AN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TEACHER'S PERCEPTION OF AN EXPANDED INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CURRICULUM

By

John Tyler Wiernusz

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ABSTRACT

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The Instrumental Music Institution has come under scrutiny through the application of various critical education frameworks. Instrumental music educators must adapt and evolve their instruction and curricular organization to better meet the needs of instrumental music students. The current study presents illuminates the lived experience of one instrumental music teacher operating with an expanded curriculum, thus providing an example of curricular innovation that enlivens instrumental music instruction and address the criticisms of instrumental music education that have been leveled by music education philosophers in recent years.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

The Instrumental Music Institution

The Instrumental Music paradigm has survived a century of musical development and innovation almost completely untouched and, until recently, unchallenged (Kratus, 2007; Williams, 2014), thanks to its deep historical roots dating back to the nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Students experience hierarchies of power, use of specific language, and rehearsal routines that are embedded into many aspects of the ensemble culture, often starting from the first instrumental lesson. This thesis will challenge this paradigm through exploration of additional curricular possibilities for instrumental music, including through expanding the repertoire, increasing student autonomy, and providing more opportunities for creativity.

History of Instrumental Music in the United States

Communities in the United States got their first taste of wind-only bands in trolley parks, popular during mid-to-late nineteenth century. These early amusement parks, often found at the end of major trolley lines, were important hubs for cultural activity in pre-mechanized American cities (Mark & Gary, 2007). Consequently, bands employed by the parks had a powerful platform for increased visibility and popularity.

However, several factors, including increased civilian mobility afforded by Ford's middle-class car, conspired to all but eliminate the trolley park and, by extension, their bands (Mark & Gary, 2007). Amusement park band members, then unemployed, continued to perform professionally in barnstorming tours around the United States. These tours helped elevate the medium to unprecedented levels of popularity, thus

building a case for the development of bands in towns and schools across the country (Mark & Gary, 2007).

Music in Public Education. Despite the growth of music programs in public education at the beginning of the twentieth century, school bands remained a novelty. The Music Supervisors National Committee (MSNC) Report in 1912 noted this deficiency and, correspondingly, advocated for the inclusion of an "orchestral ensemble" in public school music programs (MSNC 1914, p. 65). Public education around the country, however, was seemingly hesitant to break from the traditional singing school model to embrace this recommendation. According to the 1922 Committee on Instrumental Affairs, also commissioned by MSNC, organized instrumental instruction in schools was concentrated in select cities across the country, such as Detroit, Oakland, and Pittsburgh (MSNC, 1922).

Instrumental music in American public education experienced a period of rapid growth following the First World War. The progress was due, in part, to the symbiotic partnership of progressivism, instrumental manufacturers, and public school music programs (Mark & Gary, 2007). Both progressives and American instrument manufacturers were eager to reap perceived benefits of instrumental music in public schools. Progressives felt that instrumental music fostered the same positive traits that their movement sought to develop. Alternatively, American instrument manufacturers benefited financially from the professional tours of Sousa, Clarke, and Gilmore, as well as the subsequent growth of community bands (Mark & Gary, 2007).

The growth of instrumental music was further supported through the development of a national competition circuit, organized by the MSNC. Competitions

were a source of intense pride for the communities in which these ensembles resided. At the apex of the competition boom, the National Bureau for the Advancement of Music commented, “A good school band can add more than perhaps anything else to the prestige of its school and town” (Mark & Gary, 2007, p. 307). However, not everyone believed that band competitions were healthy for young musicians. Marguerite Hood observed that contests produced the “most heated debate among music educators since the rote-note disagreement” (Mark & Gary, 2007, p. 308). Competitions were, and still remain, a controversial topic in instrument music, due to “Problems of Instrumental Music” section (Mark & Gary, 2007). Competitions were often seen as means to an end, focusing on a few singular works and skills rather than a depth of knowledge.

Instrumental Music Teacher Education. Music education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was taught by ex-performers, usually from trolley parks or touring groups. Reliance on these musicians was due, in part, to the lack of focus on instrumental music in early American teacher education programs. In fact, it took until 1935 for the University of Michigan, one of the nation’s premier music education programs at the time, to create a focus on instrumental music; a movement spearheaded by Professor William Revelli (Mark & Gary, 2007).

Early instrumental teacher education programs were designed to prepare students for “a professional career as performers or conductors of professional orchestras and bands,” which included teaching positions “at the college level” and “in the larger secondary schools” (Mark, 1980, pp. 16-17). This increased focus on instrumental music in teacher preparation programs created an influx of new band

directors into the workforce, expediting the popularity of the American band tradition in school music programs.

Implications for Instrumental Music Education. Early instrumental music education still has a heavy footprint on practices in modern classrooms. Current instrumentation standards, taken for granted in modern wind ensembles and concert bands, were popularized by the influential touring bandleaders Harding, Clarke, and Sousa (Colwell & Goolsby, 2012). Canonization of the standard instrumentation was completed by the Committee of Instrumental Affairs of the Music Supervisors National Conference, the predecessor to the Music Educators National Conference and, more recently, the National Association for Music Education (Mark & Gary, 2007). The Committee of Instrumental Affairs promoted a standardized instrumentation as a necessary criterion for judging school bands uniformly. Standard instrumentation, adopted a century ago, continues to define the organization of school bands, despite the dissipation of the formal national competition during the depression years in the 1930s.

Another major implication of the competition circuit was the development of a canonic repertoire. Unlike its robust orchestral counterpart, the canon of wind band music in the early twentieth century was still in its infancy. Consequently, many of the touring bands performed music written specifically for the ensemble by the bandleader, who acted as conductor, arranger, and soloist. The development of the national competitive circuit and the establishment of a standard instrumentation helped solidify a unique canon for band.

Scholastic bands continue to be, at least in part, one of the more visible components of school music programs. Marching bands, often organized in the military corps band tradition, often are seen performing at various school and community events. Organized local and national competitive programs in both marching band and concert band continue to be a source of pride for a school and its community. In this regard, the aims of instrumental music education in the United States have not wavered from the early MSNC competitions at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Critique of Instrumental Music Education

Proponents of "traditional" instrumental music education defend its hegemony by pointing out benefits of the institution for music in the United States (Colwell & Goolsby, 2012; Fonder, 2014; Miles, 1997). Concert bands, and their partner ensemble, the wind ensemble, have reached new levels of technical accuracy and resulted in numerous contributions to modern music composition (Mark & Gary, 2007). Composers are continuing to write increasingly demanding technical passages, with hopes of pushing the outer frontiers of instrumental technique (Mark & Gary, 2007).

Additionally, proponents of the wind band tradition will point to a high satisfaction rate of students in established programs, especially those achieving at advanced levels (Colwell & Goolsby, 2012). This viewpoint supposes that more people would understand the benefits of the tradition if they participated in a band. These students populate the music teacher education programs around the country and tend to perpetuate the instrumental music culture in the U.S.

Instrumental Music as an Institution

The hegemony of instrumental music education has caused some to question whether the medium has acquired traits of an Institution, with a capital 'I' (Abrahams, 2003; Allsup & Benedict, 2008; Hess, 2014). The notion of an institution was advanced by Freire (1970) as a critique of social and political power dynamics between lower classes and an enlightened elite in his home country of Brazil. In an institution, according to Freire (1970) and Gould (2009), norms, procedures, and knowledge are advanced as taken-for-granted and thereby left unchecked. The lack of external and internal examination precipitates a power discrepancy between those that the institution deems worthy and those whom it rejects. The institutionally oppressed fall into a cycle of repression, as the institution marginalizes their knowledge actions, and beliefs. Recently, scholars such as Abrahams (2003, 2005), Hess (2014), Gould (2009) Kratus (2007), Mantie (2012a & 2012b), Palmer and Quandros (2012), and Williams (2014) have provided discourse on the hegemony of the Western Classical tradition in music education.

The institution of instrumental music education has come under increased scrutiny since the turn of the twenty-first century (Allsup & Benedict, 2008; Kratus, 2007; Mantie, 2012a; 2014; Williams, 2011). Criticism focused on the problems and oppression related to the hegemony of the traditional methods glorified by the gilded age of band directors. Williams (2011) took his assessment a step further, noting that autocratic models of education have crept into non-ensemble classes, notably music theory, guitar, and keyboard. This criticism of the instrumental institution is similar to the

criticisms of Gould, Abrahams, Kratus, Mantie, and Williams, among others, in their discussion of the hegemony of Western Classical music.

Critique of the instrumental Institution has been filtered through different lenses, often depending on the oppressed group. Allsup and Benedict (2008) synthesize many of these critiques in their multi-faceted critique of the instrumental music paradigm. The authors, working from a philosophical perspective, established eight "problems" that instrumental music education and its proponents face when critically evaluating their profession and corresponding literature and practice:

- The Problem of Tradition
- The Problem of Method
- The Problem of Legitimacy
- The Problem of Social History
- The Problem of Fear
- The Problem of Change
- The Problem of Reciprocity
- The Problem of Pedagogy

(Allsup and Benedict, 2008)

Each problem presents a unique set of critique and challenges for instrumental music education. In following subsections, I will unpack the concerns of Allsup and Benedict (2008) and tie together sympathetic arguments from other scholars and researchers.

The Problem of Tradition. The problem of "tradition," according to Allsup and Benedict (2008), focuses on the troublesome aspects of instruction that instrumental music educators have adopted from their early history. In other words, this problem is

less concerned with musical content, that is, the literature being performed, and more with the *way* in which instrumental music educators are educating students. Instrumental music educators have taken a behaviorist model of rote learning to an unhealthy extreme (Allsup & Benedict, 2008). Allsup and Benedict claim the behaviorist model has turned the ensemble classroom into an exercise of control, as evident by the organized seating arrangements and "silent until spoken to" policies. They commented that these governing principles were adopted not from the aesthetic principles of the "Old World" orchestral tradition, but rather from "a military ethos" (p. 158,),) adopted during the early 20th century. This makes instrumental music a teacher-centered rather than a student-centered instructional experience.

The Problem of Method. Concerns about control in instrumental music classrooms are compounded by the methodological choices made by instrumental music educators. Allsup and Benedict postulate a relationship between the current mechanized style of education and the arrival of "Fordism" in the early twentieth century. The Fordist model spoke to the "American belief in progress and prosperity," (p. 159) and, above all else, unquestioned efficiency. Allsup and Benedict (2008) assert that the desire for results, both musical and competitive, has led to a search for "unquestioned efficiency" in the last century of instrumental music education.

Music education, and more specifically the large ensemble tradition, has come under scrutiny for its reliance on the 'Fordist' model. This model, defined by an apprenticeship between the teacher and student, leads to a phenomenon that Freire termed the "banking model of education" (Freire 1970/1998). In the "banking model," directors fill the (presumably "empty") students with knowledge, who in turn apply the

knowledge to a specific musical setting. Shively (2004) noted that this is even reflected in the physical setup of an instrumental ensemble, with a conductor's podium at the apex and the students' chairs radiating outwards. This model of learning isolates the students from the knowledge acquisition process and, consequently, secludes the knowledge from any potential extended application (Duke 2012; Mantie, 2012a).

Music education scholars have problematized the search for unquestioned efficiency (Allsup & Benedict, 2008; Kratus, 2007; Mantie 2012a, Mantie & Tucker, 2012; Williams, 2012) with Allsup & Benedict (2008) lamenting that the school music program and its educators are "determined by the quality of its concerts and not the work that preceded it" (pp.159-160). The authors added that any challenge to this model causes a knee-jerk negative reaction from the community at-large, forcing teachers into an apparent decision between alternative methods and public legitimacy.

The Problem of Legitimacy. Allsup and Benedict (2008) note that both the students and teachers in instrumental music potentially exist in a state of oppression, albeit to varying degrees and under different oppressing factors. External factors, such as repertoire lists and performance expectations, determine the direction of instruction and limit curricular design. For the teacher, the quest to satiate institutional standards limits students' opportunities to understand "who they are and what they could be" (p. 161)

The ensuing struggle for legitimacy "forces" instrumental music educators to make decisions to legitimize themselves and their ensembles. A prominent example of this phenomenon is the practice of literature selection. According to Allsup and Benedict (2008), directors choose literature specifically based on the strengths of the group,

rather than the developmental needs of the musicians. Selective practices ensure the success of instrumental ensembles in public performances and interscholastic competitions. This phenomenon results in literature choices that routinely feature strong players while hiding and minimizing perceived weaker ones (Shively, 2004).

In a microcosm, the problem of legitimacy works to "deflect attention away from the systematic issues and actually serves to keep us in our place." (Allsup & Benedict 2008, p. 162) Both the students and the teacher are limited in their ability to explore other, "non-legitimate" ways of knowing, as determined by the institutional establishment.

The Problem of Social History. Allsup and Benedict (2008) assert that the Institution of instrumental music education has clung ferociously to its century-old social history. The hegemony of the Institution is a purposeful action, undertaken to preserve the inherent givens, or status quo, of a social institution. The status quo often is beneficial only for those in power and suppresses contradicting views of knowledge and action.

Additionally, this "society" makes a clear and visible delineation between the knowledgeable and the deficient. Those with knowledge are glorified with high chair placement, ample in-class praise, and extracurricular honors, such as All-Star band placement. While there is nothing inherently wrong with praising high achievers, the current system often suppresses the accomplishments of the non-standard ways of expressing knowledge.

The Problem of Fear. Instrumental music education has, according to Allsup and Benedict (2008), held tight control over the norms of its social institution due to strong

feelings of fear. The authors noted, “Issues of control are always connected with fear” (p. 164). Fear manifests itself in the oppressor-oppressed relationship espoused earlier in *“The Problem of Legitimacy,”* teacher-to-student relationships, and status quo-to-teacher, the latter of which will be discussed in the next sub-section.

Teachers, who act as the oppressors, take an antagonistic approach to student mistakes or confusion. The authors noted that fear has long been used as a motivator for behavior in instrumental music. This instructional method takes a Pavlovian approach, pairing a poor musical action with a negative stimulus, often in the form of public ridicule. While this strategy may lead to an end result, it is difficult to imagine positive long-term effects for the students. For example, what will become of low-achieving students when they no longer have the teacher to “provide” the negative stimulus (Allsup and Benedict, 2008; Bradley, 2012)?

The Problem of Change. Fear of external backlash as a result of change also hinders the ability of instrumental music teachers to evaluate their social institution critically. Change to an institution is regarded as an attack against a sacred entity, which often leads to violent retaliatory actions (Allsup & Benedict, 2008).

Implicit and explicit expectations associated with instrumental music education limit the agency that individual teachers have to vary their instruction and curriculum. Altering components of the instrumental music experience would mean fighting a century of embedded tradition. An example of this can be seen in the concerts associated with large musical ensembles. Concerts are expected to be formal, with performers dressed in dresses, suits, and tuxes, and patrons silent during all musical

selections. These polished concerts often are the main purpose of a large ensemble, and have been since the beginning touring bands (Hickey, 2001).

In order for any change to be successful, it must start at a foundational level. For the instrumental music institution, this means a change in higher education and the methods by which future educators are prepared. However, the latest NASM requirements for music teacher education look similar those established by William Revelli in the 1930s (NASM, 2013). Both Regelski (2005) and Barrett (2006) noted the lack of change over eighty years as well, with the latter writing, “This situation may be attributed in part to the past and continuing emphasis in many music teacher education programmes (sic) on advanced instrumental skill acquisition, resulting in the development of teachers whose experience and knowledge of composition is not commensurate with that of performance” (p. 196). Attempting to alter the foundations of instrumental music education without addressing music teacher education is akin to mowing the lawn by picking each blade of grass individually.

The Problem of Reciprocity. Underlying the teacher-student oppressive relationship is a lack of agency on the part of the student, or, as Allsup and Benedict call it, reciprocity for the students. Bands often are “not about individual learning,” but rather, “they are about the sum of the parts” (Williams, 2007, p. 20). Regelski (2005) added that band directors often do not ask whether their students are empowered to continue musically or, alternatively, whether their attraction to instrumental music ends at graduation (Regelski, 2005).

Other authors and scholars have discussed reciprocity with respect to literature and ways of knowing. The discussion of reciprocity is salient in the field of Culturally

Relevant pedagogy. Proponents of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy seek to incorporate pedagogical literature and techniques that are applicable directly to students' real world experiences[1]. However, students seldom have the opportunity to share their musical interests in formal music settings. Bladh & Heimonen (2007) and Kratus (2007) wrote that this creates a schism between formal and informal music education, which furthers the oppression of the cultural minorities who do not see themselves represented in the in-school music curriculum.

The Problem of Pedagogy. Many concerns posed by Allsup, Benedict and others are a result of the pedagogical choices built into the instrumental music institution. Kratus (2007) wrote that current music education practices "take students through a step-by-step approach dominated by the teacher," a process which develops "anything but an independently functioning musician" (p. 46). Other have noted that students must have opportunities to make individual decisions in an ensemble setting if they are to develop independent musicianship (Kannelopolous, 2012; Mantie, 2012b).

To that end, Williams (2012) questioned how much students were learning in a large ensemble classroom. He echoed concerns in *"The Problem of Legitimacy,"* noting that ensemble pedagogy is designed to hide the weak members of the group by placing them on lower part assignments that are catered to their ability level. This strategy is designed to organize the musicians into a ranking order, as evidence by the chair assignments to which most band directors adhere.

What is unclear, however, is how much the part and chair assignments really benefit students, both weak and strong. Advanced students and high-achieving students

[1] For more discussion on the foundations of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in music education, see: Abril 2013; Fitzpatrick 2012; Kindall-Smith, McCoy, & Mills 2011; O'Hagin & Harnish 2006; Regelski 2004.

in this system most definitely will benefit, often getting challenging musical parts. However, students who are low achieving will play parts that are less rich and lacking the musical content to push the bounds of their knowledge and technique. In this way, the pedagogical choices that generate some of the problems of instrumental music education serve to reinforce the oppressor-oppressed relationship of the instrumental music institution.

Summary of the Critique of the Instrumental Music Institution

Instrumental music education remains largely unchanged from its inceptive form in the late nineteenth century (Allsup & Benedict, 2008; Davis, 2008; Grunow, 2005; Mantie, 2014). Davis (2008) wrote, “It is the ‘accepted musical corpus’, or the canon as it is often referred to, that has created an elitist ideological view that elevates Western classical music and its corresponding teachings” (p. 81). This view espouses that the pedagogical hegemony in method and literature has stunted the expressive and creative abilities of students, causing generations of band students who are conditioned to follow the “special ears” of the director with unquestioned enthusiasm.

The sovereignty of the band tradition is evident in instrumental school music opportunities (Allsup & Benedict, 2008; Grunow, 2005; Kratus, 2007; Williams, 2007). Grunow (2005) lamented the lack of progress when he wrote:

> “What changes have we witnessed in beginning instrumental music instruction in the last forty years? With the exception of improvements in packaging and the use of technology… very little has changed in beginning instrumental music instruction. An old-timer observing in a

> beginning instrumental classroom today would recognize behaviors and comments prevalent forty of even sixty years ago" (p. 245).

Reformation of an institution is a challenging and often lengthy process of changing long-held beliefs and customs. The "problems" of the instrumental music Institution posed by Allsup, Benedict, and others have led to a spirited discussion in teacher education circles about the future of large ensembles in instrumental music education. Divisions are seen between those who favor the status quo of the large ensemble model and those pushing for reformation. However, even within the latter there are major disagreements about how a "reformed" instrumental music education might look.

The Future of Instrumental Music Education

The instrumental music ensemble paradigm is under intense scrutiny for its autocratic model of instruction and limited student agency and autonomy. Critics are concerned that instrumental music has become an Institution, which, critics contend, creates a hegemony of Western Classical traditions that oppresses certain musics and musical knowledges, thereby creating a cyclic system of oppression. Researchers have sought to break the cycle of oppression in instrumental music education by exploring potential modifications to instrumental music. In the following section I will discuss two broad camps of instrumental music reform.

Abandonment of Instrumental Music Ensembles

Some authors suggest putting aside the large ensemble model for an alternate approach (Mantie, 2014; Williams, 2007; 2012). This position suggests that Instrumental Music Education Institution is too far removed from the reality that students face in their everyday musical lives to continue being viable. Williams (2007) wrote that large-group

performances “limit our access to students,” while at the same time removing and delegitimizing “multiple other involvements with music that many others will find fascinating” (p. 20). All students, he continued, are capable of creating music in more ways at home than in a formal school setting.

