teacher's role to point them in the right direction. Jazz musician-educators perhaps have to encourage the enculturation of jazz in their students through disciplined listening choices, rather than through osmosis from the media (Green, 2001). The drummer noticed that many of his students mostly listen to modern rock and pop, and have little knowledge of jazz, even though they want to explore it as musicians:

**Drummer:** So for them, they have to seek out this other music.

This notion of seeking out jazz has become easier in the last decade or so with the rise of the Internet. YouTube in particular was seen as a useful resource for finding jazz recordings and videos. Indeed, there is so much available online that it can be difficult for students to know where to start, and what to do with it:

**Saxophonist:** I think the challenge, now that there's so much information available, is to find the time to listen to it and to really absorb it.
Like any other recorded form of jazz, repeated listening to online material is perhaps required in order to fully comprehend and assimilate the information available, rather than simply using it as a form of entertainment.

**Availability of Live Jazz**

With the rise of online content, however, some suggest that there has been a decrease in the number of live performances (gigs) for students to attend, although this was a contentious issue among the participants. The bassist, for instance, commented that there are at least as many gigs now as when he was young, but that they tend to favour more contemporary jazz styles – the styles he himself is involved in playing. The guitarist, disappointed in the lack of “appealing” jazz gigs featuring his own style of playing, also saw this shift towards what he calls the “government-funded” end of the spectrum:

Guitarist: That's music that is so obscure to most people and has such a tiny audience … that it has to rely on taxpayer funding to exist.

Also of concern to the guitarist was a lack of venues open to young people. Licensed jazz venues such as The Basement and the Excelsior Hotel are off-limits to students under 18 years old. To attempt to counteract this, both the guitarist and the trombonist try and make students aware of gigs in all-ages venues, such as those held by SIMA\(^{13}\) at the Sound Lounge. They also try to organise performances at their respective schools, such as the one with Don Burrows discussed earlier. It would be fair to say that those involved with Musica Viva in Schools are making jazz available to students in a similar way, by going to their schools and performing for them.

**Style and the notion of right and wrong**

Jazz does not have a single style but rather multiple substyles, each with their own nuances. These styles cover time periods – for example, the prominence of bebop in the mid 1940s – as well as influences from other musics, such as the bossa nova craze in the early 1960s. The saxophonist considered having a knowledge of the boundaries for each style as important, especially for young players. These

\(^{13}\) SIMA stands for the Sydney Improvised Music Association, who, along with Jazzgroove, are the main jazz promoters in Sydney.
boundaries help students narrow the choices they can make in their improvisations, much as rules make games easier to play, or parameters in composition tasks make them easier for students to complete (Vella, 2000).

These boundaries also help quantify for students what is considered “right” or “wrong” in different scenarios. Most participants disagreed with the notion of right and wrong notes or ways of playing in jazz, but they did think it was important to teach students about different styles, and what is appropriate within each. Continuing the language analogy, the bassist commented that it was important for players to understand stylistic conventions, so that they could communicate effectively with other members of the band:

Bassist: So you have to use a language and a vocabulary that everyone's happy with before the whole group can be articulate enough to communicate clearly.

This raises another important point about teaching improvisation – the role of style. Certain notes or patterns that are appropriate in later styles, such as hard bop from the 1950s, may sound too dissonant in earlier styles such as 1930s swing. Learning jazz 'vocabulary', then, not only gives students source material from which to base their improvisations, but also guides them towards what is stylistically acceptable. This is the case when being taught directly by jazz musician-educators, as well as when students are listening to and transcribing recordings.

On the other hand, the singer did agree with the notion of right and wrong, but she was more interested in helping students understand why this was the case, using the “precedents” of previous jazz styles, and the “logic” of jazz harmony:

Singer: Every now and again, when the students … hit a clanger, I say, “Stop. Now why was that wrong?” And I do it that way, not saying, “That was wrong, you bad girl.” It's learning that you can't just play anything you like.

In this scenario, students are allowed to make mistakes. The teacher acts as a facilitator when this occurs, helping students understand why their response is considered incorrect. This is consistent with notions of guided discovery learning, a more student-centred style of instruction (Mayer, 2004). The question of student- and
teacher-centred instruction styles is also pertinent when working with small and large jazz ensembles.

