

Bendik Fredriksen

Leaving the Music Classroom

*A study of Attrition from Music Teaching
in Norwegian Compulsory Schools*



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Norges musikkhøgskole
Postboks 5190 Majorstua
0302 OSLO

Tel.: +47 23 36 70 00
E-post: post@nmh.no
nmh.no

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Oslo, 15 November 2017

Summary

The background of the present dissertation is a problem faced by several countries: a lack of qualified music teachers. In the Norwegian compulsory school (primary and lower secondary), 38% of the music teachers (teachers who teach music) have no formal qualification at all, and only 8% have more than one year of music studies (Lagerstrøm et al., 2014). In addition to recruiting new teachers, it is important to retain those who already teach. Research from Norway and other countries points out several factors that cause music teacher attrition: low confidence related to lack of musical and/or pedagogical skills, noise, high workload, lack of equipment and facilities, low status, lack of support, and professional isolation.

The purpose of the dissertation is to explore and shed light on factors that cause attrition from music teaching in the Norwegian school, and in general contribute to the knowledge of the realities of teaching music in the Norwegian schools. The research question behind the investigation is:

Why do teachers quit teaching music?

The empirical material consists of semi-structured interviews with seven experienced teachers who chose to leave the music subject wholly or in part. The interviews were transcribed and coded for further analysis. Several of the factors that cause music teacher attrition also apply to teachers in general, and by interviewing this group of teachers the focus is on the music subject and music teaching, rather than teaching per se, as most of them still work as teachers. The dissertation nevertheless aims at describing the music teachers as part of the school in general, and in dialogue with the broader field of

school research. Another important part of the background for the study is the researcher's own background, as a music teacher who opted out of music teaching and turned to teaching other subjects.

There are two theoretical strands in the dissertation, hermeneutics and performance theory, each connected to an analytical approach: narrative analysis and discourse analysis, respectively. The philosophical hermeneutics of Gadamer (2004b) provides a language for accounting for the researcher's pre-understanding and the informants' experiences, as well as the overall epistemological possibilities and restrictions. The narrative analysis consists of constructing narratives from the interviews, and an ensuing discussion that revolves around three thematic clusters: previous research on music teacher attrition, career trajectories (Huberman, 1989; Huberman et al., 1993; Sikes, 1985) and Kelchtermans' "personal interpretative framework" (Kelchtermans, 1993, 1996, 2009b).

The purpose of the discourse analysis (Foucault, 2002a) is to investigate how the informants' choices are conditioned by discourses on a more general level, and thus to be able to generalize by referring to these discourses. Performance theory (McKenzie, 2001) is used as an analytical tool to describe both the development towards performativity in the school, as well as how the teachers in the study make their choices, and construct their professional identity (Butler, 1990/1999) in the discursive network of the school. The material in the discourse analysis consists of previous research, policy documents, curricula, as well as the empirical material. The Norwegian schools have been strongly influenced by a (German) *Bildung*-tradition, and the dominant teacher identity has been a caring, including, pupil-centered teacher (Søreide, 2007a), but this conception is being challenged by increased emphasis on performativity, including testing and accountability (Mausethagen, 2013b). The music subject is a practical subject, dominated by discourses about growth and development, joy and positivity (Varkøy, 2001), and from 2006, musical experiences. The sedimentation of discourses has over time contributed to a significant breadth, which again demands from the music teacher a substantial array of skills and knowledge.

The findings confirm previous research, and important causes for the informants' choice to opt out of music teaching are physical strain, high workload, struggling with classroom management, lack of resources and facilities, and lack of support, largely because of low status. The music subject has never enjoyed high status, but with the turn towards performativity, the low status has been rearticulated. Increased emphasis on core subjects, basic skills and testing

has left the music subject and the knowledge it conveys on the margins of the school. Moreover, many music teachers experience the increased emphasis on assessment as particularly demanding.

In addition to the problematic aspects of teaching music, there are two alluring aspects of teaching several subjects: improved relationship with students and sense of belonging. The wish for a better relationship with the students is a common theme in the interviews, and it corresponds with the dominant, caring teacher identity. The music subject amounts to about one lesson per week, which makes it difficult to establish rapport with the students, and thus fulfil the requirements of a “proper” teacher in Norway. Teaching several subjects also enhances the possibility of professional cooperation, as the music teacher is often the only one at the school. The isolation of the music teacher, combined with the “otherness” of the music subject—a subject on the margins of the school, reduces the teachers’ feeling of belonging, with negative consequences for their well-being.

All in all, there are several factors working together that made the informants in the dissertation opt out of music and seek refuge in other subjects. The music subject emerges as a subject that is difficult to teach, due to the breadth, problems with managing practical activities, physical strain, and consequences of low status, as lack of equipment, facilities and poor organization. On the other hand, the informants wished to have a better relationship with the students, and to be a part of the core activities in the school, with increased professionalism. While the dissertation focuses on the problematic aspects of teaching music, there are also examples of rewarding, meaningful and enjoyable experiences in teaching music. That the teachers in this study nevertheless chose to opt out of music teaching is a display of agency, a move toward obtaining a meaningful and endurable working life. The dissertation closes with suggested implications for further research, policy, and the practice field.

Sammendrag

Bakgrunnen for denne avhandlingen er et problem mange land deler, mangel på kvalifiserte musikk lærere. 38 % av musikk lærerne (lærere som underviser i musikk) i grunnskolen mangler formell kompetanse i musikk, og bare 8 % har mer enn ett år med musikkutdanning (Lagerstrøm et al., 2014). I tillegg til å rekruttere nye lærere er det viktig å beholde de som allerede underviser. Forskning fra Norge og andre land peker på en rekke faktorer som forårsaker frafall blant musikk lærere: lav selvtillit på grunn av manglende musikalske og/eller pedagogiske ferdigheter, støy, høy arbeidsbelastning, manglende rom og utstyr, lav status, lite støtte og profesjonell isolasjon.

Formålet med denne avhandlingen er å utforske og belyse faktorer som fører til frafall fra musikkundervisning i den norske grunnskolen, og i tillegg bidra til kunnskap om hvordan det oppleves å undervise i musikk i skolen. Forskningsspørsmålet bak undersøkelsen er:

Hvorfor slutter lærere å undervise i musikk?

Det empiriske materialet består av semistrukturerte intervjuer med sju erfarne lærere som helt eller delvis har sluttet med å undervise i musikk. Intervjuene ble transkribert og kodet for videre analyse. Flere av faktorene som forårsaker musikk lærer frafall gjelder også lærere generelt, og ved å intervjuer denne gruppen lærere settes fokus på musikkfaget og musikkundervisningen, i stedet for undervisning i seg selv, ettersom de fleste fremdeles jobber som lærere.

Det er allikevel et mål med avhandlingen å beskrive musikk lærerne som en del av skolen som helhet, og i dialog med den bredere skoleforskningen. En annet sentralt aspekt ved bakgrunnen for avhandlingen er forskerens egen bakgrunn, som musikk lærere som valgte å redusere musikkundervisningen til fordel for andre fag.

Det teoretiske grunnlaget består av to retninger, hermeneutikk og performance-teori, som direkte angår hver sin analytiske tilnærming, henholdsvis narrativ analyse og diskursanalyse. Den filosofiske hermeneutikken til Gadamer (2004b) gir et språk for å redegjøre for forskerens forforståelse og informantenes erfaringer, samt de overgripende epistemologiske mulighetene og begrensningene. Den narrative analysen består hovedsakelig av konstruksjon av narrativer basert på intervjuene, og en påfølgende diskusjon som dreier seg rundt tre tematiske grupper: tidligere forskning på musikk lærerfravall, karriereutvikling (Huberman, 1989; Huberman et al., 1993; Sikes, 1985) og Kelchtermans' «personal interpretative framework» (Kelchtermans, 1993, 1996, 2009b).

Formålet med diskursanalysen (Foucault, 2002a) er å undersøke hvordan informantenes valg er betinget av diskurser på et mer overgripende plan, og med det muliggjøre generalisering ved å referere til disse diskursene. Performance teori (McKenzie, 2001) blir brukt som et analytisk verktøy for å beskrive utviklingen mot performativitet i skolen, samt hvordan lærerne i studien gjør valg og konstruerer sin profesjonelle identitet (Butler, 1990/1999) i det diskursive nettverket skolen er en del av. Materialet i diskursanalysen består av tidligere forskning, offentlige dokumenter, læreplaner, og det empiriske materialet. Den norske skolen har vært sterkt påvirket av en (tysk) dannelsesstradisjon, og den dominerende læreridentiteten har vært en omsorgsgivende, inkluderende og elevsentrert lærer (Søreide, 2007a), men denne oppfatningen blir utfordret av en tiltagende performativitet, som inkluderer testing og ansvarliggjøring (accountability) (Mausestagen, 2013b). Musikkfaget har hovedsakelig vært et praktisk fag, dominert av diskurser om vekst og utvikling, glede og positivitet (Varkøy, 2001), og fra 2006 musikalske opplevelser og erfaringer. Sedimenteringen av diskurser har over tid ført til en betydelig bredde, hvilket igjen fordrer at musikk læreren innehar en bred palett av ferdigheter og kunnskaper.

Funnene i studiene bekrefter mye av den tidligere forskningen, og viktige årsaker til informantenes valg om å redusere musikkundervisningen er fysisk belastning, stor arbeidsmengde, vanskeligheter med klasseledelse, manglende rom og ressurser, og lite støtte, i stor grad på grunn av lav status. Musikkfaget

har aldri hatt høy status, men med vendingen mot performativitet har den lave statusen blitt reartikulert. Økende vektlegging av basisfagene, grunnleggende ferdigheter og testing, har plassert musikkfaget og kunnskapen det innehar på ytterkantene av skolen. Mange musikk lærere opplever i tillegg den økte vektleggingen av vurdering som særlig utfordrende.

I tillegg til de problematiske sidene ved å undervise i musikk er det to tiltrekende aspekter ved å undervise i flere fag: bedre kontakt med elevene og følelse av inkludering. Ønsket om en bedre elevrelasjon er felles i alle intervjuene, og sammenfaller med den dominerende, omsorgsgivende læreridentiteten. Musikkfaget utgjør om lag én time i uka, noe som gjør det vanskelig å få en nær relasjon til elevene, og med det oppfylle kriteriene for en «skikkelig» lærer i Norge. Å undervise i flere fag øker også muligheten for faglig samarbeid, etter som det ofte bare er én musikk lærer på hver skole. Den faglige isolasjonen musikk lærerne opplever, kombinert med «annetheten» som preger musikkfaget – et fag på ytterkanten av skolen, reduserer lærernes følelse av å høre til, og dermed trivselen.

Alt i alt er det summen av flere faktorer som fikk informantene i avhandlingen til å velge bort musikkfaget, og søke tilflukt i andre fag. Musikkfaget fremstår som et vanskelig fag å undervise, på grunn av bredden, problemer med å lede praktiske aktiviteter, fysisk belastning, og konsekvenser av lav status som manglende rom, utstyr og uheldig organisering. På den andre siden ønsket informantene å ha en bedre relasjon med elevene, og å være en del av kjerneaktivitetene på skolen, hvilket igjen fører til økt profesjonalitet. Selv om avhandlingen fokuserer på de problematiske sidene ved å undervise i musikk er det også eksempler på givende, meningsfulle og gledefylte erfaringer med å undervise i musikk. Når lærerne i studien allikevel valgte å fjerne seg fra musikkfaget viser de handlingskraft, en vilje til å skaffe seg en utholdelig og meningsfylt arbeidshverdag. Avhandlingen avsluttes med forslag til implikasjoner for videre forskning, bestemmende myndigheter og praksisfeltet.

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1 Introduction

When I left my job as a teacher in June 2014 I was a different teacher than I had been when I began my career six years earlier. I started my career as a music teacher, and left as a teacher in Norwegian, social studies and music, with the responsibility of a class. More important, these few years influenced me at a much more profound level. As a fresh teacher, I was mostly concerned about the subject, and of course about myself. When I left, I had spent countless hours discussing individual students, and their learning and well-being had become my primary interest. Moreover, I had changed from viewing myself as a music teacher to a teacher.

A basic premise of this dissertation on attrition in music teaching is the fact that the teaching profession is not static: we adjust ourselves to the context in which we perform our daily work and we change personally. In that regard, my story is not uncommon. As the choices we must make during our careers are influenced by a range of factors, both internal and external to ourselves, a study of a clearly defined topic such as teacher attrition must touch upon a range of aspects pertaining to the school. Although this study began as an investigation of attrition, it has ended up being a study of many of the different factors that impact the experience of teaching music in the Norwegian compulsory school.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The problem

Norwegian compulsory schools¹ suffer a lack of qualified music teachers (used here to mean every teacher who teaches music). The latest report from Statistics Norway on the formal qualifications of teachers in primary and lower secondary schools (Lagerstrøm et al., 2014) shows some alarming results. Thirty-eight per cent of the music teachers have no formal music education, 17% have between 1 and 29 credits² in music, 19% have 30 to 59 credits, 18% have 60 credits, and just 8% have more than 60 credits in music. In the core subjects (Norwegian, mathematics, English) the minimum requirement for teaching is 60 credits in lower secondary, and 30 in primary. There are no requirements to teach music in primary school, but in lower secondary it is 30 credits. Based on the criteria for the core subjects, only the 8% of music teachers have *more* than 60 credit points in music can be called specialists. It must be added that the picture is a bit more nuanced than these numbers suggest. The most qualified teach more lessons, so when it comes to lessons taught, the percentage of qualified teaching is somewhat higher. Lagerstrøm et al. also show that the number of qualified teachers increases with student age, that is, the percentage of qualified music teachers is higher in lower secondary than in primary.

These figures are not exclusive to the music subject. The competence level of music teachers is average compared to the other subjects. An average level of qualification is nevertheless too low, and this should not be used as an excuse. If anything, the present dissertation shows that music is indeed a difficult subject to teach and requires highly qualified teachers. Teaching a subject one is not qualified to teach is harmful for the status of the profession, for the subject, for the individual teacher and for the students (Gallant & Riley, 2017; R. M. Ingersoll, 1999, 2001a). The problem of unqualified music teachers (and arts teachers in general) has attracted some attention in the media and in reports, as the lessons often result in such substandard teaching methods, as watching

1 Primary and lower secondary, grade 1–10. Children enter these schools in the year they turn six. For a more extensive description of the Norwegian school system, teachers and teacher education, see Brandmo and Nesje (2017).

2 ECTS-credits (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). 60 credits is the equivalent of one year of full time study.

YouTube (Ekspertgruppe for kunst og kultur i opplæringen, 2014; Flydal, 2015; Korsvold, 2014a, 2014b, 2015).

1.1.2 The (music) teaching profession

When many teachers are required to teach subjects for which they are not qualified, it has dire consequences for the teaching profession, and the status of teaching as a profession is in itself a contested issue. R. Ingersoll and Merrill (2011) use several parameters to discuss whether teaching is a profession.³ Some of these are credentials, induction and mentoring, opportunities for professional development, specialization, authority over decision-making, compensation levels and prestige. Their analysis of the teaching profession leads them to the following conclusion:

On the one hand, almost all elementary and secondary schools do exhibit some of the important characteristics of professionalized workplaces. On the other hand, and despite numerous reform initiatives, almost all schools lack or fall short on many of the key characteristics associated with professionalization. Clearly, teaching continues to be treated as, at best, a “semi-profession.” (R. Ingersoll & Merrill, 2011)

Ingersoll and Merrill write from an American context so not all of their findings apply to Norwegian teachers, but the parameters they utilize are relevant in a Norwegian context, and several are important issues raised by the teachers' unions.

The qualification requirements for Norwegian teachers and the admission requirements to teacher education have increased in recent years, and from fall 2017, the general teacher education program will be a five-year master's degree program. Although these and other measures have been introduced to increase the competence of the teachers, there is, according to a survey by the teachers' union, extensive use of unqualified substitute teachers (Utdanningsforbundet, 2013). A recurring topic in the media is whether one even needs teacher education to be a (good) teacher. This view is often advocated by persons with a university degree, who are unable to obtain a permanent teaching position without some formal teacher education. Opportunities for professional development have increased over the last years, due to government-funded programs for supplementary training, but the admissions are limited, so not all applicants receive these opportunities. Thus, although the requirements for teaching are

3 Compared to accepted professions such as lawyer and medical doctor.

being raised, this is undermined by the use of substitute teachers and resisted by teachers within the system. Induction programs and mentoring of novice teachers are not yet fully implemented, but programs have been initiated (Elstad et al., 2014), and there are now several opportunities for mentoring education. As we will see in Chapter 2, existing research points to the importance of induction programs for retaining teachers. Pay is an area where tensions have been strong, and where the teachers' experience of falling short compared to other professions is most profound (Elstad et al., 2014). Over several decades the wage growth for teachers has been small and for the highest educated teachers the purchasing power has decreased (Aanensen, 2010). Mari Lande With (2016, p. 67ff) contests this view, however, and finds that it primarily concerns those who are educated within the natural sciences.

As we see, Norwegian teachers struggle to fulfill the professional requirements proposed by Ingersoll and Merrill, but there are several definitions of a profession, making "profession" a contested concept (Molander & Terum, 2008). The classic definition contains research-based knowledge, autonomy, ethical standards and accountability (Elstad et al., 2014; Mausethagen, 2013b). While practical and relational knowledge is a hallmark for several occupations, the basis in scientific knowledge is what distinguishes the professions from other occupations (Grimen, 2008). According to Grimen, another feature of the professions is the heterogeneity of the knowledge base. Unlike the disciplines, professions make use of knowledge from several traditions, a synthesis that is guided by the praxis. Even though scientific knowledge distinguishes professions, to perform a profession involves practical knowledge, and thus practical knowledge is crucial for all professions. The prominence of theoretical knowledge in the western world can be traced back to the Aristotelian trisection of knowledge into *episteme*, *techne* and *phronesis* (Aristoteles, 2013; Gadamer, 2010; Grimen, 2008; Gustavsson, 2000). *Techne*—practical, productive knowledge—and *phronesis*—practical, moral wisdom or prudence—have been seen as inferior, largely because they have been regarded as unable to speak any form of truth, and thus not are not considered *knowledge* per se (Grimen, 2008; Gustavsson, 2000). This view of knowledge is today again gaining ground and affecting schools and teachers. Teachers and the teachers' union have had a certain resistance towards research-based knowledge, and with increased demand for research-based practice, tensions arise. Music teachers (and teachers in other practical subjects) are in a special position in this regard, as their professional knowledge is practical to a significant degree. As teaching music

in many ways differs from “regular” teaching, one can also question whether all aspects of research-based practice apply to the music subject. Teaching outside of the norms of good teaching can result in decreased status. On the other hand, one can question whether academic, research-based knowledge is the most important part of the music teacher’s competence, as many (such as my informants) have extensive musical competence acquired outside of formal education, which challenge the primacy of research-based, scientific knowledge in the music teaching profession.

While the employers’ organizations link teacher professionalism to the competence of the teachers, the teachers’ union emphasizes teacher autonomy (Mausethagen & Granlund, 2012). A general definition of autonomy by Molander and Terum (2008) is the internal control and definition of standards within the professions, based on their professional knowledge (Molander & Terum, 2008). Ingersoll stresses a high degree of self-control and self-governance (R. M. Ingersoll, 2003b, p. 58). Until 2006, the curricula defined the content of the subjects, while the teachers had methodological freedom. The curriculum of 2006 more or less inverted this relation, as the previous *learning content* of the subjects was replaced with *competence goals*, thus, teachers were allowed to decide more of the content, while the expectation of research-based practice increased. Although an intention behind the reform that included the curriculum was to increase freedom for each school and teacher, teachers experience the loss of control over the teaching methods as a threat to their agency and would rather have control over methods than content (Mausethagen & Mølsted, 2014).

In theory, the reform and curriculum of 2006 have strengthened the autonomy of the teachers, but when the teachers have experienced the opposite, it is largely because of accountability. While *responsibility* is a professional ethics of the profession, being *accountable* for the students’ results involves control mechanisms to a much greater extent. The problem arises when there is an imbalance between accountability and agency. “It does not make sense to hold somebody accountable for something they don’t control, nor does it make sense to give someone control over something for which they are not held accountable” (R. M. Ingersoll, 2003b, p. 245).

In sum, music teachers belong to a profession that is going through some significant changes, which some experience as a threat to their professionalism. As teachers, they must relate to these changes, and whether or not they identify as teachers, they are surrounded by them, and the informants in the

present dissertation chose to become teachers. The professional identity of my informants is a topic I will return to later in the dissertation.

1.1.3 The field

Music has a long history in the Norwegian schools. First as a singing subject, serving the interests of the church and later, the nation, before gradually turning towards a broader, autonomous music subject with an end in itself. Until the last few decades, the music subject has suffered from low popularity among both teachers and students (H. Jørgensen, 2001), and teacher competence has always been an issue. The content of the subject was (at least previously) hardly addressing the students' interests, with meticulous rehearsal of psalms and songs about the fatherland. The popularity of music as a subject is probably partly due to an increased openness towards music that interests the students, as well as to an expansion of activities in the subject. The present dissertation shows that the expansion is not without challenges, as the breadth of the music subject requires an array of skills from the teachers. Today, the music subject has three main subject areas, making music, composing, and listening, all of them with several competence goals. The purpose of the music subject has changed over the years, as indicated above, and can be recognized rather by the dispersion, than the unity of the purpose. The present curriculum, however, revolves around the primacy of the musical experience, a significant step away from the long tradition of viewing music as an instrument for other aims in the school, such as social cohesion, and religious and national upbringing.

The time of writing the present dissertation is of significant importance, as recent decades have seen some substantial changes to the Norwegian schools. International development towards New Public Management, performance management, and accountability in the school has reached Norway, and picked up speed after the first PISA-test in 2000, which showed that Norway was below average in the OECD area. It sparked a political process that ended with the new curriculum in 2006, and an increased focus on the core subjects (math, Norwegian, English), and knowledge (that can be tested). This development can hardly be seen as helpful for the music subject, and has further served to reduce the status of the subjects that are not featured in national and international tests. Despite these international developments, the Norwegian schools have retained many of their core values, such as caring, adapting for each individual student, and a basic aim of providing the students with a broad,

general education—*Bildung*, in a comprehensive school. There have always been tensions in the Norwegian system between a *Bildung*-oriented school and an American-inspired “knowledge school,” so in a certain sense the changes of recent decades are not entirely new. However, a new language, new modes of managing schools, and a different view of knowledge has emerged, and the impact of the recent changes are significant. The development of the school and the music subject will be presented more thoroughly in Chapter 6.

There are several paths to the teaching profession today, with two main groups. First, the generalist teachers, who have their background from integrated teacher education. The length of the generalist teacher education has increased from two years, to a full master’s program in 2017. These teachers form the bulk of Norwegian teachers. The other major group consists of university educated teachers, who in addition have a one-year teacher education course (PPU). For music teachers, there are further alternatives, including a specialized music teacher education from teacher education institutions or music academies, and an added educational degree for trained musicians. Thus Norwegian music teachers form a heterogeneous group, and any definition must be broad. In the present dissertation I regard everyone who teaches music as a music teacher. Much of the previous research on the subject (see Chapter 2) deals with the specialized music teachers, but in Norway these are a minority, and the present dissertation attempts to increase the knowledge of the teachers who form the majority of those who actually teach music. The dispersion of the field means that a small-scale study, like the present dissertation, will never be exhaustive, but can only provide a glimpse of the realities of a handful of teachers. On the other hand, these teachers are part of a greater whole, and by viewing them in terms of the major developmental lines it is possible, I believe, to transfer the experiences of these teachers to a level of generalization.

1.1.4 The researcher

My own history is an important part of the background of the study, as I myself have been a specialized music teacher who reduced the amount of music lessons, for the benefit of other subjects. It means that my position as a researcher is both as an insider and outsider, and I bring with me a substantial pre-understanding. The research question (see below) is in many ways a transformation of my own background into a question. To account for my own background, and for the sake of validity, I will provide glimpses into my own story through

the dissertation. It also means that the present study has a reflective side to it, as the work has influenced how I view my own history.

My main educational background stems from musicology at the University of Oslo, where I specialized in popular music research and music theory. After finishing my master's degree, I worked in a kindergarten for one year before commencing a one-year teacher education course (PPU) at the Norwegian Academy of Music. I then worked in a combined primary and lower secondary school in Oslo for six years, where I taught music exclusively for the first two years, and later took a part-time education in Norwegian for lower secondary, and ended up teaching Norwegian, music and social studies. Although this background causes bias, it has also been a necessity for conducting the study, as I can relate to the lived realities of my informants.

1.2 Aim and purpose

The main purpose of the present dissertation is to shed light on why teachers opt out of teaching music in compulsory education. This is an exploratory study, and it entails investigating which *factors* cause attrition from music teaching, as well as how the teachers' *development* informs their choice. The study of Lagerstrøm et al. (2014) indicates another feature of music teaching. As music teachers generally teach less than five music lessons per week, it is likely that most of them teach other subjects as well. Most of my informants reflect this picture, as they come from an educational background where they are qualified to teach other subjects than music. In that regard, I want to view the music teachers as *teachers* in general as well, and describe their actions in light of both research on music teachers and teachers in general. As they are workers in the institution of the school it is likely that their choices are informed by mechanisms that concern the school as a whole. Most of the existing research on music teachers focuses on specialized music teachers, but considering the small amount of specialized music teachers in Norwegian compulsory education it is likely that much of the existing research does not concern the larger part of them. With a wider understanding of "music teacher," part of the purpose of this dissertation is to fill in some of these knowledge gaps. Most music teachers in Norway have less than 60 credits in music, and I believe it is safe to claim that to view them as musicians who became teachers is imprecise. Being a music teacher in the Norwegian schools is more teacher than music.

As H. Jørgensen (2001) writes towards the end of his article on the history of the Norwegian music subject, it is difficult to know what really goes on inside the music classrooms, and it is highly likely the students in the Norwegian compulsory schools encounter very different versions of the music subject, depending on the teacher. This is not exclusive to the music classroom. In a widely read article, Black and Wiliam (1998) call the classroom “a black box,” where we put something in, and expect some output, but we do not really know what goes on inside. It is my hope that the present dissertation will contribute to the body of knowledge, by offering a glimpse of the realities of teaching music, as seen through the eyes of a small group of music teachers.

The problem that guides the investigation is the dearth of qualified music teachers. The overall aim, which transcends the present dissertation, is to contribute to the retention of music teachers, by increasing the knowledge about the struggles of teaching music, and the needs that must be met to make music teaching manageable. I deeply believe that music is an important subject in the school, but to function in the school it must be taught properly by qualified teachers. I do not hesitate to claim that music is a difficult subject to teach, as it demands from the teachers a wide range of skills and knowledge. It is without a doubt achievable, but as the present dissertation will show there are several challenges that can and must be addressed.

1.3 Research question

The overall research question of the present dissertation is:

Why do teachers quit teaching music?

The word “quit” can here mean both leaving music teaching entirely, and in part. It is important to mention that the informants in the present dissertation did not quit teaching entirely, and by choosing this group I wish to bring focus to the music subject, as they in general are content with being teachers. The dissertation features an investigation of how a small group of teachers explain individually why they made their choice, and how their stories can be connected to mechanisms on a general level.

1.4 Overview of the study

Chapter 2 presents a review of research on teacher attrition in general and music teacher attrition in particular. The latter outnumber the former. I have included both categories to see whether music teachers quit for other reasons than teachers in general. The difference is also interesting as the teachers I have interviewed still work as teachers. I have striven to include research from Norway, but most of the literature is from other countries.

The theoretical framework of the dissertation is presented in **Chapter 3**. There are two theoretical strands, hermeneutics and performance theory. The hermeneutic strand consists mainly of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, and in addition to directly informing the narrative analysis in Chapter 5, it functions as the epistemological basis for the dissertation. Central to the choice of hermeneutics is the importance of explaining my position as a researcher in a field where I recently have been a practitioner. Performance theory predominately informs the discourse analysis in Chapter 6. The impact of performativity in the school and society at large has increased substantially the last decades, and has brought with significant changes to the school. The foundation for performativity is presented here, as well how the concept performance can inform the investigation on several levels. In relation to the main sources for the description of performance theory, and as an anticipation of the discourse analytical approach I have include a presentation of a few publications by Foucault that are of importance for the present dissertation.

In **Chapter 4** the methodological approach is accounted for. The narrative analysis includes both the construction of the narratives, and how these narratives are analyzed. The discourse analytical program is primarily inspired by Foucault, with inclusion of literature on discourse analytical methodology.

The results of the narrative analysis are presented in **Chapter 5**. The bulk of the chapter consists of the narratives constructed from the interview material. The narratives feature the career stories of my informants, and their path into the profession. The most important aspect is obviously how their choice to opt out of music teaching is informed by their past and surroundings. The chapter ends with a discussion of some important aspects, revolving around previous research, research trajectories and Kelchtermans' personal interpretative framework.

In **Chapter 6** the analysis is brought further by introducing a discursive level. The purpose of performing a discourse analysis is to investigate how my informants' choices are conditioned by discourses surrounding the school, and thus be able to generalize theoretically by referring to discourses that apply to the school in general. The first part of the chapter consists of a description of how various discourses have gained ground, both as they have been presented in previous research, and how they are visible in policy documents and curricula. The presentation features discourses about both the school and the music subject. In part two I apply the results of part one to the interviews, and investigate how my informants are informed by them.

Chapter 7 consists of a discussion where I attempt to collect the threads and point out a few central themes. In addition to a more theoretical discussion of how the structure of the dissertation has served to answer the research question, I discuss how the music subject emerges as *other* in the school, and how the teachers' professional identity is constructed. The closing chapter consists of conclusion and implications.

The sequence of the chapters in the present dissertation represents the order in which the investigation was conducted, and the main drafts of the chapters were written. By reading the chapters in sequence the reader will gain insight into how the research process unfolded over time. Although there might be a few abrupt turns, and instances of what might be perceived as lack of coherence, I have chosen to keep the order, as it represents the development of the research process.

2 Previous research

2.1 Introduction

The literature review for this dissertation serves several purposes. Initially, the main purpose was to develop research questions and position the dissertation in relation to existing research. The review has also served the creation and development of the interview guide. Finally, the literature has provided the background for the discussions in the present dissertation, in combination with the theoretical framework.

Literature searches were executed through databases (RILM, JSTOR, ERIC) and within selected journals. Search words used were *music*, *teacher*, *retention*, *attrition*, *turnover*, *burnout* and *identity* in various combinations. Some journals were also browsed manually, namely: *Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education*, *Diskussion Musikpädagogik*, *Musikpädagogische Forschung (AMPF)*, *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*. In addition, several articles were discovered through “snowballing.” The searches can be roughly divided into three categories: teacher retention/attrition (in general), *music* teacher retention/attrition, and music teacher identity. The reason for studying both teachers in general and music teachers specifically is to investigate whether there is a difference between the two in terms of reasons for leaving the occupation. I also believe that the causes of attrition from teaching in general are largely applicable to music teachers, who are, of course teachers first and foremost. ‘Music teacher identity’ is included because I consider it to be intrinsic to the question about attrition. Teacher retention/attrition is an extensive field of

research, but here the review of retention/attrition in general is more cursory than the presentation of research on music teachers, with a description of some salient topics. Music teachers are the object of research in the present dissertation, and they must therefore form the primary focus of the review.

In the body of research on teacher turnover, three terms are used to categorize the teachers' career trajectories: "leavers," "stayers" and "movers." The first denotes attrition, the second retention, and the last those who migrate between workplaces, but remain in the teaching profession. If we regard a national school system as a whole, migration is a smaller problem than attrition, as the number of teachers remains the same, but as Ingersoll mentions, "from an organizational perspective and from the viewpoint of those managing at the school-level, movers and leavers have the same effect—in either case it results in a decrease in staff, which usually must be replaced" (R. M. Ingersoll, 2003a, p. 9). With some exceptions, like retirement and school staffing actions (R. M. Ingersoll, 2001b), the reasons for leaving and moving are quite similar. In this dissertation, the topic is teachers who move from teaching music towards other tasks—migration within the school. If we regard each subject as an entity within the school, then this "intra-migration" will produce the same problems for the music subject, as migration does for the school.

Kelchtermans (2017) makes the important point that concerns about retention and attrition must take into account teaching quality. Although attrition has serious consequences, simply avoiding it is not the solution. Teachers who are unfit for the job or who really do not like teaching are not beneficial, and retaining them for the sake of avoiding attrition is not the answer. As Kelchtermans puts it, the issue, for education, is "*the need to prevent good teachers from leaving the job for the wrong reasons*" (Kelchtermans, 2017, p. 5, italics in original). And it is this formulation of the problem that forms the basis of the of the present dissertation and most of the literature in the present chapter.

A large portion of the literature deals with pre-service or novice teachers, which seems to be a trend in research on teachers (Elstad et al., 2014). There are two good reasons for this: first, the attrition rates are highest during the first years of teaching, second, pre-service and novice teachers are easier to make contact with than more senior ones. Unfortunately for research purposes, it is especially difficult to reach those who have already quit (Kunnskapsdepartementet & TNS-Gallup, 2011). Although the pre-service and novice teachers may be the most important group it reveals that there is a need for more research on experienced teachers.

A challenge with this literature review has been finding literature that is highly relevant for the present study. Only a small portion of the literature discussed here addresses the Norwegian schools, and there are significant differences between different national school systems, especially when it comes to music teaching. The cultural differences between the various countries are also an important factor. This means that not all aspects mentioned are necessarily present in or relevant for the Norwegian schools. Aspects encountered that are not relevant to the Norwegian system include systems with different organization and content of music teaching, and the lower wages for music teachers in some countries. Nevertheless, some challenges, such as the challenge with teaching a large group of students at the same time, are universal, and the biggest surprise when working through this material was the similarities among the different countries.

I will now address turnover among teachers—both in general and music teachers specifically—in more detail. The review will consist of presentation of themes emerging from the literature, and some studies will be presented in more detail.

2.2 Teacher turnover in general

Teacher turnover is a field of research that has gained increased attention over the last decades. With growing and greying populations, teacher shortage has become a major challenge for governments worldwide. The latest predictions for Norway show that the teacher deficit in year 2020 will be about 20,000 (Gjefsen et al., 2014). As Ingersoll (2001b) claims in a much-cited article, the solution is not to educate more teachers, but to retain those who are educated. Retaining educated teachers could solve many problems in Norway as well, as in 2008 only 55% of the educated teachers in Norway worked as teachers (Kunnskapsdepartementet & TNS-Gallup, 2011). If we ignore the obvious reasons for turnover, i.e. retirement, childbirth, and staff transfer, there are, broadly speaking, two causes for turnover: job dissatisfaction and the prospect of a better job somewhere else. In the following we will mostly delve into reasons for dissatisfaction.

2.2.1 The practice-shock of novice teachers

The problem of attrition is biggest among novice teachers. In the US, as many as 40–50% of the teachers leave in the first five years (R. M. Ingersoll, 2003a, 2007). The most salient factor for American teachers seems to be low salary (compared to other professions with the same amount of education) (Darling-Hammond, 2003; R. M. Ingersoll, 2001b; R. M. Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Cooper and Alvarado, claim that working conditions, rather than salaries, inform the teachers choice to leave (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006, p. 18). A similar observation was made in a Norwegian report from 2011, the main purpose of which was to discover how to bring educated teachers back to teaching (Kunnskapsdepartementet & TNS-Gallup, 2011). While low wages are part of the picture, several other factors seem just as important if not more: Overload of tasks and roles to fill, lack of time, class management and class sizes, lack of influence, lack of cooperation among teachers, lack of administrative support, insufficient resources and facilities, out-of-field teaching, low status, and professional stagnation. All amount to the experience of a practice-shock. These factors appear in several international papers as well, so it seems that they are widely shared (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2003; R. M. Ingersoll, 2001b, 2003a; R. M. Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Mason & Matas, 2015). Among these, poor administrative support and problems with discipline/classroom management are mentioned most frequently.

The high occurrence of attrition among novice teachers indicates that, for many, teacher training is insufficient. Ingersoll, Merrill, and May (2014) studied the impact of teacher education on attrition and found that the pedagogical preparation was the most important factor for retaining teachers. “Those with more training in teaching methods and pedagogy—especially practice teaching, observation of other classroom teaching and feedback on their own teaching—were far less likely to leave teaching after their first year on the job” (see also Darling-Hammond, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2003; R. Ingersoll et al., 2014, p. 1). Cooper and Alvarado even state that “the most academically able new teachers are most likely to leave” (Cooper & Alvarado, 2006, p. 18).

The presence of induction programs and mentoring seems to facilitate the transition from education to working life, and to reduce attrition of beginning teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2003; R. M. Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Ingersoll and Smith found that, while mentoring and induction programs in general have a positive effect on turnover, some activities are more fruitful than others: “The

most salient factors were having a mentor from the same field, having common planning time with other teachers in the same subject or collaboration with other teachers on instruction, and being part of an external network of teachers” (T. M. Smith & Ingersoll, 2004, p. 706). It might be that the presence of mentoring/induction remedies the insufficiencies in teacher education.

An important aspect is that most of the research mentioned above is from the US, and cultural differences must be considered. As Cooper and Alvarado (2006) mention, the attrition rates in the UK and USA are considerably higher than in other countries. In their study of attrition among Swedish teachers Lindquist, Nordanger, and Carlsson (2014) found the attrition rate to be significantly lower in Sweden than in the US. In Norway, 33% of the teachers quit within five years (numbers obtained in 2012) (Tiplic et al., 2015, p. 17n). In the US, a substantial percentage of the leavers are women who leave working life for several years when starting a family and giving birth. In the Scandinavian countries, having a baby rarely results in more than a year away from the profession, due to child benefit and subsidized kindergartens. Lindquist et al. (2014) emphasize that it is difficult to assert what causes attrition in their study, because teachers leave and re-enter the profession, and their opinions change over time. They do find indications of the recent policy changes leading to attrition, and they raise the question of whether the younger generations are less faithful to their workplace. In Chapter 5 I will return to the struggles of the novice teacher in a discussion of teacher career trajectories.

2.2.2 Research on Norwegian teachers

There is little research on teacher attrition in the Norwegian schools, and the findings predominately correspond with international research. One factor that is highly salient in teacher attrition is burnout (Hong, 2010). which has been defined a combination of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (according to the Maslach burnout inventory, see McLain, 2005; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Many of the above-mentioned factors can be contributors to burnout if they prevail and cause stress over time. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) studied the relations between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, self-efficacy,⁴ and job satisfaction, finding, among

4 *“Perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”* (italics in original) (Bandura, 1997, p. 3).

other things, that the strongest predictor of job satisfaction was the level of emotional exhaustion. The relation to parents emerged as an important factor, positively for self-efficacy, and negatively for depersonalization. In another article, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) studied the relations between six school variables (value consonance, supervisory support, relations with colleagues, relations with parents, time pressure, and discipline problems) and their impact on the teachers' feeling of belonging, emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and, finally, motivation to leave the profession. All six variables were indirectly related to motivation to leave teaching, with emotional exhaustion being the strongest predictor for job dissatisfaction, which again causes attrition. Their findings underscore the importance of belonging, and confirm the relation between time pressure and exhaustion.

Tiplic et al. (2015) investigated attrition among Norwegian novice teachers by testing nine hypothesized factors. They found organizational and contextual factors to be most important, resulting in four predictors of retention: collective teacher efficacy, teacher-principal trust, role conflict, and affective commitment. Like Skaalvik and Skaalvik's research, Tiplic et al. emphasize the importance of belonging.

2.3 Music teacher turnover

Much of the existing research on music teachers deals with specialized music teachers whose educational background is solely in music. Within this body of research certain topics appear repeatedly, especially that of the perceived dichotomy between being a teacher or being a musician. Many specialized music teachers were educated in music academies or conservatories, where the emphasis on performing permeates the institutions. However, in the Norwegian context, with the low number of specialized music teachers, to focus exclusively on these teachers would lead to a skewed result. Most Norwegian music teachers have a more general educational background and they are not under the influence of the conservatory's emphasis on performance. Nevertheless, the information from these studies is informative, in that it tells something about the music *subject*, and the experience of teaching music in compulsory education. Some of the challenges the non-specialists meet differs from the specialists and will be mentioned explicitly.

It is difficult to find any solid documentation on whether music teachers are more prone to leave compared to other teachers. Siebert (2008) and Hamann and Gordon (2000) claim that the attrition rate is higher for music teachers than for the rest of the teaching cohort. On the other hand, Hancock (2009) found that the attrition rates in the US are quite similar among the groups, and Madsen and Hancock (2002) found that, after six years, the attrition rate was lower among music teachers compared to other teachers. All of these studies are from the US, which is difficult to transfer to a Norwegian context. There are also several studies that suggest that music is the least favored subject by teachers (Garvis, 2013; Hennessy, 2000; Holden & Button, 2006; H. Jørgensen, 2001; Mills, 1989), which indicates an above-average attrition rate. There is no recent documentation of the attrition rate among Norwegian music teachers, or of the rate at which Norwegian teachers opt out of music teaching, so the question remains to be answered.

In the following I will present the research under various topics, which regularly appear in the literature on music teachers.

2.3.1 Competence, confidence, and self-efficacy

In this section, I discuss the question of skill and knowledge for teaching music. I choose also to combine the topics confidence and self-efficacy, as I see them closely related in this context.⁵ The challenges for generalist teachers and specialist teachers are somewhat different, and I will present them separately. The link between low confidence and attrition is not mentioned explicitly in all of the research, but it obviously leads to dissatisfaction, which again causes attrition.

Generalists

A returning topic in the literature on generalist teachers is the lack of confidence for teaching music. Several studies indicate that confidence for teaching music is significantly lower than for other subjects (Garvis, 2013; Hennessy, 2000; Holden & Button, 2006; Jeanneret, 1997; Mills, 1989; Seddon & Biasutti, 2008; Stunell, 2010). An important reason for this lack of confidence is the teachers'

5 Bandura explains the difference between the two concepts: "Confidence is a nondescript term that refers to strength of belief, but does not necessarily specify what the term is about. (...) Perceived self-efficacy refers to belief in one's power to produce given levels of attainment" (Bandura, 1997, p. 382). In research discussed here, confidence is connected to one's (perceived) skills, thus the difference is reduced.

estimates of skills required to teach music. As Mills found a few decades ago, “Some students think that they need to have musical skills customarily associated with musical specialists—piano playing, fluent music reading, an inside-out knowledge of ‘the classics’—if they are to be effective generalist teachers of music” (Mills, 1989, p. 133). The view of music as a specialist subject is also found in Hammel (2012), Holden and Button (2006), Bresler (1993) and Hennessy (2000). In addition, several of the teachers in these studies have a quite narrow definition of musical skills, often limited to being able to play an instrument, sing or being able to read notation (de Vries, 2011; Holden & Button, 2006; Wiggins & Wiggins, 2008).

The teachers’ musical background affects the confidence for teaching music, but the literature is somewhat contradictory. In his study of music teaching by first year generalist teachers in Australia, de Vries (2011) confirmed the studies of Hallam et al. (2009) and Wiggins and Wiggins (2008) regarding musical background. Having played an instrument prior to teacher education significantly increased the teachers’ confidence for teaching music. In the study of Hallam et al. those who played more than one instrument had the highest level of confidence. Bresler made a similar observation: the teachers with some musical background were more keen to include musical activities other than passively listening to music (Bresler, 1993). In a study by Russell-Bowie (2009) of challenges to teaching music in five countries, the informants reported lack of personal musical experiences (and lack of priority for music in schools) as the most severe impediment for music teaching. Hennessy (2000) on the other hand, found in her study of pre-service teachers that several of her informants had actually played an instrument earlier, but still exhibited low confidence for teaching music. They also had had negative experiences with music in secondary school. “Such experiences seemed to have left many of them with feelings of inadequacy and a strong belief that in order to teach music one had to be an accomplished performer” (Hennessy, 2000, p. 188). From this we can infer that in addition to prior experiences with music, a positive self-assessment of their musical skills is essential.

Specialists

Among specialized teachers the problems with competence is a bit different. Several of these teachers are proficient musicians and experts on their instruments. But, depending on the instrument, these skills are seldom utilized when teaching music in compulsory education. According to Scheib, under-utilization

of skills can be a contributing factor to job dissatisfaction for music teachers (Scheib, 2003, 2006). When specialized music teachers' experience difficulties regarding competence it more often concerns having the relevant musical skills, or their pedagogical skills.

An important aspect regarding musical skills is knowledge of genres and musical traditions. Sloboda (2001) even questions whether classroom music is an appropriate vehicle for music education, in part due to the discrepancy between the teachers' background (mainly from classical music) and the musical world of the students. Lamont et al. (2003), two years later, partly contradict these notions and describe generally positive attitudes towards music in the schools, even though enjoyment of class music lessons decreases with age, as does academic interest in music. They suggest that this might be due to a change in teachers' attitudes, and to the fact that "the inclusion of active music-making across a range of musical styles and genres is promoting a positive attitude amongst pupils, enabling them to assert a degree of ownership over their music-making that is far less possible with classical music" (Lamont et al., 2003, p. 239).

Welch et al. (2010) mention pupils' distinction between "school music" and music outside school, and the paradox of the popularity of music in society, and the unpopularity of secondary school music. Their solution is to develop a more holistic music education and teacher education, "and provide appropriate encounters in schools where successful genre diversity is demonstrated and modeled" (Welch et al., 2010, p. 27). A similar observation was made by de Vries (2010b). In a larger study of the career trajectories of Austrian music teachers (Bailer, 2009d), the conflict between genres seems to be a generational one, where the older teachers are educated solely in the western classical tradition, while the younger teachers are more inclined towards popular music. One of the informants reports of losing tasks due to students choosing another teacher's more popular-oriented teaching (Pecher-Havers, 2009b, p. 96). In his dissertation on music teacher educators in Norway, Sætre found that on the one hand the course structure is quite conservative, and several of the teacher educators have their backgrounds from conservatoires and musicology. On the other hand, he identified a move towards popular music and aural work forms (Sætre, 2014, p. 214, more in chapter 6). Scandinavia is arguably the area where the integration of popular music has reached furthest (Christophersen & Gullberg, 2017; Karlsen & Väkevä, 2012), but other parts of the world are developing as well (Green, 2008, p. 2f; G. D. Smith et al., 2017). It might be that teaching music that reflects the students' own preferences to a greater extent

will make the music subject more relevant for the students, and thus perhaps more enjoyable to teach.

A notable example of research on music teachers is the combined efforts in Sweden of Stephan Bladh (2002, 2004) and Christer Bouij (1998a, 1998b, 2004); and Sweden's cultural proximity with Norway makes these studies particularly relevant for the present dissertation. They studied a group of music education students in Sweden from the beginning of their education to a few years into their working life, both quantitatively (Bladh) and qualitatively (Bouij), and they exchanged, and incorporated each other's material. A general finding among the students they studied was that though they saw themselves as teachers during their years in higher education, this perception shifted quickly after they started working, and a large portion of the informants wanted to quit teaching wholly or in part within a few years into their career. Their education had to some extent failed to prepare them for the life as a music teacher. Several of the informants felt that the institutions had failed to provide them with a realistic view of the teaching occupation, e.g. during the practice period, where they mostly met well behaved, music interested students (Bladh, 2002, p. 142ff).

The skill acquired during music teacher education is another prominent topic. One issue is the above-mentioned conflict between western classical music and popular music (Bouij, 1998a, p. 197ff), another is whether music teacher education provides the students with the necessary skills.

The opinion that the music teacher education program did not prepare them for working life is rather common in our data. It is not certain, however that the main cause lies in the music teacher curriculum as such, rather than in the student culture and the collective meanings arising from that. (Bouij, 2004, p. 11)

The socialization that takes place during education is very powerful, and it provides little support for the teacher role, compared with the role of the performer, which has the highest status (Bouij, 1998a, p. 340). One of their informants even felt she had been "cheated," in that she had not gained an understanding of what skills that were useful for teaching (Bouij, 1998a, p. 183).

Notwithstanding extensive musical skills, to be an effective music teacher requires pedagogical skills as well, and obtaining comprehensive pedagogical skill is also a prerequisite for teacher retention (Greher & Tobin, 2006). Wiggins and Wiggins (2008) found that some of the generalist teachers in their study were able to provide better music lessons than the specialists, due to their pedagogical ability.

Classroom management

A deficiency in pedagogical skills that surfaces regularly, especially during the first years of the working life, is that of classroom management and student discipline. Novice teachers' struggles with classroom management emerged as one of two key issues for self-confidence in Blair's (2008) study of mentoring. "Their perceived lack of successful classroom management skills caused them to doubt themselves as music teachers" (Blair, 2008, p. 104). Eros (2013), Bladh (2002, p. 141f), and Bailer (2009c) all make the point that classroom management and ability to handle discipline problems are important factors in overcoming the practice shock of the first years. This indicates that to develop skills and knowledge about classroom management quickly is an important factor for retaining music teachers, as failing to do so can lead to burnout (McLain, 2005). Welch et al. even found that 19% of their informants chose not to teach in secondary school as they anticipated problems with discipline and classroom management (Welch et al., 2010, p. 19). Nevertheless, problems with discipline and disinterested students seem to remain a burden for music teachers (Bailer, 2009a; Dreuße & Parzer, 2009).

2.3.2 Working conditions

The problems mentioned in the preceding section can be attributed to the musical background and deficiencies in teacher education. In addition to these, there are challenges that arises regardless of background and training, challenges emanating from the actual, individual school environment.

Support

Lack of administrative support is a recurring topic in several studies worldwide (de Vries, 2004; Dreuße & Parzer, 2009; Hamann & Gordon, 2000; Hancock, 2008; Kim & Barg, 2010; Le Roux & Van Niekerk, 2008; McLain, 2005; Sindberg, 2011). Gardner emphasizes the importance of support: "[M]usic teachers' perceptions of the level of support from their administrators exhibited the strongest influence on teacher satisfaction and job commitment in all analyses" (Gardner, 2010, p. 119). A few studies describe what is meant by "administrative support": in an Austrian study, interference by the administration and lack of support for teacher-initiated musical projects was mentioned explicitly (Pecher-Havers, 2009b, p. 94). A similar observation was made by Siebert (2008) in her study of why

music teachers choose to remain in the profession. Additionally, professional validation, good working conditions and assistance in disciplinary concerns were recognized as hallmarks of administrative support (Siebert, 2008). In Pecher-Havers' (2009b) study, the relationship with colleagues was found to be just as important for the school's social climate, with lack of support for musical projects and positioning within the school causing troubles for some of the teachers. Difficulties within the teaching staff is also discussed by Bladh. Several of the informants speak of lack of appreciation from colleagues, low status, and an ongoing competition for resources (Bladh, 2002, p. 136ff).

As with teachers in general, low salary is also brought forward by music teachers (Bladh, 2002; de Vries, 2004; Hamann et al., 1987; Hancock, 2008; Kim & Barg, 2010). It is not clear whether music teachers compare their wages to other teachers, or to other professions, but the low salaries seem to strengthen the view that there is an imbalance between the effort they put in and what they get in return. Quite interestingly, Hancock (2015) found that only 5% of music teachers who left or moved to another school credited salary as the most important reason for leaving, it is therefore impossible to draw firm conclusions about this topic, as the variation is greater than the similarities.

Status

Closely related to the notion of support is the perceived low status of music (and music teachers). In the current international educational climate, with increased focus on literacy and numeracy (see Chapter 6), music and the other art subjects are often given lower priority (Bresler, 1993, p. 9; Hennessy, 2007, p. 31). Even though the larger part of the informants in Bailer's study were content with their occupation (73.1%), the negative public image of teachers ("the lazy teacher") and the low status of music compared to other subjects were identified as significant burdens (Bailer, 2009a). In the study by Russell-Bowie mentioned previously in this chapter, the low priority given to music was one of two serious impediments to teaching music in schools (Russell-Bowie, 2009). She also found that the priority given to music varied significantly between Australia and the other four countries in her study, indicating that the national culture and valorization of arts plays an important role. Dolloff even describes how music teachers are not necessarily regarded as "real" teachers.

Society has already informed our incoming music teacher education students that there is something different about being a teacher of music. In fact many of us can relate stories of being ostracized by colleagues, not taken seriously

by administrators, not included in the “academic” parts of school. (Dolloff, 2007, p. 16)

The sense of isolation is a burden many music teachers face, especially the specialized music teachers (Ballantyne, 2007; Blair, 2008; Bouij, 1998a; Hancock, 2008; Krueger, 2000; Scheib, 2006; Siebert, 2008). Isolation is not restricted to music teachers alone, but as Sindberg explains, it might pertain more to music teachers than others, because there is usually just one or a few of music teachers at each school.

Regular classroom teachers and teachers of other academic subjects (e.g., math, language arts, science) outnumber music teachers in most school buildings. Music is often isolated from the regular curriculum and, when it is taught by an itinerant teacher, finding time for dialogue with other teachers is difficult. (Sindberg, 2011, p. 8)

Similar sentiments are expressed by Siebert’s informants: “Due to the unique nature of the subject, it is essential for music teachers to be with others who resemble them, understand them, and can truly inform their teaching” (Siebert, 2008, p. 103).

Ballantyne claims that isolation might be especially salient among early-career music teachers “because of the unique demands of teaching music and the fact that they do not feel adequately prepared for this by their pre-service education” (Ballantyne, 2007, p. 185). Her study indicates that professional isolation is “a major factor leading to praxis shock” (ibid.). Krueger reaches a similar conclusion, and recommends that “administrators bring experienced music teachers into regular contact with new music teachers through team teaching and mentor programs” (Krueger, 2000, p. 25). In an article based on a one-year professional development program she carried out with three music teachers, Blair found that what started as mentoring ended up with a “community of practice” where the teachers supported each other.

These music teachers, each working as the sole music teacher for hundreds of children whose schedules isolated them in separate buildings with little opportunity for their paths to cross, were joined together with the shared goal of learning and growing as music educators. (Blair, 2008, p. 109)

In addition to creating a community for mutual support, taking part in this group also enhanced their identity as teachers.

Workload

A hallmark of many music teachers is the high number of students, often several hundred. Several studies report this as a burden for many music teachers (Bailer, 2009a; Bladh, 2002; Blair, 2008; Sindberg, 2011). In Bailer's study the high number of students in classes ranked as the most significant stressor (Bailer, 2009a, p. 229). Another common feature is the need to travel between different workplaces (Blair, 2008; Hamann & Gordon, 2000; Kim & Barg, 2010; Krueger, 2000). Krueger sums up some of the challenges: "[I]tinerant music teachers in this study regularly felt overwhelmed by the demands of conflicting schedules in their various schools. Itinerant teachers often described being left out of decision making, because they were not present in their schools full-time" (Krueger, 2000, p. 24). A similar observation is made by Bladh, who further connects the itinerant working life to problems with isolation, status and student discipline (Bladh, 2002, p. 145f).

An expectation many music teachers encounter is to take part in extra-curricular activities (Ballantyne, 2007; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004; de Vries, 2011; Dreuße & Parzer, 2009; Hancock, 2008; Siebert, 2008). While some of these activities, like rehearsing and staging performances, can be seen as intrinsic to being a music teacher, and a sign of commitment and enthusiasm (Bailer, 2009c; Hancock, 2008), they nevertheless contribute to the workload of the teachers and can lead to burnout (Ballantyne, 2007; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004). Ballantyne also mentions that music teachers do not necessarily have the skills to perform these extra tasks.

Assessment is another topic that some teachers report being troublesome. While assessment is a part of every school subject, some teachers feel that particularly grading students in music is at odds with the essence of what the music subject should be (Vinge, 2014, p. 300ff), and even forcing them to choose activities that are easily assessed (Bouij, 1998a, p. 241).

Noise

Teaching music puts significant stress on the teacher's voice and hearing (Bladh, 2002; Dreuße & Parzer, 2009). Playing instruments, and especially amplified instruments, can cause immense strain to the hearing (Bladh, 2002, p. 213). Dreuße and Parzer include handing out and collecting instruments, as well as the view that the music subject should be an outlet, where the students unlimited can relish in their emotions (Dreuße & Parzer, 2009, p. 129).

While protecting your ears is easily accomplished by the use of ear protection, voice problems are more complicated, and requires much more substantial effort. Bladh found that music teachers are eight times more prone to vocal problems compared to other professions, with female teachers being most vulnerable (Bladh, 2002, p. 203ff).

Resources

The music subject relies heavily on sufficient equipment, and deficiencies in this department will cause problems for music teachers (de Vries, 2011, 2013; Dreuße & Parzer, 2009; Hamann & Gordon, 2000; Scheib, 2006; Siebert, 2008). In a Norwegian survey, lack of equipment was one of the most important reasons for teachers in art subjects to leave the profession (Kunnskapsdepartementet & TNS-Gallup, 2011, p. 23). Having a dedicated music classroom is also important, as dragging instruments around requires time and effort. In addition, teaching music in a regular classroom, with poor soundproofing, can cause conflicts with other teachers (de Vries, 2004).

2.3.3 Burnout

Many of the themes described above are factors contributing to burnout. According to Hamann et al. (1987) music teachers are more susceptible to burnout than other teachers. Based on previous studies they also claim that “individuals who are often the most productive, dedicated and committed in their fields are frequently most affected by burnout” (Hamann et al., 1987, p. 129). Among the three components of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (see section 2.2.2) McLain found emotional exhaustion to pertain most to music teachers, while depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment were of less concern. The most important causes for emotional exhaustion were lack of support from administration, colleagues, parents, or community, uncertainty about their ability to manage stress and classroom discipline, and not feeling part of a team (McLain, 2005, p. 78). In their study of various factors’ association with burnout Hamann et al. (1987) discovered, among others, the following predictors of burnout: “workload and time to complete the work, desire to change professional careers, contentment with job, unclear goals from administration, and lack of personnel goals in career plans, lack of recognition by students” (p. 128). Hofbauer and Harnischmacher (2013) mention that teachers suffering burnout had experienced strain beyond their limits already during

their studies. They found that positive teaching experiences during studies cause motivation, which lowers the probability for burnout.

2.3.4 Musician/teacher

The perceived dichotomy between being a musician and a teacher is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but this topic constitutes such a substantial part of the research on music teachers that it must be included in any review of the research. This perception can be a predictor of teacher attrition and it provides some useful insights into the experience of teaching music.

In her review of literature on music teacher identity, Pellegrino found that “much of the literature suggests that preservice and in-service music educators view themselves first as a performer and second as a music teacher” (Pellegrino, 2009, p. 40). She continues, “Within the music teacher socialization research literature, the performer identity was found to have a privileged status compared to the teacher identity” (ibid.). The conflict arises when music education students meet the realities of life in the schools, where there is little support for the performer identity. Bladh explains why teaching music in compulsory education seems to appeal the least to his informants:

The cultural lifeworld aspect of music teaching in compulsory schools has no connection with the corresponding aspect in the student period of music teachers in pre-training or music teacher training. Here, neither art nor music takes centre stage, as was the case in pre-training and music teacher training. (Bladh, 2004, p. 11)

Bouij investigates the topic through the concept of role-identity: “the character and the role that an individual devises for himself as an occupant of a particular social position” (McCall & Simmons, 1978, cited in Bouij, 1998a, p. 68). Four role-identities emerged from Bouij’s interviews: all-round musician, pupil-centered teacher, performer, and content-centered teacher (Bouij, 1998a, 1998b). The first two of these are associated with broad musical comprehensiveness, the latter two, with narrow musical comprehensiveness. As broad musical comprehensiveness corresponds with the ideal in many compulsory music curricula (including the Norwegian curriculum), those who identify with a pupil-centered teacher role are most likely to find their place in compulsory education. (This has been more or less confirmed by Bailer (2009b, p. 222ff).) As mentioned above, support for the musician-role is stronger than for the teacher-role during education (see also B. Roberts, 2004), but as Bouij found,

there is movement between the different roles both pre-service and in-service. Perhaps paradoxically, pre-service music teachers begin to identify increasingly as teachers during their education, even though the role of musician is more strongly supported (Allen, 2003; Ballantyne et al., 2012; Bladh, 2002, p. 101ff).

The identity conflict between being a teacher and being a musician can be painful for those involved and leads to negative consequences for both the teachers in question and their surroundings. Several researchers have written about the need to acknowledge and balance identities (Ballantyne & Grootenboer, 2012; Bernard, 2005; Dolloff, 2007). In a Norwegian context, the topic has been addressed recently in the anthology *Kunstner eller lærer? [Artist or teacher?]* (Angelo & Kalsnes, 2014), where the authors seek to facilitate the construction of dual identities, with some even deconstructing the dichotomy between teacher and artist.