The movement to abandon the current ensemble paradigm has a model in the educational programs of Europe, specifically the Scandinavian countries and, more recently, the United Kingdom (e.g., Folkstead 2006; Green 2008; Hemming & Westvall 2010; Lindgren & Ericsson 2010), These music education programs are developed around the processes of ‘garage band’ musicians in informal musical settings. The *Musical Futures* (2008) program in the United Kingdom is a prime example of the adoption of the informal processes into a formal setting. The program was developed to promote innovative teaching through the use of informal learning methods. Programs such as *Musical Futures* were no doubt what Williams (2014) was pointing to in his discussion of “New Directions” (p. 56) for ensemble music making. In his proposal he put forward guitar classes, Internet-based programs, and music business related experiences as potential alternatives to the present instrumental music ensembles. Kratus (2007) proposed a similar vision of future music education programming, writing that middle level education could focus on accessible instruments, such as ukulele and guitar.

Reformation of Instrumental Music Ensembles

According to Williams (2014) and Kratus (2007), music education programs should have a *stickiness* factor that the instrumental music ensemble lacks. Sticky music programs, according to Kratus, are “interesting, relevant, and meaningful musical

experiences for all students that allow them to develop lifelong musical skills" (p. 53). Is it possible to generate interesting, relevant, and meaningful musical experiences within the current model?

Despite their advocacy for a "garage band" model similar to that of Kratus and Williams, Allsup and Benedict (2008) noted that some students still get joy from participating in ensemble instrumental music education. Ultimately, Allsup and Benedict (2011) called for educators to "expand our conception of instrumental music," (p. 169) rather than disband the tradition. These ideas also have benefited from the growth of national and international organizations for guitar education and music technology.

Expanded Instrumental Music Education Paradigm

Avenues for expansion must be identified if instrumental music education is going to address the problems posed by Allsup and Benedict. Fortunately, precedence exists for a reconceptualization of music education. The Comprehensive Musicianship Project (CMP) and both versions of the National Voluntary Standards for Music Education (MENC, 1994; Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 2014) attempted to shift the focus of instruction from knowledge consumption to student engagement beyond formal education (Norris, 2010). Using these sources as well as recent research in music education, music educators can develop a basis for expanding the instrumental music curriculum.

Philosophical Foundations

Numerous philosophical foundations have been employed to support an expansion of what traditionally occurs in instrumental music classrooms. In his

discussion of the intersection of informal and formal education practices, Bowman (2004) identified three primary goals for education:

1. [E]ducation is concerned with the development of skills, understandings, and dispositions that do not follow easily or naturally from the socialization process alone.
2. [E]ducation is concerned with developing and transmitting skills, understandings, and dispositions that are deemed important by society.
3. Education. . . involves preparing students for life by giving them skills that will serve them well. Significant among these in capitalistic democracies are such attributes as empowerment, independence, self-reliance, critical skills, and the inclination to use them. (pp. 38-39)

Jaffurs (2006) situated Bowman's goals specifically within the realm of music education. She posited that the first aim of music education is related to "musicality" and its development, the second is the transmission of culture through music education, and the third is promotion of democratic ideals in music education. Using Bowman's and Jaffurs' educational aims as a starting point for an expanded instrumental music education, the following preexisting philosophical frames are applicable:

- Critical Pedagogy
- Constructivism
- Democratic Education
- Creativity

The balance of this chapter will be dedicated to discussing each frame as it relates to a new model of instrumental music education.

Critical Pedagogy

Music education faces a schism between the lived experience of students and learning in formal education and music as it occurs in the lives of students outside of school (Kratus, 2007). Critical pedagogy as applied to music education seeks to close this gap by empowering teachers and students to think critically about curricular relevance.

Foundational Principles. Critical Pedagogy began with Friere and his groundbreaking work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/1998). Freire wrote *Pedagogy* to assist illiterate Brazilians (identified by Friere as "the oppressed") in learning Portuguese, while simultaneously advocating for action against oppression. He believed that freedom from oppression was fundamental to being human, and consequently, indispensable to the human condition.

Abrahams (2005) noted five principles of Critical Pedagogy in relation to education in schools:

- Students and teachers pose and solve problems together.
- Education broadens the view of reality, resulting in a change in perception.
- Education empowers students towards "conscentization," or the realization that an individual knows something.
- Education transforms students and teachers to acknowledging a change.
- Education transcends political constraints by providing relevant information.

(p. 64)

Critical Pedagogy requires a redistribution of power in the relationships between the teacher, student, and knowledge. Freire rejected the system of direct dissemination

of information, which he called the “banking concept of education” (p. 72), in favor of a “praxis-based” model in which students and teachers both play an active role in determining relevant knowledge. Jorgensen (1996) added, “Education is not only about transmitting knowledge from one generation to another;” rather “it is also about critically reconstructing, reinterpreting, and reexamining that knowledge for the present and future” (p. 37).

Furthermore, Critical Pedagogy seeks “to help students develop consciousness of freedom, recognize authoritarian tendencies, and connect knowledge to power and the ability to take constructive action" (Giroux, 2010; p. 34). Freire called this process of recognition and problematization “*conscientização*”, which was translated into English as "conscientization." The process begins with the oppressed coming to perceive their oppression not as a “closed world,” but rather as a “limiting situation which they can transform” (p. 49). Regelski (2005) argued that ideology and false consciousness arise when assumptions constructed by society remain unchallenged, as in the case of the instrumental music Institution.

Through conscientization, Critical Pedagogy sought to develop students who are the “subject of his or her own destiny, not an object for the carrying out of instrumental reason” (Freire, 1970/1998; p. 14). Through divergent and critical thinking, students and teachers are empowered to question deep-seated assumptions about knowledge, social practices, and their responsibility for learning and questioning the world they inhabit.

Viewed within the frame of Allsup and Benedict’s “Problems of Instrumental Music,” conscientization would result in the critical analysis of all teaching methods and long-established epistemologies to ensure they do not become oppressive or

disconnected from the real world. In other words, critical pedagogy is tasked with giving students “the skills and knowledge necessary for them to expand their capabilities both to question deep-seated assumptions and myths that legitimize the most archaic and disempowering social practices that structure every aspect of society and to take responsibility for intervening in the world they inhabit” (Giroux, 2007, p. 2).

However, developing conscientization in students and teachers can be difficult because, as Friere (1970/1998) and Regelski (2005) note, people often resist freedom from the status quo, even when the status quo is fraught with issues. This echoes Allsup and Benedict’s *“Problem of Fear,”* the idea that instrumental music teachers are hesitant to go outside their tradition.

In addition to empowering the student to develop conscientization, Critical Pedagogy is concerned with liberating teachers from the shackles of oppression. Friere argued that true, objective change, which is paramount to achieving liberation, means oppressors must not just acknowledge their positional role of power but must work alongside the oppressed to transform their reality. In the same way, it is the role of the student to achieve the “great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed” (p. 44) by liberating their teachers from the tyranny of their oppressive thoughts. Consequently, according to Freire, students and teachers engage in a dialogic relationship to break free from the oppression of ideology and false consciousness.

Music and Critical Pedagogy. Music occupies a prodigious role in the structure of Critical Pedagogy. Jorgensen (1996) noted the power that music has to empower the oppressed, writing, “Wherever there have been concerted efforts to teach people to sing, there has been a concomitant, deepening regard for self-improvement and general

education, and a heightened desire for freedom" (p. 42). The commitment to self-improvement and a desire for freedom are pertinent to two aims of education set forth by Bowman (2004) and Jaffurs (2006). Consequently, a music education that is sympathetic to the purpose of Critical Pedagogy deserves a position at the core of educational programming.

Yet despite claims of its importance, the role of music education requires defending in many school systems. Those critical of the instrumental music paradigm point to music education's steadfast clinging to the Western Classical Music paradigm as an important contribution to the lack of widespread acceptance of the value of music education. Some music education scholars evaluating the western music canon find that this practice represents a narrow conceptualization of musical knowledge (Gould, 2007 & 2009; Hess, 2014) that limits access to diverse music and music making opportunities (Allsup, 2013; Bradley, 2012; Tobias, 2014) and that has little relevance to the music and music making outside of formal education (Kratus, 2007; Jorgensen, 2008; Regalski, 2005).

An expanded music curriculum puts new responsibilities on music educators to reject the "one-dimensional brainwashing" (Regelski, 2005; p. 19) of the Western-Classical-Music-centric conservatory music training in favor of a more dialogic musical environment (Abrahams, 2005; Allsup & Benedict, 2008). The teacher and students set this new model in motion through diligent reflection and informed praxis. Abrahams (2005) wrote, when planning instruction based on critical pedagogy, music teachers should ask the questions: Who am I? Who are my students? What might they become? What might we become together? Curriculum developed in this vein engages students

in vernacular learning of the music that is central to their lives, thereby closing the gap between in school and out of school music and musical experience.

Additionally, in Critical Pedagogy, teachers and students must acknowledge the freedom of both parties to challenge, modify, and outright reject the status quo. To this end, instrumental music education would need to eliminate the pervasive top-down model of the conductor controlling what is taught, when, and how and acknowledge that students "come to the music room with the ability to teach as well as to learn" (Abrahams, 2005; p. 66). It is not enough to put the needs of the student first, however, for that neglects the inherent privilege that certain students have in relation to their peers. A student-centered music education, consequently, should seek to foster collaboration and relationship, rather than competition (Hess, 2014).

This can occur only when students and teachers engage in activities that encourage critical thinking and discussion about musical knowledge and experiences.

Constructivism

An expanded instrumental music education might include organic opportunities to engage in personal growth on the part of the students and teacher (Fostnot, 1989; Gagnon & Collay, 2001). To this end, the Constructivist model seeks to develop empowered students as "autonomous, inquisitive thinker(s) – one(s) who question, investigate, and reason" (Fostnot, 1989; p. xi). This is a concept that would resonant with Freire, who sought to eliminate oppression by empowering critical, independent thinkers.

Constructivist pedagogy, as with Critical Pedagogy, acknowledges the necessity of a dialogic relationship between the student and teacher. As was noted earlier, Freire

believed that this quality of relationship ensured freedom for both parties. Likewise, teachers who embrace constructivist philosophies strive to enter a "partnership for learning with each student" (Gagnon & Collay, 2001; p. 25). The common goals of conscientization and dialogic relationships make critical pedagogy and constructivism a strong educational partnership.

Foundational Principles. Constructivism has its roots in the work of Kant, and has been furthered by modern philosophers, psychologists, and educators including Bruner, Goodman, and Piaget (Shively, 1995). Dewey (1916), a leading proponent of constructivism as educational framework, believed that educators are responsible for cultivating opportunities that are immediately valuable to the student, as well as society. He criticized current education practices for focusing too much on the short-term results, while ignoring the process of knowledge construction.

Constructivist education is designed in the image of real-life situations and learning. Gagnon & Collay (2001) observed that young children often are excited about learning basic skills, both in the classroom and in the real world, as long as they are presented in a compelling way. They make six assumptions about learners in real-life events:

- Learners think individually to make personal meaning.
- Learners think collaboratively to make shared meaning.
- Learners connect prior knowledge and previous experiences to current learning events.
- Learners pose questions and respond to questions of others.
- Learners present their thinking about learning events to others.

- Learners reflect on their collective and individual thinking.

(p. 6)

Constructivist education seeks to replicate mutable real-life learning environments in the school classroom. Accordingly, Fostnot (1989) developed four principles of constructivist education. First, she wrote that knowledge is an accumulation of past constructions. Our world is filtered through our “logical” lens, thereby determining our perceptions of a given event or piece of information. Second, constructions are determined through a series of distinct, albeit interdependent processes. Established by Piaget (1977), these initial processes are assimilation, or the logical framework used to interpret information, and accommodation, high-level logic and cognitive reorganization that occurs when assimilated information is found to be insufficient or contradictory. Piaget later added a third process, adaption, whereby the knowledge becomes solidified through repetition and reinforcement.

Third, Fostnot (1989) wrote that learning is an ongoing process, one that is more organic than mechanical. She contended that two big misconceptions plague the current educational view of knowledge. First, that knowledge is exclusively the accumulation of raw facts required in order to think. Second, she argues that “teaching is telling, and the art is in communicating well” (p. 4) is a pervasive misconception that exists in education. However, Fosnot contended that, when learning is viewed as an organic process driven by students’ quest for personal realization, it is impossible to reduce teaching down to the dissemination of pure facts.

The fourth and final principle of constructivism, according to Fosnot (1989), proposes that identification and resolution of conflict are the backbones of meaningful

learning. Gagnon & Collay (2001) noted that the traditional model of education asks students to recall information from prescribed sources, texts or lectures, rather than articulate original thinking. This discourages students to take risks, because being wrong means exposing flaws in thinking, which is not easy for people of any age. A constructivist learning approach, on the other hand, encourages students to take risks by explicating their thought process before they are aware of the correct response. Only then are students given the opportunity to explore a variety of solutions through discussion with peers, thereby exposing misconceptions or mistakes that can be rectified through knowledge accommodation.

The ultimate aim of constructivist education, according to Fostnot (1989), is to deeply engage students with real world educational scenarios to achieve optimal engagement. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) titled the phenomenon of optimal psychological engagement, “Flow.” During “Flow,” people often are completely absorbed in the activity they are pursuing, and, consequently, may even experience time dilation, where time appears to move quicker, as a result.

Three basic conditions are required of tasks in order for people to enter a state of “Flow.” First, a task must have a specific set of goals attached. These goals help to focus the attention of the person, thereby allowing for a hyper-focused state. Second, tasks must have mechanisms for immediate feedback. Feedback helps participants to overcome adversity by readjusting their activities to maintain a state of flow. Finally, tasks must strike a balance between providing a stringent challenge and meeting the person’s ability level. Stated another way, participants must believe they can succeed during the activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

In addition to engaging students on an individual level, Social Constructionists focused on the structures of communication that occur during optimal learning, drawing from the work of Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky's theory of the *Zone of Proximal Development* posits that "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86) is fairly significant, with peer instruction leading to deeper learning. Therefore, students working collaboratively to construct knowledge with peers of equal or greater ability level will achieve at a higher level than those working alone (Vygotsky, 1990; Kastner, 2012).

Constructivism in Music Education. A constructivist critique of the instrumental music ensemble classroom sympathizes with many of Allsup and Benedict's (2008) "Problems of Instrumental Music." At the forefront is the rejection of the unidirectional flow of knowledge implicit in the autocratic design of bands. The director-driven ensemble model, according to constructivists, provides little freedom for students to grapple with and resolve conflict, and thereby, according to Piaget, construct knowledge. Instead, instrumental music students in traditional classrooms are taught to sit obediently and wait for the director to identify their mistakes and help them correct them.

Some music educators have sought to align instrumental music education with the principles of constructivist learning. They created an educational environment that stressed the importance of critical thinking (Woodford, 1996), context-specific information (Shively, 2004; Pogonowski, 2004), and collaboration (Shively, 1995 &

2004). They also tried to bridge the gap between the informal and formal learning environments by engaging students in “real-world” learning environments. Shively (1995) wrote that the constructivist music instrumental classroom “is not a classroom where learners are gathered around a teacher on a podium, but a classroom where learners interact as they carry on the work of music practitioners” (p. 211).) This concept of interaction and critical thinking is similar to that of the Critical Pedagogy classroom written about by Abrahams (2005).

Researchers and scholars have put forth models for developing constructivist-learning environments in both beginning instrumental (Holsberg, 2009; Shively, 1995 & 2002; Davis, 2008) and advanced instrumental (Kennell, 2002; Scruggs, 2009; Spears, 2014) settings. Their findings, which will be discussed further in *Chapter 2*, suggest that instrumental music education would benefit greatly from adopting a student-centered approach that values the construction of knowledge and student autonomy.

Democratic Education

All students have the right and responsibility to participate fully in their education (Bladh & Herimonen, 2007). The challenge for educators is to foster environments in which students have the opportunity to exercise this right. The philosophy of democratic education, pioneered by Dewey (1912), provides a potential solution to this concern.

A democratic learning environment is a complex network that requires contributions from both the teacher and student (Allsup, 2003). Freire (1971/2000) emphasized the need for an interdependent learning environment, stating that, “A dialogic relationship—communication and interercommunication among active subjects who are immune to the bureaucratization of their minds and open to discovery and to

knowing more—is indispensable to knowledge" (p. 99). Additionally, Allsup (2003) noted that his experience as a teacher in a democratic classroom "required a level of trust that went beyond the neutral practices of normal music education" (p. 34). Later, Allsup (2007) noted that this trust also required that he see the students and himself as "growing people" who are capable of change (p. 55).

In a democratic learning environment, as with classrooms engaging in Critical Pedagogy, the roles of and relationships between students and teacher are reconceptualized. Students are perceived as "producers of knowledge," who have the ability to "critically engage diverse ideas," as well as to act to manipulate (Giroux, 2007; p. 3). Giroux (2007) added that autonomy, self-reflection, and independence are "indispensable for students if they are going to make vital judgments and choices" (p. 3) that affect their lives which is fundamental to living in a democracy. A democratic learning environment values discussion and deliberation as tools of empowerment, rather than destructive dissent.

Democratic environments, according to Allsup (2007) engage students and teachers in conversations that matter on a deeply personal level. In this way, they force the participants to act upon their musical world. Conversations dependent upon a deep personal connection "are what make us people first, and students and teachers second" (Allsup, 2007; p. 55).

Music education, specifically the large ensemble tradition, long has been criticized for using an apprenticeship model of learning (Abrahams, 2012; Allsup & Benedict, 2008; Kratus, 2007; Williams, 2014). In this model, teachers bestow knowledge on the students, who in turn apply the knowledge to a specific musical

setting. However, this model has come under scrutiny in recent years by scholars who question what knowledge students are actually learning and how much of what is learned is relevant outside the formal classroom setting (Allsup, 2003; Woodford, 2005; Kratus, 2007; Williams, 2014).

Educators have developed formal musical activities framed by democratic principles. Allsup (2003) and Kastner (2012) both noted that working in a cooperative environment had surprising results, such as the discovery of hidden talents and musical independence. Other scholars have written about democratic music education in a variety of different musical settings (Allsup, 2007; Abril, 2013; Wiggins, 1999).

The democratic classroom is an environment in which students have the agency to discuss, debate, and act on their learning (Woodford, 2007). Teaching and learning in a democratic classroom environment, according to Allsup (2007), is a social undertaking that "requires us to embrace a changing world and see that all participants grow while learning from each other" (p. 52). When applied to instrumental music education, democratic education addresses many of the problems set forward by Allsup and Benedict (2008).

Creativity in Music Education

Music education has advocated for the inclusion of creativity in the curriculum for the better part of the last half-century. Beginning with the Tanglewood Symposium in 1967 and continuing, more recently, with the Manhattanville Music Curriculum Project and two iterations of national music standards (MENC, 1994; National Standards; Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 2014). The latest edition of the National Core Arts Standards elevated 'Creativity' to a "Core Artistic Process." As a

result, students are expected to “conceive and develop new ideas and work” by “generating and conceptualizing artistic ideas and work”, “Organize and develop artistic ideas and work,” and “Refine and complete artistic work” (National Standards; Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, 2014).

Critiques of ‘traditional’ instrumental music education posed by advocates for change center on the oppression of students’ musical personality, limited knowledge construction as a result of autocratic teaching methods, and a lack of collaboration and democratic opportunities. To these ends, composition and improvisation offer potential solutions, albeit limited by the context of specific situations.

Music educators have viewed creativity both as product-centered (Amabile, 1996; Elliot, 1995; Noorgard, 2010) and process-centered (Fairfield, 2011; Gordon, 1989; Kratus, 2014). Amabile (1996) wrote that a musical product is “creative” when it is unique, appropriate, and generated through a reflexive process. This definition neglects Robinson’s (2011) and Csikszentmihalyi’s (2012) assertions that creativity is a generative process. To that end, I will employ the active process definitions of creativity established by Amabile (1996), Green (2002 & 2008); Kratus (1990 & 1991), Gordon (1989), and Webster (1990).

In his seminal work on structuring music classes for creative learning, Kratus (1990) wrote about four creative musical activities: 1) exploration, 2) improvisation, 3) composition, and 4) creative performance. While exploration and creative performance are important elements of creative music making and worthy of extensive discussion, this section will focus on composition and improvisation.