**Teaching Small and Large Ensembles**

**Big Bands**

As discussed in Chapter 1, jazz education occurs within both small and large ensembles. From participants' perspectives, big bands tend to dominate in educational settings due to their ability to accommodate more students. Often, there is not enough money to support small ensembles, so school jazz programs focus on big bands more out of financial viability than educational value. However, big bands are still seen as worthwhile, particularly in terms of their historical significance. The guitarist coupled this tradition with the somewhat ironic comment that while they are seen as viable in educational scenarios – as are other common ensemble types such as flute choirs or concert bands – the long-term feasibility of even the most popular modern-day commercial big bands is haphazard at best:

**Guitarist:** The big band is an important part of the jazz tradition, and education is one of the last bastions of big band music. It's not generally commercially viable.

The drummer saw big bands as a place where students, and rhythm section members in particular, are exposed to a number of jazz styles – perhaps as a result of his philosophy of training well-rounded musicians:

**Drummer:** The model that I know of the [big] band, it's great if you're a drummer or in a rhythm section. You're learning to play these feels and you're learning to play these parts.

Many participants held concerns regarding how much students learn about jazz in big bands. Improvisation tends to be overlooked, especially because teaching students to improvise well takes time – a commodity many big bands do not have. Big bands, however, are flexible enough to include students keen on studying jazz and jazz improvisation to a high level, as well as those “on the periphery” (guitarist) who do not necessarily want to learn to improvise and are content playing in the ensemble.
Many published big band scores (charts) include written solos, alleviating the need to teach improvisation at all. While it is common to hear these being played in performance, some attempts are being made to change this pattern. One prominent band competition in Sydney, for example, now assigns a quarter of a band's marks to improvisation, to encourage them to include improvising:

Guitarist: Bands that have the kids just play a written solo lose a quarter of their marks instantly, whereas the ones who do it properly get the credit that they deserve.

The saxophonist was especially critical of how big bands are used in educational settings. She felt that students can get away with blindly copying the person next to them without listening to themselves. Equally, she was concerned with how members of the rhythm section read and interpret their parts, making particular mention of drummers whose written parts in big band charts are often just a rough guide:

Saxophonist: They tend to play [the drum parts] exactly as written, and it doesn't help the band sound good at all.

In this regard, she would like to see more professionals work with bands and rhythm sections to help students make more musical sense of their parts. This happens irregularly with those involved with the Musica Viva in Schools program, who occasionally remain at schools after their shows to work with the student bands.

**Combos**

Many of the participants indicated a preference for teaching and working with smaller ensembles. They also preferred working in small groups professionally, since these scenarios give more space to soloists. At his school, for instance, the trombonist viewed the small ensemble as a way of extending students in the big bands who “want to go on with their jazz”. A similar view was taken with the small ensemble in the Arts Unit (which has since been discontinued), with the tutor working closely with students to raise their improvisational skills. The preference for small groups may also stem from the smaller student–teacher ratio, allowing participants to work more closely with their students.
A benefit of small ensembles is that they allow a more student-centred approach to both instruction and curriculum. As an example, the saxophonist runs a class examining composition through improvisation, where the students determine what they want to investigate:

Saxophonist: I've asked each student in the group to come up with something that they are interested in being able to write ... So it starts with them going, "Well, I'm interested in this."

As with the singer previously, the saxophonist's role is one of facilitation, giving students examples of the music they are analysing and suggesting ways to further their ideas. Importantly, the students are involved in creating their own music and experiencing the process, rather than learning the theory before applying it.

**Emphases of Small and Large Ensembles**

In terms of skills emphasised in small and large ensembles, some differences arose between participants. The trombonist, for instance, felt that while small ensembles and big bands are two different idioms of jazz, his overall philosophy to teaching jazz remained the same, regardless of the teaching environment:

Trombonist: My teaching philosophy in jazz is that it should be well rounded and that every kid should be able to improvise.

The guitarist, on the other hand, saw small and large ensembles as quite separate in their function. His focus for big band rehearsals was more on ensemble skills and technique. He cited phrasing, balance, tone, intonation and reading as among the many skills he works on with big bands, particularly with the trumpets, trombones and saxophones (or "horns"):

Guitarist: In the big band, if the horns can't play the notes then you've got nothing, and if they can't get past the first four bars, then you're in trouble.