Of special interest for the present dissertation is how the role conflict between performer and teacher pertains to music teachers in compulsory education. In an Austrian anthology (Bailer, 2009d) the topic is investigated both qualitatively (Pecher-Havers, 2009a), and quantitatively (Bailer, 2009b). In the qualitative study only 1 out of 31 informants saw themselves first and foremost as artists (Pecher-Havers, 2009a, p. 109). Important reasons for positioning themselves as teachers were relations to other people (working as an artist was seen as connected to loneliness) and fondness for working with children. A bit contradictorily, the quantitative study showed a third of the cohort displaying a strong identity as artists. What appeared in both studies was a strong correlation between seniority and identification as teacher. Bailer also found that the teachers with the strongest identification as artists were less content with their occupation, and did not see themselves working as teachers until retirement (Bailer, 2009b, p. 219).⁶ Conway, studying mentoring and induction programs, found that novice music teachers insisted on music-specific induction, but ten years later this issue was a lot more contested, indicating that teaching had gained prominence over musicianship (Conway, 2012). From these studies, it appears that the teachers with a strong identity as a musician either choose to leave the profession, or gradually changed towards the identity of the teacher. I will return to the topic of changes during the career in Chapter 5.

6 See also de Vries (2010a, p. 38).

Differences between educational systems must also be accounted for in this regard. The music subject in Norway stems from the *Bildung*-tradition,⁷ aiming at providing the students with broad competence in music: music making, composing, and listening skills. To teach such a subject involves more than mere musicianship. Other musical activities, like choir and band, take place outside of the school, unlike the music subject in the US, for example, which also consists of choir, band, and string orchestra. This could indicate that for many music teachers in Norwegian compulsory education, the role of the musician is far from the actual activities. The educational background of the music teachers supports the claim that to teach music in Norway means being more teacher than musician. It should also be mentioned that music teachers are not the only ones who have other professions than teaching built into their education. As Roness and Smith (2009) discovered, several PGCE-students (one year teacher training course) undertake teacher education as one alternative among various occupations. Like many music teachers, these are often driven by their interest in the subject.

2.4 Summary

This review has shown that music teachers and teachers in general who leave the profession voluntarily do so for many of the same reasons. Most salient are problems with student discipline and lack of administrative support. These two may be more troublesome for music teachers. Discipline, as they rarely see their students for more than one or two lessons per week, rendering them with little time to build a relationship with their students. As the status of the music subject is low in many schools, at least compared to the core subjects, the music teachers may experience the lack of support more acutely. Large workload, time pressure, large class sizes, and low salary also appear regularly in the literature, and if not addressed, can lead to burnout. An explicit goal of the present dissertation is to connect a study of music teachers to school research in general, and literature on attrition in general therefore included. But as the emphasis must be on music teachers, the review of teacher turnover in general should be understood as a mere overview of some important trends.

Attrition is mostly a problem affecting novice teachers, indicating that their education has to a certain degree failed to prepare them for the working life—thus

⁷ This topic is presented at some length in 6.2.

the term “practice shock.” Pedagogical knowledge seems to be the biggest predictor for retention, while extensive academic skills put teachers at risk for attrition. For music teachers, the picture is a bit different. Many generalist music teachers exhibit low confidence for teaching music, regarding it as a specialist subject requiring expert musical skills. Not surprisingly, the teachers with former musical experience display more confidence for teaching music. Rather worryingly, Garvis (2013) found that self-efficacy for teaching music declined with years of experience, as opposed to other subjects, and Stunell (2010) discovered that a lack of confidence in music can cause teachers to swap music lessons for other subjects.

The specialist teacher face other challenges, including being over-qualified, having a too narrow musical background, or lack of pedagogical skills, mostly related to classroom management. The studies of Bladh and Bouij are particularly bleak considering the massive *desertion* (Bladh’s word) during the first years of their working life. It must be added that not all music teachers experience their first years negatively, but as Bladh and Bailer note, those who report a positive experience are a minority. Bladh and Bailer also mention a few teachers seeking refuge in other subjects, the topic of the present dissertation. A factor that can reduce attrition significantly among all categories of teachers is mentoring and induction programs.

There are some causes for attrition that are related to the distinct character of the music subject. Music teaching relies on sufficient resources and facilities, and usually involves much more noise than most other subjects. The high number of students, and expectations about extra-curricular activities, adds to the burden. Isolation is another concern that pertains particularly to music teachers, as they often are the only one at the school. Specialized music teachers may also experience the identity conflict between being a teacher or a musician. As Tiplic et al. (2015) discovered, role conflicts are predictors for attrition, putting these teachers at high risk. On the other hand, it seems that those who choose to remain teachers end up seeing themselves first and foremost as teachers.

Most of the research mentioned in this chapter is from other countries than Norway, and as mentioned at the beginning, cultural and contextual differences constitute divergent conditions, and one must therefore question the relevance of some of it. I nevertheless maintain that the similarities are greater than the differences, and although there are cultural differences, the organization of the schools is comparable, at least in the Western world, where most of the research

originates from. Organizational similarities such as one teacher with a group of students, standard curricula, and some form of external control, indicates that at least to some extent the experience of teaching is the same.⁸ The small amount of research on Norwegian music teachers makes it impossible to construct a platform of knowledge from which to conduct the study, from research on this group alone. The inclusion of international research also connects the present dissertation to the existing body of research, by entering a conceptual network. Some of the problems and questions I have introduced here will be taken up later in the dissertation, including the particularities of the Norwegian school (Chapter 6) and the career trajectory of teachers (Chapter 5).

8 In chapter 3 and 6 I will briefly present the advent of the modern school as a product of discipline (Foucault, 1979).

3 Theory

In this chapter I will describe the theoretical framework for the dissertation. As mentioned in the introduction, the field I am researching is a field I have been part of for several years, and I obviously bring substantial pre-understanding with me. This means that I am no neutral, objective spectator of the material I am working with, and to describe the challenges and advantages of being in this position I will begin by giving a brief account of the philosophy of hermeneutics of Gadamer and his magnum opus *Truth and method* (Gadamer, 2004b).⁹ This dissertation is by no means strictly hermeneutic in essence, and to ground this study completely on Gadamer's theory of understanding is not in my interest. Nevertheless, as interpretation is a substantial part of the analytical process, some of the concepts Gadamer develops in *Truth and Method* are highly relevant, both for describing my position, and the epistemological restrictions and

9 My principal acquaintance with Gadamer's work is the Norwegian translation of *Truth and Method* (Gadamer, 2010). In the work with this chapter I have used both the English and Norwegian editions, as well as parts of the Danish translation (Gadamer, 2007). As I am most familiar with the Norwegian edition it constituted the main source for my work, but all citations are from the English edition. When I paraphrase the material I have tried to stay close to the English edition to avoid misunderstanding. In cases where I experienced discrepancies between the Norwegian/Danish edition and the English edition, the German original (Gadamer, 1986) was consulted. In the English edition some of the German words are included in parentheses. I have retained this practice in my citations, and added a few I found important. In the work with this section I have also used the translator's notes from the English and Danish translations, as well as a philosophical encyclopedia (Michelsen et al., 2008).

possibilities. Moreover, in the analysis, I am interested in how my informants make sense of—interpret—their own decisions. *Truth and Method* can also be read as a critique of positivism and the influence of the natural sciences on the humanities and social sciences, a view with which I am largely sympathetic.

The second section of this chapter, performance theory, concerns theory in a more common sense. In the present dissertation, I will use performance as an analytical tool. First, as a description of societal development, informing discourse analysis. As mentioned in the introduction, the school system has changed significantly the last decades, with an overarching emphasis on student performance. In his seminal work *Perform or else* McKenzie (2001) claims, by uniting three paradigms of performance, that performance is becoming the guiding principle for production of knowledge and power in the post-modern societies. As we will see later in this dissertation, a discrepancy between this historical development and the teachers' ideals informs their choices to a large degree. Second, I will employ performance theory as a language for describing how the individual teachers in this study make their choices in relation to their surroundings. As performance theory will inform the discourse analysis, I have included a brief presentation of a few discourse analytical concepts in the chapter.

Both theoretical strands are also part of my background, as my main education is in the humanities, and I have used performance theory before. Moreover, another rationale for using such grand theories is to be able to generalize by connecting my findings to these concepts and theories. In a small scale qualitative study generalizing from the data is impossible. By connecting my informants' statements to underlying discourses, norms, and historical developments, I can use them to draw larger conclusions that transcend the experience of individual teachers.

The use and combination of several theoretical approaches in a single study can be controversial. I choose to do so because I use the different theoretical principles to inform different parts of the dissertation, with different analytical approaches. Although there are some significant differences between the two theoretical strands, I believe the similarities are sufficient to make it feasible. I am here pointing to the epistemological foundation in particular, as they both support a constructive view on knowledge, and both acknowledge the particularity of the individuals in a network of previous statements and practices.

3.1 The philosophical hermeneutics of Gadamer

3.1.1 The theory

A section about hermeneutics could easily have been placed within the chapter on methods, but since hermeneutics is used in this dissertation as a lens through which I consider the material and a description of the epistemological conditions, more than as a strict methodology, it will be discussed here. There are nevertheless some obvious methodological consequences, which will be accounted for in the next chapter. It is also important to note that *Truth and Method* is by no means a methodology, rather the opposite, as Gadamer explains in the Foreword to the second edition (Gadamer, 2004b, pp. xxv, xxviii). The question he seeks to answer is how understanding is possible, and he asks it “of all human experience of the world and human living” (Gadamer, 2004b, p. xxvii). For Gadamer, following his teacher Heidegger, understanding is more than a human behavior, it is a mode of being (ibid.). The title of the work itself conveys its background, with “method” representing the realm of technical rationality, methodology, and positivism, and “truth” the hermeneutic experience of truth (more below).

First published in 1960, *Truth and Method* has become a central work for all subsequent writing on hermeneutics. The book consists of three parts, each discussing the topic from different angles. The first part concerns the work of art, the second the human sciences, and the final part language. The second part is the most relevant for my dissertation and will be the center of this presentation, with contributions from the other parts. Although the three parts can be viewed as different, individual approaches to the same topic of interpretation and understanding, Gadamer’s argument is also worked out through the three parts, and thus they must be regarded as a whole (Gadamer, 2007, translator’s introduction). Due to the vast extent of *Truth and Method* there will be some unavoidable omissions, and I have focused on providing my understanding of the parts most relevant for the dissertation. For a comprehensive understanding I refer the reader to the work itself or to the extensive secondary literature. Gadamer’s main examples are works of art and texts. I have adopted these examples when I write about them, but these can be substituted with all kinds of material that can be interpreted and understood. In

the present dissertation, this may mean interviews, documents, and literature, as well as how my informants make sense of their context.

Historical background

At the center of *Truth and method* is the hermeneutic experience, the act of understanding. The hermeneutic problem, the problem of all understanding, is how to conquer alienness. There are a few structural traits of Gadamer's theory of understanding that permeate all three parts. Every act of interpretation and understanding has a pre-structure that conditions the understanding, and as a consequence every understanding is unique. Moreover, as understanding is unique, it is therefore productive, i.e. every instance of understanding is a new understanding, where our previous understanding is challenged.

The second part of *Truth and Method* opens with a description of the historical background of the human sciences (*Geisteswissenschaften*), most notably, historicism and the hermeneutics of Schleiermacher and Dilthey. Gadamer's main objection against historicism and romantic hermeneutics is the ideal of reconstruction and empathy, which he found unobtainable. Schleiermacher's interest is first and foremost psychological—how to understand another person, making understanding “the reconstruction of a construction” (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 188), i.e. another person's meaning. Schleiermacher's aim is “to understand a writer better than he understood himself” (ibid., p. 191). By “better” he means with increased knowledge. The same ideal of reconstruction of a bygone meaning permeates the historicism of Ranke and Droysen.

Dilthey continues the hermeneutic tradition and develops it further. He sets himself the task of constructing an epistemological basis for the human sciences, and distinguishing them from the natural sciences, emphasizing the historicity of the experiences with which we understand.

[T]he structure of the historical world is not based on facts taken from the experience which then acquire a value relation, but rather on the inner historicity that belongs to experience itself. What we call experience (*Erfahrung*) and acquire through experience is a living historical process; and its paradigm is not the discovery of facts but the peculiar fusion of memory and expectation into a whole. (ibid., p. 217)

To place the historicity of the subject as a condition for historical knowledge is a significant step from a psychological towards a hermeneutical basis for the human sciences, and Dilthey struggled his whole life with legitimating the historically conditioned knowledge as an objective science. “The conflict that

he [Dilthey] tried to resolve shows clearly what pressure the methodology of modern science exerts and what our task must be: namely to describe more adequately the experience of the human sciences and the objectivity they are able to achieve" (ibid., p. 235). If Dilthey failed to fully develop a foundation of knowledge from his life-philosophy, Heidegger, on the other hand, drew the full consequence of historicity.

In *Sein und Zeit* Heidegger revived the question of being, and thus transcended the question of knowledge in the human sciences. For Heidegger, "*understanding always has to do with the complete disclosedness of Da-sein as being-in-the-world*" (Heidegger, 1996, p. 137, italics in original). In Gadamer's words: "Before any differentiation of understanding into the various directions of pragmatic or theoretical interest, understanding is Dasein's mode of being. (...) [T]he original characteristic of the being of human life itself" (Gadamer, 2004a, p. 250) From this historical background of ontological hermeneutics based on the interpreter's historicity, Gadamer develops his theory of the hermeneutic experience.

The fore-structure of understanding

A central aspect of understanding that Gadamer inherits from Heidegger is the fore-structure of understanding. A fundamental condition for all understanding is our "thrownness" (*Geworfenheit*), we are "thrown" into the world, a condition that both makes our understanding possible and limits it. When a person tries to understand a text, it is through projections (*Entwurf*). "He projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text. Again, the initial meaning emerges only because he is reading the text with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning" (ibid., p. 269). This first projection is then revised when meeting the text, and it forms the basis for new projections. This is the circular concept of understanding that Gadamer develops further by introducing the concepts *prejudice* and *tradition*.

To obtain an adequate understanding of a text it is also imperative to be open to what the text has to tell, and to acknowledge our prejudices. "The important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one's own fore-meanings" (ibid., p. 271-2). When Gadamer wants to rehabilitate prejudices, he emphasizes that by prejudice he means a judgement prior to a full examination: it can be both positive and negative. The concept of prejudice was discredited by the enlightenment, but in doing so they failed to see their own prejudice, the

prejudice against prejudices. The opposition between reason and prejudice is flawed, is Gadamer's claim, as reason always is a historical reason.

In fact history does not belong to us; we belong to it. Long before we understand ourselves through the process of self-examination, we understand ourselves in a self-evident way in the family, society, and state in which we live. The focus of subjectivity is a distorting mirror. The self-awareness of the individual is only a flickering in the closed circuits of historical life. *That is why the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgements, constitute the historical reality of his being.* (ibid., p. 278)

Thus, he can say that prejudices are the condition of understanding, although we also need to distinguish the legitimate prejudices from the countless other prejudices. One way is by following an *authority*, another concept discredited by the enlightenment, which for Gadamer is a positive one, as he defines an authority as a trustworthy person with superior knowledge and judgement. The other concept he revives is *tradition*,¹⁰ which he claims contains elements of freedom and history itself. The essence of tradition is preservation, an act of reason, which persists even through the most violent changes. As historical beings, we are compelled to relate to the past, as we are always situated within a tradition (*Überlieferung*). "In any case, understanding in the human sciences shares one fundamental condition with the life of tradition: it lets itself be addressed by tradition [*Überlieferung*]" (ibid., p. 283). To be part of a tradition is part of the essence of the human sciences, and to contribute to distancing them from the natural sciences. Thus, we can define understanding in line with our historical embeddedness: "Understanding is to be thought of less as a subjective act than as participating¹¹ in an event of tradition [*Überlieferungsgeschehen*], a process of transmission in which past and present are constantly mediated" (ibid., p. 291).

The hermeneutic circle

When Gadamer now can begin unfolding his theory of understanding he does so by returning to the hermeneutic circle. In its original conception, the hermeneutical circle is based on the relationship between the whole and the parts. Understanding is a circular movement from the whole to the parts, and back to

10 In the English edition the German words "*Überlieferung*" and "*Tradition*" are both translated into "tradition." In *Truth and Method* "*Überlieferung*" means "what is handed over from the past" and Gadamer use it to emphasize the task of understanding it. The word, and various translations is discussed in "Translator's preface" (Gadamer, 2004b, p. xvi).

11 "*Einrücken*." The meaning of the German word is more in the direction of "moving in," or, as it is translated in the Danish edition, "being drawn in."

the whole, with harmony between the parts and the whole the criterion for a full understanding. Gadamer, however, turns towards the hermeneutical circle in Heidegger's developed conception.

Heidegger describes the circle in such a way that the understanding of the text remains permanently determined by the participatory movement of fore-understanding. The circle of whole and part is not dissolved in perfect understanding but, on the contrary, is most fully realized. (...) [The circle] describes understanding as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter. The anticipation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition. (ibid., p. 293)

This conception of the hermeneutical circle is ontological, not methodological, and includes our embeddedness in a tradition as the condition for understanding. To have a fore-understanding, which Gadamer claims is the most important hermeneutic precondition, involves that when we encounter a text we have an expectation of meaning, we expect it to be a complete unity of meaning. Even though we are in a tradition that gives us some connection to what we try to understand there is a tension between the alienness of what is handed over to us, and our belonging to a tradition, and in this "in-between" we find the true locus of hermeneutics (ibid., p. 295).

The productivity of understanding (truth)

Placing hermeneutics between the text and our tradition, and not in seeking the original meaning, has some far-reaching consequences. Since tradition is continuously in development there is no "final" understanding, every age understands a text differently. This means that understanding is productive, which leads Gadamer to say that "we understand in a *different way, if we understand at all*" (ibid., p. 296). The distance is also what makes us distinguish between true and false prejudices, the critical question of hermeneutics. To be aware of our prejudices they must be provoked, something the encounter with a traditional text (*Überlieferung*) can accomplish. Understanding begins with something addressing us, which implies a suspension of our prejudices, a suspension structured as a question.

The essence of the *question* is to open up possibilities and keep them open. If a prejudice becomes questionable in view of what another person or a text says to us, this does not mean that it is simply set aside and the text or the other accepted as valid in its place. (...) In fact our own prejudice is properly brought into play by being put at risk. Only by being given full play is it able

to experience the other's claim to truth and make it possible for him to have full play himself. (ibid., p. 298-9)

To take into account our own historicity is thus a premise for understanding, and from this notion Gadamer introduces one of his most central concepts, the history of effect (*Wirkungsgeschichte*).¹²

When we study a historical phenomenon, or a work of art, its effect on history—including former research and interpretations—determines how we perceive it, and according to Gadamer it is always present whether we are aware of it or not. Thus, to be conscious of the effect of history (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*) is to be conscious of the hermeneutical situation. The situation is our standpoint, which limits our range of vision, determined by our prejudices. Gadamer defines the limit with the concept of the horizon. To have a horizon “means not being limited to what is nearby but being able to see beyond it. A person who has an horizon knows the relative significance of everything within this horizon, whether it is near or far, great or small” (ibid., p. 301f). To have a horizon is a requirement for understanding a tradition (*Überlieferung*), as we must be able to transpose ourselves (*sichversetzen*) into a historical situation. Only then, when we bring ourselves into the situation, can we become aware of the otherness of the other. “Transposing ourselves consists neither in the empathy of one individual for another nor in subordinating another person to our own standards; rather, it always involves rising to a higher universality that overcomes not only our own particularity but also that of the other” (ibid., p. 304). Again, we see the productivity of understanding, understanding is always a *different* understanding. Our present horizon consists of our prejudices and is continually being formed as our prejudices are tested. Introducing one more of his famous concepts, Gadamer describes understanding as the fusion of horizons (*Horizontverschmelzung*). In the fusion of the present and the text (more broadly: what we try to understand) there is a tension which must be brought out, and not covered up, which involves awareness of the historically effected consciousness. “Historical consciousness is aware of its own otherness and hence foregrounds the horizon of the past from its own” (ibid., p. 305).

The concept of truth Gadamer develops in part one of *Truth and Method* is derived from the same structure. To describe the exchange between the

12 The challenge of translating this important concept is discussed in the “Translator’s preface” (ibid., p. xv).

interpreter and the text (work of art), he introduces the concept *play*.¹³ Play is used metaphorically to describe the continuous motion back and forth *in between* the text and the interpreter. In the transformation to truth what is normally hidden and withdrawn emerges as it is, the play is transformed into structure (*Gebilde*). In the structure, the medial quality of play is again present, as the structure acquires its true being in the mediation (*ibid.*, p. 117). Gadamer describes the event-like character of experience of truth in art:

In these cases, where reality is understood as a play, emerges the reality of play, which we call the play of art. The being of all play is always self-realization, sheer fulfillment, *energeia* which has its *telos* within itself. The world of the work of art is, in which play expresses itself fully in the unity of its course, is in fact a wholly transformed world. In and through it everyone recognizes that that is how things are.

Thus the concept of transformation characterizes the independent and superior mode of being of what we called structure. From this viewpoint “reality” is defined as what is untransformed, and art as the raising up (*Aufhebung*) of this reality into its truth. (*ibid.*, p. 112)

It is a rather peculiar concept of truth Gadamer proposes here, defined as the transformation of reality into something new, and with a strong resemblance with the concept of *aletheia*, disclosure—the concept of truth used by Heidegger (1996). We must remember that Gadamer’s main interest is ontological, rather than epistemological, and he does not reject other forms of knowledge and the use of a stricter methodology (Gadamer, 2004b, p. xxvi). It is just as important to note that the experience of art does not exist in a vacuum. Just as the historically effected consciousness guides understanding, our experience (of art) is deeply contextual, with our past and our surroundings informing the experience.

The central epistemological aspect is how truth/understanding is a result of exchange or dialogue (play), which results in something new. The dialectic of question and answer in a dialogue (*Gespräch*) is then the essence of hermeneutics. In dialogue, in contrast to the statement, “the process of question and answer, giving and taking, talking at cross purposes and seeing each other’s point—performs the communication of meaning that, with respect to the written tradition, is the task of hermeneutics” (*ibid.*, p. 361). The dialogue is an example of the structure that lies behind every act of understanding, as Gadamer claims that interpreting a text or a work of art should have the same dialogic quality. Achieving an understanding nevertheless poses challenges for

13 The German word “*Spiel*” contains the meanings of the English words “play” and “game.” In the English translation of *Truth and Method*, both are used.

the interpreter. “Thus it belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says” (ibid., p. 387). Emphasizing the importance of recognizing the other person’s meanings as valid:

If this happens mutually, and each of the partners, while simultaneously holding on to his own arguments, weighs the counterarguments, it is finally possible to achieve—in an imperceptible but not arbitrary reciprocal translation of the other’s position (we call this an exchange of views)—a common diction and a common dictum. (ibid., p. 388)

As mentioned above, it is a central feature of Gadamer’s theory that we cannot understand the other person’s (or anything else we want to understand) intended meaning, we must relate to what *s/he says*. To use another of Gadamer’s metaphors, we are speaking of a *translation* where a given text must be made understandable in another language. The truth that emerges from dialogue/exchange/play is therefore an “*increase in being*” (italics in original) (ibid., p. 135). The final step is application.

Interpretation—understanding—application

The unity of understanding and interpretation was recognized by the romantics, and Gadamer’s claim is that application (of the text to the present situation) must be (re)added to the hermeneutic process. He draws his examples from legal and theological hermeneutics, where application is an integral part in the form of a conviction or preaching of the gospel. In the context of the human sciences we must subordinate ourselves to the claim made by the text, and thus bridge the gap between text and interpreter. This entails applying the understanding to oneself. The openness for the text implied by this application also opposes the objectivization of the sciences, which could be found in romantic hermeneutics. At this stage, Gadamer draws on the Aristotelian concept of moral knowledge, *phronesis*. *Phronesis* can be defined as doing the right thing at the right moment, as opposed to the other forms of knowledge: *techne* and *episteme*. *Phronesis* is the knowledge that designates the application. By application, the reader becomes part of the meaning he apprehends, and thus a final interpretation is impossible, as future generations will understand differently. Application is not something that occurs after understanding something given as universal, it is the very understanding of the universal that the text represents. And the true ground for the understanding is the historically effected consciousness (*wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein*).

The structure of historically effected consciousness is that of the experience (*Erfahrung*). And what does Gadamer mean by “experience”? The genuine experience is an experience you *do*, and it is always negative.

If a new experience of an object occurs to us, this means that hitherto we have not seen the thing correctly and now know it better. Thus the negativity of experience has a curiously productive meaning. It is not simply that we see through a deception and hence make a correction, but we acquire a comprehensive knowledge. We cannot, therefore, have a new experience of any object at random, but it must be of such a nature that we gain better knowledge through it, not only of itself, but of what we thought we knew before—i.e., of a universal. (ibid., p. 347-8)

It implies that we cannot “do” the same experience more than once, but when we become aware of this new experience, we have acquired a new horizon from which something else can become a new experience. To be “experienced” involves having learnt from previous experiences, but also being open for new experiences. To be experienced in the proper sense means recognizing human finitude, as there are limits to what we can achieve. Understanding, then, is an event, and it is the character of event that allows for our prejudices to be suspended. The experience (*Erfahrung*) of something unusual, unexpected, is what opens up for a new understanding. The knowledge that we do not know is the condition that allows for new meanings to arise. When a question occurs to us—a question that demands an answer—a new and better understanding can be brought into being in dialogue with the text (*Überlieferung*).

As mentioned above, it is the structure of dialogue/play that makes a new understanding/truth possible, as it is *in between* that a new understanding can appear. Expanding on the hermeneutic experience Gadamer turns to the priority of the question, as exemplified in Plato’s dialogues. To ask a question means to bring something into the open, and admit that you do not know. The meaning of the question is realized when it is an open question, a state of indeterminacy, and the meaning is the direction in which we can find the answer. The dialectic between question and answer is thus what makes knowledge possible. The crucial step is then knowing that you do not know, a knowledge that leads to the question. Gadamer states that this knowledge occurs to us in the same way as any other idea (*Einfall*). The occurrence of the question resembles the experience (*Erfahrung*), as it implies that something is not in accordance with our expectations, it is unavoidable and unpleasant, as it challenges our opinions.

The claim that our prejudices, tradition, and historicity are the very conditions for understanding, encapsulates Gadamer’s main argument. For us to

understand a text, it must speak to us, and our historicity is what makes that possible. We also expect it to be a coherent unit of meaning, an answer to the question behind it, what Gadamer calls “fore-conception of completeness.” We must be open for what the text (or work of art or conversation partner) has to say, and this is why the question is so important. The question opens up, gives us direction, and creates the in-between space where hermeneutics belong. It is the fusion of the horizon of the interpreter with the past, where we bring our own historicity into what is understood that *produces* meaning, an increase in being. The challenge Gadamer proposes here, is the challenge of losing oneself in the play, being open for the meanings it presents. “To interpret means precisely to bring one’s own preconception into play so that the text’s meaning can really be made to speak for us” (ibid., p. 398). This openness is more of an attitude than methodology, one can even say virtue, to stay in line with the author himself, an ideal for the interpreter.

My interest in Gadamer’s concept of truth involves both my interpretation of the material for the dissertation, and my informants’ meaning making. My understanding is that Gadamer is pointing at the *experience* of truth: we experience something as true. This form of truth is present when we understand something, but in the context of the present dissertation, for my own part, this experience must be questioned, and for the sake of validity, measures must be taken to strengthen my anticipation. The career trajectories of my informants are significantly influenced by their interpretation of, and meaning making in relation to, their surroundings, and in this regard, their experience of truth is valid and central to understanding their choices.

3.1.2 Criticism

In the wake of its publication, *Truth and Method* elicited criticism from a range of scholars. On the one hand, advocates of hermeneutic methodology, most notably Betti and Hirsch, emphasized the importance of the author’s intended meaning. On the other hand thinkers like Ricoeur and Habermas were more opposed to his rehabilitation of tradition. In the following I will present the latter’s criticism as it has important implications for this dissertation. Habermas’s criticism, from within critical theory, also helps to connect hermeneutics with the critical aspects of performance theory.

Habermas's criticism first appeared in *On the Logic of the Social Sciences* (Habermas, 1988), published in 1967 (orig. *Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften*). The debate that followed between Habermas and Gadamer (and others) is collected in *Hermeneutik und Ideologiekritik* (Apel et al., 1971) and, in addition, Gadamer elaborated on his intended meaning, following the criticism, in the foreword to the second edition and the afterword to the third edition of *Truth and Method*. The discussion here also makes use of Jack Mendelson's article "The Habermas–Gadamer Debate," (1979) which provides a good overview of the debate.

As Mendelson (1979) and Misgeld (1976) point out in their articles on the Habermas–Gadamer debate, hermeneutics and critical theory share some features in common: they both criticize instrumental reason and the objectifying methods of natural science. In a way, the debate can be seen as a discussion about whether hermeneutics should be mediated through critical theory, or whether critical theory is already embedded in the hermeneutic phenomenon. When Habermas turned to Gadamer's hermeneutics it was because he believed it could be "used both to counter positivism, and to clarify the grounds and methods of the historical-social sciences, including those of critical theories like Marxism and psychoanalysis" (Mendelson, 1979, p. 46). In addition, Habermas wanted to build hermeneutically informed categories of intersubjectivity into critical theory, including his philosophy of history and social theory. Habermas nevertheless had some objections to Gadamer's hermeneutics. Mendelson presents them under three heading which I will follow in the ensuing paragraphs.

Habermas wanted to defend the epistemological approach to hermeneutics, and he warned of letting the positivists define scientific method against other experiences of truth.

The confrontation of "truth" and "method" should not have led Gadamer to an abstract opposition between hermeneutic experience and methodical knowledge as a whole. ... The claim that hermeneutics legitimately brings to bear on the absolutism of a general methodology of the empirical sciences, which has practical consequences as well, does not relieve it of the business of method as such—this claim, we must fear, will be effective either *in* the sciences or not at all. (Habermas, 1988, p. 167)

Habermas would rather see a concept of method informed by hermeneutics, as an alternative to objectivistic scientific method; otherwise it could risk ending up as philosophically irrelevant (Mendelson, 1979, p. 58). Gadamer's answer was that he had only wanted to show that the hermeneutic experience is more fundamental than scientific method, and not to make a sharp distinction

between the hermeneutic experience and method. While hermeneutics can affect science, it can never restrict itself to it.

The second objection concerns the relation of reason to authority/tradition/prejudices. Perhaps not very surprisingly, Habermas, the critical theorist, found it difficult to accept Gadamer's rehabilitation of tradition and authority. Against it he placed reflection as a power that breaks the quasi-natural substance of tradition. "Gadamer fails to recognize the power of reflection that unfolds in *Verstehen*. ... [W]hen reflection understands the genesis of the tradition from which it proceeds and to which it returns, the dogmatism of life-praxis is shaken" (Habermas, 1988, p. 168). Turning to Gadamer's concept of prejudice and authority, he sees the same denial of the power of reflection. As Mendelson puts it: "A prejudgment whose historical genesis has been grasped can no longer function as a prejudice. A reflected prestructure cannot hold sway over a subject in the same way as an unreflected one" (Mendelson, 1979, p. 59). In a slightly different fashion, the same argument can be used against authority, the mediator of tradition. Even though an authority has gained its status based on recognition and knowledge, it might as well be a pseudo-recognition based on force. Moreover, a young person may recognize the knowledge of the authority, but this can quickly change as the younger person grows older and becomes able to criticize the authority, and thus reincorporating the dualism of reason and authority. "Reflection has the power to break with authority and reject the claims of tradition if they contradict its reasoned insight" (Mendelson, 1979, p. 60). On the other hand, the reflection may cause acceptance of what was mediated by the authority, but it will not be accepted on the basis of authority.

In response, Gadamer accused Habermas of overestimating the power of reflection, as all reflection is historically situated in a tradition, and no reflection can remove the person who reflects from tradition. Reflection can never uncover everything, and a complete self-transparency is thus impossible. According to Mendelson, full transparency has never been a claim within critical theory, as Habermas emphasized the importance of distinguishing between "those inevitable preunderstandings which derive simply from one's participation in culture, and those false preconceptions which are anchored in systematically distorted forms of communication" (Mendelson, 1979, p. 62). The normative ideal of critical theory is "the complete elimination of systematic blockages to communication with oneself or others" (Mendelson, 1979, p. 63).

The third objection Habermas proposes is against the universality of Gadamer's ontological hermeneutics. He demands that hermeneutic understanding must

be mediated through an explanatory-understanding guided by (critical) theory. The first part of his argument is that our context is more than cultural tradition, it is also formed by structures of labor and domination. These are indeed mediated by language, but are nevertheless more than the symbolic structures of tradition, and tradition must thus be understood in relation to other moments in the social context. As the hermeneutic understanding of Gadamer fails to grasp these other moments, including ideologies and unconscious motives, Habermas accuses him of linguistic idealism. Based on the limits he imposes on hermeneutics, Habermas argues that sociology requires a theoretical reference-system combining tradition with other structures. Then it would become a critique of ideology (Habermas, 1988, p. 172).

The objective context in terms of which alone social actions can be understood is constituted conjointly by language, labor, and domination. ... [Sociology] requires a system of reference that on the one hand does not disregard the symbolic mediation of social action in favor of a relationship that is merely sign-controlled and stimulus-produced, but on the other hand does not fall prey to a linguistic idealism and completely sublimate social processes to cultural tradition. (Habermas, 1988, p. 174)

The methodological model Habermas proposes is psychoanalysis.

Gadamer answers this objection by maintaining the universality of hermeneutics, asserting that hermeneutics encompass these phenomena: Habermas has defined hermeneutics too narrowly. Hermeneutic interpretation involves understanding ideology as false consciousness, as it involves everything that can be understood within the medium of the world (Gadamer, 2004a, p. 30f). Moreover, Gadamer claims that work and domination are inside of hermeneutics, insofar as they are meaningful for us, as language is the limitless medium which carries everything within it. There is no social reality that does not bring itself to representation in language (Gadamer, 2004a, p. 32). As Mendelson writes, Gadamer is here correct, but Habermas adds nuance as he “wanted to distinguish between those aspects of the social context which *are* structures of symbols—cultural forms—and those aspects which, while symbolically-mediated, are more than that and which, therefore, pose limits to the universality of language” (Mendelson, 1979, p. 66).

Gadamer also criticized the analogy between psychoanalysis and critical theory. His argument is that the theory of psychoanalysis is too specific a function of reflection to be extended to critical theory. Furthermore, he sees problems with the doctor–patient relation of psychoanalysis. He sees no counterpart to this relationship on the social level, where there is no doctor and patient,

but social partners (Gadamer, 2004a, p. 41f). He finds the analogy potentially elitist and authoritarian.

After all, who decides who is the victim of distorted communication and false consciousness? To speak of delusion in the social realm is to presuppose the sole possession of the right conviction. ... Gadamer invokes the danger of critical theory become social technology which applies its external criteria of rationality to social life in an authoritarian way. (Mendelson, 1979, p. 67)

Gadamer's alternative model is that of the players in a game, who are more equal, and does not make a false claim to superiority. He states that there is an underlying consensus of social life, but as we are immersed in it we can never confront it.

In response to this Habermas again accuses Gadamer of absolutizing tradition, and emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between the objectivity of language and false consciousness derived from coercion and distorted communication, a distinction critical theory can make. Concerning Gadamer's attack on psychoanalytic methods, Mendelson writes: "Habermas has always stressed that critical theory proves its validity only by addressing itself to victims of domination and eliciting a self-reflection in which the victim recognizes himself in the theory" (Mendelson, 1979, p. 67). The last point is in my view a good rule to follow for every social researcher, whether he is researching victims or not.

3.1.3 Implications for the dissertation

At first glance there seems to be a huge distance between the ontological hermeneutics of Gadamer and this humble dissertation on Norwegian music teachers. But in my view, it is the very fundamentality of hermeneutics that makes it pertinent, as a substratum guiding all understanding and interpretation. The debate between Habermas and Gadamer tells us that, while *Truth and Method* transcends the epistemological and methodological side of hermeneutics, it by no means excludes it, as Habermas claimed. Applying hermeneutics to the present dissertation will necessarily involve both epistemology and methodology. I nevertheless concur with Habermas that a theoretical system of reference will be a strength, as it facilitates the explanatory part of the study. In the following paragraphs I will present the preliminary relevance of Gadamer's work for the dissertation,¹⁴ first and foremost in the realm of epistemology, but

¹⁴ I will return to hermeneutics in the analyses and discussion.

I will also anticipate the methodological and ethical consequences which will be dealt with thoroughly in the next chapter.

The primary concern in *Truth and Method* is how we understand and interpret. Gadamer's examples are mostly works of art and texts, but his hermeneutics applies everywhere interpretation and understanding takes place. In the present dissertation the aim is obviously to reach an understanding in the form of answering the research questions, but in the process there are many interpretations and examples of understanding, as in the process of analyzing the interviews. One of the basic conditions for understanding in *Truth and Method* is *wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein*, the notion of understanding as guided by historicity. My background as a teacher who reduced his music teaching significantly, makes me approach the field with a massive pre-understanding. If we are to follow Gadamer's thoughts, this must be regarded as an asset, if dealt with properly. My pre-understanding is a vital condition for understanding, the horizon which makes understanding possible. Nevertheless, it must be brought into play, and risk being contested, for, as Gadamer emphasizes, understanding is productive, to understand is to understand *differently*. Habermas would perhaps argue that as soon as I start reflecting upon my prejudices, they cease to be prejudices. In the actual work with the present dissertation, one can question whether this really affects the results. What remains is the challenges Gadamer raises to the interpreter, to which I will return below.

Gadamer defines the hermeneutic task as that of conquering alienness, and the critical problem of distinguishing between true and false prejudices. Although distance¹⁵ and alienness are to be conquered, they also constitute a condition that makes understanding possible, as it enables our prejudices to be put at risk. The distance between my pre-understanding and the material I investigate is what makes it possible to reach a *new* understanding, shared by both sides. This conversation between the interpreter and the interpreted is what Gadamer calls *the fusion of horizons*. In the present dissertation, part of the process is actual conversations with informants, as well as more metaphorical conversations with transcripts of interviews and other textual resources. In congruence with Gadamer's (and Heidegger's) interpretation of the hermeneutical circle, I find that as my prejudices have been challenged in the various parts of the

15 The distance Gadamer mostly addresses is temporal, but as he emphasizes in a footnote, it is distance in itself that makes it possible to solve the hermeneutical task (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 376).

process, this has again resulted in new prejudices, which have opened up for new understandings.

The dialogical aspect of hermeneutics can also be explained with the concept of play, which is invoked several times in *Truth and Method*. In addition to the playful nature of the conversation where the players exchange views, Gadamer also develops his concept of truth from play. The experience, or event-like character, of truth finds its place when the space in between the players—the play itself—presents itself as a structure, a new being, an equivalent of the fusion of horizons. The research question in this dissertation suggests a quite straightforward answer, with a positive character of truth corresponding with the reality. But when we regard the study as a whole, such a claim to truth remains unobtainable. This is an exploratory study, and its exploratory nature combined with the low number of informants makes an exhaustive conclusion highly unlikely, as there are probably as many answers to the question as there are possible informants. In addition, all the parts of the research process, e.g. interviews, transcription, analysis, and translation, are possible loci of distortion. Nevertheless, the informants do not exist in a vacuum, and their utterances can be interpreted as emerging from a larger whole of meaning. While a positive answer may be one possibility, this study cannot restrict itself to it, as it would result in a multitude of answers. Through interpretation a new understanding can emerge, and this productive force of understanding is what makes the research question possible to answer. In the process of understanding, where various prejudices are played out against each other, and the parts are understood in relation to the whole and vice versa, in a hermeneutical circle, a whole can disclose itself to a level of patterns and generalizable aspects. I emphasize that the whole I am referring to here is the whole of the dissertation, and not the whole of the field I am researching.

Gadamer's concept of truth is an experience occurring all the time when meaning presents itself, but in a research project the epistemic status of the interpretations should be strengthened. It is in this regard theory and method are important facilitators. While Gadamer claims that his hermeneutics encompass all aspects of understanding, I concur with Habermas that a theoretical framework provides critical distance, and makes it possible to better describe the phenomena that have being beyond language. Although language is the medium presenting what is meaningful for us, it is beneficial to distinguish between those aspects that are structures of symbols, and those that are symbolically mediated. In my analysis, I will combine both the lingual aspects

mentioned in the interviews with the objective context of teachers. Furthermore, besides understanding, the present dissertation necessarily involves explaining, and in this regard the conceptual framework derived from theory facilitate explaining and contextualizing aspects of the study.

Ethics

An ethical dilemma emerges from the hermeneutics of Gadamer. I agree with Gadamer, that in the interpretation of texts it is impossible to understand the author's intentions, and indeed these are not necessarily the most interesting aspects of the text. In dealing with living informants speaking about their own life experience, however, the situation is different. I believe I have an obligation to present my informants' stories as individual, independent, complete units, as the informants intended. This obligation to my informants is in tension with my obligation to the dissertation and its readers. A mere repetition of my informants' views hardly contributes to knowledge of the field; for the dissertation to make a contribution, it must engage in interpretation of these stories. Any interpretation will risk imposing my prejudices on the informants' stories, and there is therefore a risk of producing results in which the informants' do not recognize themselves. In a way, this would be a flawed interpretation, as agreement is a condition for understanding. The concept of play, fundamental for Gadamer's hermeneutics, also stresses the importance of equality between the interpreter and the text, in opposition to the doctor-patient relation of psychoanalysis.

I cannot completely surrender the idea of considering my informants' intended meaning, and the solution seems to be a negotiation of meaning, as I will present more thoroughly in the next chapter. As Gadamer mentions, the beginning of an interpretation is an answer (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 467), and to see the process of interpretation as a dialectic between question and answer, opens up for an interpretation that takes into consideration the intended meaning. Furthermore, any expectations of meaning that are rejected by the text must be kept at a distance (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 461). In the hermeneutics of Gadamer the original meaning is actually never touched, as it is in principle inaccessible. It is rather present in the dialectical relation between the text and the interpretation.

I have no aim of dissolving the difference between the informants' original statements and my interpretation of them, I rather seek to maintain this tension between the informants' concepts and my own, and to lay bare the process through which my interpretation unfolds. This dialectical relation between

something being the same and yet something different, is mainly a relation within the realm of language. Gadamer's own extreme example of this relation is the act of translation, where a text is rewritten in another language. Translation involves making choices, regarding which aspects of the text to emphasize, and yet maintain the meaning of the text. The difference between the original and the translation is thus the product of the translator, and not emanating from the text. The same pertain to the interpreter. "For the interpreting word is the word of the interpreter; it is not the language and the dictionary of the interpreted text. This means that assimilation is no mere reproduction or repetition of the traditional text; it is a new creation of understanding" (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 468). The productivity of interpretation means that the original statements retain their individuality whereas the interpretation is a new and different view of the matter, yet reflecting the same meaning.

The movement of the interpretation is dialectical not primarily because the one-sidedness of every statement can be balanced by another side [...] but because the word that interpretatively fits the meaning of the text expresses the whole of this meaning—i.e., allows an infinity of meaning to be represented within it in a finite way. (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 461)

This is what Gadamer calls the speculative structure of language, "the coming into language of a totality of meaning" (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 469). The ethical problem is thus perhaps non-existent, as any difference between the original statements and the interpretations, says more about my prejudices than my informants' intentions.

Anticipation of method

To summarize, *Truth and Method* poses some challenges for the researcher that I find relevant for this dissertation. The most prominent is to approach the material with an openness and accept the other view as valid. Only by letting oneself be addressed by the text is it possible to understand what the text has to say. The challenge of being open for meaning can also be called the fore-conception of completeness, to expect what is handed over (*Überlieferung*) to be a complete unit of meaning. The linguistic expression that corresponds with openness is the question. Asking a true question means bringing into the open (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 357), and acknowledging that you do not know. From this starting point a new understanding is possible, an understanding that implies applying the text to ourselves, and by doing so running the risk of falsifying our prejudices. This somewhat negative meaning of experience is at the center of *Erfahrung*.

A more specific challenge is that of risking our prejudices, bringing them into play. When we expect meaning we project our fore-understanding, and new projections (*Entwurf*) are prepared as we understand more. The literal meaning of the German word is “throwing out,” and throwing out our prejudices and suspending them, means giving our prejudices full play, and putting them at risk (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 298f). As mentioned above, this is done in the form of a question. In the present dissertation, this process takes place on different levels, most concrete in the interviews. One can argue that when questions are written down, they cease to be true questions, representing prejudices, as they emerge from reflection, although I find the distinction insignificant. The interview guide (presented in the next chapter) creates the opportunity for a free conversation, with questions appearing from the progress of the interview, more in line with the true questions of Gadamer. Some of the questions are quite leading, but I believe that in these questions the prejudices are more clearly articulated and brought into play. The real challenge in the context of a dissertation is perhaps to include this process when writing the dissertation, and to ask questions in the same manner, and to risk one’s own prejudices when they are not being recorded.

3.2 Performance theory

Performance, performative, performativity, performance studies, performance theory: all these terms revolve around the notion of something performed. The term “performance” has become ubiquitous (even in Norway), and it appears in an ever-growing range of contexts. Several Norwegian newspapers have gone as far as calling the present youth generation “the performance generation” (*generasjon prestasjon*),¹⁶ a description that reflects the pressure young people experience to perform in many areas. When I write “performance theory” it is to be understood as a theory of performance. Yet, the question of what performance *is* remains, and there is no single answer. At the most general level, performance in the present dissertation is a (discursive) formation, but this formation at the same time encompasses several paradigms and understandings of performance, some of which will be described here. It is obvious that performance is an unstable term, and in the opening pages of his introduction to

¹⁶ This translation can be contested, and an alternative can be “the achievement generation.” Nevertheless, I believe the term performance includes the demand for efficacy in the visual, virtual, and social domains, as well as the call for economic progress.

performance Carlson (2004) describes performance as an “essentially contested concept,” a concept with disagreement about its essence built into the concept.¹⁷ To give a unified definition of performance is thus an almost impossible task, but it does not mean that the array of meaning is a result of polysemy, it is more a matter of tensions drawing from different directions. What follows from the instability of performance is that performance theory in the present dissertation will be *my* version of performance theory, a bricolage, where some aspects will be emphasized, and other omitted. The *function* of performance in the present dissertation is as an analytical tool to describe the changes to the school system during the last decades, how the teachers perform their work, and how they change in relation to the contexts surrounding them. Connecting to Gadamer and his debate with Habermas, performance theory will be the theory that facilitates *explanation* and guides my interpretation. Performance also involves aspects existing outside of language, which are more than structures of symbols. In the following paragraphs, I will present three different, but connected, paradigms of performance that in my view concern the school to a large degree, beginning with performance studies. The other two are performance management and technological performance. Furthermore, I will present McKenzie’s (2001) attempt at rehearsing a general theory of performance, and the connection between Gadamer’s hermeneutics and performance theory. Within McKenzie’s general theory there are several understandings of performance, and these can be seen as extensions of performance as presented in the three paradigms. Performance theory will inform the discourse analysis that follows in Chapter 6, and the discursivity of performance needs mentioning. In this regard I will introduce the writings of Foucault (1979, 2002a), both informing McKenzie’s general theory and as an anticipation of the discourse analytical framework presented in the next chapter.

3.2.1 Performance studies

Performance studies is arguably the best-known paradigm of performance. From the study of theatre to the study of the reality *as* theatre, performance is today a recurring concept within anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and art. Carlson (2004) opens his book by introducing three traits of performance: The display of skills, patterned behavior, and the importance of observation and evaluation. For Carlson, the display of skills primarily concerns the performing

¹⁷ The term “essentially contested concept” was developed by Gallie (1955).

arts, with its public demonstration of skills. But as we will see later, the display of skills concerns other paradigms of performance as well. Within the school, it is easy to draw a line between the display of skills and evaluation, both integral parts of modern education. Evaluation and observation necessarily involve an observer, and thus performance is always performance *for* someone. Schechner (2013), makes a similar argument by defining performance in relation to “doing.” “Showing doing’ is performing: pointing to, underlining, and displaying doing” (Schechner, 2013, p. 28). Performance studies is thus the explaining of “showing doing.” More precisely, Schechner defines performance (within performance studies) in line with the notion of patterned behavior, through the concept “restored behavior.”

Restored behavior

The notion of restored behavior resembles the theatricality of reality mentioned above. At the heart of the concept we find repetition, the separation of the doer from the deed, and the instability of the original.

Restored behavior is living behavior treated as a film director treats a strip of film. These strips of behavior can be rearranged or reconstructed; they are independent of the causal systems (social, psychological, technological) that brought them into existence. They have a life of their own. The original “truth” or “source” of the behavior may be lost, ignored or contradicted—even while this truth or source is being honored and observed. (Schechner, 1985, p. 35)

Because restored behaviors have an existence external to the actor/agent, performance, for Schechner, can be understood as playing a role, it involves a double consciousness. Moreover: “Performance means: never for the first time. It means: for the second to the *n*th time. Performance is ‘twice-behaved behavior’” (Schechner, 1985, p. 36). Although performance is repetition, it is, as Schechner writes in the citation above, difficult to identify the original. He distinguishes between indicative events, for which the original behaviors can be identified, and subjunctive nonevents, whose origin is lost. Indicative events are actual, historical, while subjunctive “nonevents” are virtual, mythical, or fictional: the original event is lost, yet still repeated. Schechner’s subjunctive nonevent shares with Gadamer’s position on understanding historical texts the elusiveness of the original. As our understanding of a historical text is influenced by previous interpretations of the work, it is impossible to grasp the original, intended meaning. The historically effected consciousness can thus be viewed as a consciousness about the subjunctive mood of the original. Another distinction Schechner introduces is between “is” and “as” performance”

(Schechner, 2013, p. 38ff). “Is” performance, denotes those bounded actions and events that are accepted as performances within a cultural context. But every action can be viewed “as” a performance. In a sense, performativity (see the discussion of Judith Butler in 3.2.5), can be viewed “as” performance. In the present dissertation, viewing music teaching and being a (music) teacher as performance will be an analytical tool. Although the distinction between “is” and “as” performance may seem straightforward, Schechner emphasizes that the distinctions between them are vanishing (Schechner, 2013, p. 49). Fueled by digital media, life more and more seems to resemble a series of performances, and instead of strict boundaries, the events that comprises life can be arranged on a continuum from “is” to “as” performance.

Liminal—liminoid

Another line of performance research can be found within anthropology, and in particular in research on rituals. In addition to interpreting rituals in theatrical terms and vice versa, societies have been described using theatrical and ritualistic terms. Turner introduced the concept “social drama” (Turner, 1982) to describe conflicts in various societies. Social dramas follow four phases: First, a norm breach, leading to (second) a crisis, where factions are formed. Third, a process of redress, and finally (fourth) reintegration or recognition of schism (Turner, 1982, p. 68ff). The term “social drama” incorporates the similarity, and dialectical relation,¹⁸ between social dramas and cultural performance (not unlike “is” performance and “as” performance).

The third phase of the social dramas, redress, is a productive phase where changes can take place. One is *in between* the past and the future, and through reflection over oneself and the culture, meaning can arise. Turner places the redressive phase in a hermeneutical framework leaning on Dilthey, in which meaning involves grasping the relation of the parts to the whole (Turner, 1982, p. 76). Like the origin of new culture, the in-between has a subjunctive quality, as it is a “could be” that cannot be fixed.

The “in-betweenness” is further developed through the concept of liminality (a concept from Van Gennep). Liminality is first and foremost associated with rites of passage. The word “liminal” comes from the Latin word “limen” which means threshold; and in rites of passage, the liminal phase is the transitionary phase

¹⁸ Schechner has developed a model of the dialectical relationship in the form of a feedback loop (Schechner, 1977/2003, p. 215).

where the participants of the ritual are separated from the rest of the group. Liminality allows for norms and the conventional structure to be challenged, and played with. As in social dramas, the liminal in-between is productive, and new culture can emerge. Although liminality is transgressive, it is most often playful, and ends up reaffirming the culture. “The *liminal* phases of tribal society invert but do not usually subvert the *status quo*, the structural form, of society; reversal underlines to the members of a community that chaos is the alternative to cosmos, so they’d better stick to cosmos, i.e., the traditional order of culture” (Turner, 1982, p. 41). It must be noted that the concept of liminality originates in anthropological investigations of primitive cultures with few alternatives to the established society. While a primitive, unified culture is possible to reaffirm, it is more difficult in modern, complex, fragmented cultures. In modern societies one finds *liminoid* activities, instead of liminal, where “liminoid’ *resembles* without being identical with ‘liminal’” (Turner, 1982, p. 32). An important condition for the separation between liminal and liminoid is the separation between work and leisure in modern societies, as liminoid activities take place in activities as sport, art, and popular culture (Turner, 1982, p. 30ff).

Liminoid like liminal activities mark sites where conventional structure is no longer honored but, being more playful and more open to chance, they are also much more likely to be subversive, consciously or by accident introducing or exploring different structures that may develop into real alternatives to the *status quo*. (Carlson, 2004, p. 19)

It does not mean that there are no liminal activities in modern societies, the liminoid must rather be viewed as a supplement, and although both can challenge the structures of society, only the liminoid can change them. An interesting development the last decades I will return to later, is the gradual dissolution of the separation between work and leisure, contributing to a sense of continuous liminality.

Language

While the above-mentioned aspects of performance studies mostly concern embodied performances, it is important to note another important aspect of performance: language. In a series of lectures, collected in the seminal publication, *How to do things with words*, Austin (1962) introduced “speech act theory” where he distinguishes between constative and performative utterances. The latter are utterances that perform an action. Unlike other utterances, performatives are not to be evaluated as true or false, but as felicitous or infelicitous, the success of achieving the acts (Austin, 1962, lecture II). In the article “Signature

Event Context” Derrida criticized some aspects of speech act theory, which resulted in a heated argument with Austin’s student Searle. One of Derrida’s points is that successful utterances must necessarily be a citation.

Could a performative utterance succeed if its formulation did not repeat a “coded” or iterable utterance, or in other words, if the formula I pronounce in order to open a meeting, launch a ship or a marriage were not identifiable as conforming with an iterable model, if it were not then identifiable in some way as a “citation”? (Derrida, 1988, p. 18)

As Carlson writes, by citation, Derrida never meant an exact reproduction. Citations are adapting, changing, and causing new contexts. Furthermore, Derrida’s concept of citation echoes the notion of repeated (or restored) behavior, one of the hallmarks of performance (Carlson, 2004, p. 76). The concept of performativity has later been developed into an integral part of Judith Butler’s identity politics, which will be discussed in some detail below.

Carlson sums up the relation between performance and the social sciences in a few points.

Performance and performativity are deeply involved both with the reinforcement and the dismantling of stable systems of meaning and representation. (...) Secondly, (...) performance and performativity, in whatever field they are utilized, are always involved with a sense of doubleness, of the repetition of some pattern of action or mode of being in the world already in existence. (Carlson, 2004, p. 80)

It is important to note that the idea of citation and repetition does not imply an original. It is at best inaccessible, and within a post-structural framework an illusion. As each citation involves small adjustments, each citation is a citation of a citation (cf. subjunctive/indicative above).

Cultural performance

The aim of McKenzie’s *Perform or else* (2001) is to rehearse a general theory of performance. McKenzie’s speculative forecast is that “*performance will be to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries what discipline was to the eighteenth and nineteenth, that is, an onto-historical formation of power and knowledge*” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 18, italics in original). The formation, consisting of discursive performatives and embodied performances, originated in the US in the second part of the twentieth century, and is spreading globally, fast. Among the three paradigms of performance he investigates is performance studies – cultural performance. One of McKenzie’s findings is that each paradigm is guided by a challenge. The challenge of cultural performance is of social efficacy, an efficacy

grounded in embodied transgressions or resistance. Furthermore, McKenzie defines cultural performance within the notion of liminality, which he claims has become a norm.

We have come to define the efficacy of performance and of our own research, if not exclusively, then very inclusively, in terms of liminality—that is, a mode of activity whose spatial, temporal, and symbolic “in between-ness” allows for social norms to be suspended, challenged, played with, and even transformed. (McKenzie, 2001, p. 50)

Liminal rites of passage also function as a meta-model of cultural performance. The liminal-norm makes transgression and resistance normative; this is perhaps most evident within performance art.

3.2.2 Performance management

The second paradigm in McKenzie’s general theory is performance management—organizational performance, which emerged as a paradigm displacing scientific management, a term coined by Frederick Winslow Taylor (Taylor, 1919). Although the goal of both paradigms is high efficiency, the means are quite different. While scientific management was a child of industrialization, performance management is suited to the new computer based information economy (McKenzie, 2001, p. 63). McKenzie mentions three other aspects where performance management differs from scientific management. Control of workers is an integral part of scientific management, and enforcing is the most efficient method. Performance management, on the other hand, valorizes the empowering of workers and encourages the use of intuition and creativity. Furthermore, performance management seeks to displace the machine-model of scientific management, by introducing “a more ‘organic’ systems-oriented model, one that resituates performance within larger organizational and socioeconomic environments” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 63). The challenge of performance management is of organizational efficiency—maximizing outputs and minimizing inputs. These aspects can be found within several models of performance management, where certain values seem to surface regularly. Creativity, diversity, continuous renewal, and learning on all levels of the organization are all important features, often visible through strategies like restructuring, reengineering, reinvention, outsourcing, and downsizing (McKenzie, 2001, p. 60). The metamodel of performance management is the feedback loop. Feedback is a process where output is fed back into the system, allowing a comparison of input and output, not as

a control mechanism, but as a tool for improving efficiency. An important point to note is that performance management has by no means replaced scientific management. They exist side by side, and organizations can have traits of both paradigms. The Norwegian school is such an area.

3.2.3 Technological performance

The last paradigm McKenzie investigates is what he calls “techno performance,” the performance of technology. The challenge is of effectiveness, performance “in terms of executability, the technical ‘carrying-out’ of prescribed tasks, successful or not” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 97). The metamodel McKenzie attributes to this paradigm is the missile, because of the paradigm’s close affiliation with what he calls the military-industrial-academic complex. Techno-performance has a cyclic structure, where sequences of testing leads to improved performance. “Technologies, then, are made to perform through a circular process of hypothesis and measurement, prediction and evaluation” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 110). These steps are again guided by criteria, performance specifications and performance standards. It is easy to see a connection to the feedback loop of performance management, which also, through continuous evaluation, seeks to improve the performance. What is important to note in the context of the present dissertation is that the technological developments the last decades, especially within ICT, has been an important facilitator for some of the recent changes to the school. I am here thinking chiefly about how the massive gathering and dissemination of data concerning student performance have had a profound influence on the school system in Norway (and other countries). Additionally, several of the concepts typical of techno-performance have also become customary within the schools. In the following we shall see further how these paradigms intertwine and inform each other, and how the school and the working life of teachers can be understood in light of performance.

3.2.4 Sites of convergence

Within this triad of performance paradigms, performance studies seems to be the odd one out. There are, nevertheless, several commonalities between all of them. Each paradigm emerged in the US after the second world war, and is guided by a challenge, with consequences if they are not met. Like Carlson,

McKenzie emphasizes the contestedness of the concepts, and each paradigm indeed spends much effort discussing and contesting what performance is. The instability is partly because “each paradigm valorizes process over product and structuration over structure” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 132). Connected to this underlying instability is the testing and contesting of norms, which characterize each paradigm. Within performance studies, the notion of liminality incorporates much of the transgressive and subversive potential of performance, in opposition to social norms, whereas in performance management the limitations of the organization are to be overcome. Norm testing in techno-performance means testing the limits of a given material or system. The latter two paradigms’ norm testing is quite familiar through phrases like “thinking outside the box” and “cutting-edge” (ibid.).

Before I continue with McKenzie’s general theory, I wish to elaborate a bit further on the similarities between performance studies and performance management, liminality, and feedback. Building on Schechner and Turner McKenzie writes: “Both liminal rites and feedback loops are cyclical processes, and both involve exteriorization and interiorization, expulsion and incorporation. (...) One might even say that (...) rites of passage function as feedback loops for entire social groups” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 90). In addition to being models for, respectively, efficacy and efficiency, there is feedback between the two paradigms, for example in the notion of “management (or whatever else) as a performing art.” McKenzie writes further, echoing Derrida: “One of the most important processes our readings of the two paradigms have revealed is the iterability of conceptual models, the possibility that models of performance developed in one research paradigm can be appropriated by another” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 92). Performances can be cited and re-sited,

breaking apart the evaluative forces that bind together their discourses and practices. More importantly, they can recombine and re-inscribe these forms, deploying them elsewhere while ignoring, incorporating, and/or reevaluating their previous values in uncanny ways. Through this iterability, mutational forces can become normative, and normative forces mutational (ibid.).

As mentioned above the separation between work and leisure in modern societies has made liminoid activities displace liminal activities, but the separation of work and labor is diminishing. Partly because of technological inventions making it possible for work to invade leisure time, and partly because of the emphasis on creativity and personal expression within performance management, that brings play into work (McKenzie, 2001, p. 93). This leads McKenzie to claim that the idea of liminality in modern societies may need to be revived.