Webster (1990) and Kratus (1991) assert that every creative musical act consists of the same four components: 1) the person, 2) the process, 3) the product, and the place (4). “Person” refers to the individualized traits brought to the activity by the individual, including originality, past music experience, and fluency. “Process” refers to how the creation occurs, usually through finding problems, generating and modifying ideas, and evaluating solutions. The “product” is what is generated as a result of creativity. Finally, “place” is the physical, emotional, and psychological context in which the creativity takes place. The four components interact with each other to determine the sequence of events of the creative activity.

Webster (1990, 1992, 2002) continues by noting that the concepts of “convergent” and “divergent” thinking are critical to a discussion of creativity in music education. In “divergent” thinking, questions and inquiries do not have a single goal in mind (Webster, 1992), which, consequently, means the process may lead to many diverse products. Alternatively, “convergent” thinking focuses on a definitive final product during the creative process. Webster (2002) noted that both “divergent” and “convergent” thinking are necessary for creative musical activities.

Composition and improvisation share in a complex and interdependent relationship. Burnard (2000) and Thornton (2013) noted that, although students see the two as distinct musical processes, teachers often find that engaging in one helps the other, and vice versa. The symbiotic nature of their relationship may be a result of the similar, some argue identical, personal, process, and product components of composition and improvisation. Indeed, Azzara (2005), Burnard (2000), Gordon (2012), Kratus (1990, 1991), and Thornton (2013) all have noted similarities between the two

activities, with Kratus (1991) commenting that the distinguishing feature is the separation, or lack thereof, between the process and product component. In improvisation, the process and product occur simultaneously and, therefore interact dialogically. Conversely, in composition, according to Kratus (1991), the process of creating music is separated from the sharing of the product created. Gordon (2012) added that composition allows the creator the opportunity to reflect and revise musical creations.

Instrumental music education has had trouble with the application of composition to the classroom (Hickey, 2001; Schmidt, 2005; Snell, 2013). The application of the 'creative' standards of NAfME presents a "daunting challenge" for traditional instrumental ensemble teachers and students because it implies a "fundamental change, not only in the way that they teach lessons and direct rehearsals, but how they approach the goals of their total program" (Hickey, 2001; p. 17). To that end Schmidt (2005) wrote, instrumental music educators have a superficial relationship with the process of creativity, because when push comes to shove "the week before performance, product is always bottom line" (p. 25). However, the incorporation of creativity in instrumental music education may have benefits for instrumental music students that extend beyond those of traditional methods.

Merits of Creativity in Instrumental Music Education. The critique of the traditional instrumental music education paradigm centered around oppression of ideas as a result of unexamined traditions, limited knowledge construction as a result of autocratic teaching methods, and lack of opportunities for collaboration and democratic

deliberation. To those ends, composition and improvisation offer possible answers to these concerns.

The challenge for any music educator is designing activities that allow for maximum engagement and growth for all students. Researchers have asserted that creative activities have the potential to get students into the state of maximum engagement, or Csikszentmihalyi's "Flow," by inviting them to take control of their own learning and development.

The work of several scholars (Azzara, 2015; Burnard, 2004; Kashub & Smith, 2013; Lieberman, 2002; Norman, 2012; Randles, 2010; Randles & Stringham, 2013; Woodford, 2007) provides the support that creative activities may be a possible answer to a constructivist critique of instrumental music education by engaging them in real world learning environments.

Randles (2010) concluded that composition also contributes to the positive self-image of music students. In his study, Randles found that high school instrumental students who composed for twelve weeks on various digital platforms had higher measures of self-concept in music, according to the Self-Esteem of Music Ability (SEMA) scale. Randles posited that this may have resulted from the emphasis placed on giving students autonomy in the role of creator.

Despite the persistent image of the creative genius as a lone wolf, the modern application of creativity acknowledges the social nature of creative thinking and learning (Barrett 2002, 2006, 2010; Beitler & Thornton 2010; Burnard 2000; Robinson 2010; Wiggins 1999/2000, 2001). Wiggins (1999/2000) noted that creative "experiences require that students initiate, articulate, develop, evaluate, revise, and defend musical

ideas" (p. 65). These processes are vital to the Deweyian model of education but often are missing in the traditional model of instrumental music education.

Creative music making generates opportunities that students in the traditional ensemble model lack. Students who engage in composition and improvisation develop skills that best prepare them to fully participate in the musical world (Kaschub & Smith, 2011). The act of composing forces students to understand the world in new ways and demonstrate new knowledge in a generative manner. It also "allows children to grow, discover, and create him/her self through artistic and meaningful engagements" (Kaschub & Smith, 2011; pp. 4-5). This sentiment is not unlike the Constructivist learning environments discussed in a prior section.

Summary of Creativity in Music Education. Creative music making engages all three previous philosophical frames discussed in the opening chapter. Students who compose in band may have the opportunity to develop positive self-images (Randles, 2010) while developing skills that will benefit them as lifelong music makers (Kaschub & Smith, 2009). However, in many cases researchers and scholars have discussed that there is a need for additional research to forward the discussion about the use of creativity in the instrumental music classroom (Hickey, 1997; Kratus, 2012; Randles, 2009; Stringham & Randles, 2011; Younker, 2000).

Purpose and Problems

When taken in combination, the philosophical foundations outlined above provide an avenue for addressing the "Problems of Instrumental Music Education." An expanded instrumental music education curriculum seeks to meet Bowman's and Jaffurs' three goals for education by deepening the student and teacher relationship,

focusing on developing student-centered and collaborative learning environments, and fostering knowledge that is applicable beyond formal education.

Ultimately, two fundamental questions pertaining to an expanded instrumental music education remain: What does an expanded instrumental music education look like, and how would a teacher be positioned within that classroom? Past research in Critical Pedagogy, Constructivism, and Democratic Education inform us that there are no easy answers to these questions, if there are "answers" at all. However, it is possible to provide guidance to educators wishing to expand curricular opportunities for students in instrumental music education.

The goal of this study is to provide one example of an instrumental music teacher constructing and operating within an expanded instrumental music curriculum. My purpose is not to provide a definitive process for expanding the band and orchestra curriculum. Rather, I hope that instrumental music teachers reading this will engage with the narratives and that these narratives will empower them to pursue their own curricular modifications as a result. As Abrahams (2007) noted, "When music teachers realize that they are able to analyze, adopt, and manipulate the curriculum in an unlimited number of ways, they open the possibility for creative experiences, that are both liberating and transformative" (p. 225). It is my hope that this study will help contribute by providing an account of one teacher's experience in an expanded instrumental music curriculum.

With the goal of expanding the musical opportunities for students in instrumental music, the purpose of this research is to explore one instrumental music teacher's perception and implementation of an expanded instrumental music curriculum. Two

questions drive the design of the study: 1) How do beliefs about instrumental music education manifest themselves in the teacher's organization of the band curriculum? 2) How do beliefs about instrumental music education manifest themselves in the teacher's actions and decision-making in an ensemble setting?

CHAPTER 2:

RELATED RESEARCH

Instrumental music educators, researchers, and scholars have called for an expansion of the epistemological and curricular structures of the institution of instrumental music education. An expanded instrumental music education requires an updated set of philosophical principles. To this end, Jaffurs' (2006) adaption of Bowman's (2004) ultimate goals for music education provides a starting point. She stated that the first aim of music education is related to musicality and its development, the second is related to the transmission of culture through music education, and the third is related to democratic ideals in music education. From that starting point, in this chapter I will discuss how the theoretical frames of this study, constructivism and informal music learning, are applied in the classroom.

Constructivism

The foundations of constructivism are rooted in the work of Kant and Piaget. Within the context of education, a constructivist education seeks to replicate real-life learning experiences in the controlled classroom. In music education, researchers looked at the benefits of implementing a constructivist approach to students in larger musical ensembles.

When juxtaposed against the problems of instrumental music (Allsup & Benedict, 2007), constructivism addresses the problems of pedagogy, reciprocity, methods, and pedagogy. However, the constructivist music classroom also engages material from the creativity and informal music learning research.

Constructivism in Non-Band Ensemble Settings

Scruggs (2009) entered numerous constructivist middle school orchestra classrooms and compared performance outcomes, musical growth, and learner and teacher dispositions in. She had four teachers as participants, two of whom taught using "traditional" teacher-centered strategies, and two of whom were taught by Scruggs to use student-centered strategies. The student-centered classrooms focused on peer tutoring and collaboration; student conducting, solicitation and incorporation of student input; and facilitation of student leadership, all critical elements of constructivist learning.

The results of Scruggs' quantitative inquiry showed no differences in musical performance between the teacher-centered and student-centered learning environments. However, Scruggs did note that student-centered classrooms demonstrated higher engagement and increased perception of choice and leadership opportunities. Scruggs' four teacher participants had not used a student-centered approach in their classes before participating in the study. Although teachers incorporated student-centered activities at the beginning of the year, Scruggs found that the classrooms turned more authoritarian as the concert dates approached. Scruggs concluded that music ensemble teachers can create student-center classroom environments that promote independence and higher order thinking, while still maintaining appropriate performance expectations. Finally, Scruggs (2009) argued for the inclusion of "documented field-based experiences and college classroom experiences that instill attitudes, knowledge, and skills for learner-centered environments" (p.166) in teacher education programs.

Becker (2011) attempted to address many of the misconceptions that plague constructivist classrooms by studying her own practice in a youth choir. Her goal was to achieve the following constructivist ideals in her teaching setting:

1. I try to create strategies for rehearsing that address the students' internal processes of learning and making meaning.
2. I try to accept children for where they are, what they can do, and what they bring to the rehearsal setting, and I aim for our work to meet them where they are.
3. I try to enable students to feel ownership of the rehearsal process and the music they create, and I try to recognize and nurture the steps that students make in this direction, such as when they begin to offer their opinions and suggestions in rehearsal.
4. I present the repertoire musically, we begin with whole pieces and break them down only as necessary to address problems that we observe or questions we have.
5. I seek opportunities for students to make discoveries about how the music works, to appreciate aspects of its form by analyzing it in different ways, including by choreographing it, by changing the arrangement that we sing, and by figuring out, by ear, how multiple parts fit together.
6. We take time in rehearsal to explore the texts to songs in depth, for the students to think about and share their interpretations of the texts, and to experiment with delivering and inhabiting the lines as actors would.

7. I try to help students claim ownership of their singing voices, to help them consider what they like about their voices and how they would like to develop vocally, and then to offer them technical support for achieving those ends.

8. The choir works toward preparing a concert that represents the students as fully as possible with respect to the work they have done, the growth they have undergone, the challenges they took on, and the ownership they have claimed of their singing, of the music, and of the choir." (p. 236)

Becker acknowledged that these goals do not represent her actual teaching but rather an ideal that she strives to achieve. She also addressed her teaching methods during the study. She noted that she saw a drastic, immediate switch in her teaching at the beginning of the study. With the shift, however, she experienced frustration from her inability to separate her dual role as a researcher and a teacher.

Constructivism in Band Settings

Shively (1995) conducted a broad-reaching study that applied the philosophical frame of constructivism in beginning band. He conducted the study because he believed that teaching techniques in band, specifically in beginning band, had not changed to reflect contemporary educational thinking. The overarching research question was, "How is knowledge constructed?" (p. 71), and Shively developed more specific research questions based on that broad question. Shively discussed the positioning of constructivism in a beginning band class, the roles and relationships of the learners and teacher, and the assessment of learning.

First the researcher devised a broad outline of goals for music learning in a constructivist environment. He asserted that all musical knowledge is constructed, and

that knowledge construction in music exists as both an individual and social process. He adds that the reflective use of knowledge is critical to constructing additional knowledge. Shively goes on to establish eight constructivist principles of instrumental music:

1. Instrumental music learning is the active process of making meaning out of one's experiences with music: knowledge construction.
2. Instrumental music learning should always be grounded in a constructivist approach.
3. Instrumental music learning is enhanced by engaging learners in experiences reflecting music practitioner culture.
4. Instrumental music learning is enhanced by engaging learners in experiences involving individual and group knowledge construction.
5. Instrumental music learning is enhanced by engaging learners in experiences reflecting multiple perspectives.
6. Instrumental music learning is enhanced by multiple means of representing knowledge.
7. Instrumental music learning is enhanced by the individual distributing the process of knowledge construction and resultant knowledge base among other individuals and artifacts.
8. Instrumental music learning is enhanced by experiences encouraging the reflexive use of a learner's knowledge base. (pp. 167-169)

Shively's (1995) "Framework for the Development and Implementation of Constructivist Learning Environments for Beginning Band Classes" (p. 171) was based on a combination of his outline of broad principles of constructivist music learning and

his more specific constructivist principles of instrumental music. He broke the framework into three sections: 1) Background, 2) Development, and 3) Process. Each section was further broken into sub-sections. The sub-sections outlined the nuts and bolts of incorporating constructivist principles in the instrumental classroom. However, Shively fell short of providing guidance on how the teacher should go about incorporating his ideas, nor did he actually apply them himself in the context of a research study.

When taken as a whole, Shively's framework provides a guide for both the philosophical and praxial application of constructivism in instrumental music education. Shively suggests that the constructivist music instrumental classroom "is not a classroom where learners are gathered around a teacher on a podium, but a classroom where learners interact as they carry on the work of music practitioners" (p. 211). Yet, Shively's work still needs to be examined in the context of its practical application with students.

Holsberg (2009) spent time in an instrumental classroom at a school serving children ages twelve to eighteen. The students were selected from across all grade levels and represented a diverse cross-section of the school's population. He created constructivist activities that functioned within the teacher's normal curriculum.
Few studies have placed the researcher within the confines of a constructivist band classroom. Holsberg (2009) hypothesized that this is due to the lack of available constructivist band pedagogy. His study sought to reverse this trend by providing a rich description of a constructivist curriculum. He also sought to identify and analyze the roles of student participants as they participated in that curriculum. Holsberg's observations were supported by interviews and participant journaling.

Holsberg found that trust is one of the most important factors in creating a successful constructivist classroom. The symbiotic trust between a students and their teacher allows a feeling of freedom, which Freire argues allows students to takes risks and discover their true identities (Freire, 1998). Holsberg does warn that teaching in this environment is messy and requires that the teacher take many risks. The risks, he asserts, are far outweighed by the growth potential for the students and teacher. Ultimately, he found that engaging in the risk of giving students freedom requires a reclassification of the role of the teacher; it requires a teacher who is open to a constantly shifting paradigm serves as a mentor and a partner to students. Holsberg writes that this allows the teacher to learn and grow alongside his/her students.

Holsberg framed his study, and by extension his findings, by placing the teacher-centered ("Revelli") and democratic learning ("Dewey") paradigms in an antagonistic relationship. However, in his conclusion he notes that a merging of the two would not be a "radical departure from what is currently practiced" (p. 205). He adds that, although band has a rich living tradition, it is only passed on because "it has some potential relationship to our students' lives" (p. 207). Constructivist learning could help students foster a deeper relationship between school music and students' lives.

Spears (2014) attempted to connect her pedagogy with the lives of her students by incorporating aural music learning into a high school band curriculum. The students were divided into small groups and asked to find, aurally learn, and arrange a melody for small musical ensembles. Spears investigated the perceptions of the students as they engaged in the student-led, aural-based projects. Specifically, she sought to understand how the students navigated the process and to get a window into their

perceptions about their experience. The study's purpose and research questions centered on the experience and perceptions of the students. However, some of the conclusions focused on the role of the teachers in the classroom, as Spears' role as a participant-researcher put her in the unique position to address teacher-related themes.

Spears and the band director, Nick, agreed to "drop the students in the deep end" (Spears in Green, 2008) by providing little assistance during the project. The students were allowed to ask for assistance, but both teachers avoided providing direct instruction, opting instead to ask questions, make suggestions, and provide feedback.

In her conclusion, Spears provided recommendations for practice in music teacher education programs. Spears suggests that preservice music teachers engage in a wide variety of musical activities, many of which fall outside the scope of normal teacher education programs. Many of her suggestions, such as the inclusion of aural learning, could serve as a means to acculturate preservice teachers in constructivist activities with which they may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable. The inclusion of a variety of types of activities could perhaps create a "more multimusical music education" (Westerlund, 2006, p. 123) that can be reciprocated into future teaching.

Summary of Constructivism in Large Musical Ensembles

The previous studies support the inclusion of Constructivism or Constructivist principles in the teaching of large music ensembles. Scruggs (2009) writes, "If our role as educators is to nurture lifelong learners, students must have an integrated view of knowledge, rather than one that remains fixed within our discipline area" (p. 173). Constructivism, fundamentally, encourages a constant symbiotic interaction between the acquisition and reincorporation of knowledge. When applied in a musical setting,

this ensures that students are developing musical skills that they will carry outside the brick and mortar walls of the institution.

Informal Music Learning

Lucy Green and Popular Musicians

Lucy Green is at the forefront of research on informal music learning and its relationship to educational practice. In her groundbreaking work *How Popular Musicians Learn (2001),* Green interviewed 14 popular musicians, ranging in age from 15 to 50. The interviewees came from divergent backgrounds, ranging from professional working musicians who earned their living playing, composing, or arranging "popular" music to younger musicians working to create their first band. Participants were asked about their backgrounds in music, including their start, learning processes, and continued engagement.

At its heart, Green's study was attempting to gain an understanding of how musicians acquired musical knowledge in informal learning environments. Folkstead (2006) made the distinction between informal and formal music settings, writing:

> "In the formal learning situation, the minds of both the teacher and the students are directed towards *learning how to play music (learning how to make music)*, whereas in the informal learning practice the mind is directed towards *playing music (making music)*." (p. 138, emphasis in original)

Consequently, Folkstead wrote that informal learning differs from formal learning in four ways: *situation, learning style, ownership*, and *intentionality* (pp. 141-142). *Situation* refers to the physical context in which the learning takes place, *learning*

style describes the nature or quality of the learning process, *ownership* is focused on who dictates learning outcomes, and *intentionality* is the desired outcome of the activity.

As a result of her interviews, Green noted that the popular or vernacular musicians assimilated knowledge in a manner specific to the informal nature of their musical setting. To that end, Green proposed five characteristics that differentiate informal from formal music learning practices. In informal music learning:

- Learners choose the music they will study themselves.
- Learning is based on an aural rather than theoretical approach.
- Learners are self-taught, with learning occurring in groups.
- Skills and knowledge are assimilated in personal ways according to musical preference.
- Learners place an emphasis on creativity while also integrating elements of listening, performing, improvising and composing.

Application of Informal Music Learning

Informal Music Learning has gained a considerable base of scholarship over the past decade. However, many gaps in scholarship remain pertaining to the application of Green's (2002/2008) five principles of informal learning into instrumental music settings in schools. However, Woody (2007) notes that many teachers are not opposed to incorporating popular music and its corresponding pedagogy; they simply have no first-hand knowledge of how to engage in vernacular music making. To this end, the challenge for educators is, as Rodriguez (2008) states, that "the process is not a pre-

ordinate series of steps that is understood separately from the music itself, nor deliberately taught by someone who has already mastered them" (p. 38).

In the time since *How Popular Musicians Learn (2001)* was published, researchers and educators have sought to foster and implement informal music learning in formal music settings.

Musical Futures. In Green's follow-up work, *Music, Informal Learning, and the School* (2008a), she examined the question, what does a classroom based on the principles of informal music learning look like? To answer this question, she spearheaded the implementation of the "Musical Futures" (Green, 2008b) project in schools around the United Kingdom. Green felt that she could help school music become more applicable to students who did not immediately relate to traditional music education.

The *Musical Futures* project offers a potential remedy to the concerns of Woody and Rodriguez. The program, established as part of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in 2003, offers suggestions to teachers who wish to foster informal music learning in their classroom. The teacher's pack established seven stages in which popular music learning takes place:

Table 1: Stages of *Musical Futures*

	Green (2008a)	**Kastner (2012)**
	Name for Stage	**Summary of Stage**
Stage 1	"The heart of the project – dropping pupils into the deep end"	Students chose peer groups and selected a song to learn.

