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## Nordisk musikkpedagogisk forskning

### Årbok 19

*Nordic Research in Music Education  
Yearbook Vol. 19*



Norges  
musikkhøgskole  
Norwegian Academy  
of Music

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# Contents

Introduction	5
Tolkningspraktiker och bedömningskulturer – ett projekt om bedömning inom högre musikalisk utbildning <i>Bengt Olsson &amp; Einar Nielsen</i>	9
”It’s so easy to feel inadequate” – music teachers’ discussions regarding music education and social aims <i>Anna-Karin Kuuse</i>	25
Academic musicians– How music performance students in Sweden re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence <i>Nadia Moberg</i>	25
Empowering girls as instrumentalists in popular music. Studying change through Engeström’s cultural-historical activity theory <i>Eyolf Thovsen Nysæther &amp; Tiri Bergesen Schei</i>	75
Relational perspectives in the practices of choir directors <i>Pia Bygdéus</i>	97
Gender and equality in education. Key themes, changes and the contemporary focus on achievement <i>Elisabet Öhrn, University of Gothenburg</i>	123
Nordic choral conductor education: Overview and research agenda <i>Dag Jansson, Pia Bygdéus &amp; Anne Haugland Balsnes</i>	137
Mesterlære – en analyse af forholdet mellem viden, kunnen og forståelse – med referencer til den musikpædagogiske mesterlærepraksis <i>Øyvind Lyngseth</i>	171
Forgetting the audible body. Voice awareness in teacher education <i>Tiri Bergesen Schei, Bjørg Solsvik Åvitsland &amp; Edvin Schei</i>	197

Nordic PhD-dissertations 2017–2018	217
Editor group	219
Review panel	220

## Introduction

Volume 19 of *Nordic Research in Music Education Yearbook* includes nine articles. The contributions represent a variety of themes and research interests presented by scholars from the *Nordic Network of Music Education Research* community.

In the opening article Bengt Olsson and Einar Nielsen are discussing assessment of musical performances among conservatory teachers. Special attention is paid to the question of the employed assessment criteria. Research interviews with 15 teachers are carried out, in order to illuminate the extent to which the different set of criteria are integrated and to investigate how the teachers verbally construct the meaning of their criteria and assessment manuals. Distinctions between 'explicit' and 'fuzzy' criteria as well as 'analytic' and 'holistic' grading are emphasized in the study.

In the succeeding article Anna-Karin Kuuse reports on an investigation of the social aspects of music education for children and young people. Societal challenges such as increasing social vulnerability and segregation are demonstrating the need for general educational aims such as democracy, equality, social justice and inclusion. The study reports on the 'affective repertoires' and the 'subject positioning' of teachers working in *El Sistema*. The study is comprised of group interviews with teachers about their simultaneous role as both music teacher and social worker.

In the third article Nadia Moberg looks into reforms of academization implemented in music performance programs in higher education in Sweden. The aim of the study is to investigate how music performance students negotiate notions of knowledge and competence in the light of these reforms. Of special interest is the distinction drawn between practical craftsmanship and artistic competences in these programs versus an academic emphasis on scientific and scholarly knowledge.

The fourth article by Eyolf Thovsen Nysæther & Tiri Bergesen Schei is about empowering young girls (age 11–19) as instrumentalists in popular music. This is carried out with special attention to the role of music educators in informal learning settings. The central challenge here remains to transcend the gender norms characteristic of popular music. In light of Engeströms 'activity theory' and the concept of 'expansive learning' the study identifies conditions and elements, that allow change to take place

in these informal learning settings, so as to support the development of independent and competent female musicians.

In the fifth article, Pia Bygdéus is looking into relational perspectives in the practice of choir directors. Special attention is given to the understanding of learning and creativity as mediated and relational categories. This is carried out within a socio-cultural perspective focusing the interaction in choir practice. Four choir directors have been observed and interviewed.

The sixth article by Elisabet Öhrn is based on a keynote presentation at the *Nordic Network for Research in Music Education* conference organized at the *Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg*, March 14–16, 2017. This article deals with gender and equality in education, with special reference to the contemporary focus on achievement. Key themes include power relations, as well as the question of femininities and masculinities produced with/in education. The article cautions against homogenizing gender groups and underlines the need to explore variation between social groups and contexts.

In the seventh article a research group consisting of Dag Jansson, Pia Bygdéus and Anne Haugland Balsnes attempts to establish a picture of choral conductor education in the Scandinavian countries. The guiding research questions attempt to clarify (i) which educational programmes exist (within music academies and universities)?; (ii) what are the profiles of these programmes?; (iii) what is the student capacity of these programmes? The study consists of curriculum reviews as well as interviews with teachers and students from selected institutions.

The eighth article is by Øyvind Lyngseth. It deals with the practice of music-pedagogical apprenticeship with special regard to the relation between knowledge, know-how and understanding. The study thus introduces three different approaches to learning: (i) individually constituted learning; (ii) social theory of learning; (iii) philosophical hermeneutics. The article argues that learning is constituted by both subjective/individual and general/common matters – thus rejecting any dichotomous relation between individual and practice-conditioned learning.

The final article is made by Tiri Bergesen Schei, Bjørg Solsvik and Edvin Schei. It discusses the ‘audible body’ by means of voice awareness in teacher education. It is argued, that the voice is any teacher’s primary tool for establishing authority, commanding attention and for motivating and creating trusting relationships with

students. The article discusses the importance of the ‘audible body’ in terms of both (i) voice physiology as well as (ii) the relational meanings within a matrix of social, cultural connotations of beauty, quality, normalcy and health.

Author information is stated at the end of each article. The last section of the Yearbook provides an updated list of doctoral dissertations from 2017/18 within the field of music education.

The editor group would like to thank all authors for their valuable contributions. As any other scholarly journal the *Nordic Research in Music Education Yearbook* depends on the work of peer reviewers. A list of scholars currently contributing to the Yearbook as peer reviewers can be found at the end of the volume.

*Nordic Research in Music Education Yearbook* has been published since 1997 by the Norwegian Academy of Music. The editor group would like to thank the member institutions of the *Nordic Network for Research in Music Education* for securing the financial basis of the Yearbook. Further information about *the Nordic Network for Research in Music Education* is available at [www.nnmpf.org](http://www.nnmpf.org). The editor group also wants to thank Anders Eggen and the *Norwegian Academy of Music* for generously offering assistance in editing and finalizing the layout.