“Postindustrial liminality is neither liminal or liminoid: it is instead *liminautic*. Limen remain sites of passage and transformation, but these sites are now themselves in passage” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 93f). What makes this distribution of performances possible is according to McKenzie digital multimedia. Global networks fuel the citation of discourses and practices, and offers new possibilities for iteration, alteration and restoration.¹⁹

3.2.5 Performance as formation

In his forecast that “*performance will be to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries what discipline was to the eighteenth and nineteenth*” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 18, italics in original), McKenzie is using the term “discipline” as it is described by Foucault (1979). Although he does not mention it explicitly, McKenzie’s method resembles to a large degree the discourse analysis/archeology of Foucault, even though *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 2002a) (originally published in 1969) is not even featured in his literature list. As far as I can see, the term “formation” (and the equivalent “stratum”) corresponds with Foucault’s description of discursive formations, and to fully understand the meaning of formation we must first look further into Foucault’s concept of discourse. This section anticipates aspects of the discourse analytical method I will employ later in the dissertation (more below and in Chapter 4).

According to Schaanning (1997, 2000) there seem to be three levels in Foucault’s theory. On the first level we find statements; second, discourses, a collection of a distinct type of statements; and third, discursive formations, the field where statements and discourses are regulated by laws (Schaanning, 1997, p. 189). In Foucault’s own words:

[D]iscourse is constituted by a group of signs, in so far as they are statements, that is, in so far as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence. And if I succeed in showing (...) that the law of such a series is precisely what I have so far called a *discursive formation*, if I succeed in showing that this discursive formation really is the principle of dispersion and redistribution, not of formulation, not of sentences, not of propositions, but of statements (in the sense in which I have used this word), the term discourse can be defined as the group of statements that belong to a single system of formation. (Foucault, 2002a, p. 121)

19 A similar description of the impact of modern media on the societal development was presented decades earlier by Horkheimer and Adorno (2002), however, from a different position and different results of the analysis.

The concept “statement” needs a comment. What makes a statement a statement is its ability to evoke a (discursive) field of what is already said. Foucault contrasts this to language.

[A] language (*langue*) is still a system for possible statements, a finite body of rules that authorizes an infinite number of performances. The field of discursive events, on the other hand, is a grouping that is always finite and limited at any moment to the linguistic sequences that have been formulated. (Foucault, 2002a, p. 30)

It means that to understand how a statement can emerge one must analyze the network of statements, tools, practices, and institutions that are evoked, the conditions of possibility that makes a statement valid (Schaanning, 1997, p. 184f). Put bluntly, in referring to an object the object appears. Schaanning uses the term ‘*iscenesettelse*’,²⁰ which is perhaps best translated as ‘bringing into play’, to describe this characteristic—when an object is referred to it is brought into play. In addition to being an attribute of the relation between the statement and its object, it is a trait of the statement itself that it has an associated domain. “[O]ne cannot say a sentence, one cannot transform it into a statement, unless a collateral space is brought into operation. A statement always has borders peopled by other statements” (Foucault, 2002a, p. 109f). Foucault distinguish these borders from the common understanding of context, as it is what makes context possible. Every statement has a position in a web that makes it possible to investigate them historically. The last aspect of the statement I will present here concerns the materiality of the statement. At its most mundane, the statement has a materiality in form of speech and writing, but Foucault’s concern is more fundamental. Materiality is constitutive of the statement itself: “a statement must have a substance, a support, a place, and a date” (Foucault, 2002a, p. 113). Moreover, statements have a quality of *repeatable materiality*. As Schaanning writes: “The material repeatability of the statement can be understood in light of bringing a network of other statements, tools, practices and institutions into play” (Schaanning, 1997, p. 194, my transl.). The institutions are mentioned explicitly by Foucault as the field that governs the possibility of repetition. “The rule of materiality that statements necessarily obey is therefore of the order of the institutions rather than of the spatio-temporal localization; it defines *possibilities of reinscription and transcription* (but

20 The term “iscenesettelse” can also be translated as “staging”. The French equivalent is *mise en scène* (a term Foucault also used in an interview, see Schaanning, 2000, p. 208f), which implies a more theatrical understanding. But to encompass the more broad conception Schaanning points to “bringing into play” is in my view the most accurate.

also thresholds and limits), rather than limited and perishable individualities” (Foucault, 2002a, p. 116). By being connected to its surroundings, the discourses do not exist outside of society, and the statements have weight. By being placed within a network, there is an inertia that characterizes the discourses, they are slow moving, and by being put in operation in a new place, the network moves with that place. Earlier I have described how iterability is a central aspect of performance, and below it will be described as an intrinsic part of Judith Butler’s identity theory.

Foucault’s use of the term “formation” indicates a process, but it can also denote a system or pattern. McKenzie seems to make use of both, as his description of the performance stratum/formation is both a horizontal study of the present order, but also its historical development, which still is in motion. To describe what a formation is, one must describe how it has come to be, and that is McKenzie’s project. It entails describing the practices that let the object appear; describing the formation of styles, the character of description; describing the rules that produce concepts; and describe how themes are formed (Schaanning, 1997, p. 190f). “A discursive formation will be individualized if one can define the system of formation of the different strategies that are deployed in it: in other words, if one can show how they all derive (...) from the same set of relations” (Foucault, 2002a, p. 76). To repeat an important characteristic, we are speaking of a system: the conditions of possibility that makes statements appear. And this system is not a linguistic one, it is to be found in what is already present as statements and practices, and in the relations between these and others. The result is a certain inertia; but fueled by digital media, the production and distribution of statements picks up speed, explaining the proliferation of performance.

The performance stratum McKenzie describes consists of embodied performances and discursive performatives, “bound together by normative forces and unbound by mutational ones” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 20). In my view this corresponds with Foucault’s first level (statements), but unlike Foucault, who has been (falsely) accused of putting too much emphasis on the written word, the inclusion of performances gives equal weight to practice. In a way, the normative and mutational forces correspond with the laws of possibility and the rules of existence, the forces that comprise the formative aspect of the formation; but at the same time, the preceding performances and performatives also constitute these laws and rules, as they decide what can be accepted as

meaningful. For the remainder of this section I will look at three areas where the performance formation has impact on the topic of the present dissertation.

Power

The emergence of the formation is visible through the advent of the three research paradigms presented above (as well as other paradigms not mentioned here), and like the paradigms, the performance stratum has not replaced its predecessor. Discipline, as a historical formation, is still very present in different parts of the world, even in the Norwegian schools (more below), but according to McKenzie, performance is spreading fast, powered by digital multimedia. In addition to the research paradigms, McKenzie grounds his arguments in the work of notable scholars. In *Eros and Civilization*, Marcuse (1966) names the reality principle guiding advanced industrial societies “the performance principle.” The performative society is characterized by alienated labor performing pre-established functions rather than living their own lives. “In societies stratified by the performance principle, individuals work and live only to enact performances dictated by others, performances normalized according to the dictates of expediency and efficiency” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 160). The alienation of labor is linked with the repressive sublimation of desire. “Libido is diverted for socially useful performances in which the individual works for himself only in so far as he works for the apparatus, engaged in activities that mostly do not coincide with his own faculties and desires” (Marcuse, 1966, p. 45).²¹ According to Marcuse, performance is to be understood as a force of domination which extends far beyond labor and desire into other realms of society, facilitated by mass culture and technology. McKenzie sums up some important notions from another essay by Marcuse, “Some Social Implications of Modern Technology”: “The mechanisms of this performance are not the raw exercise of physical power, but the more subtle control of psychic desire, the rational transformation of individual desire into the socially defined desire to fit in, to get along, to conform to the pattern of the apparatus” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 160). A valuable lesson from Marcuse’s work is how performance can exercise power through domination and repression. Technical rationality, alienation, built upon a logic of economic efficiency extends into all aspects of life, even education.

My interest in performative power is connected to a central topic for Marcuse: labor. In the present dissertation, I study workers’ relationship with their workplace. Entering a workplace is necessarily entering a domain of domination, at

²¹ This sentence is also cited by McKenzie (2001), p. 160.

least in a hierarchical structure like the school. Schools are hierarchical both in the form of ascending administrative levels and as an expression of the social status within the individual schools. Performative power is present in schools, as I will describe in Chapter 6, but there are still some obvious traits of disciplinary power, and several teachers find themselves suspended between these two forms of domination. The school is, in essence, a distributor of knowledge, and the power mechanisms within the school is necessary connected to the knowledge it professes.

Knowledge

In 1979 (in English 1984) Lyotard wrote *The Postmodern condition: a report on knowledge* (Lyotard, 1984). An important premise behind the *Report* is the unity of power and knowledge, and thus Lyotard is interested in the legitimation of knowledge. For methodological purposes he turns to Wittgenstein's language games (Wittgenstein, 1997), and the language game that "has come to dominate both knowledge and social bonds since the 1950s" is performativity (McKenzie, 2001, p. 162f).

There are many different language games—a heterogeneity of elements. They only give rise to institutions in patches—local determinism.

The decision makers, however, attempt to manage these clouds of sociality according to input/output matrices, following a logic which implies that their elements are commensurable and that the whole is determinable. They allocate our lives for the growth of power. In matters of social justice and of scientific truth alike, the legitimation of that power is based on its optimizing the system's performance-efficiency. The application of this criterion to all of our games necessarily entails a certain level of terror, whether soft or hard: be operational (that is, commensurable) or disappear. (Lyotard, 1984, p. xxiv)

The last point is similar to what is indicated by the title of McKenzie's book: perform or else. What has made this development possible is the decline of metanarratives, which previously were the source of legitimation. Lyotard goes as far as defining postmodernism as incredulity towards metanarratives. When knowledge is legitimated according to performativity, the benchmark is "the maximization of a system's output and the minimization of its input" (McKenzie, 2001, p. 163). Technology plays an important role, as performative knowledge relies on technology to produce proof. Technology, on the other hand, is made available through funding, which make these three elements a unity. Performance is thus the criterion for receiving funding (Lyotard, 1984, p. 47).

This view of knowledge obviously has some implications for education. A system where the performance of the social system is the main criterion demands skills that contribute to that performance. Lyotard mentions two kind of skills that are indispensable. The first are skills necessary to tackle world competition. Writing in 1979, Lyotard mentions management and computer technology as two central sectors for the future. It is today difficult to underestimate the growth in demand for experts within these areas, even in the schools, where the emphasis on good management has increased. Regarding the second kind of skill he continues: "Higher learning will have to continue to supply the social system with the skills fulfilling society's own needs, which center on maintaining its internal cohesion" (Lyotard, 1984, p. 48). McKenzie describes the development in his own words. "Performative education emerges when the university student's goal of 'learning a philosophy of life' is replaced by 'learning a job skill'" (McKenzie, 2001, p. 163f). The change toward purpose-oriented knowledge and education has some natural and rather disturbing implications, that to a certain extent resemble Austin's performative utterances. Within a performative condition "knowledge ceases to be either true or false and becomes instead optimal or suboptimal" (McKenzie, 2001, p. 164). Lyotard expands on the economic aspect in a world where truth has been replaced by usefulness as the most important criterion. "In the context of the mercantilization of knowledge, more often than not, this question is equivalent to: 'Is it saleable?' And in the context of power-growth: 'Is it efficient?'" (Lyotard, 1984, p. 51). Although quite bleak and extreme, traits of this development can be found in today's schools and in teacher education, as I will return to later.

While Lyotard defines postmodernism in relation to metanarratives, McKenzie develops the argument: "In a certain sense, performativity is the postmodern condition: It demands that all knowledge be evaluated in terms of operational efficiency, that what counts as knowledge must be translatable by, and accountable in the '1's and '0's of digital matrices" (McKenzie, 2001, p. 14). The replacement of grand narratives (metanarratives) by smaller narratives has evoked criticism. First, replacing grand narratives with a grand narrative about smaller narratives, might just be a change in content of the grand narratives. Second, are the grand narratives really dead? Or are the modern stories about democracy, human rights, and market economy stronger than ever before? (Aakvaag, 2008, p. 343f). An interesting development in the last decade is how two other grand narratives have been revived; I am thinking here of nationalism and the increasing influence of religion. At the time of writing this dissertation,

nationalism is on the rise in Europe, coupled with social marginalization and xenophobia; and in the US disputes between proponents of natural science and proponents of creationism and/or intelligent design, even reaching into the schools, indicate that grand narratives may still play an important role when defining knowledge. In Norway, these developments have had little impact, although several television shows and other strong rationalistic voices in the media argue against the dangers of basing knowledge in anything outside of the perimeters of modern, natural science.

It is not difficult to draw a line between the notion of performative knowledge and the recent developments in the Norwegian school system. After the first PISA-test in 2000, the term “PISA-shock” was coined to describe the public reactions to the revelation that Norwegian students were average, rather than at the top. The following changes have been fundamental, with a new curriculum in 2006, and the emergence of several national and regional tests. This has resulted in a significantly increased valuation of the knowledge examined in these tests. The emphasis has thus changed from learning skills and knowledge for the sake of personal development and relevance for work and further education, to the performance on these tests. The other aspects are obviously still present, but the importance of test-performance is now an integral part of Norwegian education. The school subjects that do not produce performative knowledge—and therefore are not tested—thus risk being treated as insignificant, as this knowledge cannot be transferred into quantitative data for measurement and comparison of schools and countries. Within such a paradigm, the efficiency of these subjects is too low to render them relevant. This topic will be elaborated further in Chapter 6.

Identity

The last aspect of performance I will mention is subject formation. Judith Butler is arguably the most important scholar of performance the last decades, and her groundbreaking work in gender studies has influenced a generation of scholars. As a contribution to McKenzie’s general theory of performance it is important to mention that she defines performance as both transgressive *and* normative.

In the article “Performance Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory” Butler (1988) launched the notion of a resemblance between gender constitution and theatrical performance. Naming the acts that constitute gender “performative” means that the “reality” is the performance, there is no inner identity *expressed* by the acts. In *Gender Trouble*

she developed her theory further and summed up the main argument in a much-quoted sentence: “There is no identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results” (Butler, 1990/1999, p. 33). This entails that we cannot view gender as a role, as would earlier performance scholars, removed from the inner self, something we put on (Butler, 1988, p. 528). The performances are compulsory citations of norms, that are further sedimented by these performances. For those who fail to do their gender right the consequences can be grave, as gender is part of what humanizes us. “Performing one’s gender wrong initiates a set of punishments both obvious and indirect, and performing it well provides the reassurance that there is an essentialism of gender identity at all.” (ibid.). Repetition is a crucial aspect of her theory as repeating norms makes genders intelligible.

When the subject is said to be constituted, that means simply that the subject is a consequence of certain rule-governed discourses that govern the intelligible invocation of identity. The subject is not *determined* by the rules which is generated because signification is *not a founding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition* that both conceals itself and enforces its rules precisely through the production of substantializing effects. In a sense, all signification takes place within the orbit of the compulsion to repeat; “agency,” then, is to be located within the possibility of a variation on that repetition. (Butler, 1990/1999, p. 185)

The relation between discourse and act has been elaborated further following the first publication of *Gender Trouble*. In the introduction to *Bodies That Matter* she distinguishes the acts of performance from performativity as a discursive practice. “[P]erformativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate ‘act’ but, rather, as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names” (Butler, 1993, p. 2). Nevertheless, as they both are modes of citationality they converge. McKenzie concludes: “[G]ender, and more generally, all subject formation, entail a normative ensemble of restored behaviors and discourses, a mundane yet punitive regime of *performances* and *performatives*, a sedimented stratum of acts and words always already repeated for the *n*th time” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 170). (In the preface to the 1999 edition of *Gender Trouble*, Butler discusses the ambiguity of performance and performative, theatricality and linguistics (Butler, 1990/1999, p. xxv).) In Butler’s theory of performativity several of the notions described in this chapter converge. As McKenzie writes, both the restored behavior of Schechner, and citation, as in Derrida’s response to Austin is present in subject formation, and I will also mention Marcuse’s description of performance as repetitions of pre-established

functions dictated by others. When Butler writes about intelligible subjects (Butler, 1990/1999, p. 22ff) (see also Mitchell (2008)), it is tempting to draw a connecting line to Gadamer, and his theory of understanding. To find something intelligible is in itself an act of understanding, and it relies on pre-understanding, which corresponds with Butler's notion of iteration and citation.

This is no exhaustive description of Butler's writings, as her publications include a range of topics, extending far beyond the few I mentioned here, but these few paragraphs include the aspects most pertinent to the present dissertation. To view identity as the compulsory repetition of norms, performances that constitute, rather than express identity is intriguing, but needs to be adjusted to inform the context I am investigating. My rationale for including Butler in this chapter is to apply her theory to the professional identity of teachers. Although I believe it is possible and fruitful to do so, there are some important differences that must be noted. First, Butler's main interest, gender, is a fundamental, inescapable category of human life inscribed with a physiological counterpart, sex, implying an inner essence. This means that the risk of doing it wrong is much higher than it is for a professional identity. Second, the professional identity—at least in part—resembles more closely a role, as it can be thought of as “something you put on.” I do claim that “teacher” can be performed by an actor conscious of playing a role. What remains, nevertheless, is the performative constitution of teachers. As Jones writes:

I am not “a teacher” outside of our collective understanding—I only become a teacher in the performance of certain socially understood acts (discursive practices). And those acts only “make” me a teacher as I am produced by you, the students (people acting as “students” right now). We are all engaged in the performance, the production of the teacher. And this room too is recruited in the process—the inert architecture of the lecture room is alive in “speaking” me the teacher and you the students into existence as we take our sanctioned places in the space. Moreover, what counts as a “teacher” is re-enacted by all of us, including the architecture, in our culturally produced actions in relation to each other and the space. “The teacher” is produced through/in our material bodies in the ways we move, what we wear, who we look at, the gestures we make. All this is “aside” from the “I” of me, or you. (Jones, 1997, p. 267f)

Jones uses this as an example of how performative constitution of subjectivity takes place, and mentions another difference between “teacher” and “woman”: a teacher is not necessarily always recognized as a teacher, but a woman will be recognized as a woman in any context. This is not necessarily true, and an important part of Butler's writing is how this recognition can be challenged. I also find Jones's description of what constitutes a teacher overly simplistic,

as teaching is also a profession, which means that as soon as you receive your qualification you are a teacher (in itself a performative utterance). Regarding the performative aspect of being a teacher, I find her description fitting. What must be added is the normative aspect. The normative aspect of performance implies sanctions if not done properly, and it is certainly possible to perform “teacher” wrong. This is a central aspect of the analyses in this dissertation, as being a music teacher in some respect falls outside of the boundaries of “teacher.”

3.2.6 Discipline and performance

I have mentioned several times that a central aspect of McKenzie’s general theory is the displacement of discipline by performance. In the preceding paragraphs, there are some indications of how and where the displacement takes place. Now, towards the end of this chapter, the displacement needs to be addressed, and discipline presented in some detail, as in my view the Norwegian schools have characteristics of both discipline and performance. As a school is organized in a manner that corresponds with discipline (see below), it is tempting to claim that performance and discipline operate at different levels within the school. On the other hand, the historical emergence of performance has not fully reached the Norwegian school, and my informants had their own schooling experience, and began their teaching career at a time when the influence of performative power was significantly less than it is today.

First, a brief summary of McKenzie’s theory. At its most abstract, performance is an onto-historical formation of power and knowledge. “An emergent diagram of power forces that envelops a stratum of knowledge forms whose crystallization began in the mid-twentieth century” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 194). Moreover, paradigms of performance research stretch across the stratum. In addition to the three presented here, educational performance is also on the rise, which I will present further in Chapter 6. The most concrete level of the performance formation consists of discursive performatives and embodied performances—statements and practices, expression and content. “Performances are territorializations of flows and unformed matters into sensible bodies, while performatives are encodings of these bodies into articulate subjects and objects” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 177). The age of performance produces new subjects and objects, hyphenated identities, new forms of knowledge, life-long learning and power mechanisms that challenge us to perform, all intensified by digital media that transgress borders. “[T]he performance stratum is the power matrix of

the New World Order, an order in which disorder is put to work, where bodies perform both physically and digitally” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 189). Performative power encourages transformation, and we now perform, multitask, “do our own thing.” The latter, according to McKenzie, is especially troubling, as it “reveals the libidinal infrastructure of contemporary domination” (ibid.).²² I will now present discipline as presented by Foucault, before returning to McKenzie’s summary of the displacement.

In contrast to performance, discipline is strongly related to industrialization and enlightenment. Like performance, it is a formation of domination for the sake of efficiency, but the tools are quite different. The subtitle of *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1979), *The Birth of the Prison*, reveals the main topic of Foucault’s investigation. By explicating the (discursive) formation *discipline*, he prepares the advent of the modern prison. In doing so he spends much time on other institutions, such as the modern school, which is another product of the discipline formation. Like *Perform or Else*, the book has an archeological structure, connecting findings from an array of sources. Unlike performance, discipline is a formation of *order*, a political technology of power, and strongly linked to centralized power and institutions like the school, military, hospitals, and prison. Discipline is a theory of details, and of meticulous control of these details (Foucault, 1979, p. 141). Disciplinary systems exercise control over individuals at different levels, from the effectiveness of the individual parts of the body, to distribution of individuals in space. Moreover, they facilitate control of activity, time and composition of forces into an effective machine for economic progress.

Although many of the control measures in schools are being challenged, many survive. A good example is the classroom unit as a control of the distribution of students within the school. The classroom is still the favored sectioning of the

22 McKenzie’s theory consists of one more, atmospheric, level: “perfumance,” which the last part of *Perform or Else* is devoted to. Perfumance is “the citational mist of any and all performances (...) the incessant (dis)embodying-(mis)naming of performance (...) the becoming-mutational of normative forces, the becoming-normative of mutant forces” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 203). In an interview (McKenzie et al., 2014) McKenzie describes perfumance as related to Derrida and Butler’s use of iterability. He also mentions that many readers don’t read all of *Perform or Else*, and miss important parts of the project. Although I acknowledge this view, I believe that the rest of the theory is of mostly philosophical interest, and for the present dissertation, what has been presented so far will suffice as an analytical tool. The last part of *Perform or Else* is largely inspired by the writings of Deleuze, a perspective I have avoided here, as it would entail an expansion of the theoretical framework of the present dissertation beyond my self-imposed restrictions.

school; it allows teachers to supervise a whole group, and teachers are mostly critical of other ways of organizing schools—often for good reasons.²³ The organization into classes points at two other traits of discipline, hierarchy and rank.

In the eighteenth century, “rank” begins to define the great form of distribution of individuals in the educational order: rows or ranks of pupils in the class, corridors, courtyards; rank attributed to each pupil at the end of each task and each examination; the rank he obtains from week to week, month to month, year to year; an alignment of age groups, one after another; a succession of subjects taught and questions treated, according to an order of increasing difficulty. (Foucault, 1979, p. 146f)

Foucault names this “serial space,” an organization in which efficiency is achieved by perpetual movement. As it is reliant on an overarching organization, Foucault can thus claim that “the table” is among the great operations of discipline. “[I]n the form of disciplinary distribution (...) the table has the function of treating multiplicity itself, distributing it and deriving from it as many effects as possible” (Foucault, 1979, p. 149). An indication of the movement from disciplinary to performative organization of the school can be found in the temporal distribution of subjects in the curriculum. In the curriculum of 1974, the prescribed duration of a lesson was 45 minutes, and for each schoolyear there was a set amount of lessons per week in each subject. The succeeding curricula, of 1987 and 1997, show a gradual loosening of the rigorous temporal distribution of the subjects; and in the current curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2006), the total time of lessons for each subject is indicated in full hours for two or three school years. Moreover, individual schools are entrusted with deciding the duration of the lessons, and the distribution of the lessons over the school years. It is a small, but striking example of the liberation the performance paradigm conveys. On the other hand, this freedom is followed by strict auditing and performance expectancy.

In addition to the spatial distribution of individuals, discipline involves the control of activity. It entails meticulous control of time to constitute a useful time, and minute descriptions of acts according to the temporal organization, all for the benefit of the highest efficiency. Foucault describes it as “the capitalization of time” (Foucault, 1979, p. 157f). The meticulous control of each individual’s time, broken down into segments of activity, according to a general plan of individual evolution was transferred from the military to the schools. The main

23 The prime example is “base schools,” a way of organizing schools that avoids traditional classes, which gained ground about a decade ago. As it led to discontented teachers (Vinje, 2011, 2015) and no increase in learning, it has largely been abandoned in recent years.

procedure was exercise, “that technique by which one imposes on the body tasks that are both repetitive and different, but always graduated” (Foucault, 1979, p. 161). Exercise became an element of unending subjection, turning life time into economic progress. Finally, discipline involves the composition of forces, turning a group of individuals into an efficient machine.

Foucault devotes much attention to the development of training. For the sake of efficiency, discipline turns individuals into both objects of power and instruments of its exercise. The primary tool is observation, often in a hierarchical network, where supervisors are supervised in turn. Within the school, it is found in the use of students for observation and other tasks. In addition to the hierarchical observation, a penal mechanism is integral to discipline (Foucault, 1979, p. 177). Disciplinary penalty has some unique traits. Penalty is introduced when someone fails to carry out the task, for *not* having done what is expected. Moreover, it is corrective, often resulting in exercises, and complemented with gratification, resulting in a binary opposition of good and bad. Finally, penalty can take the form of demotion being assigned a lower rank. The driving force behind penalty is normalization, and the school is not excepted. “The Normal is established as a principle of coercion in teaching with the introduction of a standardized education and the establishment of the *écoles normales* (teachers’ training colleges)” (Foucault, 1979, p. 184). Normalization has become an instrument of power.

Examination is what combines these measures, as it both observes and punishes. It is a normalizing gaze (*ibid.*), highly ritualized (at least earlier), and linked a certain formation of knowledge to a certain exercise of power (Foucault, 1979, p. 187). Examination documents individuals and distributes and classifies; by entering a network of writing, individuals can be described, analyzed and compared as cases. “[A] case which at one and the same time constitutes an object for a branch of knowledge and a hold for a branch of power” (Foucault, 1979, p. 191). While individuality (in writing) earlier has been the privilege of the few, a form of heroization, it was, with the introduction of discipline, moved from high to low, constituting the individuals as effect and object of power and knowledge (Foucault, 1979, p. 192).

The culmination of the disciplinary formation is panopticism: a power mechanism whose efficiency is passed over to the surface of its application. The idea originates in Bentham’s well-known panoptic prison, where the inmates can be observed continually, without seeing the observer, and thus, the observance is unverifiable, making it effective even when it is not taking place. Foucault

claims that panopticism is a generalizable model for a highly efficient exercise of power that can be integrated into any function, and he ascribes it a role of amplification. “[A]lthough it arranges power, although it is intended to make it more economic and more effective, it does so not for power itself, nor for the immediate salvation of a threatened society: its aim is to strengthen the social forces—to increase production, to develop the economy, spread education, raise the level of public morality; to increase and multiply” (Foucault, 1979, p. 207f). Discipline has, in that sense, a positive role of enhancing society through making useful individuals. Foucault understands this development as the formation of society from the dissemination of discipline from the institutions into other areas and state-control of the mechanisms of discipline. It is important to notice that although discipline is strongly connected to the institutions, it is not restricted to them. “‘Discipline’ may be identified neither with an institution nor with an apparatus; it is a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a ‘physics’ or an ‘anatomy’ of power, a technology” (Foucault, 1979, p. 215). It is a form of regulation through surveillance that suits a society consisting of private individuals. The formation of disciplinary society involves the ordering of human multiplicities into useful beings. It emerges as formation in connection with historical economic, juridico-political, and scientific processes.

Finally, it must be mentioned that, although I write about disciplinary society, Foucault’s main interest is to describe the conditions for the advent of the modern prison, and the notion of a fully disciplinary society is by no means correct. But as a formation it serves the role of defining several aspects of the manifestation of power and knowledge in society, even today.

McKenzie summarizes the main difference between discipline and performance within seven domains, some of which have been described already: subjects and objects, geopolitics, economics, knowledge production, media archives, desire, and power mechanisms (McKenzie, 2001, p. 179ff). While discipline produces centered and unified human subjects, and a stable field of objects, performance constructs decentered, performed subjects, as investigated by Butler; and highly unstable object fields. In contrast to the geopolitics dominated by colonialism and the nation state, performance is characterized by networked distribution of power and extensive diversity. (As mentioned above, this aspect is challenged by recent geopolitical developments.) The strongest symbol of disciplinary economy is the factory. It is further characterized by a

quite stable commodity-based capitalism, with stable, slowly evolving labor. Like the above-mentioned domains, performative economy is highly unstable, dominated by globalization and the quickly developing information economy, all made possible by the proliferation of technology. Knowledge production and media archives have a strong connection. The primary medium of disciplinary knowledge is the book, which was restricted to the universities and an exclusive group of students coming from a small fraction of society. Performative knowledge is spread quickly through multimedia networks, and education has become democratized, resulting in a vast diversity of students. With the notion of life-long learning, education is no longer exclusive to institutions. Desire in disciplinary society was largely dominated by, and mediated through, institutions like the school and the factory. The disciplinary mechanism described above, was a technology that enabled the repression of desire, channeling it in a productive direction. Desire in performative societies is disconnected from the institutions and placed within a network of challenges to perform. Finally, McKenzie claims that the power mechanisms of discipline are continuous and function through institutions. (As mentioned above, the latter aspect needs to be nuanced.) Discipline can be characterized by liminal rites of passage, passing through a serial succession of institutions like the schools, the military, and higher education. Performance, on the other hand, features the liminal norm, removed from serialized time. Although performative power is restricted to certain parts of the world, the rest of the world is nevertheless object of that power. The free flow and dispersion described in this paragraph makes it difficult to pin down exactly the sources of power as they are moving through networks in constant change.²⁴

The Norwegian schools feature aspects of both of the formations presented here. They offer different subject positions and value different forms of knowledge. In that regard, the description of the formation(s) serves two purposes, first as historical background and a description of some of the conditions for the recent changes to the school (which is the context where music teachers do their daily work), and second, as an analytical tool. In Chapter 6 I will return to

24 The juxtaposition of discipline to performance is slightly unfair to Foucault, as he later developed a concept of power more suited to the present, (neo-)liberal time: *governmentality* (Foucault, 2008). The concept concurs with performative power on several levels, as the notion of self-management, efficiency, and the emphasis on utility (Eliassen, 2016, p. 161ff). I choose to leave this aspect of Foucault's writing out of the present dissertation because it is beyond the aim of the study to give an exhaustive definition of Foucault's production, and since I am using his concepts primarily as tools, I find it more suitable to use concepts with which I am most familiar.

both discipline and performance and present how they pertain to the research question of the present dissertation. As mentioned in the Introduction, I claim that to be a music teacher is more “teacher” than “music,” and therefore, a basic tenet behind this dissertation is that the music subject and the music teachers should be treated as a part of a greater school system. The music subject is an area where both the normative and transgressive aspects of performance are evident. As an art subject, it has creativity, experimentation, and creation as crucial components, but because these are prescribed in the curriculum they are at the same time normative. The tension between normative and transgressive is intensified by the recent changes towards a performative school, with its emphasis on accountability and test results, changes that in some ways marginalize the music subject; I will explore this further in Chapter 6. As an object of research, the music subject remains a site where different challenges to perform meet, where transgression has become normative. This space, this “in-between,” is where this dissertation finds its place.

3.3 Hermeneutics and performance

My rationale for including two theoretical positions in a single dissertation is that they support the investigation of the research question at different levels. The hermeneutical approach serves to describe the personal meaning-making of my informants, and the challenges/advantages of researching a field in which one is embedded. The performative/discursive approach facilitates the description of the structural level that contains the conditions for which options appear to be possible. Moreover, the use of two approaches facilitates the exploration of the field of research, as the horizon becomes wider. There are problematic aspects to combining theoretical approaches, however. On the one hand, one runs the risk of weakening the unity of the dissertation. Moreover, if the theoretical approaches contain contrary ontological and epistemological foundations, they will produce results that may be irrelevant to each other. Despite these problems, I chose to use these two approaches because they have some common features that makes the enterprise feasible, and even productive. In the remaining paragraphs of this chapter I will briefly compare the theoretical approaches. To compare them at the same level of abstraction, I will include Foucault as a means to explain the performance theory described in this chapter.

The hermeneutics of Gadamer and performance theory have different purposes and backgrounds, and operate on different levels: indeed, hermeneutics, according to Gadamer, encompasses all of the phenomena described in performance theory (and other (critical) theories). Both can be read as non-essentialist. The productivity of hermeneutic understanding denies the possibility of an understanding that operates independently of other influences, just as performance in every instance is constructed. More importantly, they both rely on a pre-structure when producing meaning. Although the purposes are different, the underlying structure is common. A statement emerges from a field of other statements. Schaanning compares Foucault and Gadamer by using the metaphor of theatrical play, a (re)activation of the text, where the text is brought into play.

The performance *is* in a way the text itself. Gadamer uses this insight to formulate a philosophical hermeneutic, a philosophy about the “application” of understanding. The person who reads a text, applies it to himself. Foucault’s perspective, on the other hand, is not primarily about understanding, but about describable relations between statements, tools, practices and institutions. It is in that respect that Foucault can be called “positivist.” For Gadamer, understanding must take place as an “event” inside the interpreter, while Foucault folds out the referentiality for the scrutinizing view of the historian. Gadamer folds the application down, to an intrinsic understanding (the play becomes an analogy for what goes on inside us when we understand something), Foucault wants to unfold the historically describable conditions for the bringing—into—play [*iscenesettelse*, see footnote above]. (Schaanning, 2000, p. 208f, my transl.)

One consequence of putting emphasis on the performance of the text, is to disregard the author. As described above, Gadamer’s view is that we cannot know the intended meaning of the author. Foucault makes a similar claim.

[T]he subject of the statement should not be regarded as identical with the author of the formulation—either in substance, or in function. He is not in fact the cause, origin, or starting-point of the phenomenon of the written or spoken articulation of a sentence. (...) To describe a formulation *qua* statement does not consist in analysing the relations between the author and what he says (or wanted to say, or said without wanting to); but in determining what position can and must be occupied by any individual if he is to be the subject of it. (Foucault, 2002a, p. 107)

Gadamer’s and Foucault’s view of the author exemplifies the differences between their purposes, as Gadamer places the emphasis on the understanding that takes place within the interpreter, and Foucault’s interest is the conditions that made the statement possible. What remains a commonality is the reservation towards meaning being produced by a free agent.

By claiming prejudices as condition for understanding, Gadamer emphasizes the importance of transforming what is known into a new understanding when being fused with the unknown. Within performance and performativity we have seen the importance of restored behavior, iteration, and citation, and the very possibility of producing intelligible statements and acts lies in repeating and citing, as the examples of Derrida, Butler, and Foucault have shown. This has some significant consequences for the present dissertation, as it implies that when a person makes a statement it always carries more than just personal meanings. When making an utterance we also speak the discourses that enable us to make a statement in the first place, or in Gadamer's terms, we speak from the position of our historicity.

Methodologically, the relationship between a hermeneutic and a discursive approach is a bit problematic, as Foucault opposes interpretation. "The analysis of statements, then, is a historical analysis, but one that avoids all interpretation: it does not question things said as to what they are hiding, what they were 'really' saying" (Foucault, 2002a, p. 123). Although Foucault prescribes a description freed from interpretation, it is nevertheless a result of a researcher's action, and thus it is difficult to see how the description could be untouched by the researcher's background, beliefs, and prejudices. Comparing Foucault and Gadamer we must remember that Foucault's critique of hermeneutics appears to be a critique of hermeneutic *methodology*. This is not Gadamer's interest, his task is to investigate understanding itself, and thus both he and Foucault can maintain their emphasis on what is given, and instead of placing understanding in the mind of a researcher who tries to understand the intention of another mind, every statement/utterance has a value in itself and can only refer to the surroundings that made it possible for it to emerge. What makes Gadamer different from Foucault is that he places the researcher within that same matrix, making the researcher a part of the network of statements, tools, institutions, and thus turning the archaeology of Foucault towards the researcher as well.

Moreover, the meaning production in both strands takes place "in-between." The liminal/liminoid space is where transformation takes place in performance studies, the transitional space where negotiation and playfulness are valorized. Gadamer places the true locus of hermeneutics "in-between." Play is here to be understood as a movement forward and backwards, a negotiation across horizons. It is important to note the difference here as well, as the fusion of horizons does not find its counterpart in performance, where disruption, subversion or affirmation are the likely results of passing through the liminal/

liminoid space. Finally, a structural commonality is between the feedback loop and the hermeneutical circle. The ontological hermeneutical circle passes between pre-understanding and the unknown, which again leads to a new understanding. The purpose of the feedback loop is not understanding, but efficiency. The structure nevertheless remains partly the same, as the input in a feedback loop leads to a more efficient output.

4 Method

The present dissertation is an exploratory, qualitative study. In exploration it is important that the methods in use do not predefine the field completely, as Adorno (1970) has warned. This is not to suggest that one can approach the field without expectations and prejudices, but rather that the methods in principle are open for differing views, and encourage a curious yet critical attitude. In this chapter I will describe the methodological framework for the present dissertation, the process of gathering data and preparing it for analysis. I will discuss the analytical approaches in some depth, before discussing issues of validity and research ethics.

My main empirical material is interviews with seven teachers. By interviewing teachers, I hope to get to grips with both the personal factors and external structural issues that drew them out of the music room. I believe structural factors have a huge impact on the lives of teachers. Unlike to a survey setting, where the factors to a larger degree are imposed on the teachers, the research interview opens up for a proper exploration, where *uncovering* factors is the main interest. In an exploration, difference must be conceived of as a goal—one that is achievable through interviews.

The analysis consists of two strands: narrative and discourse analysis, broadly conceived of as analysis on a micro and macro level, although they inform each other. Both of these methodological approaches can be seen as an extension of the theoretical framework described in the previous chapter, a connection

that will be described in the introduction to their respective sections in this chapter. Narrative analysis has enjoyed a certain popularity within music education (Barrett & Stauffer, 2010a, 2012a), and by centering on lived experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) one can gain insight into how the lives of teachers unfold. Under the umbrella “narrative methodology,” a distinction can be made between narrative analysis, and analysis of narratives. The former concerns the construction of narratives from empirical material, while the latter means analyzing already existing narratives. I employ narrative analysis to investigate how my informants’ themselves make their career decisions meaningful, with emphasis on the particularity of their choices and individual agency. Narrative analysis stresses the uniqueness of the individual storyteller by allowing the interviewees to tell their stories freely in the interviews; this is in keeping with the exploratory nature of the present dissertation.

The second analytical strand is discourse analysis, through which I wish to connect the interview material to important discourses on a national level, and be able to generalize. To make a general claim from a small-scale study I must investigate the conditions that make actions possible. Thus, I employ discourse analysis to be able to describe how powerful discourses surrounding the school affected my informants’ choices. The sources for the discourse analysis include the narratives, coding of the interviews, government documents, and previous research on Norwegian school discourses. Among my interests is how these discourses function as exclusion mechanisms and offer subject positions for teachers.

Brinkmann and Kvale (2014) make the distinction between two metaphors: the researcher as *miner* and *traveler*. Where the miner searches for uncontaminated knowledge buried in the interior of the subject, the traveler constructs the knowledge by traveling, embarking on a *Bildungsreise*, exploring the unknown, interpreting the material, and in the end returning home with a story to tell, conceivably with a new self-understanding. My position is closest to the traveler, and in line with the exploratory nature of this study the view of knowledge in the present dissertation is constructive. Although the research question implies a single answer, an exploration will cause the result to be an array of answers, as each informant will have different reasons. The “original” reason for their career choice is also mediated through the interviews and my interpretation of them, and by temporal distance, as some of my informants made their choice years ago, making it unlikely that they recollect their exact thoughts and feelings at the time. The question why my informants chose to

opt out of music teaching is then more or less impossible to answer correctly, so it is more accurate to say that I investigate their experience of the career trajectory (in the narrative analysis).

As mentioned above I wish to make some generalizable claims, and explain the findings in addition to exploring the field. With so few informants, a statistical generalization is impossible. What remains is analytical generalization which “involves a reasoned judgement about the extent to which the findings of one study can be used as a guide to what might occur in another situation” (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 297). Within narrative research, a foundation for making such generalizations is to view “any narrative as an *instance* of the possible relationships between a narrator’s active construction of self, on the one hand, and the social, cultural and historical circumstances that enable and constrain that narrative, on the other” (Chase, 2005, p. 667). This calls for a description of the circumstances; and in my view, discourse analysis is a fitting approach, as it provides a language for the power mechanisms and properties for making meaning on a social level. This form of generalization indicates an abductive logic, a mode of reasoning introduced by Charles Sanders Peirce (Misak, 2013, p. 47ff). “In abduction, an (often surprising) single case is interpreted from a hypothetic overarching pattern, which, if it were true, explains the case in question. The interpretation should then be strengthened by new observations” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2000, p. 4). The abductive logic resembles the hermeneutic circle, as the researcher approaches the empirical data with a theory-driven pre-understanding, and adjusts the theory as according to the data. “Theory” in the present dissertation consists of the matters presented in the previous chapter, but also the previous research and the discourses that emerge from the analysis. As a consequence of both the abductive logic and the exploratory nature of the study, the purpose of the comparisons of the interviewees that appear in Chapter 5 is to display the differences, as I wish to present them in their individuality, and show the breadth of factors that can answer the research question.

4.1 Data gathering

4.1.1 Informants

The empirical material for the dissertation consists of interviews with seven teachers who have reduced their music teaching wholly or in part. All of them have formal qualification in music (≥ 60 ECTS) and teaching, and work in Norwegian compulsory education. The interviewees were gathered through my own network and via an inquiry on teachers' groups on *Facebook* (Appendix 1). I must admit that finding informants was a problem, as it is difficult to find someone who is no longer doing the thing you are researching. As some of my informants said, few of their colleagues were even aware that they were qualified music teachers. Finding this group of teachers is a problem within research on teacher attrition in general, as it is difficult to know where to look for them (Kunnskapsdepartementet & TNS-Gallup, 2011). Before interviewing, I corresponded with the candidates via email to ensure they would fit the profile for the dissertation. My criteria were that they had formal qualification in music, still worked in the school, and had reduced their music teaching significantly or quit music teaching completely. The criteria resulted in the rejection from the study of some of the teachers who contacted me following the inquiry on Facebook. I also wanted to obtain informants from both primary and lower secondary, urban, suburban, and rural schools, and from different parts of Norway. The rationale for this is that the changes to the school the last decade (see Chapter 6), have had stronger impact in the urban areas, especially in Oslo, and by interviewing teachers from a variety of schools, one can get a glimpse of whether these changes apply everywhere. The geographical distribution will also give an idea of the importance of the culture in individual schools and municipalities. Most of my informants have moved working places, and talk about how different the working condition can be for music teachers. Notwithstanding this variation, the present dissertation makes no claim to be an exhaustive account of the plight of music teachers in Norwegian compulsory education: the number of informants is too low. But as it is an exploratory study, I wish to display some of the variation, including geographical distribution. (See Table 1 for a brief description of the informants and the interviews.)

Name	School type	Duration	Age (approx.)
"Ellen"	Primary, rural	48:40	50s
"Lena"	Lower secondary, urban	1:25:31	30s
"Anne"	Lower secondary, urban	1:07:18	50s
"Finn"	Lower secondary, rural	1:36:24	40s
"Linda"	Lower secondary, rural (on leave)	1:08:45	40s
"Ida"	Primary, suburban	2:01:53	30s
"Thomas"	Lower secondary, suburban	2:06:05	50s

Table 1: Informants and interviews

4.1.2 Pilot interview

In June 2015 I conducted a pilot interview. The purpose of this interview was to test the interview guide and the research question, and create a preliminary code list. In addition, I used the pilot interview as an opportunity to enhance my interviewing skills. Permission to conduct the interview was granted by *The Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD)* (Appendix 2). The interview was recorded with a *Zoom H1* audio recorder, and notes were taken. After the interview, the session was discussed with the interviewee, and some topics not mentioned in the interview emerged. The interview was subsequently transcribed into standard Norwegian (bokmål) using the program *HyperTRANSCRIBE*, and coded with the program *NVivo*.

The pilot interview led to some significant changes to the interview guide, and the research questions were modified to its present form. The greatest change was from a list of questions to an open guide, because of my decision to use narrative analysis. During the analysis, several codes were created and organized in a code list. The topics mentioned in the discussion after the interview were also included in the code list. None of the findings from the pilot interview are included in the present dissertation, as the interviewee is a person I know well and have worked with; but as the findings from the pilot interview have been fed back into the interview guide and, just as important, into my pre-understanding, the pilot interview has indirectly informed my inquiry.

4.1.3 Interview guide

The interviews were conducted as individual, semi-structured interviews, following the interview guide (Appendix 3 & 4). The purpose of the interview guide was to facilitate the elicitation of the informants' stories. The first question in the guide was merely for my information, and could just as well be written down. I aimed at a chronological structure, starting with the informants' first memory of music, and ending with their present work situation. The interview guide was designed to highlight the changes to their career trajectory, and the list of possible factors was collected from the pilot interview and the literature review. The factors were mentioned/asked, as I found them relevant. In some cases, I did not have to ask many questions, as the interviewees included them in their stories.

4.1.4 Interviews

The interviews were recorded using a *Zoom H1* audio recorder, with a *Sony Xperia Z1 Compact* smart phone as backup, at a place picked by the interviewees. The backup recording was deleted when the main recording was confirmed to be intact. In addition, I made notes during the interview, mainly to be able to return to some aspects later in the interview. The interviews were conducted between October 2015 and May 2016. In general, the duration of the interviews increased. I see two reasons for this development. First, my interviewing skills increased with each interview, which led to better questioning and richer results. Second, the information from each interview was included in my pre-understanding, and thus the range of topics I could introduce in the interviews expanded for each interview.

The interviews were a combination of a narrative approach, where interviewees tell their story quite freely, and more direct questioning of certain aspects. Narrative interviews "emphasize the temporal, social and the meaning structures of the interview" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 179), and by asking the interviewees' to tell stories I wanted them to make meaning out of past events. The role of the interviewer is to "invite" the interviewee's story (Chase, 2005, p. 662). This can be done by asking broad questions, asking directly for the story, or by initiating the story by asking for concrete episodes or parts of the life (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 180). I used a combination of these, first informing the interviewee about the interview and the research question, and then

asking about their first memories of music. During the interview the task of the interviewer is mainly to listen, and to assist the interviewee in telling the story. I also asked concrete questions, in cases where clarification was needed, and sought to establish a chronology and causality, by asking directly for the sequence of the events. Naturally, my role varied from interview to interview, as some of the interviewees were less loquacious, and needed a lot of support, while other interviewees were almost unstoppable. Riessman mentions the importance of giving up control in the interview, to let the interviewees tell *their* story (Riessman, 2008, p. 24). I am sympathetic towards this idea, but within the context of the present dissertation, I sometimes had to bring the interview “back on track” when they wandered too far. Riessman also opposes the notion of the interviewer as a facilitator, and proposes the role of the interviewer as a “participant,” co-constructing the narrative, in an interview form close to an everyday conversation (Riessman, 2008, p. 23f). I find the idea of an everyday conversation unlikely, as the power balance between the interviewer and the interviewee is highly unequal, but the relational aspect is nevertheless an inescapable aspect of narrative interviewing. In addition to asking questions, I co-constructed the narrative by playing out my own story in the interviews, both directly, by mentioning experiences I had had in common with my informants, and indirectly, by asking questions that emerged from my pre-understanding, almost in the form of testing hypotheses. Another result of my experience with the profession was that several problematic issues that were discussed in the interviews were followed by laughter, from both me and the interviewee, as some of these experiences were quite common, and over time they become amusing. Chase mentions the importance of knowing what can be “storyworthy” in the interviewee’s social setting (Chase, 2005, p. 661). Because of my background as a teacher I share discourses and experiences with my informants, and although our educational background and workplaces differ, I found my understanding of the realities of being a teacher to be a great advantage in the interview settings, as I could relate to their stories, and contribute with recollections from my own career as teacher. On the other hand, it may imply that I have missed important facets of my informants’ stories, that should have been treated with more care, and elaborated further in the interviews.

4.1.5 Transcription

All interviews were transcribed using *HyperTRANSCRIBE* into standard written Norwegian (bokmål). In the transcriptions I wrote down some of the pauses, laughter, hesitation, and obvious use of irony, and I used italics and exclamation marks to indicate emphasis. Each informant was given a pseudonym as I started to transcribe, and after the transcription the text was copied into a *MS Word* document for final editing. In the transcription, all information that could identify the informants was anonymized: places, educational institutions, name of music groups, teachers etc. Before commencing with the analysis, I sent the transcriptions to the informants for approval. Dialect words were a challenge in some instances, and in cases where I was uncertain, the transcribed word was written with the original word in brackets, and the informants were asked to confirm that the transcription was inaccurate. A transcription is necessarily a reduction of the content of the interview, but it is also a fixation of meaning that facilitates analysis. Although I listened to the recordings while analyzing the interviews, I have primarily used the transcripts.

4.1.6 Coding

To become acquainted with and explore the interviews, and to provide myself with an overview of some of the central aspects, the interviews were coded using the program *NVivo*. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña present coding as a two-stage operation. “First Cycle coding methods are codes initially assigned to the data chunks. Second Cycle coding methods generally work with the resulting First Cycle codes themselves” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 73). In this dissertation, the second cycle coding is primarily carried out as narrative analysis and discourse analysis, so the coding described here falls within the first cycle. There has, however, been a more circular motion between working with smaller sections and larger data chunks during the analytic process, as new perspectives appeared from working with the material. When coding chunks of data I often included my own questions and some of the surrounding remarks to frame the sentence at center of attention. As a consequence, the codes were largely overlapping. The interviews were coded separately for the narrative analysis and the discourse analysis.

Coding for narrative analysis

The codes fall into several categories. Some were mostly organizational, to facilitate looking up individual parts of the informants' stories, such as "early memories of music" and "teacher education." These proved valuable later in the process as literature on teachers' career trajectories emerged as an interesting contribution to the analysis. Another important strand of codes was identifying the factors discovered in the literature review, e.g. "practice shock," "equipment and facilities" and "status." The largest number of codes were created having the research question in mind, denoting the factors that together caused the informants to opt out of teaching music. Some were exclusively related to music teaching, while other concerned the appealing aspects of teaching other subjects. In some cases, they were each other's opposites: "class management," for example, was for many of my informants a problem in the music lessons but not when teaching theoretical subjects. Due to the exploratory nature of the study, I have attempted to include the breadth of individual factors in the coding process, and some of the codes are only present in one interview. Later in the process, as I became aware of Kelchtermans' "personal interpretative framework" (Kelchtermans, 1993) (see below and next chapter), the interviews were coded according to the framework. These overlapped some of my own, resembling codes, but were nevertheless recoded, and these codes were organized within a group in *NVivo*.

Coding for discourse analysis

The interviews, together with a few policy documents, were (re)coded for the discourse analysis. The chapter on discourse analysis consists of two parts: a description of discourses pertinent to the Norwegian school, and an empirical analysis where the impact of the discourses is investigated in light of the research question. The interviews were coded after the first part was written, and the codes are primarily a result of the first part of the investigation and the discourses that were uncovered (for more on this see section 4.3).

4.2 Narrative analysis

The use of narrative analysis is in some regards a consequence of the hermeneutical framework described in the preceding chapter. Telling stories about ourselves is one of the ways we make meaning of the world, resembling the

notion of historically effected consciousness, and the ontological hermeneutical circle of Gadamer. Barrett and Stauffer define narrative within a line of thought that stretches from Heidegger to Foucault. "As our lives unfold our narratives shift (even transform) in a recursive process of revisiting and retelling stories from different experiential viewpoints and time perspectives, and for different audiences" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2012b, p. 5f). At the center is experience and understanding experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). "Narrative constitutes past experiences at the same time as it provides ways for individuals to make sense of the past" (Riessman, 2008, p. 8). The cumulation of storied experiences "provides a basis for understanding new action episodes by means of analogy" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 11), i.e. drawing upon previous understanding, yet being open for the particularity of the new episode. Moreover, narratives are constructed in the meeting between the researcher and the informant (Chase, 2005; de Vries, 2014; Riessman, 2008). "The ontology of experience in narrative inquiry is relational—it requires both teller and listener" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2012b, p. 7). The epistemological consequence is that the relation is the condition that makes a certain understanding possible, so in addition to the dialectic between the individual and the social being (ibid., p. 6) there is a dialectic between teller and listener.

[O]ur thinking as narrative inquirers grows out of being-in-relation. (...) Through attending to the relational in-between spaces in narrative inquiry, possibilities arise to discover new ways of knowing and understanding, and also for profound change. (...) These in-between spaces are filled with uncertainty and indeterminacy. They are places of liminality; the betwixts and between, which, we argue, require attention to context(s), relationship(s), and time to explore narratively. (Caine et al., 2013, p. 580)

This also means that while narratives can include emotions, thoughts, and interpretations in addition to the events (Chase, 2005, p. 656), they are no accurate representation of an inner truth (Riessman, 2008, p. 22).

The word narrative has several possible meanings (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 5), and in the present dissertation, the meaning of narrative is primarily "story," "texts that are thematically organized by plots" (ibid.). On the other hand, narrative can also mean "mode of knowing" and "method of inquiry" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2010b). The stories in Chapter 5 are more or less the results of narrative as a method of inquiry, and the content represents narrative as a mode of knowing. Gadamer's notion of a translation (see p. 42, 52) is a suitable metaphor, as the interpretative step involves a rewriting of the material in the form of a story.

To attempt a definition: by narrative I mean a coherent, sequential, temporal structuring of events with respect to interrelationship and causality.

Following Dollard, Polkinghorne describes seven guidelines for developing narratives. The following guidelines are highly relevant for this dissertation, and I have included them as I saw fit: the narrative must include the cultural context of the story, significant people and the historical continuity of the characters, as “[p]eople are historical beings retaining as part of themselves their previous experiences” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 17). The informant must nevertheless be considered a person with agency, not just a result of the surroundings. Finally, the result must be a structured story, with identifiable characters, presenting a meaningful explanation of the actions and choices. Caine et al. resist the idea of neat stories. “Life as it is lived is not neat, tidy, or formulaic. Nor does it fit within the confines and conventions of the good story” (Caine et al., 2013, p. 583, see also Brinkmann & Kvale, 2014, p. 257). They resist the good story, because of their ontological and epistemological stance, and emphasize the relational aspect of stories. Although their objection has some weight, I see no reason to leave out story structures altogether, and “good stories” can certainly contain the aspects they valorize. More troubling for the present dissertation is their underlying warning of imposing preformed plots on the narratives.

The procedure Polkinghorne proposes, is to some extent imposing plots. He suggests beginning with finding the conclusion, before arranging the events chronologically. “A narrative configuration is not merely a transcription of the thoughts and actions of the protagonist; it is a means of making sense and showing the significance of them in the context of the denouement” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 19). In my analyses the conclusion was given even before the interviews, as I am researching what made the teachers opt out of teaching music. The interviews were quite chronological, so my main task was to identify the relevant and important events. To write a condensed text, I reduced the interviews by paraphrasing chunks of information, with the addition of quotes from the interview and my own comments. By bringing my own voice into the narrative, I am also putting my own prejudices on display, especially in cases where they were challenged by the informant, and I thus exhibit the knowledge production that takes place “in-between” interviewer and interviewee (de Vries, 2014, p. 65).

In my writing the narratives, I have kept the research question in mind when defining the meaningful events, and focused on the professional life. This involves several omissions, as the career trajectories are also informed by the private life, chance, and organizational factors beyond the control of the

informants. Furthermore, I have striven to develop a plot leading towards a conclusion, and to describe how an array of factors work together to unleash a crisis (or more) in the informants' lives. In most cases, they have experienced several of these, building up towards a resolution. Some of the stories end indecisively, with the informants in a state of uncertainty about their future working lives. Caine et al.'s concern about imposing plots is of some relevance to the present dissertation. Although the conclusion was a given, in some stories it was vaguely articulated, as the movement away from the music subject was gradual and informed by several factors, including chance (see e.g. Ida's story, 5.2.3). It means that the amount of crisis varied as well. I still believe that imposing a plot can be beneficial, and although I impose a plot of movement away from the music subject, it emerges from the in-between of me and my informants, and I make no claim of providing the reader with a story that represents life itself, just a small fraction of it. When writing the narratives, I sometimes had to compromise between creating narratives that function as stories, and narratives in which my informants would recognize themselves. I have therefore included information that can seem superfluous in a story, but as a purpose of the narratives is to show the relationship between their background and their choices and attitudes this information had to be included. That there is a connection between the background and the choices is self-evident, and I do not write extensively about their biographies to *prove* that there is a connection, but rather show *how*.

The narratives are included in Chapter 5 in all their extent, and are followed by a discussion in which I elicit some important findings. The findings are presented in relation to three clusters of themes. The first is in relation to the findings of the literature review (Chapter 2). The literature review formed a starting point for the interviews, and to connect the present investigation to this body of research I have investigated how these factors appear in the interviews. The two next clusters were discovered while working with the narratives, and is thus presented in the beginning of Chapter 5. The second cluster revolves around the notion of teachers' career trajectories. The notion of teachers' careers as passing through several stages has been investigated in a few studies (Huberman, 1989; Huberman et al., 1993; Sikes, 1985), and although they produce different results, they highlight a few distinct traits of being a teacher. As I wish to describe how my informants left the music subject

as a consequence of their own development, this aspect is highly relevant.²⁵ Third, I have included the important work of Kelchtermans (Kelchtermans, 1993, 1996, 2009a, 2009b, 2016) who emphasizes the individuality of the teacher, and how the teachers are socialized into the school (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002). Kelchtermans claims that teachers develop a “personal interpretative framework” that consists of their *professional self-understanding* and *subjective educational theory*.²⁶ Through these three clusters the narratives describe how the informants opted out of the music subject both because of dissatisfaction with teaching music, and because of the allure of classroom teaching.

4.3 Discourse analysis

In their introduction to discourse analysis, M. Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) describe discourse analysis as a “complete package” of theory and method. In Chapter 3 I introduced discourse through the writings of Foucault, Butler, McKenzie, and others. Some of the analytical approaches introduced there will also be mentioned here. I am especially pointing towards Foucault and *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. As mentioned several times, my rationale for employing discourse analysis is to be able to make generalizable claims, by connecting my findings to the conditions that made them possible. The localization of these conditions is thus a question that needs to be investigated. To a large degree, my informants’ choices were informed by local factors, things happening at their particular workplace, and they were rarely referring to a more general level. A central task for me is thus to uncover whether the power mechanisms at the local workplace can be connected to discourses at a(n) (inter)national level. Using Foucault as a model for discourse analysis is problematic as it is no defined approach. He even describes his books as a “tool-box,” and says that he writes for those who *use* his texts, not the readers, an audience (Foucault, 2002b, p. 651). It means that this is a version of discourse analysis that is adapted to the situation, and my personal preferences. I also emphasize that this is no exhaustive description of Foucault’s writings

25 The notion of career trajectories was an important background for the study of Bailer (2009d) to which I referred several times in Chapter 2. The relevance of trajectories for the present dissertation was discovered later.

26 Kelchtermans’ description of research methodology in qualitative research (Kelchtermans, 1994) is exemplary, but as I read it after the data gathering, I could only make use of his notions about analysis.

on discourse. I have selected the parts I find most relevant, treating them as a tool-box. Nevertheless, as Ellefsen mentions, although discourse analysis can be adapted there are a few significant, underpinning premises. First, it has a constructivist epistemological basis, second, it is qualitative, and third, although subjects have ability to act “within, through and on discourse, a discourse analytical study nevertheless sets limits to a subject’s agency, committing itself to the discursive structuring of the individual” (Ellefsen, 2014, p. 69). The final aspect is what makes it possible to generalize discursively, as the normativity of discourses perform a certain power. It also entails a dialectical view of discourses as between being constituted and constitutive, a view that includes both normativity and agency. This view differentiates a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis from other approaches (M. Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 18ff). Ellefsen emphasizes another important aspect of discourse analysis, that the analysis is a discursive practice itself “in which meaning is continuously negotiated, reproduced and changed, and in which different stances struggle to define concepts like ‘discourse’, ‘power’ and ‘practice’ for their own aims and purposes” (Ellefsen, 2014, p. 68). The present dissertation is no exception.

In the following sections, I will present the approach to discourse analysis I will use in the present dissertation. The presentation begins with picking up the threads from Chapter 3, with a general description of Foucault’s *archaeology*, which forms the basis for the analysis, then through a description of various approaches I utilize, before moving towards a more concrete description of the analytic process. In addition to referring to the material used in Chapter 3 I will introduce more methodologically oriented publications on discourse analysis.

4.3.1 Archaeology

The term “archaeology” indicates the “method” Foucault promotes, but as Eliassen writes, in an interview following the publication of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault stressed that it was no book on method. “Discourse analysis does not arise from a given object, but it is the overarching problematic which establishes or produces the discourse qua ‘object of cognition’. Rather than naming a method, ‘discourse analysis’ denotes a strategy, a procedure” (Eliassen, 2016, p. 56, my transl.). Archaeology is connected to another term Foucault introduces, “the archive.” Archive can mean the physical archives consisting of written documents, and more generally, everything that has been said, but Foucault introduces yet another meaning: “It is *the general system*

of the formation and transformation of statements" (Foucault, 2002a, p. 146). Archaeology is then the investigation of this archive. As Schaanning mentions, the differences between this conception of the archive and discursive formation must be minute (Schaanning, 2000, p. 294). If we follow Foucault's further remarks about the archive a few challenges appear. On the one hand the archive can never be described exhaustively, and second, more troubling for the present dissertation, it is impossible to describe our own archive, as speaking from within we can only speak according to the rules of the archive (Foucault, 2002a, p. 146). Methodologically, a certain distance is needed.