Table 1 (cont'd)

		Then they listened and copied the recording with almost no adult guidance. This resulted in peer-teaching, haphazard learning, and integrated performing, listening, and some improvising
Stage 2	"Modelling aural learning with popular music"	Students still selected their peer group and used peer-teaching, haphazard and integrated learning. However, the students were given more initial guidance from the teacher and were provided with a CD with split tracks of the same song.
Stage 3	"The deep end revisited"	This stage replicated the initial stage, but the students approached the task with greater confidence and musical sophistication.
Stage 4	"Informal composing"	Students created their own compositions in peer groups.
Stage 5	"Modelling composing"	A visiting band demonstrated their song-writing process for students and then provided mentoring as peer groups composed again.
Stage 6	"Informal learning with classical music"	This stage replicated the initial stage, but the students selected their choice of song from pre-selected classical pieces from well-known television advertisements.
Stage 7	"Modelling aural learning with classical music"	In this stage, the students selected and aurally copied a classical piece from a pre-selected set of more unfamiliar pieces.

(Kastner, 2012, p. 13)

In addition, suggestions for activities in the teacher's pack are designed to guide the teacher's activities. The teaching pack articulates the following roles for the teacher: set the task going, stand back, observe, diagnose, guide, suggest, model, take on students' perspectives, help students achieve the objectives they set for themselves (p. 133).

In *Music, Informal Learning, and the School* (2008a), students, who were 13- and 14-year olds with varying musical backgrounds, followed the process over the course of a 4-year music program. Green found that students became highly motivated to participate in music. Additionally, "Musical Futures" promoted collaboration by fostering the same democratic learning environments that are prevalent in informal music learning.

Research Studies in Informal Music Learning. With the intent of furthering informal music learning in music education, a few teachers and researchers have shared their lived experiences related to the intersection of formal and informal practices. The experiences, conclusions, and implications of these studies shaped the design of the current study. Additionally, they provide a lens with which to view any informal learning in the current study.

Jaffurs' (2004) ethnographic investigation into one of her student's rock band was her impetus for reevaluating her teaching practices. She sought to understand how students create meaning in their informal music making, with the intent of informing "formal" music education practice. Jaffurs observed the group rehearse, recorded their conversations, and interviewed select members.

The amount of intra-group knowledge swapping impressed Jaffurs, who wrote that members listened critically to each other, providing prompted and unprompted critique. Jaffurs also noted that, while no person was considered the “leader” of the group, the identification of an “expert” was important to developing musical independence. The students also spoke favorably about their formal musical experiences. However, the students had not made a connection between their formal and informal musical experiences, preferring to situate them in different musical ideologies.

Jaffurs writes that, although her research took place in the students’ basements, the study “was always about my classroom” (p. 199). Her research taught her the value of having a dialogue with students about the music that is relevant to them, or as she eloquently puts it, “My garage band musicians taught me not to ask my students to compose an ABA composition when they want to write a rap” (p. 199).

Jones (2014) evaluated student learning during extra-curricular informal music activities. The participants, students chosen from a high school band, participated in a 12-week program in which they composed and created music by following the *Musical Futures* curriculum. Jones was interested in the construction and manipulation of learning strategies to fit the evolving nature of musical experience.

Students who had participated in the traditional instrumental model of education found it difficult to break formal learning habits. However, Jones noted that students became more comfortable with the process as they delved further into informal learning practices. Jones credited their increased comfort to students’ successfully learning to use peer collaboration and the skills and knowledge of the facilitator. This revelation led

Jones to provide a list of suggestions to educators who want to implement informal music learning in their classrooms. She notes the importance of teachers reorienting themselves to teach in a classroom that includes both formal and informal learning. The reorientation process, Jones writes, requires that teachers understand the ways to facilitate learning, including questions to ask and answers to provide.

In a similar study, Allsup (2003) gathered nine band students to create culturally relevant music. The students met after school eleven times over a 4-month span. The two groups that developed within the cohort chose to employ different methods of music making. One group chose to create music using traditional band instruments, while the other employed more a “garage band”-esque instrumentation. Both groups, however, chose to create jazz and popular rather than classical music. The students conceived of these genres as fun and personally meaningful, Allsup concluded, which led to an emphasis on interpersonal relationships and peer learning.

Allsup’s two major themes, mutual learning and democratic action, led him to ask if band directors need to rethink instrumental music education in formal settings. He challenged band directors to develop educational environments that allow students to break free from predetermined roles. Those who were given this opportunity, Allsup found, were forced to reconceptualize their understanding of the role of the teacher. Although “the teacher” was not of central concern, Allsup’s role in the classroom gave him positioning to tangentially discuss his ideas. The reframing of the learning environment forced him to, “teach *with* my students, rather than *to* my students” (p. 34). This is a perspective that is reiterated by many of the teachers in subsequent studies.

A 6-month investigation of informal music learning in Davis' (2008) beginning band classroom led her to a similar conclusion as Allsup (2003). Davis, inspired by an earlier study of rock musicians (Davis, 2005), hoped to identify ways to incorporate informal learning processes into formal instrumental classes. Her questions focused on students' construction and negotiation of musical knowledge, as well as the responsibility of the teacher to nurture and facilitate learning.

Davis noted the importance of musicians having a "musical say," that is, the incorporation of an individual's agency and personal expression to develop relevance and ownership. She concluded that fostering a musical say became a spiraling process of continuous readjustment, which she represented through the image of a double helix. She chose the double helix because, "It reveals the tensions involved in negotiating learning, as movement that is full of twists and turns with the possibility of continuous growth (p. 346). Her pictographic representation is exemplified in her reflection on her pedagogy during the instructional period. She believed that teachers must have a plan of action to recover student's "potentially fragile musical identity" (p. 349) when plans go awry.

Unlike the previous studies in formal music settings, Hasty (2009) and Bersh (2011) both acted as outside agents while investigating the perceptions of students who were participating in informal music learning activities. Both researchers had a background in instrumental music education, although they conducted their research in different types of learning environments. Hasty investigated the perception of students in a high school general music classroom, while Bersh sought the essence of the experience for high school band students participating in informal music learning.

Both researchers had similar conclusions regarding student perceptions during their exposure to informal music learning. The researchers agreed that the inclusion of popular music, and the related pedagogical approaches, created confident and engaged students. The informal music learning environment also enabled students to engage in collaboration, which, as Bersh (2011) wrote, “enable(d) students to teach, model, and coach each other based on their prior knowledge and beliefs regarding music” (p. 124). Bersh goes on to add that that the exclusion of a teacher did not automatically result in social interaction and shared knowledge. He writes that students who developed a friend-like connection had a greater impact than the overall skill level of the group. Bersh concludes by advising that teachers facilitate group dialogue to cultivate an environment of shared learning.

LaFave (2007) capitalized on a scheduling anomaly to investigate the learning process of a concert band turned “ska.” Students performed on primary and secondary instruments that merged classical and popular ideals. The group used formal and informal learning processes to cover a series of songs by Reel Big Fish.

Despite focusing primarily on student learning, LaFave did reflect on her experience as teacher-facilitator. She agreed with Allsup (2003) and Davis (2008) about the necessity to explore outside one’s comfort zone. However, she noted that accomplishing this gave her, and by extension her students, a sense of empowerment. LaFave acknowledged a shift in her teaching philosophy since the conducting the study. She has accepted her role as a facilitator of learning by allowing the students to have a voice in classroom direction and decisions.

Kastner (2012) conducted a professional development community (PDC) with four teachers who had little or no experience with informal music pedagogy. She documented the thoughts and concerns of the teachers as they infused informal music learning into their classes. All four teachers taught in general music settings. Three teachers taught elementary-school-aged students (K-6), while one taught middle-school-aged students (6-8). The PDC met once a week for the entirety of the study. In addition, Kastner visited each teacher to observe the informal music learning in practice in their classrooms.

According to Kastner, the teacher's pedagogical practices fell into two continua: "a continuum of control between teachers and students and a continuum of teacher scaffolding" (pp. 215-216). Teachers' actions fell into different sections of the scales depending on the type and scope of the activity. Kastner warned that occasionally teachers would provide too much guidance, which disrupted the flow of students' processes. Kastner echoed the call for additional guidance for teachers in the form of research in diverse music education settings.

Summary of Informal Music Learning

Kratus (2007) asserted that an updated pedagogical approach, enriched by the inclusion of informal learning, is necessary to enhance areas of student growth that have not been addressed sufficiently in traditional instruction. Nevertheless, instrumental educators remain reticent about applying informal music pedagogy to ensemble-based classrooms.

One reason for the trepidation of instrumental music educators may be due to the lack of research in this area. Researchers looking at instrumental settings have sought

to understand how beginning band students (LaFave, 2007; Davis, 2008) and experienced band students (Bersh, 2011; Jones, 2014; Spears, 2014) perceive their vernacular music making experiences. Many of those same researchers also have compared students' informal music making experience to those of the traditional band experience (LaFave, 2007; Davis, 2008; Bersh, 2011; Jones, 2014).

In many of the aforementioned studies, however, little attention was given to the teacher in a classroom using informal learning. Additional research through the lens of the teacher may illuminate ways to enhance informal music learning in the instrumental music classroom.

Summary of Related Research

Many of the studies presented in this chapter represent an isolated case of an expanded instrumental music curriculum, often implemented as an addendum to the curriculum. Few studies of curricular innovation have been implemented by practicing teachers who choose to disrupt traditional curricular practices in their own instrumental music classrooms. By illuminating the lived experience of one instrumental music teacher operating with an expanded curriculum, I hope to provide an example of how this type of curricular innovation can enliven instrumental music instruction and address the criticisms of instrumental music education that have been leveled by music education philosophers in recent years.

CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is a narrative case study. I will focus on the lived experiences of a participant while collecting data using techniques drawn from ethnography and anthropology.

Case Study Research

Case study research is a branch of qualitative research "involving the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system" (Creswell, 2007; p. 73). I hope to illuminate the questions of the study through deep observation of a bounded system— a single extraordinary instrumental music teacher and his classroom pedagogy.

Narrative Research

Narrative inquiry, as a branch of qualitative research, seeks to engage readers with the stories and lived experiences of individuals. Pinnegar and Daynes (2006) defined narrative inquiry as a method and a phenomenon. Ritchie et al. (2014) wrote that narratives seek to "provide greater understanding of phenomena in the context of people's own accounts of their personal development and histories" (p. 17). I sought to provide a lived account of the participant-educator as he engages in his work in the "new instrumental paradigm."

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century there has been an increase in the use and discussion of narrative and biographical methods (Chamberlayne et al., 2000; Creswell, 2013; Roberts, 2002), including in music and music education (Bresler, 2006;

Bowman, 2006; Bruner, 1986; Chase, 2005; Clandinin, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Polkinghorne, 1988). In music education, the increase in narrative research has helped to trouble certainty (Barrett and Stauffer, 2009), while also uncovering stories that may otherwise go unheard.

Barrett & Stauffer (2009) wrote that humans seem to "find connection in and through stories" (p. 2). To this end, Webster and Mertova (2007) claimed that:

> "Narrative delves beneath the outward show of behaviour to explore thoughts, feelings, and intentions. If narrative is fundamental to communication, then the use of narrative as a research method may, for instance, give us a better understanding of teaching, learning and performance in a wide range of environments and may assist in generating more appropriate teaching tools and techniques." (p. 12)

It is my hope that this narrative will provide an accessible platform for current instrumental music teachers to build upon when they seek to engage their students in an expanded instrumental music curriculum.

Participant

Participant selection is a vital component of any qualitative research study (Creswell, 2007) and is especially critical in a case study. Kemper, Stringfield, and Teddlie (2003) state that researchers must be careful to identify sampling strategies that are conceptually aligned with a common goal and that sufficiently addresses the synthesis purpose. Creswell (2007) noted that participants must be "willing to provide information" and should be "distinctive for their accomplishments and ordinances or shed light on a specific phenomenon or issue being explored" (p. 119.).) With that in

mind, I chose to engage in purposive sampling, which allowed me to identify rich examples of the desired phenomenon.

Sampling

In order to provide a compelling narrative, it is important to have a cooperative and reflective participant who is working in a rich environment. In purposive sampling, participants are chosen as a result of one or more sampling strategies to select evidence that adequately addresses their purpose (Patton, 2002). I chose to start the participant selection by employing a theory-based construct to use in participant identification (Creswell, 2007). To start this process, I sought an outstanding example of an instrumental music teacher using pre-established theoretical constructs, including Critical Pedagogy, Constructivism, Democratic Education, and Creative Music Making, and who, as a result, is currently teaching with an expanded instrumental music curriculum.

Following the identification of the theoretical constructs, I employed intensity sampling. In intensity sampling the participants and their environments "consist of information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of interest intensely (but not extremely)" (Patton 1990, p. 172). To identify rich cases, I employed the assistance of colleagues and faculty members, as well as local music teachers. I discussed the theory of an expanded instrumental music curriculum, including the four underlying theoretical constructs mentioned above, with these colleagues and faculty members and asked if they knew any teachers who are rich representations of a teacher engaging students in an expanded instrumental music curriculum.

The current participant was recommended to me by both a colleague and a student teacher at a Midwestern university. Both commented on this teacher's ability to develop a strong instrumental music program through including creativity and informal music learning. After numerous discussions with my trusted sources, I contacted the participant and obtained examples of his lesson plans, unit plans, and audio recordings of past public performances. These documents demonstrated a pattern of his using both traditional and expanded band methods, which led me to believe he would be a good participant for the current study.

Participant Profile: Todd Robertson

Mr. Todd Robertson is an experienced instrumental music teacher at a rural school district in a Midwestern state. Mr. Robertson is a graduate of the local large Midwestern University with a degree in music education.

He is in his eighth year of teacher, of which seven occurred in his current school. Upon completion of his undergraduate degree, Mr. Robertson took a job in a school as an instrumental music teacher in a small school district in the northern region of his current state. He spent most of the year working with multiple band classes at a middle school and high school in the district. After a year at that position, Mr. Robertson switched to his current position in the Rosemont School District. His current position involves teaching classes at both the middle school and high school buildings. At the middle school he is responsible for the 6th grade and 8th grade band classes, the latter of which he co-teachers with another music teacher in the district. At the high school he teaches two curricular ensembles, the Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble, as well as an afterschool jazz band and marching band.

Mr. Robertson's teaching was described by colleagues and trusted sources during the participation selection process as "creative" and "imaginative," and he is involved in the mentoring of preservice music education students from a local university. Additionally, I had the opportunity to discuss his teaching and curriculum with a colleague prior to any observations, and he appeared to engage many of the teaching characteristics and activities that I hoped to illuminate.

Setting Profile: Rosemont School District

The Rosemont School District is located in a small rural town in the Midwest. The school is ethnically homogenous, with approximately 94 percent of the students identifying as "Caucasian" on a recent demographic survey. Approximately one-third of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, although that number is lower at the high school. While a discounted or free instrumental rental plan is available to students, Mr. Robertson indicated that a majority of students own or rent their own instruments through a local music store.

The Rosemont School District has just under 2,900 students in Kindergarten through twelfth grade. Rosemont Middle School has just fewer than 680 students in grades six through eight. Rosemont High School has around 850 students.

The music program in the Rosemont School District employs two instrumental music teachers who share responsibilities at the middle school and high school. The instrumental music curricular offerings in the district consist of three middle school instrumental ensembles, one for each grade level, and two high school ensembles, organized by skill level, as well as extracurricular jazz and marching bands at the high

school. A songwriting club was developed last spring and is currently in its first year as a recognized organization at the high school.

Class Descriptions

Sixth Grade Band. Students in sixth grade have the opportunity to play a band instrument for the first time at Rosemont Middle School. In total, about 100 students typically start the year in band classes. The students are divided into two classes that are approximately equal in size and instrumentation. Most students play traditional beginning band instruments, including flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, horn, trombone, tuba, as well as both mallet and drum percussion.

The band classroom at Rosemont Middle School is located down a long corridor that begins in the main lobby of the school. The walls leading to the classroom are mostly white, with sketches of a half-painted mural strewn across one wall. Students involved in both the band and art programs at Rosemont Middle School are working on the project and expect to have it completed by the end of the school year.

Through two wooden doors is the band classroom. The front of the classroom is lined with various instruments owned by Mr. Robertson, including a trumpet, a hulking bass trombone, and an electric piano. Hung on the wall above the podium is a large screen, upon which is projected the schedule for the day and various education videos. On the wall as well are two large wireless speakers. Three large windows in the center dominate the back wall of the classroom. The windowsills are littered with books, drum sticks, and other miscellaneous student belongings. Flanking the windows is a series of gray instrument storage lockers. Each locker is about eight feet tall, with its upper

shelves just barely within reach of the shorter students in the sixth grade band as they stand on their tip-toes.

Between the instruments at the front of the room and the sun-soaked window sills in the back are four rows of black plastic music chairs, each paired with a black music stand. The chairs and stands are organized loosely into four large arcs around the podium in front, although students shuffle both chairs and stands around the classroom as needed. The percussion equipment in the rear of the classroom shifts its position from day to day, which does not seem to faze the percussion students as they get ready for the class.

The sixth grade students enter the classroom in a series of waves, each of which causes minor fluctuations in the chair and stand setups. Most students scurry to lockers to pick up their instruments before plopping down in their designated seats in the classroom. However, a few students make a few laps around the room to talk friends before finally finding a seat. Students in the sixth grade band started playing their instruments in September, a mere four months before observations for this study started. As such, Mr. Robertson gives the students ample time to assemble the parts of their instruments and “warm-up,” although the latter often turns into a medley of greatest hits from *Standards of Excellence* and random acoustic experimentation.

The sixth grade band program represents a diverse cross section of the student population, and enrollment in the program is voluntary. Included in the sixth grade band is one special education student. This young man participates in the percussion section, often working with the support of an aide and Mr. Robertson. This student is involved with the normal sixth grade band rehearsals, which meet every day for forty minutes. As

part of his arrangement, the student works closely with a paraprofessional to get involved as much as possible.

8th Grade Band. The eight-grade band students at Rosemont Middle School mostly are in their third year of playing their instruments. The ensemble is co-taught by Mr. Robertson and Mr. Allen, although the former does a majority of the instruction while both are present in the room. While it is not required for participating in the eighth grade band, most of the students have been students of the Rosemont Middle School music program prior to their eighth grade year.

The eighth grade band shares the instrumental music classroom in the middle school with the sixth and seventh grade bands. Consequently, the physical make-up of the classroom is identical to the one described above. However, the eighth grade band is smaller than the combined sixth-grade ensemble by about forty students, and, as such, there are more empty chairs and unused stands strewn around the classroom.

Students in the eighth grade band enter the classroom in a similarly sporadic fashion to those in sixth grade. Students enter the classroom at the front of the room, traverse the labyrinth of chairs to reach their instruments, either in the back of the room or off in the storage closet to the left of the podium, before finally reaching their assigned seats.

Eighth Grade Chamber Ensembles. This eighth grade class is an elective at the middle school. Within the eighth grade band are student-organized chamber ensembles that meet on Wednesdays during this class period. Approximately ten chamber ensembles are formed during rehearsal time, with some give or take depending on the students who are in school during any given day. Each of the ten groups is charged with

finding space in either the hallway near band room or on the stage of the middle school so that it can rehearse. The largest chamber group, the jazz band, occupies the middle school band room during Wednesday chamber music. All students in the eighth grade band have the opportunity to participate in the jazz band, regardless of their instrument.

Eighth Grade Jazz Band. Eighth grade students were given the option to select jazz band as their chamber ensemble. Any student in the eighth grade band was eligible to participate in the jazz band, regardless of instrumentation or prior experience. The students meet on Wednesdays for forty minutes during class time throughout the school year.

The jazz band students are organized physically along the lines of a traditional jazz big band, with some modifications in order to include those instruments not typically seen in scholastic big bands. The rhythm section, consisting of a percussionist on drum set and a converted upright bass player, are off to the left of the ensemble with Robertson directing traffic from the front. (More details about the organizational structure of the jazz band as well as the instructional structures can be found in Chapters 5 and 6.)

High School Wind Ensemble. Rosemont High School's Wind Ensemble is the premier auditioned band at the high school and in the district. Any student with prior musical experience may audition for the ensemble. The ensemble consists of 40 to 50 students, depending on the year, and is modeled on the Eastman Wind Ensemble model. Students in grades eight through eleven audition for entry into the ensemble during the spring of the previous school year. Mr. Robertson does not have guidelines as to the number of students who will be chosen from each grade and noted that the

number of students from each grade varies greatly from year to year. The current iteration is one of the younger ensembles in Robertson's time at the school, consisting of only a handful of seniors. Almost all of the students have had Robertson as their teacher for all of their school band experience, with a few exceptions of students transferring into the district after their sixth grade year.