# Tolkningspraktiker och bedömningskulturer – ett projekt om bedömning inom högre musikalisk utbildning

Bengt Olsson & Einar Nielsen

## ABSTRACT

### *Practices of interpretation and assessment cultures – a project of assessment within higher music education*

*One major pedagogical key concept within music education is “assessment”. It is here that the core values of musical quality of performances and analyses are revealed. Some of these core values are manifest in official documents; others are tacit and hidden. In this interview study 15 teachers from two Swedish and two Danish conservatoires are asked to present their assessment criteria being used. Moreover, the teachers are asked to present their whole assessment manual such as other key concepts being used.*

*Focus in the interviews is how the teachers verbally are constructing meaning of their criteria and assessment manuals. Theoretically, the study is based on the concept of “practical knowledge”. Here, one main problem is how people are verbalizing motives, concepts and actions in their daily professional activities. One approach to reveal this information is to investigate critical incidents, i. e. to study how teachers are explaining assessment of authentic performances in real time.*

*Another theoretical approach is based on the concept of “semantic density” linked to key criteria. The different criteria presented are finally summarised in two overall models: analytic and holistic grading.*

*The results are divided in two major areas. Firstly, the distinction between explicit criteria and fuzzy criteria. Explicit criteria are based on clear verbal definitions with a connection to concepts; fuzzy criteria are, on the other hand, vaguely defined. A lack of concepts linked to these criteria is observed. Here*

*the key issue is how the criteria and their functions are verbally explained. The second area concerns the structure of the assessment manual. Is there a tension between different criteria involved in the process or are the different criteria integrated? The latter example shows a higher quality than the first on one.*

*Since this is an on-going project, further analyses will show the degree of validity and reliability in the project.*

*Key words: Assessments of musical performances, practical knowledge, explicit criteria, fuzzy criteria, structure of assessment manuals*

## **Projektets bakgrund och syfte**

Detta är ett projekt om bedömning av instrumentalt utövande inom högre musikalisk utbildning. Bedömning utgör en central aspekt av såväl antagning, redovisningar av olika slag som examinationer. Därför kan bedömning sägas utgöra ett pedagogiskt kärnvärde för all undervisning. Inom högre musikalisk utbildning finns det av tradition både kriterier och normer och värden integrerade i verksamheten vilka ligger till grund för kvalitetsbedömningar av olika slag. Trots de centrala funktioner som olika bedömningsfaktorer har för verksamheten så är kriterier och normer emellertid föga begreppsliggjorda. Det saknas helt enkelt en tydliggjord teoretisk diskurs kring dessa frågor då traditionerna till stor del präglas av muntlighet.

Syftet inom projektet *Tolkningspraktiker och bedömningskulturer* är att utforska olika aspekter av bedömning såsom vilka kriterier som används och deras funktioner, hur dessa formuleras rent språkligt, vad som bedöms, dvs. vilka normer och värden som sammanfattningsvis bildar en grund för bedömningar inom högre musikutbildning. Ett speciellt fokus ligger på undervisning på avancerad nivå. Zandén (2010) avgränsar bedömningsbegreppet ytterligare genom att peka på dess normativa karaktär. Normativa uppfattningar handlar om kvaliteter som är relaterade till normer eller regler inom vissa kontexter eller sammanhang.

I en tidigare pilotstudie undersöktes hur bedömningar vid antagningsprov genomfördes (Olsson, 1997). Enskilda prov videodokumenterades och dessa inspelningar användes därefter som stimulated recall vid intervjuer med lärarna. I analysen utvecklades en hypotes om olika strukturer beroende på graden av integration och avstånd

mellan bedömningsgrunderna. Den ena grundstrukturen, *total integration*, mellan bedömningsgrunderna motsvarade en positiv bedömning av utförandet med följd att ingen enskild grund kunde urskiljas utan bedömningen kan närmast beskrivas som holistisk. I den andra grundstrukturen, *den analytiskt sönderdelade strukturen*, var avståndet mellan olika kriterier stor på grund av att olika negativa omdömen urskildes. Strukturen var här med andra ord tydligt uppdelad mellan olika bedömningsgrunder. Denna hypotes prövades i de nuvarande intervjuerna för att jämföra resultaten (se vidare nedan).

## Forskningsläget

Även om musikpedagogisk forskning av bedömning inom instrumentalundervisning är relativt omfattande så visar generella sökningar (inom Google sökord: assessments of musical performances), och pedagogiska databaser (ERIC, RILM, samma sökord), internationella s.k. handbooks (Bresler, 2007; Colwell & Richardsohn, 2002; Eisner & Day, 2004; McPherson & Welch, 2012) att projektets fokus på instrumentalpedagogiskt inriktade bedömningskriterier inom högre musikutbildning är relativt utforskat. Inom mer musikpsykologiskt orienterad forskning kring musikaliskt utövande (Deutsch, 1999; Hallam et al., 2007) kan denna delas in i två huvudgrupper: förståelsen av musikfenomenet, dess struktur och mening och behärskan av den instrumentala tekniken (Gabrielsson, 1999). En viktig del av olika studier är också metodutvecklingen, dvs hur man bäst fångar och bedömer musikupplevelser. Colwell (2002) visar i sin breda översikt av 1990-talets diskussioner om bedömning och betygsättning inom musikområdet hur flera bedömningsaspekter griper in i forskning om pedagogiska faktorer som undervisning, kreativitet, kurs- och läroplaner och attityder till lärande. Det handlar också om både kvantitativa och kvalitativa metoder, olika validitets- och reliabilitetsproblem och bedömningar utifrån skilda normer och kunskapstaxonomier.

I Jørgensens översikter över nordisk musikpedagogisk forskning visas också att bedömningsforskning till stor del lyser med sin frånvaro. I sin översikt över internationell forskning (2009) om högre musikutbildning diskuteras olika bedömningsaspekter och skilda kriterier. Detta leder till diskussioner om *vem* som bedömer och dessa bedömningsars validitet och reliabilitet. Olsson (2014) visar i sin genomgång av bedömningsbegreppet att det är sammansatt och komplext och värderande till sin karaktär.

Intressant forskning kring bedömning inom skolområdet har dock under senare år genomförts i Norden. Zandén (2010) undersöker i sin avhandling ett antal gymnasie-lärares i musik explicita bedömningar av elevers ensemblespel. Zandén (a.a.) delar in lärarnas bedömningskriterier i två huvudkategorier: övergripande och kontextuella kriterier. De övergripande kriterierna domineras av självständighet, initiativkraft, autenticitet, spelglädje och engagemang. De är sociala till sin karaktär och inte primärt specifika för musikskapande. De kontextuella kriterierna bygger på musikförtrogenhet och genrekunskaper. De är också vaga till sin karaktär i lärarnas förklaringar.

Zanden (2016) har i en uppföljande studie undersökt hur en ny läroplan med tydligt innehåll och klart angivna bedömningskriterier påverkar musiklärares begreppsliggörande av musikalisk kvalitet vid elevers komponerande. Resultaten visar hur lärarnas bearbetningar av läroplanens tydliggörande av kriterier kan få betydelse för deras tillämpningar av dessa kriterier. Ferm (2010; 2011) har också i några studier och konferensbidrag dels undersökt relationen mellan kvalitetsuppfattningar och undervisning och lärande utifrån ett fenomenologiskt livsvärldsperspektiv vid bedömning), dels vilken betydelse bedömningar kan få på undervisningspraktiken. Vilka utmaningar gör sig gällande vid bedömningar? Den sistnämnda frågeställningen utvecklar Ferm et al. (2017) utifrån engelsk forskning (Torrance, 2007) om bedömningars funktioner och validitet. En central utgångspunkt är hur bedömningar omdefinierats från bedömningar *av* lärande till bedömningar *som* lärande. Formativa bedömningar riskerar att förlora betydelse genom denna glidning i betydelsen.