When the task is to analyze the formation of discourses, Foucault raises some consequences, which primarily concern changing focus from defining to investigating the formation (Foucault, 2002a, p. 34ff). First, instead of defining the objects of the discursive formation, one must investigate the formation of the objects. Second, instead of defining the style or character of statements, one must investigate the formation of these "enunciative modalities." Third, instead of "determining the system of permanent and coherent concepts involved" (Foucault, 2002a, p. 38), it is the rules behind the production of the concepts, that are of Foucault's interest. Finally, instead of defining the discursive formation on basis of its themes, it is the thematic dispersion that must be investigated. On that basis he can claim that the purpose of archeological comparison is not to unify, but to diversify (Foucault, 2002a, p. 177).

Schaanning suggests some applications of Foucault's research strategy, following the above-mentioned consequences (Schaanning, 1997, p. 192). Concerning objects, one can investigate where they appear, which authorities demarcate the object area, and to which criteria they are specified. The enunciative modality is influenced by the status and the institution from which one speaks. The formation of concepts can be analyzed by looking at how different areas of knowledge borrows concepts from each other, or how old concepts are embedded in a new conceptual apparatus. Finally, one can determine points of rupture where the same phenomena are described differently. Several of these aspects are relevant for the present dissertation, but to include all of them can prove difficult, and in addition the content of these categories needs to be addressed as well. The principles behind Foucault's discourse analysis presented here forms the connection between the theoretical framework described in Chapter 3 and the actual discourse analysis that will follow in Chapter 6. Although there are some practical applications of these principles I will now turn towards the

more methodologically oriented literature to present the discourse analytical program of the present dissertation in more detail.

4.3.2 Approaches

In the final paragraph of his introduction to discourse analysis, Neumann writes that the purpose of discourse analysis is to study the conditions for possible spoken and acted actions, how a statement puts a series of social practices in play, and how the statement affirms or changes these practices. This has implications for researchers as we must accept that the world, as it presents itself to us is *in flux* (Neumann, 2001, p. 178f). This definition corresponds with the purpose behind my use of discourse analysis. Moreover, another consequence of this instability corresponds with one of the crucial aspects of both the hermeneutics of Gadamer and the archaeology of Foucault, mentioned earlier, that we can only understand what is presented to us, there is no reaching an original, intended meaning of an “author.” (Many of the publications I will describe, such, as curricula and government documents, do not even have a single, named author.)

For the discourse analyst, the purpose of research is not to get ‘behind’ the discourse, to find out what people *really* mean when they say this or that, or to discover the reality behind the discourse. The starting point is that reality can never be reached outside discourses and so it is discourse itself that has become the object of analysis. (M. Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 21)

The task for the researcher is thus to look for patterns in and consequences of what is actually said, and what these statements do (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 168).

Another challenge for the researcher, which Winther Jørgensen and Phillips also discuss, is the investigation of discourses close to the researcher, as it can be difficult even to identify these as discourse; this challenge is highly relevant for my position. Neumann, on the other hand, claims that a fundamental condition for any discourse analysis is knowledge about the culture being investigated (Neumann, 2001, p. 50), which indicates that proximity to discourses can be an advantage if one maintains a critical distance. One way to distance oneself is through theory (Grue, 2015). A theoretical framework provides the researcher with a point of view, a starting point for the analysis. A strength of the theoretical framework described in the previous chapter is that it both addresses *how* societies change and provides an argument for *what*

kind of context is surrounding the dissertation. This echoes parts of Habermas' criticism of Gadamer, in particular his arguments for guiding understanding by (critical) theory. As mentioned in the introduction, I approach the topic of the present dissertation with a critical attitude, in the sense that I believe the situation investigated in the dissertation is a societal problem. A central part of my pre-understanding is that the problem lies in changes to the school system and all public administration, causing a general devaluation of music and other subjects that are not believed to contribute to the nation's economic progress. This view may not be entirely correct, but, combined with the more general aspects of the theoretical framework, it gives a point of view from which I undertake this study.

Finally, hermeneutics, performance theory, and discourse analysis all emphasize the importance of language. It is language that makes the world meaningful for us, as the medium of understanding. Nevertheless, while discourse analysis primarily is analysis of texts, it is important to remember that the materiality of the statement involves that it puts a network of statements, tools, practices, and institutions in play. Neumann states that discourse analysis needs to capture both linguistic and material aspects, as discourse must be understood as both a linguistic and material phenomenon (Neumann, 2001, p. 81).²⁷ He draws three distinctions that needs to be considered. The first is between the materiality of language and social actions, second, between formal and informal organizations, and third, between physical institutions and institutions conceived as regular patterns of action (ibid., p.85). To recapitulate, the purpose of the discourse analysis in the present dissertation is to investigate how the informants' career choices are influenced by discourses surrounding their working life, and hence enabling generalizations by drawing on discourses. I am thus interested in identifying pertinent discourses, and how they exercise power—what they *do*. The procedure Neumann suggests is to begin by creating a model of the discourse by delimiting it and identifying the representations and the stratification of the discourse.

The field in which the present dissertation takes place is the Norwegian school system. A central delimitation I must conduct is the temporal one. To stay

²⁷ The notion of materiality presented here bears similarities with the actor-network theory (ANT) of Latour (and others). Schaanning juxtaposes Foucault and Latour, and uses the latter to further develop the discourse theory of the former (Schaanning, 1997, p. 206ff). Although ANT could be a fruitful contribution to the theoretical-methodological program of the present dissertation I have avoided it, as it would entail too great an expansion.

in line with the performance formation presented in Chapter 3 the obvious demarcation line is the Second World War, as it marks the starting point. As the disciplinary formation must be included as well, the timeline must stretch a bit further back than that, but in the actual analysis, the temporal demarcation follows the informants, which will reduce it to the 1980s and upwards. Discursive demarcation is a bit more difficult. The school discourse(s) is bordered by a range of other discourses, and for my informants the various music educational discourses they emerge from play a role as well. To define this demarcation beforehand is futile, as the network of statements, tools, practices, and institutions is among the most important features of describing the power mechanisms in the Norwegian schools. As Neumann emphasizes, the demarcations the participants in the discourse wish to execute is an important part of the discourse in itself (Neumann, 2001, p. 56).

The next step Neumann suggests is to set up an inventory of the representations of the discourse. Neumann defines representations as “things and phenomena in the rendition they appear before us, that is, not the things in themselves, but filtered through what comes between us and the world” (Neumann, 2001, p. 33, my translation). Another word Neumann uses to describe the representations is “realities,” (*virkeligheter*) as these are produced by discourse. Within this step it is possible to uncover sites of conflict. With relevance for the present dissertation is the conflict about defining “knowledge” and “teacher” (the latter will be presented further below). We are here speaking about the normativity of discourse, how the discourse is regulated (Eliassen, 2016, p. 68). In *The Order of the Discourse* (Foucault, 1981) Foucault describes how the normativity of the discourse is maintained through sets of procedures. The first set is procedures of exclusion. The three systems of exclusion Foucault presents are prohibition, the opposition between reason and madness, and the opposition between true and false (Foucault, 1981, p. 52ff). The next set of procedures are the internal procedures whereby “the discourse is controlled and ordered” (Eliassen, 2016, p. 69), and finally there is a set of procedures that govern the access to the discourse. It entails:

determining the condition of their application, of imposing a certain number of rules on the individuals who hold them, and thus of not permitting everyone to have access to them. There is a rarefication, this time, of the speaking subjects; none shall enter the order of discourse if he does not satisfy certain requirements or if he is not, from the outset, qualified to do so. (Foucault, 1981, p. 61f)

These measures also concern the final stage Neumann prescribes, investigating the stratification of the discourse, looking at the continuity of the

representations of the discourse. The unifying traits of the discourse are not as easily changed as the differentiating ones (Neumann, 2001, p. 62). The materiality of the discourse means that if some representations have more and stronger connections to the network of material and non-material aspects, they tend to have a stronger continuity.

Neumann proposes several starting points for discourse analysis, of which I will mention two, institutions and subject positions. The teachers I have interviewed work within institutions, both physical and as patterns of action. The individual schools are embedded in a hierarchy of administrative levels, ranging from school to municipality to the national school system which again is dominated by political institutions. The consequence for the discourse analysis is that if one can speak of a discourse at the school level, this discourse is embedded in several discourses, corresponding with the institutional levels. To make a generalizable claim, a task that remains is to uncover the system of formation that these levels of discourse emerge from.

Although they are connected to discourses, institutions have the power to point out possible subject positions, and the identity is thus a result of identification with a subject position (M. Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Neumann makes the distinction between roles and subject positions by relating the former to institutions and the latter to discourses (Neumann, 2001, p. 117). This echoes the distinction I made in the previous chapter between gender identity and professional identity, the former being a more fundamental category. The professional identity of teachers is in my view nonetheless substantially inscribed by discourse(s), and can be thought of as subject positions. As discourses struggle for hegemony the possible subject positions change as well. The task for the researcher is to identify these. As Butler has described, identity is highly normative, with grave consequences for those who fall outside of the boundaries. A central issue that concerns teachers is the conflict between a caring and a performative teacher identity, and I will explore this in Chapter 6. The latter is a materialization of a discourse that originates in performance management and New Public Management, and what Fairclough would call “the colonization of institutions in the public domain by types of discourse which emanate from the private domain” (Fairclough 1995, cited in Neumann, 2001, p. 98).

To investigate the identity of the teachers it is feasible to include the narratives in the discourse analysis. Davies and Harré (2001) makes a connection between subject positions and stories, emphasizing that a result of social interaction and discursive practices is that the self that emerges is not fixed and stable.

Who one is is always an open question with a shifting answer depending upon the positions made available within one's own and other's discursive practices and within those practices, the stories through which we make sense of our own and others' lives. Stories are located within a number of different discourses, and thus vary dramatically in terms of the language used, the concepts, issues and moral judgements made relevant and the subject positions made available within them. (Davies & Harré, 2001, p. 263)

The concept they apply to describe the process is *positioning*,²⁸

the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines. There can be interactive positioning in which what one person says positions another. And there can be reflexive positioning in which one positions oneself, (Davies & Harré, 2001, p. 264)

As a practice in constructing identity, one sees that identity is constructed both through identification and difference. In the narratives, there are several examples of my informants positioning themselves and their colleagues as (good and bad) teachers. (See e.g. Lena's story for how she differentiates herself from another music teacher, and how Ellen has changed her identity from music teacher to teacher.) An important aspect of positioning for the present dissertation is how the background, the history of the individual, defines how that individual can act from a position. To connect positioning to Gadamer's hermeneutics we could argue that the position is a hermeneutical situation, from which the *horizon* is defined and continually re-defined. "In speaking and acting from a situation people are bringing to the particular situation their history as a subjective being, that is the history of one who has been in multiple positions and engaged in different forms of discourse" (ibid.). In other words, the prejudices that are played out are a result of the historicity of the individual. There are indeed differences between positioning and interpretation at least when we speak of content, but there are some obvious structural similarities.

Souto-Manning (2014) suggests a combination of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (M. Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 60ff) and narrative analysis—critical narrative analysis (CNA). Her main interest is the colonization of the lifeworld by institutional discourses, resembling the colonization mentioned above.

I combine the analysis of narratives with CDA because narratives are a window into meaning-making processes in the lifeworld and can help us assess and understand institutional and power discourses in society in more concrete ways. (...) CNA allows us to learn how people create their selves in constant

28 Positioning is a central concept in Søreide's (2007) dissertation on Norwegian teacher identity I make use of in chapter 6.

social interactions (...) at both personal and institutional levels, and how institutional discourses influence and are influenced by personal everyday narratives. (Souto-Manning, 2014, p. 4f)

In my analyses, I find that the teachers' stories in some ways indicate colonization, but on the other hand, some give storied accounts of opposition against institutional discourses, as protagonists fighting an "enemy." The appropriation and internalization of the language of the institutional discourses is nevertheless an indication of the power of these discourses, even if the teachers oppose them. Although I have no intention of applying my findings on the informants to create transformation, I retain the idea of connecting the narratives to discourses, as this analytical step also strengthens the narratives. Telling a story about oneself is a performative action, where one constructs the reality, a construction inscribed by discourse (Chase, 2005).

4.3.3 Analysis

The material for the discourse analysis is previous research on the music subject, the Norwegian schools, and teacher identities; policy documents, including curricula; and the narratives and interview transcriptions already used in the narrative analysis. The latter were subjected to a completely new analysis, and were coded anew. The material has been analyzed using several approaches, and although a certain sequence in the working methods can be extracted, they have been revisited and reanalyzed throughout the process. The most central have been close reading, coding (and subsequent recoding), annotating, and structuring and restructuring the material. I have used sticky notes, electronic documents, handwriting, and *NVivo*.

In the analytical process, my first step has mostly been close reading and subsequent coding, after acquainting myself with the texts. The texts were coded in *NVivo*, but beforehand many of the codes had been written directly into the texts, as I read them.²⁹ The sections that were coded mostly included the context, and many of the sections were covered with several codes. The material, especially the interviews, have been recoded several times. The coding has been used as an analytical tool, but also for organizational means, to more easily navigate the body of texts. In addition to coding the text inductively, from what appears from the statements, I have used thematic coding—codes emanating

²⁹ I prefer reading on paper, as it provides me with more freedom when making notes. The codes were subsequently transferred from the paper document to *NVivo*.

from the theoretical foundation, especially performance theory—underlining the abductive logic behind the investigation.

Chapter 6 is in two broad parts. In the first part I present discourses I find pertinent to the material, and in the second I turn to the empirical material. The first part predominately consists of a “discourse presentation” rather than a discourse analysis, but it is important to note that the presentation is informed by my prejudices. Although I am to a large extent presenting the work of other researchers, that work has been through my own selective and interpretive processes. The first part begins with a description of performativity within the schools, both internationally and in Norway, and more generally, with a few important developmental lines, seen through the history of the Norwegian schools, before I turn to the music subject. Like the schools, the music subject has changed significantly in the last decades, with a continuous sedimentation of new discourses, many of them still important. In addition to research on the history of the music subject, the post-war curricula are the most important sources.

The discourse analysis will help me connect the statements of my informants to larger discourses, and from there to generalize theoretically. In the second part I turn to the interviews, and I investigate how my informants are influenced by discourses, and how identifying and understanding these discourses can contribute to explaining their choice to opt out of music teaching. More precisely I investigate the ways in which my informants draw on discursive resources—their discursive work. It is important for me to emphasize that they are teachers with agency, and not docile objects of discursive power. Moreover, the analysis is a result of what *I* have investigated, and *my* understanding of which discourses that are brought into play, and not *The Truth*. Furthermore, I have no direct insight into the materiality in which my informants are situated, I must rely on their accounts. The statements from the interviews that are included in the analysis are exemplary. While I use statements from several informants under the same heading, this is not done for quantitative purposes, but rather to show the breadth of articulation, in line with the exploratory basis of the study. It is also selective: I have not included all possible examples from the interviews, but the most lucid. As I have chosen examples according to the investigation in the first part, the picture of the informants that emerges from the second part is inevitably incomplete. Completeness is not my aim; nor is it achievable. The relevance of the study lies in it’s showing that mechanisms

on a discursive and formative level have direct, material consequences for the working life of teachers.

4.4 Validity

Validity refers to the soundness of results, and as a concept it originates from quantitative research; applying it to studies like the present dissertation can be problematic. Due to its origin in quantitative research, the concept of validity is contested among some qualitative researchers (Miles et al., 2014, p. 313). Barrett and Stauffer (2012b) propose *trustworthiness* instead (in narrative research), and ground it in the responsibility and rigorousness of the researcher. The latter involves a recursive process between the various aspects of the study, e.g. research activities and theories; and reflexivity.

The researcher must constantly examine the ways in which her own values, motivations, and epistemological assumptions influence every dimension of the research process, and, conversely, how the research process impacts her. Reflexivity also implies awareness of one's own positionality and how that positionality figures into the relationships at the core of narrative inquiry. (Barrett & Stauffer, 2012b, p. 10)

In other words, the researcher must be aware of the hermeneutical process. Within discourse analysis, other concepts of validity have been proposed, including “coherence” and “fruitfulness”, the latter including the ability of an analysis to generate novel explanations (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p. 170f). Although a certain level of coherence is desirable, the purpose of the present dissertation is just as much to disperse as to unify, thus the former is of little interest. Fruitfulness is more interesting, although novelty is no goal in itself. When I speak about validity in the present dissertation it is, despite of the epistemological basis in hermeneutics and discourse, connected to the soundness of the results, and trustworthiness is a fairly good definition. Generalization and external validity are also part of the picture and will be discussed below.

Concrete validity measures were taken at several steps in the analytical process. One of the central activities was member check. As mentioned above, the transcriptions were sent to the informants for approval. After writing the first draft of the narratives these were also sent to the informants for approval and comment. To my disappointment very few had any objections, and the original narratives were largely kept unchanged. I had hoped for more feedback as it, in my view, would enrich the narrative. It has also led me to believe that I

perhaps should have included more “bold” interpretations in the narratives, instead of describing the more obvious aspects of their stories. In the analytical processes, including both instances of coding, I have worked in Norwegian until the final stage where all narratives were translated. I believe working in one’s first language results in better control over the content of the material, and, more important, I wanted the informants to be able to review the material in Norwegian, as I have no information about their English skills. Due to the importance and ubiquity of interpretation in the analytic work I aim to be as transparent as possible, to put my contributions on display, and give an insight into the process.

The exploratory aspect of the dissertation poses another challenge to validity. As I have mentioned several times, I aim for breadth and richness, to present the array of possibilities. One could argue that the strong theoretical base of the present dissertation impedes a proper exploration, as many aspects are predefined. I nevertheless maintain the relevance of putting forth a theoretical framework, as I believe the theoretical framework forms an account of the pre-understanding of the researcher. By constituting a center from which the investigation unfolds, it allows the reader to follow the line of thought, although there is a bias, in the approach.

The low number of informants needs to be mentioned as well. Within the domain of internal validity (Miles et al., 2014, p. 312f), a low number of informants is not necessarily negative, as it makes a rich description feasible within the time-restrictions imposed by the dissertation process. Delving more deeply into the material makes it possible to present negative evidence as well as confirmatory, and contradictory findings can be accounted for. Concerning external validity (ibid., p. 314f)—transferability and generalizability—the low number of informants is more problematic. My aim is not to write an exhaustive account of the difficulties faced by music teachers in the Norwegian compulsory schools, but to explore some pertinent aspects. I compare my findings with previous research, but it is important to note that such a comparison is no proof for the generalizability, the function is merely to see how they relate to each other. It is discourse analysis that enables me to make generalizable claims, by pointing towards the conditions for my findings—investigating how their statements can refer to a limited number of discourses (and practices). Alvesson and Sköldbberg write about the possibility of generalization in qualitative research.

In a perspective that accepts non-observables in the form of patterns and tendencies, common to and underlying several surface phenomena, *successive*

expansions of the empirical area of application within a certain domain are both possible and desirable, even in qualitative studies.” (Alvesson & Sköldbreg, 2000, p. 21f).

One might question whether discourses are non-observable, but as rules they function as patterns that make generalization possible. It is thus a result of the *abductive* logic (see above), where both the theoretical framework (and successively expanding theories) and the empirical material is combined in a dialectic (hermeneutic) process of inference.

A final aspect of generalization/external validity concerns the field and the readers. I am particularly interested in the main group the dissertation addresses, teachers. The goal, as Miles et al. describe it, is that “a range of readers report that the findings are consistent with their own experiences” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 314). Barrett and Stauffer (2012b), similarly describe this ability of an inquiry to engage as “resonant.” This is a form of generalization that takes place external to the writing of it, what Stake calls “naturalistic generalization.”

Naturalistic generalizations are conclusions arrived at through personal engagement in life’s affairs or by vicarious experience so well constructed that the person feels as if it happened to themselves. (...) To assist the reader in making naturalistic generalizations, case researchers need to provide opportunity for vicarious experience. Our accounts need to be personal, describing the things of our sensory experiences, not failing to attend to the matters that personal curiosity dictates. A narrative account, a story, a chronological presentation, personalistic descriptions, emphasis on time and place provide rich ingredients for vicarious experience. (Stake, 1995, p. 85f)

It poses a challenge to the researcher, and also hints at how both the narratives and the discourse analysis can have generalizable aspects. Although Stake writes about case studies, the particularity of the informants I emphasize in the present dissertation makes his point relevant even for the present dissertation (see also p. 49). During the process of my research I have received some hints of a certain resonance in the field. In the autumn of 2016 I was interviewed by the Norwegian teachers’ union member magazine (Ropeid, 2016), and following its publication I was contacted by several music teachers who found that my preliminary findings resonated for them. When I have presented preliminary findings at international conferences I have received similar feedback.

4.5 Ethical considerations

This study is approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) (previously *The Norwegian Social Science Data Services*) (Appendix 5). All informants were given information about the project beforehand, and signed a letter of consent (Appendices 6 and 7). Throughout the process of transcription and analysis I have anonymized the informants, educational institutions and work places, as much as possible. I have also kept personal information at a minimum. The cost of this may be that some important information has been omitted, but these measures were necessary, as some of my informants stressed the importance of remaining anonymous.

As mentioned earlier, the informants were sent both the transcription of the interview and the narrative for approval in Norwegian. When translating from Norwegian to English I have striven to retain the original meaning, but as some interpretation is unavoidable, slight displacements of meaning may have occurred. Working with informants involves significant responsibility to the informants, and I emphasize that all interpretations are my own, and the final findings may not represent my informants' intended meaning.

Another set of ethical considerations emerges from my role as a researcher. The moral imperative that lies behind any study is to be as truthful as possible. Several of these are already mentioned in section 4.4. Although this study by no means involves confirming hypotheses, it is a challenge to avoid confirmation bias. I have striven to question my own pre-understanding, and have sought actively for information that countered my initial understanding, and I present these findings. In conducting an explorative study, it is nevertheless important to put the whole breadth of identified factors on display, although some appear to be more important than others.

5 Narratives

5.1 Introduction

From my point of view, it was never obvious that I would become a teacher. It is without doubt my choice to study music that brought me to the profession, so in a way the first step was when I started playing guitar at the age of 12. (I had previously been in a musical kindergarten, and come from a somewhat musical home.) Throughout the music program in upper secondary, and later musicology studies at the university, I had no clear idea about what it would lead to, although a dream of being a musician or composer/arranger was present. I have always explained my choice to become a teacher as a pragmatic choice, a temporary occupation, while I waited for a “proper” job with music. But now, I am not sure whether that is the truth.

In this chapter I present the narratives of my informants with an emphasis on how they understand their own career choices. To answer the straightforward research question guiding the dissertation, several factors must be taken into consideration: training, working conditions, the culture in the individual school, the influence of school policy, and the teachers’ ideas about music, teaching, and students. In addition to these factors, there is a body of research on teachers’ career trajectories, which indicates that as the career proceeds, teachers change their dispositions. Moreover, the private sphere influences teachers’ choices as well. As I am most interested in the influences emanating from the work life, these will be the focus in the present dissertation. In order to frame the narratives, in this opening section I present some important contributions to the scholarship on teacher career trajectories and lives. I will then return

to some of these contributions when I come to the analysis of my informants' narratives and the ensuing discussion. As mentioned in the Introduction, I approach the material with a significant pre-understanding, and, in order to give the reader a glimpse of my background I include some of my reflections in the narratives and elsewhere in this chapter.

In the literature review the focus was primarily on identifiable *factors*, and these are indeed important; I will later rehearse some of them in light of the interviews. But attrition from teaching music can also be viewed as a result of professional *development*, occurring spatially and temporally. A consequence of professional development is that the individual factors are not static: as teachers gain experience they perceive them differently. In that regard, the developmental aspect becomes a factor in itself, as it has consequences for the interpretation of the other factors. My informants' stories are to a large degree characterized by a gradual movement away from music, or an increase in dissatisfaction over some stretch of time, rather than sudden decisions based on specific events.

The narratives begin with the informants' recollection of their (musical) childhood and memories from school and proceed through their adolescence, higher education, and work life, into the present. I have chosen to include their background because it is part of their horizon, and thus helps to explain their interpretations of their career choices. Huberman (1989, p. 44) mentions that the background of teachers is a predictor of their future contentment as teachers: for instance, having done substitute teaching, working with children's leisure activities, and having many siblings correspond with fewer initial difficulties. Another important aspect of the background is their motivation for teaching. Motivation can be divided into three subgroups, intrinsic, extrinsic, and altruistic (Kyriacou et al., 1999). Intrinsic motivation concerns aspects related to the profession, such as teaching children, imparting knowledge, and working with one's subject. Altruistic factors concern the greater good of teaching, such as having an important job and helping children succeed, while extrinsic factors are those outside of the actual job activities, such as salary and holiday allowance. Bruinsma and Jansen (2010) found that intrinsic motivation was a predictor for remaining in the profession. Huberman et al. (1993, p. 154ff) made a similar observation when they found that teachers with an "active motivation" were more likely to continue as teachers than those with a "material" motivation. In their review, Bergem et al. (1997) found that in previous Norwegian research on motivation for becoming a teacher

The most significant result in this research is the demonstration of the strength and stability of the so-called 'inner-motivation factors' which imply that most students become teachers because they like working with children and like involving themselves in social activities. (p. 447)

In a recent study of motivation among student teachers at the University of Oslo, a similar picture appeared.

The motivations that typically received high ratings included intrinsic career value, teaching-related abilities, job security and social utility values. In addition, the opportunity to study and work with a particular subject seemed to be an important reason for becoming a teacher. (Brandmo & Nesje, 2017, p. 115)

The intrinsic and altruistic (social utility) factors are common in many countries (Watt et al., 2017), but they are articulated differently. The importance of the subject is a bit more complicated. Brandmo and Nesje mention that student teachers at a primary program would perhaps be less interested in an individual subject. The University of Oslo is also the leading university in Norway, making it likely that the students have applied there to be able to immerse themselves in a discipline (Brandmo & Nesje, 2017, p. 104f). As mentioned earlier, there is a parallel here to many music teachers who became teachers because of the music. It is nevertheless important to note that teachers are motivated by a combination of several factors (Huberman et al., 1993). In the context of the present study, there are two important implications considering motivation. On the one hand, if one enters occupation with a specific motivation, it is likely to cause disappointment if the expectation is not met. On the other hand, a fresh teacher may enter a work place where a certain set of values (as altruism) are present, and thus must relate to them to be included in the professional community.

Teachers' career trajectories are important, as my informants' decision to reduce or leave music teaching can be a result of entering various career phases. No general description of teachers' career trajectories can be fully accurate, as these are unique to the individual. In a review of research on teachers' career trajectories from several countries Rolls and Plauborg (2009) identified some common traits. In general, the general development is in three stages: the first years, mid-career and the final years. In Chapter 2 I introduced the notion of "practice shock," which is most salient in the early years of the career. Many teachers experience a shock when entering the profession, largely because of problems with classroom management and student discipline. This phase of the teachers' career is the best documented in the research, largely because of the problem with novice teacher attrition. On the other hand, the first years

can be characterized by a sense of “discovery” (Huberman, 1989; Huberman et al., 1993) and enjoyment in having one’s own class, having responsibility, and being part of a staff. These two aspects often appear together, resulting in contradictory emotions.

In mid-career, “stabilization” is the best documented phase (Huberman, 1989, p. 34). Although a sense of professional stabilization is salient, it is not the only one. Rolls and Plauborg describe the mid-career not just as a phase of stabilization and commitment to work, but also one where teachers undergo doubts about their future in the school.

To summarize, there would seem to be broad agreement among researchers that teachers in their mid-career period are at their peak. Thus, the mid-career is characterized by teachers that are focused on pedagogical and curricular development as well as their own career development. (...) [I]t is also during this period that a considerable number of teachers experience career frustration and even crisis which for some leads to serious considerations regarding their future within the profession. (Rolls & Plauborg, 2009, p. 22)

Sikes (1985) identifies a shift at the age of 28–33, which she calls “the age thirty transition.” At this stage teachers consider their future, and a shift in attention from subject to pedagogy takes place, with teachers becoming more preoccupied with the students. Her next phase is “settling down,” which corresponds to some degree with Huberman’s notion of “stabilization.” The final years are characterized by confidence in their abilities as teachers and preparation for retirement. Given of the age of my informants, the two first phases are of most interest to me.

The teacher occupation has some quite distinctive traits that must be taken into consideration. On the one hand, teachers work with a fixed age group, with the obvious result that the relationship with the students will change over time as the age gap increases. Another important aspect of a teaching career is the possibilities of promotion, as climbing the career ladder often means doing something else than to teach, such as administrative duties or counselling. In this sense, teaching differs from other occupations in that a career change that still involves teaching is more likely to be horizontal—doing other tasks within the school or changing schools—as the stories in this study will show.

A major contribution to the knowledge of teachers’ lives is the work of Geert Kelchtermans. Through a narrative-biographical approach, Kelchtermans has investigated teachers’ professional development over several decades. A central argument has been that teachers develop a “personal interpretative framework”

that guides their interpretations and changes as a result of interaction with the context (Kelchtermans, 1993, 2009a, 2009b). As opposed to the research on teachers' career trajectories in general, Kelchtermans advocates an emphasis on the individual, although the individual's actions must be connected to underlying structures (Kelchtermans, 2016, p. 38). The personal interpretative framework consists of two interwoven domains: *professional self-understanding* and *subjective educational theory*. Professional self-understanding refers to "both the understanding one has of one's 'self' at a certain moment in time (*product*), as well as to the fact that this product results from an ongoing *process* of making sense of one's experiences and their impact on the 'self'" (Kelchtermans, 2009b, p. 261). He further identifies five components in the self-understanding. *Self-image* is the descriptive characterization of oneself, while *self-esteem* contains evaluation of one's proficiency. *Task perception* is the normative component, "the teacher's idea of what constitutes his/her professional programme, his/her tasks and duties in order to do a good job" (Kelchtermans, 2009b, p. 262). Connected to the task perception we find *job motivation*: what motivates individuals both to *become* teachers and to *stay* in the profession. Like Sikes (1985), Kelchtermans identifies a shift from subject-related motivation to the motivation derived from being an important person for one's students. The final component is the *future perspective*, the teacher's expectations for her/his job future. Naturally, this perspective shifts over time, as the teacher's self-understanding is developed through interpretation. As Kelchtermans writes, almost echoing Gadamer: "The person of the teacher is always somebody at some particular moment in his/her life, with a particular past and future. This 'historicity' deeply characterizes every human being and should therefore be included in our conception of professional self-understanding" (Kelchtermans, 2009b, p. 263). "Subjective educational theory" encompasses the teacher's knowledge and beliefs about education. There is a clear link between teachers' task perception and subjective educational theory, as the latter contains how to implement the former (Kelchtermans, 1993, p. 450). Knowledge refers to formal knowledge—what is obtained through teacher education, teaching practice and professional reading—whereas beliefs refer to "more person-based, idiosyncratic convictions, built up through different career experiences" (Kelchtermans, 2009a, p. 41). In the actual work of teaching both categories are intertwined, and, for teachers, the most important criterion for whether to include a practice in their educational theory is whether "it works" (Kelchtermans, 1993, p. 452). The content of the theory is thus highly

idiosyncratic and connected to the judgements a teacher makes in the course of daily work.

From Kelchtermans' analyses of teachers' biographies, *vulnerability* has emerged as a central theme. As Hargreaves (1998) also has emphasized, emotions are an intrinsic part of teaching, and the moral aspects of teaching are just as central as the technical (Kelchtermans, 2016). Hargreaves found that the emotional bond with the students underpinned every aspect of teachers' work, and that many of the rewards of teaching were psychic in nature (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 842). Consequently, such a bond can be made possible by a timetable that lets the teacher spend more time with a group of students (p. 845). It is not difficult to see the connection to (Norwegian) teachers' motivation to become a teacher, as mentioned above. The basic structure of teachers' vulnerability, according to Kelchtermans is "always one of feeling that one's professional identity and moral integrity, as part of being 'a proper teacher,' are questioned and that valued workplace conditions are thereby threatened or lost" (Kelchtermans, 1996, p. 319). As such, vulnerability must be understood in micro-political terms in the context of the work place (ibid.). There are several sources of vulnerability. At a formal level, administration and policy have some influence, first and foremost in the struggle for tenure, which can cause doubt about one's own skills (Kelchtermans, 1996). This aspect may be more prevalent in Belgium, where Kelchtermans conducted his research, than in Norway; but we will see that my informants, too, went to some lengths to get tenure. Moreover, teachers often have little control over administrative decisions and policy changes that directly influence their work life, and as a consequence, their working conditions are largely imposed on them (Kelchtermans, 2009b, p. 265). A second source of vulnerability is the professional relationships in the school. Teachers must relate to leadership, parents, and colleagues, and vulnerability can result "when teachers feel *powerless* or politically ineffective in the micro-political struggles about their desired workplace conditions" (Kelchtermans, 1996, p. 312). The struggles can be about material resources or organization and may concern norms and goals. The visibility of the teaching practice can also enhance vulnerability. As Kelchtermans mentions, teaching most often takes place in the isolation of the classroom, but the students' results and discipline is visible for colleagues, leadership, and parents. The third source of vulnerability that Kelchtermans describes is efficacy, or more precisely the limits to teachers' efficacy, as they can "only to a very limited degree, prove their effectiveness by claiming that pupils' results directly follows their actions" (Kelchtermans,

2009b, p. 266). This means that, despite huge commitment, the results may be disappointing. A variant of this, predominantly among teachers with a strong caring ethic, is failure to establish a rapport with students, leading to a feeling of guilt. Finally, teachers often lack a firm, scientific ground on which to base their decisions. This vulnerability exemplifies the combination of knowledge and beliefs in the teachers' subjective educational theory. Teachers must always make judgments that are based in their personal beliefs rather than formal knowledge, and thus Kelchtermans can claim that vulnerability is the fundamental category in which teachers find themselves (Kelchtermans, 2009b, p. 266). But at the same time

it is the committed judging and caring action that opens up "the educational space" in the relationship between teacher and students. (...) Since not everything can be planned for, authentic interaction between people can take place and that interaction can have deeply meaningful educational value just because it "happened," it "took place." (ibid. 266f)

Teaching is thus an activity that takes place in the space between carefully planned actions based on norms for good education and the inevitable unfolding of events that were not planned. In other words, teaching involves both the *techne* of the profession and the *phronesis* of the individual teacher. The above-mentioned research mainly concerns teachers in general, but it has obvious consequences for music teachers as well. Nevertheless, the music subject has a position in the school that differs from the core activities of the school, which implies that some of the aspects presented above have a different effect on music teachers.

What now follows is the narratives of my informants, they may seem a bit tedious, and quite similar in structure, but, as the interviews were conducted from the same guide, and because the informants' professional development, from the first memories of music to the decision to leave/reduce music, teaching followed some of the same steps, it was unavoidable. By presenting the narratives I aim at retaining my informants' individuality, and thus, comparison of the narratives is of little interest. The main objective of the narratives is to describe the informants' development as it unfolds over time. Critical phases and incidents are emphasized, but, as we shall see, in some cases the career change is gradual, and the causes are not always clear. In the discussion following the analysis I will delve more deeply into some aspects and return to the research on career trajectories and Kelchtermans' interpretative framework. I will also mention Kelchtermans' contribution to the research on socialization in the workplace.

5.2 The informants' stories

5.2.1 Ellen

I think it's about—music is very much about emotions, experiences.

Ellen is a teacher in her fifties with a clearly defined understanding of the music subject, as the sentence above indicates. She works at a primary school in a rural area in eastern Norway, where she is classroom teacher (*kontaktlærer*).³⁰ At the time of the interview she was studying for a master's degree in English, and I met her at the university where she studies. She comes from a home with much singing, ranging from drinking songs to psalms, and her father was also part-time guitar teacher and musician. A musical home?

Yes, yes. A rich musical home, exempt from any professionalism. (...) It was expected of me, that I should be singing. Strong expectation.

In her childhood, she took piano and singing lessons, and played in the school band. From primary school she remembers one teacher in particular.

I had a teacher who played mandolin and accordion, and he included much singing in the lessons. It was actually morning song, a psalm in the beginning of the first lesson. And I found it brilliant. He would also often bring out the mandolin or the accordion during the day, and we sang a song.

This teacher has been an inspiration for Ellen, and she often brings out the guitar and sings with her students herself. In lower secondary she experienced a very different situation, because even though the school was richly equipped, the teachers could not teach music, and she even realized that she could play the guitar better than her teacher. What she found positive with lower secondary, musically, was that she for the first time in her life found a friend with the same interest for classical music. Her friend would play the piano and Ellen sang.

In upper secondary she entered a rich musical environment, even without a music specialist program.³¹ One teacher emerges as having been particularly important. He ran most of the musical activities, taught music, and conducted the school choir. For Ellen, he was a significant inspiration, one who motivated

30 The term classroom teacher refers here to a teacher with responsibility for a class, and who in primary school does most of the teaching in that class. The responsibility resembles that of a form teacher or homeroom teacher.

31 In upper secondary school in Norway, there are no music lessons apart from music specialist programs. Earlier, as in Ellen's case, music was elective.

her to study further. In addition, he was an important conversation partner, a person she could talk with about classical music. It is during these years that Ellen decided to go in for music, and after upper secondary school she received a scholarship that enabled her to take several singing lessons per week and practice, with a part time job besides. To enhance her music theoretical skills she decided to attend a folk high school.³² She describes the year in folk high school as inspiring and enjoyable, and says it was particularly nice to meet other young people who shared her interest in classical music, which she had missed during much of her adolescence.

After the folk high school she began studying at the conservatory, which turned out to be a mixed experience. From having a strong conviction to become a musician, she lost all interest in making music during her three years there. Ellen tells that she has thought a lot about what made her lose all passion. An important cause is social, finding her place in a tiny environment.

It takes its toll to, sort of, fit socially in those ... it was so socially constricted. And I believe [that] because the milieu was so small, it became some struggle about the places [in the rank]. It became very much of a mutual (...) struggle. I understood that, my classmates, they are also my competitors. You know, there was very much competition in the study, which I was very uncomfortable with.

Ellen started to understand that this competition would continue beyond her studies, a thought she disliked. The studies also included pedagogy, which was notably second-rate.

And I remember that I one time asked: Why don't we talk about teaching music? Why do we always talk about doing recitals? Why don't we talk about that—because then it dawned on me that out of us students, this small number of students, it is very, very few of those who will be performing musicians—so why don't we talk about that?

Even when asking openly, she did not receive an answer, and she had no reaction from the teachers either. While the competitive aspect of the studies apparently drew Ellen away from her ambition to be a musician, there were two reasons she did not want to become a music teacher. The first was the devaluation of teaching: if you teach you have not succeeded. The other was her negative experience with teaching practice during the studies.

Bendik

How did you like trying to teach?

³² Folk high schools (*folkehøgskole*) are colleges without formal education. They are common in the Nordic countries, and most students attend for one year after upper secondary, often to pursue hobbies or special interests, like music and sports.

Ellen

I found it terrible. (laughter)

Bendik

(laughter) Yes.

Ellen

Yes, because we were just thrown into it you know. We received very little preparation. I thought it was terrible. Utterly terrible. I thought that this is not for me (laughter).

Bendik

Okay. So that was sort of the thought after finished practice?

Ellen

(laughter) Yes, it was completely dreadful. (laughter)

The idea of becoming a music teacher was at this stage absent, and she had a feeling that the years spent at the conservatory had been in vain. What also emerged during the interview is that Ellen has a theoretical disposition, and she liked the theoretical part of the pedagogical education. After the conservatory, she was at a loss concerning plans for the future and decided to study social pedagogy and work in a kindergarten besides. During this time she married and had a baby.

The turning point that made her turn towards teaching came a year later. After her maternity leave she joined a project group that worked with language stimulation of children in kindergarten, where music was included. It is here that Ellen first began to view herself as a music pedagogue, and contrary to her experience during teaching practice in the conservatory, this turned out to be a positive experience. In addition to being part of the project group, she studied pre-school pedagogy and physical education. Why did the thought of becoming a teacher appear now? On the one hand, it appears as if her interest in working with small children, which I suppose she got by working in kindergarten, is a contributory cause of her starting to head for a career in the school. On the other hand, time heals all wounds, and as the distance from her early teaching practice grew, she gained positive experiences with being a music pedagogue.

After another maternity leave she started working at the school where she still works, and the two motivating factors, working with music and children could develop further. She earned a position as preschool teacher and subject teacher in music. Starting to work at the school gave her another positive experience with music pedagogy, and came to the full realization that she should be a teacher. And at the same time as the music lessons strengthened

her inclination to become a teacher, her interest in music making (performing) started returning to her as well. It is interesting to note that the experience from these years had an effect contrary to the years in the conservatory.

Ellen enjoyed her position as subject teacher in music, but decided early that she needed to make her own content for the lessons. Her lessons consisted almost exclusively of practical activities: singing, dancing, playing instruments, acting, and performing. It is evident that Ellen has a strong professional ethos, where the central aim is for students to experience the practical aspects of music, rather than following the curriculum and books accurately. At her workplace, the conditions for teaching music are good, with support from administration for putting on shows, a well-equipped music classroom, and resources to buy instruments. Nevertheless, after a few years Ellen wanted to teach more subjects, and the movement away from the music subject started. I asked her about her reasons.

Ellen

I think we are back to the pedagogy. That is, the interest in teaching. And I also think—I don't think, I know—if you just teach music, you will never be a classroom teacher, and I wanted to have one, I wanted to have a class. I had one when I taught the preschoolers. But the preschool classes ... in 97 they became first graders, you know.³³ And I really wanted to be a classroom teacher, and have more subjects with them, get to know them better. As a subject teacher they come, and they go.

Bendik

Yes, I'm aware of that.

Ellen

So, I wanted to ... No, I wanted to teach more subjects. And I was kind of like... Yes, I was interested in other subjects.

I must emphasize that it was not primarily the wish to teach less music that affected Ellen, it was the wish to become a classroom teacher that appealed to her and initiated the change. With some goodwill from a nearby university college, Ellen's previous education was credited, and she could finish her teacher education part-time, and then begin working as classroom teacher. The most important part of the teaching profession for Ellen is the contact with the students, but I was also curious as to whether there was something else behind her wish to teach less music, such as the content. Ellen is obviously not especially enthusiastic about the curriculum, which she finds far too theoretical, and

33 With the curriculum change in 1997 the students entered first grade at the age of six compared to seven. Preschool, which had been optional, was discontinued.

she mentioned repeatedly how important it is that the students get a chance to practice music. Her school takes part in a project where the students learn to play cello in the music lesson, which she views as a fantastic opportunity to practice music. Through this project, the students have also become more aware of classical music, making it more interesting for Ellen to talk with them about music. Having cello lessons instead of “regular” music lessons has made her principal concerned of whether they comply with the curriculum. Ellen has a pragmatic approach to this concern, and believes that to meet music and musicians and learn an instrument is invaluable, and the remaining goals in the curriculum can easily be covered in the other subjects.

I asked her whether she experienced more strain when teaching music than other subjects, and to my surprise she answered no. She only remarked that you need a more marked structure in the music lessons, and the time to establish a relationship with the students is shorter. As a classroom teacher you do not need to spend so much time on this in the lessons, and you can focus on the enjoyable aspects. The enrichment that lies in a good relationship with the students is in Ellen’s view the most rewarding aspect of being a classroom teacher. However, she emphasizes that music is difficult to teach. It demands a lot from the teachers, who must both master the content of the subject, and have the ability to communicate the joy of (musical) expression to the students.

There is much about Ellen’s story I can relate to, especially the limitations of being a subject teacher, such as the wish to establish a better relationship with the students and to spend less effort on discipline, and last but not least, the problem of fulfilling a curriculum one experiences as an impediment to the most important aspect of the music subject—to express and experience music. Towards the end of the interview I asked whether Ellen still views herself as a music teacher.

Ellen

No. No.

Bendik

When did the change occur?

Ellen

I believe during teacher education.

Bendik

Was it because of the content in the teacher education, or because of the position you got (classroom teacher)?

Ellen

I believe it was that process. From ... It was the process. (short break) Maybe I also felt that it was more important to teach more subjects, that is, that music—maybe, when I sit here talking with you—maybe I didn't feel that it was so important to just teach music. Maybe that job wasn't as important as teaching Norwegian. Maybe, I haven't thought about it, but when you put it like that, I believe I ... it could be. Perhaps I didn't feel it was the same importance, that I didn't teach such an important subject.

Even though Ellen works at a school where the music subject has a high status and receives good support, a feeling sneaks in that the core subjects³⁴ are more important. A cause could be the public discourse that emphasizes the PISA tests, the national tests, and the core subjects, all of which have been discussed within the teaching staff at her school. In that case, it shows that discussions on a national, political level can influence how teachers view their job.

Ellen is a strong advocate for the experience dimension of the music subject, while the formal demands within the curriculum contributes to make it less interesting. There is a connection to her distaste for the competitive aspect of music she met during her years at the conservatory. A detail I noticed during the interview is that she distinguishes “to teach” from “to teach music,” which indicates that the music subject entails something different to her from “regular” subjects. Perhaps is it the emotional aspect of the music subject, and the underlying ability to create experiences—two central aspects of Ellen’s view on the music subject and music altogether, which she has brought with her the entire life. Ellen does not envisage teaching more music than she teaches today, she is content with a few lessons per week, and having studied English, her decision is to head in a different direction. Even though there is less music in her job, she has continued with music in her spare time, by singing in vocal ensembles and a few assignments as soloist. This combination seems to function well, comprising both the joy of practicing music, and the most meaningful aspects of being a teacher—the relationship with students.

5.2.2 Anne

Anne’s story is about agency, and struggling with creating a manageable working life. It revolves around finding a balance between doing suitable activities without burning out. It is also a story about learning about the occupation as

³⁴ Norwegian, mathematics, English.

you go along, and acting according to that knowledge. Today, she works at a school in a town in western Norway, but at the time of the interview she was studying special education. Even though she studied full time, she still had a 25% position as teacher.

Anne comes from a musical home where they listened to records, sang, and played instruments. She even has a brother who is a musician. In her childhood and youth she sang in a choir, played in a school band and children's theater group. For a short period in her teens she took piano lessons as well. Choir and band have been activities later in her life too. The music lessons in primary school did not make an impression on Anne. Even though music was her preferred leisure time activity, the music lessons, consisting of singing, recorder playing, and listening tasks, were of little interest. In lower secondary, Anne had a competent music teacher with lots of music skills. She even chose music as an elective subject, where they brought their own instruments, in Anne's case, the trumpet. In upper secondary she also chose music as elective subject, which altogether indicates that Anne was very interested in music in her adolescence.

After upper secondary, which included two years of health and social care, she started in teacher education—something she describes as an accidental choice. She brought with her from home an expectation of studying at the level of higher education, but the choice of teacher education appears to be a pragmatic one. Anne tells that she had no strong wish to work with children, but just saw teaching as an achievable occupation. In addition to the generalist teacher education she took a one-year specialization in music. Her preference was for the creative subjects, music and art—activities she enjoyed in her part-time as well. The largest part of the one-year course in music consisted of didactics, and in addition she received training in piano, arranging music, and some music theory. Although she admits the teaching practice was unrealistic, she seems content with her music education. I asked her whether she felt the education prepared her for the working life.

I feel that the music education ... I remember thinking after graduating, that—it struck me that it had been very good. It was as if you got a way of thinking. (...) And we spoke about making music [musisere] and The Muse Within,³⁵ and all

35 The Norwegian word "musisere" means playing music in a non-professional, recreational setting. *The Muse Within* refers to a book by Bjørkvold (1996), that had a huge impact in Norway. It advocates innate musicality and a holistic view of music education. When Anne speaks about "a special way of thinking," I believe her to mean these values. I will pursue this further in Chapter 6.

that. And you got a special way of thinking, that I viewed as an advantage—that it was wise of them to give me.

After finishing her teacher education, she started working as a classroom teacher at a combined primary and lower secondary school, with a few extra classes in music. She describes her encounter with working life as “not that simple.” Adding to the difficulty of being a novice teacher was that she received a somewhat difficult class, and after two years she quit due to pregnancy. Before continuing her teaching career she worked for a short period in a musical kindergarten, where she traveled around and ran music groups with children, something she quickly discovered was not the right for her. When she returned to school teaching she got a position as teacher in music and special education at a lower secondary school.

The word Anne uses to describe her encounter with this position is “intense,” intense because of the music. At this school the music subject was organized as three continuous lessons per week for half a year. Needless to say, teaching a practical subject for three hours straight, with the same group of students, is demanding both for the teacher and the students. In the lessons, she utilized much of what she learned during her teacher education, including many activities, performances with dance and band, and participated in projects where she led a choir of several hundred students. Because of the performances, the music subject enjoyed quite a high status, but as I have learned from my own experience, and as research confirms, organizing these events can be demanding and tiring.

Bendik

Were you, sort of, did it add up, concerning what you invested in it, and the recognition you gained?

Anne

No, if it had worked out, I would have done something else now, than just teach special education.

Bendik

Yes. Uh, what did you, sort of, experience as the biggest challenge of teaching music?

Anne

You're running practical things. Big classes, you're alone and supposed to organize it. Very ... very demanding. Making you sweat, sort of. (laughter) Totally ... Very demanding. (...) Yes, very demanding.

Reflecting on the zeal of the fresh teacher, she does not understand how she could manage it, and she would never do it again. It also emerges that very few teachers wanted to teach music at this school, and her colleagues were

glad Anne came and took the music lessons. It appears as if Anne shared this attitude and had a wish to gradually teach less music.

I knew that I wanted to work in a lower secondary school, so when you get a job, you have to take it, even though you know that this can be a bit too much. So, you have to do it, just to get into the system.

I noticed that Anne repeatedly during the interview spoke of her wish to “get rid of” parts of the music teaching, which she also expressed to the administration at the school. In the course of several years she had discovered that it was very demanding to teach music because of all the activities, the big classes, and the huge number of students to relate to. As she worked her way in the school and gained more influence, the music teaching was reduced slightly for the benefit of special education, but she still got tired, and after a few years she applied for a position at a Norwegian school abroad.

At the school abroad she was able to teach other subjects than music, and there were also fewer students in the classes, making it easier to teach and adapt for the individual students. Moreover, there were other music teachers, so they could divide the music lessons between them. All in all, the music subject had become endurable. At this school it was also a tradition to have projects and shows in which all students took part, and because of the low number of students Anne could do much of what she had done at her former workplace, without “ending up in chaos.” After seven years abroad, which in the interview sounded like they had been good years concerning music teaching, Anne returned home. Back in Norway Anne got a position as classroom teacher at a lower secondary school, with music in some other classes as well, a role she enjoyed.

It was a lovely class. It was like ... I had such a good time with them. It was, when you entered the classroom, it was just like coming home in a way. (...) So, it was completely ... Those three years, as classroom teacher, they were really nice... they were nice.

She still felt she had too much music, but now she had found a way of dealing with the problems with music teaching, a way to reduce strain. The solution was to use a computer program with tasks and tests built into the program. The practical part of the subject was carried out during projects. She describes the use of this program as “cowardly,” and seems to be ambivalent with respect to the suitability of this. I got the impression that Anne thought the students missed out on something, even though this solution made it possible to achieve

many of the goals in the curriculum. I asked her about her reasons for teaching music like this.

Anne

Very good control, and good organization. So, it was ... I didn't even have to be cross. (laughter)

Bendik

No. (laughter)

Anne

Do you understand?

Bendik

Yes.

Anne

And it was a good structure, they knew what to do, everybody had to solve it, and they handed it in to me. So, it was sort of ... it was organized very well.

An important reason for choosing the computer tool was her previous experiences with teaching music, experiences of a subject that demands a lot from the teacher. As music teacher, I have experienced the struggle of organizing activities myself, especially in full classes, and this computer program, which I have also used, makes it possible to achieve many of the problematic goals in the curriculum, especially within the subject area composition. Despite the fact that this solution facilitated her music teaching, Anne wanted to quit teaching music.

When you have been at a workplace, and gained some seniority, you are allowed to say what you want and what you don't want. And then new teachers arrive, who maybe have music [as part of their education], and then they are the unlucky ones that have to take it, sort of. (...) So, I have said that: You know, I don't want that, and I have been spared.

Anne went from being a classroom teacher to teaching special education. I wondered whether it was because she was interested in special education or because she did not want to teach music.

Anne

I didn't want to teach music.

Bendik

No.

Anne

I don't like it.

Bendik

No.

Anne

It's difficult, difficult to accomplish well and—it's big classes, and for just one lesson per week. (...) So, you can't get anything done. It's just ... It's difficult.

It seems like a stressor for Anne is the lack of balance between the content of the curriculum and the number of lessons. When we spoke about her view on an ideal music subject, she brought the extent of the subject to the fore. A smaller subject with clear goals would have made teaching easier.

Apparently the number of students is another important factor in Anne's decision to leave the music subject. Full classes make it difficult to carry out activities—especially playing instruments—and class management becomes a challenge. Furthermore, when a teacher has several classes, as Anne did, it becomes difficult to have an overview of all students, making assessment a challenge. Just remembering names and distinguish students from each other when grading, is a problem both Anne and I have experienced. In her first teaching job Anne was classroom teacher, and teaching music in your “own” class is a very different matter.

It's different to teach music in your own class, with those you know. Because music, it is ... it's a creative subject, they are supposed to show themselves, give from themselves. It's extremely important that I provide a nice and safe setting, and ... knowing them. To be a teacher and know the students makes organizing easier. Everything is much easier. (...) To have music in your own class, that's wonderful.

This notion was echoed towards the end of the interview where I asked Anne what special education gave her that she did not get from teaching music.

It has something to do with the number of students you have. To be able to follow up personally, each of them. It's not as if no subjects can give you the same, but it's just—it has something to do with the number of persons that require attention. (...) Because all teaching is about, in a way, seeing each individual, and having a good relationship. You need that in any case. But it's obvious that the higher the number, and the less time you spend with them, it becomes more difficult to, in a way, to adapt for the individual.

As this is difficult to carry out as a music teacher with many classes, Anne does not envisage a return to teaching music; if she did, it would be with a smaller group. Even though she does not wish to teach music again, she does believe music is an important subject, as it affects the students in other ways than the theoretical subjects. Perhaps is it because of this view that Anne harbored doubts about using computer programs extensively, as it sacrificed some of the experiential dimension of the subject to the aim of attaining goals in the curriculum. As the strain of teaching music decreased, the aspects that causes joy and meaning with the subject declined as well. Her music education had

given Anne a way of thinking, and she mentioned *The Muse Within* specifically. The distance between this view of music, and the realities in the school—with the emphasis on class management and assessment—can be quite significant, and this gap may be a contributing cause for Anne’s desire not to teach music, even though she thinks it is important.

At the beginning of the interview Anne mentioned that she did not become a teacher because of her interest in children; but after having talked with her for about an hour I got an impression of a teacher preoccupied with the contact with her students, who finds the student relationship a substantial part of the meaning of the occupation. When it turned out to be impossible to combine the subject she felt most connected to, with a manageable work situation, it led her to special education. Anne still views herself as a music teacher, but after several years without music teaching she has become a different teacher among her colleagues.

Now I am out of it, you know? So now it's no one at my job who thinks of me, that I'm actually music teacher, and that I actually enjoy that kind of stuff. So, now it's sort of—no one connects me to it. I just walk silently around, and no one knows anymore.

Several months after the interview I sent Anne the first draft of the narrative and she told me that she had just started working as school counselor, and enjoys a good balance between contact with students and administrative work. Interestingly, she now works full time with the well-being of the students.

5.2.3 Ida

Ida’s story is to a large degree about the impact one person can have on a life. Moreover, it is apparently characterized by a series of coincidences that have led Ida to where she is today, working as classroom teacher in a primary school in northern Norway. I met her at her home, in a place that can be described as very remote.

Ida’s strongest memory of music from her childhood is the school band. With the exception of a grandfather who played violin, nobody in her family participated in any musical activities, so her wish to begin in the school band was entirely hers. It seems that it was the extra-musical and social aspects of the school band that drew her to it in the first place. She had several older friends

who already were members, and 17th of May³⁶ was another attractor. When she began in the school band she began lessons with a flute teacher who would later have a huge impact on Ida's education and work life. The flute lessons appear to be especially positive experiences, and the teacher, who also conducted the school band, let Ida take part in the activities from early on.

Ida has mostly had competent music teachers in compulsory school, but the lessons in primary school did not make an impression, partly because she played the flute and already knew how to read notation. In lower secondary, on the other hand, she had an inspiring music teacher, who was very interested in music. Even though the content of the music lessons mainly consisted of singing, like in primary school, they also played guitar, and Ida recalls being excited about the subject, while several of her classmates viewed the music lessons as free periods. What we see is a displacement of Ida's valorization of musical activity from being a mainly social activity to one of greater intrinsic value. In her teens she also got the opportunity to try her hand at being a flute instructor, which she enjoyed.

At the age of 14–15 Ida had reached such a high level on the flute that the school band had begun to bore her, and she considered quitting. When her flute teacher heard about this she invited her to the concert band in the nearby town. In the new band, which mainly consisted of adults, she met new challenges, new friends, and a renewed inspiration for playing. The experience of mastering this level gave Ida an assurance of her skills and it encouraged her to continue. A clear sign of finding her place in this band is that she still plays in it.

Ida had a strong wish to attend the music program at upper secondary, and when she was not accepted it was a huge disappointment. Instead she chose the program for health and social care. Her choice puzzled me, and I asked her why she made this choice.

I think I only did it to have an alternative. I didn't have any ... and that's why I was so disappointed when I wasn't accepted [in the music program], just: no. (laughter) But then I actually liked it quite well there. And we had practice already the first year. I was at an old people's home and enjoyed the three weeks I was there. And then I said to myself: You know what? You're just gonna continue down this path.

While in upper secondary she continued with flute lessons in the culture school, and played in the concert band. She had a break away from the band, but quickly discovered something important missing in her life. She needed to

36 The school bands have a central role in the celebration of the Norwegian constitution day (17th of May). They lead the children's parades, and play at other occasions during the day.

play—to practice music—and she returned after a while. When she turned 20 she had finished upper secondary and started working at a home for psychiatric patients. Even though she enjoyed getting a permanent position, and started earning money, a doubt started to arise. Was she supposed to do this for the rest of her life? Again, she turned to her flute teacher, who suggested she take a year at a folk high school.

The year in the folk high school turned out to be a fantastic year for Ida, and she discovered parts of herself she had been unaware of.

I hadn't believed that I was so interested in music, but when I came there I got such a ... yes, tremendous experience. (...) I didn't know there was so much music in me.

The year offers new experiences, such as singing in choir and playing in a wind ensemble, and she encounters new challenges, like ear training. Moreover, for the first time, she had a new flute teacher. As mentioned above, I was puzzled to learn that she had chosen the program for health and social care in upper secondary, but during the interview it became clear that the choice was not as incidental as Ida claims it is. Listening to Ida I got the impression of a person who finds great joy in caring for others, and another enriching experience in the folk high school was when Ida had the opportunity to take part in a music group with mentally disabled people. The year inspired Ida to study further, and the flute teacher suggested that she take a one-year course (*grunnfag*) in music.

During the interview, I asked repeatedly whether her taste in music had developed as a result of her musical development. To my surprise, it does not seem like Ida has any strong preference, her musical taste is eclectic, and she listens to many different genres. For Ida, the most important thing is to play, and be part of a musical community, and even though the social aspect was the most important in the beginning, it is obvious that playing has become important in itself.

Ida took the one-year course at a teaching academy, so in addition to a standard music education, with harmony, ear training and so forth, it also included some didactics. Following the course, she took a supplementary half-year course, which comprised a longer practice period. Here too, she chose to join a group who had musical activities with a group of mentally disabled, which strengthens my impression of a person who enjoys working with the disadvantaged.

After having studied music, Ida decided to study drama (using theater in working with children and youth). This choice seemed a bit accidental to me, and when I asked her why she chose this study she was a bit unsure too, because she had

never had any theatrical experience. That may be the reason this became an inspiring year, in which she experienced personal growth and got a kick out of standing on the stage. When we spoke about both her music education and her drama education, I asked her whether she at that stage had any thoughts about which occupation this could lead to, and whether she had envisaged becoming a teacher. To my surprise she answered no. From the outside, it seems a bit strange that Ida had not thought about becoming teacher herself, considering her caring nature, and combination of subjects. Her choice of studies was just the result of following her interests, and combining subjects that could lead to a bachelor degree. Still following her interests, she studied cultural knowledge for a year after the drama studies, and for the first time the thought of becoming a teacher emerged, and she was advised to attend the one-year teaching training course (PPU).³⁷

Ida studied PPU part-time at a program with an emphasis on drama and music. In addition to theoretical education, she had teaching practice in lower and upper secondary schools, and the culture school.³⁸ During teaching practice she discovered for herself that this was something she liked and mastered. She also found out that upper secondary was not for her, and while the dream was to work in the culture school, she ended up applying for jobs in compulsory education. Because the question of whether teacher education adequately prepares students for the occupation is a salient topic in the research, I asked Ida her opinion.