The high school is located across two parking lots from the middle school. Entering through a large steel door in the rear of the school leads directly into the back of the band room. The band area is relatively new to the school, about eight years old, and consists of a large square room decked out in the school colors of purple and gold. Along one side are two auxiliary rooms that house instrument storage and percussion equipment. The back wall of the band room has four gray doors, each of which leads to a single practice room. The largest room, located on the end in the far right corner, houses a drum set and other miscellaneous percussion equipment.

The front of the room contains little in the way of musical equipment or decoration; only a large podium and oversized music stand are present at all times. Hanging on the wall is a large whiteboard with various instructions scribbled underneath two large Bluetooth speakers. Robertson's office at the high school is located in the front of the room, right next to a second instrument storage locker. A common door joins the two rooms, and both have access to the main rehearsal space.

Unlike most of the middle school classes, students at the high school set up their own chairs into their ensemble configurations. The chairs begin and end the classroom in stacks on the extremities of the room. As students enter the room, they gather their needs for rehearsal (instruments, music, chair and stand) and proceed to organize the

space. For a majority of the instructional time, the students remain in traditional concert arcs, although other configurations are used as pedagogical tools. However, no matter the configuration, students always return the chairs to their original location along the outside walls at the end of the class period.

Students in the wind ensemble are given a certain amount of freedom at the beginning of class to gather their equipment and begin warming up. After a few minutes of chitchat with peers, most, if not all, of the students have gathered the necessary belongings and arrived at their seats. Although most of the warm-ups are individual, occasional impromptu group sessions arise, with material often being pulled from band literature past and present. The class begins with Mr. Robertson getting the attention of the students at the front of the room.

Researcher Stance and Lens

In other disciplines, social science research increasingly is being viewed as a collaborative process, with researchers developing ways to engage study participants in setting the research agenda (Reason, 1994; Reason and Rowan, 1981; Whyte, 1991). However, these participatory and user-led approaches have not been without challenges, including how to avoid “tokenism” (Cook, 2012) and balancing participant involvement with maintaining quality. I was vigilant to avoid these pitfalls throughout this study, reflecting on my data collection and analysis procedures in an effort to reduce colonialist tendencies inherent in research.

Additionally, I chose narrative design in an effort to alleviate power discrepancies prevalent in some research formats. In narrative research, “narrative inquirers live and work alongside research participants in order to understand the ways in which

individuals and communities story a life and live their stories" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009, p. 2). In this way, both the researcher and participant learn and change as a result of the research process (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). Having presented a case for the need for increased equity between a researcher and the study participants, it is important for me to share my researcher lens, as it helps to frame the current study.

Researcher's Lens

Music has been part of my life since I entered formal education. I was fortunate to live in a school district dedicated to providing a quality musical education for all students. However, many of my early musical experiences were limited to formal music classrooms. I spent much of my time in large ensembles. My high school teacher had us learn melodies by ear, but we never considered these exercises more than side dishes to the main course of reading and performing the canonic works.

After enrolling in a wonderful, albeit traditional, higher education institution, I believed that I was ready to teach music to all students. My experience as an undergraduate music education student prepared me to teach a specific segment of the musical world. I learned every instrument, I could read a musical score like a book, and I could wave my arms to provide the necessary direction to an ensemble. I was confident that no situation could challenge my authority as the leader of the band.

When I began teaching, that confidence lasted less than fifty minutes, one complete class, during which I discovered that music exists outside the world of Western classical music. I was not prepared for the amount of diversity in my band classroom. I *was* ready to be a director, to lead the concert ensemble in rehearsals of traditional band literature. Any teaching technique or repertoire beyond the traditional,

however, was outside my comfort zone. Although I tried to diversify my instruction, I found little success and was too frustrated at the lack of progress to pursue these strategies beyond a class period or two.

It was my experience with a group of six musicians in the “jazz band,” a name employed more out of tradition than practice, that sparked my interest in an expanded instrumental music curriculum. The group was made of dedicated and talented young musicians whose concept of musical knowledge was not from within the traditional ‘band’ paradigm. Our path of discovery and music making over the next six months led me to two of the most fulfilling musical performances of my career.

The jazz band at the school in which I taught started as frightening prospective; six students with few reading and writing skills came together for an hour and a half of music making every other day for the entire school year. However, what I perceived as a disaster in the beginning of the school year turned out to be a huge success. The students performed five concerts during that school year, a school record for a single performing ensemble. The students received rave acclaim from school district employees, community members, and their peers. But I did not choose one of their musical selections. They performed no traditional “jazz standards.” Rather, they spent the entire semester creating, debating, rehearsing, and performing pieces of music that they wanted to perform. Those six students spent class time performing music that was on their ipods, on the radio, and streaming across the Internet. They were playing the music in which they were immersed in their lives outside of school; the music was part of their culture.

This experience with those students proved to be a pivotal one for me as a music educator. It forced me to rethink my concept of musical knowledge and its consequent relationship to curriculum and instruction in band. Despite the success of the ensemble, I struggled to provide the necessary support for the students. The group's success was as much a credit to the determination, creativity, and musical ability of the students as to my own teaching skills. It was during that experience that I began to develop an understanding that a teacher's role goes beyond that of imparting knowledge. My experience with that ensemble, in part, is what led me to pursue this study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection

The current study was approved by the Michigan State Institutional Review Board (IRB) and received "exempt" status on September 23rd, 2015 (Appendix #1). The IRB concluded that all elements of data collection and analysis were safe to the participants and researcher.

Data collection techniques were borrowed from ethnographic and anthropological research and included the following: observations, fieldnotes, interviews, participant journal entries, audio and visual recordings, and a collection of culturally sensitive artifacts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2007; Creswell, 2007). The amount and diversity of the data collection procedures help to ensure trustworthiness of the narrative by providing multiple sources of triangulation. My aim during the data collection process was to navigate the process as an observant listener, working to ensure that the participants' voices were heard within their cultural context.

Field Observations. A large portion of my time was dedicated to fieldwork, or the gathering of information through firsthand experience in the field (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). Prolonged exposure in the field is important to gathering information about the physical, social, and emotional culture established in the classroom, as well as to develop trustworthiness for the study. To this end, I conducted a majority of my fieldwork though observation of formal class meetings, as well as through various interactions in between class meetings in the research setting.

I conducted twenty field observations on 8 days spread over a little more than 3-month period during the spring semester of the school year. For two of the observations I observed four class periods during the school day, for two of the observations I observed three class periods, for two of the observations I observed two class periods, and for two observation I observed only one class period. A full list of observation dates and locations is found in Table 2.

Table 2: Observations

Date of Observation	**Class(es) Observed**
January 27th, 2016	6th Grade Band (1 section) High School Wind Ensemble
February 4th, 2016	6th Grade Band (2 sections) High School Wind Ensemble
February 11th, 2016	6th Grade Band (1 section)
February 25th, 2016	6th Grade Band (2 sections) 8th Grade Band High School Wind Ensemble
March 9th, 2016	6th Grade Band (1 section) High School Wind Ensemble

Table 2 (cont'd)

	6th Grade Band (2 sections) 8th Grade Band
March 21st, 2016	High School Wind Ensemble
May 4th, 2016	6th Grade Band (2 sections) 8th Grade Band
May 11th, 2016	High School Wind Ensemble

During these observations I attempted to take as many *jottings*, or brief records of key phrases and happenings (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw 1995), as possible. I used the jottings to create fieldnotes immediately following each observation. Fieldnotes take many shapes and forms, including personal narratives of experiences, reconstructed dialogue, "real-time" analysis of what happened during class, and "end-point" reflections on classroom activities (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw 1995). The fieldnotes included as much thick, rich descriptions (Creswell, 2007) of the activities in the classroom as possible. My hope was that the detail in the fieldnotes would draws the reader into the scene and assist in enhancing the narrative.

Journals. Both the participating teacher and I kept a journal throughout the course of the study. All journal entries were written in free response; that is, there were no prompts preceding writing. Participants' journal entries provided another source of triangulation in the data analysis process. My ultimate hope was that this process enhanced the participant's voice and reduced my imprint.

Interviews. I interviewed the participant three times: before and during the observation period. An informal meeting took place in December, in which Mr. Robertson and I discussed the broad outline of the study, as well as the music

classroom. Two additional semi-structured interviews took place during the school year, one in February and another in March. Questions and topics for the interviews stemmed from emerging themes, recorded in-class dialogue, outside inquiry, and my own observation and curiosity. As much as possible, I tried to ask the participant to reflect on his experience with the instrumental music ensembles, emerging themes, and select excerpts from video and audio recordings. Conducting semi-structured interviews allowed me to prepare questions ahead of the interview but still provided the opportunity for follow up discussion or clarification when it would be useful (Creswell, 2007). Interviews were transcribed as soon as possible following each class period, with the exact time ranging from a few hours to a few days.

Video Recordings. Classes and interviews were recorded using a combination of a Phone recorder and Korg wireless audio recorder. The recordings were used to aid in the construction of fieldnotes as well as the development of interview questions at a later time. However, recordings are only valuable when combined with prolonged exposure in the classroom so that the researcher can get a visceral sense of the setting and the culture (Creswell, 2007).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was ongoing throughout the study. I coded the data throughout the research process, starting after the conclusion of the second observation (Saldana, 2009). The process of re-coding allowed me to reflect on initial data, make comparisons between codes, and create additional codes and memos (Creswell, 2007; Saldana, 2009). Additionally, the development of one code area led to the restructuring of a major theme as will be discussed in *Chapter 5*.

Trustworthiness. I sought to establish trustworthiness through four means: prolonged engagement, data triangulation, member checks, and peer reviews (Creswell, 2007; Saldana, 2009). Initial observations can lead to “notic(ing) and describe strangers in terms of gender, age, or race, along with other qualities in their physical appearances" (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw 1999, p. 132). I conducted observations in seventeen classes on seven days, in hopes of counteracting this tendency.

I triangulated main codes and themes, seeking multiple sources for each emerging theme. Clandinin & Connelly (2000) advocate for the inclusion of participants throughout the narrative construction process. Consequently, the participant had the opportunity to member check information to ensure the accuracy of his story. Additionally, the participant was consulted throughout the narrative construction process to ensure that his voice is salient and true.

Finally, I called on peers and faculty advisors to review selections of my data and my coding, resulting in analysis triangulation. Their feedback helped to ensure that codes and memos were representative of the data. By engaging in the aforementioned processes, I hoped to gain the trust of the reader.

Significance of Study

This study will contribute to the growing body of literature relating to the expansion of the instrumental music curriculum. Instrumental music, and more specifically the band and orchestra ensemble model, has received criticism for featuring one-dimensional models of learning. In this model, the teacher acts as the dispenser of knowledge, and, consequently, students have little autonomy to direct their learning.

Allsup and Benedict (2008) wrote one of the more serious critiques of instrumental music when they outlined their eight “critiques of instrumental music.” In his closing remarks Allsup reiterated a desire to see the instrumental ensemble reformed.

In order to begin the process of expansion, instrumental music teachers must have examples and models of successful instruction and curriculum in instrumental music instruction. Kratus (1990) noted that, while teachers frequently get suggestions for individual lessons or units, “what has largely been lacking is a scheme for bringing structure and sequence to learning that occurs” (p. 33).

To that end, Randles wrote that his goal in putting together *Musicianship: Composing for Band (2010)* was to join with others passionate about creativity to “organize a movement of sorts” with a commitment to “putting appropriate, meaningful resources in the hands of innovative teachers” (p. 12). It is my hope to join a similar movement, one that strives to answer the problems of instrumental music education by sharing the lived experience of one instrumental music teacher planning, implementing, and reflecting on their experience with an expanded instrumental music curriculum.

CHAPTER 4:

STRUCTURING INSTRUCTION & INTERACTION

I observed Todd Robertson incorporate creative and vernacular activities into the curriculum in three settings:

- 6th Grade Band
- 8th Grade Band
- High School Wind Ensemble

I chose to observe specific components of the Rosemont instrumental curriculum based on two criteria. First, each observation contained activity related to the four principles of an expanded band curriculum, Critical Pedagogy, Constructivism, Democratic Education, and Creative Music Making. Second, each of the projects highlighted in the observations was a major pillar in the Rosemont instrumental music curriculum at either the middle school or high school levels. In other words, each of these projects was central to the curriculum alongside the traditional curricular stalwarts of scales and literature. An outline of the key structural components of each of the projects is provided in this chapter, along with a general description of the instruction that occurred. A discussion of the relationship between these activities and the underlying principles of the expanded instrumental music curriculum follows in Chapter 5.

Sixth Grade Band

Due to the voluntary nature of the band program at Rosemont Middle School the sixth grade band program represents a diverse cross section of the student population.

The band totals around 120 students, split fairly evenly in terms of numbers and instrumentation.

The instrumental music classroom at Rosemont Middle School is located next to the main lobby of the school. The walls leading to the classroom are mostly white, with sketches of a half-painted mural strewn across a single wall. As we walked into the classroom a couple students smile and point at the sections of the mural that they helped create. Students enter the classroom in small groups, with some students going directly to their instrument lockers and others finding friends to catch up on the daily gossip.

Students are given 2 minutes at the start of class to warm-up their instruments and gather the materials they needed for class. Some students pass the time by working diligently out of their method books, intently playing familiar exercises such as #90, "London Bridge", #91, which has no name evidently, and the focus of this class, #92, "Variations of Twinkle, Twinkle." However, other students are less studious and spend the majority of their 2-minute warm-up chatting with a neighbor or blowing air through their instrument without regard for tone or the hearing of others. A trombone player gets up out of his chair, walks to the tall wooden instrument closet to my immediate right at the back of the room, carefully lifts his trombone from the top shelf, which is an inch too high for comfort, and grabs a cloth to clean his trombone slide. After careful contemplation, the student decides to leave the case on the ground off to the side of closet, returning to his seat in the back row of the classroom.

After the 2 minutes' elapse, Mr. Robertson, who spent the duration of the 2 minutes playing his own trombone at the front of the room, replaces his instrument on

the trombone stand to his right and claps his hands twice, which is the signal for students to focus their attention to the front of the room. After a minute of pleasantries, including some wise cracks from the jokers in the trumpet section, Mr. Robertson picks up his trombone and opens his own book.

"Okay, let's start with number 92 in the book." Robertson instructs the students. He raises his trombone to his face while walking in between the seated chairs of students. The students flip through their pages to find the right musical line, some taking longer than others. Fifteen seconds pass before Robertson starts to count off for the students.

"1… 2… 1. 2. 3. 4." The sounds of "Twinkle, Twinkle," albeit with added dissonance, ring throughout the band room. As the music continues, some students get lost and put their instruments down, others scramble to recover after taking too long to open their books. Finally, after 16 measures the song comes to an end.

"All right. . . now for a different challenge," Mr. Robertson comments with a smile as he strides back to the front of the classroom. "I would like to you to compose for me on the spot a variation not already written." A murmur breaks out throughout the students, with a few even starting to play a few notes in anticipation of the experience.

"For example," Robertson continues, "you could play something like this".". Robertson proceeds to play the first four bars of the melody before breaking into a relatively simple, well played, improvisation on the trombone.

"Here we go. . . play the first four measures as written, and then play your composition in the second half. This is going to be chaos at its finest." Mr. Robertson picks up his trombone and counts off from the beginning of the piece. The first four

measures proceed in a normal manner, and then the improvisation section begins. Students make their best attempt at improvising, with some creating coherent, four-measure thoughts and others failing to get past the first couple of beats. It truly was chaos at its finest.

With a wave of his arms, Mr. Robertson cuts off the cacophony of sound. Some students giggle, others discuss successes and failures. A few seconds go by with the murmur of sound growing as additional students join in conversation. Even Mr. Robertson, who still carries his trombone in his left hand, shares a short chat with the front row flute players. Finally, after 30 seconds of building sound, the students receive the sign to quiet down.

(Fieldnote, 6th Grade Band Observation #1, Rosemont Middle School, 1/27//2016)

Improvisation

Improvisation is a natural part of the curriculum in the sixth grade band at Rosemont Middle School. Students are asked to participate in these exercises as a way to supplement the traditional method book instruction that is a part of earliest band pedagogy. Much of the time Mr. Robertson and his students spent improvising in the large group settings was done in conjunction with either short melodies from the *Standards of Excellence* method book or in a musical dialogue with either the teacher or other students. In both of these cases Mr. Robertson was involved actively in the improvisation process, improvising on the trombone or the trumpet. Sometimes students were asked to create an ending to an exercise spontaneously, at times as many as

eight measures. In other cases, students participated in traded phrases, playing off each other to generate material for their improvisations.

Students also participated in call and response with Mr. Robertson and other members of the class. For these improvisations, students were asked to keep time throughout a four-measure introduction as well as during the improvisation of another student or students before finally improvising themselves. The idea was to create a dialogue between two musicians or groups of musicians that happened in real time.

There was no pattern to the use of improvisation in the class, although improvisation was incorporated fairly frequently into instruction during observations. Sometimes improvisation was used to add a layer of complexity and difficulty for those students who were advanced and needed additional challenge. Other times, improvisation was incorporated into the warm-up as a basic skill. In these cases, improvisation was done in different ways and tied to solfeggio and basic aural and oral skills.

Mr. Robertson structured instruction as both large group as well as focusing on individual students in the class. This dual structuring allowed for improvisation to serve both as an exploratory exercise, when it was for the whole group, as well as a more assessment-focused tool, when it was with individuals. However, improvisation was not always successful, especially during those moments when students were less than comfortable with the process.

"Who is willing to play their variation for the class?" Mr. Robertson asks the class, his finger moving from one side of the ensemble to the other at a slow, methodical pace. A few hands shoot up quickly in the air, practically before Robertson finished his

sentence. These hands are accompanied by a few straggling hands, attached to students who were prompted to volunteer by the enthusiasm of others.

Robertson takes a minute to survey the volunteers before choosing two students, Colin, the alto saxophone player, and Evan, the trumpet player. These students will play their improvisation following Mr. Robertson's four bar introduction of "Twinkle, Twinkle." The students are given a couple seconds to "plan" their improvisation, although most of this time was spent shuffling around papers and deciding the order in which the two students will perform.

Colin is first on alto saxophone, and he chooses to stand up at his seat in the ensemble. Mr. Robertson consults Colin, they make eye contact and share a nod, and Mr. Robertson begins to play the "Twinkle, Twinkle" melody. Colin picks up the melody with a basic start to the improvisation, playing quarter notes on a single pitch for the first couple of notes. He breaks out of his shell as the improvisation advances forward, adding some passing tones on a quarter note rhythm for the remainder of the four-measure improvisation. The conclusion is greeted by applause from Colin's peers, spearheaded by Mr. Robertson at the front of the room. After the applause dies down Mr. Robertson speaks.

"All right . . . so what did Colin do?" A few students offer answers to the question, and all provide interesting insights into the thought process of the students. A truly inquisitive student notices Colin's slight change of tempo near the end of the improvisation, although it was hardly an intentional gesture. Another round of applause greets Colin as he descends back into his seat.

As Colin sinks back into his seat, Evan rises from the trumpet section. Evan chooses to raise his stand to match his new standing position, slowly pulling the stubborn music stand up over the course of 10 seconds. He slowly raises his trumpet to his face, taking a few glances at his peers in the seats around him. Robertson points in his direction, grinning hugely, and Evan nods in acknowledgement of his turn to create.

Evan's solo starts differently than both Robertson's and Colin's; in fact, it starts in a different meter. He chooses to play the entire second half of the "Twinkle, Twinkle" melody in triple meter, playing three notes for every quarter note in the original melody. A few students notice the jarring change of meter, with one cocking his head silently to the left and giving Evan an inquisitive look. Unfortunately, Evan loses the momentum from the beginning of his solo and does not play any meaningful notes in the second half of his four measures of improvisation. Despite the lack of music in the second half, the students still greet Evan will a rousing round-of-applause.

"Dude! I love what you did at the beginning, you could have done that the entire time!" Robertson exclaimed while replacing his trombone on the stand. Students around the ensemble, including Evan, nod in agreement. A few students offer comments about the solo, most having to do with the rhythmic interest. Some students raise their hands in an attempt to procure an opportunity to improvise their own creations, but Robertson has chosen to move on to another activity on the board.