Vinges medverkan i antologin ovan bygger på hans avhandling kring 14 norska musiklärares bedömningspraktiker (2014). Fokus för hans undersökningar är bedömning *av* och *för* lärande utifrån ett antal konkreta frågeställningar grundade i den norska läroplanen. Avhandlingens resultat pekar på hur en ökad fokusering på bedömningar i musikundervisningen på olika sätt präglar lärarnas val av innehåll och aktiviteter.

Trots att dessa studier på många sätt har kopplingar till vårt pågående projekt är resultaten mer av generell musikpedagogisk karaktär än diskussion av specifika kriteriers diskursiva formuleringar och betydelser. Vissa studier inom engelsk forskning har däremot en tydlig koppling till projektets fokus på kriterier, deras innehåll, avgränsningar och betydelser (för en översikt, se Sadler, 2005; 2009). Sadlers forskning visar på svårigheter att hitta gemensamma definitioner och betydelser av kriterier. Det saknas objektiva och metodologiskt säkra sätt att validera och jämföra dessa. Bedömningar inom det konstnärliga området diskuterar Sadler heller inte explicit.

## Teoretiska utgångspunkter

En central utgångspunkt för detta projekt vilar på den s.k. praktiska kunskapens teori. Den kännetecknas av att musikpedagogiska handlingar och värderingar inte alltid verbaliseras och begreppsliggörs och det är här vårt intresse för diskursiva konstruktioner och normbildningar i samband med formativa bedömningar tar sin början (Olsson, 2014). En praktik som högre musikalisk utbildning är varken historielös eller saknar teoretiska perspektiv men i de vardagliga sammanhangen framträder inte alltid dessa perspektiv tydligt (Hjærtström Lappalainen, 2015). Handlingar, rutiner och regler tenderar vara det mest synliga i verksamheten. Praktisk kunskap som teoretisk grund är därmed en metateori baserad på flera aktiviteter, varför de utövas, hur de bedöms och värderas verbalt samt i vilken kontext som en sådan bedömning ingår i (Svenæus, 2009). Begreppen bedömning och värdering med tillhörande analys av tillhörande diskursiva konstruktioner och begreppsanalyser i bedömningssituationer är i särskilt fokus (Olsson, 2014).

Stefani's "Model of Musical Competence (MMC)" (1987), med grund i semiotisk teo-ribildning utifrån förhållandet musikproduktion och kultur, utgår från olika kompetensnivåer. Ytterpunkter i modellen är "allmänna koder" (general codes) respektive "unika koder" (opus) för att belysa kompetensen att diskutera musikalisk mening och betydelse. Mellan dessa två ytterpunkter i modellen namnger Stefani ytterligare tre nivåer. De sammanlagt fem olika nivåerna anger olika aspekter av hur musikaliska erfarenheter och praktiker formuleras och ett centralt begrepp härvidlag är "semantisk täthet eller densitet". Även om modellen teoretiskt inte är knuten till detta projekt har dess resonemang kring språklig täthet bidragit till våra diskussioner om språk och värderingar.

Sadler (2009) diskuterar även två övergripande perspektiv på bedömning: *analytiskt* och *holistiskt* grundad bedömning. Den analytiska bedömningen utgår från explicita kriterier som används för att på olika sätt värdera ett musikaliskt framförande. Den holistiska utgångspunkten bygger på en kvalitativ helhetsbedömning där olika faktorer viktas till en samlad uppfattning. Sadler reser frågan vilken ansats som är mest relevant? Båda perspektiven är tillämpliga även om Sadler argumenterar för att holistiska bedömningar är mest värdefulla.

Sammantaget består den teoretiska grunden av hur kriterier av musikaliskt utövande språkligt formuleras och bedöms samt hur dessa delas in i olika bedömningsmodeller.

## Metod

Undersökningen är en pågående intervjustudie där redovisning av intervjuer med 15 lektorer och professorer från två danska konservatorier och två svenska musikhögskolor är nuvarande empiri. Urvalet av intervjupersoner har gjorts med hjälp av rektorer på respektive konservatorium och musikhögskola som gett förslag på vilka lärare som skall delta. Instrumenten som representeras är piano klassiskt och afro, komposition, gitarr, orgel, trombon, sång, viola, cello inom det klassiska området samt saxofon afro.

Analysens utgångspunkter har varit att undersöka hur formativa kriterier samt sammanfattande bedömningsgrunder i intervjumaterialet språkligt uttrycks. Det handlar om diskursivt formulerade kriterier och begrepp där kriteriebegreppet undersöker "hur man kan avgöra att ett visst villkor är uppfyllt" (Nationalencyklopedin, del 11: 446). Kriterier är språkliga abstraktioner vilka visar på kunskapskvaliteter och kompetenser på olika nivåer. Zandén (2010) diskuterar "skarpa" och "oskarpa" kriterier för att ytterligare problematisera språkets betydelse där skarpa kriterier kännetecknas av analytisk tydlighet och objektivitet medan de oskarpa i högre grad saknar språklig skärpa och är mer subjektiva och holistiska till sin karaktär.

I begreppet bedömningsgrund sammanfattas flera kriterier. Bedömningsgrund är således en innehållsmässigt specifik referensram baserad på vilka kriterier som används vid specifika bedömningar i sitt sammanhang.

En annan utgångspunkt i analysen har, som tidigare nämnts, även varit att undersöka hur pilotstudiens tredelade modell (Olsson, 1997) är tillämplig på nuvarande empiri. Därför har intervjupersonerna även fått frågan hur de ser på dessa resultat. I vilken mån stämmer pilotstudiens resultat överens med deras uppfattningar?

## Resultat

### Bedömningsgrunderna

Tolkningen av intervjuerna visar på fyra samlade bedömningsgrunder varav de tre första dominerar och den fjärde (situation och beteende) endast förekommer i begränsade delar av materialet och därför inte vidare diskuteras. De tre bedömningsgrunderna

som behandlas vidare är: (1) idiomatiska, instrumentspecifika och analytiska färdigheter; (2) uppförandep Praxis och stilkänsla; (3) musikaliskt, personligt uttryck och kommunikation.