Bendik

Now, in retrospect, did the education [PPU] prepare you to be a teacher?

Ida

Uh ... no, I don't think so.

Bendik

No.

Ida

Of course, the first year we had a teacher who taught a bit about different strategies and so on, but I didn't think it was enough, because ... It was very much theory the first year.

Bendik

Yes.

Ida

I didn't feel that—well, it was still: what do we do? How do we do it? Why do we

37 Comparable to PGCE.

38 The municipal schools of culture, formerly the municipal music schools.

do it? It was this—but else, no. No, it wasn't ... Still didn't really know what the teacher occupation involved.

After a brief period as flute teacher Ida received an offer for a teaching position at a school with mixed-age classes,³⁹ at a small place further north. Happy to be getting a full-time job, Ida accepted, and she began as (generalist) teacher for the smallest children, also teaching music in other classes. Her encounter with working life was quite tough. Teaching in a primary school for the first time, she found it difficult to prepare for teaching several grades at the same time, and the curriculum presented a great challenge for a fresh, conscientious teacher. In her first music lessons, she utilized what she had learned during her first year of music studies, singing, clapping and Orff-instruments.

Bendik

Did you like it?

Ida

No, I found it, I actually thought it was utterly terrible. (laughter)

Bendik

Yes.

Ida

The first music lessons—I had no idea about how to approach it. How am I supposed to do this?

Ida felt she lacked teacher competence, and in addition she started working just after the introduction of the new curriculum, which has a strong emphasis on goal achievement.

Planning for achieving all this ... Because my colleagues were very preoccupied with the goals, to achieve the goals. And then I also became like: yes, I have to reach this goal. And when you're supposed to reach goals—the first grade must reach theirs, the second, third, fourth must reach theirs. It made you preoccupied with the goals. (...) And to assess the music, that's not too easy.

Luckily for Ida her colleagues were supportive, and she noticed improvement, especially when the management became aware of her competence and she got a more fitting teaching assignment with music in higher age groups. With experience and increased professional assurance, the school became a very good work place for Ida. She got support from management and colleagues, and music was regarded as an important subject. Her students appreciated the music lessons, and she had time to practice with them before performances, without the experience of additional work. The only problem was assessment.

39 These schools are not uncommon in rural areas, where the small number of students makes it necessary to mix age groups to obtain a reasonable class size.

Ida had not learnt to assess in PPU, and was therefore quite unprepared for this part of the teacher occupation.

I remember the first time I was grading, because they must have grades you know. I thought it was very difficult, so I had to consult other music teachers, and how are we supposed to assess this and ... to give a fair grade. So then I consulted the former music teacher, and asked how he had assessed them. No, that was a challenge. (...) Just grading, it was something I wasn't used to, to assess. And at that school we wrote this report about the subjects several times a year, which was sent home with the students. And then I had to write something about music, in all of them. And my starting point was the goals we had worked with, and the road further. And I found that difficult too, to give feedback in a report form. (...) In general, to assess music, that was challenging.

At this stage in the interview a dilemma appeared in Ida's story, between subject content and age group. While she preferred teaching music with the oldest students, she felt most at home in the lowest grades. I believe that it was here that the movement away from music started, and a turning point appeared just as Ida found her place in the school. Because at the same time as she got more music lessons in the upper grades, she was also teaching theoretical subjects in the lowest grades, and begins with continuing education.

I was very comfortable at the lower primary level. And gradually I discovered that letter learning was something I found great fun. So, while I was there, I took continuing education. I studied beginning writing and reading, because that was really exciting.

After a somewhat heavy start, Ida found her place at the mixed age-groups school, but after a few years she started longing for home, and she found a job in her home town—a job she still has. Her new position was in a primary school, as classroom teacher in the first grade. If she herself had initiated a movement towards becoming a generalist teacher because she wanted to work with the youngest children, and her interest in teaching reading and writing, there was no other alternative in the new job. As classroom teacher she only had music in her own class, even though she wanted more. At this school the status of the music subject is also quite different from at her former school. Ida describes the music subject as “non-existent,” and since all teachers must teach music in their own class, the result is often so-so.

I become a bit uneasy when I hear about YouTube in the music lessons. (...) And several [teachers] drop the music lessons. There aren't many teachers that ... I know about one more who is passionate about music. And she teaches recorder, and she ... But in the upper grades [of primary] they sit and watch YouTube, and that's supposed to be the music lesson.

Even though Ida wishes she had more music, she has now become so well-acquainted with the classroom teacher position that she would not just teach music. Moreover, it seems like she has noticed higher strain in the music lessons.

I feel that I could very well been music teacher. But I think I would have Norwegian, for example. That is, another subject on the side. That I could have both. I think so. I just visualize that, to be music teacher—now I'm not used to it anymore—it could be a bit too much. (...) But of course, it has always been a dream, to be a music teacher. After taking that education, and ending up not being it at all, that's sad. So, if I would get the offer to teach more, a larger position or something like that, I think I would have had an additional subject. That it could be music and Norwegian. That I would have something else too.

When I ask her about whether she views herself as music teacher or teacher, the answer is teacher. The cause is partly altered assignments, and, I guess, response from colleagues. Ida tells that several are surprised when they hear about her educational background, and have thought she was a generalist or pre-school teacher. This indicates that Ida is viewed as a skillful teacher, and she says herself that she has become a proficient class leader. This can probably explain the movement away from the music subject, which started at her previous workplace. While the subject content of the music subject is the most interesting, it appears as if the relationship with the smallest children is what Ida finds most rewarding. In addition, she values the variation you don't get as a subject teacher in music, and she has probably noticed that the strain of teaching music is higher than in other subjects.

As mentioned above, I was surprised to learn that Ida had not thought of becoming a teacher before close to the end of her education, as she appears to me as a caring person who enjoys imparting to her students. Otherwise, it looks like she has brought with her much of what has given her joy of doing music, because when we spoke about her view of the ideal music subject, she describes a practical subject, an alternative to all of the theory on the school, and with more lessons. *YouTube* cannot solve that. For Ida, special genre and taste of music is not the most important. It is the musical practice that matters most to her, and it is the joy of practicing music she wants for her students. It requires adequate equipment, which she mentions repeatedly, and preferably a music classroom. Ida has chosen to teach music in her own classroom, as it makes control of the students easier, and she finds the music room unsuitable. Because of the problems with the organization of the music lessons, and other problems with the management Ida considers changing work place, but she is reluctant because she enjoys being with her class.

5.2.4 Linda

Linda is a teacher in her forties settled in central Norway. At the time of the interview she is on leave from her school, and works for a special interest organization. Linda's story is characterized by several coincidences that have influenced the direction of her (working) life. The starting point, though, is music.

Considering how influential music has been for the direction of her life, Linda remembers very little from her childhood. Her clearest memory is a record player, but she finds it difficult to remember any particular records. Even though there was little music in her home, it is obvious that it was something about music that caught her interest early on, especially classical music. In third grade, she started taking piano lessons, and joined the school band. While the piano lessons were a brief affair, band music has been a companion her whole life. I am a bit uncertain why she wanted to join the school band. She tells that the social aspect was an important factor, but at the same time it seems like doing music has been a factor as well. There was no influence from home, and even though her parents supported her music, it was more despite than because of her home that she started with musical activities.

The music lessons in primary school were no cause of enthusiasm for Linda, with the exception of recorder, which she liked. Notable parts of the lessons consisted of learning notation, which was boring for Linda, who had already learned notation in the band. The music lessons were also characterized by a lot of commotion, and without me having to ask, she makes it clear that "it was not that which pushed me forward in music." Most striking for me was that she could not remember anything from the music lessons in lower secondary, and she wonders whether they even had music lessons. Altogether, it is clear that during her school years other subjects interested her more than music did, and this background played an important role when she later decided to quit teaching music.

While the music lessons were of little influence, the school band has been enormously important. During her childhood and adolescence she received positive feedback on her musical skills from the surroundings, and she was transferred from trumpet to trombone because she had a good ear. While growing up, music was a hobby, and it became a full-time activity only after upper secondary school, when she went to a folk high school. The year in folk high school must have been a huge inspiration as Linda decided to continue with music. She did not wish to audition for the conservatories, as a career as

musician seemed too narrow for her, but on the other hand, a future as music teacher started crystallizing.

Bendik

What do you think made you think about that?

Linda

I was very fond of music and communicating and so on. I really found that ok. And I think, maybe—well, if I could give other people that experience, I thought that was interesting, yes.

During the interview we repeatedly touched upon the importance of musical experiences, which she brings up as a central aspect of the music subject. Another factor for choosing music teacher education is Linda's versatility, especially her joy with trying out different instruments.

After the year in folk high school Linda embarked on a year of music at a teaching academy (actually a specialization year to be taken after the regular teacher education). But somewhere during the time in folk high school and music teacher education a feeling grew, and she noticed that music was not enough. It became too much, its value as a hobby diminished, and she wanted to broaden her horizon. The following year she started her generalist teacher education. Linda seemed a bit uncertain when I asked her to give reasons for her choice to become a teacher. It appeared to be partly a pragmatic choice, and perhaps a result of having liked the school in her childhood.

During teacher education Linda's versatility was given full play, and, in addition to music, she liked math and science in particular. While the music subject during the specialization year had been predominantly practical, in the generalist teacher education it was more theoretical, with lots of listening. The students' experience was at the center. She also held the teaching practice in high esteem, and after finishing teacher education Linda was ready to embark on her career as a teacher. Unfortunately, her encounter with the occupation was not as she had imagined.

Linda describes her first year as teacher with one word: "terrible." She experienced a classic practice shock when she was given all music lessons at a primary school in an area dominated by a religious sect. Moreover, she had to follow up an autistic student, something for which she did not feel qualified.

Bendik

[W]hat made that year so awful?

Linda

Well, when you have all music lessons in a school, you have each student for two

lessons per week. You don't even get to learn the names. And in that area it was a lot of [members of a particular religious sect]. And they can't take part in anything.

Bendik

No.

Linda

So, planning for so many music lessons, so many weeks, it killed the music teacher within me. They actually managed that in one year.

As the members of the sect viewed practically all parts of the music subject offensive it became very demanding to come up with anything to do in the lessons, and it often ended with listening. After one year at this school Linda started applying for other positions all over the country, and ended up far away from the first job. The intention was for her to work as generalist teacher at a small school, but when the head teacher of the local culture school heard about Linda, she was “headhunted” to a position divided between the culture school and a bigger school at the center of the municipality. In the culture school Linda taught several instruments, everything from guitar and organ to the brass instruments in the school band. At the school she had “proper subjects.” Linda repeats the word “proper” with air quotes. I asked her whether she felt included in both work places, as previous research shows that it can be a problem.

It worked out really well. Because it was very nice and transparent there, and the cooperation was superb, so it wasn't any problem. I really enjoyed it.

Even though Linda enjoyed this position she only stayed there for three years. This time the reason for her move was external to the work place and much happier. She married and moved to her husband's home town, where she entered a position similar to the last one; but this time it did not work out.

Linda

No, because ... well, at [the previous work place] a divided position worked, because everything was sort of compact, cooperation anyway. But when I arrived at the new place being divided was a complete different matter. There I didn't fit in anywhere. So, I had one year divided between culture school and compulsory school, and then I transferred to compulsory school.

Bendik

Yes. Why did you choose compulsory school, and not culture school?

Linda

Because I was tired of working in the evening. As simple as that.

There are two factors then, that impacted her decision: unfavorable working hours, and the feeling of not being included in a community. Unfortunately,

the transfer to the compulsory school did not turn out very well, because at the school where Linda worked, the music subject suffered from significantly low priority. It was the years she spent at this school that made Linda quit teaching music.

Bendik

And you started working full time in the compulsory school then. What kind of position did you have?

Linda

I had a—this was a primary school—and I started getting music lessons again. (...) Music was given very low priority at that school, in that municipality. So we ... I was assigned the bomb shelter, furthest away. There were a few semi-destroyed instruments there and so ... Yes, that would suffice. Furthest in, so no one hears. (...) Yes. Well, I had music for some period of time. But it was prioritized lower and lower. And it was impossible to buy instruments, but they could buy ten kayaks. (...) I had no other purpose with those lessons than come up with something to show the parents. (...) [The music subject] was given low priority, it had a very low status in that school. It was almost ridiculing of the subject. (...) Yes, or not almost, it was.

This attitude was reflected among colleagues and management, and shows that a subject's status is likely to be expressed through (lack of) material resources, which the music subject is dependent of. The moments she received recognition were in relation to performances. Linda describes working with these performances as very tiring, and as the recognition was present only during the performance, the balance between effort and reward became highly unequal. Linda also experienced that the expectations from the management were contrary to the requirements in the curriculum.

Linda

So, I was, sort of, drawn between not being able to do what was required of me, sort of.

Bendik

In the curriculum, or do you mean...

Linda

Yes. So, I didn't do my job properly if it was approved of the management, in a way.

When the expectation of her was (only) to practice songs for the end of term show, it became a cause for frustration, and in opposition to both her ideal of the music subject—a broad experiential subject, and her professionalism—a teacher who adheres to the curriculum.

After ten years of opposition Linda had finally had enough, and applied for a position at the local lower secondary school instead. When the management

at this school discovered that she had specialization in math and science from upper secondary, she received an offer to teach mathematics, and at the same time pursue continuing education in mathematics. At her new work place she also became classroom teacher.

Bendik

But did you have music there?

Linda

No!

Bendik

Had you asked for it?

Linda

I just said: No! You can assign me anything, but I am not a music teacher. I'm done. Haven't taught music after that.

Even though Linda tells that the low status of the music subject was the primary cause, several causes emerged when we talked about the difference between this job and the preceding. One factor is the pedagogical challenges. As a classroom teacher she experienced less stress, and respect for the content of the curriculum, while in the music room, class management is a significant challenge.

It's quite a lot more work in music. Because ... you have to be completely "on" the whole time to avoid the two second breaks that makes everything fall apart. (...) It takes nothing before you lose concentration in the music subject. In other subjects is easier to, sort of, round them up again.

Linda's explanation of this difference is that the students learn in primary school that music is an "anti-subject," an hour of relaxation. That made her experience an "immense difference" between being music teacher and classroom teacher. Another realization she had in the lower secondary school was the importance of belonging to a professional environment.

Bendik

How has it been? To be alone?

Linda

Well, you get no input anywhere. And as the priority for music was so low, there was no offers of courses either.

Bendik

No.

Linda

So, the only development is what you make yourself.

Bendik

No, right. But ... and how is it then to be included, in a way, in a professional environment, is I suppose you have been, in math?

Linda

Well, it's lovely. It's brilliant. And you can discuss subject matters. (...) That's really important. It's very important to be part of a professional environment. It gives you the opportunity to develop.

The last aspect we touch upon is student–teacher relations. At the lower secondary school, she experiences much better relations with the students, she has more lessons with them and gets to know them.

Bendik

How important has the relationships with the students been for the change you made?

Linda

I was sick and tired of fighting with students in music (lessons).

Bendik

Mm.

Linda

But I don't think I was a bad teacher.

Bendik

No.

Linda

So, to change to mathematics and be able to challenge the students, get a dialogue going and get to know them in a different way was fantastic.

Linda does not view herself as a music teacher anymore, and when I asked her what it would take for her to teach music again I received the following answer:

No, it will never happen. It's just never going to happen. It isn't interesting, it's an issue I'll definitely never approach at all. I'm just so fed up, and done. Yes.

The years at the primary school killed Linda's joy in teaching music. But while the music has vanished from her working life, Linda has retained it as a hobby, and has played in a band her whole life. Perhaps was it never meant to be that Linda would end up as a full-time music teacher, since she has always had other professional interests. And the concern she had in her student days about losing her hobby may first have blossomed when she became a full-time music teacher.

5.2.5 Thomas

Bendik

Which profession do you think you belong to? Are you a teacher or are you a musician, or are you a music teacher? What do you view yourself as?

Thomas

It's something I have reflected on myself. Because I have always viewed myself as a musician, and working as a teacher a necessary evil. And a jazz-musician is not one of those most fascinated by filling out evaluation forms and performing the bureaucratic tasks the teacher occupation demands today. (...) I had a chat with a very experienced colleague—union official as well, because I needed him in a few meetings with the principal. And he had a serious talk with me afterwards, and without us discussing it he said: "Thomas, you must stop viewing yourself as a musician. You are actually here now. You work full-time here, you are a teacher. (...) And then you can be musician as much as you like afterwards, but when you are here you are a teacher, and then you have to do the job required from a teacher." But deep down I view myself as a musician, who tries to appear as a teacher.

This exchange came towards the end of the interview with Thomas, and sums up much of what we talked about. While I arrived at the interview with an expectation of primarily talking about the teaching occupation, it turned out that Thomas' story comprises many other aspects which in the end has led him to where he is now, teaching at a lower secondary school in a suburban area in western Norway. Besides his teaching job he conducts a school band and a big band, and does some freelance activity as musician. Thomas told me that a colleague has described him as a "storytelling teacher," and anecdotes and short stories about everything from Swedish dance bands to football strategy, often from Thomas' many-sided career, spiced up the interview, proving this claim.

Thomas had a rich musical upbringing in a home where they listened to music a lot, especially jazz. His grandfather who played in a marching band, was an early source of inspiration. During his childhood, Thomas attended musical kindergarten and played recorder in the culture school, but it was when he joined the school band that his interest gained momentum. After having played cornet and baritone horn he wanted to change to trombone, which has remained his main instrument. A common theme through the whole interview is consciousness about music and musical quality. Thomas described the school band he was member of as very good, a band that has produced several excellent musicians. The band was also characterized by a good social environment where the oldest members cared for the youngest. Thomas' musical consciousness dates back to his early childhood, and his musical taste was largely unaffected by

influence from his peers. Among other things he enjoyed listening to concert bands, Norwegian popular music, and jazz, which distinguished him from those of the same age. Even though he was interested in music, the music lessons in compulsory school did not leave an impression, and consisted mostly of listening. Thomas expressed himself musically in the school band, and by listening to his own music.

After compulsory school Thomas joined the youth band, where he met others who were as interested in music as he was, and who encouraged him to continue with music. However, the most significant source of inspiration was not the band, but summer courses in jazz with a group of famous musicians. Thomas attended these courses for several years in his adolescence.

And it was insanely fun. They played such cool music. Back then I was completely into the rhythmic (music), it was practically no classical pieces or something like that there, it was Stevie Wonder and the whole shebang. (...) It was incredibly inspiring, and such fantastic pedagogues. So that I chose to go in for music, is something they have to take much of the blame for.

After upper secondary school Thomas attended a folk high school, a year that turned out to be wonderful. Several of his classmates later became professional musicians, and he practiced and developed, and played in several groups including big band, which he has played in more or less since those days. At the folk high school, the shift towards jazz accelerated, while marching band became increasingly “uncool,” and at the end of the year Thomas was determined to continue with music.

Immediately after the folk high school Thomas first worked as a substitute teacher for six months, before joining the marching band of the King’s Guards. The half year of teaching was a positive experience. When we spoke about what he liked about teaching Thomas emphasized the relationships with the students. He remembers one student, in particular, who reportedly was “difficult.” Thomas, on the other hand got on well with him and had no problems. Another positive aspect with this early attempt at teaching was the absence of documentation requirements, and that they spent more time with the students, compared to the present situation. Thomas had no plans to become teacher at that time, but it is tempting to suppose that this experience influenced his later decision to choose teacher education.

The year in the King’s Guards was not a positive one for Thomas. He describes the system as based on fear, with a rigid discipline: “a terrible year.” A meeting with a system in stark opposition to his own view on music and pedagogy.

Thomas has a humanistic, anti-instrumental and student-centered view of pedagogy, and he repeatedly speaks about positive experiences with the students, and how individual students blossom when they are met with respect and understanding. Despite this year, Thomas was adamant to continue with music, and applied for musicology at the university.

A common theme in Thomas' educational background is the conflict between jazz/popular music and classical music. At the time Thomas was a student, there was only one institution which offered jazz, while the rest was mainly classical. Consequently, much of Thomas' musical development in jazz has taken place outside of formal music education. Instead of finishing the musicology studies he ended up working for a year and a half: first at an old people's home, then, to his relief moving to a position as music teacher, and he played at occasions like school revues. I asked Thomas whether at this time he had considered a future as music teacher, as he had tried his hand at teaching, and had enjoyed it.

Yes, I had. Because I had ... Well, at the folk high school we traveled around the country and auditioned at various conservatories, and it actually was a good practice. To practice at auditioning, as the situation is very artificial. But I wasn't admitted anywhere, don't think I made it to the final round either. So I had an immense respect for this ... Yes, well, I though the level was incredibly high, and it wasn't even something to think of for me, trying again at the academy or a conservatory.

It seems as if Thomas is somewhat bitter about never having been stimulated to put in the effort that is needed to become a professional musician, and he asks himself where he would be today if someone had told him in his youth that he had talent. The alternative for Thomas became generalist teacher education with specialization in music.

The specialization comprised the classical disciplines of music as harmony, ear training and conducting. He also took lessons in jazz trombone and started a big band. Teaching practice was inadequate, but since Thomas had some experience he knew what awaited him. His previous experience also made pedagogy a subject of little relevance. The conflict between jazz and classical music continued in the teaching academy, especially in conductorship. While the other students conducted choir, Thomas had asked to conduct big band, as he had some experience with this ensemble. The problem arose when the teacher assessed his conducting using criteria from choir conducting. As already mentioned, Thomas is very conscious of musical quality; he takes music seriously and has substantial respect for different genre. I asked him what he learnt from the problems with the exam in conducting.

That you must respect different styles. (...) I can't conduct an obligatory piece for the Norwegian brass band championship, because I don't know the style. And, moreover, I have way too much respect to attempt it. So, it's sort of: "cobbler, stick to your last," and if you want to attempt something else then you better learn about it first. (...) As [the conducting teacher] should have done back then: learn a bit about big bands since one of your students will do the exam with a big band.

Contributing to the negative experience with conducting was the fact that he was assessed on his progression, and not his level of proficiency, resulting in a significantly lower grade than the degree of difficulty indicated. Towards the end of the interview it emerged that Thomas' consciousness about musical quality is one of the keys to explaining why he does not teach more music than he does at present.

After his teacher education Thomas studied "dissemination of music" for a year, which turned out to be music performance in disguise. At that point, Thomas had no intentions of working as teacher, he wanted to play as much as possible, and during teacher education and dissemination of music, he invested a huge effort in practicing and laying the foundation he still lives on. The following year he took a course in management, a subject area that would later come to use.

Since he had studied dissemination of music and management, and was decided on becoming a musician, I was somewhat surprised to learn that he then started to work in the compulsory school and the culture school (and some activity as musician). I asked him why.

Well, it was what turned up. I had to have something—that is, it's a perpetual discussion—do you want to live as a poor artist, or do you want to have money. Should I be on welfare, or... (...) So, as I had teacher education, and had music as a subject, it was actually an obvious choice.

But after a few years of teaching Thomas got a job at an employment office for musicians, a job behind which he admits there was ulterior motives. By working there, he built a large network of musicians and other artists, and in addition he got some of the playing assignments most in demand, by substituting for his boss, a fellow trombonist. These years seems to be the peak of his career. He played with famous artists, toured, and was continuously offered popular assignments. Together with the playing and the work at the employment office he also had a position in the culture school, of which, to be sure, he became increasingly tired. After some years with this combination Thomas was offered a position as manager of a casting studio, an offer he accepted. But after just two months he had to resign; his wife at the time had been offered a job in northern Norway, and, though he dearly wanted to stay, Thomas felt he had to join her.

So I packed the car, got in, and drove north. I wept bitterly then, when I drove from [the town], because I knew that I would never return.

Up north, Thomas got a job at a primary school, while his career as a musician came to a halt. It took him a long while to enter the musical milieu in the county, but when it first happened it resulted in lots of playing and working with culture administration. Thomas told me he had always enjoyed working administratively (unless in the school I suppose), which he benefited from there. Besides working in the primary school, and a bit in the culture school, he was at times responsible for different projects concerning culture development in the municipality, some of them with international cooperation, arranging concerts and other cultural activities. Moreover, he launched a big band and had gigs all over the county. For the second time it appears as if Thomas had worked his way into a position he enjoyed, combining pedagogical, artistic and administrative work; and for the second time he had to leave because of his wife's work situation. This time they headed for western Norway, to the town where he still lives.

Thomas' primary wish was to continue with freelancing and culture administration, but for pragmatic reasons he had to start working in the compulsory school again. The first position he received was a stroke of luck, as he became the classroom teacher for a class in lower secondary with whom he got on very well: he is still in contact with some of the students. When we spoke about this class Thomas made a statement many teachers will recognize.

I believe that if you work as a teacher for a whole life there is one class you meet, that you remember for the rest of your life, and you just ... it's a perfect match. This class was mine. And we had so much fun together.

Unfortunately, Thomas had only one year at this school due to cutbacks—even though his students had written a letter describing firing Thomas as a big mistake. After a year in a primary school he ended up at the school where he still works, teaching music, social studies and religious and ethical education.

The background for the interview was obviously to investigate why Thomas does not work more as a music teacher, and more generally, what his story has to say about the music subject in compulsory education. I find it strange, considering his background with lots of music education and experience, that Thomas just teaches music in one grade (the tenth). When I asked Thomas about this, he still described skill as an important reason.

And this is where I fall short as a music teacher, because I can't play the guitar. I can't play bass. I can some piano. Drums, you know, play a simple rock groove,

but that's it. With that, I can't teach (rock) band, because ... I'm a good trombonist, but you can't buy a set of bass trombones either. (laughter) A bit impractical. (...) And that's the reason for why I don't teach more music, because the only things I can teach is this stuff.

What Thomas mainly does in his lessons is teach music history, while the practical aspects of the subject are carried out in the ninth grade, where they have group lessons, and when they are visited by student teachers (Thomas is also practice supervisor). I found this quite peculiar, and asked Thomas whether he was not demanding too much of himself?

No, I actually don't think so. I sat down, went to the school, to the job, a Saturday a few years ago, and sat there for a few hours, trying to learn some guitar chords. And it just wasn't for me. With blood dripping so ... This changing, fast enough, chords and so on ... well, no. I managed bass—I learnt one song. I managed that, it was easier. No, I would love to have, especially in music technology, some furthering education, so I could use it in the lessons. As they get a supplement in Norwegian and mathematics, and stuff like that.

I must admit that I am not entirely convinced, and I still maintain that Thomas demands too much of himself. It is somewhat paradoxical that he displays such low confidence regarding his own skills as a music teacher, as he appears to be very confident within other domains. Perhaps is it connected to the respect he has for music, as mentioned above, and Thomas does emphasize that it takes more to be a teacher in music than in other subjects. In connection with the demands of the music subject we discussed the curriculum, which Thomas finds too ambitious, and assessment, which is the least favorite part of his job, because the students' abilities vary significantly. It appears to me that the musical activities outside of the school and outside of the curriculum are the ones most interesting for Thomas, where he benefits from his competence. He mentioned specifically the graduation shows, which have become something of an occasion at his school. In addition, there are other aspects of teaching he finds just as meaningful, because Thomas really enjoys working in the compulsory school with full classes, and does not wish to teach in the culture school. What he does not like is the bureaucratic aspect of teaching. When we touched upon Thomas' positive experiences with teaching in the compulsory school, it was always about his relationship with the students, especially with those who do not fit in completely. Contact with the students is in my view what Thomas values most highly, and it is likely to be easier when teaching more subjects than music. Moreover, it must be mentioned that Thomas has other interests besides music, and would not dream of solely teaching music.

Well, to begin with, there is not enough music lessons to fill a position, and second, I am quite interested in the society, so I love to—and history as well—I love to teach, especially, modern history, that is, from the second world war and onwards, with the cold war and so on. And today's politics for instance. I find that very interesting. I actually believe that I, if it had been a professional big band in Norway, with professional musicians engaged full time, I don't know if I would have enjoyed doing just that. And not do something else, to use my wits on other things. I think it's so immensely interesting, that is, it so much that's interesting, and not just be there.

As mentioned at the beginning of this narrative, Thomas is a storyteller, he often uses humor, and in addition to liking the content of the subjects, he also enjoys imparting it, which he thinks is the most important skill for a teacher. His ability to impart derives from his experience as a musician and conductor. Even though teaching was by no means his first choice of occupation, he seems to have reconciled himself with it now, and he has declined offers of other jobs. With an array of interests both within and outside of his job it looks as if his present position combined with the holidays teachers enjoy, where he plays at festivals and other venues around Norway, gives him a balance he can live with.

5.2.6 Finn

Finn is a teacher in his forties who works at a lower secondary school in a rural area in eastern Norway. I interviewed Finn at his work place, a quite modern school, well equipped for music teaching. Before the interview, Finn had informed his principal about the interview and the topic, which she herself found important. It tells me that this is a school that takes music seriously. During the interview, I experienced several times a feeling of identification with Finn's story, even though the interview also brought about a few surprises. In the story there is a clear thread from Finn's own experiences with music and music education in his childhood to the ideal of his own teaching. Finn's teaching music less today than he used to is caused by a combination of pragmatic choices and a wish for a closer relationship with the students.

Finn comes from a musical home. His first memories of music mostly revolve around listening to records with children's music, and his mother, who used to be a music teacher, playing piano and guitar. The music lessons in primary school are also good memories, of proficient teachers and much and varied musical activity: singing, dancing, recorder, and notation learning. The music lessons were popular among Finn and his classmates—lessons they looked

forward to. The memories from lower secondary are not as joyful. They consisted mainly of theory and music history, with little musical practice, memories that have taught Finn a lesson.

In retrospect, I see that what I have learnt from this is that overly theoretically based music teaching can become boring.

An interesting aspect of Finn's story, considering the important role of music for the direction of his life, is that in his childhood and adolescence sports, especially football, were the big interest, and at upper secondary he attended the sports program.

But I have always, because my mother has been so close to music, enjoyed singing, and conducted myself very—I have been very fond of music, been very much of a listening child, to music.

Besides a few piano lessons in his childhood, Finn did not attend any music training outside of school before he was in his mid-teens. Then he started taking singing lessons, and a while later joined a choir.

Bendik

Do you remember why you started taking singing lessons?

Finn

I guess it was ... Well, it's an inherent, genuine music interest. Kind of an invisible driving force that makes you wanna develop, wants ... loves singing, loves music.

Finn grew up in a rich cultural milieu, with great social acceptance for doing various cultural activities. He sang in a choir, took part in school revues, wrote a collection of poems, and took part in the Norwegian Youth Festival of Arts⁴⁰ with remarkable success. The year after upper secondary Finn worked at a lower secondary school as substitute teacher, and discovered that he liked to work with youth, and especially teaching music. This positive encounter with the teaching occupation is one of several reasons that led Finn to later become a music teacher in lower secondary school.

The following year he attended folk high school—a year he describes as “outstandingly great,” a year that fired up the motivation to continue with music. In addition to the social and professional aspects of the school, it was the joy of practicing music full-time for a year that made the year so splendid. Even though there was little talk about becoming a music teacher at the folk high school, it appears that the joy of doing music was strengthened while at the same time he retained his experiences of being a teacher and a student. Finn

⁴⁰ Norwegian Youth Festivals of Arts are annual festivals all over Norway for young artists between 13 and 20 years of age. <http://ukm.no/about-ukm/>

does not describe himself as one of the most ambitious at the school, but he was nevertheless adamant to continue with music.

Before continuing with music education, he carried out his compulsory civilian national service by working at a special school for youth. A large part of his service involved working with music, and Finn experienced how important music can be for youth. In addition, he took singing lessons, and applied for a conservatory. Even though the performer program enjoyed higher status, Finn deliberately applied for the pedagogical program, as he already at this stage wished to work with youth and music. The years at the conservatory hold for Finn only good memories: of classmates, skillful teachers and relevant practice. When I sent the first draft of this narrative to Finn, he responded by emphasizing the quality of his education, especially the teaching practice, which covered many age groups and activities. In the interview I asked him directly whether he had experienced any shortcomings (a salient topic in the existing research), and the only thing he could think of was that there was little information about the practical realities in the school. Otherwise, he met an intrinsic openness for doing different styles of music, and support for becoming a teacher in the compulsory school. In addition, he sang in several choirs and a vocal group, and thus maintained a performing career.

After the four years of music education at the conservatory, Finn was resolved to start teaching, but because of an unexpected offer, teaching became a part-time job. At the end of his studies he received an offer to become vocalist in a band from his hometown, which at that time was quite famous, an offer he accepted. The income from the band was not enough alone, so he also started working at a lower secondary school in an urban area in eastern Norway. As it was a quite large school, two other music teachers were employed the same year, both skilled musicians. Together, these three teachers built up the music subject at the school, which up to then had almost been in ruin, and they purchased a lot of necessary equipment. Being one of three music teachers has made Finn conscious of the importance of having colleagues to cooperate with professionally. As Finn only worked 40 percent time at the school in the beginning, I asked him whether he felt included, as a part of the teaching staff.

Yes and no. I believe I was lucky and made a few very good friends, that I still have. Together with the good friendship in the music department, with three music teachers, which made me enjoy myself there. But at the same time we felt, and I have always felt it the whole time, that we have been somewhat left out of the organization, or, well, the school completely. (...) And ... Yes, why did we feel like

that? No, but it was such a good mood among us musicians. Yes, we felt a bit left out, but we were actually content, if you know what I mean?

A possible source for the feeling of being left out is the status of the music subject. Even though the subject became highly regarded at the school, the music teachers got small hints that indicated the higher status of other subjects. To give one example: One of the music teachers, who also taught English, always gave priority to English, e.g. when there were meetings in several subject groups at the same time. But apart from a feeling of always striving to legitimize the music subject, the conditions for teaching music were good, with cooperation among the music teachers, well-equipped music facilities and group lessons, the last according to Finn, a condition for teaching music under the current curriculum.

I see that it's something not all schools budget for, dividing the classes in music, but I think it's decisive for accomplishing successful teaching according to the curriculum, which is a very practical, performative curriculum. It's a lot you're supposed to do. And to facilitate for it by dividing the classes (in music) is extremely important, not just for the students, but also for the teacher, as it gives more order and possibility for adapted education. You can approach the individual to a larger degree.

During his thirteen years at this school Finn continuously expanded his position. In addition to a slight increase in music lessons, he was also used as a substitute teacher in other subjects, and with his assignments outside of the school it gradually became too much. At his busiest, Finn worked full-time as teacher, sang in the band, conducted a choir, and had embarked on further education in Norwegian. Moreover, at home he had two children, the youngest just two years old, and a wife who worked shifts. Together, the total strain was too high and led to health problems. Finn had to reduce his amount of work, and decided to quit the band, a decision he describes as difficult, but necessary. Although the band was lucrative it was also unpredictable and involved traveling. At this time, Finn saw that his future was in the school. A career that involves safe income and security was in better harmony with a family life. This thought had emerged a bit earlier, as Finn had started his furthering education in Norwegian, which would also put an end to the struggle of getting a full-time position in the school.

Even though these pragmatic aspects are important, there were two other elements that influenced him to study Norwegian. The strain of teaching music, and the relationship with the students.

Well, it is quite demanding to teach music, since you have to be much more active than in another subject. (...) You must attempt to carry them along with

you in a totally different way. Almost doing psychological work. (...) You have to win their favor. How are you supposed to get fifteen, twenty fifteen-year-olds to dance or sing? So, it takes some pedagogical insight. (...) Whereas in Norwegian they mostly sit behind their desks—there are very many exciting things you can do there too, but the Norwegian subject is more traditional, in a classroom. (...) And it gives a comfortable break. (...) Also, considering that one is getting older, and doesn't have the same energy as in the twenties, thirties. I am... beginning to ascend the forties. So... (...) But to work full-time in the school as music teacher, I think that can be very tiring.

Finn regularly described teaching theoretical subjects as “breaks” from music teaching. His choice of words shows both the strain of teaching music, and, importantly, that he still views teaching music as his main business, and he still views himself primarily as a music teacher. With a wider range of subjects he also gets more variation, another positive aspect. I asked Finn whether he noticed any difference between students in music opposed to other subjects. His answer surprised me, because I expected to hear about the pedagogical challenges and problems with discipline.

I feel that they are more open-minded and ready for creativity and craziness to a much higher degree than in the Norwegian lessons. (...) Yes. No, I quite simply feel that they are more open in the music lessons. It's easier to draw something from them, and then you have these pleasant surprises when a student who is weak theoretically, at a sudden have a musical nerve, which you perhaps hadn't believed. (...) And it's always delightful to experience.

As the interview went along it became more and more apparent that Finn is a teacher who holds his rapport with the students in high esteem, and perhaps wants to give the students some of the positive experiences with music he himself has had. This was reflected when we spoke of his reasons for wanting to become a classroom teacher.

I believe that... I was a music teacher for many years, which implied that I had a relation with very very many students. (...) And I believe that in the long run it can wear you down a bit, it takes its toll. And I saw that those who were classroom teachers, they often had the same sixty students, the whole week. There were years when I had, during a week, more than two hundred students. (...) And it comes at a price, it's tiring. (...) So, I missed that improved connection with the students, and to just have one group of students to relate to, rather than so many that you know okay, but not properly. And we have all that about prestige and being part of the community. When you are a music teacher—and can't be a classroom teacher—you are sort of excluded. You are an outsider, but if you're a classroom teacher you sort of come in from the cold. So, yes, I wanted to be a classroom teacher. And you get a wage increase, which in itself, by no means is in proportion with the extra burden, far from it.

This paragraph sums up many of the above-mentioned factors. It is pragmatic choices, as increased salary, the wish to feel included, and a wish for better connection with the students. At the same time, Finn sees, in retrospect, that it was quite comfortable to be an outsider at the school, with a career in addition to teaching, without the responsibility of being classroom teacher. It nevertheless appears as if the joy of getting to know the students better and spend more time with them compensate for these aspects.

After thirteen years at the school Finn changed to the job he holds at present. While the former school was large and urban, the present is small and rural. At the new school, he entered a position quite similar to the one he left, as classroom teacher with music and Norwegian. Finn has also for several years taught an elective subject, "production for hall and stage." I learned during the interview that Finn has had the responsibility for putting on shows for many years, with success. I understood that this is something Finn is really excited about, maybe because it gives the students the opportunity to express something there is no room for elsewhere in the school. His current work place is a school that dedicates itself to culture, making it a pleasurable place for a music teacher. But as it is a small school, cooperation about the music subject can be difficult to achieve. Finn repeatedly mentions the importance of having a colleague to interact with, and has wished for another music teacher, even though he realizes that it's difficult to find qualified music teachers. Before Finn started working at the new school, another music teacher had taught all music lessons alone, for several decades, a situation Finn has no wish for. At the time of the interview the other teacher was about to retire, and the intention was that Finn should take on the music teaching, but at the same time, a fellow music teacher is high on the wish list.

As mentioned at the beginning, Finn's choice to teach less music is the result of several factors. The high strain of teaching music, pragmatic choices (as the possibility of obtaining a full position), and a wish for more time with the students. When towards the end of the interview we talked about how to improve the music subject, Finn emphasized that an increase in music lessons could make him teach more music. Moreover, he wishes that group lessons were obligatory. Combined, it would give the teachers more time with the individual students, and more order, resulting in reduced strain. Finn is politically conscious, and I sense some skepticism about the recent changes to the school system, with an increased focus on core subjects and assessment. Finn is a typical student-centered teacher, who wants to give the students positive

experiences with music, and it is best done when you have chance to establish a good rapport with them.

5.2.7 Lena

Lena's story is in many ways a story about how a career evolves through interaction with people around us. I met Lena at her work place, a lower secondary school in an urban area in eastern Norway, where she has worked for five-six years. Lena is quite diligent, she teaches seven classes in music, is classroom teaching Religious and Ethical Education and social studies, and is a member of the school's planning board; she also supervises student teachers. In addition, she is also taking courses in school management. It is no doubt that Lena is a resourceful teacher, thus it is interesting that teaching music full time became too much for her.

Lena comes from a musical home, and her father teaches in music education at a university. From her childhood she has fond memories of listening to records and piano playing in the home, and at the age of seven she joined a choir, an activity she has continued until recently. She started piano lessons at about the same age.

When we spoke about memories from the music lessons in her childhood it surprised me that she could hardly remember anything from primary school. She was a bit surprised herself, and could only recollect that they changed teacher, and got one that had some competence and taught them the recorder. From lower secondary, on the other hand, she remembers a lot. The music teacher was skillful, and in the music lessons they played guitar and did other practical activities. Among her most positive memories is music as an elective subject. She had a teacher who had a liking for Lena, and she even accompanied him at the graduation ceremony. The only negative aspect she brings up is assessment. While the music subject was predominantly practical, the grades were given on the basis of a theoretical test, which resulted in students with a range of practical skills receiving the same grade.

I think I liked the music lessons (...) but I remember yet that I was a bit disappointed that it, it wasn't set up so that the teacher had the opportunity to see how much I knew in music. (...) He never sort of, he never heard me sing for instance. I was used to singing in a choir, and I remember I even sang some solo. And I remember thinking that: My music teacher doesn't know I can sing.

This has apparently made its mark, as during the interview, Lena repeatedly spoke about the importance of good and fair assessment.

During her years at upper secondary school there continued to be a lot of musical activity in Lena's life. She conducted a choir, played piano, and started taking singing lessons, which became her main instrument. After upper secondary she attended a folk high school specializing in music, and for the first time was in a milieu where the interest in music matched her own.

It was then first I felt that now I'm home, sort of, now I have found my people. It was people that were interested in just the same music as me and they understood where I came from, and had the same interest for music that I had. Because that was something I hadn't really felt neither at lower secondary or upper secondary. I was very alone, sort of, with my interests.

At this stage, Lena's story takes a twist. Because even though she says that the folk high school was like coming home, the year after she left she began studying law. Lena's road towards the teaching occupation is by no means streamlined, because after a short while she realized that law was not for her, so she took the preliminary examinations (for the university) and studied sociology, and later, Religious and Ethical Education. After a while she was admitted to the musicology department, as music was still on her mind, and only then, after she had been studying musicology for a while, did the thought of being a teacher occur to her. One reason for this is that by conducting choirs and doing musical activities with children in a hospital, she got positive, rewarding experiences from instructing and working with children and music.

After finishing her BA she got a position as substitute teacher at a primary school, where she taught several subjects, including music, in the fifth grade. It is during this assignment that the thought of becoming a teacher really started to blossom, because her colleagues gave her lots of positive feedback and encouraged her to be a teacher, and she realized it was something she handled well, even with troublesome classes. When I asked her what she liked and found rewarding by teaching she gave a somewhat hesitant answer.

I thought that ... (break) Yes, what did I think for myself? I believe that ... (6 sec break) It's not too easy to answer, what I thought for myself. It's a bit difficult to tell what made it exciting, or rewarding, because that was my experience anyhow. But it's something about the interaction with the students, as I recall, that I, sort of, thought they were cool and funny, and stuff like that.

The influence of her colleagues and her own positive experience left their mark, because after spending half a year as substitute teacher she embarked on her teacher qualification (PPU, see footnote above) with a specialization in music.

She recalls this year with some ambivalence, as it left her with a toolbox for her to use as teacher, and some valuable professional experience, but at the same time she describes the year as “chaos.” The course was poorly administered, and although she had several positive experiences, she felt the course was very unrealistic, especially the teaching practice. Her time as substitute teacher had made her aware of a reality that differed significantly from the impression she was given during PPU. As a regular teacher, one must plan for several lessons a day, and not least, assess the students, an aspect that was absent in PPU. Neither playground duty nor the responsibilities of a classroom teacher were mentioned to any great extent, and her final assessment from PPU did not actually say anything about her abilities in the classroom. Despite this somewhat unsatisfactory teacher education, Lena was nevertheless determined to become a teacher.

Back then I was completely sure. I knew then, and it was quite, sort of, fixed. I'm suited for this. (laughter) And I also remember that it was, among us in the same class, that it was kind of: "Lena is the typical teacher." (laughter) "Lena is the one that will end up in the school."

Again, we see that Lena's surroundings seem to influence her choices, but also that those around her notice some qualities that make her especially apt to be a teacher. I conducted the interview with Lena at her school, and during my short visit I witnessed several times how she relates to the students in a warm and caring manner. Perhaps is it this ability that people around her have sensed—how she seems to pass on a feeling of security to her students. Another interesting aspect is that Lena did not have a clear idea of becoming a teacher before she was well into her education, while those around her saw her talent immediately.

After PPU, Lena applied for several positions and finally got a job as full-time music teacher at a combined primary and lower secondary school near her present work place. But just before the start of the school year she was suddenly asked whether she could be classroom teacher, with social studies in her own class, in addition to music. Happy to be offered a permanent position, she accepted and experienced a textbook practice shock.

Lena

And I remember it was utterly terrible. (laughter)

Bendik

Yes. (laughter)

Lena

It was so difficult. It was very noisy, the music classroom was poorly equipped, no working sound system, no internet access, no—yes, it was very ... a few damaged guitars, and so on. So, it was an extreme transition, shocking in every possible way. And [I had] never been classroom teacher, had no idea about which responsibilities it involved.

With full classes in music, distant management, a feeling of being left to herself, and working with a colleague who was just as new, it affected her health and she ended up with a sick note. Luckily for Lena, the safety representative at her school took care of her, and got her timetable sorted out. Lena told that she “got rid of all music lessons in primary school” (a choice of words that tells a lot about these music lessons), and got group lessons in lower secondary. Even though having music in full classes was difficult she experienced positive moments with students blossoming and mastering.

In the start of her career she felt that she lacked two important skills: class management and assessment.

Class management was very difficult. Being able to establish rapport and a relationship of trust with all students. Because one has very many students. (...) I can't say if I handled all situations ... Well, I know today that I didn't handle all situations properly, because you are easily fazed. You know? It doesn't happen today, in the same way. That was very challenging. I felt I had fairly good control over the didactic plans and so on. I spent an awful lot of time on assessment. I didn't have much experience—I hadn't actually assessed anything in PPU. So, I spent a lot of time on that. Quite simply. How to assess students. (...) Because when you are so unexperienced, thing takes extremely long time, and you are so enormously afraid of doing anything wrong.

It is interesting to notice how important the relationship with the students is for class management; Lena almost makes them equivalent. And with her inexperience, having students for just a short period of time per week made the chance of achieving this small. Moreover, the setting for music teaching increased the challenges, as this setting the regular constraints in the school are loosened, and the students must do activities they rarely (if ever) do, such as singing. Lena's continual emphasis on assessment and referral to the importance of achieving the goals in the curriculum also shows that she is conscious of, and influenced by, the changes the Norwegian school system has seen the last decade(s).

Because of changes in the local school structure Lena was transferred, after a while, to a newly built lower secondary school nearby, with group lessons in music and a well-equipped music classroom. Despite the improved working

conditions, it did not turn out to be much easier for Lena to be a music teacher. A significant challenge at the former school was being the only music teacher. Lena had missed having someone to cooperate with, especially since she felt she lacked important pedagogical skills. When she changed school she gained a music teacher colleague, but the cooperation has proved difficult. As mentioned above, Lena is a very professional and responsible teacher, and the other music teacher takes quite substantial liberties in his teaching, something Lena finds difficult. The lack in professionalism in the other music teacher is manifested in lack of planning and in assessment practices Lena cannot answer for, something she finds deeply problematic. The result is that Lena feels just as isolated in her music teaching now as she did before, as cooperation is impossible. The problems with cooperation have culminated in the annual school musical, for which Lena has withdrawn completely after attempting to cooperate for several years. Her colleague's lack of communication skills has given her a significant amount of extra work, especially in terms of organization and administration. All in all, it seems that for Lena, the opportunity for professional cooperation is at the heart of the allure of teaching other subjects.

I sorely miss to—because in other subjects, you know, we work in teams, and concerning observation of students too, we work in teams all the time, and I think it's really enjoyable, and it suits me well. Working with development, planning and—lots of good ideas emerge, and we can learn of each other and use each other's lesson plans. Yes, and it has turned the music subject into a headache.

Lena has also experienced the low status of the music subject, which at the previous school appeared in the form of a lack of group lessons and poorly equipped music classroom. At her present workplace these aspects are improved, but she nevertheless has a feeling that the school management tolerates practices that would never be allowed in other subjects, such as her colleague's negligence towards curriculum, learning objectives and assessment. While the management values performances (like the musical), the everyday music teaching is unimportant.

Lena

And that's what makes me not wanna be a music teacher here anymore. As, it is fun doing musical activities with the students. And occasionally I catch myself enjoying myself, sort of. But ... Yes, I miss that ... It will never happen that music becomes as important as Norwegian and math. Basic skills.

Bendik

There's not much that indicates so, anyhow.

Lena

Yes. And it's nothing ... I want to, sort of, be part of something we go in for, with

many people involved, where we push something forward together. (...) That's what's fun with the school. School development.

It is quite clear how Lena's professionalism as a teacher is challenged by teaching music in ways that are in opposition to her principles, and it has made her question her future. At the time of the interview Lena was pondering the future course of her career. She is considering finding a school where the music subject has a stronger position, or going into school management. Towards the end of the interview I asked her whether she still views herself as a music teacher.

No. Not at all. It's ... I feel that I come into my own, or that I ... (5 sec break) My role at this school is ... I feel that the others view me in another way, and I perceive myself in another way as well. The music lessons are almost on autopilot now, it's how I experience them. To be a team leader and practice supervisor and—that's what's fun. (laughter) (...) And just talking about the school, and talking about the subjects with others—that's fantastic. (...) Yes. Talking about the students. (laughter) That's very exciting.

Lena is a structured person and obviously has talent for leadership and administration, which may explain why she began studying law, and this notion has been strengthened through feedback from her colleagues.

It's quite common to get some roles—or you take, or get, it's difficult to say how it comes to be—but you have a role in a staff. And I think that I, in a way, have the same role here, as... I have a tendency to get that role. (...) A person who has overview, and takes responsibility and has things sorted out, and, very much... Yes, has—has control and overview. Because here at work it's very much like: "We can ask Lena because she knows." (laughter) (...) So that's sort of the role I have here. And of course it's... Well, you get this feedback all the time, this feedback from colleagues. (...) These dribs and drabs all the time, that turns you into the person you are at work, plain and simple. (...) Someone else has planted the idea about leadership [training] in my mind. (...) That was how it started: with some colleagues telling me... That you are suited to this, and should do so and so. And yes, then the idea ripens. Yes, that's how it will be.

Lena's movement away from the music subject is a result of several factors, including the problematic aspects of teaching music, class management, and status. Even though Lena is a pragmatic teacher who makes the best out of the situations one should not conceal that music teaching is reliant on good conditions, such as group lessons and facilities and equipment. Yet it seems that Lena's choice is also affected by the positive aspects of being a classroom teacher and teaching theoretical subjects: improved relationship with the students, professional cooperation, and feeling of being part of something "important." Even though Lena unquestionably thinks that music is an important

subject, it is difficult to find support for this in a milieu that values other skills and other knowledge.

5.3 Discussion

In the interviews, there are examples of how I both identify myself with the informants' stories, and was surprised of their answers to some of my questions. But on a more profound level, speaking with these teachers has made me question why I chose to become a teacher, and later chose to reduce my music teaching to become a classroom teacher. Although studying music was the direct cause for my choice to become a music teacher, as I saw few other options at the time, did I have a wish to work with children and youth that was always there? I believe I must answer yes to that. After finishing my master's degree, I worked in a kindergarten for a year, and it was a rewarding year, which sparked my interest in working with young people. And I believe the most rewarding aspect was the caring side of it, and the opportunity to have a positive influence on their lives. Although there were severe shortcomings to my year of teacher training, this year further enhanced my enthusiasm for becoming a teacher, where I could combine my interest for the subject and the caring side. My entry into the teaching profession was challenging on some levels, but I cannot say I experienced a practice shock. I still remember my first day as a teacher, as one of seven new employees at that school. As a music teacher, I must admit that I did not feel particularly included, and although I wanted to be a music teacher it was difficult to suddenly view myself as a teacher. I was lucky to have a good mentor, but it relied more on the fact that the music subject was something outside of the primary activities in the school. A feeling of not being a proper teacher was always there, a position I wanted to maintain in the beginning, as I primarily identified myself with the subject.

To elucidate some important features of the narratives I end this chapter with a discussion. I begin with connecting the narratives to the previous research that was presented in Chapter 2, before continuing with the two other thematic clusters, career trajectories and Kelchtermans' personal interpretative framework. The latter will be included within the frame of the former. This discussion serves primarily as a reflection of the content of the narratives, while a more thorough discussion of the dissertation as a whole, in connection to the purpose, aim and research question, will follow in Chapter 7.

5.3.1 Previous research

Earlier, I posed the term “intra-migration” to denote the transition between various tasks within the school. This term describes the horizontal career development of my informants, and in addition we see migration between different schools taking place. In some instances these are intertwined, as for example in the case of Anne, who changed work place to change work assignments. In the following paragraphs I will compare the narratives to the previous research, both to describe where my investigation confirms previous research, but also to distinguish the factors that are to a lesser degree previously described.

In Chapter 2 I claimed that there are essentially two reasons for leaving an occupation: job dissatisfaction and the prospect of a better job elsewhere. A similar, yet more nuanced parallel was introduced in a seminal paper on migration where Lee (1966) divided the factors that cause migration into two main groups, push factors and pull factors. While both push and pull factors can be found both at the origin and at the destination, push factors appear mostly at the origin and pull factors at the destination. A significant difference between the factors of the origin and the destination, is that one has a much better understanding of the origin than the destination, and thus the choice to migrate can be quite irrational. Lee’s theory of migration can function as an allegory for the factors found in my investigation. There are factors that push the teachers out of the music subject, and there are factors that pull them to other tasks, and vice versa.

Preparation

The informants in this study come from an array of educational backgrounds. They have studied at different institutions at different periods of time, some at teacher education facilities, other at more performance oriented institutions. Although the informants are quite content with their education, at least parts of it, most of them endured some degree of practice shock in the beginning of their career (practice shock can also occur when changing work place). The education can hardly be blamed for some of the practice shocks, such as Linda’s encounter with a very conservative religious environment, or the schedule Lena was first given, but a few deficiencies emerges from the narratives.

A significant topic in the previous research on generalist music teachers was the lack of confidence for teaching music, especially because of musical skills. My informants who mostly have about a year of formal music education seem

not to suffer from this. Interestingly, it is Thomas, perhaps the most capable musician of them who exhibits the lowest amount of confidence for teaching music. The predominant deficiency in preparation mentioned by the informants deals with the pedagogical aspects of teaching: how to be a teacher. Lena and Ida struggled with planning and assessment, and almost all of them had some problems with class management and student discipline. Previous research shows that mentoring can facilitate the transition between teacher education and the school, something none of my informants received in any organized form. As mentioned in Chapter 2, previous experience with music is an important predictor for confidence, and all of my informants come from a musical background with years of playing and being in a musical milieu. In many ways, it was music that brought them into the profession, and in general they are confident about their music skills. Taking their background into consideration, I will nevertheless claim, in accordance with several of the informants, that music is among the more difficult subjects to teach, as it demands an array of practical skills combined with other challenges I will return to later, especially class management.

Working conditions

A recurring theme in the interviews is the lack of support for the music subject from colleagues and leadership. The lack of support is often subtle as in Finn's experience with a fellow music teacher who always had to choose meetings with the English teachers before music meetings, and the lack of funding for equipment Linda experienced. Low salary is of little or no concern. When Finn brought it up it was just to give voice to his frustration of receiving higher salary for a lesson of substitute teaching in Norwegian with no qualifications, than per lesson in music.

The primary cause for the lack of support some of my informants experienced during their career was the status of the music subject. Linda is the only one who speaks about an outright ridiculing of the music subject; most of the indications of the status are more subtle. The notion of the music subject as a subject "somebody must take"—a subject taught because it is required—is mentioned by several. Apparently, the status of music has diminished in light of the increased emphasis on core subjects and basic skills the Norwegian school system has seen the last decade, a topic that will be discussed further in the next chapter. The emphasis on the core subjects is also felt in the form of prioritization of these subjects over music when grants for furthering education are

distributed. Both Thomas and Ellen expressed concern over not being offered further education in music. School leadership also seem to accept practices that are harmful to the subject and unheard of in other subjects, such as Lena's colleague whose assessment practice that in Lena's view was harmful to the students, and lack of proper planning according to the curriculum. Ida's concern over the extent of "YouTube-teaching" going on apparently with the leadership's approval corresponds with reports in the media (Flydal, 2015; Korsvold, 2014a, 2015) and it is unlikely that such practices would go unnoticed in core subjects.

On the other hand, the narratives also tell a story about the music subject having quite high status in some schools. Ida's experience at her first work place was positive, musically speaking, with strong support for the music subject from both colleagues and leadership. Finn, too, works at a school where the music subject enjoys high status. Both Finn and Ida experienced high status working at small schools, and perhaps a small transparent environment makes it more difficult to devalue the music subject. In several of the stories the status of the music subject is linked to performances, a component of the subject that is visible to others. For Ellen, Finn, and Thomas the performances serve as a way of promoting the music subject, but they also find great joy in organizing the performances. Finn has even made it a hallmark of his proficiency as music teacher. On the other hand, the problem arises when the status is *exclusively* linked to the performances, as Lena and Linda experienced. As soon as the curtain fell, the music subject was reduced to its status of "something one has to do."

In the literature review, professional isolation emerged as an important cause for dissatisfaction. In the interviews, this notion was strongly expressed by Finn and Lena. Finn has had the advantage of working together with other skillful music teachers, and he wishes to maintain professional cooperation in his new workplace. Lena has had the same positive experience of working together in teams, but in other subjects than music, and her feeling of being isolated as music teacher is one of the most significant causes for her wish to leave the music subject. Lena was indeed not the only music teacher at her school, but when the cooperation did not work out, it turned out to be a burden. As Kelchtermans (2017) mentions, relations in the school can operate as *double-edged swords*. Linda, who also had to battle for the status of the music subject, was deeply affected by isolation at one of her workplaces. Why she was included in both the culture school and the primary school at one place and not the other is difficult to answer, but it nevertheless raises an important

question, as the musicians' union in Norway advocates this kind of cooperation (Musikernes fellesorganisasjon, 2017; Odland, 2016).⁴¹

The nature of the music subject seems to pose some challenges concerning classroom management and discipline. Musical activities are among the most rewarding aspects of teaching music, but at the same time they require the full attention of the teacher to keep control of the group. Even as content, committed, and skillful a teacher as Finn describes teaching theoretical subjects as a "break" from the music lessons. Anne ended up doing most of the music teaching on computers, because organizing the subject as a theoretical subject made it achievable for her, without being worn out.

Considering the above-mentioned challenge of keeping control of the students, it comes as no surprise that the number of students is a major concern for my informants. Being a full-time music teacher involves having a huge number of students per week, which makes it difficult to establish rapport with them, and in addition, teaching music in a full class functions as an impediment to proper instruction. Especially when playing instruments or band, having a smaller group is almost a fundamental requirement for adequate instruction. (This issue will be discussed further below.)

As mentioned above, performances are meaningful activities for both students and music teachers, and are important for raising the status of the music subject, but organizing performances also puts extra strain on the music teachers. In some schools, there is a tacit expectation that the music teacher will arrange end-of-term shows and the like, as Linda experienced. Anne said that she could hardly understand how she managed to organize the performances she undertook the first years, and for Lena, the problems with cooperation have made her withdraw completely from the school musical, as the strain turned out to be too much.

A factor every informant mention is assessment, especially grading. A problem both Anne and I have experienced is how to distinguish the students when you have many classes. We both sat with class photos to be sure the right student got his/her grade. Moreover, grading activities is difficult as it is problematic to define criteria that corresponds with goal attainment, and identify them in an assessment setting. Finally, for some, grading is opposed to the very nature of music, and the ideal one has for the subject. The changes to the schools and

41 I am interviewed in Odland's article.

the curriculum during the last decade seem to have enhanced these difficulties, and will be discussed later in the dissertation.

The need for proper equipment and facilities is a factor that applies to all art subjects. As mentioned above, lack of funding for equipment is an indicator of the status of the subject, but more importantly, the lack of a well-equipped music classroom makes teaching music difficult, and one has to choose the activities that are possible.

Burnout is a strong predictor of teacher attrition, and as mentioned in the literature review, music teachers may be more prone to burnout than other teachers, as they often are committed and dedicated. The narratives show that the joy of making music brought the informants into teacher education, and thus it is likely that they carried with them an emotional connection to the subject that not all teachers have. It is well beyond the scope of this dissertation to identify indications of burnout, and certainly beyond my capabilities, but the factors rehearsed above can lead to burnout, and the amount of exhaustion described in some of the narratives points to the likeliness of such a result. I will nevertheless refrain from making any claims about burnout.

