Chapter 2
Music Teacher Education as Professional Education

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The motives for describing music teacher education as professional education can be manifold. Since professions are regarded to have a certain, powerful position in society (Molander & Terum, 2008; Vågan & Grimen, 2008), along with a kind of exclusiveness and higher status than other vocational groups, some descriptions may seem to rest on a wish to strengthen the status of the music teacher vocation. These endeavours accord with the increased use of the terms 'profession' and 'professionalism' in the rhetoric of other vocational groups in order to express a positive self-image and to obtain recognition of their own competence (Molander & Terum, 2008), hence propelling a process of professionalisation (Fauske, 2008). Other reasons to focus on the profession of music teacher education seem to be based on a notion that it will contribute to the improvement of education by stimulating discussions about what it entails to carry out music teaching professionally, or to a higher degree of professionalism than before (Johansen, 2012). In addition to such normative purposes, it is also held that conceiving music teacher education as professional education may afford new descriptive-analytical perspectives as a basis for its systematic studies (ibid.). Finally, these descriptive-analytical perspectives can be seen to provide a fruitful framework for comparative studies of music teacher education across different cultures and countries (ibid.).

All these reasons to describe music teacher education as professional education necessarily presuppose that the corresponding vocation for which it qualifies its graduates can be defined as a profession. In other words, such descriptions presume that music teaching is conceived as

professional practice, and that music teachers are regarded as the execu-tors of that profession.

In this chapter we will start by suggesting and discussing some ways in which music teaching can be described as a profession. Thereafter the question of understanding music teacher education as professional educa-tion will be addressed. Finally some implications for the future develop-ment of that education will be drawn.

Music Teaching as a Profession

The rich scholarship on professions (Dale, 1989; Handal & Lauvås, 2000; Hookey, 2002; Molander & Terum, eds. 2008; Pembrook & Craig, 2002) suggests a wide array of perspectives by which professions and profes-sionals can be described and characterised. In fact, the only trait that se-emingly unites these theoretical positions is that they do not agree on any one definition (Fauske, 2008). Furthermore, strong voices among relevant scholars argue that such a definition is not even necessary (ibid.), whilst others focus on degrees rather than clear characteristics of professions, such as autonomy, theory and research based knowledge, monopolistic traits and ethical standards (Haug, 2010). This leaves the field open to a broad variety of approaches among which some may seem to be more relevant than others with respect to teaching music.

To throw light on the question of what may designate music teaching as a profession we will start by relating the music teacher vocation to some general traits that are highlighted within the scholarship on pro-fessions. Thereafter the organizational and performative sides of music teaching will be dealt with before turning to professional perspectives on the relationship between music teaching and society, and between music teaching and knowledge.

General traits of professions and the teaching of music

Within the scholarship on professions, a frequent way of describing a profession is to conceive of it as a kind of vocation offering services that solve practical problems based on theoretical knowledge acquired from specialist education (Molander & Terum, 2008). In line with this, music teaching can be described as a profession in that music teachers deal with the teaching and learning of music as problem solving processes. Such a notion entails, for example, helping students to decide on how to proceed

in a classroom group composition, or how to guide a violin student in deciding the length of a phrase, both of which, from this perspective, are seen as problem solving activities. Furthermore it requires that the term 'theoretical knowledge' should include experience-based and theory-based, as well as research-based knowledge, along with the skills required to apply such knowledge wisely to solve the problems at hand. In the words of Aristotle (Gustavsson, 2000), it presumes that theoretical knowledge includes *episteme* as well as *techne* and *phronesis*.

Etzioni's (Dahle, 2008) distinction between professions and semi-professions is of relevance to this discussion insofar as the former refers to, for instance, lawyers and doctors, whilst the latter semi-professional group includes teachers, nurses and social workers. Originally this definition was intended to point out that semi-professionals have less autonomy from supervision and social control than professionals, their status is less legitimated, and their training is shorter (Fauske, 2008; Dahle, 2008). Later on other scholars pointed out that semi-professionals were typically female, hence suggesting that Etzioni's concept was sexually divisive. This critique also questions the fruitfulness of distinguishing between professions and semi-professions at all. Rather, it might be more productive to focus on the degrees to which a profession complies with certain criteria (Haug, 2010), rather than looking for clear criteria by which to assess whether a vocation can be classified as a profession or not. In agreement with the latter point of view, we suggest that applying the term 'semi-professional' does not help to promote any of the rationales for describing music teaching as a profession that were sketched earlier.