Den första samlade bedömningsgrunden kring färdigheter, exemplifieras av kriterier som intonation, klangbehandling, timing, rytmkänsla samt teoretisk och analytisk förmåga att exempelvis tolka en notbild. Diskursivt handlar det om skarpa kriterier (Zandén, 2010) utifrån tydliga referensramar och ofta en utvecklad begreppsapparat. Generellt uttrycker både de svenska och danska intervjupersonerna hur de initialt urskiljer studenternas kompetensnivå färdighetsmässigt i sina bedömningar för att därefter vidga analysen till övriga bedömningsgrunder. I två citatexempel framgår detta (av anonymitetsskäl redovisas inte vilket instrument som läraren undervisar i; intervjuperson a–h svenska lärare, A–G är danska lärare):

Sen noterar jag naturligtvis instrumental förmåga och om de stämmer ganska väl med de kriterier vi har för instrumental färdighet – man noterar om solisten spelar rent – hur de behärskar att spela koden. (Lärare b)

Då lyssnar jag till tekniken naturligtvis och där finns olika aspekter av den. Det finns en tydlighet, det finns en fingerfärdighet naturligtvis, klangbehandlingen, man kan säga att teknik är ett område, klangbehandling är ett annat. (Lärare c)

En av de danska lärarna understryker färdigheternas matematiska karaktär till skillnad från uppförandep Praxis och stilkänsla.

Det behøver vi ikke tale om, for det er forstået. Alle de her ting er jo forholdsvist matematiske. Det er når vi kommer ind på det musikalske og fortolkningsmæssige, at vi ikke kan være matematiske længere. Eller ikke være så tekniske.... Det kræver en upåklagelig teknik, som understøtter og ikke forstyrrer noget steds i den musikalske fortælling. Og det kræver, at den teknik understøtter præcis, hvad musikern vil. (Lärare B)

Vissa lärare betonar kontextens betydelse för färdighetsbedömningar. Skall utöva- ren bedömas utifrån en kommande karriär som orkestermusiker eller som solist? Frihetsgraden mellan dessa två kategorier varierar:



För en orkestermusiker är det väldigt snäva ramar. Speciellt för brassmusiker när de bedöms vid en audition. Både rytm och intonation. Har man inte det så har man inte där att göra. Man skall spela exakt som det står, brassmusiker vill inte ha för stora personligheter. Om man jobbar med en trumpetare och Haydns trumpetkonsert så har de ofta två versioner av konserten. En om de skulle vara solist med orkestern då kan man ta sig lite större friheter för att man vill visa sin personlighet, men om man spelar på en audition då måste man spela mycket straightare. För då vill de höra precision. (Lärare e)

Spänningen gentemot andra bedömningsgrunder är inte speciellt framträdande. Man kan snarare se att färdigheterna är mer integrerade till sina karaktärer med övriga grunder. Färdigheter skall därför inte särbehandlas utan beskrivas som dynamiskt nära uppförandep Praxis och uttryck.

Uppförandep Praxis och stilkänsla, bedömningsgrund 2, kan sägas omfatta musikerns förhållande till traditioner och förmågan att tolka musikaliska förlagor (noter eller efter inspelningar) och i linje med vedertagna uppfattningar av traditionen. Man skulle också kunna sammanfatta dessa kriterier som delar av "generella estetiska kriterier" där en given repertoar på ett enskilt instrument eller vissa stilar och traditioner utgör tydliga referensramar. Det är således en fråga om hur väl utövaren grundar sina uppfattningar på kriterier och bedömningar av musikaliska konventioner och hur väl man behärskar regelverket. Intervjupersonerna formulerar här inte skarpa kriterier för sina bedömningar utan deras uppfattningar speglar i hög grad svårigheter att konkret uttrycka sig och att samtidigt fånga viktiga oskarpa kriterier. Därför uttrycks kriterierna oftast i allmänna och övergripande termer där stilkriterier som dynamiska uttryck, rytmiska förskjutningar, ornamentik m.m. och deras betydelser stilmässigt inom epoken sällan verbaliseras utan tas för givna under intervjuerna. Ett exempel är 2 följande citat:

Det som finns i fonden hela tiden är en referensram när jag hör musik och eftersom jag jobbar med den kan jag hela tiden referera till andra saker där man se att det här är den stilen. Om jag är på Beethovenkonsert kan jag höra att det här är en del av den kontexten, som en del av en uppförandep Praxis och ett frasförråd som man kan förhålla sig till precis på samma sätt som en be bop-saxofon. Och sedan kan man värdera inne i en kontext, det är mer den stilistiska delen. (Lärare b)

Sen finns det en annan avdelning kriterier, där har vi gestaltning och stilkänsla. Och de har då ett antal underkriterier. Vad gör musikern av det hela? Stilkänslan, hur relaterar den till traditionen, till uppförandepraxis och de konventioner vi har? (Lärare c)

I den danska empirin är svaren mer indirekta och inte så tydligt fokuserade på kriterier. Ett skäl är att lärarna inte explicit fått frågan om kriterier inom bedömningsgrunden uppförandepraxis och stilkänsla utan i stället ombetts redovisa sina uppfattningar mer generellt. Kriterierna är därför mer invävda i deras allmänna resonemang om bedömning. Samtidigt ligger kriterierna i linje med de svenska, dvs. att de är generella och oskarpa:

Og så lytter jeg på det tekniske, hvad jeg kan høre, der er af udfordringer og ikke udfordringer, om det er fuldkommen behersket af at man behersker det, ikke i form af det er et behersket udtryk, men at man behersker det rent kropsligt. .... Og så lytter jeg på det stilistiske i forhold til den periode, den studerende spiller, om vedkommende har kunnet sætte in den musik i en stilistisk ramme, altså har en idé om, hvad barokmusik er. (Lärare B)

Dessa allmänna beskrivningar skall dock inte tas som intäkt för okunnighet eller brist på begreppsliggörande utan mer som exempel på "tyst underförstådd kunskap" av bedömningsgrunder (Molander, 1991). Stilkriterier är djupt förknippade med vissa verk och väl kända av lärarna. Dessutom exempel på en nära integrering med kriterierna inom färdighetsgrunden.

Den danska undersökningen visar också prov på en delvis annorlunda hermeneutiskt influerad analys kring interpretation och begreppsbildning än den svenska granskningen. Lärarna försöker begreppsliggöra några centrala aspekter av en tolkning som musiker använder sig av. Det kan handla om känslor (følelser), närvaro (nærværet) och musikernas kunskap (forståelse) om det musikaliska uttrycket. En av lärarna formulerar detta på följande sätt:

Jamen det fanger mig, hvis et stykke musik for mig virker som, hvis man er følelseladet, at det kommer fra hjertet. Altså at jeg kan høre at han/hun elsker det stykke. Og hvad gør det? Det gør jo at jeg føler mig ført. At den der spiller ved, hvad han/hun gerne vil. (Lärare B)

Detta leder oss över till den tredje bedömningsgrunden, det individuella, musikaliska och personliga uttrycket och kommunikationen. Vilken förmåga har musikern att självständigt uttrycka musikaliska och personliga ställningstaganden i sitt utövande utöver traditionens krav på vissa uttryckssätt och konventioner. Hur skall detta i så fall förstås ur ett bedömningsperspektiv? Här har vi kanske de mest svårgripbara kriterierna att verbalisera, vilket också intervjuerna ger prov på. En första svårighet är bristen på referensramar utifrån stil, konventioner etc. då det musikaliska uttrycket har sin utgångspunkt i den individuella personligheten och kommunikationen, vilket framgår av följande två citat:

Man hör någonting där musikern har en egen vilja. Det är mycket den viljan att uttrycka sig, har man den inte så .... (Lärare f)

Om det inte finns uppenbara brister eller defekter i musikaliteten så kan man fixa till mycket men finns inte viljan och lusten då skall man välja en annan utbildning (Lärare f)

Ett exempel på hur bedömningsgrunden musikaliskt uttryck och kommunikation beskrivs utifrån en bedömning av ett videodokumenterat framförande i den danska empirin är följande:

Så jeg vil sige, det er ligesom kunstnerisk ureflektet. Men til trods for det: et teknisk personligt, stort overskud, klang på instrumentet. Hans frasering bliver ikke rigtig vigtig, fordi det betyder ikke noget for ham. Han har ikke, det er ikke ham selv der har besluttet de der ting. Det er noget, der kommer fra forebilleder. Og på en eller anden måde er det det samme med det der tekniske. Den der gave for at have nemt ved det tekniske i musikken kan også for nogle blive en sovepude fra at tage stilling. Han ville ikke være selvskreven her. (Lärare D)

Den konstnärliga uttrycksförmågan står i fokus här. De avgörande kriterierna som används är väl närmast att betrakta som oskarpa och holistiska utifrån en analys av vad bedömarens hör och ser på videon.

Sammanfattningsvis kan vi se hur de tre samlade bedömningsgrunderna finns representerade i både den svenska och danska empirin, men en mer detaljerad analys på kriterienivån av hur de två bedömningsgrunderna kring uppförandep Praxis och personligt uttryck är diskursivt konstruerade är inte lika framträdande. Specifika

genre- eller stilmässiga kriterier är ännu inte synliggjorda i analysen utan blir först tydliga utifrån en större empiri. Det verkar därför vara enbart kriterier inom bedömningsgrunden tekniska och teoretiska färdigheter som dessa är tydligt skarpt beskrivna och begreppsliggjorda. De oskarpa och holistiskt präglade kriterierna för övriga två bedömningsgrunder är till sina karaktärer just otydliga och i avsaknad av tillhörande begreppsbyggnad.

## Bedömningsmodeller

I de svenska intervjuerna ställdes också den explicita frågan hur hypotesen om den tredelade modellen med dess olika spänningstillstånd, integration eller splittring, stämde överens med intervjupersonernas bedömningserfarenheter. Intervjupersonerna gav alla sitt entydiga stöd till modellens dynamik som förklaring till olika spänningstillstånd och dess bedömningskonsekvenser. De två strukturella bedömningsformerna, integration och avstånd och mellanrummet mellan dem, bekräftades således. I en av de danska intervjuerna formulerar sig intervjupersonen närmast med en oskarp kriteriegrund men utifrån en känd diskurs kring tid om stilkänsla:

Og det med at kunne disponere i *tid* og få noget til at balancere i *tid* er jo en kunst inden for enhver stilart. Barokken kan få en *puls* til at leve. Og få en fornemmelse af en retning hvor det fører hen, at jeg ved hvor mine store kadencer er i bund og grund i starten, og hvordan jeg fraserer et barokt værk og får det til at leve. Eller i romantikken, hvordan jeg lige kan få det til *hele* tiden at glide videre. Og have en stor agogisk frihed, men samtidig få fornemmelsen af *alt hænger sammen*. Selv om jeg trækker vejret, så går det alligevel videre. Jeg har ikke nogen stop, så at sige, men alting har hele tiden flow. Og den *balance*, hvis man kan kalde det det, er det der for mig giver mening (Lärare B).

Frågan här blir då om bedömningsgrunderna som helhet blir tillämpliga som analytiska verktyg då de samlade resultaten för uppförandep Praxis respektive personliga uttryck i så hög grad närmar sig de oskarpa kriteriediskurserna och de holistiska bedömningsgrunderna. Närheten till givna referensramar såsom vedertagen repertoar och kända musikaliska konventioner får därmed en stark påverkan på det konkreta språkbruket. Formuleringarna speglar samtidigt i hög grad lärarnas subjektiva upplevelser med ett inexakt språkbruk som följd. Det danska citatet ovan är ett tydligt exempel på detta.

## Diskussion

Detta är ett pågående forskningsprojekt. Därför kan vi inte redovisa slutliga resultat utan bara preliminära tendenser, tendenser kring kriterier, bedömningsgrunder, integration och spänningar som vid utökad datainsamling torde få större substans och giltighet. Inte minst unika stil- och genremässiga drag skulle bli tydliga. Projektet består i många avseenden av en paradox: diskursiva bedömningar av ett icke-verbalt fenomen. Frågan blir då hur bedömningsgrundernas validitet blir giltiga utifrån undersökningar av diskursiva konstruktioner av kriterier och musikalisk kvalitet? Något som är centralt inom praktisk kunskapsteori. Här handlar det enbart om att initialt diskutera diskursiva konstruktioner av kriterier, begrepp och kvalitetsuppfattningar.

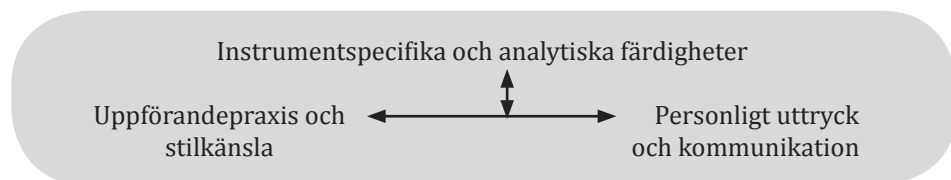
Resultaten visar förekomsten av tre övergripande bedömningsgrunder som lärarnas uppfattningar kan delas in i. Dessa tre grunder ingår i två hypotetiska modeller baserade på transformeringar, integration och dynamiska spänningar. Detta ligger i linje med Sadlers (2009) resonemang. En konsekvens när bedömningsgrunderna i den första modellen är helt integrerade är dels att de diskursiva konstruktionerna är en blandning av skarpa analytiska och holistiska och oskarpa kriterier, dels att uttryck och kommunikation får ökad betydelse för en samlad bedömningsmodell genom att de subjektiva komponenterna blir så framträdande. Färdigheter och uppförandep Praxis/personligt uttryck blir därmed integrerade. Grafiskt kan modellen redovisas enligt följande.

*Integrerad bedömningsmodell:*

Instrumentspecifika och analytiska färdigheter  
Uppförandep Praxis och stilkänsla/Personligt uttryck

Det andra exemplet på en motsatt modell är när uppdelningen och spänningarna mellan skilda färdigheter, uppförandep Praxis/stilkänsla och uttryck/kommunikation är tydliga. Lärarna nämner, både i pilotstudien från 1997 och i nuvarande undersökning, att det ibland blir en fråga om vilken bedömningsgrund som betyder mest. Det framgår i många intervjuer att den konstnärligt mest framstående tolkningen även här har ett försteg. Grafiskt blir redovisningen således följande:

*Analytisk och uppdelad bedömningsmodell:*



Sadlers (2009) distinktion mellan analytiskt och holistiskt grundade bedömningar verkar vara tillämplig för de olika bedömningsmodellerna.