The factors above can be categorized as push factors, aspects of being a music teacher that put strain on the teachers. But some of these also have a pull component, such as organizing performances, which is both exciting and exhausting for the teachers, and activities in the music lessons, which call for the full attention of the teacher to avoid things getting out of hand, but also offer the opportunity to watch students enjoy the activities, which is one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching music. A prominent example is Anne's ambivalence towards using ICT in the music subject: it did make it tolerable, but at the same time, important aspects of the subject were lost.

The point of this short review is primarily to show that the factors uncovered in the previous research are relevant also in a Norwegian context. Not all of them apply to all of my informants, and the low number of informants makes any generalization of the factors impossible. What is clear is that music can indeed be a difficult subject to teach. It demands a broad composition of subject knowledge and skills, in addition to the pedagogical skills every teacher must have. The informants who made a deliberate reduction in music lessons experienced a manageable work life, and the reasons are identifiable and clearly related to the subject itself. Their choice to reduce/leave music teaching is a result of push and pull factors working at the same time. Some of the pull

factors are indeed the opposite of the push factors, such as smaller workload and higher status, but in addition, aspects connected to what makes teaching meaningful emerged, and these will be further investigated in the rest of this chapter. I argue that the most important of these is the wish for a stronger relationship with the students. Some of my informants, such as Ida and Finn, enjoy teaching music, and would gladly teach more music lessons, if they could spend more time with their students.

5.3.2 Career trajectories

Motivation to become a teacher

A common trait among the informants is that an important motivation for becoming teachers is music itself. In addition to the intriguing presence of school band and folk high school in many of the narratives, another commonality is that they all have a background of finding joy in musical activities. Although the enjoyment was at first mostly social, it developed into taking joy in making music as well. This joy in music is what brought many of the informants to teacher education. Approaching teacher education with a subject-related motivation differs from the general picture (Bergem et al., 1997), but among certain groups of teachers it is not uncommon (Brandmo & Nesje, 2017). The challenge of having a subject-driven motivation is the discrepancy one experiences when entering the school, as these strong notions about music are not necessarily reflected in the environment, as Bouij (1998a) and Bladh (2002) have described. Having an emotional connection with the subject, as, with their background in musical activities, my informants did, makes them vulnerable when encountering an environment where the music subject is ascribed a different, lower value. The result is then that they must “fight” for their subject.

Although the interest in music may appear to be the most important motivational factor, it is not the only one. Extrinsic motivation, which I have called pragmatic motivation in some narratives, played an important role for some of my informants. The interest in working with children/youth is the most common of these, and its importance is indeed evident in the interviews. As I will describe below, this motivation seems to emerge during their career, and an important question is whether this is a result of being socialized into the school culture—a consequence of spending time in the occupation, or a motivational force always present in the informants.

The first years

When my informants experienced a practice shock it was usually because of a feeling of being overwhelmed and unprepared for the daily working life of a teacher. A closer look at the causes of the practice shock, shows a few recurring topics, such as problems with class management/student discipline, planning, and assessment. The music teaching itself is of less concern, even though class management and assessment may pose a bigger challenge in music than in theoretical subjects: the former because the students are outside of their normal classroom environment, and the latter because it is difficult to create clear criteria for assessment. Developing strategies for coping with these challenges is thus a significant part of the first years.

But at the same time, not all of the informants experienced a practice shock. Finn and Thomas both experienced few difficulties, and when Ellen found a school that suited her—after a few years of other jobs—she found that she was destined to be a teacher. In his study of Swiss teachers, Huberman found that “those experiencing the fewest initial difficulties were, predictably, teachers having done a lot of substituting, sibling in large families, scout leaders, camp counselors, and ‘tourists’—mostly men—who had entered the profession accidentally, just to have a look” (Huberman, 1989, p. 44). Thomas and Finn had extensive experiences with teaching before being full-time teachers, and Ellen turned towards teaching only after having tried her hand at other pedagogical work with children. Lena had been a substitute teacher and choir conductor before her first teaching assignment after finishing her education, but nevertheless experienced a practice shock, so when the working conditions are too challenging, no previous experience can fully prepare the novice teacher.

In addition to entering a profession, with tasks to perform, the teachers also enter an organization. Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) made the micro-politics of socialization in the school a topic of their investigation. They view teacher socialization not as “passively sliding into an existing context, but rather as an interpretative and interactive process between the new teacher and the context” (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 106). This entails that not only will the teacher be influenced by the context, but the teacher can affect the context as well. What is at risk is the teachers’ professionalism and identity as a “proper” teacher, and the struggle for obtaining this is largely through micro-political actions. “*Micro-political action* we thus understand as *those actions that aim at establishing, safeguarding or restoring the desired working conditions*” (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 108, italics in original). They group the teachers’

professional interests in five groups: self-interest, material interests, organizational interests, cultural-ideological interests, and social professional interests. Self, material and cultural-ideological interests are the most relevant for the present dissertation. Self-interests concern the teacher's professional identity and self-esteem. A common result of this socialization process in the interviews is the notion of low status and little support. One way my informants furthered the music subject was by doing time-consuming extra-curricular work, such as organizing performances and end-of-term shows. Though exhausting, these brought recognition, if only for a short time. For some of my informants, these efforts are a thing of the past, as they no longer teach music, but for Finn, organizing performances has been an initiative on his behalf, and he has made it a hallmark of his proficiency as a teacher. When changing work place, his ability in organizing these shows were a reason for receiving the position.

Material interests are obviously a great concern for music teachers, as the music subject relies heavily on sufficient equipment. Linda believed that the lack of funding for equipment was a direct consequence of the culture at the school, where music was hardly regarded as a proper subject. This belief was strengthened when the school found the means to buy a set of kayaks, while Linda did not receive funding for equipment necessary for her to perform her job. She experienced this as a threat to her professionalism, and a ridiculing of the music subject. Ellen had the opposite experience in her school, where there is strong support for the music subject. Funding for buying equipment is thus a significant hallmark of the support for music at the schools.

There is thus a clear connection between the material interests and the cultural-ideological interests of music teachers, as the availability of teaching material is a result of the culture at the school. According to Kelchtermans and Ballet, "Cultural-ideological interests concern the more or less explicit norms, values and ideals that get acknowledged in the school as legitimate and binding elements of the school culture" (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002, p. 114). In this regard, perceiving the music subject as a "non-existing" subject is a grim expression of the norms and values for the music teacher. The unease with the norms and values at the school, especially concerning the music subject, has led Ida and Lena to reassess their future, and at the time of the interview both were considering changing work place. Another way of dealing with the discrepancy between one's own values and those of the work place is to generally accept them. Anne described how, with increased seniority, she had greater influence over her tasks, and could change her assignment towards less music teaching.

Although she maintains the value of the music subject, she was glad to leave it to others. Similar traits of acceptance of negative attitudes towards the music subject are seen elsewhere in the empirical material in the form of comparing the music subject to “proper” subjects, and “music teaching” to “teaching,” and through emotive expressions as “getting rid of the music” and being “sick and tired” of music. A third solution is the one sought by Finn, Thomas, and Ellen, who have all worked to raise the status of the music subject within the school, and partly succeeded. They have all gained status through the school performances mentioned above, and with this status along with being confident professionals cooperating with other (music) teachers, they have, over time, influenced the schools. The best example is perhaps Finn: at his former school he worked with colleagues to build up the music subject to a high status, and at his present work place the music subject has a high status because of the efforts of the previous music teacher who over decades had organized an array of musical activities and turned them into important traditions at the school. Nevertheless, all of these three teachers still admit that the music subject will never have the status of the core subjects.

Yet another instance of conflicts regarding teacher socialization that needs to be mentioned is the conflicting identities of the teacher and musician. Although not particularly relevant for the present dissertation, the ubiquity of the topic in the literature calls for a comment. As described in Chapter 2, the main source of the identity conflict is the socialization that takes place during music teacher education, where the musician identity has significantly higher status than that of the teacher. Of my informants, Ellen experienced the discrepancy most strongly during her education, while Thomas still largely defines himself as a musician who “tries to appear as a teacher”. The struggle arises when music teachers with a strong identity as musicians are socialized into the school, and meet an environment where the values are the opposite of those during teacher education, with strong support for the teacher role, and little support for the musician role. It has obvious consequences for the teacher’s self-interests and cultural-ideological interests, and can function as a way of emphasizing the differences between a subject-oriented music teacher and a school culture that values other aspects. As mentioned above, socialization is a mutual interpretative process, but it is obviously more difficult for the music teacher, often working alone, to influence the context, than the opposite.

In the important work of Bouij (1998a, 1998b) on Swedish music teachers (see Chapter 2), role-identity is an important analytical concept. From his

interviews four role-identities emerged: all-round musician, pupil-centered teacher, performer, and content-centered teacher. The two first reflect a broad musical comprehensiveness, the latter a narrow one. What Bouij found was that change between these positions was rare, but change from an identity as musician towards teacher was quite common. The informants of the present dissertation all emphasize the need for a broad musical comprehensiveness, and at the same time they are pupil-centered. This corresponds with being content with teaching, as my informants are, if not necessarily with teaching music.

Bouij further connects broad and narrow musical comprehensiveness to different views on teaching and culture. Broad comprehensiveness is connected to an “anthropologic social” ideal, and narrow comprehensiveness to an “aesthetic normative” ideal (Bouij, 1998b, p. 28). The former ideal advocates an approach to music teaching that emphasizes active participation, collectivity, and focus on the pedagogical aspects, while the latter, specialized approach emphasizes tradition, professionalism, and subject-centeredness. In the narratives, both of these are present, as evidenced by Thomas’s view of musical quality and Ida’s emphasis on the importance of musical activities, but in most of the cases the informants’ position lies somewhere between the different views. Moreover, as soon as the music teacher enters the school, he/she meets another set of ideals, concerning music and its place in the school, but also, normative ideals about what constitutes good teaching. This will be discussed at some length in the next chapter.

Mid-career

The mid-career is the period of stabilization and settling down. Having survived the initial years and become more confident about their proficiency, this is the period when teachers are at their peak. The informants in the present dissertation fall into this category, and one part of settling down was reducing or leaving music teaching. A trait of the mid-career, as described in the literature, is that the earlier interest in, and identification with, the subject is replaced with stronger attention to the pedagogical aspects. Moreover, settling down is in some ways a result of the socialization process and there are numerous examples in the narratives of how settling down is concurrent with realizing something about oneself. Throughout the interviews the relationship with the students emerges as the single most important pull factor, and the most meaningful aspect of being a teacher.

The change from subject orientation towards pedagogical orientation needs to be noted. As described above, many of the informants became teachers because of their musical background, and working with the subject was a large part of their motivation to become teachers. This corresponds with the work of Sikes (1985) and Conway (2012), who found a movement from subject to pedagogy over time. Huberman et al. (1993, p. 113ff) also found the subject to be important for the novice teacher, but almost as important was the wish to work with young people. Pecher-Havers (2009a) similarly questions the movement from subject to pedagogy, when writing about the conflicting identities of teacher/musician. “However, the large proportion of interviewees with an early affinity with the teaching profession, relativizes the assumption that the pedagogical identity grows with seniority” (Pecher-Havers, 2009a, p. 113, my transl.).⁴² Considering the research on teacher motivation in Norway (Bergem et al., 1997; Brandmo & Nesje, 2017), it is likely that, in general, the altruistic motivation is just as profound as the subject-driven motivation among the novice teachers, with some exceptions. The increase in pedagogical, student-centered motivation is quite prominent in the narratives in the present dissertation. As Anne, Linda, and Finn discovered, the zeal they had in the first years was not sustainable over time, and the need for a less demanding work life developed as a consequence. Lena, who first wanted to be a teacher because of positive experiences, now finds pedagogical development and professional cooperation to be two of the most significant motivators. The question is whether this motivational force is strengthened, or whether it is present from the induction, and what appears to be an increase is just the uncovering of this aspect, the informants learning something about themselves.

Kelchtermans' *personal interpretative framework* can function as a language of description of the teachers, as it emphasizes the individuality of the teachers, in opposition to the attempts of creating a general theory of teachers' career trajectories. The teachers' self-image is created in dialogue with the surroundings, and the informant who most strongly expresses this aspect is Lena, who through feedback from those around her realized that she was fit to be teacher. Her self-image as a teacher with good skills in administrative work is also a result of interpretation of the surroundings, as well as the fact that she has some obvious, personal qualities. The feedback, especially before and during teacher education, has also boosted her self-esteem. It is evident that she is a

⁴² “Der große Anteil der Interviewpartner mit frühzeitiger Affinität zum Lehrberuf relativiert jedoch die Annahme, die pädagogische Identität wachse mit steigendem Dienstalter.”

conscientious and professional teacher, and a significant source of distress in her working life was when her professionalism was not reflected in her colleague and the leadership's view on the music subject. Her self-understanding as a teacher is thus an important reason she finds it difficult to see herself as a music teacher in the near future.

Ida entered the profession without a full understanding of what it entailed, and as she settled down as a teacher she discovered that although she preferred the music subject, her pedagogical interest was with the youngest children. To opt for this group was thus a choice of pedagogy before subject. As described in the narrative, it is no surprise that she chose a position that left her with more time with the students, as her story is full of examples of a caring nature. Her background is thus an important factor when describing her career choices. Becoming a proficient class manager has also been a source of self-esteem for Ida, and although she would like to teach more music, she has grown into the identity of a classroom teacher, and is viewed as such among her colleagues. Her self-image as a teacher intersects with her subjective educational theory, as she has a strong belief in doing activities in music and other subjects, and learning that her colleagues watch *YouTube* in the music lessons is a cause for alarm. Like Lena, Ida was quite preoccupied with assessment and planning. This may be a reflection of the fact that they are the two youngest of my informants, and both started to work as teachers after the introduction of the curriculum of 2006, which marks the beginning of teacher accountability in Norway. (This topic will be addressed further in the next chapter.)

Both Anne and Ida are no longer viewed as music teachers in their schools. While Ida would like to teach more music, Anne is satisfied with being an "undercover" music teacher and has settled down with being a school counselor. The development from music teacher to school counselor reveals a change from subject to pedagogy, as well as her pragmatic nature. Many of her career choices were made to manage her work life in a sustainable way, and when it proved difficult to teach music in a way that balanced effort with result, the solution became turning her interest towards special education.

Thomas is perhaps the odd one out among the informants, as through the most of his career he has treated teaching as a secondary activity (fallback career; see Watt et al. (2017)) to musicianship and culture administration. On the other hand, he has a reflected view of what constitutes good teaching. His emphasis on impartation, and adapting to each group of students is, in his own words, a result of both being a teacher and his extensive experience as a musician and

conductor. His respect for subject content and skills is another central part of his personal educational theory, but more important than all these aspects that concern the actual teaching is his relationship with the students. When asked for memories about teaching Thomas returned to stories about classes and individual students. His self-esteem as a teacher is in many ways a result of his abilities in establishing rapport with students and reaching out with the content of his lessons, and this relationship is the most rewarding aspect of his teaching. A central aspect of the *subjective educational theory* is idiosyncrasy, and Thomas seems to be little influenced by colleagues. His educational theory is largely constituted by activities that have proved successful over time, and are an extension of his personality. Unlike the other informants, his wish to not be a full-time music teacher has little to do with the context; it is more about himself: his lack of skills for teaching the practical aspects of music his wish to teach other subjects because he likes the variation and the content of the other subjects.

Ellen is confident about her skills, and she has a strong opinion about the content of the music subject. She has followed her subjective educational theory to the point where she describes herself as “disloyal.” For Ellen, letting her students do proper musical activities is more important than fulfilling the curriculum, a standpoint that indicates high professional self-esteem. In connection with this sentiment she emphasizes the need for trained music teachers, as music is a difficult subject to teach due to the demand of musical skills and pedagogical knowledge. Combining these two aspects one can safely say that professionalism is a key aspect of her educational theory, at least concerning music. Even though she is a strong advocate of the music subject, she does not view herself as a music teacher anymore, and, like the rest of the informants, she finds her relationship with the students to be the most rewarding aspect of her job.

Linda experienced the lack of support for the music subject as a threat to her professionalism. As a conscientious teacher, not being able to teach the music subject according to the curriculum, as a broad subject, resulted in a moral conflict and distress. Linda’s motivation in becoming a music teacher had been to give her students musical experiences, but spending most of the lessons practicing for end of term shows caused her motivation to dwindle. Versatility is another feature of Linda’s personality, and teaching the same lessons year after year, in an environment with little support, ultimately drove her to leave

the music subject. Teaching several subjects and being part of a cooperative team has proved to be a massive improvement to Linda's work life.

The wish to give students musical experiences was also a motivator for Finn. It is impossible to understand Finn's view of, and excitement for, the music subject without considering his own background. Having many rewarding experiences with music both inside and outside of the school has been a significant influence. Engaging in practical activities and performing for an audience are key elements of Finn's subjective educational theory. It must be emphasized that although Finn studied at a conservatory and has had a fairly successful career as musician, he wanted to be a teacher from an early age. In addition to his interest in giving students the same experiences he had as a youth, the relationship with the students is just as important. Compared to those of the other informants, Finn's career must be considered quite a happy one, as he has been contented at the schools where he's worked, and has few negative experiences with teaching music; but over time, teaching only music became an impediment to establishing a good relationship with his students.

The sources of vulnerability described by Kelchtermans (1996, 2009b) seem to affect the music teachers in a significant way—perhaps even more strongly than they affect larger group of teachers—as they are on the margins of the school. By margins I mean not the core subjects and basic skills. Not being considered a “proper teacher” can create a sense of vulnerability; and when the subject you teach is not considered a “proper subject” it is difficult to maintain status as a proper teacher. Even when teaching music at a school where the subject enjoys high status, as Ellen and Finn do, there is still a hierarchy that puts music below the theoretical subjects. When the consequence of low status is as material as lack of funding for equipment, on which the music subject is reliant, it has implications for the actual teaching. Lack of understanding for the idiosyncratic nature of the music subject, as the need for smaller groups to offer adequate instruction on playing instruments, adds to the feeling of not being taken seriously. Another source of vulnerability is the discrepancy between the norms and values of the school and the theoretical subjects, and those of the music subject. A frequently mentioned example is assessment, which for some of my informants is considered a threat to the essence of the music subject. In some ways, it is a consequence of a development the whole of the school has gone through, towards goal-oriented teaching and organization. Kelchtermans describes the lack of scientific grounds for their actions as a cause for vulnerability, and the music teacher must often act contrary to

the locally established facts as well. I will return to this important topic more thoroughly in the next chapter. Combining these aspects, we see that lack of understanding for the distinctive character of the music subject emerges as a category, and if the music teacher is the only one at the school it often results in a sense of professional isolation.

The actual teaching is another source of vulnerability. All of my informants (except Thomas who teach music as a theoretical subject) describe teaching music as pedagogically challenging. In the music classroom the students are out of their usual element, and the activities may seem strange to them. Moreover, the music teacher often spends little time with each group, enhancing the difficulties with class management. Most of my informants describe that the music teacher must be “on,” alert during the lessons to avoid things getting out of hand. During the first years of teaching, after surviving the induction, they often have the energy to master these challenges, but over time it proves to be demanding. Even a proficient, content music teacher as Finn, describes teaching theoretical subjects as “a break.” Combining these aspects, two sources of vulnerability surface. On the one hand, the physical strain is an experience several of my informants have went through, and on the other hand, there are consequences for the teachers’ self-efficacy. Not succeeding in managing the students may lead teachers to doubt their abilities, as some of my informants experienced, especially during their first years. Thomas’ assessment of his own skills is another aspect of this problem. Not being able to play and teach all the necessary instruments has made him believe he is unfit to teach more music. This vulnerability obviously stems from his preoccupation with musical quality as a part of his subjective educational theory.

Kelchtermans claims that visibility is another source of vulnerability. The music subject is a very visible subject in the form of performances, but it is difficult to claim that this is a cause of vulnerability for my informants. In some cases, it is rather the opposite, an opportunity for exhibiting their proficiency as teachers, and strengthening their position. If we look at the expectation of organizing the performances, it can cause vulnerability, but it is rather the lack of visibility that gives concern, connected to the status of the music subject, as it can be more or less invisible in the core activities of the school.

Perhaps the most significant source of vulnerability for the informants in this study is their inability as full-time music teachers to establish rapport with their students. The caring ethic of the teacher occupation makes it a hallmark to have a good relationship with the students. As mentioned several times

already this is the most rewarding aspect of teaching, and the most important pull factor that caused my informants to opt out of music teaching. Failing to establish rapport cause vulnerability on two levels. First, as a failure to comply with the standards of the profession, and second, more importantly, as an absence of meaning.

5.4 Summary

The term “reality shock” is another term for “practice shock.” What is intriguing about the former is the underlying presumption that education is something else than reality, that the shock is an experience of something as true. The virtuality of teacher education involves that it is impossible to experience the full reality of being a teacher before the umbilical cord is cut. What takes place when a teacher experiences a reality/practice shock is a proper *experience* (*Erfahrung*). As described in chapter three, the negativity of a genuine experience is nonetheless productive, as it produces a new understanding of the matter at hand (Gadamer, 2004b, p. 374f). The full realization of the experience of something as true, is the self-application of the new understanding. The continuous interpretation of the context, which every teacher does, led my informants—and me—to a change in practice. Huberman mentions that, over time, employees come to resemble the institution where they work (Huberman, 1989, p. 53). If we compare this to Kelchtermans’ emphasis on the mutual interpretation that takes place in a socialization process, the model of fusion of horizons emerges. It nevertheless takes time, and it is a gradual process where the pre-understanding is risked through series of projections (*Entwurf*); but after some time my informants found their place, and as their horizons widened, they reached an understanding of the realities of being a teacher.

Moreover, the informants’ stories shed light on their prejudices. Behind the possibility of a genuine experience lies a discrepancy, a discrepancy made up of the prejudices with which they approached the profession. As we have seen, not all of the informants had good memories (if any) from their own music lessons, so their expectations of the realities came from other places as well. Perhaps is this part of the problem, that the prejudices are formed on background of unrealistic experiences. As mentioned earlier, having experiences with teaching prior to entering the profession may facilitates the entrance to the occupation, although not necessarily.

What this chapter shows is that many of the factors for music teacher attrition that have been found in other studies, also apply to the informants of the present dissertation. I have called these factors “push factors,” as they belong to the subject of origin. But, as we also have seen, the mechanism that caused my informants to opt out of music teaching is two-sided, there are forces that pull them towards the other subjects/activities as well; in addition to the opposites of the push factors, the relationship to the students and the caring aspect of teaching emerge as the most significant of these.

Although the subject (music) is important as an initial motivation to become a teacher, it is the relationship to the students that is the most sustainable motivator. “[W]hen we ask teachers to describe their ‘best year’, the responses almost invariably turn around the characteristics of their pupils and the exceptional rapport they enjoyed that year” (Huberman et al., 1993, p. 251). In the narratives, Thomas expressed this most clearly, together with Ida and Anne who expressed similar sentiments. Because my informants approached teacher education with a subject-centered motivation, it is difficult to say whether the caring element appeared as a result of experience with the profession or of being socialized into a culture that ascribes this aspect a high value, or whether it had been with them all the time. It is nevertheless apparent that, over time, as they learned about the realities in the school, the caring, student-related side to teaching emerged to be perhaps the most important motivational force. What we are speaking of is what the teachers find meaningful with their job. As described above, teaching is an emotional profession (Hargreaves, 1998), and being motivated by altruistic factors will probably result in more satisfaction with the job. By becoming classroom teachers, they also enjoyed more variation, in addition to being important figures in their students’ lives.

Finally, I will mention one more central aspect that informed my informants’ choice to opt out of music teaching: belonging. A sense of emotional belonging to the workplace is a significant predictor of teacher retention (Tiplic et al., 2015). In several of the narratives, a feeling of music as a subject on the margins of the school surface regularly. It is of course possible to be included at a work place even though the subject remains peripheral, and perhaps the teachers in the present dissertation are among the unlucky few who felt excluded because of the marginalization of their subject. I am left with the impression that my informants were largely unaware of the position of the music subject in the school, and to act according to this revelation resulted in different actions, from resistance to compliance. I do not claim that the choice to become classroom

teachers was a result of the school socializing them into the dominant views of what a teacher is. Quite the contrary, the narratives tell stories of teachers with agency, who take responsibility for improving their situations. The informants made deliberate choices, in correspondence with their conviction, that enhanced their contentment with their job. As K. Smith and Ulvik (2017) emphasize, leaving teaching is not necessarily a result of lack of resilience, it can be thought of as a display of agency. In the next chapter I will investigate the factors that informed my own choices and those of my informants'; although we are teachers with agency, who made our own choices, there are underlying structures that one cannot avoid.

Why did I opt out of teaching music? I cannot blame the music subject alone, as I enjoyed teaching music, and experienced higher workload when I began teaching other subjects. Did I approach the profession with a wish to make a difference to the students' lives? Yes, I did, and by becoming classroom teacher I could also develop myself and teach other subjects I am interested in. Did I feel excluded? Yes, I think the feeling persisted. At least I did not feel part of the primary activities in the school. But even though I can answer yes to these questions I was not forced into making these choices, they emerged from interpretation of the context in which I was working. In fact, because of the lack of music teachers, they would probably have more use of me as a music teacher, so the choice was entirely mine. But the possibility of making choices emerged from my prejudices, and as they changed during the years spent at the school, the option of becoming a classroom teacher became more and more obvious. More importantly, I had, as my informants a wish to have a stronger relation to my students. I cannot recall whether I had an articulated opinion about it at the time, but now, in retrospect, I see that this aspect of being a teacher was the most meaningful.

6 Discourse

This chapter picks up the thread where Chapter 3 ended, with an investigation of performativity within the school. The introduction of discourses of performativity is one of the most substantial changes to the school system the last decades, and, like the performance formation itself, it comes from the English-speaking world. A central starting point for the present dissertation is to view the music subject as a part of the school system in general, thus I wish to connect the empirical analysis to research on, and discourses pertaining to, the schools. The music subject and music teachers must relate to the totality of the school as it constitutes the context where they perform their daily work, and to understand the realities of being a music teacher this must be taken into consideration.

According to Neumann (2001), the purpose of discourse analysis is to investigate the conditions for actions. This is an underlying strategy of this chapter, as I am seeking the conditions for my informants' choices to abandon music teaching on a general level, in the hope that this can be transferred to other contexts and other teachers. The methodological approach described in Chapter 4 is more a strategy than a strict method, and central to it is the aim of describing—rather than defining—the formation of objects, concepts, and styles. A certain degree of defining is unavoidable, but my main emphasis is on how new discourses are introduced and affect the school and the teachers. In other words, the goal is to identify pertinent discourses and how they exercise power—what they

do. The investigation ranges from abstract theoretical constructions to the mundane, material realities in the schools.

The material I use in the present investigation, including previous research, documents, and empirical material, constitute the parts of the *archive* I have selected. In the first part, where the material is written texts, I have deliberately chosen to emphasize what can cause problems for the music teachers. That includes how the discourses are controlled, e.g. through exclusion, and where the conflict lines appear, both within the music subject and between the music subject and the school in general. An important aspect is how conflicts between discourses affect the school, and although we have seen some quite radical changes in the last two decades, the materiality of the discourses makes them persistent, an inertia that results in a sedimentation where several discourses can appear at the same time. In the empirical analysis, I have looked for *statements* that bring discourses into play. As a consequence of my view of discourse analysis as a strategy, rather than a strict method, I have striven to write this chapter with a minimum of technical, methodological terms, describing the development and its consequences. In the next chapter the theoretical (and methodological) foundation will be included to a greater extent.

The chapter can be divided in two parts, where the first part consists of a description and investigation of discourses important to the schools in general, and the music subject in particular. Foucault claimed in an interview that “One should be able to read everything, to know all the institutions and all the practices” (Foucault et al., 2000, p. 262). I am the first to admit that I have not read everything, and due to the restrictions of the present dissertation, I have made a selection of sources. In the opening paragraphs about international tendencies about performativity I rely on previous research, beginning with McKenzie. In the next section, about performativity within the Norwegian schools, the material consists of both works conducted by other researchers and my own readings of some important policy documents. I also make references to performance theory, as presented in Chapter 3, and investigate how traces of the performance formation are colonizing the school. Although the main emphasis is on the last three decades, I draw some lines further back in time. In Chapter 5 I described the informants’ personal career trajectories, including their professional self-understanding and subjective educational theory. As this chapter is written with the intention of making more generalizable claims, I have included a discussion about Norwegian teacher identities to which my informants must relate. The main material in this section consists of

the dissertations of Søreide (2007a) and Mausethagen (2013b), who addressed identity and professionalism among Norwegian teachers. Although fairly close in time, they offer quite differing findings, with Mausethagen emphasizing the importance of performativity in shaping the teaching profession.

The Norwegian music subject has roots dating back to the first public schools in the eighteenth century. From a singing subject, to support religious upbringing, the subject has evolved into a broad music subject, where several discourses operate, some of them in conflict with each other. The emphasis here is on the last two curricula, but a look further back in time is unavoidable.

In the second part I turn to the empirical material and investigate the impact of the discourses I have investigated. My main interest is in how discourses exclusive to the music subject position the music subject in opposition to the dominating discourses of knowledge, and how these discourses cause problems for my informants. The picture is not one-sided, and I attempt to show the variation among my informants. School performances are used as examples of events where various discourses are in play. Two central teacher identities, the teacher as *caring* or *performative*, are included in the discussion, as these can function as exclusion mechanisms when music teachers fall short of both. The music subject exists in the margins of the institution (school), with its own discourses that differ from the privileged ones. Through the analysis, the music subject emerges with an inherent *otherness* that will be discussed further in the next chapter.

6.1 Performing schools

6.1.1 International

In the article “High Performance Schooling” McKenzie (2004) puts his theory to work and addresses the proliferation of audit cultures within finance and higher education. The root of the modern audit cultures is to be found in “new managerialism,” a crucial part of neo-liberal capitalism. (McKenzie, 2004, p. 51). This development has reached the public sector through the paradigm of New Public Management, and can be described within the context of performance management, where McKenzie also places some of the proliferation of auditing in higher education. Within these audit cultures, performance is chiefly

normative, even though the transgressive and resistant aspects of performance have become parts of performance management. When performance management invades higher education, it has far-reaching consequences for how we evaluate knowledge. McKenzie cites P. Roberts (1998), who finds evidence for several of Lyotard's (1984) prophecies in education policy in New Zealand, especially concerning the commodification of knowledge. Programs at odds with the challenge of performativity run the risk of being closed down, and research that does not comply with performative standards may lose funding. The same trend can be found in Australia, where "researchers are held accountable for what they do through various forms of research assessment. Universities become more consumer oriented, dominated by a managerial discourse and a logic of accountability and excellence" (Usher & Solomon, 1998). This auditing requires a reduction of research into quantifiable units. In Norway, these changes are felt as well, especially in the continuous threat felt by small programs and disciplines in the universities (mostly the humanities) of discontinuation due to the low productivity levels of the students and academic staff; and this also results in low funding.

The above mentioned research concerns higher education, but the impact of performative education is felt also within basic education. Wilkins (2010) describes how British schools have become performative, shaping new professional identities, and like McKenzie he situates the origin in neo-liberal policies. Wilkins describes three characteristics of performativity. The first is the "audit/target culture," "in which a multiplicity of targets is used to measure (primarily by quantitative data) the work of teachers and schools" (Wilkins, 2010, p. 391). The second is the presence of regulatory mechanisms (in the UK: The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)) that can intervene when schools are underperforming. A recent development has been towards self-surveillance, where the schools themselves are responsible for evaluation. "In the performative school, therefore, leadership becomes inextricably linked with inspection" (Wilkins, 2010, p. 392). The last characteristic is the "marketization" of schools, viewing students and parents as consumers, who choose schools freely. Interestingly, Wilkins describes these changes as disciplinary, rather than empowering. It shows on the one hand that performance and discipline can operate simultaneously, and on the other that when performativity operates normatively, it often results in disciplinary measures for the workers. One of the results of these changes is the emergence of a "post-performative professional identity," a new generation of teachers, who themselves have been educated under the

performative regime, who embrace several of these changes as long as they retain some autonomy.

Ball (2003) makes a similar claim, but more critical, emphasizing the alienation of teachers within a performative framework. His definition of performativity is borrowed from Lyotard, and an emphasis is put on the “terror” of performativity, i.e. the risk of being excluded, if one does not comply with the imperative of the performative system: efficiency (Lyotard, 1984, pp. xxiv, 63f). Another interesting aspect of Ball’s article for the present dissertation is his claim (not unlike Wilkins) that performativity is a new or re-invented discipline (cf. Foucault, 1979). Along with market and management, performativity creates a new language and a new ethics that emphasize competition and efficiency. As described in 3.2.2., performance management is a paradigm that values freedom and creativity, but in reality the results can be deeply paradoxical when the feedback loop is introduced. “On the one hand, they are frequently presented as a move away from ‘low-trust’, centralized, forms of employee control. (...) On the other hand, new forms of very immediate surveillance and self-monitoring are put in place; e.g. appraisal systems, target-setting, output comparisons” (Ball, 2003, p. 219). In a study of male novice teachers in Australia, Gallant and Riley (2017) found similar structures. Under the umbrella New Public Management (NPM), they place characteristics such as accountability, performance, efficiency, and commodification of education. The teachers perceived these factors as contrary to their values and ideals as teachers, and although they enjoyed being in the classroom with the students, the impact of NPM caused them to leave the profession early. Their altruistic motivation for becoming teachers was met with performance expectations and surveillance rather than trust. Control and surveillance has direct consequences for the teaching, as gathering the data necessary for control takes energy and time away from teaching, and may result in “value schizophrenia,” when teachers are drawn between commitment, judgment, and authenticity, on the one hand and performance goals on the other (Ball, 2003, p. 221). A resemblance between the theatrical and the organizational aspect of performance emerges from Ball’s article, as he claims that organizations (schools) and individuals produce *fabrications* of themselves, in order to be accountable and effective. These fabrications have a paradoxical side to them, as they may conceal important aspects of the school, even though they are presented as means of openness.

Ball makes the bold claim that there is no room for caring in performance (Ball, 2003, p. 224). The topic of caring is interesting for the present dissertation,

as it has been a staple of Norwegian teachers, and a significant cause for my informants' choice to opt out of music teaching. The relation between performance and caring has been discussed by Forrester (2005), and more generally between performance and humanism by Jeffrey (2002). Both of them define performativity with Lyotard's terms. Forrester found that the emergence of performative policy has rearticulated professional legitimacy, and it devalues the "caring" activities of teaching, even placing them outside of what counts as work. For some of the teachers, exchanging a holistic view of teaching, with care for the individual student, for a performative view, can result in stress and burnout. Forrester claims that the conflict between caring and performance is a conflict between feminine and masculine values. I question whether this applies to the Norwegian school, where the caring ethic seems to be distributed among both female and male teachers (see also Gallant and Riley (2017)).

Jeffrey identifies three areas where a performativity discourse is displacing a humanistic discourse of teaching, affecting the relations within the school. The teacher–student relationship has changed from an interdependent dialogic relationship towards a more formalized one where the teacher is more a conveyer of knowledge, resulting in a more technical approach to teaching. The relations between teachers has also changed. While a humanistic approach to collaboration emphasizes equality, consensus, flexibility, and personal support, collaboration in a performative discourse involves building a strong team to ensure success in the educational marketplace (Jeffrey, 2002, p. 537). Relations also tend to be more hierarchical and disciplinary, as the contribution to the team's success is more important than consensus. In his discussion on teacher–inspector relationships, accountability and the increase in auditing is emphasized, as it has replaced the previous advisory and supportive function of inspection. As inspection becomes more and more important, Jeffrey found, like Ball, that the teaching tend to be more of a fabrication: "playing the part" to please the inspectors (Jeffrey, 2002, p. 542ff). O'Connor (2008) brings nuance by identifying three types of caring behavior. *Performative caring* means caring "as a role" to motivate students, while *professional caring* relates to the integrity of the teaching profession. Finally, *philosophical/humanistic caring* is based on a personal philosophy or code of ethics. Moreover, "many of the emotions that teachers show throughout their work lie somewhere on a continuum between professional behaviour and 'genuine feeling'" (O'Connor, 2008, p. 122). In other word, we can speak of a continuum between role and identity, in line with the

difference between Schechner's and Butler's conceptions of performance (see 3.2.1 and 3.2.5).

As presented in 5.1, emotions are central to teaching, and as the performativity discourse displaces the humanistic, caring discourses, many teachers experience a conflict between their own ideals and the new, performative demands. The discursive change brings with it a new definition of what constitutes a proper teacher, which is a significant cause for vulnerability according to Kelchtermans (1996). As mentioned in Chapter 5, Kelchtermans (2007) claims that vulnerability is a structural condition of teaching that one should embrace, and an exaggerated emphasis on performativity would be a reduction of some of the most central aspect of teaching.

From these few studies discussed so far, it is apparent that the emergence of a performativity discourse within the schools causes conflicting demands. Teachers are being torn between accountability demands and the holistic, humanistic traits of the profession, a "value schizophrenia," as Ball puts it. Moreover, the paradox of performativity has interesting consequences for the school. As we saw in Chapter 3, performance management was originally a liberating force, displacing the disciplinary mechanisms of scientific management. Yet, Marcuse's and Lyotard's definitions of performativity emphasize the repressive aspect of performance. The devolution of responsibility within the school which was intended to give teachers freedom has been coupled by powerful accountability measures that have surpassed the liberating force. Accountability is perhaps the most important tool, as it materializes the feedback loop. Another paradox is that performativity was introduced to enhance the students' learning results, but another result has been performativity on another level, as a fabrication of the school, an outwards image that does not necessarily reflect the truth. From these changes, it appears as if McKenzie's claim that discipline is being displaced by performance must be commented, especially within the context of the school. Ball's point, that discipline has been rearticulated within a performative framework, seems more accurate, at least within the English-speaking world. Moreover, it seems like the liberating aspect of performance thrives higher up in the hierarchy, while the teachers seem to be subjected to the repressive version.

6.1.2 Norway

There have been some substantial changes towards performativity in the Norwegian school the last decades as well, but similar debates about the content of the school can be traced back for more than a century. In the first decades of the twentieth century, a group of Norwegian scholars and artists accused proponents of reform pedagogy and a general, all-round education (*allmenndannelse*) of lack of respect for “proper knowledge” (Slagstad, 2001, p. 153). The debate gained speed after the Second World War and ended in a confrontation between a (German) *Bildung*-oriented tradition and an (American) technocratic, positivistic, scientific pedagogy with testing as a prominent tool (Slagstad, 2001, p. 374ff). Although the latter alternative gained prominence, there are proponents of both views, and they have to some degree settled down in different institutions and geographic areas. Notwithstanding these different views, there are several traits that more generally describe the Norwegian schools in the post-war years, such as equity, in which adapting to the individual student is central, and the goal of preparing children to be responsible citizens of a democracy. The latter aspect means balancing the knowledge and skills that are needed for work and further education, and the broader goals of a *Bildung*-oriented general education.

In his book on the history of the Norwegian schools, Thuen (2017) has named the section about the years after 1982 “A school for achievement” (*En skole for prestasjon*). The turn towards a more performative school can be thought of as a reaction to the quite radical curriculum of 1974 (see Telhaug et al., 2006, p. 260ff), but it was also a result of a global neo-liberal development, where economic terms began invading the education sector. Thuen describes the development using a concept borrowed from the Danish scholar Ove Kaj Pedersen, “the competition state” (in contrast to the welfare state) (Thuen, 2017, p. 185ff). The competition state is geared towards high efficiency in global competition. It is dynamic, and encourages the citizens to take part in the competition for their own sake and that of the state. To achieve these goals, management by objectives was introduced into the public sector, including education. The general aim of these changes is:

to reduce public expenditure and bureaucratic structure by fostering competition and marketisation of public services, monitoring efficiency and effectiveness by measuring outcomes and staff performance and attempting to change the regimes and cultures of public institutions to resemble more closely those found in for-profit businesses. (Møller & Skedsmo, 2013, p. 336f)

Moreover, they value deregulation and decentralization (ibid.). The link to performance management is not difficult to spot. The accusations against the schools were the same as decades earlier: the schools had become too “cozy,” and an emphasis on knowledge and usefulness was needed. The new ideal, the “knowledge school,” replaced the old comprehensive school, and revitalized the marketization of knowledge that view education as an investment, and students as a factor of production (Thuen, 2017, p. 185). The development towards performativity can further be exemplified through the curricula of 1997 and 2006.

The curriculum that was introduced in 1997 (L97) (Ministry of Church Affairs, 1996), was the result of a reform that began early in the nineties, during what Møller and Skedsmo (2013) calls the first wave of NPM in Norway. Among the more radical changes were the extension of the compulsory school by one year, and the children starting one year earlier, at the age of six. Although the rationale behind the curriculum was to increase the emphasis on knowledge, the knowledge school was fused with the comprehensive school, retaining the emphasis on the community, individual adaptation and general education (Thuen, 2017, p. 202ff). In L97, management by objectives was introduced, but it came with minute descriptions of learning activities, thus reducing the individual freedom of the teachers for the benefit of centralization and a strong state. In that regard, L97 has a significant disciplinary quality to it. In addition to the curriculum for the subjects, L97 came with a core curriculum (The Royal Ministry of Research, 1993) that elaborates the main purpose and the basic values of the schools. Generally, the core curriculum can be placed within the confines of *Bildung*, as the goal is an “integrated human being” who can combine the various purposes of the education. The core curriculum does not distinguish between subjects, and has been popular among the teachers, including arts teachers, as it emphasizes the importance of art in the school. The core curriculum survived the curriculum change in 2006, and has been retained until the present day; but at the time of writing, a new core curriculum is in the making.

The work with replacing L97 started at the turn of the millennium. A defining moment was when the results from the first PISA-test arrived in 2001 and sparked a “PISA-shock,” as the results in general were mediocre, and lower than the other Nordic countries. According to Møller and Skedsmo (2013) it is also the starting point for the second wave of NPM in Norwegian education, where the focus on leadership and accountability gained speed. The conservative coalition government of the time wanted schools of higher quality, more directly influenced by NPM. A reform process was initiated and ended with the

introduction of *the Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion* (LK06) (Ministry of Education and Research, 2006). The reform addressed management, content, and structure, and perhaps most important it introduced a national quality assessment system (NQAS), competence goals, and basic skills (Thuen, 2017, p. 205). Many of the ideas behind the reform can be traced back to White Paper 30, *Culture for learning* (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004). In section 3.3 of the report, "Conditions for success" ("Forutsetninger for å lykkes"), competent, committed, and ambitious teachers are listed first. A more substantial change is apparent in the next condition: "Freedom, trust and responsibility: a change of system," where the paper proposes more flexibility and variation, to adapt for the individual students and to enhance the efficiency of the school. "The idea that the state can provide an equal education through detailed control and regulation, is replaced with confidence that the individual teacher, school leader, and school owner [municipalities] are qualified to know how to create and carry out good learning, within the confines of national goals" (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004, p. 25, my transl.). As in other countries, autonomy and devolution of responsibility to the individual school and teachers is emphasized. However, the paper also stresses the importance of strong leadership, to ensure that the schools become "learning organizations," which indicates that some are indeed more autonomous than others.

While the preceding curricula featured learning goals to some extent, LK06 differs significantly, as the goals are *competence goals*, and make no reference to teaching method and content. The responsibility for achieving these goals became the responsibility of the individual schools. The freedom this change involved was countered with accountability measures. Mausethagen (2013b) investigated the role of accountability in the Norwegian schools in her dissertation on teaching professionalism. Her work accentuates some of the differences between Norway and other countries. Mausethagen differs between accountability as a top-down, external, policy theory of action, and accountability as internal, professional responsibility. The former is characterized by testing, documentation, and competition, and by holding teachers, schools and municipalities accountable for the results, student performance is believed to increase. The latter concerns the teachers' view and sense of professionalism. Although Norway differs from the high-stake school systems in England and the US (see above), these changes have had a significant impact even here. In an Official Norwegian Report (NOU, 2002: 10) that preceded the national quality assessment system (NQAS), accountability is mentioned explicitly (using the English

word)—not as a tool for improvement, but for the sake of auditing, ensuring that the school is sufficiently efficient, and providing for the clients' wishes and demands. The most substantial part of the NQAS is the national tests and a web portal (skoleporten.udir.no) where results are published. This is where Mausestagen situates the most significant accountability measures. "In the Norwegian context, accountability policies as a concrete practice are first and foremost related to national testing, though the policy discourse has increasingly emphasised student outcomes and teacher accountability" (Mausestagen, 2013b, p. 12). Unlike the high-stakes countries, market mechanisms have had little impact, and the Norwegian school has retained its emphasis on equality, flexibility, and freedom for the individual schools.

As mentioned above, the introduction of LK06 attempted to resolve the debate between proponents of a knowledge school and a *Bildung*-oriented school. A major step was the introduction of five basic skills: oral skills, reading, writing, digital skills, and numeracy. These are viewed as tools necessary for the acquisition of knowledge, and they cover all subjects (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004, p. 30ff). The White Paper claims that the basic skills resolve the conflict between a democratic, general education and the knowledge school. This view has elicited some criticism (Thuen, 2017, p. 209), as the measurable basic skills cannot cover the wider purpose of *Bildung*. This aspect becomes clearer when the basic skills are imposed on subjects like music.

Traces of a formation

Accountability is perhaps the most distinctive performative feature of the Norwegian schools, but there are other aspects appearing in the policy documents as well. To investigate the performative aspects of the schools I will rely on the presentation of the performance formation that was introduced in Chapter 3. The importance of identifying traits of the performance formation is to further ground the context in which my informants have made their choice, and, as we will see below, the discourses that affect the schools have the power to support differing, and even conflicting, teacher identities.

The policy documents mentioned above seem to be influenced by performance management (PM). As the other paradigms of performance, PM is no unified paradigm, yet, the challenge behind it is common—*efficiency*—minimizing inputs and maximizing outputs. Within PM, several strategies are employed to restructure and provide excellent service to clients/customers. Another important aspect is that PM concerns organizations and how to improve their

performance towards *excellence* or *high performance* (McKenzie, 2001, p. 60). In the Official Norwegian Report mentioned above (NOU, 2002: 10), the task was to survey and assess quality in the Norwegian schools and propose a system for quality assurance. The definition of quality in the report is threefold: structural, process, and result quality. The latter, which can be called output quality, is the most important. In White Paper 30 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004) the use of economic resources is mentioned repeatedly, and compared to the unsatisfying results in (some) international tests, the equation between input and output does not add up. I am now constructing an argument by combining different sources, but as the use of resources is mentioned elsewhere too (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008; NOU, 2002: 10, 2003: 16), and the output-based definition of quality was further narrowed down in White Paper 31 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008) and in the competence goals of the curriculum, I think it is fair to say that the feedback loop has entered the schools. The feedback loop is further accentuated by the introduction of the national tests and the web portal (skoleporten.no). By making results from each school public, the interest in student results has increased as well.

In the first section of this chapter, performativity is largely presented as a development that has served to repress teachers. In McKenzie's description of PM, the picture is somewhat different. PM is in many ways a continuation of and reaction to scientific management, but unlike scientific management, PM seeks to empower workers instead of controlling them; it valorizes intuition, creativity, and diversity. Moreover, the ideal model of an organization is a decentralized, flexible, dynamic, and open system, resembling an organism rather than a machine (McKenzie, 2001, p. 73). In White Paper 30 these values are mentioned repeatedly; the question is whether this is mere rhetoric (and I will return to this question below).

McKenzie mentions several models of PM, including "organizational development" (OD).

OD seeks to create "high performance" organizations that not only respond to change, but generate personal and organizational changes in order to continuously renew themselves as organizations. Because it defines organizational performance as intimately connected to education and development, OD is often called organizational learning. OD seeks to create high performance by continuously stimulating learning on all organizational levels. Not only can individuals learn, so too can organizations. (McKenzie, 2001, p. 77)

Iterations of OD can be found repeatedly in policy documents through the notion of the school as a *learning organization* (see Ministry of Education and Research,

2004, 2008; NOU, 2002: 10, 2003: 16). In the Norwegian Competence Report from 2005 the definition of a learning organization is “an organisation that develops, manages and utilises its knowledge resources in such a way that the entire organisation is put in a better position to master day-to-day challenges and establish new practices when necessary” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2005, p. 9). It entails that teachers must learn and develop too (in addition to the students). In White Paper 30 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004, p. 26f), collaboration, networking, flexibility, sharing of knowledge, the ability to change and take responsibility for results are more precisely mentioned as traits of a learning organization. These values reflect a professional, autonomous, responsible teacher, but, as mentioned above, the White Paper also propounds the need for “clear and powerful” leadership (ibid.).

A recurring term in the description of learning organizations is “continuous.” The idea of continuous development—lifelong learning—is becoming ubiquitous. Lifelong learning is a marked departure from disciplinary time, where education is something one completes as a young adult. Deleuze claims, in a sentence McKenzie quotes as well, that “*perpetual training* tends to replace the *school*, and continuous control to replace the examination. Which is the surest way of delivering the school over to the corporation” (Deleuze, 1992).⁴³ Although the realities of the Norwegian schools are not quite so bleak, the link to the private sector is obvious and a distinctive performative feature (McKenzie, 2001, p. 81; Thuen, 2017, p. 205).

The connection between education and economic competitive ability has been noticed since the eighteenth century, but since the second world war the connection has been re-articulated from the individual’s interest to the nation’s interest (Thuen, 2017, p. 145). With the introduction of neo-liberal policies in the school, the importance of education for economic growth has been gradually moved to the center of the discourse.

But when we today speak about “the knowledge society” it is because knowledge and creativity emerge as the most important driving forces behind economic growth in the society, and the importance for peoples’ possibility for self-realization. The most important production factors in working life are no longer capital, buildings, or equipment, but the humans themselves. Statistics

43 The PISA-test is an area where Deleuze’s prophesy was uncannily precise, as the multinational IT company *Pearson* are responsible for the tests and produce remedies through educational programs etc. Considering the importance of the PISA-tests, this is an area where the schools are handed over to a corporation (Sjøberg, 2014, p. 40; Sahlberg and Hargreaves in Strauss, 2015; the guardian, 2014).

Norway has estimated that 80 percent of Norwegian national wealth consists of human resources. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004, p. 23, my transl.)

The national wealth is referred to in White Paper 30 and 31, and even compared to the petroleum resources, to emphasize the importance (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008, p. 5). The insistence on the importance of education for economic competition further solidifies the position of the schools within the feedback loop, as the stakes become higher. Today, results from exams and national and international tests are regularly featured in the news, and the importance of school results a matter of national interest. The connection to the “performance principle” of Marcuse is not difficult to spot, as “under its rule society is stratified according to the competitive economic performances of its members” (Marcuse, 1966, p. 44). Marcuse is not specifically writing about education, but the same argument is found in Lyotard’s analysis of performative knowledge, as what counts is the efficiency of the knowledge. Although the core curriculum emphasizes the general, humanistic aims of education, it is apparent that the marketization of education is displacing these values. McKenzie mentions the change towards purpose-oriented education, where learning a job skill replaces learning a philosophy of life (McKenzie, 2001, p. 164f). This development corresponds with the conflict between the “knowledge school” and the “*Bildung*-school,” of which the former of which has gained ground in Norway. The curriculum of 2006 represented another displacement of knowledge, as the content of the subjects was replaced with competence goals. The notion of basic skills that span all subjects, is, in my view, a break with traditional forms of knowledge, linked to disciplines. The basic skills accentuate logocentrism, where artistic skills are present only as artificial interpretations of skills such as literacy and oral skills. Together, these measures have served to destabilize the previous concept(s) of knowledge. McKenzie’s claim that the knowledge that counts “must be translatable by, and accountable in the “1”s and “0”s of digital matrices” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 14) is also difficult to avoid, as test results have become increasingly important. McKenzie’s argument connects knowledge to computer technology, a sector where Lyotard claimed experts would be high in demand (Lyotard, 1984, p. 48). In general, the accountability measures in the Norwegian schools are highly dependent on ICT. The introduction of NQAS, including the web portal (skoleporten.no), are striking examples of how this development is difficult to envisage without ICT. The introduction of digital skills as a basic skill, along with writing and reading, is another example. One must be careful not to interpret all these developments as a sign of a performative school system, as the growing importance of digital skills is indisputable,

regardless of control mechanisms. It can nevertheless serve as an example of how the paradigms of PM and techno-performance are intertwined, as the first has become dependent on the other. When the tests themselves have become digital, the entanglement of technology and performative measures in the school have become even deeper. The increased interest in management has been mentioned several times already, but it must be emphasized that the role of management has changed. The new role of managers is to ensure efficiency and the performance of the organization. Within the PM paradigm the role of managers is to be supportive and empowering with an eye for the totality instead of meticulous control of details. The question is whether the accountability measures counteract these values.

In Chapter 3 I claimed that the Norwegian schools are in between discipline and performance. In that regard, Ball's (2003) notion of performativity as a re-articulated discipline is interesting. By and large, the Norwegian schools are, as mentioned in 3.2.6, still organized in a disciplinary way (although White Paper 30 attacked the traditional organization as a hindrance to flexibility (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004, p. 27)). We still have traditional classes and classrooms, individual subjects are taught in separate classes, and students progress through grades as before. L97, with minute description of activities and a strong, centralized power is particularly disciplinary (even compared to the preceding curricula of 1974 and 1987). The normalizing force of discipline is still evident, although the content has changed. The increased emphasis on research-based teaching (best practice) has narrowed the scope of what constitutes good teaching and good teachers (I will return to this below). More generally, the purposes of discipline and performance are quite similar: efficiency and the production of useful individuals. On the other hand, some traits of the disciplinary formation are breaking down. The curriculum is now more open for interpretation, and different competence goals can be distributed among different grades. Through the notion of lifelong (continuous) learning, the serialized time of discipline is breaking down as well; and in the schools and higher education new assessment forms are replacing the ritualized examination about which Foucault (1979, p. 184ff) wrote extensively (and criticism against the traditional exam is regularly surfacing in the media as it is not seen to prepare the students for their working life). We also see that the favored medium of discipline, the book, previously the exclusive privilege of a fraction of society, is being replaced with computers, and the massive expansion of information through computer networks. Moreover, the rhetoric

about freedom, flexibility, intuition, and creativity is another distinguishing feature, although the results may not be that convincing.

Ball (2003) refers to Foucault (1979) as part of his criticism of management. One should be wary, however, of associating a present-day school leader with a guard in a nineteenth-century penal colony, as the comparison is far-fetched; but his comparison can at least serve as an example of how a performative system is realized without the “positive” managerial strategies connected to PM. It is also a description of how individual freedom and creativity can be eliminated when passed through the normalizing mesh of accountability measures. Ball also claims that the new management of schools is panoptic, surveilling quality and excellence. In a way, he is right, if we accept the emergence of docile workers. Yet, we must take into consideration the structure of panoptic surveillance. Panopticism works through an impression of continuous observation, although the observation may not be actual. By placing the efficiency of the observation on the surface of the applicant, it becomes continuous in effect, using a fraction of the resources a continuous presence of observation would require. In the schools, both in Norway and internationally, the assessment of teachers’ work is usually connected to tests, or inspection regimes (not in Norway), making the *actual* surveillance discontinuous. In an earlier paper, Ball (2000) refers to this difference by claiming that school performativity is not panoptic, but the surveillance entails “the uncertainty and instability of being judged in different ways, by different means, through different agents; the ‘bringing-off’ of performances—the flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that make us continually accountable and constantly recorded” (Ball, 2000, p. 2). When Ball writes about panoptic surveillance he may mean the perception of being accountable for everything one undertakes as a teacher. Ball finds support by referring to Deleuze (1992) and his claim that we have moved from a society of discipline to a society of control, but Ball rearticulates Deleuze by claiming that control overlays discipline, rather than replacing it. Ball also refers to the *visibility* of the school, and in my view this is where the panoptic quality is to be found. A staple of the accountability systems is the visibility of actions, as activities and results are monitored, to provide inspectors with data. In Norway, where inspection regimes such as Ofsted do not exist, visibility is manifested in review of results in parents’ meetings, staff meetings, individual reviews, and the national web-portal. Although there is an array of surveillance mechanisms that control the teachers and school leaders, if not continuously, they are not the only ones who are subjected to surveillance. In *Discipline and Punish*

(Foucault, 1979), the surveillance of students is a main issue, and in that regard, panopticism is still a regular feature in the schools, as the classrooms are still, predominately, constructed for the teacher to have an overview. And contrary to the teachers, who are assessed through the results of formalized tests and exams, students are continuously being monitored, e.g. through assessment for learning, which has become ubiquitous in the Norwegian schools. However, I find it difficult to claim that assessment for learning is negative and alienating, as the proofs of its efficiency is more or less indisputable, and the rationale behind is not to control and repress, but to help them improve. In that regard, panoptic surveillance has positive aspects.

Another useful concept Ball raises is *fabrication*, the performances schools construct when facing external control. From my own experience, I have witnessed that schools are eager to perform well on national tests and other control measures, and they reduce the regular teaching of subjects to prepare students for these tests. In the news, one can regularly read about how poor students are exempted from testing, to improve the average results (Fladberg, 2015; Sarwar, 2013a), and at the time of writing this paragraph, there is a growing concern over schools under-reporting acts of violence against teachers (Fladberg, 2017a, 2017b). The paradox that emerges from the use of fabrications, is that while a transparent public sector is a goal of performativity, the prevalence of fabrications render them increasingly opaque (Ball, 2000, p. 10). Due to the lack of high-stakes accountability and an inspection regime like Ofsted, it could be that the image of the Norwegian schools is not as fabricated, as the consequences are not as dire. I will return to the notion of fabrication below, as the music subject plays a role in how the schools' present themselves.

As I have emphasized several times, performative measures have not been effectuated to the same degree in the Norwegian school as in the UK and US. The curriculum has retained the emphasis on a comprehensive school, inclusion and *Bildung*-oriented general education, although the latter aspects have diminished with the growing importance of basic skills. Nevertheless, there are several examples of conflict and distrust. Thuen (2017, p. 230ff) mentions some of the conflicts that have reached the public sphere, and in addition some polemical books have been published (Malkenes, 2017; Marsdal, 2012). What these books attack is the dehumanizing effects of an increased focus on testing and results,⁴⁴ and lack of autonomy for the teachers. They all relate to

44 There is a growing concern over an increase in depression among young girls, which may be connected to increased demands in the school and elsewhere in society, cf. "the performance

the other paradox that was presented in 6.1.1: how the liberating, transgressive, empowering aspect of performance is being neutralized by the repressive side, in particular through accountability measures. The policy documents discussed in this chapter clearly show how a language connected to PM has invaded the school sector. Freedom, creativity, and devolution are central to the new discourse, and from the outset the reform in the new millennium was, at least as it was written, a reform to provide teachers with autonomy and the right to have influence over what is taught. However, as in the UK, this freedom came with expectations of performance, accountability measures, and a new emphasis on strong leadership. It must be mentioned that school leaders have experienced a significant increase in responsibility, and as mid-level managers they are drawn between conflicting demands, and an wide array of tasks (Colbjørnsen, 2014).⁴⁵ “The Norwegian schools” consists of 2858 schools (2016) and the variation is obviously significant, with both school leaders who are supportive and empowering, and those who are controlling (I have experienced both). Notwithstanding the variation between schools, I believe it is safe to claim that discourses of performance are affecting the Norwegian schools significantly, and the schools are characterized by both normative and transgressive performativity. The challenge of organizational efficiency has indeed been raised, but in the recurring demands for creativity and flexibility, so has the challenge of cultural efficacy; and both of these are intertwined with digital technology. To further position the schools using concepts of performance, it appears that the liminal phases of discipline, connected to serialized time and events, are being displaced by a state of permanent liminality—a liminal-norm in which continuous assessment and lifelong learning places individuals within a matrix that demands improvement at all stages of life. Complete (re-)integration is becoming impossible, as there are always new challenges demanding response.

The purpose of this section has been to describe the developments through which Norwegian schools have gone in the last decades, and to apply the concept of performance/performativity to the schools. In the next section I will present some dominant teacher identities produced by the Norwegian schools discourses. The rationale behind presenting these identities and subject positions is that they play a role in my music teachers’ decisions to teach less music. As a teacher, one must relate to these dominant constructions, regardless of

generation” (“*generasjon prestasjon*,” section 3.2) (Bakken, 2016; Eriksen et al., 2017).

45 Unlike the teachers, school leaders in Oslo have been subjected to performance-related pay, where the indicators and criteria included student results and loyalty (Sarwar, 2013b).

background; and because teachers distance themselves from or identify with the positions, the positions have a strong normalizing power. My main data is two overlapping dissertations (Mausethagen, 2013b; Søreide, 2007a), spanning a publication period of seven years. A comparison of the two studies reveals some development trends. Although they are fairly close in time, there are several divergent aspects to be found, due to the significant changes to the school I have described in this chapter. I have also included newer documents where available.

6.1.3 Teacher identities

The research on a British context above highlight the development of teachers the last decades. The teaching profession has been a caring profession, where the ability to establish good rapport with the students has been a hallmark of a proficient teacher. In Chapter 5 we saw the importance of the emotional aspect of teaching, and the traditionally strong altruistic motivation to become a teacher. What the work of Forrester (2005), Jeffrey (2002), and Wilkins (2010) shows, is how this dominant feature of teachers and teacher identity is being challenged by a performative teacher ideal, at least in policy. Constructions of Norwegian teacher identity were investigated by Søreide (2007a). The timing of her dissertation is interesting, as it is published at a major shift in the history of the Norwegian schools. In a series of three articles she investigated the construction of teacher identity among teachers, in the teacher union and in policy documents.