(Fieldnote, 6th Grade Band Observation #1, Rosemont Middle School, 1/27/2016)

While improvisation in a large group provides the security necessary for students to find their own compositional and improvisatory voice, the individual improvisation

described in the proceeding account is a different way of approaching improvisation. While the process is similar to group improvisation, the aims vary slightly.

Students chosen to participate in the individual improvisation often were volunteers for whom the pressure of solo performance was welcomed for their own musical growth. For these students, the improvisation served as a way for them to share their musical vocabulary in an exposed but safe environment. However, Robertson did not limit the improvisation opportunities exclusively to students who were at the top of the ensemble. In some cases, students volunteered and were selected to perform who were still developing technique. While some of these improvisations turned out to be successful, others had little resemblance to the original source material or the intended goal. Although these students failed to achieve high levels of improvisational skill, the opportunity to improvise still provided an important platform for both the students and the teacher.

Challenges with Improvisation

The improvisation in the sixth grade band was not always successful and quite often had to be re-started or scaffolded, depending on the level of achievement of the student(s) or difficulty of the task. Constant restarts are not usual for beginning bands, but in this case Mr. Robertson used the restarts to his advantage. This occurred quite often and was treated by both Mr. Robertson and the students as a natural part of the process of creating music.

Large group improvisation was “chaos at its finest” according to Mr. Robertson (Interview #2). In practice, large group improvisation was a loud and messy affair that involved between 60 and 80 students performing their unique musical creations at the

same time. Given the freedom of the improvisational structure, it was not uncommon to hear students performing dissonant passing tones alongside harmonic tones. With all of the independent music making, it was difficult to discern what sounds achieved the aims of the activity and which were off-task, unintentional, or otherwise. This meant that much of the large group improvisation was exploratory in nature and cacophonous in sound. Although this sometimes made it difficult for students to hear themselves and others, it also provided enough "cover" so students felt safe exploring their improvisational ideas.

Another challenge of improvisation was the common occurrence of individual students veering far from the original parameters set for the improvisational task. For example, sometimes students were given a specific time frame in which to improvise. While some improvisations began and ended within the time frame provided, others varied drastically and somewhat catastrophically. These cases two things to Mr. Robertson as an educator. First, it provided information that the student may not be ready for that level of improvisational complexity, either audiationally, technically, or both. As a result, the teacher knew to scale back the complexity of the task for the student in the future. Second, and less obvious at first glance, the teacher was faced with contextualizing and minimizing the peer reactions that arose from the failed attempts that may have hurt the feelings of the students who improvised. Students in this class were able to identify when improvisations were successful and when their peers were unable to complete the task within the given parameters. Sometimes, their reactions to performances was knee-jerk and not always to the benefit of the student improvising because of their negative tone or lack of diplomacy. Mr. Robertson was

quick to reinforce the improvising student, often verbally encouraging the student or clarifying the instructions of the improvisation. However, the challenge of critical peers was evident in the faces of some of the brave students who improvised.

Robertson used improvisation in the sixth grade band as both an extension of traditional band instruction (e.g., re-imagining the end of “Twinkle Twinkle”) as well as a musical skill that required development for its own sake. In this regard, according to Robertson, the improvisation activities served a short-term goal, diversifying the curriculum and differentiating instruction for the advanced students, as well as preparing students to participate in more advanced improvisation and creative, music-making activities in the seventh and eighth grade bands.

Eighth Grade Band

Students in the eighth grade band have a minimum of 2 years’ experience performing on their music instruments. The ensemble is co-taught by Mr. and Mr. Allen, although the former is the teacher of record as far as the school is concerned. The ensemble numbers around 60 students, with all traditional band instruments represented.

The eighth grade band shares the space in the middle school with the sixth and seventh grade bands. The students enter the room to a disorganized array of chairs and stands, which quickly take the form of the more familiar arcs as the student’s shuffle around and gather their belongings for rehearsal. Mr. Robertson greets most students at the door, only missing a few as students take his attention away to ask questions. After a few minutes of student chatter and individual warm-ups, Mr. Robertson gathers the students’ attention and prepares for the rehearsal.

Eighth Grade Chamber Music

The eighth grade band members participated in a chamber music program, incorporated in the music curriculum throughout the entire year. The following is an excerpt of one of the classes dedicated to chamber music.

Students shuffle around, working to find their assigned chamber ensemble. Wednesday was the designated "chamber music day" at Rosemont Middle School and, judging by the buzz coming from the students, they were eager to get to work. I stand along the back wall of the main band room at the middle school, occasionally leaning up against the tall, gray, metal instrument storage lockers that are all too common in band rooms. One student, a stout boy with circular glasses, struts up to Mr. Robertson and inquires about some cymbals for the drum set. Robertson disappears into the storage room on the far side of the room, only to reappear with two cymbals, a ride and a crash, one in each hand. He hands them off to the student, who has since set up a kick bass drum and snare. Preparations continue as students dash in and out of the room looking for stands, chairs, and music.

Three or four groups congregate in the long hallway outside of the band room. Students jostle for position, organizing their groups in semi-circles, full circles, or in some cases, amorphous blobs. Mr. Allen and Mr. Robertson pop in and out of the different locations, hustling students along to their assigned groups. An inquisitive student approaches Mr. Allen slowly, with his head hanging slightly down and to the left. He taps Mr. Allen on the shoulder with his right hand, holding his saxophone tightly in the left. Allen turns quickly and shares a few words with the student before taking the sax and disappearing into the office adjacent to the band room. The student shuffles

slowly over the door, peaking in occasionally to check on his beloved saxophone. Finally, after a minute of nerve-racking waiting, Mr. Allen reappears from the office with the saxophone and a tiny screwdriver in hand. He proceeds to gesture at the saxophone a few times before handing it off and sending the student back to his group.

After a few minutes of organization things begin to settle down. Most students, with only a few exceptions, are beginning to play with their peers in the ensemble, although, in the intimate acoustical environment of the hallway, it is difficult to discern one piece from another. Mr. Robertson nods to Mr. Allen and reenters the band room through the main door. A few of his thunderous claps silence the jazz band students, who have themselves been working on tunes from the prior classes. Mr. Allen is already bouncing in the hallway quickly from one chamber group to another, answering questions and helping organize the student workday. He will remain busy as the students work toward improving their performances.

(Fieldnote, Rosemont Middle School 8th Grade Band Observation #2, 3/21/2016)

Organization. Chamber music in the Rosemont instrumental music program is wrapped into the curricular offerings of the eighth grade band at the middle school. The chamber ensembles meet once a week, on Wednesdays, starting from near the beginning of the school year. Students are given the entire period, 50 minutes, to work in their groups, with only brief interruptions from Mr. Allen and the limited set-up and tear down time at the beginning and end of class.

Students have the option to participate in the jazz band, which meets during the chamber ensemble time, or to form their own group with other students. The chamber ensembles are self-selected with only a few exceptions, according to Mr. Robertson.

Most of the groups contain either two or three students, usually organized without regard to instrument or “standard” chamber music repertoire.

Most of the material that the students rehearse and perform comes from the duets in the back of the Rubank book for young students. Students usually choose their own music from the book, although Mr. Robertson and Mr. Allen have a say in most of the final decisions about what pieces the students will practice and refine. The jazz band operates from a separate set of literature, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Instruction. Students are given a great deal of autonomy when working with their ensemble members in the chamber music program. For most of the class period, students are responsible for assessing their musical progress, making musical decisions, and rehearsing their musical selections. In many cases this autonomy, coupled with the relative youth of the students, leads to off-task behavior at times during rehearsals. It was not uncommon to see students have conversations for a couple minutes at a time before starting to play their instruments again. Often this change back to focused rehearsal was prompted by either a glare or quick word from Mr. Allen as he passed by a group.

When Mr. Allen did work with a group, the focus was on creating a sense of musical cohesion and advanced instructional direction that was lacking with student-only rehearsals. The length and detail of the conversations with Allen varied greatly depending on the group’s level of focus, the skill level of the students, and the time left in the rehearsal period. Mr. Allen’s duty was to assess the levels of the different groups and provide the necessary instructional support for them to move forward with their

work. More about the structure of these conversations and the students' role is in Chapter 5.

Eighth Grade Jazz Band

Mr. Robertson walks into the band room calmly and coolly, scat-ting a melody in a smooth up-tempo blues. The 20 eighth grade students in the jazz band practice their music, some playing the head to Coltrane's "Tenor Madness," others working through the bassline to the tune while the rhythm section struggles to get its equipment together. Mr. Robertson picks up his bass trombone perched on the stand at the front of the room and begins to noodle around, jumping from Coltrane to Brubeck and back with ease. Finally, after a few seconds of challenging improvisation, he pulls the horn off his face with a laugh and a headshake. He replaces his trombone on the stand and claps a few times, and students finish playing their last notes.

(Fieldnote, Rosemont Middle School 8th Grade Band Observation #2, 3/21/2016)

Organization. The eighth grade jazz band at Rosemont Middle School was comprised of students enrolled in the concert band. The group met Wednesday during the class time designated for a "chamber music experience." All eighth grade students had the opportunity to participate in the ensemble, regardless of their instrument or past musical experiences, which resulted in non-standard jazz instruments (flute, clarinet, oboe) playing alongside traditional jazz instruments (saxophone, trombone, trumpet, and rhythm section), with the number of students fluctuating slightly depending on the students in class on any given school day.

Students organizes themselves into a semi-traditional big band setup, with twelve upper woodwinds (i.e., flutes, clarinets, oboe, alto saxophone) forming the front row and

eight brass and low woodwinds sitting in the back. The rhythm section consisted of two members, a drummer and a bassist, both of whom were still novices on their instruments. This duo sat to Mr. Robertson's right as he stood at the front and faced the group. Mr. Robertson started class at the front of the room, although he rarely stayed in that position for long. He often would vacillate between the sound system to his far right, the bass trombone on the stand to the immediate right of the podium, and the electric keyboard on the far left side of the room.

Literature. The literature used as curriculum in the eighth grade jazz band has roots in the standard jazz repertoire. Much of the listening material used in class derives from canonic recordings of jazz greats, such as Johnny Coltrane, Miles Davis, and Benny Goodman. These recordings are made available, or at least acknowledged as reference recordings, for the students to consult as they learn the melody and stylistic nuances of jazz.

The book used in the jazz band was "Absersold Jazz Vol. 1." Each student book contains the head to a jazz chart, chord symbols along with a possible walking bass line, a sample harmonization for the melody, and a background figure for underneath solos. Most of the keys in the book are beginning band friendly, although, as explained in a later section, this became less important with the implementation of solfeggio. The jazz band only worked out of the "Absersold Jazz, Vol. 1" book during the observation window and, according to Mr. Robertson, would not move on to different material until the students are in high school.

Instruction. The jazz band class incorporated elements of an informal educational environment as well as a more formal approach. The two types of environments often

were transparent and fluid, with switches between them made based upon the needs of the students and ensemble in the moment.

The elements of an informal music-learning environment consisted of the aural learning of the songs as well as a dialogic relationship between the students and the teacher. When learning a piece, the students initially listened to source recordings of jazz legends performing it, with a focus on hearing the individual parts and the style of the piece of music. Most of the aural work, used some sort of solfeggio system so that instruments in different keys would have a common language. Subsequent listenings to the recording were incorporated throughout the remaining instructional time, mostly as a tool to reinforce style and the correct audiation of the parts of the song. Consequently, solfeggio was used as a bridge between the initial listening and the final performance.

Although there also was a focus on learning the component parts of an arrangement through the written notation in the book, there was still a focus on aural skills. Rehearsals often would begin with the instructions, “No stands, everything on the board or by ear” (8th Grade Jazz Band Observation #4, Rosemont Middle School, 5/4/2016). The arrangement components listed in the book were the melody, a harmony part, a bass line, and background parts for underneath solos. Mr. Robertson would trade performances of the parts of the song, from full runs to single measures, with the students.

Another important informal component of the jazz band learning process was a focus on improvisation and experimentation. Students participated in improvisation activities every rehearsal, regardless of the focus for the rehearsal. In some cases, improvisation was based on basic chord structures; other times it was based on the

structure of the rehearsal piece. For example, the vignette above detailed an event in the beginning of the class period. From there, students proceeded to use their new improvisation skills in context of “Tenor Madness,” a tune they knew well from prior rehearsals.

The eighth grade jazz band at Rosemont Middle School introduced students to vernacular learning through the context of traditional jazz charts. Students performed improvisations in groups and in solo based on both loose and strict guidelines provided by Mr. Robertson. This experience was meant to introduce them to various informal learning methods, as well as prepare them for high school jazz band, according to Mr. Robertson.

High School Wind Ensemble

Rosemont’s High School’s Wind Ensemble is the premier auditioned band ensemble at the high school and in the district. The ensemble consists of 40 to 50 students, depending on the year, and is based on the Eastman Wind Ensemble model. Students in grades eight through eleven audition for entry into the ensemble during the spring of the previous school year.

The ensemble meets in the high school band room, a large carpeted room with a white board in front and practice rooms in back. Students in the wind ensemble set up their own chairs; the center of the room is bare, save for a lone podium and conductor’s stand.

Transcription Project

Students in the Rosemont High School Wind Ensemble participated in a long-term transcription project during the latter part of the school year. The project was

designed to get the students focused on developing aural skills in relation to recordings of actual band music. However, due to the variable schedule of observations as well as unfortunate weather delays, only one observation took place during a transcription project class. Additionally, that class proved not to involve any transcription but rather a conversation that examined the role of this project within the instrumental music curriculum. Regardless, I had an opportunity to talk about the project during the interviews with Mr. Robertson.

Project Guidelines. Students enrolled in the wind ensemble at Rosemont High School are exposed to high quality literature, rehearsal of that literature, and discussions of ensemble playing, as well as opportunities for creative music making. One of these opportunities for creative music making is a transcription project.

For this project, students are asked to transcribe and arrange a tune of their choosing for a mixed instrument grouping. The students were allowed to use multiple source recordings but were not to consult any form of notation during the transcription process. After transcribing the melody, students were required to add two to three additional parts. One standard addition was a bass line to go along with the melody. The final part typically was a counter-melody or secondary harmony part that ran concurrent to the melody. Although this part often was pulled from the source recording, Mr. Robertson noted that some students created their own extra part. Students were given time to work on the project on a semi-regular basis, which is to say they were given a full class period each school week during the time frame of the project to talk with their peers and work out their solutions.

Diversion of Class Time. The transcription project ran concurrent to preparations for upcoming public performances as well as other curricular activities related to the development of instrumental music education students. Consequently, there was a natural tension between the need to prepare for upcoming performances and the completion of the transcription project. This tension came to play during my one observation late in the process that happened to fall the week before a wind ensemble concert performance.

Mr. Robertson meets me in the parking lot of the middle school, a midpoint between the middle school and high school buildings. I quickly grab my backpack, which contains all of the observation necessities, and join him in walking towards the high school. The day had started off nicely enough but has quickly turned to gray skies, the smell of a spring rain lingering in the air.

As we walk to the back door of the band room, Mr. Robertson and I discuss the situation at hand in the wind ensemble. The group has a concert in 3 days — their final performance of the school year. Mr. Robertson informs me that the program is loaded with difficultly, including "Amazing Grace" by Frank Ticheli and "Symphonic Dance #2" by Clifton Williams. He grabs his keys and flips through the dozen or so keys on the chain before settling on the high school master key, all the while noting that, while the students are more than capable of achieving the program, they have not worked up to their potential. Consequently, today's rehearsal is going to start with a conversation about the future of the transcription project and the upcoming concert.

We enter the room and are immediately greeted by students milling about, talking with their peers and gathering equipment for the rehearsal. Mr. Robertson takes a visual

survey of the room, glancing at a few students who are loitering in the corner of the room. He takes a deep breath before calling out, "Let's chat… Let's figure out what we are doing."

Students grab their chairs and equipment and begin to set up the three concert arcs. Mr. Robertson takes a minute in his office before joining the group in the main classroom space. By this time all but three students have found their seats, and the percussion students are gathering the last of their sticks and drums. A moment of hushed conversation dissipates as Robertson takes his seat at the front of the room, a serious look painted on his face.

"Okay, so here are the options on the table. We can push back the transcription project a week and use the time for rehearsals. But these rehearsals mean you need to bust your butt, and if I tell you to practice a part overnight you had better put in the time to make it happen." Robertson pauses, providing time for the weight of the statement to sink in.

He takes a deep breath and continues; "Alternatively, we could do the transcription project this week and restructure the concert program on Sunday. We would have to drop a piece and replace it with an easier piece, probably a middle school level one. Or we could just play two pieces that would work as well… Any thoughts?"

Students look around at each other — a few exchange some thoughts about the options on table. The conversations continue for about 15 seconds before Mr. Robertson opens the floor for conversation.

After discussion, the students finally conduct a "hands up" vote to determine the fate of the concert and the transcription project. Their decision is to postpone the project

until after the concert, consequently keeping the original concert program. It is a decision with which Mr. Robertson approves, as he nods his head following the vote.

"Okay, so we have to work hard over the next couple of days. We can do it, but you all have to be ready to listen and make corrections…. You have 5 minutes to warm up and then we are jumping right into the Ticheli."

(Fieldnote, High School Wind Ensemble Observation #5, Rosemont High School, 5/10/2016)

The decision to table the transcription project until after the concert was made out of a seeming necessity. However, it was also made in a democratic manner, by a vote of all of the ensemble members following a conversation about the consequences of each choice. In this conversation, each choice was discussed, and students were able to voice opinions about their preference and the reasoning behind their choice.

It is difficult to say if Mr. Robertson had any strong opinion on the matter. He did tell the students the course of action that he thought would be least beneficial, which was to play the concert with only two pieces of music. However, what was notable was his decision to let the students have a discussion before making decision and allowing them to make the final decision.

In the end, the ensemble performed all three pieces originally programmed at the concert. Additionally, the students completed the transcription project, albeit two weeks after the concert performance. Although all of the curricular plans eventually were completed, the decision to postpone the transcription project highlighted a philosophical decision made by Mr. Robertson and the students that is central to the decisions faced

by all instrumental teachers when choosing whether to include creative and vernacular music making in their ensembles.

Composition Project

Students in both the eighth grade and the high school wind ensemble created musical compositions based on Modest Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition." During this project, students used critical analysis skills to connect Mussorgsky's famous musical work with the artwork from which it derives. Following the initial discussion, the students broke into groups to create their own musical selections based on other paintings.

Instruction. At the beginning of the project, the class listened to the movement, "The Catacombs," with Mr. Robertson prompting them to think about what image may have inspired from this music. Next, Mr. Robertson showed the actual painting that inspired the movement to the students, and asked, "How does the music portray the painting?" (Sixth Grade Band Observation, Rosemont Middle School, 3/13/2016.) After a brief discussion, Mr. Robertson flipped the question, inquiring, "Musically, what might you do to portray this painting?" (Sixth Grade Band Observation, Rosemont Middle School, 3/13/2016). The prior inquiries contributed to a larger conversation; to what extent can music portray visual images?

Conversations served as a jumping off point into a composition project. Students took ideas from the first discussion to shape their compositions. The composition project took place both during and outside of the instructional period, with in-class work times happening periodically throughout the early part of the second semester. The elongated work time period allowed the students opportunities to work with each other inside and

outside of class, while also receiving instructional support from Mr. Robertson. At the conclusion of the project, students presented their compositions in class to their peers as well as Mr. Robertson and Mr. Allen. This served as both an opportunity to share their final work and receive feedback.

Teacher as Facilitator. During the compositional process Mr. Robertson served as both a facilitator during discussion as well as a guide. Mr. Robertson chose the piece of music discussed at the beginning of the exercise, and he was the primary facilitator of discussion during early conversations. As the students actually began to compose, Mr. Robertson noted that his role turned from teacher towards facilitator, as he primarily answered questions about the compositional process without dictating the students' activity.

Discussion. The composition project at Rosemont Middle School and High School served to provide a platform for students to share their creative voices. Their musical creations were framed by discussion about the relationship between musical creations and other artistic creations. Consequently, Mr. Robertson's role in the musical endeavor was to organize initial discussions, provide guidance for compositional techniques, and present examples for students on which to base their compositions.