Furthermore, studies identifying professions as 'human service organizations' (Svensson, 2008) no doubt contributes to identifying the particularities of music teaching as a profession. Interest in outlining these characteristics is supported by studies of how various professions are characterised by profession-specific traits that can be identified in terms of 'particular knowledge structures' (Lahn & Jensen, 2008) or 'system operations' (Stichweh, 2008). We will return to the question of what distinguishes music teaching from other professions below. Before doing so we will investigate some of the ways in which music teaching can be related to two other groups of professions' general traits, sorted into organisational and performative characteristics (Molander & Terum, 2008).

Organisational characteristics

The music teacher profession demonstrates *monopolistic traits* (Molander & Terum, 2008) insofar as it reserves particular work assignments for individuals with a certain type of education, such as general music teacher or instrumental teacher, and hence regulates the offer of these services in society. This reservation of particular work assignments happens more indirectly in the music teaching profession than in those with strong unions, and it varies according to where the teaching can be positioned on a continuum between formal and informal music education (Folkestad, 2006; Green, 2008; Karlsen & Väkevä, eds., 2012). One example is the fact that the admission to teaching music in Norwegian culture schools is not regulated by law, or by the membership of an association, although there is an apparent agreement among their headmasters concerning the selection of teachers with a conservatory or music academy education. The *autonomy* of professionals is designated by their internal, relative control of their assignments. Tensions and conflicts between professional autonomy and governmental steering are well described in the literature on professions (Fauske, 2008), which position them as a separate sector of society which is located between a centralised bureaucracy and the free market (ibid.) Among music teachers, autonomy is clearly exemplified in the system of private pedagogues which has dominated formal music teaching and learning from long before the birth of the Western school system. Together with other groups, such as general music teachers and instrumental teachers in culture schools, upper secondary school and higher music education those music teachers are designated by high loyalty to the profession and to music studies. For the latter groups loyalty can collide with authorities' expectations of dedicated allegiance with political as well as managerial priorities (Johansen, 2003).

Music teachers organise themselves into *professional organisations* (Molander & Terum, 2008). Even if the strength of these organisations can be questioned, they still enable music teachers to act like a united group with a common self-understanding; and to some extent these organisations function as a collective agency working to legitimise its professional claims.

Finally, the music education profession can be comprehended as *politically constructed* (ibid.), in that the right to teach music in elementary and secondary schools, as well as in tertiary education, is given to music teachers by certain authorities on behalf of society, as a more or less exclusive right to take care of certain assignments. This right to teach is connected

to passing the exams of music teacher education, which regulate who is allowed to enter the profession.

Performative characteristics

The performative side of the music teacher profession includes music teachers *offering services* that do not involve the production of artifacts that can be stored and transported, hence productivity is hard to measure and the working process is hard to control (ibid.). In addition, music teachers serve *clients* who seek help from qualified specialists to handle issues that are significant for them. When considering the music teacher profession as a particular function system (Stichweh, 2008), with characteristics that are specific to its actual knowledge cultures (Lahn & Jensen, 2008), it is necessary to replace 'clients' by students, and to highlight knowledge in, of and about music as a significant part of music teachers' knowledge base. Furthermore, music teaching is *change oriented* because it aims to assist students to develop from one condition to another, such as from uneducated to educated, from unskillful to skilful, and the like (ibid.). In so doing, music teachers handle the specific characteristics of individual cases, which are based on judgments and interpretations, and which draw on a systematic body of knowledge and norms of action. Hence music teaching applies to the often described characteristics of professions as imperfect practices (Molander & Terum, 2008), because it is characterized by uncertainty about its consequences, which further implies that students take risks when attending music education, and that professional music teachers must accept the responsibility for handling uncertainty about the best way to proceed.

Music teaching and society

General traits of professions have been identified in terms of the relations between professions and society ever since the early days of professional research in the eighteenth century (Fauske, 2008). Within this scope music teaching can be described by attending to the concepts of 'confidence', 'stability', 'critique' and 'autonomy'.

The relationship between the professional and the client, in our case between the music teacher and the student, is designated by a particular kind of *confidence*. Professional scholars think that this kind of confidence is qualitatively different from, for example, the confidence between a seller and a buyer (ibid.). In music teaching and learning students entrust

their teacher with the power to make judgement-based decisions about their progress (Grimen, 2008). Underlying this are students' expectations that the teacher will not make decisions that hurt their interests. Furthermore they anticipate the teacher to be capable and competent of taking care of their musical learning according to those interests, as well as to possess the appropriate means for so doing (ibid.).