The dominant teacher identity constructions Søreide uncovered were “the teacher as pupil centered, caring and including,” along with “the teacher as cooperation-oriented” and “the teacher as innovative and willing to change and develop” (Søreide, 2007a, p. 63). The first is assigned a primary status. These identity constructions are amalgams of the three studies, but they are not distributed equally among the studies. In interviews with teachers, (Søreide, 2006) found that the teachers construct their identities through identifying with, and distancing themselves from a range of subject positions. The resulting identities are not sharply defined and stable, but “flexible ‘clusters’, which construct and are constructed by the relevant subject positions the teachers relate to” (Søreide, 2006, p. 536). The dominant identity construction she finds is “The caring and kind teacher.” It is a result of both genuine affection for the students, and a feeling of responsibility for their well-being and development

(ibid.) There are variations, and in Søreide's article one can find traits of the different kinds of caring described by O'Connor (2008). Two of the other constructions seem to be in line with the developments described in the preceding paragraphs, "the creative and innovative teacher" and "the professional teacher."

In her article on educational policy, (Søreide, 2007b) reaches some of the same conclusions. She analyzes the national curricula for teacher education from 1999 and 2003 and the core curriculum. From these documents, she induces a narrative plot that departs from the notion of learning as an immanent force in children. As in the earlier article, she reaches several identity constructions via an array of subject positions. The identity construction Søreide highlights is "the including and pupil-centered teacher." The link to the caring identity the teachers value is obvious, and in addition it displays the humanism and democracy orientation that have characterized the Norwegian schools (on which more below). Her choice of documents is interesting, as they display some of the expectations/challenges the government poses. Moreover, they can be seen as an accumulation of values that existed in the Norwegian schools at the time she was writing, combined with values as flexibility and innovation, which at least to some degree belong to PM. The core curriculum is interesting in several ways. First, it has enjoyed a significant popularity since it was first introduced, and, as mentioned above, even survived the introduction of LK06, despite the massive changes the new curriculum entailed. Second, one can question the importance of the core curriculum, at least today. Part of the rationale for reviewing the core curriculum (in process at the time of writing) is the distance between the curriculum of the subjects and the core curriculum, and there are several reports that indicate that it is in little practical use in the schools (Gjerustad et al., 2016; Isaksen, 2016; Vibe & Hovdhaugen, 2012; Vibe & Lødding, 2014). Yet, the popularity of the core curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2016, p. 17) may indicate that it at least contains some aspects the teachers value.

Søreide's last source consists of documents from the Norwegian teachers' union (*Utdanningsforbundet*). The union policy seems to be more in line with the statements from the teachers in the first article, as the caring teacher is emphasized, along with cooperation and development. It is also interesting to note that the union distances itself from neo-liberal education policies such as marketization and accountability, and emphasizes loyalty to the students, when experiencing conflict between policies and the child's best interest. The

union documents seem to offer an initial response by the teachers and their union to the changing policies of the time.

When Søreide found “the teacher as pupil centered, caring and including” as the paramount identity construction, she was in line with previously described discourses pertaining to the Norwegian schools. Although the teachers concern themselves with learning, there is “a tendency to be more preoccupied with learning *environment*, the *conditions* for learning and learning *processes*, than the *definition* and *measuring* of concrete learning *results*” (Søreide, 2007a, p. 67). The importance of caring had its counterpart in the “seminarium tradition” of Norwegian generalist teacher education, which previously constituted the bulk of teacher education institutions. In these teacher colleges, the student teachers were to a great extent treated like students in the compulsory schools, with great emphasis on the social environment, and with caring and supporting teacher educators (Kvalbein, 2003, p. 103f). (One could claim that the emphasis on the well-being of the student teachers was at the expense of their professional development, justifying some of the criticism against a too “cozy” school.) The importance the teachers and the union lay on individualization and adaption has its root in Scandinavian school discourses (Carlgren et al., 2006; Stephens et al., 2004; Telhaug et al., 2006). It is further related to a strong equity discourse, as every child is entitled an education, notwithstanding their abilities (Møller & Skedsmo, 2013, p. 338). It is important to mention that although caring/individualization is typical of the Norwegian schools, it is by no means exclusive to Norway and the rest of the Nordic countries. As described in Chapter 5, it is common in most countries to approach the teaching profession with an altruistic motivation, but it is perhaps more strongly accentuated, and discursively rooted in Norway.

Although Mausethagen’s dissertation (Mausethagen, 2013b) does not directly concern teacher identity, her work on teacher professionalism sheds light on how the recent changes to the school system affect teachers, and offers different subject positions. Like Søreide, Mausethagen uses a range of sources to investigate how teachers construct and negotiate professionalism under increasing accountability. As she has analyzed statements from teachers, the teachers’ union and policy documents, it is possible to compare her findings with Søreide’s on some levels, and thus identify some developmental traits.

Mausethagen and Granlund (2012) analyzed three Government White Papers (ranging from 1997 until 2009) and policy documents from the Union of Education (*Utdanningsforbundet*). The government papers emphasize

accountability, research-based practice and specialization. The teachers' union, on the other hand, accentuate research-*informed* practice (in combination with experience-based knowledge) and responsibility. Unlike the stark opposition to accountability Søreide described, there are traits of negotiation in the document of 2009, as the term responsibility is included, although there still is resistance towards external control. In the present political program of the teachers' union (Utdanningsforbundet, 2016), the same opposition is present, and trust and responsibility (responsibility (*ansvar*) is mentioned on almost every page in the document) is proposed instead. However, towards the end of the document, there are examples of accepting the need for accountability. "The profession will through the union officials contribute and take part in appropriate national and local systems of inspection and control, as well as systems facilitating for systematic developmental work" (Utdanningsforbundet, 2016, p. 23, my transl.). This statement is coupled with proposing a new system of control that replaces the national tests and takes the broader aims of the school in consideration. The same emphasis on research-informed practice is present in 2016, and in addition the paper mentions the need for teachers with a PhD.

The same tension between responsibility (and autonomy) and accountability (or internal vs. external accountability) is present among the teachers Mausestagen (2013a) has spoken to, but she emphasizes that the antagonisms against the government policy are stronger in the teachers' union documents. Among the more interesting findings, Mausestagen discovered that age is a factor that affects the teachers' attitude towards accountability. Like Wilkins (2010), Mausestagen found that younger teachers are more receptive to external accountability, while experienced teachers value internal accountability, such as being responsible for the broader aims of education and the student as a whole person. To some extent, the experienced teachers' stance corresponds with Søreide's findings, while the younger teachers' positive attitude must be regarded as something new in the Norwegian schools, and more in line with international trends.

The national tests are the main tool for the performative evaluation of students (and teachers) within the NQAS, and Mausestagen (2013c) uses the teachers' discussions about the tests as an example of how increased accountability challenges the boundaries of the profession. The tests have been a matter of dispute since they were introduced, especially the publication of the results, and even today the teachers' union is critical of the extension of the tests and opposed to the publication of the results (Utdanningsforbundet, 2016, p. 23). As

in the above-mentioned interviews with teachers, Mausethagen found an age difference in her study on the impact of the national tests. “Especially beginning-of-career teachers more greatly approve the tests by giving them a more authoritative and legitimate status than experienced teachers, for example, by being a corrective to their own practices” (Mausethagen, 2013c, p. 140). Although the novice teachers stand out, Mausethagen identifies a general drift towards performativity and external evaluation, and an expansion of professional boundaries that includes legitimating the profession by being accountable. Accountability may be discussed and contested among the teachers, but the acceptance of research-based knowledge seems to have increased significantly. In Chapter 5, research on teachers’ career trajectories was presented, and a central finding in some of the studies is that there is a shift in interest over time, from subjects to the pedagogical aspect and the relation with the students, although, for most teachers, altruism is the main motivator in the first place. Considering this, one should be careful to argue that a new performative generation of teachers is on the rise, as the age difference Mausethagen uncovered could be related to the shift from subject to student. Moreover, a novice teacher may find security in fixed standards, whereas an experienced teacher is more likely to trust her own experience.

A topic where the internal tensions are visible is practicing for tests. Mausethagen finds that it is not generally acceptable among the teachers to practice for the tests to achieve better results; instead, they refer to the caring aspects of teaching, and how practicing can reduce performance anxiety. Legitimation of practicing is thus inscribed in existing professional discourses, but at the same time these are reshaped. Although they admit that practicing will produce better results, the argument is that it is because the students feel secure and can perform at their personal highest level. The topic can be interpreted within the concept of fabrication, as the test results are not necessarily representative of the students’ level of competence, but by practicing, for the students’ well-being, the teachers contribute to the standards that are imposed in the tests.

In a report about Norwegian teachers written by an expert group consisting of eleven school researchers (Ekspertgruppa om lærerollen, 2016), the school is described as an archaeological field where different values have been accumulated through time, and today, we can see how various opinions and values are combined and rearticulated in various ways. Although the latest developments to the school and the teachers have been quite substantial, the historical layers affect the practices in the school today. From the nineteenth century onwards

Norwegian teachers have come from two traditions, the teaching academies (seminarium tradition, see above), with a strong link to the church, and the university. In the years after the second world war, the first group gained ground, largely because of their alliance with the Labour Party in establishing the comprehensive schools, and their success in promoting pedagogical knowledge. University-educated teachers remained in the schools, but their influence decreased. In these years, the main line in the school, social integration through care, was introduced (Ekspertgruppa om lærerollen, 2016, p. 42). In the 1970s a new, rather radical, curriculum was introduced, and the caring aspect of the school was accentuated, along with the emphasis on individualization (Carlgren et al., 2006, p. 307ff). Certain groupings within the school contrasted *Bildung* with knowledge (a view of *Bildung* opposed to the academic conception). In that regard it was a revitalization of the earlier teaching academies, who stood in opposition to the universities (Ekspertgruppa om lærerollen, 2016, p. 58). Paradoxically, the 1970s were also characterized by the beginning academization of the teaching profession, a process that continues.

The period from 1980 and onwards, which has been presented more fully above, is a continuation of the values that became established in the post-war years. Individualization, caring and maintaining a good rapport with the students is still at the heart of the Norwegian teaching profession, both as a matter of professionalism, to facilitate the students' learning, and as a result of a personal code of ethics (Carlgren et al., 2006; Mausethagen & Kostøl, 2010). In recent decades the two teacher cultures mentioned above have become increasingly fused, as integrated teacher education has become more and more academized, and the universities have offered integrated teacher education. From fall 2017, the general teacher education programs will be at a master's level, an initiative supported by the union. It has also entailed a professionalization process that was dormant for some period, and as the analyses of union documents have shown, the union has started taking more and more responsibility for professional development, e.g. by increasingly accepting research-based knowledge.

Stephens et al. (2004), in their comparative study of Norwegian and English teacher education policy, found that Norwegian teacher education is "a system based on the cultivation of public service. In Norwegian terms, this implies positioning the teacher as a moral agent charged by the state to develop egalitarian values among the young" (Stephens et al., 2004, p. 123). The English documents focus more exclusively on the subjects. This could be because England is ahead in their performative development, but one should be careful to make such

claims, as the national idiosyncrasies must be regarded. (There have obviously been some radical changes since 2004, and Norwegian teacher education has moved in the direction of performativity and subject-centeredness.) The increasing professionalization may also explain why Norwegian teachers have been able to counter accountability, by including it within their own values and discourses. The process of professionalization taking place in times of accountability has obviously deposited a new layer in the geology of the Norwegian teacher, and in addition to be caring, inclusive and pupil centered, the *proper teacher* is now understood to be one who is acting according to research-based knowledge and being accountable for their students' results. The big paradox of performativity is that under a rhetoric of freedom, intuition, and creativity the accompanying accountability and control mechanisms can stifle the liberating aspects. Norwegian teachers have traditionally enjoyed a significant amount of autonomy (Mausethagen, 2013c), but with increasing accountability the autonomy has been challenged, as the feedback loop between the students' performance and the teachers' performance has become increasingly important.

6.2 The music subject

As described above, today's school and teacher identities are built upon a sedimentation of discourses and practices that dates back decades, and even centuries, and several of these traditions and values surface regularly. In accordance with this understanding I will give a description of the music subject in the Norwegian schools, with an emphasis on the post-war years. The present music subject carries traits that dates far back in time, and some of the conflicts that still dominate the music subject have a long history. The rather bleak history of the music subject also presents its relation to the dominant discourses in the school, and thus provide insight into challenges a music teacher can face.

Music has been a part of the Norwegian schools since 1739, for the first two centuries as singing (H. Jørgensen, 2001). Until the middle of the nineteenth century, singing was a part of religious upbringing, mostly in the form of learning psalms. When singing became a subject of its own it still featured psalms, and in addition it was a part of the national patriotism of the time⁴⁶ (Dale, 1991). In a survey conducted in the 1930s singing was the least or second least popular subject among schoolchildren (Østlyngen, 1939, p. 121ff). According to H.

46 From 1814 to 1905, Norway was in a union with Sweden.

Jørgensen (2001), the low popularity of singing may be because of the way it was taught, with an emphasis on voice training, intonation, and meticulous learning by heart—all disciplinary techniques. A topic that has been discussed since the nineteenth century, is whether the students must learn to read notation, another feature that can explain its low popularity. In the curriculum of 1939 (Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, 1957), the critique against the singing subject was answered by including that the requirement that students should “enjoy good singing.” The curriculum nevertheless included quite meticulous descriptions of exercises, keys, time signatures, and vocal range. The material was still psalms and “songs about the fatherland,” and although enjoying good singing was the purpose, the subject emerges as highly instrumental, as a means for the upbringing of the children.

After the second world war, singing enjoyed a somewhat higher status because of its political and social function. Attempts at including instruments and movement were also initiated, and the patriotic aspect was reduced for the benefit of a more Nordic and international approach. The music in the school was also challenged by the emerging popular music of the time, a challenge that survived for decades. Among the teachers, music was an unpopular subject, largely because of their lack of proper training.

In 1960, a new curriculum was introduced with *music* (not singing) as a separate subject. The purpose was to teach the students to enjoy good music, i.e. the musical cultural heritage. Varkøy found that the curriculum of 1960 retained a hierarchy of music that emphasized Western classical music and the traditional music of Norway (Varkøy, 2001, p. 115). The purpose of the curriculum in general was to educate the students to become good and useful members of the society, and the music subject was not exempt from this. The educative function of good music was to make the students open to what is beautiful and good, and facilitate friendship and cohesion. Although the curriculum was open to popular music, the music teachers who debated the topic in the media were predominately negative towards jazz and pop (H. Jørgensen, 2001, p. 108). The use of instruments was also introduced, but the lack of qualified teachers made it difficult to carry out.

When the curriculum of 1974 was introduced, the music subject was extended further, and opened up musically. Popular music, listening, composition, and movement were now parts of the subject, although the latter part probably was avoided by most music teachers (H. Jørgensen, 2001, p. 113). The instrumental function was still present, and music was especially mentioned as a tool for

learning other subjects, while also emphasizing the intra-musical values. A problem Varkøy found in the 1974 curriculum (and the predecessors) is a lack of coherence between purpose (student centered) and content (music centered) of the music subject. Despite the extension and openness for different kinds of music, and the accentuation of the expressive aspect, in many ways a confrontation of the musical hierarchy of the preceding curriculum, the subject was still unpopular among both students and teachers, who found it difficult to teach.

In the beginning of the 1980s there was a proposal to discontinue music as an individual subject, and instead incorporate music as an activity in other subjects (H. Jørgensen, 2001, p. 117).⁴⁷ This idea was dismissed, and efforts to develop the music subject further were initiated. The music subject is continuously being torn between its function as means or end. The former is historically the most significant, but in the curriculum of 1987 (M87) (Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, 1987), a better balance was found. As an end in itself, it contained musical experiences, creation, and musical activities. The instrumental function was first and foremost related to the ability to facilitate cohesion, identity, contentment, and joy of mastering. A new development Varkøy identified was that, in addition to the emphasis on the students and the music, the societal function of music was accentuated. In comparison to its predecessors, M87 was much broader, opening up for the various musical processes in society. According to Varkøy there is also a better balance between the various conceptions of the music subject. While the curriculum of 1974 began breaking down the musical hierarchy, this process was completed in 1987, resulting in a relativistic stance on musical styles. Music teachers were also granted more freedom concerning choice of content, as the previous advisory song lists were discontinued. The popularity, however, was still second to last. The only subject that was less popular was religious upbringing.

The curriculum of 1997 (L97) involved several changes, some of which I have described already. L97 was heavily centralized and characterized by detailed descriptions of activities. Moreover, its status as a legally binding document was a significant difference. During the 1990s, the music subject had become an important tool for improving the school environment. This instrumental function of music, which was important in the preceding curricula, was retained in L97, but the identity as a subject independent of other purposes was also

⁴⁷ In 2009, the minister of education, Bård Vegard Solhjell, suggested that music and arts and crafts should be replaced with a new subject, "creativity." Due to almost universal negative response, the suggestion was dismissed.

strengthened. The development went from solidarity and identity in general, to musical interaction, thus reducing the societal function that characterized the predecessor. Varkøy nevertheless asserts that the potential of music to transform the personality—that musical activities can develop self-esteem, understanding, and tolerance; and that communal interaction is as important as mastery of the skill—continued to be a tenet of L97 (Varkøy, 2001, p. 187f). The internationalization and inclusion of popular music was further developed, but L97 takes a slight step away from the relativistic stance of M87, for example by providing examples of works, thus implying a canon. The content of the subject was divided into four groups: making music (*musisere*), dancing, composing, and listening. The inclusion of composition accentuates the expressive aspect of the subject, while singing and playing still hold the most important place. Another major difference compared to earlier curricula, reported by Jørgensen, is apparent increased popularity among the students (H. Jørgensen, 2001, p. 125).

The legitimation of the Norwegian music subject has predominantly been found outside of the music itself. The main role of the music subject has been as a means for extra-musical ends, as central to religious and patriotic upbringing, the formation of the personality etc. The perspectives on the value and function of music in upbringing and education has broadened through all of the post-war curricula, but always in an extra-musical direction (Varkøy, 2001, p. 200f). In his analysis of the curricula, Varkøy identifies two discourses that saturate them, both in general, and in the music curriculum. The first, a “growth and development discourse,” is discernible through the many notions of personal growth, initiation, expansion, development, preparation etc. The aim is to produce useful members of society (Varkøy, 2001, p. 203ff). The second discourse, the “joy and positivity discourse,” is more accentuated in the music curriculum. The many references to beautiful music, joy in music, and the ability of music to produce a pleasant environment permeates every music curriculum. The relationship, according to Varkøy, is always between beautiful music and joy, while the other possible emotions music can evoke are not acknowledged (*ibid.*).

Dale (1991) explains the pervasive instrumentalism of the aesthetic subjects by claiming that the Norwegian schools emerged from a pietistic culture, negatively inclined towards art and aesthetic pleasure. Instead of providing an aesthetic upbringing, the role of the aesthetic subjects has been to complement the general upbringing that takes place in the school. “The schools are established and developed in a culture characterized by being a hybrid of monastery, chapel, and factory, part of a disciplinary rejection of indulging in sensory feelings and

emotions, to beauty and art” (Dale, 1991, p. 22, my transl.). Another factor that has served to downgrade aesthetics is the positivistic concept of knowledge in the Norwegian schools. As a consequence of the positivistic stance, usefulness has perhaps been the most important criterion for valuing knowledge and education. The role of music is consequently relegated to a tool or a break. As described above, there has been opposition—rooted in a *Bildung* tradition—to the positivistic “knowledge school”, but Dale’s verdict is that this opposition has never gained ground in aesthetic areas. Dale is being polemical, but to some extent his description is quite precise, although the later development has leaned towards accepting music and the arts on their own terms. In a report about arts and cultural education in Norway, Bamford (2012) found that the climate for arts has improved the last years, with positive attitude for arts and several good initiatives, but art has a predominately social, utilitarian function in the school. She also found that testing and accountability have caused school leaders to give less priority to arts, often against their own will.

In addition to the pervasive instrumentalism, Varkøy mentions a few other characteristics. The music subject is a predominantly *practical* subject. Singing has been the main activity for more than 250 years, with the inclusion of playing instruments the last decades. Some of Dale’s criticism is connected to the emphasis on practice, as he proposes a pedagogy and a concept of knowledge that incorporates aesthetic knowledge and experiences. From a position that advocates existential encounters with art, mindless practice for the benefit of “having fun with music” is counterproductive.⁴⁸ An opposite solution to the same problem with unsatisfactory arts education was advocated by Bjørkvold (1996) in his highly influential book, *The Muse Within*, and with quite significant success. It propagates a naturalistic, absolute self-expressialism, combining music and dance, that highly values the genuine expression of the child. This accentuates another problem, the lack of coherence between purpose and content. While the purpose describes music in expressionistic, developmental terms, the content is often more mundane, a trait that makes it difficult for teachers to grasp the purpose of the subject. The final pervasive trait Varkøy mentions is the problem of musical hierarchy. In 1960 (and before) the hierarchy between good and bad music was explicit, and in general, the trend has been a gradual loosening up, making room for other styles and musical cultures. In a modern, fragmented, multicultural society, hierarchy becomes even more challenging,

48 A similar argument was proposed decades ago by Adorno in the essays “Die Musikanten” and “Zur Musikpädagogik” (Adorno, 1972).

as the choice of required content for music teachers, needs to speak to an array of different criteria. The emphasis on individuality and inclusion, which is a prominent discourse in the history of the Norwegian schools, is becoming more pronounced for each of the curricula described here, e.g. by the increasing tolerance for the students' own musical preferences, at the expense of imparting a cultural canon.

The present curriculum (LK06) is in many ways a continuation of the preceding reforms, where the music subject is suspended between utility and the intrinsic value of music. As described above, L97 was to some extent an example of walking backwards into the future, as it involved both an orientation towards performativity and NPM, while the strong centralization and level of detail, along with the reintroduction of more or less obligatory works in music (and in other subjects), is a break with some important lines of development. According to Varkøy, it appears as if L97 wanted to counteract the identity crisis of post-modernism, by a more stringent approach to knowledge and cultural heritage (Varkøy, 2003, p. 66). Considering this, L97 is in some ways an anomaly in the development from M87 to LK06. The legal status of the curriculum that was introduced with L97 is continued in LK06, a status that has been accentuated by competence goals (instead of activity goals) and the previously described accountability measures. The purpose of the music subject contains references to the general pedagogical efforts one finds in the predecessors, as "music is a source of self- and interpersonal understanding, across time, place and culture."⁴⁹ The music subject is further granted a "central role in adapted education in an inclusive school." The individualizing element is also mentioned musically, as the musical competence the students have acquired outside of the school should be put to use where it is natural. The identity aspect that was introduced in 1987 is, in LK06, connected to the multicultural society, where the music subject can "contribute to positive construction of identity by promoting belonging to one's own culture and cultural heritage, tolerance and respect for other cultures and understanding the importance of music as a culture bearer and value creator locally, nationally and internationally." The relation to other subjects is only mentioned in connection with the use of technology. Altogether, the competence of the music subject will contribute to self-realization benefiting the individual and the society.

As mentioned above, these instrumental tendencies are balanced by goals that focus more directly on the music itself. It is obvious that the curriculum writers

49 All excerpts from the curriculum are my translations.

want to define music as an experiential⁵⁰ subject. In a central paragraph, the value of music in itself is described.

The musical experience (*opplevelse*) is unpredictable, but not without premises. Herein lies the realization that the musical experience (*opplevelse*) is not exclusively intuitive, but acquaintance with music, knowledge about music, development of musical skills, and reflection about music, together form the basis for the musical experience (*opplevelse*), understood both as aesthetic experience (*opplevelse*) and existential experience (*erfaring*).

In the descriptions of the main subject areas, all three feature “musical experience” in the first sentence, giving the impression of musical experience as the main goal of the music subject, and consequently emphasizing the intrinsic value of music. It is important to note that the ability to experience music is something that can be trained. In the description of the main subject areas, the existential experience is first and foremost located under “making music,” not “listening.” The importance of training is a central part of Dale’s criticism of the treatment of art in the schools. While advocates of a naturalistic, expressive view of music (such as Bjørkvold) claim that musical abilities are innate, Dale calls this a mistake. “The aesthetic upbringing weaves *skills* with being *familiar* with formally given examples. And when skills are woven together with the ability of perception, when motor function and consciousness are united, they become a part of the formation of the personality” (Dale, 1991, p. 62, my transl.). The combination of skills and consciousness poses a challenge to the schools, to achieve a proper aesthetic education, first hand experiences with making art is a prerequisite for aesthetic knowledge. The opposite, naturalistic view, entails a form of *anti-pedagogy* (Dyndahl & Varkøy, 1992, p. 85), in which the role of the school is not to tamper with the children’s congenital abilities. Dale’s view is represented in LK06, as the notion of skills is present both in the purpose and in the competence goals.

The weight on “existential experiences” is a step away from the joy-discourse Varkøy identified in the previous curricula, although positivity is still found. The opening paragraph of the purpose of the music subject emphasizes that music speaks to every aspect of being human, a significantly broader view than found in the joy and positivity discourse. “Existential experience” is nevertheless a quite problematic concept, that can be defined in various directions. It

50 The English term “experience” comprises two Norwegian terms, “*opplevelse*” and “*erfaring*.” The former denotes a positive experience, an event or adventure, while the latter indicates a more fundamental, transformative (negative) experience, leading to new insight. The Norwegian terms correspond with the German terms “*Erlebnis*” and “*Erfahrung*” (see Chapter 3).

can indicate the negativity Gadamer (2004b) described, transcendence, or a Kantian encounter with *the sublime* (Varkøy, 2010). (One could also discuss the probability of an existential experience.) Another important development is that the notion of *trivsel*, well-being, is absent from the music curriculum in LK06, unlike all previous curricula.⁵¹ The balance between the social and the musical aspect of the music subject is mentioned explicitly. “In working with music, musical and human interaction is central, and in the music subject, being together and interacting must be balanced with mastering in such a way that students in all grades achieve quality in musical performance on their level.” In other words, interaction is an unavoidable feature of the music subject, but the greater aim is musical *quality*. This is a significant difference from L97, where being together and interacting is equally as important as mastering and quality. This indicates that the shift towards quality in LK06 in general, has impact on the music subject as well.

The musical hierarchy that was reintroduced in L97 is revoked in LK06. Although the competence goals regularly feature different styles, there is no trait of a musical canon.⁵² Quite the contrary, the emphasis lies on diversity. And within the discourse of diversity, dance is situated. In LK06 dance is no longer an individual main subject area, but subsumed under “making music” (*musisere*). The two other areas, listening and composing are continued from L97. A problem Varkøy identified in his analysis of Norwegian music curricula, was the lack of internal coherence. Varkøy (2001, p. 234ff) uses the distinction between education *to* or *through* music, to describe the problem with coherence, as education *to* music is present in the content, but the general purpose and aims of the subject is more often characterized by the instrumental category, “education through music.” The competence goals in LK06 are musically centered, and thus reflect the emphasis put on the music itself, described in the purpose of the subject. Competence goals, instead of activity goals, serves to enhance the stress on quality and mastering. Nonetheless, the purpose of the subject comprises the instrumental function of the music subject, and it is difficult to locate these notions in the actual competence goals, as they in general are

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- 51 In the highly influential White Paper Culture for Learning (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004) I have referred to repeatedly, *trivsel* is mentioned once in the descriptions of the subjects, under the paragraph about aesthetic subjects. It nevertheless seems as if the group who wrote the music curriculum avoided this aspect, consciously or not.
- 52 The lack of a cultural canon is a feature of every subject in the curriculum. The absence of obligatory authors or works in the Norwegian subject, especially, elicited harsh criticism when LK06 was introduced (Thuen, 2017, p. 207).

concrete and rather mundane, and typically consist of descriptions of musical activities with increasing difficulty. Prescribing existential experiences is interesting, to say the least, and the idea behind is perhaps that these experiences *can* emerge through the musical activities. The distance between the prosaic competence goals and the more inspiring language in the purpose section is nevertheless indisputable.

6.2.1 Music teacher education

The title of Varkøy's (2001) dissertation, *Music for everything (and everyone)*, indicates the multifariousness of the Norwegian music subject. The differing and continuously expanding goals of the music subject must be regarded as a contributor to the difficulties of teaching music and thus lack of popularity among the teachers, leading to attrition. The sorry plight of the music subject through history can be explained partly by a lack of qualified teachers, and partly by a content hardly fit to speak to the students' interest in music outside of the school, perhaps with the exception of the last two or three decades. H. Jørgensen (2001) describes music teacher education in his article on the history of the music subject, and the history is hardly encouraging, with a steady decline of music in teacher education, from an obligatory subject, to an elective. As teacher education has increased over time, the amount of music has been the same, and, as with the school subject, the portion of music has decreased. Although this is the general developmental trend, there is, and have been, a few institutions that have produced a steady stream of qualified music teachers.

In his investigation of music teacher education within Norwegian generalist teacher education, Sætre (2014) identified a few common traits. The teacher educators mostly come from a conservatory or university (musicology) background, and very few have a background as (generalist) teachers. As Jørgensen also has pointed out, Sætre's informants reported a severe cutback of teaching hours, causing a significant challenge for the teacher educators (Sætre, 2014, p. 128). The challenge is dealt with by reducing depth, to maintain the breadth of the education. Another challenge is the student teachers, as their musical knowledge varies enormously, and the musical knowledge they carry with them has changed from a "vertical" discourse, to a "horizontal" discourse, more influenced by popular music and aural approach.

The content of the education is still based on a traditional fragmented, conservatory discourse, with courses consisting predominantly of musical performance and musicological subjects as aural training, music theory etc. The second important element is music didactics, and finally, a trend towards increased academization, in congruence with the general development of teacher education, as described by Thuen (2017, p. 213ff). The content has become dominated by popular music, a development that reflects the development of the music subject (perhaps to such an extent that the hierarchy is becoming reintroduced, but upside down). As many student teachers have little experience, they lack confidence (see Chapter 2), so the teacher educators strive to make a secure, low-risk setting.

From its humble beginnings as a singing subject for the purpose of religious upbringing, the music subject has expanded enormously. To teach the entirety of the present curriculum one should be able to play several instruments, sing, dance, compose, record and compose music with digital tools, have knowledge about voice technique, music theory, music history, graphic and traditional notation, and the sociological aspect of music. In addition, one needs the pedagogical skills to impart all this content to students. On top of this we can add responsibility for facilitating personal growth and development, identity construction, awareness of cultural heritage, tolerance for other cultures, and now, aesthetic and existential experiences. The music subject amounts to about one 60-minute lesson per week distributed over ten years. Needless to say, teaching music is a challenge. As the music subject has expanded, time for music in teacher education has decreased, and to maintain the necessary breadth of the music teacher education, the sacrifice has been depth.

6.2.2 Summary

Due to the breadth of the music subject, extracting an essence can prove difficult, so perhaps it is more fruitful to speak of sedimentation of discourses, where some have gained prominence. The expansion of the music subject is less a product of discursive changes than of discursive additions. There have obviously been some changes, for example the religious aspect is virtually non-existent today, but only a few decades ago, when I was in school, we still

practiced psalms for Christmas and Easter.⁵³ Another residue is the strong belief in the ability of music to be a moral power, strengthening inter-cultural understanding and positive interaction. The notion of the music subject as a patriotic agent is also still present, for example in references to the cultural heritage in the curriculum. As a consequence of the important role of children in celebrating the constitution day, there is an unspoken canon of national children's songs, prevalent in many schools. In recent curricula, this is countered by an emphasis on multiculturalism, and a more relativistic view, especially in M87 and LK06. This is the most recent instance of a movement towards musical *openness* that began in 1974. The music subject is open in several other ways as well, e.g. towards other subjects and the local community (Johansen, 2003, p. 355ff). The inherent openness Johansen discovered seems to be toned down in LK06, as the autonomy of the subject is somewhat strengthened by the emphasis on the musical experience.

The combination of instrumentalism and openness has been directed towards another set of values in addition to religion and patriotism. In the post-war years, the strong notions of *well-being* (*trivsel*) and *interaction* are in my view the most significant. It is not difficult to see the link to the child-centered pedagogy that has dominated the Norwegian schools for several decades, resulting in a dominating teacher identity as "pupil centered, caring and inclusive." Together with the weak status of art (cf. Dale, 1991), the way has been paved for what Varkøy called the "joy and positivity," and "growth and development" discourses. Student-centeredness has been further developed, and while it earlier has been a pedagogical student-centeredness, the musical student-centeredness has increased the last decades, through the growing emphasis on popular music. Instead of inculcating in the students a musical (or cultural) canon, the tendency is now to meet the students' preferences. Through the main goal of musical experiences one can say that the subject is both musical- and student-centered. Finally, with LK06 the performativity-discourse has made its influence on the instrumentalism of the music subject as well. In addition to the above-mentioned aspects, the music subject is now also an agent for fostering creativity. The emphasis is on *musical* creativity, but as creativity is a central concept within performativity, and due to the timing of the emergence in the curriculum, the link is still there.⁵⁴

53 This is a major area of conflict in the Norwegian schools. School Christmas services are still common, but highly debated, as preaching is forbidden in the public schools. Some schools still practice for these services, a relic of the old music subject.

54 Creativity is also a central part of the core curriculum.

Another dominating trend is the emphasis on musical practice. The emergence of this discourse concurs with the emphasis put on music (singing) as a tool for religious upbringing, and later as a tool for other measures. As Dale argued, there has been little support for the intrinsic value of the arts in Norway, connecting their value to the standard of usefulness. The notion of art as a mode of knowledge has been further reduced by the positivistic concept of knowledge that has dominated the Norwegian schools, although there have been advocates for a broader, *Bildung*-orientated concept of knowledge. In the last two or three decades, Bjørkvold (1996), with his expressive view of the music subject, has also had a significant impact. The degrading of musical knowledge to the function of a break from more important, theoretical matters, may also be a contributor, as activity is opposed to theoretical work.

Johansen (2003) found that the implementation of L97 had little impact on the teachers' view of the subject. This indicates that there are some powerful discourses about music teaching in the Norwegian schools. Some of Johansen's informants even stated that the new curriculum (L97) *confirmed* their view of the music subject. It may signal that the new curriculum incorporated some dominating aspects circulating in discourse. Although L97 had a stronger juridical status than the predecessors, this aspect did not seem to have much impact. This status is also evident in LK06, but contrary to L97, the juridical status is enhanced by accountability measures. When we now turn to the empirical material, we will see that these and other aspects have influenced my informants' career trajectories.

6.3 Empirical analysis

In the rest of the chapter I will focus on the empirical material of the dissertation: the interviews with the teachers and the narratives presented in the previous chapter. My aim here is to connect my informants' experiences to discourses on a more general level and to investigate how these have affected my informants' choice to opt out of music teaching. By connecting their personal stories to structures on a national (and even international) level, I can, to a much greater extent, make generalizable claims. My aim is not to make an exhaustive description of the mechanisms that are in play, but, as this is an exploratory study, I will present some dominating structures. The bulk of this section concerns the discourses uncovered in the first part of this chapter. I

will look at how they surface and affect my informants, and how they position themselves in relation to these discourses. They obviously draw on other discourses as well, and some of them will be mentioned here. As the purpose of this section is to make generalizable claims, the main emphasis will nevertheless be on the already described discourses. The section begins with discourses about the music subject, and how my informants position themselves in relation to these. Second, I use school performances as an example where several discourses and challenges are in play. I will also connect the performances to the concept of *fabrication*, presented above. Finally, I will look at teacher identities, more precisely the caring and the performative teacher, and how these can function as exclusion mechanisms.

6.3.1 Discourses about the music subject

The strong emphasis on practice in the music lessons is a distinct feature of my informants' music teaching. As described above, musical practice has been the main content of the Norwegian music subject since its early conception. The practice discourse is a substantial feature of the curriculum, but it seems as if this discourse lives outside of the curriculum as well.

Ellen

... I think it's too much theory, and I think it's important that the students get to experience musical practice. I think it's a practical subject.

I think it's very, very important that the students get to express themselves through music. And it's very, very important that not all of it is assessed. We shouldn't have these—I really mean it—we shouldn't have these tests in music history, and tests in notation.

Anne

You're supposed to do things, make music. They should be creative, they should make things, you know. You can't just stand there and have theory and things like that.

Ida

I mean that music should be a more practical subject. That you can do other things than just sit there with a book.

Ellen positions herself firmly within a discourse of practice, and for her, musical practice is almost synonymous with the music subject. She has striven to reduce the amount of theoretical lessons to a minimum, and in that regard, she mentions that she has been “unfaithful” to the curriculum, and focused on the

content she finds most important. Her strong defense of the *El Sistema*-inspired project at her school, accentuates the importance of practice in Ellen's view of the music subject, and at the same time introduces an element of authenticity, which might have its root in Ellen's past of performance-oriented education and musical activities.

Anne is the only one who explicitly mentioned *The Muse Within* (Bjørkvold, 1996) in the interview, but similar views on the importance of musical expression is brought forward by Ellen, Finn, and Lena too. The word "creative" is important as it shows the weight Anne lays on giving students the opportunity to create, and not just re-create. As described in Chapter 5, a discourse of practice and expression formed a challenge for Anne, as an ideal of the music subject. A challenge that caused qualms about the suitability of using computer programs. The importance of practice is an important factor in establishing what caused Anne to leave the music subject, as the balance between what she experienced as normative from a musical point of view, and the importance of covering the breadth of the curriculum, combined with the effort it takes, proved unbearable.

Ida's story is in essence a story about musical practice. While she displays little interest in, and do not position herself according to musical styles, it is the joy of practicing music that is at the heart of her music pedagogical view. It is indicative of her emphasis on practice that she finds the presence of "YouTube-teaching" deeply troubling (see above p. 130). However, because of her background in the school band, she values music theory as a part of music teaching, so it would be wrong to place her in the absolute expressionism category, and as an advocate of anti-pedagogy. Instead of adhering to an idea of congenital, innate musicality, she insists, as Ellen, on the role of education in fostering musical practice.

An interesting feature of the three extracts above is their insistence of music as an *alternative* to theory, or a break from the other subjects. In addition to underlining the idiosyncratic, practical side to the subject, it emphasizes the *otherness* of the music subject. While defining oneself in opposition to the other subjects is a way of defining the individuality of the music subject, one can run the risk of constructing an anti-subject. I will return to the topic of otherness in the next chapter.

Bendik

What was the best part of teaching music while you were there?

Lena

It was the moments when the students sort of... They have made a composition

they are supposed to present, or when they had made something they presented to me, and I saw that they—this means something for them, or they had made an effort. And I remember being really charmed. I thought, in those moments, that this is very, very rewarding. I could sense that they enjoyed what they were doing. I remember they had a “stomp”-task, where they made their own rhythmic composition in groups, which many really enjoyed. And I remember thinking that this is great fun. I sort of got a kick from it. Because they were so good, it’s so fun to have students who suddenly flourish! That you can achieve that.

Finn

[At that school] I encountered many good things with regard to music as an important element for youth. (...) That can bind them together and create many positive things.

Anne

Music engages other... it mediates in totally different ways than other forms of teaching, say, a lecture or... Music mediates in a different way, and... the more channels you have for mediation, you know? (...) The better they feel, I think. (...) But it has something to do with expressing and receiving, and process, yes. The whole being, in a way.

The two discourses Varkøy uncovered, “joy and positivity,” and “growth and development” are clearly affecting my informants. In general, joy in music is a central aspect of their motivation to become teachers in the first place (see Chapter 5), and an in-service motivational force is the chance to convey this joy to their students, making enjoyment a criterion of successful teaching. The joy and positivity discourse is clearly connected to growth and development, as Lena’s statement shows. Generating development in the students is a cause of enjoyment for the teacher, as it proves that the teaching has touched the students. Moreover, many students find joy in developing and creating something new. Finn combines the discourses of practice and joy and positivity when he recollects his own school years, stating that too much theory can be boring (see above p. 145). If the teacher succeeds in engendering joy, a major goal has been achieved. Finn shares Lena’s joy in seeing students grow, as his remarks about the differences between students in music and in other subjects show (see p. 148). Moreover, the extract above shows the role music plays in establishing cohesion—the social role that has been a trademark of the music subject for several decades.

A major trend in the history of the Norwegian music subject is a pervasive instrumentalism, where legitimacy traditionally has been found outside of the music in itself. The growth and development and joy and positivity discourses are to some extent instrumental, but when my informants refer to these

aspects it is usually with the autonomous value of music in mind: that is doing musical activities is valuable in itself. It is joy, rather than the positivity Varkøy described, that best describes my informants. The idea of music as a remedy for everything is not to be found, and I would say that the informants generally show a nuanced view on the experiences music can elicit. They nevertheless maintain that music in general is positive and important in the school. Anne's account of the importance and value of music displays how she connects music to a holistic view of the student, much in line with Bjørkvold. Her difficulty with describing her view exemplifies the difficulty of explaining the intrinsic value of music, a struggle she shares with others. When Finn describes the meaningfulness of music (p. 148) it is both an instrumental function of music as an alternative field of achievement, but it is the actual musical achievement that is the most important.

Finally, we can add that the lack of a musical hierarchy that characterize recent curricula, is found in my investigation as well. The two exceptions are Finn, who briefly mentioned the lack of classical music in the curriculum, and Thomas, who seem to place extra value on jazz and popular music in his teaching. But in general, the informants display a musical egalitarianism, where the musical activities are more important than the works themselves.

The informants' position within these discourses is a result of both their own past and schooling, and their teacher education. A major finding of Sætre was that music teacher education was dominated by a fragmented structure based on the conservatory. Most of my informants seem to have been subjected to an education based on this structure. Their description of the courses resembles that of the conservatory, with lessons in music history, theory, ear training etc. In addition, they have received some training on instruments and in didactics and pedagogy. The variation is notable, but a commonality many shared was a feeling of being unprepared for the job at hand. With the exception of Finn and Anne, the informants display rather negative descriptions of their own music teacher education, at least when it comes to being prepared for the realities in the school. When the informants have become affected by the dominating discourses surrounding the music subject, it is difficult to see the role of music teacher education in establishing these discourses. The bulk of the content in their own music teacher education appears to be quite technical, although this was not something discussed extensively in the interview. The informants' recollection of the music lessons in their own school years is another interesting source for introduction into these discourses. The variation in quality

is immense, and while Finn enjoyed the music lessons in primary school, for example, most are rather neutral concerning music in school. The musical activities outside of school seems to have played a much more substantial role, and these seem to be the primary source of musical enjoyment. When entering the work place, teachers like these have limited experience of what constitutes good quality music *teaching* as a school subject, as their main influence has been musical activities outside of the school. To conclude this section on a speculative note: Could dominating discourses among music teachers, such as “joy and positivity” and practice, have their origin in the activities outside of the school? and at the same time be connected to the social aspect of these activities?

6.3.2 Coping with breadth

Anne

I think that the purpose, the content of the music subject... The content is actually quite immense. (...) So nobody, in one lesson per week—can accomplish all of the curriculum, you know? It's just... It's impossible. (...) And when it's impossible, it turns out quite accidental what happens at various places, you know? (...) And how it takes place. And there's nothing unusual about that. When you can't do anything, you must do something, and it ends up quite accidental. (...) Do what works best, or what you are good at. So, I think a change... Would be to reduce it a bit, and perhaps get it a bit more concrete. Small and good.

A significant challenge for most music teachers is the breadth of the music subject, and what might be a lack of a center. Through decades (even centuries) of sedimentation of discourses, the music subject has expanded in several directions, from a singing subject within the context of religion, and later, the national state, to an array of different purposes and contents. In LK06 it can be argued that the musical experience constitutes the center (although the concept is not clearly defined), and some of my informants indeed put the musical experience at the center of their (ideal) teaching. There is, nevertheless, a quite substantial variation in the interviews. To make the music subject sustainable to teach, my informants' have narrowed the subject down to suit their own preferences and skills. Although they have a personal understanding of the core of the music subject, they are aware of the other, and sometimes conflicting, understandings, which can cause trouble.

Thomas is the one who most clearly evidences a view of music that corresponds with the professional's perception. His strong emphasis on musical quality has

led him to deprecate his own ability to teach the practical part of the music subject, resulting in a more theoretical subject. The only occasion where he puts his practical musical ability to work is in the end of term shows. Ellen, whose education is also partly from an institution that valorizes musicianship, expresses a similar emphasis on musical quality, through her claim that teaching music is more difficult than theoretical subjects, because the teacher must possess a certain amount of musical skill. She also displays considerable confidence, and teaches the music subject in a way that to some extent is in conflict with the curriculum. By narrowing it down to a practical, expressive subject, she has more or less disposed of the more theoretical aspects. The combination of an emphasis on musical quality, and expressiveness/experience places her in between the positions of Dale and Bjørkvold, and the result is a personal music pedagogical discourse.

Linda's story represents the opposite challenge, as she herself see the breadth of the music subject as a strength and ideal, but due to the expectancies of the administration, she had to teach a subject that was narrow and in a direction she did not approve of. While her opinion corresponds with a general education discourse, the school administration seems to be within a Norwegian discourse of art in schools, where the function is primarily social. Linda's story is also dominated by an accountability discourse, as her ideal is to teach the whole of the curriculum, but her ideal music subject is somewhat opposite.

Linda

I would have made it an experience subject. I think the present curriculum is very: Must make music! Must be able to play an instrument! Must this, and must that. I would... I think it's more important to make an oasis subject, especially in lower secondary, so—the students really need an oasis subject. And I think it could be music. But then you can't have too much "must." It must be an aspect of experience to it.

Moreover, Linda allows for a subject where the students have greater opportunity to choose what they would like to do, both listening and making music. Her use of the word "oasis" is particularly interesting. It points to the otherness of music, and the underlying argument is one that makes music an alternative to the rest of the subjects. Linda's story shows how an array of discourses are in play, from accountability and experience, which she herself advocates, to her administration's emphasis on the exteriority, the (social) function of the performances. Being in between these often conflicting discourses causes strain, as she puts her own ideals and expectations on the line. A similar situation arises in Anne's story and her description of herself as showing "cowardice",

when using computer programs. Being firmly placed within a practical, expressive discourse, she had to compromise her ideal of music teaching to be able to teach the breadth of the subject, and assess the students in a way that was not too time consuming. Although she chose this solution primarily because of the lighter burden, it also shows how the accountability discourse has introduced a stronger concern of documenting that the entirety of the curriculum has been taught. The interview with Anne places this discursive change at the introduction of LK06, as she previously had taken little notice of the change in curriculum from M87 to L97.

Lena is the one who most clearly expresses the accountability discourse, and she has struggled with the low status of music in her school (see Chapter 5 and below). Although she occasionally finds joy in teaching music, and her students enjoy and develop in her music lessons, it is not sufficient. Joy cannot remedy the low status and the sense of music not being a “proper” subject. It shows that Lena wants to position the music subject as a “proper subject” where legitimation arises from the knowledge it produces. Although Lena would wish for the music subject to be within such a discourse, she receives little support, and the administration at her workplace turns a blind eye to the unsatisfactory practices of her colleague. The conflict between her ideals and the position of music within the school discourse has resulted in a lack of enthusiasm for teaching music.

6.3.3 School performances

In Chapter 5, performances emerged as a conflicting field. For some, performances provide an opportunity to enhance the status of music in the school and demonstrate the music teacher’s professionalism. On the other hand, school performances are demanding activities that put extra strain on the music teachers. Performing is an integral part of the music subject, and it is prescribed in the curriculum on all levels. In that regard, performing is a consequence of the practice discourse that has dominated the music subject. The strong position of performances also exemplifies the gradual movement from music as a means for external goals, to an end in itself, from utility to intrinsic aesthetic value. However, the purpose of the performances is a bit unclear. Performing (for an audience) is hardly mentioned in the purpose section of the curriculum, but as it is mentioned in the competence goals for every age group, the importance must be significant. In the curriculum of 1960, performance is mentioned as a

possibility, and from 1974 school concerts became a part of the music subject. In M87 it appears as if the purpose of the performances is a feature of the growth and development discourse Varkøy described. Besides improving listening habits and increasing the students' ability to understand various musical expressions, there is a goal of enhancing the students' confidence in performing for other students (Ministry of Church Affairs and Education, 1987, p. 260). A similar argument for the position of musical performances is nonexistent in the two subsequent curricula. In addition to the growth and development aspect, performances connect the music subject to musical activities outside of the school, where performing is a self-evident activity, and thus performing enhances the authenticity of the music subject. Performing introduces yet another distinctive feature of the music subject, its exteriority. Performances create an interface where the subject meets the other, be it other students, teachers, family, or a stranger who happen to be in the audience. An exterior aspect is not exclusive to the music subject, as exam and test results in theoretical subjects and displays of work of art, can also be conceived of as a public display of a subject (visibility is indeed a central cause for vulnerability in Kelchtermans' theory), but in musical performances, the actual *practice* of the subject is on stage, and the result cannot be removed from the actors. In that regard, these are high-stake events, where the professionalism of the teacher and the ability of the students is put to the test. When several of my informants describe the performances as straining, it indicates that they have indeed put some effort in to it, and do not wish to be associated with a poor performance.

When organizing the performances often involves a lot of extra (-curricular) work, one can ask why the music teachers embark on this year after year. The drive to organize performances can come from both the teachers themselves and the school administration. Finn is the one who most strongly integrated the performances into his ethos as a teacher, and he feels the pressure of succeeding (p. 149). As he comes from a background in musical performance, and being educated at an institution that regularly produces musicians of high quality, it is likely that his belief in the importance of performances is connected to his own background. Ellen shows the same joy in staging various performances, even on her own initiative. Other teachers, such as Linda (p. 135) and Anne (p. 121), have felt pressure from school leaders to take responsibility for the performances, and this is an important point: the performances are not necessarily connected to the music subject, but they nevertheless often become the music teacher's responsibility.

Lena

But of course: When we're in March/April, and all the students are on the stage, flourishing, and it's, sort of, fantastic, and there's stage lights, and sound, and costumes and stage props and... Then they [school leaders] are like: This is SCHOOL, this is our identity. Right? This is what we can show the world. (...) But it's not what, in a normal workday, is perceived as important for us working here. To say the least.

The performances are important for enhancing the status of the music subject. It is difficult to pin down exactly how status is related to performances. Thomas explains it as a consequence of the high musical quality, but for others, like Lena, it is more likely to be connected to the social function of the performances, and to the students enjoying themselves and developing personally. It means that several discourses can be at play in the performances, both growth and development and joy and positivity, but also discourses of musical quality. The social function is perhaps the most important, especially if we consider the weak autonomous status of art, as described by Dale (1991) and in a report by Bamford (2012). Having cultural gatherings, and presenting something in the end of term shows are a central part of the Norwegian schools (as they are, I would guess, in many other countries as well). When the status of the music subject is connected to performances it is sensible to ask what kind of subject it is that receives status. Performing is indeed a part of the music subject, but locating a huge amount of status in the performances puts the focus on just a small part of the subject. By connecting the status almost exclusively to the performances one runs the risk of creating a *fabrication* of the subject (cf. Ball, 2003). It is also slightly troubling that by connecting the status of the subject to performances, it is mostly the social function that produces status. Linda experienced this disproportion as quite disturbing, as she had to compromise on her own professionalism. Lena and Ida have had similar experiences, where the everyday work in the music classroom becomes overshadowed by the performances. It indicates that the descriptions of Bamford (2012) and Dale (1991) are quite accurate, and the consequence is that the knowledge produced in the music lessons is subjected to a lower value than enjoyment.

6.3.4 The music teacher between caring and performativity.

The dominating strands of teacher identity, as presented above, can be reduced to two discourses: *caring*, including the importance of teacher–student relations and individuality, and *performativity*, the accountable teacher focusing on

knowledge and results. These are obviously not definitive, and most teachers are probably affected by both. The question is how these discourses affect music teachers, and how the role of the music teacher is positioned against these discourses. In Chapter 5, the desire to be able to develop caring relationships with students was presented as a central cause for my informants' choice to reduce or leave music teaching, and it was something all of my informants mentioned. We have seen that caring, individualization, and the relationships with students are defining factors in the discourses about Norwegian teachers. It is thus likely that the presence of caring in the teaching profession is a combination of socialization in the work place and the fact that those who want to be teachers already have these characteristics (see Chapter 5, about motivation). I have already described how my informants wanted to have a better relationship with a smaller group of students, both to reduce strain, and because a better relationship made the working life more meaningful. When I now return to the topic I will change the focus and look at how the dominant discourses operates as a norm, and thus as exclusion mechanisms if one fails to live up to the norm.

From an external view, one can question what makes it more straining to have few lessons with a large group, than more lessons with a smaller group, as the amount of teaching remains the same. Classroom management is one aspect that is mentioned by my informants, as better relationships reduce the need for strict control, and the reluctance towards discipline might be a central factor. The discourse of individuality is a significant cause for this reluctance, as strong discipline has a collectivistic taste to it. Moreover, strict discipline is opposed to the dominant discourses of joy and personal development that surround the music subject. Many of my informants connect proper teaching to adapting for each individual. Anne defines good teaching as seeing each individual and having a good relationship (p. 124). In her expressive view of the music subject, it becomes more important since music is a creative subject, where they must give of themselves. Creating a safe environment is thus a premise for achieving her ideal of the music subject. Caring is for Anne a central aspect of her professionalism (O'Connor, 2008), as safe surroundings are central to proper music teaching.

For Lena, caring for each student is connected to her professional ideals. Her main problem with the other music teacher's practices (p. 154f) was that they were harmful to the students, and not just harmful to their learning. In her recollection of the challenges of her first year as teacher, struggles with class

management, more precisely establishing a relation of trust, was the first she mentioned. It is interesting that she felt confident with the teaching, but from her description, the relationships with the students are just as important—almost an aim in itself. Like Anne, Lena posits caring as a part of her professionalism, but from her description of her route into the profession, the relationship with the students was also a strong motivator to become a teacher, which indicates that caring is also a personal trait.

Finn expressed a wish to have better relations with a smaller group of students, which led him to study Norwegian, to have the opportunity to be classroom teacher. His pre-service experiences as a substitute teacher are an important influence on his decision to become a teacher, and working with youth was the main motivation (p. 146). His relationship with the students is a significant part of his ethos as a teacher, but there was a social aspect to his career move as well. In his description of his first work place, he and the other music teachers had a feeling of being left out of the organization, and later he states that if you are not classroom teacher you are an outsider, but if you are classroom teacher “you come in from the cold” (p. 148). This statement is interesting as it shows the normativity of the classroom teacher role, where the main difference compared to a subject teacher is the caring aspect and the general responsibility for the individual student’s learning and well-being. As described above, this attention to the students is inscribed in the discourses about what constitutes a proper teacher in Norway. For those who do not comply with this standard, the norm can operate, as in Finn’s case, as an exclusion mechanism.

The changes towards performativity and accountability have affected my informants in various ways. While they comply with and respect the changes to various degrees, they all are aware of them, and the language of the discourses is present. The one who is most critical of performativity and the increased focus on the core subjects is Ellen. Although she has experienced some pressure to comply with the aims in the curriculum, she maintains her focus on what she believes is most central to the music subject, the practical and expressive part. When the principal has expressed concern about whether she can document her teaching, grounded in the curriculum, she defends her choices by referring to the importance of musical experiences.

At the other end of the scale we find Lena, who is most strongly affected by performativity and accountability.

Lena

The systematics of assessment, from—well, your starting point is the competence

goals, and then you set up an annual plan, and then you work your way through the competence goals, with different assessment forms, and grading. (...) You are supposed to be able to document the grade. Yes, refer to documentation.

I am deliberately extending the boundaries of these discourses by including practices as assessment for learning, that have been included as traits of professionalism. They are accountability measures to the extent that the teachers are accountable for performing their task in line with research-based knowledge. All together these practices are examples of the discourses that were introduced with LK06. In the extract above we see Lena's definition of proper planning and assessment. The description emerged when Lena told about the lack of training in assessing during her teacher education. The increased focus on assessment⁵⁵ and *assessment for learning* that was introduced with LK06 meant that good teaching in some ways has been defined as beginning with how to assess the competence goals. In addition to presenting good assessment procedures as a part of her professionalism, Lena has included the moral aspect of assessment in her music teaching.

Lena

And his [the other music teacher] classes are now going to have singing tests, which I can't approve of, pedagogically. I don't want to expose my students for that, so I won't do it. Especially not the boys, poor things. (...) Breaking of the voice in the tenth grade. So, it's quite unpleasant and personal things.

The problems with her colleague were increased as they taught at the same grade, and in principle were required to teach the same content, for the sake of fairness. But as her colleague mainly plays guitar with the students, and thus dispenses with the breadth of the subject and has a lack of professionalism, Lena decided to do her work separately from the colleague.

Ida entered the profession at about the same time as Lena, and struggled with the new expectations to the teachers present in LK06, as working with competence goals and the enhanced importance of assessment (p. 129f). Although she struggled with these aspects in general, the music subject proved especially difficult, particularly assessing and grading. From Ida and Lena's descriptions it appears as if the breadth of the music subject has become a challenge when it is coupled with accountability measures.

Lena

I think for myself: the most important is that I make sure—my ideal is, but it's impossible in reality, my ideal is that we touch upon every main subject area in the curriculum every term. We haven't got time for that, if we're to do it

55 See <https://www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/vurdering/>.

thoroughly or properly. (...) But at least the last term in the tenth grade, I think it's important that you assess the student in all main subject areas, as it will lead to the final assessment. (...) Time is the great challenge, in regard of going through enough competence goals, for you should at least cover half of them in every main subject area during a term. So... Yes, I try to be very careful about and comply with... What will the county governor say if there's a complaint?⁵⁶ (...) That's actually my starting point. (laughter) And they will look at it, that is the first they will look at. The main subject areas, and how many competence goals are covered within each area, and can I document the students' skill or level in relation to the competence goals. (...) So, I rely significantly on the competence goals. It must actually preside over everything.

Bendik

Did you have the feeling of getting through... (...) the curriculum?

Ida

No. I didn't feel that. And the teacher who had them [earlier], there were some students in the tenth grade who had to get their final assessment. He hadn't been too occupied with the Knowledge Promotion, and L97 and all that, so he had just done his own thing. And then I arrived. New and conscientious, and: have they reached these goals?

This description of Lena's ideal indicates how an external control mechanism (accountability) has become internal to her own professionalism. It also shows how powerful the discourse is, to the point where they dominate a teacher's professional ethos. Although the standards Lena imposes on herself originate in external *accountability*, they have become her own *responsibility*, as she must, for her students' sake, ensure that they get a chance to prove themselves in the breadth of the subject. Lena is no machine-like teacher, who only has the competence goals in mind, the extract above displays how she has care for the students' learning, and well-being in mind. Linda had a similar concern, but she met opposition from the school leadership when she wanted to teach the breadth of the subject. Like Lena, Ida had a colleague with an independent approach to the music subject, with little concern for the curriculum, as Johansen (2003) found quite prominent in his study. This difference between generations is indicative of the relevance of age difference Mausethagen (2013b) discovered. Increased weight on cooperation is in itself a characteristic of performance management (McKenzie, 2001, p. 69ff) and an expectation of teachers in the age of performativity (Ministry of Education and Research, 2004, p. 26ff). Cooperation is also central to establishing good assessment practices (Vinge, 2014, p. 214). Isolation has already been presented as a challenge for many music

56 The county governor [*fylkesmann*] is the administrative appeal body of final grades in the compulsory school.

teachers. The isolation of music teachers makes it difficult for them to cooperate in the ways expected in performative practices, and particularly makes assessment difficult, as Ida discovered (p. 130). Finally, Lena also locates much of the joy of working as a teacher in working together with her colleagues (p. 154f).

There are a few reasons that Lena has internalized performativity to a stronger degree than the other informants. First, she is the youngest of my informants, and she received her teacher education after the introduction of LK06, which means that all her work experience after she graduated has been within a performative system. Second, she works in a municipality that is known for its emphasis on performativity and accountability, and third, she has embarked on a path towards school leadership, which entails a deeper involvement in the accountability measures of the municipality. However, she also experienced the unfairness of poor assessment procedures in the music subject in her own school years, which has made its mark to such a degree that she does not want the same for her students.

The most substantial aspect of accountability and the music subject is how status is distributed. The national and international tests give legitimacy to the knowledge that is tested, to such an extent that other subjects run the risk of being irrelevant. Section 6.2, above, shows that the music subject has yet to experience an era of high status, but the development towards accountability has rearticulated the dispersion of status in the school. School performances are events where the music subject gains status, but not necessarily because of the intrinsic value of music, or the knowledge special to music. The status is primarily due to the social function of the performances, and, as Lena and Linda experienced, is rather brief in duration. The introduction of LK06 also meant an emphasis on core subjects and the introduction of basic skills. Both these concepts exclude the music subject from the central activities in the school.