Modellernas transformeringar och dynamiska spänningar för att avgöra graden av musikalisk kvalitet samt bedömningar av de subjektiva aspekterna av utövarens intentioner och musicerande bildar således grunderna för de normer som gör sig gällande. Detta innebär dock inte att normerna är tydliga och välformulerade. Ett problem är självfallet problematiken kring oskarpa kriterier där de språkliga konstruktionerna ofta är generella och allmänna till sina karaktärer. Kända verk och erkända utövare inom respektive stil blir ofta de enda referenserna för kvalitet. En ytterligare förklaring är, som tidigare nämnts, också den muntliga och tyst underförstådda kunskap som präglar högre musikutbildning, en brist på etablerade begrepp. Projektet bekräftar dessa brister.

Det finns dock skäl att resa frågetecken kring den nuvarande analysens validitet och den valda intervjumetoden. Kraven på konsistens och tydlighet vid redovisningen av kriterier, bedömningsgrunder och normer är än så länge inte heltäckande. Därtill krävs dels fler genomförda intervjuer för att täcka hela utfallsrummet, dels en utveckling av själva intervjumanualen avseende undersökningarna av intervjupersonernas uppfattningar. Det vidare projektarbetet får visa hur giltigt nuvarande resultat är.

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## **“It’s so easy to feel inadequate” – music teachers’ discussions regarding music education and social aims**

Anna-Karin Kuuse

### **ABSTRACT**

*The aim of the present article is to discuss the social aspects of music education for children and young people. Societal challenges such as social vulnerability and increasing segregation have highlighted general educational aims such as fostering democracy, equality, social justice and inclusion. The empirical material comprises a focus group interview with teachers working in El Sistema, a music education programme that has both musical and social aims. Analyses of verbal constructions reveal the way teachers negotiate and legitimise their work through affective repertoires and subject positioning. A discursive practice is constructed, in which two different, often incompatible, positions emerge: the music teacher and the social worker. Among different subject positions available, those specifically constructed to fit the claim of a social commission prevail. Finally, the study’s result is discussed in relation to the conceptualisation of music education as a social practice, and music teachers’ understanding of their professional commitment towards both social and musical learning.*

*Keywords: affective discursive practice, El Sistema, music education, social aspects*

## Inledning

Nutida samhälleliga utmaningar som socio-ekonomisk utsatthet, integration och en alltmer segregerad skola (Arnesen & Lundahl, 2006; Beach & Sernhede, 2011; Lundahl, 2002) har ytterligare accentuerat sociala aspekter av undervisning och lärande. Begrepp som likabehandling, social rättvisa och inkludering artikuleras i den svenska skolans övergripande fostrans- och demokratiuppdrag. Dessa är allmänna utbildningsmål, något som också musiklärare har att förhålla sig till. Inom musikpedagogisk sociologi diskuteras hur sociala och demokratiska mål får praktiska konsekvenser för reflektion, planering och organisation av undervisningspraktiken (Bowman, 1998; Elliott, 1995; Small, 1998). Hur verksamma musiklärare skapar mening kring sådana mål utgör utgångspunkten för denna artikel.

Barn och unga i Sverige har obligatorisk musikundervisning i grundskolan men erbjuds även frivillig musikundervisning i den kommunala kulturskolan. I grundskolans kursplan för musikämnet (Skolverket, 2011b) poängteras samspel och eget skapande, grundläggande musikaliska färdigheter och kunskaper om musikens roll i samhället. Enligt den senaste nationella utvärderingen av grundskolans musikämne (Skolverket, 2015) tenderar kursplanens förtydligade kunskapsmål att användas instrumentellt. Undervisningen framstår mer uppgiftsinriktad än utforskande och reflekterande. En sådan uppgiftskultur riskerar att minska utrymmet för elevers eget skapande och reflektion samt att vara kontraproduktiv för kreativitet (Ericsson & Lindgren, 2010). Musikundervisning organiserad på detta vis kan få svårigheter att hantera det övergripande pedagogiska demokratiuppdraget (Georgii-Hemming & Westvall, 2010; Sernhede, 2006).

Till skillnad från grundskolan har musiklärare i den kommunala kulturskolan inga styrdokument eller läroplaner att förhålla sig till. Inom denna frivilliga skolform har musikundervisningen traditionellt bestått av individuell instrumentalundervisning och ensemblespel. I flera svenska kommuner sker dock samarbeten mellan kulturskolan och grundskolan vilket får till följd att en viss del av kulturskolans undervisning för yngre åldrar organiseras på schemalagd skoltid. Sedan starten på 1960-talet har kulturskolan (tidigare kommunala musikskolan) vilat på några grundläggande principer: att erbjuda musikupplevelser och musikaliskt lärande av hög kvalitet, samt att vara tillgänglig för alla barn och unga ([www.kulturskoleradet.se](http://www.kulturskoleradet.se)). Studier om den svenska kulturskolan har dock visat på flera hinder för deltagande. Den statliga kulturskoleutredningen från 2016 argumenterar för införandet av nationella riktlinjer, avsedda att stimulera en ökad likvärdighet (SOU 2016:69:116). Detta motiveras bland annat

med behovet av att stärka kulturskolans ”relevans i en förändrad omvärld” samt att garantera en mer ”inkluderande” musikundervisning (SOU 2016:69:12). Genom det internationellt uppmärksammade musikundervisningsprogrammet El Sistema från Venezuela är ambitionen att nå nya grupper av barn. El Sistema hävdar social utveckling genom musikundervisning i grupp (Baker, 2014; Hollinger, 2006). Ett flertal länder har inspirerats av dessa idéer och påbörjat etableringen av El Sistemainspirerad undervisning. I den svenska kontexten organiseras undervisningen ofta i socialt utsatt områden, företrädesvis genom kulturskolan men i samarbete med grundskolan.