By comparison, he saw teaching small ensembles as “all about teaching improvising”, with a different set of teaching skills. This is not to say that he neglects improvisation in his big bands – indeed, he often starts band rehearsals with warm-up
exercises that involve improvising, and he encourages every student to solo at some level – but it is not the only focus. In small ensembles, however, the attention is squarely on improvising, with less time spent on arranging the melody. Where he did see a similarity between small and large ensembles was the rhythm section:

Guitarist: Even in the big band, the rhythm section is still improvising most of the time what they're playing. If your rhythm section isn't in a combo, they're never going to be as good as you'd like them to be.

In both scenarios, they have to respond to what is going on around them, whether it be a composed passage for the full band or a single player's solo. He felt that rhythm section players should play in both small and large groups, with each scenario complementing the other in terms of what students learn about jazz.

**Links with Individual Tutoring**

Although this study does not seek to examine how the participants approach teaching in private studio situations, it is interesting that a number of them mentioned the importance of private tutors for their students. The singer, for instance, remarked that jazz students should have a solid technical grounding in their instrument and a “good” acoustic sound:

Singer: I think it's really important if you play an acoustic instrument, you get a good acoustic sound. You need to know the classical foundations of your instrument.

As part of his overall philosophy of instrumental education, the trombonist also held private teaching in high regard. For him, it was important for students to engage in both private tutoring and instrumental ensembles, since what was learned in one scenario could be expanded upon in the other:

Trombonist: You have a private teacher and then [the students] come together as a group so it inspires them on. Both inspire each other.

In the same way as the guitarist associated the teaching undertaken in small and large ensembles, so the trombonist linked private tutoring and ensemble situations. It is perhaps fair to suggest that the jazz musician-educators in this study feel that jazz
education is more of a collaborative effort, with each person lending his or her expertise and offering different sets of experiences, so that students become more confident in their abilities as rounded musicians.

**Reasons for Teaching Jazz**

**Confidence**

The growth of student confidence in music making through their study of jazz was noted by many of the participants. Those involved in Musica Viva in Schools, for instance, hoped that students would be more confident in approaching music even by observing the workshops:

Drummer: There might be one or two there that might be a bit lacking confidence in [pursuing music], or it might be enough for them to see someone doing that and hearing them.

Through the performance and composition activities in the workshops, these participants try to inspire students' confidence in making sounds of their own devising on their instruments, regardless of the music style. Although the following comment referred to a workshop held by the drummer and bassist at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, it could also be applied to their work with Musica Viva in Schools:

Bassist: Hopefully that kind of experience gives individuals the confidence to not only make a sound on their instruments, but give them ideas of how to go about making music.

In a similar vein, the saxophonist felt that jazz education can be used to help students increase their confidence in improvising. Elaborating on why she felt improvisation was so important to teach, she considered it a wonderful ability for students to have:

Saxophonist: To instil in people a confidence and a love of it, and some skill with which to approach it – that's a great gift to give to students, I think.

This shares some resemblance with Hickey's (2009) notion of encouraging a disposition towards improvisation. By giving students confidence and opportunities to improvise, they are more likely to be positive towards it.
Confidence in jazz can perhaps also increase confidence in broader social skills. The guitarist, for instance, recognised parallels between improvisation and public speaking, and believed that building skills in the former can positively impact upon the latter. He also commented that he has seen a number of students enter high school as awkward young teenagers, but become more and more confident through their jazz studies:

Guitarist: You think, “Poor kid.” He's got no social skills or no confidence, but then you see this amazing change in people as they grow through the music. So it can be a really powerful thing.

These social benefits may also be due to students finding others who share their musical interests, and forming positive social interactions around these.

Musical Benefits

Participants see benefits for students' musicianship in teaching them jazz, and jazz harmony and theory in particular. The singer, for instance, considered her theory lessons “sacrosanct”, especially when studying jazz, when she focuses on harmony and jazz chords. She reported that students have found this information useful, even when they have also studied classical music theory, and that they commented to her on how this knowledge helps them with their compositions:

Singer: And one of the girls said, that was the best lesson she'd ever had. Learning about those chords. And it helps her with … ideas for what she's going to do in year 12 with her set composition.