Student-Led Instruction

Students in the wind ensemble were given the opportunity to engage the ensemble literature in a deep and meaningful way through the use of the Classroom™ platform on the Google server. Through online reflection and the consequent student-led instruction, students were given a voice in their education as well as the direction of the ensemble's growth.

GoogleClassoom. To start, students in the high school wind ensemble completed a self-reflection and future rehearsal planning activity via an online GoogleClassroom platform. Students were asked to provide a written reflection based on a classroom recording provided by Mr. Robertson. Students used these written reflections as a starting point in planning for their short instructional lessons, and Mr. Robertson used them in planning for future rehearsals.

Mr. Robertson made the student recordings during the middle of a concert cycle. In the current case it was 5 weeks after the introduction of the music to the students and 6 weeks before the concert. Mr. Robertson then distributed the recordings via a shared GoogleClassroom website, hosted by the Google server. On this platform, students had access to their recordings as well as professional recordings of the same repertoire and guidelines for student feedback. At the core, the students were asked to provide ways in which the two recordings (student and professional) differed, as well as strategies for rectifying these discrepancies, if appropriate.

Mr. Robertson's role during this process was to act as a facilitator for the students. His work mainly was completed during the beginning of the process, including taking the recordings, editing them down, and providing guidelines for the feedback. Additionally, Robertson set the parameters for the feedback, specifying the focus of the feedback as well as organizing the student responses on the GoogleClassroom and providing additional rehearsal strategies for the students to consider moving forward.

Student Instructors In Rehearsal. Following the student reflections on GoogleClasroom, students in the wind ensemble at Rosemont High School had the opportunity to run a small portion of rehearsal during the final concert cycle of the

school year. This practice was a natural extension of the GoogleClassroom project, during which students listen to a recording of their group in order to identify ways they could improve and then provide suggestions for improvement. As such, the students have an opportunity to direct the intent of their education, a common theme in both the *Critical Pedagogy* and *Constructivist* theories of education.

Each student in the wind ensemble planned to rehearse or talk about a small segment of music, usually a few bars or even an individual measure. Their plans for rehearsal were derived from their experience in rehearsals or in their review of audio recordings. The instructions from Mr. Robertson were to come up with a single item to discuss or work on, his idea being that having a single focus would be more achievable for developing students. Although scheduling conflicts prevented me from directly observing student instruction, Mr. Robertson generously discussed the process with me and shared information from the process.

During the student lessons, Mr. Robertson performed with the ensemble, usually just observing what was happening. However, he noted in our informal discussion that there were times when he would contribute to the conversation, either as an authority figure or as a relative equal of the group. This focus allowed students to have support and guidance from Mr. Robertson while still having the autonomy to make their own musical decisions and suggestions.

Students in the high school wind ensemble were given a great deal of autonomy when providing their feedback and lessons for the wind ensemble. The GoogleClassroom lessons gave students the opportunity to express their opinions and musical voices, thus engaging their instruction at a deeper level.

Conclusion

Todd Robertson created opportunities for young musicians in the sixth and eighth grade bands at the Middle School, and the students in the high school Wind Ensemble in Rosemont to engage in an instrumental music curriculum that goes beyond the preparation and performance of repertoire. The opportunities ranged from learning to improvise, to focusing on aural skills, to engaging in arranging projects, to rehearsing as independent chamber ensembles. Each of these opportunities was incorporated on a semi-regular basis into the instruction to bolster the audiational and aural skills of students as well as give students opportunities to engage their creativity and express their own musical ideas.

These instructional activities were not without significant challenges. Lack of physical classroom space for chamber ensembles led to students sharing cramped hallways and a crowded middle school stage. The conditions were less than ideal for students who were intent on communicating verbally and musically in intimate sessions with a limited number of peers.

Additionally, some students in both the sixth grade and high school were asked to participate in musical activities that were above their current levels of musical ability. In either case, the lack of predictability meant the participants and the classroom they inhabited needed to be flexible and ready for various outcomes at any time.

Finally, there was the tension between engaging in creative activities and working on more traditional concert preparations. This tension was especially prevalent in the high school Wind Ensemble, which chose to forego a class period of their transcription project in favor of more traditional concert preparations. Despite the

challenges faced by Mr. Robertson and his students, these activities are all examples of expanding a traditional instrumental music curriculum.

CHAPTER 5:

EXPANDED INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CURRICULUM IN PRACTICE

The purpose of this study was to seek out ways in which a veteran instrumental music teacher who engages students in an expanded instrumental curriculum structures that curriculum and manages interactions with students. To accomplish this, I sought an instrumental music program that aligned with the principles set forward by Bowman (2004) and Jaffurs (2006) in their discussions of music education pedagogy. Todd Robertson, an instrumental music teacher working with both middle school and high school students in the Rosemont School District, fit the criteria established above. Observations and consequent data analysis sought to bring to light the ways in which the principles of an expanded band curriculum were found in Mr. Robertson's curriculum as well as in his actions and instruction.

What follows is a discussion of the themes found across the instrumental music ensemble settings and the extent to which they relate to the frames of an "Expanded Band Curriculum" established in Chapters 1 and 2. Sections of the chapter will include:

- Redistribution of Power
- Teacher as Musician
- Creative Music Making

Each section will highlight a different theme and its subthemes, with discussion centered on the extent to which the experiences of the participant reflect the literature on the topic. Additional discussion will include challenges faced by Mr. Robertson when implementing each of the principles as well as addendums to the curriculum not specifically discussed in *Chapter 4*.

Redistribution of Power

Both Critical Pedagogy and Constructivism call for a redistribution of power between the teacher, student, and knowledge. Through autonomous critical thinking, students and teachers enacting the principles of these philosophies are empowered to share in the responsibility for learning in the everyday classroom.

Shared Responsibility

The focus on shared responsibility in Mr. Robertson's classrooms was developed through curricular opportunities as well as the daily interactions between teacher and students. While these two go hand in hand in many cases, some instances of shared responsibility came during more traditional music education practices.

A prominent example of this in practice occurred with the eighth grade jazz band at Rosemont Middle School. The following vignette is taken from an observation in which the class was working on an improvisation lesson, with students being asked to create a background figure for the ensemble to perform behind soloists:

Three students are preparing to perform their solos for the class, along with an accompaniment from the rhythm section and Mr. Robertson. The first chorus passes with relatively little in the way of excitement. However, the second and third choruses provide more imagination as students venture off the tonic pitches, exploring the notes of the triad as well as the newly introduced seventh of the chord. As the final chorus finishes, the soloists bask in the moment. Their peers and Mr. Robertson provide verbal support in acknowledgement of their achievement.

Mr. Robertson starts to debrief with the students, asking the other students what they heard in the solos. Jenny, the alto sax improviser, has a bright smile on her face as

Robertson acknowledges her creative work: "Good work, that was fun. Did anyone catch the descending scale? That was hip!"

With the initial improvisation complete, Robertson turns his attention toward the next step in the process. "I want us to compose a background part. Something we can play while people are soloing." A few students take the time to express their consent, while others stare, perplexed. "It could be something like," Robertson goes on to play the tonic of the first four bars ('Do') on clarinet, "with a different rhythm in each measure."

The students are given time to work on a background figure, about 1 minute in total. One student disregards the initial directions to stay on the tonic of each chord, but Robertson does not seem to mind this adventurous spirit. All the while Mr. Robertson also is working on a background figure on clarinet, although Mr. Allen and students involved with the chamber ensembles happening concurrently take his attention more than one time during the minute of "noodle time."

After a few minutes more than the initial time allotted, the students prepare to share their creations with the class. The first student selected, a clarinet to the left of the front row, creates a background for the first four tonic chords. Robertson echoes the pattern a few times, working to get the exact pitches and rhythms. A few attempts later, Robertson demonstrates the pattern for the class before asking them to answer the pattern. Once all of the members are satisfied with their level of achievement, they move on to the second four measures.

The second pattern proceeds much like the first, with a trumpet player providing the background figure. Finally, a third student, this one playing the alto saxophone,

provides the background figure for the harmonically tricky final phrase. The student puts forth a gallant effort, switching notes two or three times per chord. However, the notes often clash with the harmonic changes and are sometimes outside the triad and seventh provided by Robertson.

Following this third example provided by the student, Robertson commends the student for making an adventurous attempt. He then adds, "How could she tweek it slightly to make it fit?" A few students think for a minute before offering some suggestions. Robertson takes these changes and combines them together to create a revised third phrase. The group then puts all three phrases together to create the background figure. The students, still working aurally, struggle to audiate all twelve bars together, but eventually they go from start to finish.

Robertson, with a large smile on his face, claps at the student effort before commenting, "Do you have your tunes? Let's jam a little bit!"

(Fieldnote, Eighth Grade Jazz Band Observation #1, Rosemont Middle School, 3/6/2016)

Abrahams (2005) wrote that a classroom engaged in critical pedagogy would include children working together in groups, making decisions that affect their environment, and engaging in dialogue with peers and teachers to make meaning. The parallels with the vignette above are evident. However, the addition of Mr. Allen as a second teacher helped immensely in this regard, allowing more support and scaffolding both during instructional time and with logistics, such as broken instruments and missing music.

Another example, albeit on a much smaller level, of this practice occurred during a High School Wind Ensemble rehearsal. In the middle of the warm-up, Mr. Robertson had the students perform a particular scalar pattern with members of the ensemble that were in the same grade (i.e., freshmen). However, rather than select the exercise style himself, he asked a student in the ensemble to "give an articulation to the juniors" (Wind Ensemble Observation #2, Rosemont High School, 3/9/2016). With this simple act, Mr. Robertson allowed students to engage with their colleagues in the ensemble and play an active role in the development of technique.

A final example of this in practice was the GoogleClassroom activities in which the high school students participated during the middle of their concert cycle. In this activity, students had the opportunity to identify issues in their own musical performances through self-reflection. Following their musical reflections, the students then were tasked with applying their newly constructed knowledge in a manner that would benefit the greater group. This responsibility, traditionally given to the band director, was shared with the students in order to bolster their musical development and communication skills.

Student Autonomy

The eighth grade chamber ensembles at Rosemont were established on the principles of student autonomy and teacher guidance. Students organized themselves into small groups, usually with either two or three students per group, and rehearsed their own musical selections from a provided duet book. The logistics of the structure of the class meant that Mr. Allen, who was the teacher for this part of the chamber ensembles, spent much of the class period walking around to each group and checking

on its progress. Most discussions between Allen and the students in the groups revolved around the challenges that the students faced and potential rehearsal strategies for resolving those issues.

Providing the students with student autonomy during the chamber ensemble project was not without significant challenges for Mr. Allen. One significant challenge was the seemingly constant questions coming from students with non-musical concerns, such as broken instruments, missing music, or personal issues. These challenges limited the amount of time that Mr. Allen was able to consult with students during class time, and the students sometimes needed him more because they were new to self-rehearsals.

Democracy in Wind Ensemble

Giving students autonomy can result in leaving important decisions in the hands of the students. This occurred during the observation window with the Rosemont High School Wind Ensemble. The circumstances resulted in the decision to table the work on the transcription project in favor of additional rehearsal time in preparation for a concert. The whole event happened late in the final concert cycle of the year, which is to say the Tuesday rehearsal before the weekend concert. The process was notable in that Mr. Robertson gave the students the responsibility of deciding whether to change the concert rather than making the decision himself. In giving the students the opportunity to decide their own fate, he showed confidence in their ability to weigh the choices and make the decision that they felt would benefit the group to the greatest extent.

The conversation that took place during the class was straightforward and devoid of any high dramatics. Mr. Robertson started the conversation by laying the choices on

the table for the ensemble. First, they had the option to “do the transcription project this week and restructure the concert program on Sunday.” According to Mr. Robertson, this would mean having “to drop a piece and replace it with an easier piece, probably a middle school level one. Or we could just play two pieces that would work as well” (Fieldnote, High School Wind Ensemble Observation #5, Rosemont High School, 5/10/2016).

Conversely, they could “push back the transcription projects a week and use the time for rehearsals” (Fieldnote, High School Wind Ensemble Observation #5, Rosemont High School, 5/10/2016). Following the initial explication of the choices, the students were given an opportunity to ask questions of both Mr. Robertson and each other, and pose opinions to the group at large. Finally, after a good deal of conversation the students and Mr. Robertson conducted a “hands up” (Fowlerville High School Observation #4, 5/4/2016) vote. The eventual decision was to delay the transcription project and use the time to continue to work on the program as was originally developed. (The full vignette and further discussion of this discussion can be found in Chapter 4.)

Mr. Robertson acted as both a participant in and a mediator of the discussion. He opened the discussion by providing the choices but then allowed the students to control the direction of the discussion. The only two times Mr. Robertson added his voice to the conversation were when students posed direct questions to him about the consequences of decisions and when he agreed with a student’s opinion that they should avoid performing a concert with only two pieces of music. Consequently, Mr. Robertson embraced a dialogic relationship in his instrumental musical ensembles.

Discussion

The principles of democratic education, constructivism, and critical pedagogy all overlap in a way that makes them successful when applied together. Engaging students in environments that used these principles underlying these educational approaches resulted in a greater level of communication between the students and Mr. Robertson. Students were given voice and their ideas were valued throughout the observation period, regardless of the focus of the ensemble rehearsal. Mr. Robertson often occupied space in the democratic classroom as a relative equal to the students, allowing them opportunity to express their voices and make decisions.

Teaching and learning in a democratic classroom environment, according to Allsup (2007), is a social undertaking that "requires us to embrace a changing world and see that all participants grow while learning from each other" (p. 52). It is evident that Todd Robertson made an attempt to embrace these principles in his relationships with students in the classroom. The complexity of the new teacher/student relationships, as opposed to a more straightforward and traditional top-down approach, added a level of complexity that challenged the order of the classroom. However, Robertson noted that these challenges were all part of the learning process.

In all three classes, students had the opportunity to work with their peers to develop instructional strategies. To this end, Mr. Robertson served not as a disseminator of knowledge or controller of the environment, but rather as a guide for the students. Additionally, each of these learning opportunities was a part of the regular curricular programming, even serving to reinforce the work in more traditional ensemble rehearsals.

This process was not without its challenges, especially for younger students. Both Mr. Robertson and Mr. Allen spent time reinforcing the goals of the activities and making sure that the students were working towards appropriate instructional goals. Additionally, the student-led rehearsals often were less efficient than rehearsal if the teacher had been running it, especially in relation to more traditional ensemble rehearsal techniques. However, Mr. Robertson did note that the process became more efficient as students became more comfortable.

Teacher as Musician

Mr. Robertson was an active performing musician as well as the teacher in both the sixth-grade and eighth-grade band classes. He performed on bass trombone, which was his primary instrument throughout college, as well as on secondary instruments of trumpet, clarinet, and piano. All of the instruments were kept close to the podium at the front of the room, which was an ideal placement for his being able to use them consistently during class time.

Using these musical instruments, he demonstrated “ideal” technique and performance execution, participated in classroom exercises alongside the students, and provided scaffolding for students who needed additional support during solo performance. All three of these types of actions took place during both the sixth grade and eighth grade bands at various times during the instructional process.

Improvisation Demonstration – Sixth Grade Band and Eighth Grade Jazz Band

Students in the sixth grade and eighth grade bands at Rosemont Middle School participated in improvisation activities during their respective classes. Mr. Robertson was an active participant in both of the classes, choosing to improvise for and with the

students. As a result, the students had the opportunity to hear a successful example of improvisation, and having the teacher perform the same task that he was asking of the students created a more dialogic dynamic between the teacher and the students.

Mr. Robertson's background as a trombonist was helpful during the instances of improvisation in the classroom. He served as an example of an improviser for his students, and as a growing musician and lifelong learner who took chances during his improvisation. This was clear during the trading of four bar improvisations in the eighth grade jazz band class. Mr. Robertson began his improvisations fairly conservatively, providing a model for those students who needed basic levels of instruction. However, as the exercise continued, his improvisations became increasingly complex, allowing for demonstration of more advanced improvisations while also providing an opportunity for him to further his own personal musical growth and to challenge himself as a musician.

The dialogic nature of musical improvisation in both the sixth grade and eighth grade settings allowed Mr. Robertson to have musical conversations with the students. These "conversations" could be as simple as "I'll play, you echo" (Jazz Band Observation, 3/4/2016) or more conversational, such as the previously described completion of "Twinkle, Twinkle." During these interactions the students were engaged actively with Mr. Robertson's musical performances, which shaped their own musical expression.

Instrumental Performance – Sixth Grade Band

"All right, let's start with number 102 today as a warm-up. Our goal is to get all the way up to number 104." The students gathered their exercise books from their tattered folders as Robertson grabbed his trumpet from the open case on the electric

piano to his right. He blows some air through the instrument before bringing it to his chops and blowing a few warm up notes. The students take a minute to get everything settled, and a few use the time to stand and visit with their neighbors.

Robertson grabs control of the classroom and gets everyone seated in the proper seat. He moves away from the stand, which does not contain the music anyways, and ventures in between the first couple of rows of woodwind players, trumpet in hand. "All right let's start with number 102, ready?" The students shuffle their instruments to their face, some quicker than others. Robertson raises the trumpet to his face as he counts in the rest of the students.

Mr. Robertson plays along with the students the first time through the melody, moving his sound around from the flutes to the clarinets and even to the saxophones in the second row. The melody comes to an end and Robertson quickly quips, eyeing the brass in the back, "Can we make sure that we are sitting up tall with both feet on the ground? All right let's play it again, this time with more focus on creating a nice sound?" Students promptly retook playing positions and awaited the next count in.

Prior to starting the next repetition of the tune Mr. Robertson slyly slipped between the second and third row of the ensemble. Currently he was standing in front of the trumpet players on the far left of the ensemble, demonstrating some valve combinations to help the trumpet players struggling with the patterns. After it was clear that the students understood, Mr. Robertson began his count for the next repetition. The quick transition took some students by surprise; consequently, the first couple bars included only a fraction of the 60 students in the ensemble.

As the students performed the melody for a second time, Robertson walked across the trumpet section, surveying the different playing positions and occasionally gesturing about a fingering or a student's posture. As he reached the end of the row he took the trumpet off his face and walked up to the electric piano at the front of the room. He reached the keys right as the students finished the melody; soon after that he picked up the music with a vamp of tonic and dominant chords on the piano. He provided a few words of encouragement, barely audible in the back of the room, before encouraging the students to play the melody again.

The students happily obliged, buoyed by the improvised accompaniment provided by Robertson, and began playing the melody with vigor and, most importantly, right notes. As the melody came to an end for the third time Mr. Robertson kept going on the piano, providing a few measures of improvised music ending with a short glissando, a smile, and a shared laugh between teacher and students.

Mr. Robertson demonstrated his prowess on multiple instruments during the sixth grade band classes. His performances on multiple musical instruments provided a fundamental source of pitch for students as well as an example of an appropriate tone on the instruments. Additionally, it allowed Mr. Robertson to have musical conversations with the students, as was exemplified in the vignette.

Mr. Robertson was able to traverse the room with an instrument, with the exception of the piano. In fact, his performing on an instrument actually had the effect of drawing the students' attention to his position in the room, thereby increasing his ability to keep the students' attention during more tedious sections of classroom instruction.

As was the case with Mr. Robertson's improvisation during sixth grade band and jazz class, there were times when he made mistakes during playing. These mistakes often were the result of Mr. Robertson playing most of the short melodies from memory or transposing them on the spot from a woodwind method book. In all cases, however, Robertson was able to divert attention from the mistakes to the topic at hand, even if it meant cracking a joke about himself. Although he was a good musical model for students, he also demonstrated that it was all right to make mistakes and that mistakes were a natural part of the learning process.

Discussion

During both improvisation and performance on instruments Mr. Robertson both demonstrated his musical abilities and used them as a pedagogical tool. In this regard instrumental performance was necessary to fully engage in the activities outlined in the prior chapter. Overall, the performance on musical instruments in both the sixth grade band and the eighth grade jazz band were seamlessly infused in the classroom structure, and provided a model for the students as they ventured into new activities.