Following this train of thought, teaching music fits well into the above argument that professions do not engage in the production of artifacts that can be stored and transported, that productivity is therefore hard to measure, and that working processes are hard to control (Molander & Terum, 2008). This is clearly demonstrated in discussions about whether teaching to national standards improves music education (Woodford, ed. 2011), along with debates about whether a school system which is based on commercial and economic ideals can encourage the sustained attention that is required for its students to achieve deep learning (Smith, 2003). Following such issues, a discussion about the priority of what make us human over what makes us competitive (Faust, 2007) has become vital.

This 'non seller-buyer' relationship between teachers and their students also characterises the confidence between the profession and society at large. For music teachers this confidence is expressed through a mandate to teach music, for example in elementary schools, presupposing that their professional expertise is suited to making decisions about the 'hows' and 'whats' of music education, as well as handling the various, possible 'whys' in a fruitful and responsible way. But on the other hand, the present global politics of education convey an extreme 'test optimism'[1] designated by a belief that tests and mappings of students' abilities and achievements are relevant instruments for enhancing student learning and arriving at better schools. Followed by attempts to reduce teachers to business clerks who implement certain particular models of teaching (Westbury, 2000) this makes it necessary for music teachers to include and maintain a *critical attitude*, insofar as they do *not* 'deliver a product', and that their students or those students' parents are not 'customers' buying a 'commodity' from them.

From the days of Herbert Spencer (Fauske, 2008) professions have been regarded as institutions that contribute to social *stability* in that they take part in reproducing and maintaining social order. Hence, as stated in 1933 by Carr-Sounders & Wilson (Molander & Terum, 2008), they

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1 'Test optimism' has been strongly opposed by several educational scholars (see e. g. Darling Hammond, 2011; Smith, 2003).

constitute one of society's stabilizing elements, and, following Dingwall & King (ibid.), they contribute to the handling of the uncertainties of the changing world. Such stabilizing effects must, however, be seen in relation to professional autonomy as described.

Music teaching and knowledge

One trait that characterizes the classical professions, such as doctors and lawyers, is that they are qualified to administer certain kinds of knowledge (Grimen, 2008). Even if music teachers do not enjoy an equally strong and exclusive certification, they nonetheless administer certain kinds of knowledge. What characterizes these kinds of knowledge, and how do they identify music teaching as a profession, as opposed to a discipline or regular vocation?

The knowledge base of the professions is constituted of many, often diverse, elements from different fields (Grimen, 2008). It is their practical use that holds them together as knowledge bases, which designates them as different from disciplines, which latter are characterized by being held together by overarching theories. As such the knowledge base of a profession can be described as a practical synthesis, whilst a discipline rests on a theoretical synthesis (ibid.). The difference between a profession and a regular vocation is designated by the markers of professionalism, such as scientific or scholarly knowledge, whilst vocations do not rest on such kinds of knowledge.

As a profession, music teaching rests on a complex knowledge base within which scientific and scholarly knowledge is complex in itself, since it draws on both social and human sciences. The relationship which is most frequently referred to in this respect is that between the disciplines of musicology and education which meet in the very concept of music education. In turn, both of them are diverse, just as musicology now includes traditional and 'The New Musicology', whilst education draws on hybrids such as educational psychology and sociology. Within music education this leads to further differentiations into, for example, the social psychology of music (North & Hargreaves, eds. 2008) and the sociology of music education (Frölich, 2007; Wright, ed. 2010).

Other elements in the heterogeneous knowledge base for teaching music originate in the hundred-year old master/apprenticeship scheme, which is based on a tradition of teaching and learning to sing and play musical instruments, as well as on the experience-based knowledge of teaching, say, general classroom music, or conducting choirs or wind bands. Such

types of knowledge constitute the practical sides of the knowledge base for music teaching. Among their common traits are the inclusion of various forms of 'acquaintance' knowledge (Swanwick, 1994), 'tacit' knowledge (Polanyi, 1966) and technical as well as cognitive skills, such as those required to play a musical instrument with proper intonation.

The ways in which these parts of the knowledge base for music teaching complement each other in the practices of music teachers in various situations also reveals another trait of music teaching as a profession: its normative aspects. On the basis of a broad knowledge base along with well trained analytical skills, the challenge of practical teaching situations is to decide what will be the best solution. This way professionals´ assignments are characterized by the use of discretion as the situations cannot be standardized (Molander & Terum, 2008). Such discretion in music teaching concerns pedagogical issues as well as those related to judgments of musical quality, as for instance, when it comes to interpreting music.