Flera av de studier som diskuterar musikundervisningens sociala aspekter definierar den musikaliska praktiken som en arena för sociala och musikaliska handlingar. Genom sådana handlingar kan sociala såväl som musikaliska kompetenser utvecklas (Bowman, 1998, 2007; Elliott, 1995; Regelski, 2005, 2016; Small, 1998). Denna uppfattning får ontologiska och epistemologiska (Benedict & Schmidt, 2007), men även etiska konsekvenser (Bowman, 2012; Regelski, 2005; Silverman, 2012). En socialt rättvis musikundervisning förutsätter reflektioner över praktikens förutsättningar för inkludering, delaktighet och tillgänglighet (se Grant, 2006; Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Hess, 2014; Vageouis, 2009; Wright, 2014; Yerichuk, 2014). Etablerade och för givet tagna föreställningar kring exempelvis etnicitet och kön behöver därför problematiseras (se Bradley, 2006; Hess, 2017; Richardson, 2007; Sands, 2007; Vageouis, 2007). Enligt Burnard, Dillon, Rusinek, & Saether (2008), är det viktigt att det väcks frågor om inkluderande praktiker redan i musiklejarutbildning. Bristen på reflektion riskerar att vidmakthålla för givet tagna föreställningar om vissa specifikt utsatta elever i behov av stöd och hjälp (Gould, 2007). För att skapa en inkluderande musikundervisning, där alla, oavsett socio-ekonomisk ställning, kön, religiös, språklig eller kulturell härkomst, kan delta på lika villkor, behöver praktiken kunna tillhandahålla möjligheter för samarbete elever emellan (Wright, 2013; Grant, 2006). Med andra ord, organiserandet av en socialt rättvis musikundervisning är avhängigt lärares kritiska reflektioner över undervisningens innehåll samt medvetenheten om vilka möjligheter för elevers handlingar och förhandlingar som kommer till stånd (Gould, 2007).

Enligt internationella studier har implementeringen av El Sistema i socialt utsatta områden ökat möjligheterna att engagera fler och nya grupper av barn i musikundervisning (Eatock, 2010; Flenaugh, 2012; Lorenzino, 2015; Lui, 2012; Nemoy & Gerry, 2015). Organiserad musikundervisning med sociala mål verkar kunna påverka sociala ojämlikheter (Hollinger, 2006; Nowakowski, 2012; Uy, 2012). El Sistemainspirerad undervisning i grundskolan bidrar till elevernas psykosociala utveckling samt till ökad måluppfyllelse i övriga skolämnen (Osborne, McPherson et al., 2016). Mer kritiska

studier problematiserar dock programmets diskurser kring disciplinering och makt (Baker, 2014, 2016; Dobson, 2016), en disciplinering som, enligt Dobson (2016), dessutom omgärdas av en förgivettagen affirmativ diskurs. Uy (2012) problematiserar själva grunden för inkludering samt bristen på medbestämmande. Svenska studier av El Sistema synliggör flera förgivettagna föreställningar om musik och musikundervisning, om barn, familjer, social utsatthet och etnicitet (Bergman & Lindgren, 2014a; Kuuse, Lindgren & Skåreus, 2016). När lärares uppfattningar om en socialt inkluderande musikundervisning studeras synliggörs särskiljande och reducerande, men även mycket generella idéer kring elevers identitet, ursprung och möjligheter (Bergman, Lindgren & Saether, 2016; Saether, Bergman & Lindgren, 2017). Sociala aspekter verkar uppfattas vara förlagda utanför själva musikundervisningspraktiken (Saether, Bergman & Lindgren, 2017).

Sammanfattningsvis, svensk skola och musikundervisning står inför utmaningar att hantera frågor om likabehandling, social rättvisa och inkludering. I ett mer segregerat och mångkulturellt samhälle behöver musiklekrare hantera nya och förändrade uppdrag (Karlsen, 2013). Det finns därmed ett behov av att öka musiklekrarens professionsförståelse (Angelo & Georgii-Hemming, 2014). Detta gäller i grundskolan såväl som i kulturskolan. Även om nutida musikpedagogisk forskning oftast definierar musikundervisning som en situerad social praktik med möjligheter för musikaliska, sociala och demokratiska erfarenheter, uppfattas praktiken inte som neutral. En socialt rättvis undervisning förutsätter bland annat lärares kritiska reflektioner över praktiken.

Med ett specifikt fokus på musikundervisningens sociala aspekter är studiens syfte att undersöka hur verksamma musiklekrare artikulerar mening kring sin egen undervisningspraktik. Två frågor driver undersökningen: Hur konstruerar och legitimerar lärare sitt arbete som musiklekrare? Vilka olika kompetenser och positioner synliggörs i dessa meningskonstruktioner?

## **Teori, metodologi och analytiska begrepp**

Studien har ett socialkonstruktionistiskt och poststrukturalistiskt perspektiv. Enligt en sådan utgångspunkt förväntas sociala praktiker innehålla hegemoniska meningskonstruktioner vilka konstituerar deltagares tal och handlingar (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Potter, 1996; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Härigenom produceras den samtalsordning, eller de diskurser, som verkar inom praktiken. Inom en sådan *diskursiv*

*praktik* kan flera diskurser operera parallellt samt vara mer eller mindre styrande för medverkande subjekt (Foucault, 1977). Subjektens pågående förhandlingar skapar ständigt nya konstruktioner (Potter, 1996; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Diskurser ses därför som kontingenta (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985), i transformation, och möjliga att förändra (Wetherell, 2012).

Samhällsvetenskapernas affektiva vändning har lyft affekter och förkroppsligande som viktiga och avgörande aspekter av individers meningsskapande (Burkitt, 2002, 2012; Wetherell, 2012). Teorin om *affektiv diskursiv praktik* behandlar därmed affekter och emotioner som ständigt sammanlänkade med meningsskapandet i tal och handling (Wetherell, 2012; Wetherell et al., 2015). Diskursiva konstruktioner utgörs av känslomässig och förkroppsligad mening i pågående förhandling och praktikens deltagare konstruerar mening genom *affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer*. Sådana repertoarer är återkommande meningskonstruktioner, ofta karakteriserande och värderande gentemot praktikens innehåll samt uttryckta genom tal, handlingar och affekter (Wetherell et al., 2015). Affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer både produceras och tas i bruk av medverkande subjekt. De sätts samman med hjälp av återkommande “lexicon of terms, metaphors, descriptions, tropes, cliches etc.” (ibid:61). Dessa ofta domnanta och för givet tagna konstruktioner (Wetherell, 2012) synliggör hur den lokala praktikens *affektiva kanon* är komponerad (Wetherell et al., 2015). En affektiv kanon innebär etablerade och förgivettagna procedurer för det affektiva meningsskapandet inom en diskursiv praktik (ibid). Förutom affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer konstitueras även ett antal affektiva *subjektspositioner* (se även Potter, 1996; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Härigenom definieras roller, relationer samt plats och rum för medverkande. Affektiva positioneringar synliggör därmed även “established patterns of privilege and disadvantage” (Wetherell et al., 2015: 62). Den diskursiva praktikens affektiva kanon verkar genom affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer och affektiva subjektspositioner. Dessa konstruktioner syns ofta organiserade i par runt dilemman (Wetherell et al., 2015).

Den diskursiva praktikens föreställningar uppfattas stå i relation till samhälleliga makrodiskurser med liknande innehåll (Eriksson & Lindgren, 2011). Analysen kan därför även synliggöra förhandlingar inom och mellan mikro- och makrodiskurser. Sammanfattningsvis, genom en diskursiv kartläggning, genom analys av repertoarer, positioner och dilemman, synliggörs praktikens kollektiva meningsskapande samt vilka föreställningar som verkar stå på spel.