Students' compositional abilities are also aided by the practical experience they get manipulating musical elements during improvisations (Vella, 2000). The guitarist cited a multitude of similar musical benefits, including improved aural skills, ensemble skills, and an understanding of rhythm, among many others. Perhaps the most important benefit for him was the ability to improvise not only in solos, but also if something goes wrong in performance. Unlike some classical players, who might have to stop and restart to regain their performance, jazz students can continue as an ensemble, despite any mishaps:
Guitarist: Everyone in the group is entirely flexible if something happens, and we can deal with it seamlessly, so the audience don't even know. In fact, we can make the audience think that a disaster is a stroke of genius that we've planned and rehearsed for months.

The trombonist felt that jazz, and instrumental jazz ensembles in particular, provide experiences that concert bands, orchestras and the like cannot:

Trombonist: It gives the students another dimension of music. It's a freer type of music. It allows for improvisation, which the other structured ensembles can't provide, and that's really important.

This might be one the main reasons the participants feel teaching jazz is important – it includes skills, competencies and attitudes that other styles of music do not cover to the same extent. Jazz, and improvising in particular, also encourage a sense of individuality, even within the group:

Saxophonist: [Jazz] encourages the individual voice, but to work in a collective sense.

This emphasis on finding a distinctive musical voice may account for the lack of reliance on over-rigid scaffolding systems such as the Aebersold play-along books, which encourage a more homogenous playing style (Witmer & Robbins, 1988). Although participants, particularly those who play in freer scenarios, acknowledge the importance of knowing the rules for each style of jazz, they still feel it is important for students to find their own way of expressing themselves through the music.

Chapter 4 has explored the approaches the participating jazz musician-educators take to teaching jazz. Chapter 5 will examine the implications of these findings for jazz education, and music education generally.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study explored how Australian jazz musician-educators approached the teaching of jazz, focussing on their work with secondary school students. In particular, it researched the activities and methods used by jazz musician-educators, and some of the reasons they felt jazz was an important style to teach. This was done through a multiple case study, by interviewing six jazz musician-educators – some of whom have vast experience working in traditional classroom situations and include jazz as part of their programming, and some whose experiences lie in conducting workshops and other freelance activities.

The study found that jazz musician-educators use a range of inter-related methods, many of which stem from listening activities, with differences between working with small and large ensembles. They consider jazz education as an ideal way of helping students gain confidence in their abilities as musicians, which can also have extra-musical repercussions. This chapter links these findings to music education more broadly, and suggests further areas for research in the field of jazz education.

The Centrality of Listening

Although improvisation is seen by participants as the central skill to teach, listening is deemed the most important learning activity to undertake with students. This most likely stems from how the participants were exposed to jazz themselves as young musicians, and is consistent with Berliner's (1994) depictions of how professional jazz musicians in the United States of America learned. The benefits of listening include an increased knowledge of appropriate vocabulary and an understanding of rhythmic feels, phrasing and articulation. These cover a range of skills and knowledge necessary for playing and comprehending jazz – not just improvisation, but also stylistic considerations and an understanding of the history of the music. In this way, listening plays a central role in teaching students all aspects of jazz.

Repeated listening is a trend reported by a number of participants. Within this, there is always a focus of some sort for each repetition, whether it be the structure of the piece, the harmonic choices made by players, the role of certain instruments, and so
on. There is a focus to the listening task, rather than simply being a passive exercise, and shows a link with Campbell's (2004) notion of attentive listening. In both cases, the teacher draws students' attention to salient features of recordings, so that students can better understand it, and then perhaps use it in their own playing or composing. Campbell's concept of enactive listening – listening to copy in performance – is also present through jazz musician-educators' use and support of transcription, as is engaged listening, particularly through students clapping to follow the form.

Perhaps one of the other reasons repeated listening is so important for students – and, arguably, for teachers who are not expert in jazz – is that many have not heard enough jazz to be comfortable with it. Unlike the enculturation of styles such as rock and pop, students have not had the same exposure to jazz in the mainstream media. Certainly, some jazz musicians-educators help students to learn in much the same way as Green (2001) described how popular musicians learn by listening and copying, although others use a more formal approach, particularly in classroom scenarios. The comparative lack of jazz readily available through mainstream media, as opposed to rock or pop, makes it harder for current students wishing to learn jazz. Of course, the rise of online content may help to change this, but as it stands, teachers have to help students seek out any material they wish to study. Perhaps the advantage jazz musician-educators have is that they have a detailed working knowledge of the recordings and performances available, often because they are involved in its production in their professional capacity.