Whilst contributing to the definition of music teaching as a particular kind of profession, these traits together also constitute central elements in music teachers' in-service professional development (Hookey, 2002), along with demonstrating how the conceptual and logical structure of music teachers' subject are different from the structures of other professions. By being connected to domain-specific knowledge structures, the factors at play in the learning processes of their professional development (Lahn & Jensen, 2008) prove that music teachers belong to a particular profession. Because professional identity is always connected to a particular subject content (ibid.), interactions between colleagues are mediated through material and symbolic tools or artifacts which, in turn, are historically constituted and serve particular aims. These tools or artifacts maintain music teachers' subject knowledge and regulate the relations between music teachers and other professional groups.

Music Teacher Education as Professional Education

When a profession is seen as a kind of vocation offering services based on theoretical knowledge acquired from a specialist education (Molander & Terum, 2008) it suggests that professions are vocations with particular connections with higher education and research (ibid.). In this sense the education of music teachers can be described as 'professional education'

since it takes place within institutions of higher education. Furthermore, it is professional insofar as it aims to assist student music teachers to develop competences that will be relevant for entering the music teacher profession. In the following we will attend to the possible implications of that aim.

The education of music teachers is most often based on studies of: 1) how human beings learn; 2) what they should learn; and 3) how to train student teachers to prepare the ground for such learning to take place. In other words, the basics of music teacher education consist of the subjects of music and education along with the practical training of teachers. One of the classical challenges facing music teacher education is how to make student teachers' learning profit from reflecting the learning experiences of these three areas in each other. Furthermore, the balance between knowing your subject and being good at teaching is under continuous discussion. Drawing on Klafki (Nielsen, 2002), Nielsen (ibid) uses the notions of 'percolation', 'bypassing' and 'field of relation' to discuss this relationship. When the relation between knowing your subject and being good at teaching takes on the characteristics of 'percolation', the music subject that children meet, when for instance they come to their violin lessons, is a more or less reduced product of music as a performing subject. This reduction relies on the misguided belief that if you know music, you also know how to teach it. 'Bypassing' describes a relation wherein musical and educational priorities are only peripherally and occasionally put into contact with each other. This will occur for example when music education serves primarily non-musical interests, and when no concern is shown for questions of the phenomenon of music itself. 'Field of relation' describes the relations between music and education when neither educational nor musical criteria are understood to be sufficient for the selection of content. Sufficient criteria have to be developed "in the border area, or rather in the field of relations between [them]" (ibid., p. 109).

It is within such frames that student music teachers are supposed to collect the experiences, knowledge and skills needed for developing competences that equip them to enter a vocational arena wherein they, as the executors of a profession, can approach and handle the challenges of the ever-expanding and differentiated vocational field as described in chapter 1. In addition they should be prepared for future, professional development, readiness for change and lifelong learning.

The question of 'exemplarity' (Illeris, 1977; Klafki, 1983) becomes paramount to the accomplishment of such ideals, entailing a principle for content selection that look for the best examples. By working with good examples of, say, relevant teaching and learning situations, student

teachers will be able to discover and understand the more profound characteristics and structures underlying those situations. The selection of examples proceeds by attending to selection criteria that have to be elaborated for the education in question. In our case, this leads to six important questions. Firstly, since no education can offer experiences of all the possible future situations that its students will meet, what examples will offer the greatest possibility for fruitful learning transfer? Secondly, what will be the most suitable content and teaching strategies to train, locations to practice teaching, and ways of connecting these contents, strategies and locations? Thirdly, is it sufficient to concentrate student music teachers' practicum arenas to one or two in order to pursue deep knowledge with good transfer effect to various future situations, or should we arrange for student teachers to practice teaching in a wide array of locations across general music and instrumental music, teaching and performing, monocultural and multicultural settings, as well as in both formal and informal situations? Fourthly, questions need to be posed about the views of practice and practicing upon which we base our decisions about student music teachers' practicum, including the sharing of experiences between student music teachers and their practicum supervisors. Fifthly, we need to question student teachers' learning trajectories between the practicum and the subjects they study at the institution, including the development of professional music teacher identity, or identities, which are attached to the various relevant competences, and the ability to develop new ones after entering the profession. Sixth and finally, we need to see all our endeavours in these respects from a larger, social perspective wherein the double obligations of contributing to society's stability, as well as to change and future development, must be addressed. These are among the issues that are the concern of the rest of this volume.

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