Through performance in his instrumental music classes, Mr. Robertson attempted to more equitably balance and negotiate the power relationship between the teacher-musician and student-musician, while also providing a live model for the students. Creative music making and musical improvisation are deeply personal endeavors that could cause angst in both inexperienced and experienced musicians. However, by putting his creativity on display alongside that of the students, Mr. Robertson sought to create a safe environment for all original creations and improvised music. This environment fostered conversations, both musical and verbal, that relied on

a deep personal connection between both teacher-to-student and student-to-student advocated for by democratic educators (Allsup, 2004; Woodford, 2007), critical pedagogues (Abrahams, 2005; Friere, 1970/1998) and creative music scholars (Barrett, 2002; Wiggins 1999/2000).

Creativity in the Instrumental Music Classroom

Students at all of the academic levels in the Rosemont School District participated in both formal and informal creative activities. In both the sixth grade and eighth grade at Rosemont Middle School, students engaged in improvisation. These activities took place both as standalone assignments, as in the eighth grade jazz band, and in regular classroom instruction, as in the sixth grade improvisation. Finally, students in the high school wind ensemble engaged in informal music learning, via the transcription project. All of these projects asked the students to engage as creators, both individually and with peers.

Improvisation

Students in both the sixth grade and eighth grade at Rosemont Middle School engaged in improvisation during class time. In both classes, students had the opportunity to engage in the relative safety of group improvisation prior to sharing their creations alone. This strategy alleviated the potential stress for first time improvisers as well as provided time for students to organize their thoughts. It is possible that this additional reflection time and opportunity for revision moves the activity away from true improvisation and more towards composition. However, as Burnard (2000) and Thornton (2013) noted, the two activities share in a complex relationship with significant overlap. Hence, because the improvisation was in time and did not require that students

settle on a “final” version of their performance, activities in the middle school classrooms represented a scaffolded version of improvisation, meant to alleviate the challenge for beginning improvisers and to result in more sophisticated performances.

Improvisation activities in both the sixth and eighth grade required involved participation from Mr. Robertson. Mr. Robertson would often engage in the improvisation activities, performing on both the trombone and the clarinet. During the eighth grade jazz band, for example, Robertson often would share the improvisational opportunities with his students, “trading fours” or asking the students to create a response to his own improvisation. By engaging with students as a fellow improviser, Robertson hoped to foster a deep musical and personal relationship with students, and thus provide a safe environment for the students to share their musical creations (Barrett, 2002; Beitler & Thornton, 2010; Burnard, 2000; Pinocchio, 2003; Wiggins 1999/2000, 2001)

One of the challenges during improvisation was determining how to react to those student creations that were less than ideal. The classroom was, even by Robertson’s own admission, “chaos at its finest” (6th Grade Band Observation #1, Rosemont Middle School, 3/6/2016). Consequently, sorting through this chaos to provide useful and constructive feedback was a difficult challenge, especially with between 40 and 60 students performing simultaneously. However, Robertson managed to maintain a positive and constructive approach to the students’ work. In one instance, during a sixth grade improvisation, a student created a musical response to a four-measure melodic stimulus. The improvisation contained only a few notes and was decidedly front-loaded, with the last couple of measures featuring only one or two notes.

Mr. Robertson's response was to praise the work at the beginning while also providing suggestions for the future: "Dude, I loved what you did at the beginning! You could have done that the entire time!" (Sixth Grade Band Observation, Rosemont Middle School, 3/6/2016). Within this statement, Mr. Robertson acknowledged the success of the student in the beginning, while simultaneously providing suggestions for how to move forward in the future.

Composition

Students in both the middle school and high school instrumental music programs created musical compositions based on Modest Mussorgsky's, "Pictures at an Exhibition." After listening to a piece of classical music, Mr. Robertson prompted them to think about possible inspirations for the work, before finally disclosing the artwork at the center of the inspiration. Finally, the students took the information from the conversations and created their own musical works based on different artwork.

During the compositional process, Mr. Robertson served as both a facilitator during discussion as well as a guide for the compositional process. Mr. Robertson chose the piece of music discussed at the beginning of the exercise, and he was the primary facilitator of discussion during early conversations. His facilitator role discussed in *Chapter 4* is similar to that proposed in both Constructivist education (Kastner, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978) and Critical Pedagogy (Abrahams, 2004; Allsup, 2007; Friere, 1970/2000).

Throughout the composition project, Mr. Robertson noted that his role fluctuated between teacher and facilitator as the needs of the students changed. Consequently, the students had an opportunity to grapple with challenging questions and decisions in

an environment that promoted risk-taking and productive discussions. This situation is far removed from the concerns about “Reciprocity” and “Pedagogy” proposed by Allsup and Benedict (2007) in their “Problems of Band.”

Informal Learning

As described in Chapter 4, in addition to working on their compositions based on images, students in the Rosemont Wind Ensemble completed a transcription project. This project began with students working in groups to transcribe a melody by ear, via source recordings discovered by the students. At the conclusion of the initial transcription, students took the melody and added two additional components, usually a bass or a harmony part. The students selected source music for the transcription project, and the entire composition was completed by ear. These two principles, along with the cooperative learning environments dictated by the group assignment, engaged the primary principles of Green’s (2008) definition of an informal learning environment.

However, as with the majority of the research about informal learning environments, the exact roles and responsibilities of the students and teacher were malleable and constantly being redefined. Such was the case in the eighth grade jazz ensemble at Rosemont Middle School. In this classroom Mr. Robertson acted as a performer of music during the jam sessions, as well as a teacher during the moments of instruction.

Robertson’s role in the informal learning environment, as with the composition assignment previously discussed, was to provide support for the students. However, in this project, Robertson has less involvement with the actual direction of the musical projects, including the selection of source material. In this regard, Robertson’s role was

similar to the guide on the side role advocated for by Green (2008) and other informal music scholars (Allsup, 2003; Folkstead, 2006; Jaffurs, 2004).

In the role of a facilitator in informal music education, teachers are tasked with allowing students the opportunity to explore the learning environment and ask their own probing questions. For Mr. Robertson, this meant providing the initial musical composition that served as the source material, as well as various prompts throughout the duration of the activity. The purpose of this role was to give the students enough scaffolding to have initial success, but also enough room for them to explore music creation through the jazz idiom. In this way, the informal learning in the eighth grade jazz band touched each of the four frames established in *Chapter 1*.

Discussion about Creativity in Instrumental Music Classroom

Mr. Robertson made sure that students in all three classes participated in some form of creative activities as part of the instrumental curriculum. Additionally, when viewed in academic succession from sixth grade to eighth grade to high school, students had the opportunity to engage in a variety of creative activities that ranged from formal to informal, and spontaneous to reflective. Consequently, students could develop a deep creative toolbox for use in engaging in music making following their formal education.

Mr. Robertson's role in the creative classroom was as a teacher, a participant and a facilitator. As an active musical participant, Robertson provided a strong example of a performer and creative musician for young students hoping to build their creative toolbox. He often would participate in improvisation activities, engaging in "conversations" with students, as well as provide simple demonstrations when

introducing a new creative challenge. When Mr. Robertson was not performing with the students, he acted as a facilitator. In this role he provided the musical examples in the jazz band class, during the transcription project, and during the composition project. Notably, there were few occasions when Robertson dictated the nature of the creative activities, even when there were “mistakes” in the creativity.

The use of creativity in the classroom was not without its difficulties. The most prominent example was the decision to postpone the transcription project in the high school in favor of additional rehearsal time for the concert. This decision highlighted the prioritization of more traditional concert performance as opposed to creative activities. To this end Schmidt (2005) wrote, creativity has a fleeting place in the curriculum because in the end the week before performance, product is always bottom line. However, as Mr. Robertson noted, the students were given the opportunity to discuss the decision and come to a group decision, which he happened to support. Additionally, the transcription project was completed, albeit after the concert performance and the observation period for this study. So it is more apt to say that the decision resulted in the best opportunity for the success in all components of the curriculum.

Expanded Instrumental Curriculum in Practice

Expanded instrumental music curricula, as described in *Chapter 1*, can alleviate the concerns expressed by Allsup and Benedict (2008) and other music education scholars, who worry that the conception of instrumental music education has become too narrow. The curriculum established by Todd Robertson in the Rosemont School District sought to challenge this narrowness by increasing student autonomy, providing

positive examples of musical performance by Mr. Robertson, and engaging students in creative music making.

All three of the main themes in this chapter touches each of the four philosophical frames positioned in the expanded instrumental pedagogy, and, when taken together, these frames contribute uniquely to the broader aims. Creative environments in the Rosemont School District, by their nature, involved communication between students and teacher in democratic environments. Consequently, it was difficult to untangle the effect of each frame without discussing its relationship to the others

CHAPTER 6:

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PEDAGOGY MOVING FORWARD

Instrumental music education has faced criticism from a number of music education scholars regarding the relevance and narrowness of the curriculum in traditional band classes. Critics express concern about the hegemony of the Western Classical tradition in instrumental music education. With the Western Classical tradition comes concerns about teacher-dominated classrooms, few instances of student agency, and little engagement with musical skills needed outside of the instrumental music classroom. Consequently, music education scholars have discussed ways in which instrumental music education can expand its curricular opportunities in order to address these concerns.

Music education scholars have discussed potential avenues for curricular expansion in instrumental music education. Four theoretical frames seem most useful in guiding instrumental music education to meet the three aims of music education as established by Bowman (2004) and Jaffurs (2006). These four philosophical frames were critical pedagogy, constructivism, democratic education, and creative music making. Each of the frames offers possibilities for instrumental music educators who are in search of answers to the problems presented by Allsup and Benedict (2007). As such, the purpose of this research was to provide an account of an instrumental music teacher working to expand the expanded instrumental music curriculum so that others could learn from his experiences.

Mr. Todd Robertson, an instrumental music educator in the Rosemont School District, who served as the primary participant in this study, organized the instrumental

music curriculum and his interactions within students in ways that meet the revised aims of an expanded instrumental music education. These aims included the development of musicality, the transmission of culture through music education, and the maturation of democratic ideals in music education.

The curricular opportunities present in the Rosemont School District included improvisation in both the 6th and 8th grade instrumental music classrooms, composition activities at all levels, and a transcription and rearranging project in the high school wind ensemble. These opportunities were embedded into the existing band curriculum, and were often taught along with the traditional band pedagogies.

Three themes emerged related to the research questions. These three themes include the dialogic and malleable relationships between Mr. Robertson and his students, the music making of the teacher, and the creative music making in all three large musical ensembles. Together, along with the established research in the field, the experience of Todd Robertson and the Rosemont School District can help instrumental music teachers who are hoping to expand their curriculum imagine some of the possibilities.

Application of Themes

The possibility for open interpretation was the impetus behind conducting a qualitative inquiry and framing it through a narrative case study lens. Each person reading the narrative about Mr. Robertson's classroom may have a different interpretation and thus, come to different conclusions. However, I will share the lessons that I learned while observing and interviewing Mr. Robertson, and their potential

application for current instrumental music teachers, music teacher education, and future research in the field of instrumental music education.

Applications for Current Instrumental Music Teachers

Mr. Robertson operated in the classroom as a competent musician on multiple instruments. During observations in middle school ensembles, he performed on his "major" instrument, the trombone, as well as the trumpet, clarinet, and piano. On these instruments he demonstrated proper tone and style for the students, performed alongside them in classroom music making, and demonstrated improvisation in both the jazz band and concert band settings. Additionally, he routinely performed on the piano, establishing tonality for singing exercises and providing accompaniments for student performances.

Observing Mr. Robertson's ability to perform comfortably and well on multiple instruments during class time has resulted in my desiring to improve my performance skills on multiple instruments. The importance of strong musical skills was evident in the multiple ways in which Mr. Robertson used each instrument in the classroom. Consequently, it is important to develop a base level of technical proficiency that can be applied in a variety of musical situations, both formal and informal, which may emerge as a result of the expanded instrumental music curriculum. This should include being able to perform from notation, though aural means, and improvising and creating on multiple instruments.

In addition to performing on multiple instruments, Mr. Robertson had strong fundamental musical skills. He was able to improvise, create accompaniments extemporaneously as needed, and perform repertoire musically. Consequently, it could

be beneficial for teachers in the profession to find time to perform and improvise on a number of different instruments and in a variety of different settings. This could mean performing with students during class or pursuing other non-academic music making opportunities, such as rock band or vernacular music ensemble. Performing on various instruments in both formal and informal settings could benefit teachers willing to act as musicians alongside their students in an instrumental music classroom.

On numerous occasions the desire to engage in musical challenges in the classroom led to mistakes or outright failure. However, Mr. Robertson was quick to reframe his mistakes as learning opportunities for him as well as the students. Embedded in this approach is a willingness to take chances, both musically and otherwise. The notion of taking chances in the classroom is one that is discussed by authors in both the constructivist and creative literature as opportunities for development.

For instrumental music teachers, the desire to take challenges and embrace failure manifests itself in daily interactions in the instrumental music classroom. Instrumental music educators could be aware of those moments when they are vulnerable in the classroom and embrace them as a possibility for learning and growth. This may include times when the teacher is presenting music creations for students or those moments when students express a desire to direct the rehearsal or classroom activity in a direction other than the one originally planned.

Instrumental music teachers wishing to invest in a more balanced power distribution in their class should plan on scaffolding the transfer of agency throughout students' time in an instrumental music program. Turning education over completely to

students, especially those still developing technical skills on their instruments, may prove to be beyond the “zone of proximal development.” However, by starting with smaller activities embedded within a larger program student will gain an understanding of how to explore and create the musical world that surrounds them. During this time teachers and students should embrace the journey of learning, including those moments when mistakes are made or progress happens in a non-linear fashion.

Finally, Mr. Robertson noted that patience is an important trait when adding expanded curricular offerings to the instrumental music classroom. Todd Robertson was open in acknowledging that the development of the instrumental music curriculum in the Rosemont School District was a “work in progress” (Interview #2, 3/25/2016), even as he finishes his seventh year of teaching. As such, the ability to embrace a flexible progression of activities, both in the short term of a single school year and the longer span of the seven years Todd Robertson has been in at Rosemont, is imperative for the long term development of the expanded instrumental music curriculum.

It is important that teachers organize their curricula in a manner that is conducive to the natural growth of musical skills. This means having an understanding of the long-term goals for students’ musical growth and development and developing curricular opportunities that link up over time. For example, students who improvise on a simple melody in their first year of instruction could move on to more advanced creative music making, such as longer and more nuanced improvisation in a jazz ensemble or musical composition.

Application for Music Teacher Education

The experience of Mr. Robertson also is useful for providing recommendations for music teacher education programs. These suggestions are meant to provide guidance for instrumental music teacher education (IMTE) programs hoping to expand the readiness of future music educators to work in an expanded instrumental music classroom.

First, IMTE programs should increase the emphasis on improvisation and composition throughout the teacher preparation curriculum. These skills are vital to participation in the expanded instrumental music curriculum, and instrumental music educators must develop these skills during their preparation. As such, faculty in IMTE programs should seek a balance between traditional music pedagogy topics and those related to the expanded instrumental music curriculum.

In addition, improvisation and composition activities should be implemented into a variety of different higher education musical situations, both new and traditional. This includes more traditional ensemble setting along with classes explicitly focused on the skills and activities in the expanded instrumental music curriculum. These experiences will allow future music educators to have a plethora of experience with the expanded instrumental music curriculum. Moreover, preservice music educators should have the opportunity to participate in these activities as both student and teacher-facilitator. Experiences in these dual roles will deepen the pedagogical toolbox for preservice educators as they prepare to design an expanded instrumental music curriculum in a real-world scenario.

Future instrumental music educators also should have opportunities to work in real-world situations that incorporate an expanded instrumental music curriculum. Participation in practicum teaching experiences using an expanded instrumental music curriculum will provide an example for preservice educators to draw upon when they design their own expanded instrumental music curriculum. Furthermore, preservice music educators should design and implement their own lessons and units in real-world settings. These experiences also should include diligent reflection with an experienced cooperating teacher or peer group on both the positives and challenges related to working in an expanded instrumental music education curriculum.

Finally, underlying all of the previous suggestions is the need for strong teachers and mentors guiding the preservice educators through the process of adjusting to an expanded instrumental music curriculum. As such, IMTE programs should seek faculty members who disrupt the traditional instrumental teacher education norms discussed in *Chapter 1*. These faculty members should have an understanding of how to place students in situations in which they are uncomfortable in an effort to embrace constructivist learning principles. Finally, these faculty members also should serve as positive mentors and musical leaders as their students emerge from discomfort and prepare to become leader in the expanded instrumental music curriculum.

In order to prepare future instrumental music educators, careful and conscious decisions should be made to ensure the inclusion of a variety of musical experiences in the preservice curriculum. Implementation of these previous suggestions in an IMTE course of study would help ensure that instrumental preservice educators are prepared

to engage their students in the variety of music settings they are bound to face in an expanded instrumental music education classroom.

Suggestions for Future Research

Music education scholars have written about the need for more research regarding instrumental music education pedagogy. The purpose of this research was to attempt to contribute to this body of literature in a meaningful way by providing an account of a middle school and high school instrumental music teacher. However, questions still remain regarding the expanded instrumental music curriculum its application.

The focus of the current study was on an instrumental music teacher and his relationship to the curriculum and classroom experience. Future replication studies focusing on different participants engaging in an expanded instrumental music classroom could prove useful in the understanding of the expanded instrumental music classroom. These studies could focus on the perspective of the teacher or the perspective of the students.

The current study was limited by a compressed timeframe, due in large part to the researcher's schedule and unforeseen circumstances such as school cancellations. These cancellations meant that some critical observations had to be rescheduled or abandoned, including those central to two of the projects. Future researchers who spend longer periods in a classroom could present a more detailed narrative of the complexities of expanding and then implementing an instrumental music curriculum. Additional saturation in the field also would add trustworthiness, allowing for the voice of participant to be more present throughout the narrative. Additional triangulation points

had to be gathered to rectify this hole in data, although the strength of the discussion ultimately was damaged by this limitation.

Additionally, longitudinal studies following students and teachers engaged in expanded and innovative instrumental music programs over an extended length of time could help educators identify the musical activities and curricular approaches that are most useful to and valued by students. An extended focus on one or several teachers could shed additional light on how implementing an expanded instrumental music curriculum changes teachers musically and in terms of teaching practices and philosophical beliefs about music teaching and learning.

In discussing the strength of narratives, Barrett & Stauffer (2009) wrote that people find connections through stories, told through the lens of those who lived the experience. Consequently, additional narratives framed through the viewpoint of teachers and students engaged in the expanded instrumental music classroom could help teachers seeking to expand their own pedagogy.

Conclusion

The goal of the research was to contribute to the growing body of literature on expanding instrumental curricular opportunities for students. This study was organized to present the lived experience of Todd Robertson, a veteran teacher at Rosemont High School, as he worked in an expanded instrumental music classroom. The Rosemont School District proved to be an inspiring place for instrumental music education, with teacher and students working together to create powerful and relevant musical experiences that contribute to the continued development of life-long music learners and makers.

Instrumental music education has enjoyed a century-long tradition, but little has changed in 100 years. Critics of the current model of instrumental music education in schools argue that it limits the opportunities for students in band, while presenting literature and knowledge that are not relevant to students nor to the aims of music education. Consequently, they suggest means of expanding the instrumental music education curriculum in schools.

An expanded instrumental music education can be organized around four main philosophical frames, each with its own body of literature. The four frames used in this study were Critical Pedagogy, Constructivism, Democratic Education, and Creative Music Making. Applying the principles of each of these frames in instrumental music education setting can contribute to the development of musical skills and independence in instrumental music education students. When taken together they offer a powerful additions and alternatives to the traditional instrumental music curriculum.

Indeed, in this study, the activities that engaged the principles of these frames were powerful, relevant, and engaging for the students. However, they also existed alongside the traditional instrumental music rehearsals and pedagogy. All three ensembles continued to engage in ensemble rehearsals in the Western canonical tradition in addition to participating in activities and projects that were less traditional in nature. Within a single rehearsal, in fact, the learning might begin with a traditional warm up before students were immersed in a creative or more student-centered activity. In this way, the two paradigms worked together to enhance the music education of students.

Instrumental music education needs more examples of exemplary music teachers engaged in expanded instrumental music curricula, and researchers need to illuminate their successes and struggles. By combining the story of Mr. Robertson with others, both similar and different, instrumental music education can include broaden curricular offerings and empower the next generation of instrumental music educators to, in turn, empower their students to become musicians who continue to make music throughout their lives.

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