Finn

We cooperated a lot, we three music teachers, but [we] noticed that he who taught English as well, that he often had to yield for the benefit of the more important subject, in quotation marks. English. Because it is a massive focus in the school with regard to that math, Norwegian and English are the core subjects. (...) And in reality, it takes up a lot of space. Both time and focus, for many, it's what you're measured against. National tests, exams and so on. So... it was kind of, I felt that (...) it was a battle of legitimating the importance of the music subject. That battle has been there all the time.

Finn's description points to an important nuance, that it is not necessarily just a depreciation of the music subject, but rather an increased emphasis on the

core subjects, which makes other subjects fall behind. The last sentence also indicates that low status is not new with LK06. Ellen first claimed that at her school the music subject enjoyed a status similar to the core subjects, but later adjusted her claim (p. 119). A clear example of the way the difference in status is manifested is in funding for furthering education.

Ellen

I see that with the increased weight put on the core subjects, that is, what PISA implies. The PISA-tests imply that some subjects are more important than others. In addition, we have that competence-package from the government, with furthering education, where the municipality has decided—at least here—that it will exclusively go to math and science this year, and just English that year. (...) The municipality says that, yes, we will grant furthering education in the most important subjects, and then they reel off the most important subjects. And then I ask: What about the other subjects? And what about the practical-aesthetic subjects? Because after the most important subjects we have social studies, and then those subjects follow. But where are the practical-aesthetic subjects?

These two examples show how national and international tests have changed the school. It may be that these subjects have been regarded the most important earlier as well, but the tests, and the notion of core subjects, has introduced a language that (re)articulates the difference in status. It also expresses how certain forms of knowledge, i.e. literacy and numeracy, are what makes these subjects important. International tests in art subjects has been discussed (Varkøy, 2003, p. 44), but we have (luckily) yet to see them introduced. The question remains: to what degree should the music subject comply with the changes to the school for the sake of increased status? Vinge (2014) discussed the status of the music subject in his study of assessment in music in the Norwegian schools. His informants are quite unanimous in their emphasis on the need for grading and formal assessment as a tool for maintaining status. In a discussion about the possibility of a subject without grades a dilemma occurs: “[I]t appears to be difficult to develop the music subject on its own terms, without running the risk of losing status as a ‘proper subject’” (Vinge, 2014, p. 356, my transl.). Regardless of the difference between performativity and the music subject, it is a necessary Faustian pact to maintain the relevance of the music subject in the present educational climate.

6.4 Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to make an outline of some dominant characteristics of the Norwegian schools, and how they pertain to my informants. There is a synchronization taking place between the Norwegian school system and those abroad, especially with the English-speaking world. While Norway has adopted performativity, there are nevertheless powerful discourses operating within the Norwegian schools that counteract these inventions, and ensure that the identity of the Norwegian schools is maintained, although several of these values are challenged. A starting point for the present dissertation is the importance of viewing the music subject in light of these changes, as the music subject is but one small part of a greater school system, and can only be fully understood as such. Although my informants are individuals with agency, it is inevitable that they are influenced by the discourses that constitute the context within which they perform their daily work. In my view, connecting their experiences to the discourses that operate on a macro-level makes it possible, to some extent, to make generalizable claims.

In the Norwegian schools we can historically speak of two conflicting camps, with their own views of knowledge and teacher education. On the one hand, we have the comprehensive school, from a *Bildung*-oriented grouping, and on the other hand, proponents of a more positivistic knowledge-school. Although they have approached each other the last decades, it is safe to say that the knowledge-school has gained prominence, at least in the policy (the counterpart still has a strong standing among the teachers). The ground gained by the knowledge-school is largely related to the emergence of performativity, understood as a discursive formation that includes accountability measures, increased emphasis on research-based knowledge and practice, and an overall challenge of efficiency. In the Norwegian schools, this has resulted in the *Knowledge Promotion* reform and a new curriculum that involved both devolution of responsibility and freedom for the actors, but also increased control and accountability. It is tempting to describe the introduction of performativity as a paradigm shift, as it has led to a new language within the school, new aims, and new benchmarks. I hesitate to use such bold words, because of the inertia of the discourses. The materiality of the school, including the teachers, is slow moving, and the other discourses are still present as part of the discursive geology that constitutes the Norwegian schools.

Another change is the move from discipline to performance. As mentioned several times, the Norwegian school system is still largely organized as a disciplinary institution; but this is breaking down. Through devolution of responsibility, breaking up of serialized time, and more freedom for the actors, the disciplinary organization is being challenged and displaced by forms of organization that, according to McKenzie, originate in the performance formation. When Ball described performativity as a rearticulated discipline he captured the paradox of performativity—that performance can both be liberating and transgressive, and normative and repressive. The language of the policy documents largely implies the former, with the above-mentioned emphasis on freedom for teachers and school leaders; but the control mechanisms and the importance of student performance have more or less neutralized the “positive” side to performativity. With the increased weight put on performance, especially test-performance, norms for teaching appear, and teachers are expected to conduct their teaching according to research-based knowledge about what works best; in Norway this is publicly advocated by the school researcher Thomas Nordahl (Nordahl, 2015). The result is both the experience of reduced freedom for many teachers, and an increased status of, and attention to, the knowledge that is tested: a description that is uncannily close to Marcuse’s description of performative repression (see p. 65).

The music subject is vulnerable to these changes. If we position the music subject within performativity, it is on the one hand a subject that incorporates many of the values of performance management (and other paradigms of performance), such as creativity, initiative, and freedom, but which on the other hand also incorporates a form of knowledge that is incommensurable with the knowledge that characterizes the core subjects and basic skills. The result is low status. The low status of the music subject did not appear with the advent of performativity, it is more correct to speak of a rearticulation within performative terms. It seems that the music subject runs the risk of being a victim of the terror of performativity (see above), i.e. the risk of being excluded if the efficiency is too low. When the efficiency of the school is connected to test results, it is not difficult to see that the music subject falls short on several standards. Low status has consequences for my informants: directly, in a feeling of being unimportant and excluded, but also indirectly, in poor funding and unsuitable organization.

The music subject is further characterized by a substantial breadth, at least considering the low number of lessons. The breadth of the music subject is a

consequence of different features being added over time, and has led to extensive “privatization” of the subject, where teachers try to narrow it down to suit their own skills, knowledge, and preferences. There are nevertheless some dominating discourses. The two discourses Varkøy found, “joy and positivity” and “growth and development” are present among my informants, indicating a link between the curriculum(-a) and their own ideas about teaching. LK06 distinguishes itself by being primarily preoccupied with the musical experience, and it does not mention enjoyment (*trivsel*), which indicates a step away from the joy and positivity discourse. When my informants talk about joy in the music subject, they refer both to their own joy in making music, and to watching their students learn and enjoy. The students enjoying themselves in the lessons is in some ways a measure of successful teaching, but it is always connected to the music itself, as Ida’s concern over “*YouTube*-teaching” reveals. The joy must come from the content/activities of the subject: it has no value if it is not connected to the activities in the lessons. While a “music-is-always-good-for-you positivity” is a trivialization of what the music can convey, I am sympathetic towards my informants’ emphasis on joy and, as a teacher, I have striven to make music a joyful subject as well. Joy is an important pedagogic strategy, and it is also a clear sign of students’ achieving something, which must be the goal for every teacher.

Growth and development also requires comment. Varkøy’s understanding of growth and development is connected to the instrumental function of music. Similar traits are evident in my informants’ stories, clearly connected to the otherness of the music subject, which will be discussed further in the next chapter. They are more nuanced than Varkøy’s curriculum-analysis found, however. When they speak of personal growth and development, they express both the ability of music to facilitate personal development, and a development connected to the intrinsic value of music—as an activity that is good in itself as part of a general education. Growth and development can also be seen as the purpose of all education, and thus we should perhaps be worried if we found no traces of such a discourse.

While the two discourses Varkøy found, and a discourse of musical experience, can form a discursive center of the music subject, the actual teaching is predominantly characterized by an emphasis on musical *practice*. My informants value musical practice highly, and they strive to make it a practical subject. A subject that is mainly practical further accentuates the otherness of the music subject, as the knowledge connected to musical practice is opposed to the logocentrism

that characterizes the school (and the society). It must be emphasized that practice is not a choice my informants have made, it is an inevitable, substantial part of the music subject. If we draw a continuum between, on the one hand, the theoretical, *Bildung*-approach of Dale, and absolute expressivism on the other, my informants are somewhere in between. They advocate a practical subject, and the value of musical expression, but they are also adamant about music as a *subject*, where the students must learn, and never succumb to the anti-pedagogy to which absolute expressivism can lead.

Another division that has formed teachers in the Norwegian schools is the subject positions offered by the discourses. Søreide found “the teacher as child centered, caring and including” to be the paramount teacher identity across her study of teachers, teachers’ union, and policy documents. This identity is connected to Scandinavian discourses of individualization, and it has a strong position among the teachers. In the years since Søreide’s dissertation, new discourses and subject positions have emerged, and the performative teacher is on the rise. Beginning in the English-speaking world, school performance, especially in the form of test results, has increased significantly in importance, and with the PISA-tests and LK06, it has reached the Norwegian schools. Mausethagen found that a new generation of teachers is being formed, who to a much greater extent find testing and accountability legitimate. Vinge (2014) made a similar finding among music teachers. A new form of teacher professionalism is appearing, in which, in addition to testing and accountability, research-based knowledge and best practice are valued. Among my informants, Lena and Ida are most in line with the new generation, while all of them are influenced by this, often in opposition. Being more concerned with the legal aspects of teaching, the new generation strives to assess the goals correctly, document their work, and makes sure the students are being taught the breadth of the curriculum. Needless to say, a broad music subject with a low number of lessons can lead to qualms about whether it is possible to reach the intended goals while maintaining good teaching that actually gives the students a chance to learn. What remains is that both of these identities—caring and performativity—can function as exclusion mechanisms, as a full-time music teacher will struggle to reach the standards of both of them. Caring is made difficult by the low number of lessons with each student, and performativity is a challenge because the knowledge of the music subject falls outside of the boundaries of performative value.

I have used school performances as an example of how various challenges and demands are in play. Performances are events where music teachers can make use of their musical and pedagogical skills, and make the content of the subject visible for an audience. While some teachers value these performances, and spend a lot of time and effort in enhancing the quality, other teachers experience them as a hindrance for teaching the subject. The concept *fabrication* describes what occurs when schools produce an exterior image of their activities (results) that does not fully comply with the realities. The term is useful for the present dissertation, as performances are a public display of the music subject, yet not necessarily an authentic display. The area of most concern is when the performances are held in high esteem by leaders and others, while the everyday teaching has low status. Connecting the status of music more or less exclusively to the performances is problematic, as the social aspects of performances are often more important than the musical; and the “normal” lessons and knowledge that is produced there are left in the shadows. I must again emphasize that my informants are divided in their view of performances, and some of them find organizing performances empowering, while others experience them as mostly straining.

In performances, several articulations of performance are brought into play. On the one hand, they are cultural performances in the everyday sense, including the display of art where the artists (students) are outside of the everyday life (liminality). At the same time, the students and the teacher are performing on another level, as they are assessed according to a standard. In some cases, they become emblematic of the whole school, as a public display where an audience are invited to watch what goes on inside the school. However, as mentioned above, the question is whether they are assessed according to their social function, or the musical value. Previous studies (Bamford, 2012; Dale, 1991) indicate that the former is the most important, a finding to which some of my informants, though (luckily) not all, can relate.

7 Discussion

Starting with the question of why music teachers quit teaching music, through the literature review, theoretical framework(s), description of method, and two different analytic segments, this dissertation has expanded in several directions. As the purpose is to explore the field of causes for attrition from music teaching, dispersion is welcomed. In this general discussion, I will gather up the threads and discuss some of the central themes that have emerged through the investigation.

The investigation has so far uncovered a range of possible factors that can cause music teachers to leave music teaching. On the one hand, there are factors connected to teaching music, such as noise, lack of resources, inadequate organization, professional isolation, low status, and lack of support. My informants also describe the music subject as pedagogically challenging, and they need to be constantly “on” to maintain control. And there are some factors my informants find alluring about teaching several subjects and being a classroom teacher. Among them is that classroom teaching of non-music subjects is simply less demanding. Teaching core subjects also invites them into areas of the school that are perceived as “important,” and they experience increased professional collaboration and a greater sense of inclusion. Moreover, all of my informants describe their wish for a better relationship with the students to be a central cause. The latter factor corresponds with the findings in the discourse analysis, where the relationship with students was found to be an important part of

Norwegian teacher identity. The career trajectory is another factor that must be considered. The interest in the students and pedagogy seem to displace the interest in the subject that first brings many future teachers to the profession. This is the case with my informants, who to a large degree became teachers because of their musical background. The move towards pedagogy and student centered-ness is accentuated in the Norwegian schools by the important discourses of caring and individualization.

The discourse analysis also uncovered the connection between my informants' struggles and the discourses that surround the Norwegian schools. Historically, the music subject has suffered from low status, due to the low appreciation of music and art in the Norwegian schools. The most substantial discourses in the music subject, such as joy and positivity, and growth and development, further position the music subject on the margins of the school, as the value has been placed largely on utility—on a means to ends approach. The problem of legitimizing the music subject in itself has been addressed by LK06, which puts the musical experience at the heart of the subject. This nevertheless places the music subject in opposition to the dominant values of the school, further exacerbating the low status and isolation of the subject. It is from that background this discussion departs, and I will revolve around some important themes on a more abstract level. It also entails moving the argument away from the immediate context in which my informants perform their daily work, thus resulting in a theoretical description few music teachers will recognize. The purpose is to reach a level where the general aspects become more pronounced. I open this chapter with a discussion of the relationship between the general and the particular aspects of the dissertation, and include the theoretical framework as described in Chapter 3. Second, I will turn to a topic that was uncovered in the previous chapter, the *otherness* of the music subject. The third section deals with the professional identity of music teachers, understood both in terms of how their professionalism is constructed and challenged, and how maintaining a professional identity as music teacher is difficult in the Norwegian schools. Finally, as the present dissertation is based on my own background as a teacher, I will close the chapter with a short personal reflection.

7.1 Uniting levels of investigation

A part of Habermas' criticism of Gadamer was the need to distinguish between the aspects that are symbolic structures and those that are symbolically mediated, such as labor and domination. In the discourse analysis, I put great emphasis on the language used in policy documents, but large parts of the conceptual framework are not found in texts that originates from the context, but are from research written in English, and most often from an English-speaking context. Some of the concepts have found their counterpart in Norwegian, but others (such as the ambiguity of the term performance) are imposed. It is nevertheless safe to claim that aspects of the performative language, including those that are imported from the private market sphere, have an alienating function among some of the teachers. While the performative language may have originally been made up mostly of symbolic structures, it has—as the practices the performative discourses prescribe become realities—increasingly taken on a status as a mediator of performative structures, including structures of labor and domination, to quote Habermas. But as the language has an alienating effect, and displaces other languages, as symbolic structure it has a dominating function as well. The prevalence of the rather new performative concepts, like basic skills, core subjects, and goal achievement, and the weight on testing and testable knowledge, makes it difficult to gain acceptance for language that traditionally has been part of the music subject. I am not sure whether the emphasis on musical (existential) experiences helps in that regard. The lingual practices in the school seem to enhance the displacement of the music subject from the school discourses, although many teachers seek refuge in the new language (and pedagogical practices) to obtain a somewhat higher status (cf. Vinge (2014)). To view the language in the school as discursive helps to explain how the antagonism appears, and partly explains the difference between generations of teachers. Central to the discourse theory presented in the present dissertation is the weight and materiality of the discourse, understood as a materiality that primarily consists of previous statements and practices. The inertia that follows from the materiality makes an abrupt discursive change difficult, and thus the experienced teachers experience the new discourse of performativity as alien to the school. But for the fresh teachers who are not embedded in the discursive network of the school, the performative language is a given.

The dispersion that is the result of the investigation is no accident. The rationale behind combining theoretical frameworks and methods was to enhance the

exploratory aspect of the dissertation, while at the same time facilitating for a discussion on a more general level. On the one hand, we have the relationship between the particular and the general—each informant’s experiences and the whole of the study—and on the other hand, yet related, the relation between the discursive aspects and the lived materiality. Although the discourse has its own materiality, the difference is useful as a tool, and as an articulation of the particular and the general. The model of the hermeneutical circle encompasses some of the dispersion, as each particular story is a part of the hermeneutical circle. It nevertheless entails that there must be a certain coherence between the various elements of the circle, and in that regard combining theoretical frameworks may prove problematic. I still maintain that it is feasible, and even productive, as the two theoretical strands inform the study at different levels. There must, however, be a certain epistemological correspondence between the theories, which I believe there is. Both have a constructive basis, with historicity as a central condition. The main concern is the view of interpretation one finds in Foucault (2002a), but, as previously mentioned, the definition of and limits to interpretation for which Gadamer argues, correspond with Foucault. When I say that the theories address the study on different levels, it is slightly imprecise. While the hermeneutics directly concern the narrative analysis, and performance/discourse concern the discourse analysis, the former has obvious influence on the latter, due to the ontological aspect of hermeneutics. Although they are connected to each analytic segment, it is fair to claim that hermeneutics concern the dissertation as a whole significantly more than discourse/performance. Taking the ontological status of interpretation seriously means that there can be no discourse analysis without interpretation.

To speak of an answer to the research question, it is necessarily an element of triangulation between theory, empirical material, and interpretation, with the productive space lying in between these components. To draw inferences from the totality involves overlaying the hermeneutic circle with the logic of abduction. It is nevertheless not my intention to reach a single answer, as the conclusion in the next chapter shows, but the findings that emerge are still products of this hermeneutic/abductive logic. While I have striven to maintain my informants’ individuality, the possibility of a generalization involves describing the ways in which the conditions for my informants’ actions arise from similar discursive origins. My description is obviously not exhaustive, but it demonstrates the power these discourses can exercise over teachers, while also having a resonance in their pre-service, pre-education motivation

for becoming teachers. Just as teachers are influenced by the context in which they work, there is probably also a certain percentage of the population who view teaching as an alluring profession, and this is demonstrated by their motivation in approaching the occupation. The final answer to the question lies somewhere in between the individual teacher's agency and the power of the discourses.

7.2 The otherness of the music subject

The otherness of the music subject has been indicated already, and its consequences need to be discussed. In the present dissertation, the notion of otherness stems from both the informants and the subject itself, as it emerges through curricula, policy documents, and research on its historical development. At the most pronounced, the informants speak of the difference between music and "regular" or "normal" subjects. Their experience of music as something that differs from the other subjects in the school indicates that they have internalized some of the discourses that construct the Norwegian schools, but it is important to note that there are features of the music subject that distinguish it from most other subjects in the school. At the heart of this discussion is knowledge and what the knowledge does.

One of the conflict lines that was presented in Chapter 6 is between the "knowledge school" and the *Bildung*-oriented school, a conflict with a long history in Norway. To repeat an important point, the latter orientation has enjoyed (and still enjoys) significant support, but the former has gained ground, and in my view, it is safe to say that it has become the dominant one. In the present dissertation, I have described this development within the concepts performance/performativity. The performance formation reaches in several directions, and can be both normative/repressive and empowering/transgressive. This duality constitutes the paradoxical side of performance. In the present dissertation, performativity within the schools has predominately been presented as a normative development, in which increased emphasis on test-performance and efficiency has enhanced the status of the knowledge that is tested—a description of performance that is closest to performance management and Lyotard's and Marcuse's descriptions of performative power and knowledge. The liberating aspect is also present in policy documents, but it is coupled with accountability measures that, at least in some areas, have neutralized the

intended freedom of teachers and school leaders. A central aspect of McKenzie's theory is that the paradigms of performance are interconnected—they cite each other—what he calls “the iterability of conceptual models” (McKenzie, 2001, p. 92). Herein lies the explanation to how “mutational forces can become normative, and normative forces mutational” (ibid.). In the present dissertation, the relation between technological and test performance and accountability has been mentioned several times. In the schools, they have become dependent on each other, as the accountability measures, would be too demanding without the help of digital tools. Moreover, this performativity coincides with schools producing “fabrications” of themselves, performances in a more artificial, theatrical, and concealing form.

A pertinent question in the present dissertation is the place of the music subject within the performative network. The otherness of the music subject has emerged as an important theme precisely because the music subject in many ways opposes performativity, at least when speaking of performative knowledge. The knowledge that has been, and still is, at the heart of the music subject revolves around *Bildung*, well-being, personal growth, and, from 2006, musical experiences. This view is found both in the curricula and in the music pedagogical discourses that surround the music subject. In the current educational climate, where the most important knowledge is the one that is tested and believed to contribute to the nation's economic efficiency, there is little room for the knowledge and values traditionally associated with music. What emerges is “the terror of performativity” (Ball, 2003; Lyotard, 1984), where everything that fails to adhere to the challenge of efficiency is rendered irrelevant, resulting in low status. One must also ask what choices the music teachers have, as they are obliged to teach according to the curriculum. One could say that from the outset the music subject evades the feedback loop of efficiency that characterizes performativity. As mentioned several times, the low status of the music subject is nothing new, it appeared with the advent of the performative school in the 1990s. As H. Jørgensen (2001) describes, the music subject has been more or less in crisis since the nineteenth century, and when my informants described the music lessons in their own school years, the notion of music as a break is common, a view many students today have adopted, as they can hardly see the purpose of music in the school. It is therefore more correct to speak of a rearticulation within performative terms. The consequences are nevertheless the same. This study also indicates that it is not necessarily low status in itself that is problematic, as Finn's story shows, and my informants

in general maintain the otherness of the music subject as a strength: it makes a necessary alternative to the theoretical subjects. The problem arises when low status has material consequences like low funding for instruments, and when there is little understanding of the idiosyncrasy of the music subject, such as its need for divided classes when teaching instruments. These can result in indefensibly poor-quality teaching. This brings us to another feature of the music subject's otherness: the pedagogical practices.

Cultural performance pertains to music teachers to a significant degree. As a practical art subject, the music subject has an obvious connection to the theatrical, artful aspect of performance, and demands of the teachers some level of skills in musical performance. But the actual teaching can also be thought of as performance. This is not exclusive to music teachers, but music (and other practical subjects) has an intrinsic bodily aspect, where the teachers are expected to use their bodies in ways that differ from most other subjects, as in playing, singing, and dancing. And unlike physical education, the purpose of these bodily practices is primarily aesthetic. The aesthetic, bodily aspect counterposes the music subject to the logocentrism of the school. There are obviously parallels in other pedagogical settings, as the use of drama in the language subjects, or dancing lessons in physical education, but unlike these examples the bodily aspect of the music subject *defines* the music subject. In a "regular" school setting you would generally see a high amount of pedagogical iteration: a certain set of pedagogical practices circulate between the subjects. The music subject is largely cut off from this feedback loop. Exceptions do exist, for example, some of my informants say that their teaching in theoretical subjects is informed by musical practices and music teaching, but in general, music as a practical subject opposes the iteration of pedagogical practices. On the other hand there is a considerable amount of exchange between the music subject and musical practices outside of the school, indicating the feedback loop Schechner (1977/2003, p. 215) has described. (There are obviously far more practices moving from outside the school to the school than in the opposite direction.) Assessment is an important pedagogical practice, and as we saw in Chapters 5 and 6, assessment can prove difficult in the music subject. For many music teachers' assessment contradicts with the essence of the music subject, and others find it difficult to assess musical practice. On the other hand, there are examples in the present dissertation and in Vinge (2014) of teachers who find assessment, and especially grading, important for enhancing the status

of the music subject, and assessment is also becoming an important aspect of teacher professionalism.

All of this may be self-evident, to a degree, as the music subject requires certain practices, but it can become problematic when it is coupled with the increased emphasis on performativity and research based knowledge. First, to repeat an important point, practice and aesthetics are likely to fall outside of what is conceived of as knowledge, both in opposition to a positivistic definition of knowledge, and the performative value, i.e. (economic) efficiency. Second, as I mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, the repertoire of desired and available pedagogical practices has become somewhat narrowed down with increased emphasis on research-based knowledge of “what works.” If we follow this line of thought, it is tempting to claim that “music teaching” risk falling outside of the boundaries of “teaching,”—or at least “proper teaching.” Consequently, a dilemma arises between pedagogical practices that belong to the music subject, and pedagogical practices that are considered “proper,” a parallel to the problem of knowledge described above. The challenge that music teachers face is thus a realization of the imperative in the title of McKenzie’s book: “perform or else.” Perform according to standards of teaching, or risk being excluded. The opposite means teaching in ways that are unfavorable to the subject. I will return to this topic below.

7.3 Professional identity

A more precise title to this section might be “*changing* professional identity,” or “*struggling with* professional identity.” Another distinction might be a separation of professionalism from identity. I use the word “identity” because *identification* (and lack of identification) is a significant aspect of my informants’ professional development. In addition to the teachers’ identification with the profession, there is, perhaps an even more important aspect, namely how teachers are identified/perceived by their surroundings/colleagues. By “identity” I do not suggest an inner essence. If anything, the present dissertation shows how professional identity can be fluid. In Chapters 2 and 5 we have seen the problem of isolation, and the importance of belonging to the work place (Tiplic et al., 2015). The schools, both a national institution and at the individual school level, are fairly closed institutions, and locally, of limited size. Entering such a small environment necessarily entails a great deal of orientation to find one’s

place, what Kelchtermans and Ballet (2002) call “micro-political actions.” In the previous chapter, we saw how certain teacher identities are central in the Norwegian school, both the caring and student-centered teacher, and in the last decades, the performative teacher, whose professionalism is connected to results, research-based practice, and accountability. The latter is predominately valued by the youngest generation of teachers, who have their background as students in performance-oriented education—what Wilkins (2010) calls “post-performative teachers.” As greater interest in the students and pedagogy increases over time, this aspect might be subdued as the teachers gain more experience. From some of my informants’ experience of exclusion it can be claimed that just as the music subject has an *other* quality, the music teacher is something else than teacher as well.

As certain subject positions and identities emerge over time these come to represent norms for what constitutes teachers and teaching. And to be identified as a teacher one must act or perform according to these norms. We are thus speaking of what was presented in Chapter 3 as “restored behavior”—behavior that involves a strong element of repetition (Schechner, 1985). The discursive background of teacher behavior in Norway was presented in the previous chapter and has a long history, at least the caring, individualistic aspect. The exact origin is nevertheless lost, resulting in what Schechner calls subjunctive “nonevents.” However, with the growing presence of research-based teaching, the original events are becoming more and more indicative, i.e. actual, historical. A cause for teacher vulnerability Kelchtermans uncovered was the lack of a firm, scientific base for the actions. The subjunctive nonevents correspond with this situation as the reasons for choosing these can be more historical than actual, and thus, the indicative events can easily enjoy higher status, as they are more likely to be efficient. Another useful distinction introduced by Schechner is between “is” and “as” performance. In section 3.2.1 I claimed that teaching is “as” performance, yet teaching has a theatrical quality to it, so in addition to viewing teaching as a performance, there is certainly an “is” quality to it as well, especially in the music subject, where the teacher has to be a performer as well. A useful concept by Schechner to describe this situation is “double negativity.” In a performance you are “not you,” but on the other hand you are “not not you” either (Schechner, 1985, p. 111). It means that in teaching there runs a loop between the teachers’ private life and personality and the teaching, just as there is a transfer between musical practices outside of the school and the music subject.

In section 3.2.5 I presented Butler's theory of performative identity (Butler, 1988, 1990/1999, 1993). While Schechner (and Turner) belong to performance studies, in which performance is more in the line of empowering and transgressive, Butler describes the performance of identity as highly normative, and building on the work of Austin and Derrida, she claims that (gender) identity is repetition of norms. In addition to viewing identity "as" performance, her point that there is no identity behind what is performed in many ways posits identity within the "is" performance category as well. To repeat an important point, performing gender identity is very different from performing professional identity. Professional identity lies somewhere in between a role, something you "put on," and the constitution of the self.⁵⁷ I nevertheless turn to Butler because of her insistence of norms and on negative consequences for the one who fails. Jones (1997) claims that "the teacher" emerges from the collective understanding of what a teacher is, a product of discursive practices, performatively produced by the teacher, the students, and the surroundings (p. 267f). She mentions the architecture explicitly, and how the various actors position themselves in that space. What are then the consequences for the music teachers, who teach in a different architecture, with different spatial organization, less sanctioned places, and different acts? Following Jones and Butler it is apparent that the music teachers' professional identity must be different from a teacher identity as it is produced by other practices and in another environment. The otherness of the environment is heard in the interviews in the repeated mention of the difficulties of classroom management in music, as the students engage in activities with which they are unfamiliar, and the spatial organization of the teaching is different than that of most other subjects. Having a professional identity different from the colleagues is not necessarily problematic unless it has negative consequences as exclusion and professional devaluation, i.e. not be regarded as a "proper teacher." Pushing the argument to an extreme, one could say that the intelligibility (Butler, 1990/1999; Mitchell, 2008) as a teacher is at stake (see also Dolloff, 2007). As teaching has become increasingly scripted, and informed by what I described above as indicative events, these are not necessarily applicable to the music subject, at least not perceived as such by the surroundings. In addition, the extensive "privatization" of the music subject, where the teachers have to choose content based on their skills, may lead to an

57 Butler's distinction between performance and performativity (Butler, 1993, p. 2) is close to the is/as or role/identity distinctions, as performance is understood as more deliberate acts, while performative (discursive) acts are more or less unintentional.

increase in subjunctive activities. The consequence is increased vulnerability, as the music teachers are decreasingly able to build their practice on solid evidence.

According to Kelchtermans, vulnerability is the fundamental situation in which teachers find themselves (Kelchtermans, 2009b), and the central risk is not being conceived of as a “proper teacher.” Central to Kelchtermans’ theory is the “professional self-understanding” and “subjective educational theory” (see Chapter 5.1). Although these analytical tools emphasize the personal and the subjective aspect of being a teacher, they are formed through interaction with the surroundings, where feedback from students and colleagues is important. If we look at the norms for what constitutes a (proper) teacher in Norway they constitute the caring teacher who adapts for each individual student. These norms, which emerge from the discourses surrounding the school, correspond with the position of the classroom teacher (*kontaktlærer*). The normativity of being a classroom teacher is exemplified through Finn’s description of becoming classroom teacher as “coming in from the cold,” and moreover, it indicates that there is little support for an identity as music teacher. In the final paragraph of section 5.3.2 I mentioned that failing to establish rapport with students is a significant source of vulnerability, as it entails not succeeding as a teacher, a feature that is enhanced by the Norwegian school discourses. Ball (2000) describes teachers as drawn between their own “*judgements about ‘good practice’ and students ‘needs’ on the one hand and the rigours of performance on the other*” (Ball, 2000, p. 6, italics in original). Kelchtermans, who asserts that we should embrace vulnerability, as it opens up the space for meaningful interaction, makes a similar claim by opposing performativity to vulnerability (Kelchtermans, 2007). The problem for music teachers is that although they are sympathetic to the opposition to performativity, their conception of “good practice” might deviate from the common understanding of it.

What we see in my informants’ stories is an increased entanglement in the discursive weave that constitutes the Norwegian school system, a development that necessitates a movement away from the music subject. It corresponds with Huberman’s point that during socialization in the work place the workers “come to resemble the institutions in which they work” (Huberman, 1989, p. 53). Institutions can here be both each school and the school as a pattern of actions, and while the former deals with the micro-politics of teacher induction (Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002), the institution acts as a pattern of behavior on a macro level. Kelchtermans and Ballet describe socialization as an interpretative and interactive process, in which both the teacher and the context are influenced.

As described in section 5.3.2, some of my informants have had significant impact on their work place, but the opposite is more common. Among the interests that are in play, the cultural-ideological interests—the values and norms of the work place—are central in understanding the challenges of being a music teacher when one's values deviate from those of the school. In the school (and elsewhere) these interests are discursive, both on a micro and macro level, and thus there is an inertia to them that makes them resistant to change.

In *The Order of the Discourse*, Foucault (1981) describes how the normativity of the discourse is maintained. Among the procedures we find exclusion, which includes prohibition—the opposition between reason and madness and between true and false. As already described, the otherness of the music subject is largely caused by positioning it outside of the realms of knowledge (truth and reason). The internal procedures seek to maintain the unity of the discourses. Of interest for teachers' professional identity is another set of procedures, the external procedures that govern access to the discourse and the conditions for bringing them into play. "To be precise: not all the regions of discourse are equally open and penetrable; some of them are largely forbidden (they are differentiated and differentiating), while others seem to be almost open to all winds and put at the disposal of every speaking subject, without prior restrictions" (Foucault, 1981, p. 62). While the Norwegian schools offer subject positions for being a teacher, there are few positions for the music teacher to take. Neumann distinguishes between roles and subject positions, connected to institutions and discourses respectively. This distinction entails that while "teacher" is both a role and a subject position, "music teacher" will in many cases be mainly a role, as there are few subject positions available for an identity as music teacher, and thus it can be nothing but a mere description of a person who teaches a particular subject. I do claim that in many schools in Norway there is little support for being a music teacher with a strong professionalism. My informants' choice to become teachers instead of music teachers (most view themselves as such too), is connected to the gradual acceptance of them within the community of teachers that resulted from the move—a development that resembles the reintegration phase of liminal rites of passage. Being a music teacher is in many ways liminal/liminoid, and being fully integrated in the school often means leaving/reducing music teaching. A major difference between liminal rites of passage and the situation of teachers in the school, is that while liminality in rites of passage is more or less absolute, it makes more sense to speak of a continuum between liminal and integrated when describing

the teachers. When some of my informants realized they had the power to create change within the school where they worked (cf. Kelchtermans and Ballet), it was in many cases a result of the strength of liminality, the power to produce new culture. The music subject has a subversive quality to it, as it has an innate potential to oppose the status quo of the school. The normal structure is dissolved, the primacy of theoretical, measurable knowledge is challenged, and the evidence-based pedagogical practices are exchanged with the idiosyncratic practices of the music subject. To paraphrase Butler, we can speak of music teaching as “subversive pedagogical acts.” Ideally.

The music teacher is obviously a teacher as well. The opposition between music teacher and teacher is perhaps artificial, and the discussion in this chapter is deliberately exaggerated: I bring the consequences of teaching music to extremes that do not necessarily reflect the lived experience of most teachers. The distinction between teacher and music teacher was imposed on the informants by me in the interviews, and it may not have been a topic to which they have given much thought. And teachers in other subjects may also experience their roles and identities as different from being a teacher (in general). But I have chosen to use the opposition as a tool to describe how the music subject, and consequently the music teachers, are positioned within the discursive matrix of the school. In other words, my use of “music teacher” as professional identity brings attention to the personal consequences of investing time and effort in a subject with an unstable position in the school.

The dissertation opened with a discussion of the status of teaching as a profession, and towards the end of the study, a rehearsal of some of the characteristics is appropriate. For music teachers, lack of autonomy seems to be the least problem, as the high amount of privatization shows. One could even say that the abundance of autonomy and lack of accountability they experience serves as a catalyst for low status, loss of professionalism and identity as a “proper teacher.” The use of research-based knowledge and practices of which teachers in general have been critical, apply for the music teachers as well. There is a substantial body of research on teaching, but it is not necessarily relevant for the music subject, due to the subject’s idiosyncrasies. The music subject is also a practical subject, which entails that the individual teacher’s practical knowledge has a significant impact on the quality of the teaching. The characteristics mentioned by R. Ingersoll and Merrill (2011), involve some problematic issues. The lack of mentoring and induction are obvious, and because there often is only one music teacher at a school, the chance of having a peer as mentor is slim. Low prestige,

both external and internal at the individual schools, is another problem, along with few opportunities for professional development. Finally, I will mention credentials. I claim, with the support from my informants, that music is a difficult subject to teach without a broad musical background (which often is obtained outside of formal education). And as mentioned in the introduction, a large portion of the music teachers in the Norwegian compulsory schools have little or no music education. I believe that to describe a teacher with 60 ECTS in music as a specialist is flawed, as this is the minimum requirement to teach the core subjects. As a profession, it is therefore difficult to say that the music teachers in general comply with this requirement. When we look at individual music teachers, like my informants, the picture is different, and many of them fulfill several of the characteristics of a profession. Finally, one could ask whether the requirements should be different for music teachers, but this is a topic well beyond the present dissertation.

7.4 Personal reflection

According to Gadamer the full realization of an understanding lies in the application. The structure of the hermeneutic circle involves a continuous application of each new understanding of oneself, which contributes to new prejudices that makes new interpretations possible. As mentioned several times, and exemplified in Chapter 5, this has been a reflective project, and I believe it is an unavoidable consequence of investigating a field that emerges from one's own history. As I have worked with my informants' stories, it has influenced how I perceive my own path away from the music subject, which again has been played out in new interpretations of the material and the literature I have used. The study has further influenced me in that it has turned my attention back towards the music subject, the opposite process of what I am investigating.

Gadamer defined the hermeneutical problem as conquering alienness. What kind of alienness have I tried to conquer, in a project so deeply connected to myself? Working with this study has vivified a well-known truism: The more you learn of a topic, the more you become aware of what you do not know. It is without doubt that I embarked on the study with an expectation of what to find, as the interview guide shows. However, asking other persons about a topic you have a pre-understanding of, is bringing it out in the open, risking it, and creating a new distance, a new alienness that must be conquered. And

although the problematic aspects I have investigated are of little surprise for those who are familiar with the schools, the individual experiences of them differ. The alienness thus resides in what makes them appear for each informant at the individual schools. As one delves more deeply into the material, new open spaces appear, nuances give light to new questions, in an endless row of possibilities. A hermeneutical project like this has no end, as the interpretative work could go on, so at one point, one has to say that the answers are sufficient, and put a stop to the investigation.

8 Conclusion

8.1 Strengths and weaknesses

The obvious objection to the present dissertation is the low number of informants. The difficulties I had obtaining suitable informants could indicate that the problem I am investigating is not actually that significant. A higher number of informants could enhance the richness of the descriptions, and open the exploratory space even further. However, the response from my informants is fairly congruent in some important areas—such as the importance relationship with the students—and it accords with significant discourses about the Norwegian schools and Norwegian teachers. Other themes found in multiple accounts, including the strain of teaching music and the low status of the music subject, often correspond with findings in previous research. I do not, however, claim that the similarities between my informants' response strengthens the validity of these findings, as the number is too low to make generalizations from the number of similar factors. It would be more sensible to conceive of them as individual cases, where the generalization must be done theoretically. On the other hand, the low number of informants invites a deeper investigation of their choices, and how they are informed by surrounding discourses.

The strengths and weaknesses of the present dissertation revolve in general around compromises between depth and breadth. As already mentioned, a low number of informants makes it possible to delve more deeply into the material, but at the sacrifice of breadth. Theoretically I have chosen to include a substantial breadth, with two theoretical and methodological strands. One

could easily argue against this approach, as half could suffice, and would leave time and room for a deeper understanding of each individual segment. I nevertheless maintain the relevance of my approach, as investigating the topic on several levels elucidates both the individual stories of the music teachers and the (discursive) conditions for their actions. I believe that the relevance of applying research on the schools and teachers in general to music teachers is one of the foremost strengths of the dissertation. My decision to include in my investigation teachers who have reduced music teaching as well as those who have left altogether is in my view another positive factor, as most studies on music teacher attrition deal with those that quit teaching altogether. By interviewing this unique group, attention is focused on the music subject, more than on teaching itself, as most of my informants still work as teachers or in other positions within the school. In that regard, it is also a contribution to the in-service development of teachers. Whatever the strengths and weaknesses of my approach, I offer it as *one* way of investigating the research question; designing the research process and dissertation differently produce *different*—and perhaps no less interesting—results.

8.2 Contributions

In the introduction, I listed several aims and purposes of the dissertation. Among them was to describe the realities of teaching music through the eyes of a small group of teachers. The sentence contains an oxymoron, as describing “the realities” through the eyes of a small group would be impossible, and I have largely focused on their struggles, the problematic aspects of teaching music. Teaching music can obviously be a joyful experience, and all of my informants have had, and still have, experiences with teaching music that are inspiring, rewarding, productive, and enjoyable for both them and their students. On the other hand, physical strain, pedagogical challenges, inadequate equipment and facilities, unsatisfactory organization and professional isolation are also part of the picture. I have chosen to describe the challenges of teaching music because I believe a greater awareness of these aspects is necessary. From the interviews, previous research, and policy documents it is apparent that the music subject has a marginal position in the schools. As we have seen, this is due to a range of factors, but lack of understanding of the knowledge unique to the music subject is arguably the most important of them. The low status of the music subject is not new to recent decades, but the introduction of

performativity in the schools has rearticulated the power mechanisms within which the contribution of the music subject to the feedback loop of the school is considered too low. The development towards performativity, nevertheless has a positive side, in my view, as the increased value of innovation and creativity may enhance the status of the music subject, which has these values built into its activities. My fear, however, is that music will become a mere means to ends outside the subject, such as the maintenance and increase of the nation's economic efficiency.

Another purpose was to investigate music teachers as part of the school in general. My pre-understanding that the term "music teacher" emphasizes teacher over music, involves a critique of the opposition between musician and teacher, which has been given significant amount of interest in previous research. In my view, there is little support for the importance of this dichotomy, as the numbers of music teachers it applies to is low. The opposition that emerged through the study was between "music teacher" and "teacher." Norwegian teacher identity is informed by powerful discourses of caring and individualization, and failing to live up to the standards can cause isolation and loss of status, i.e. not being viewed as a "proper teacher." The importance of relating to students in the Norwegian schools can hardly be overestimated. In the present dissertation, it was a personal wish of my informants, both as a way of reducing strain and as meaningful in itself. The development from being motivated by the subject to seeking motivation in the pedagogical and relational aspect of being a teacher is not exclusive to the Norwegian schools, and many teachers approach the school with altruistic goals as their primary motivation. Most of the informants in the present dissertation became teachers because of their early experience with music, and they can be placed within the subject-motivated category (the borders between the categories are obviously not absolute). It could then be argued that the development from subject to student is enhanced by the Norwegian teacher discourses, making it even more difficult to stay outside. Performativity and accountability have introduced yet another aspect of the professional identity of the Norwegian teacher, but not for the benefit of the music teachers, as the status and importance of the core subjects and tested knowledge has increased at the expense of other aspects of the school.

8.3 Why teachers quit teaching music

The main purpose of the present dissertation was to answer why teachers in the Norwegian school choose to opt out of music teaching. Although there are as many answers to the question as there are teachers who left the music subject, a few general factors have emerged. In general, they leave or reduce music teaching to obtain a livable, meaningful working life. First, we have the factors connected to the experience of teaching music, what I have called “push factors.” Several of these are already described in previous research and include noise, high workload, insufficient organization, resources and facilities, and lack of support. To these we can add pedagogical difficulties. The music subject emerges through the interviews as a subject that is difficult to teach, as it involves activities with which students are unfamiliar, and this makes classroom management difficult. Although my informants in general have quite high self-esteem for teaching music, it is important to note that the breadth of the music subject calls for a wide array of skills and knowledge. The physical strain of teaching music has made some of my informants view other subjects as a break from teaching music. The strain of teaching music does not mean that it has no positive aspects. The joy to be found in musical activities is a significant cause for my informants’ path into the teaching profession, and all of them tell of rewarding experiences with teaching music and emphasize the importance of the music subject. It is therefore important to mention that some of them still teach music, and continue to enjoy these lessons, although they will no longer teach only music.

Their choice to leave the music classroom was influenced as much by the pulling factors of teaching several subjects. On the one hand, teaching several (theoretical) subjects entails the opposite of the negative factors connected to the music subject: there is less noise, a lighter workload, less dependence on equipment and facilities, and less challenging classroom management. We could also add increased status and inclusion in the teaching staff, with more opportunities for cooperation. But if I were to single out the major contribution of the present dissertation, it is the elicitation of the importance of these teachers’ desire to have a better relationship with the students. Solely teaching music involves having an large cohort of students for one lesson per week, which leaves little room for establishing rapport with individual students. Their wish for a better relationship is personal, as the encounter with the students and opportunity to make a difference is the single most meaningful aspect of being a teacher. Becoming a classroom teacher also heightens their status as a “proper teacher”

in the Norwegian schools, where caring for each individual student is at the heart of the professional identity. Finally, it must be emphasized that their choice to leave music teaching is a clear display of agency. The informants in the present dissertation have made deliberate choices to obtain a meaningful, endurable working life. And an interesting aspect that follows is that, in these cases, attrition from music teaching has led to retention of teachers.

8.4 Implications

8.4.1 For further research

Above I mentioned the low number of informants as a weakness of the present dissertation, and a natural continuation would be to conduct a large scale quantitative analysis of the problematics uncovered in the present dissertation. In addition to providing an overview of the extent of music teacher attrition, it would be interesting to study further what happens with teachers after they enter the occupation, as to my knowledge such questions have not been investigated on a large scale in Norway. Furthermore, many of the aspects/factors that appear in the present dissertation could be studied further in more detail, as some of them are treated here in a rather cursory manner. Another relevant continuation would be to conduct the opposite study, why do music teachers remain music teachers? Such a study would uncover factors that did not appear in the present dissertation, and would be a valuable addition to the body of research on music teachers. Together with findings from the present dissertation it will be a knowledge base on which to increase music teacher retention. Finally, as I have differentiated between “music teacher” and “teacher,” it would be interesting to investigate whether teachers in other subjects experience the same amount of exclusion from what is conceived of as the core activities in the school.

8.4.2 For policy

The present dissertation sheds light on several problematic features of teaching music in the Norwegian compulsory schools. The literature review highlights many teachers’ low confidence for teaching music, and from my informants’

accounts and analysis of the present curriculum it is apparent that teaching music does involve some challenges not encountered by teachers in most other subjects. The problem of low confidence is primarily related to the knowledge and skills of the teachers. At the time of writing there is a debate about the formal requirements for teaching: both for acceptance into teacher education and to teach each individual subject. The strictest requirements are currently for the core subjects. In my view, it would be sensible to have similar requirements for the practical subjects as well, if not stricter, as these subjects require an array of both skills and knowledge that make them difficult to teach. Such requirements would also likely increase the status of these subjects. Generalist teacher education in Norway has recently been increased to a five-year master's program. It is to be hoped that the expansion will make it easier to accommodate a full year of music in generalist teacher education.

One solution to the lack of qualified music teachers is increased collaboration with the municipal schools of music and performing arts (*kulturskolen*). In general, the teachers in these schools have formal qualification and a high level of skills on the instruments they teach, and they would be a welcome addition to the teaching staff in many schools. I hesitate to give my full approval of such collaboration for several reasons. First, it could lead to increased isolation of the music teachers, as they must divide their time between the compulsory school and the municipal music school. Second, I am unsure whether the teachers in the music schools would welcome such a collaboration, as they have chosen to work in the music schools instead of compulsory schools. Moreover, being an expert on your instrument does not ensure that you are qualified for teaching a broad music subject. Third, entrusting the municipal schools of music with teaching music can result in an *outsourcing* of the music subject. My fear is that it over time music will be external to compulsory education, and end up being a leisure time activity rather than a normal, obvious part of the education students receive in school.

Work is currently underway reviewing the curriculum. An official Norwegian report from 2015 (NOU, 2015: 8) and a following White Paper (Ministry of Education and Research, 2016) have advocated the importance of in-depth learning. As mentioned several times, a major challenge for music teachers is the breadth of the subject. The breadth is also a cause for the unavoidable "privatization" of the music subject, where teachers adapt the content of the subject to their own skills. It is my hope that the review of the curriculum will result in a narrower subject, with a core of activities, aims, and purposes. It

would make the subject more achievable for the music teachers, and making it possible in music teacher education to adjust the content according to the realities in the school.

8.4.3 For the practice field

It is difficult to make suggestions about the practice field and how to work with music teacher retention. One can easily recommend that school leaders increase the status of the music subject and be more attentive to the challenges of teaching music. But it is probably more productive to look at the material realities of teaching music and emphasize the need for a properly equipped music classroom and suitable organization. The demand for smaller groups in lower secondary is an especially salient topic. The question I am most wary of trying to answer is what kind of music teachers are most likely to remain in the music classroom. The present dissertation indicates that teaching music full time is very demanding, and the obvious implication is that the contented music teacher is one who teaches other subjects as well. An important argument for reducing the amount of music lessons per teacher is that it would make it possible for most schools to have more than one music teacher, and thus to provide them with the opportunity to cooperate. In addition to reduced professional isolation, a multi-subject teacher will have increased opportunity to include music as a natural part of the school as a whole, and not as something taking place beside the “regular subjects” by a different teacher. I hesitate to make such a bold claim, because this study cannot be extended to the field as a whole, and I am sure there are teachers who are happy teaching music as their only subject for a full career. There are also examples of schools where collaboration between the compulsory school and the municipal music school works brilliantly, and the music subject is fully integrated in the school (Odland, 2017).

8.5 Concluding remarks

During my work with the present dissertation I have encountered criticism from actors in the field. The critique has mainly revolved around giving a one-sided, negative view of the music subject. In one sense, they are right, as the purpose of the study was to highlight the difficulties of being a music teacher, but it indicates that there is a fear of discussing some of the problematic aspects.

The criticism tells me that the present dissertation can be an important contribution, as there is a tension it can help resolve. On the other hand, I have received positive and encouraging feedback from music teachers who struggle with their work and are happy that someone is investigating the problem. The study has also been an internal journey into my own choices as a teacher, realizations that have informed the interpretation of my informants' stories.

Although I paint a rather bleak picture of the music subject in the Norwegian schools, there are many bright spots. The history of the music subject indicates that the subject enjoys higher popularity than before, and even though there is a lack of qualified music teachers, many students still enjoy high-quality music teaching. The development towards performativity has been presented primarily as threat towards the music subject, as the importance of core subjects and tests has increased. The answer to this challenge is to embrace performativity in the broad sense. As mentioned repeatedly, the music subject answers to many of the challenges in the performance formation, such as creativity, innovation, testing, and contesting of norms. I certainly hope that the rigor of discipline is a thing of the past; the work of reviewing the curriculum and the new teacher education certainly offer hope for the future. Finally, it is my hope that this study will contribute to the body of knowledge that will ensure that also in the future, students in the Norwegian compulsory schools will meet proficient, qualified music teachers who provide their students with rich opportunities to encounter, practice, and enjoy music.

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Appendices

- 1 Inquiry on Facebook
- 2 Approval for pilot interview from NSD(Norwegian original)
- 3 Interview guide (Norwegian original)
- 4 Interview guide (English translation)
- 5 Approval from NSD (Norwegian original)
- 6 Letter of consent (Norwegian original)
- 7 Letter of consent (English translation)

Appendix 1: Inquiry on Facebook

Norwegian original:

Har du tidligere undervist i musikk, men har sluttet?

Etter å ha vært lærer i seks år jobber jeg nå som stipendiat og forsker på hvorfor lærere ikke ønsker å undervise i musikk. Jeg vil veldig gjerne komme i kontakt med, og eventuelt intervju, lærere som har undervist i musikk i grunnskolen, men som nå helt eller delvis har forlatt musikkfaget. Ta kontakt på facebook eller mail: bendik.fredriksen@nmh.no hvis du passer til beskrivelsen.

Håper å få høre fra dere!

Mer informasjon om prosjektet:

http://nmh.no/forskning/prosjekter_pa_doktorgradsniva/music-teachers-leaving-music

(Denne teksten legges ut flere steder, så beklager hvis jeg fyller facebook-veggen din.)

English translation:

Have you previously taught music, but quit?

After working six years as a teacher, I am now a PhD student researching why teachers do not want to teach music. I would like to get in touch with, and possibly interview, teachers who have taught music in compulsory school, but now has left the music subject wholly or in part. If you fit the description, contact me on facebook, or on e-mail: bendik.fredriksen@nmh.no

Hope to hear from you!

More information about the project:

http://nmh.no/forskning/prosjekter_pa_doktorgradsniva/music-teachers-leaving-music

(This text is published several places, so apologize if I fill up your facebook-wall)

Appendix 2: Approval for pilot interview from NSD (Norwegian original)

Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



Hovedkontor: Apes 21
18 3302 Bergen
Bergen
tlf: +47 55 58 21 11
fax: +47 55 58 96 50
nettside: nsd.no
www.nsd.no
18 og 19, 21 2011

Bendik Fredriksen
Norges musikkhøgskole
Postboks 5190 Majorstua
0302 OSLO

Vår dato: 22.05.2015

Vår ref: 43373 / 3 / LT

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 06.05.2015. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

43373 *Music teachers leaving music: Music teacher retention and occupational identity*
Behandlingsansvarlig *Norges musikkhøgskole, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig *Bendik Fredriksen*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.08.2017, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Lis Tenold

Kontaktperson: Lis Tenold tlf: 55 58 33 77

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSD's netter for elektronisk godkjenning.

Endringssystem / Endring / Oppsett

OSD 100: Helsevitenskapelig datatjeneste NSD-Bergen, 1830 Oslo, tlf: +47 22 85 12 11, nettside.no

NSD-Bergen NSD: Norges sosialvitenskapelige datatjeneste, 5001 Sandnessjøen, tlf: +47 75 55 59 57, nettside.no/bergen

OSD/NSD 100: Helsevitenskapelig datatjeneste NSD-Bergen, tlf: +47 22 85 12 11, nettside.no

Personvernombudet for forskning



Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 43373

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet er godt utformet.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Norges musikkhøgskole sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 31.08.2017. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:

- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjønn)
- slette digitale lydopptak

Appendix 3: Interview guide (Norwegian original)

Intervjuguide

- Nåværende arbeidssituasjon.
- Musikalsk bakgrunn (tidlige erfaringer, minner fra egen skolegang, viktige hendelser og personer).
- Utdannelse og veien inn i læreryrket.
- Fra musikk til andre oppgaver

Stikkord/oppfølging, hovedsakelig til siste tema

- Undervisningserfaring (før og under utdanning)
- Erfaringer med å undervise i musikk (positive og negative)
- Yrkesmessige fremtidsplaner
- Vurdering
- Læreplan
- Forventninger til musikk læreren
- Kunnskap/ferdigheter
- Største utfordringer
- Fysiske forutsetninger
- Kontakt med elever, omsorg
- Støtte fra ledelse, kolleger, foreldre
- Musikk kontra andre fag
 - o Opplevelsen av å undervise i
 - o Holdninger/status (elever, ledelse og kolleger)
 - o Belastning
 - o Respekt fra elever
 - o Profesjonalitet
- Klasseromsledelse
- Innhold i musikkfaget
- Identitet som musikk lærer
- Hva må endre seg for at du skal undervise (mer) i musikk?

Appendix 4: Interview guide (English translation)

Interview guide

- Present work situation.
- Musical background (previous experiences, memories from own schooling, important events and persons)
- Education and path into the teacher occupation.
- From music to other tasks.

Keywords/continuation, mainly to last topic

- Teaching experience (before and during education)
- Experiences with teaching music (positive and negative)
- Plans for the professional future
- Assessment
- Curriculum
- Expectations to the music teacher
- Knowledge/skills
- Biggest challenges
- Physical [material] prerequisites
- Relation with students, care
- Support from leadership, parents, colleagues
- Music vs. other subjects
 - o Experience of teaching
 - o Attitudes/status (students, leaders, colleagues)
 - o Strain
 - o Respect from students
 - o Professionalism
- Classroom management
- Content of the music subject
- Identity as music teacher
- What must change if you are to teach (more) music?

Personvernombudet for forskning



Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 44362

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet er godt utformet.

Data innhentes ved personlig intervju. Vi minner om at det av hensyn til læreres taushetsplikt ikke kan fremkomme identifiserbare opplysninger om enkeltelever. Vi anbefaler at forsker minner informanten om dette ifm. intervjuet.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Norges musikkhøgskole sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 31.07.2017. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:

- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjønn)
- slette digitale lyd-/bilde- og videoopptak

Appendix 6: Letter of consent (Norwegian original)

Bendik Fredriksen
PhD-stipendiat
Norges musikkhøgskole, fagseksjon for musikkpedagogikk og musikkterapi
bendik.fredriksen@nmh.no
Tlf.: 40233297

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjekt

Arbeidstittel:

“Music teachers leaving music: Music teacher retention and occupational identity”

Bakgrunn og formål

Dette er et PhD-prosjekt i musikkpedagogikk ved Norges musikkhøgskole. Målet er å undersøke hvorfor lærere i grunnskolen slutter å undervise i musikk. Gjennom intervjuer med en utvalgt gruppe lærere ønsker jeg å avdekke hvilke faktorer som fører til at lærere slutter å undervise i musikk.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Intervjuet vil bli avholdt på avtalt sted og til avtalt tid, og vil vare ca. en time. Intervjuet vil bli tatt opp på digital lydopptaker, og notater vil bli tatt underveis. Intervjuet vil senere bli transkribert. Før jeg starter å analysere intervjuet vil du få anledning til å lese gjennom og godkjenne transkripsjonen, og eventuelt kommentere eller utdype synspunktene dine.

Spørsmålene vil blant annet omhandle din faglige og musikalske bakgrunn og hvordan yrkeslivet har endret seg over tid.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt og i avhandlingen vil navnet ditt bli erstattet med et pseudonym. Det er kun prosjektleder som har tilgang til materialet. Lydopptaket og transkripsjon blir oppbevart på passordbeskyttet datamaskin som låses inn når den ikke er i bruk. Lydopptak og navneliste slettes, og datamateriale anonymiseres senest ved prosjektslutt 31.08.2017.

Prosjektet er finansiert av Norges musikkhøgskole gjennom stipendiatstilling i perioden 2014-2017. Resultatet vil bli publisert i en avhandling for graden PhD ved Norges musikkhøgskole, og i tillegg søkes materialet publisert i internasjonale og nasjonale tidsskrift og fora.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert, og lydopptak og transkripsjoner slettes.

Hvis du er interessert i å delta i prosjektet ber jeg deg skrive under på samtykkeerklæringen på neste side.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

Med vennlig hilsen

Bendik Fredriksen

Samtykke til deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta.

Sted/dato:

Signatur:

Appendix 7: Letter of consent (English translation)

Bendik Fredriksen

PhD-student

Norges musikkhøgskole, fagseksjon for musikkpedagogikk og musikkterapi

bendik.fredriksen@nmh.no

Tlf.: 40233297

Inquiry about participation in research project

Working title:

“Music teachers leaving music: Music teacher retention and occupational identity”

Background and purpose

This is a PhD project in music pedagogy at the Norwegian Academy of Music. The aim is to investigate why teachers in the compulsory school quit teaching music. Through interviews with a selected group of teachers I wish to uncover factors that cause teachers to quit teaching music.

What is involved in taking part in the study?

The interview will be conducted at an agreed upon place and time, and will last for about an hour. The interview will be recorded with a digital sound recorder, and notes will be taken. The interview will later be transcribed. Before I start analyzing the interview you will have the opportunity to read through and approve the transcription, and comment and elaborate upon your points of view.

The questions will include your professional and musical background and how the working life has changed over time.

What will happen with the information about you?

All personal data will be treated confidentially, and in the dissertation your name will be replaced with a pseudonym. It is only the project leader that will have access to the material. The sound recording and the transcription will be stored in a password protected computer that is locked when not in use. The sound recording and name list will be deleted, and data material anonymized at the end of the project period, 31.08.2017.

The project is funded by The Norwegian Academy of Music through a research fellow position for the period 2014–2017. The results will be published in a dissertation for the PhD degree at the Norwegian Academy of Music, and in international and national journals and fora.

Voluntary participation

Participation is voluntary, and you can at any point of time withdraw from the study, without having to explain why. If you withdraw, all information about you will be anonymized, and sound recordings and transcriptions deleted.

If you are interested in taking part I kindly ask you to sign the statement of consent on the next page.

The Norwegian Social Science Data Services are informed about the study.

Best wishes,

Bendik Fredriksen

Statement of consent

I have received information about the study and I am willing to participate.

Place/date:

Signature:

In the Norwegian compulsory schools there is a lack of qualified music teachers. To provide students with adequate music lessons we need to recruit new teachers, but also retain those who already teach music. The question Bendik Fredriksen investigates in this study is why teachers quit teaching music?

Fredriksen shows that there are some problematic aspects of teaching music, such as high workload, low status and professional isolation. The music subject is further recognized by a substantial breadth that demands from the teachers a wide array of skills.

The teachers in the study also find aspects of teaching other subjects alluring, such as reduced workload, stronger sense of belonging, and most important, an improved relation with the students. The last point corresponds with discourses about Norwegian teachers that promote a caring and pupil centered teacher identity.

The Norwegian school system has gone through some rather substantial changes the last decades, with an emphasis on core subjects, basic skills, testing and accountability. These changes promote new teacher identities and pose new challenges for the music teachers, as they have to legitimize the music subject in a changed educational environment.

The dissertation is a qualitative exploratory study, based on interviews with seven experienced teachers who have quit teaching music wholly or in part, and analysis of documents and previous research. The material has been analyzed using narrative analysis and discourse analysis, informed by hermeneutics and performance theory.

Bendik Fredriksen (b. 1982) has studied musicology, music education and Norwegian at the University of Oslo, The Norwegian Academy of Music and Oslo and Akershus University College. He has been a teacher in compulsory education for six years.