**Methods of Teaching Improvisation**

Participants use a number of approaches to helping students with their improvisation, with most of them focussing on giving students confidence, building their knowledge of vocabulary and highlighting appropriate harmonic choices. As writers (Ake, 2002; Witmer & Robbins, 1988) criticise the over-reliance on the chord-scale theory, so do many participants feel that it is important not to neglect elements of improvisation other than harmony – particularly those jazz musician-educators performing in more contemporary ensembles and idioms. Perhaps because of their professional knowledge of jazz, the participants do not feel the need to rely heavily on books like those of Baker (1983), or Aebersold play-along CDs (Aebersold, 1992; Harrell,
1994). In the case of the latter, participants usually work in situations where they, or other students, can provide an accompaniment for students. These CDs may be of more use for teachers in private studios, where they are not in a position to accompany their students, or where they are not comfortable providing an accompaniment themselves.

In keeping with its centrality in their pedagogy, listening forms a major of participants' methods for teaching improvisation. Approaches include:

• students imitating phrases, similar to activities documented by Scott (2004);
• students transcribing short phrases played by the teacher or from recordings;
• responding to other students' improvisations in the context of a 'conversational' exercise; and
• using only small numbers of notes as the basis for an improvisation.

The approaches are not confined to only one teaching scenario, with the imitation of phrases, as an example, present in both classroom and small ensemble situations. Simplicity is inherent within all of these, particularly when considered as an example of sequencing (Walters, 1992). Participants stress the importance of starting simply, in order to help students understand the ideas they are practicing and build their confidence.

**Student Involvement**

The active involvement of students in the teaching and learning process is an idea endorsed by all participants, even if they did not explicitly talk about it. Within listening, for instance, students are engaged in the learning process by actively focussing on key points. Although not exclusively so, many of the approaches used by the jazz musician-educators in this study are student-centred in nature, with the teacher acting more as a facilitator, guide and mentor. This is certainly the case in the Musica Viva in Schools show, where the final composition is created through the process of students improvising short phrases and melodies. The members of the
band may guide the process, and suggest ways of improving or editing the composition, but it is the students themselves who generate the musical material. This is also the case with those participants who work in small ensembles. The emphasis on students' improvisation skills again demands a student-centred approach where the teacher suggests and guides, rather than dictates.

While there is still student involvement in big bands, the teacher takes a little more control over the learning. Greater emphasis is placed on ensemble skills and getting the band to an acceptable performance standard. Consequently, some band leaders find it uneconomical to spend time working with individual students on their improvising when they could be working with the whole band, which leads to a lack of improvisation in these groups. This is also driven by the need to get performances 'right' for competitions – a trend that is being countered by some bands and festivals. In the eyes of the majority of participants, the approaches normally used in combo rehearsals, with their stronger focus on the student, is more conducive to teaching improvisation. Of course, it may also be true that the importance many jazz musician-educators place on improvisation, both for themselves and their students, leads them to favour working in small group scenarios for this purpose.

**Approaches to Different Teaching Scenarios**

In addition to the different strategies for small and large ensembles, participants use a wide range of approaches depending on the scenario they find themselves working in. Those involved in more freelance scenarios often use freer methods of teaching and creating, including using stimuli for improvisations based on conversations or trips to the beach, as examples. These participants are perhaps more comfortable with using elements of free jazz in their teaching due to their involvement in playing contemporary styles of jazz and improvised music. This can be compared with Borgo's (2007) contention that free jazz is often eschewed by many teachers due to a lack of familiarity and comfort with the style.

The jazz musician-educators involved in classroom teaching tend to use more traditional teaching methods and repertoire with their students, including improvisation activities structured by pre-determined note choices. This is probably
due more to the styles of jazz these participants engage with professionally, rather than the classroom environment, or the fact that these teachers are also constrained by teaching programs and syllabus documents.

**Implications for Students' Musical Skills**

A number of participants reported their belief that studying jazz can have positive effects on students' musicianship, including aspects of music theory and harmony, sense of rhythm and style, and ensemble skills, among others. Again, the centrality of listening comes into play, whether it be hearing and imitating phrases, transcribing solos, or listening to other members of the ensemble during performances. Indeed, the role of listening as an ensemble skill is important, due to jazz's improvisatory nature – members of the group have to be aware of each other's actions to know what is happening next. From the data it is not clear exactly how the interviewees teach these skills, but it may be similar to the demonstration of cues and signals, as documented by Black (2008).

Compositional skills also seem to benefit from the study of jazz. This often stems from the increased working knowledge of harmony and theory, as reported by the singer. Additionally, it may be that composition becomes easier for students when they have experience manipulating elements of music such as melody, harmony and rhythm in real time through improvisation. As Vella (2000) suggests, exploring musical elements in this immediate way develops “a sense of musical thinking based on doing” (p. 9), where the act influences one's thoughts, and vice versa. In line with Sternberg's (2009) conception of experiential or practical intelligence, jazz students who are frequently exposed to such activities are perhaps better positioned to organise their musical thoughts, based on their practical knowledge, when it comes to more formal composition tasks.

**Recommendations for Further Study**

Although this study has examined some of the approaches of jazz musician-educators in teaching jazz, it is limited by its small sample size, and only takes into account the approaches of those whose work has largely taken place in secondary schools.
Further research into teaching approaches might examine the work of highly regarded private teachers, how they work with students individually, and how they balance teaching jazz with developing students' technical skills. The role of teachers and mentors at jazz camps, weekend workshops and other occasional or semi-regular teaching scenarios could also prove insightful.

Green (2001) suggested that a few years ago, while popular music had entered the classroom 'canon', its teaching approaches had not. Where jazz is used in the classroom, particularly by teachers who are not experienced in jazz, the same comment applies. For instance, many teachers will ask students to use the blues scale over the 12-bar blues, without analysing or even listening to how great players, from the United States of America, Australia or elsewhere, approach improvisation over the blues. Even where the trombonist used the blues scale in his classroom, he still structured the activity with notions of simplicity in mind.

Further research is warranted in the direction of how some of the ideas raised in this study might be adapted for classroom use – for example, using simple folk songs or nursery rhymes as a basis for improvisations, as suggested by the bass player. In addition, despite the presence of jazz studies for pre-service music educators in some institutions (see Chapter 1), many of my fellow graduand music teachers still feel uneasy about using jazz in their classrooms, due to a lack of familiarity with the style. The saxophonist's work creating a professional development kit is a start, but more work is warranted into how approaches used by jazz musician-educators might help general music educators to feel more confident in teaching jazz.

Although the use of interviews raised a number of pertinent issues surrounding jazz musician-educators, a logical next step would be to observe a broader range of jazz musician-educators working in the wide array of contexts in which jazz is taught. Perhaps by using measures of improvisation similar to those of Madura (1995) or May (2003) to see how students had progressed in their playing, the effectiveness of many of the approaches considered in this study might be examined.
Conclusion

This study found that the six participating jazz musician-educators use a number of approaches to teaching jazz. Many of these are common among all participants, but differences can often be attributed in part to the musical and professional backgrounds of each. Listening occupies a central role in pedagogical strategies, and improvisation is seen as the most important aspect of jazz to teach. As a researcher having experienced many of these approaches through my own jazz education, it has been intriguing to explore the pedagogical bases employed, and their links to broader music education. Bearing these links in mind, the participants feel that it is important to use jazz as a way of instilling an appreciation of music generally in students, and giving students the confidence to play and create on their instruments.
References


Appendix A: University of Sydney Ethics Approval Letter

The University of Sydney

Human Research Ethics Committee
Web: http://www.usyd.edu.au/ethics/human

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Ref: DCJPE

12 February 2009

Dr. James Renwick
Sydney Conservatorium of Music - C41
The University of Sydney
Email: jrenwick@usyd.edu.au

Dear Dr. Renwick

Thank you for your correspondence received 16 January 2009 addressing comments made to you by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). After considering the additional information, the Executive Committee at its meeting on 6 February 2009 approved your protocol entitled “The Approaches and Opinions of Australian Jazz Musician-Educators Towards Jazz Education in Secondary Schools”.

Details of the approval are as follows:

Ref No.: 02-2009/11461
Approval Period: February 2009 to February 2010
Authorised Personnel: Dr. James Renwick
Mr. Andrew Chessher

The HREC is a fully constituted Ethics Committee in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans-March 2007 under Section 5.1.29

The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. We draw to your attention the requirement that a report on this research must be submitted every 12 months from the date of the approval or on completion of the project, whichever occurs first. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of consent for the project to proceed.

Special Condition of Approval

Please provide the letter from the New South Wales Department of Education and Training when available.
Chief investigator / Supervisor’s responsibilities to ensure that:

1. All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

2. All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

3. The HREC must be notified as soon as possible of any changes to the protocol. All changes must be approved by the HREC before continuation of the research project. These include:
   - If any of the investigators change or leave the University.
   - Any changes to the Participant Information Statement and/or Consent Form.

4. All research participants are to be provided with a Participant Information Statement and Consent Form, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee. The Participant Information Statement and Consent Form are to be on University of Sydney letterhead and include the full title of the research project and telephone contacts for the researchers, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee and the following statement must appear on the bottom of the Participant Information Statement. Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 8627 8175 (Telephone); (02) 8627 8160 (Facsimile) or gdiody@usyd.edu.au (Email).

5. Copies of all signed Consent Forms must be retained and made available to the HREC on request.

6. It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

7. The HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the Approval Period stated in this letter. Investigators are requested to submit a progress report annually.

8. A report and a copy of any published material should be provided at the completion of the Project.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Professor D I Cook
Chairman
Human Research Ethics Committee

Copy: Mr. Andrew Chessher ache0969@usyd.edu.au

Encl. Approved Letter to Principals
Approved Initial Email to Potential Participants
Approved Sample Initial Telephone Contact
Approved Participant Information Statement
Approved Participant Consent Form
Approved Interview Protocol
Appendix B: NSW Department of Education and Training Approval Letter

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES DIRECTORATE

Mr Andrew Chessher
99/192 Vimiera Road
MARSFIELD NSW 2122

SERAP Number 2008242

Dear Mr Chessher

I refer to your application to conduct a research project in NSW government schools entitled The Approaches and Opinions of Australian Jazz Musician-Educators Towards Jazz Education in Secondary Schools. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been approved. You may now contact the Principals of the nominated schools to seek their participation.

This approval will remain valid until 12 February 2010.

No researchers have been screened for working with children for the purposes of this research.

You should include a copy of this letter with the documents you send to schools.

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

- School Principals have the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time. The approval of the Principal for the specific method of gathering information for the school must also be sought.
- The privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.
- The participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school’s convenience.
- Any proposal to publish the outcomes of the study should be discussed with the Research Approvals Officer before publication proceeds.

When your study is completed please forward your report marked to the Director, Strategic Initiatives, Department of Education and Training, Locked Bag 53, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010. If you have any queries, please contact Dr Robert Stevens, Manager, Schooling Research on telephone 9244 5619.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Dr Max Smith
Acting Director, Strategic Initiatives
//> February 2009

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NSW Department of Education and Training
Strategic Initiatives Directorate
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Appendix C: Participant Information Statement

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

Dr James Renwick
Lecturer in Music Education

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT
Research Project

Title: The Approaches and Opinions of Australian Jazz Musician-Educators
Towards Jazz Education in Secondary Schools

(1) What is the study about?

The study examines the approaches, thoughts and opinions of expert jazz
teachers, or jazz musician-educators, in teaching jazz and jazz improvisation in
secondary school scenarios. It aims to explore a number of teaching scenarios,
such as teaching in the classroom, leading big bands or smaller combos, and
running workshops in high schools. As well as investigating what jazz musician-
educators do, the study also seeks to shed light on some of the issues they
perceive in current Australian jazz education practice.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Andrew Chesser, undergraduate student,
Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and will form the basis for the degree of
Bachelor of Music (MusEd)(Hons) at The University of Sydney under the
supervision of Dr James Renwick, Lecturer in Music Education, Sydney
Conservatorium of Music.

(3) What does the study involve?

The study involves conducting interviews with participants to explore their
individual thoughts and approaches to jazz education. These interviews will
involve audio recording for later analysis, and will be recorded at a mutually
agreeable location, such as your school, office or another appropriate location.
In addition to this, relevant documents such as teaching programs, workshop
kits, newsletters and the like will be requested to supplement the information
provided through the interview.
(4) How much time will the study take?

The interview will take between one and two hours, which can be broken up into shorter time periods at your discretion. Ten or fifteen minutes may additionally be requested for guidance in obtaining documents pertinent to your position as a jazz musician-educator.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary – you are not under any obligation to consent and – if you do consent – you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney. You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

The study may benefit you, in that it will allow you to see the range of approaches and opinions held by jazz musician-educators working in a variety of scenarios, which may in turn provide further inspiration for your own teaching.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you may.

(9) What if I require further information?

When you have read this information, Andrew Chessher will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Andrew Chessher (Mob: 0425 273 482) or Dr James Renwick, Lecturer in Music Education (Tel: 9351 1235).

(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbrlody@usyd.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep

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Appendix D: Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I, [PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project.

TITLE: The Approaches and Opinions of Australian Jazz Musician-Educators Towards Jazz Education in Secondary Schools

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher(s).

3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) or the University of Sydney now or in the future.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

5. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio/video recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

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7. I consent to: –

i) Audio-taping
   YES ☐ NO ☐

ii) Receiving Feedback
   YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answered YES to the "Receiving Feedback Question (ii)", please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

Feedback Option

Address:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Email:

________________________________________________________________________

Signed:

Name:

Date:
Appendix E: Letter to Principals

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Approaches and Opinions of Australian Jazz Musician-Educators Towards Jazz Education in Secondary Schools

One of your music teachers, (insert name here), has been invited to participate in a research project examining the approaches and opinions of expert jazz teachers to teaching jazz and jazz improvisation in secondary school scenarios. I am writing you to ask your approval for this teacher’s participation in the project.

The study is being conducted by Andrew Cheesher as part of a Bachelor of Music (Music Education)(Hons), and being supervised by Dr. James Renwick, Lecturer in Music Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music. They have been invited to participate as a result of their work as an expert jazz teacher, referred to in this study as a jazz musician-educator.

This study will look at:

• attitudes and beliefs towards a variety of teaching methods;
• approaches in different settings, such as classroom teaching, big and small band directing, and workshop leadership;
• opinions concerning emphases with students of varying abilities;
• the role of listening; and
• opinions on the state of Australian secondary jazz education.

The focus of this research comes, in part, from my own experiences of learning jazz through high school, as well as my self-identity as a jazz musician-educator in training.

Information will be collected through interviews, which will be audio recorded and will take approximately two hours in total. This can be broken up into shorter time periods as requested by the music teacher. Documents pertaining to their work as a jazz musician-educator will also be requested. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and no ill-favour will be held against the teacher or your school if they decline to participate or withdraw during the course of the study.

If you agree to your teacher’s participation, I would appreciate approval in writing. For further information, or to discuss your music teacher’s involvement in this study, please contact Andrew Cheesher (Mob: 0426 293 482) or Dr. James Renwick (Tel: 9351 1235).

Regards,

Andrew Cheesher.
Appendix F: Interview Protocol

GENERAL QUESTIONS
What instrument(s) do you play?
How long have you been playing for?
What styles do you normally play? (eg jazz, classical, rock etc)
How long have you been teaching jazz?
What formal qualifications do you have in: music/jazz performance?
education?
Do you have any private students?

ROLE OF JAZZ
Why do you think it is important to teach jazz?
In your opinion, what is the most important aspect of jazz to teach?

ROLE OF LISTENING
What emphasis do you place on listening?
How do you approach listening with your students?
What sorts of listening repertoire (eg particular musicians, styles) do you tend to use?

METHODS
Do you use, in whole or in part, any methods like those of Baker, Coker, Aebersold or others?
What are the strengths/weaknesses of these methods?

ELEMENTS OF JAZZ
How do you approach teaching improvisation and the individual aspects of improvisation?
How do you approach teaching phrasing and articulation?
How do you approach the roles of individual instruments or sections for ensemble playing?

STUDENTS OF DIFFERENT LEVELS
How do you alter your approach with students as they develop more as jazz players?

APPROACH TO ENSEMBLES
Do you alter your approach to teaching jazz when working in small or large ensembles?

PERSONAL BELIEFS/STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES
What do you think are your strengths and weaknesses in terms of teaching jazz?
What do you think are the strengths or weaknesses of the current common methods?
What do you think about the state of jazz education in Australia generally?
Are there any suggestions you would make to improve the state of jazz education in Australia?