## Metod och analys

Studien utgör del av ett etnografiskt projekt med målet att undersöka och diskutera sociala aspekter av nutida musikundervisning för barn och unga. Sett ur ett etnografiskt perspektiv kan tidigare delstudier (Kuuse, Lindgren & Skåreus, 2016; Kuuse, 2018) utgöra en viktig bakgrundsförståelse för de kontextuella aspekter som framträder i denna studies resultat. Undersökningen fokuserar på lärares förståelse av sitt musikleäroppdrag. Inledningsvis presenteras empiriproduktion: design, lokal kontext, urval och genomförande. Därefter beskrivs analysförfarande samt etiska ställningstaganden och reflektioner.

## Design

Empiri utgörs av ett transkriberat fokusgruppsamtal med en grupp musiklejare som tillsammans diskuterar sitt läroppdrag. Fokusgruppsamtal som metod används för att studera åsikter, attityder, tankar, uppfattningar och argumentationer hos deltagare i sociala praktiker, men även för att studera interaktionen gruppmedlemmarna emellan (se Wibeck, 2010: 22). Metoden ger också möjligheter att upptäcka konstruktioner av mening kring ett givet ämne, eller med andra ord, gemensamma, kulturellt förankrade föreställningar och attityder. Analysen av ett fokusgruppsamtal avser därmed att visa på social interaktion, hur deltagare resonerar sig fram, vilka strategier för att skapa konsensus som synliggörs samt vilka eventuella konflikter som blir synliga (ibid). Studiens teoretiska perspektiv, samt syfte och frågeställningar, intresserar sig för konstruktioner av mening inom en praktik. Genom analys av affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer och affektiva subjektspositioneringar i tal kan den affektiva diskursiva praktiken framträda. Fokusgruppsintervju lämpar sig för att producera empiri som synliggör deltagares föreställningar och förhandlingar kring den egna praktiken.

## Urval

Valet av svenska El Sistema som studieobjekt legitimeras av detta programs uttalade fokus på sociala aspekter i relation till musikundervisning. Genom svenska El Sistemas retorik framhålls social utveckling, inkludering och demokratisk fostran genom kör och orkesterundervisning ([www.elsistema.se](http://www.elsistema.se)). Undervisningen, som alltid sker i grupp,

organiseras och administreras till största delen av den kommunala kulturskolan. För att nå fler och nya grupper av barn schemaläggs undervisning även inom skoldagen för förskolan, årskurs ett och två. För äldre barn är verksamheten, precis som i övrig verksamhet inom ramen för kulturskolan, frivillig och avgiftsbelagd efter skoldagen. Svenska El Sistemas idé är dock, till skillnad från kulturskolans vanliga organisering, att erbjuda grupplektioner flera gånger i veckan, att involvera barnens familjer i veckovisa sociala event, att ge möjligheter till möten med professionella musikaliska förebilder samt att arbeta för att överbrygga sociala skillnader. Detta möjliggörs bland annat genom att låta barn från olika skolor mötas och spela tillsammans.

El Sistema finns nu i 25 av Sveriges städer ([www.elsistema.se](http://www.elsistema.se)). Implementering och organisering sker företrädesvis genom kulturskolan. De lärare som medverkar i föreliggande studie är anställda av kulturskolan och arbetar deltid med El Sistema-undervisning, organiserad både inom barnens skoldag samt som frivillig eftermiddagsverksamhet. Urvalet av denna grupp gjordes mot bakgrund av att dessa lärare utgör ett fast arbetslag som tillsammans arbetar med flera delar av kulturskolans El Sistemaimplementering inom en lokal praktik. De utgör därmed ett, på många vis, ”typiskt urval” (se Patton, 2002) i relation till hur svenska El Sistema är organiserat. Lärarna i studien representerar flera instrumentgrupper, de arbetar med barn i olika åldrar och samarbetar dessutom regelbundet kring sociala event. De utgör ett kollektiv som delar en praktik. Alla medverkande lärare har dessutom till större eller mindre grad medverkat i en tidigare fältstudie (Kuuse, 2018). Inför inbjudan till fokusgrupps-samtalet ställdes frågan till kollegiets alla sju lärare, en lärare fick förhinder och sex stycken medverkade.

## Lokal kontext

Lärarna i studien är alla anställda av kulturskolan i en svensk stad. De undervisar alltid i kompanjonskap och ansvarar för El Sistema-satsningen på en specifik skola. Satsningen är politiskt sanktionerad med syfte att skapa nya möjligheter för barn och vuxna i den aktuella stadsdelen. Undervisning sker uteslutande i grupp, vilket också är en av El Sistemas huvudidéer. Några arbetar med förskolan, några med klassorkester, några med rytmik och förberedande undervisning, några med kör och några med stråkorkester. För förskolan, samt för årskurs ett och två är undervisningen obligatorisk och schemalagd inom skoldagen. Barnen kan dessutom välja en avgiftsbelagd eftermiddagsverksamhet två gånger per vecka från och med årskurs ett. Varje



onsdagkväll arrangeras ett socialt event där barn och föräldrar är välkomna. Där kan barnen uppträda, alla sjunger och fikar tillsammans och det kommer regelbundet musikaliska gäster på besök.

Medverkande lärares tjänster är på minst 50 % men sällan heltid och flera fyller därför ut sin arbetstid med frilansuppdrag som musiker samt med instrumentalundervisning inom den ordinarie kulturskolan. De flesta har musiklejarutbildning från högskola medan några har förskollärarexamen eller musikhandledarutbildning. Alla har anställts som El Sistemapedagoger och har förutom sedvanlig ansökan också genomgått anställningsintervju samt fått utföra ett undervisningsprov. Detta för att visa på lämplighet och intresse för att arbeta med El Sistemas undervisningsmodell: gruppundervisning och delat ledarskap. Vid anställning har lärarna fått diskutera sitt intresse för, och sin inställning till, att arbeta i socialt utsatta områden. På lärarsamlingar och studiedagar får de ytterligare information om El Sistemas musikaliska och sociala mål men på anställningsavtalen står det endast musiklejare.

## Genomförande

Fokusgrupps-samtalet pågick i 45 minuter och ljud-inspelades. Innan inspelningen startade gavs medverkande lärare möjlighet att ställa frågor. De blev informerade om att samtalet skulle starta med en frågeställning och att de därefter kunde tala fritt, lyssna på varandra och diskutera. Som samtalsledare sammanfattade jag vid några tillfällen under samtalets gång, vad som sagts. Jag upprepade och påminde om temat, ställde vid behov ytterligare följdfrågor och bjöd in de deltagare som inte gjort sig hörda. I ett fokusgruppsamtal initieras ofta diskussionen med en öppen fråga och forskaren förhåller sig sedan inte styrande (se Wibeck, 2010). Fråga och utgångspunkt för lärarnas diskussion i denna studie var: Hur är det att arbeta som musiklejare i El Sistema?

## Analys

Allt inspelat material transkriberades ordagrant till text. Utan att i förväg veta vad som skulle komma att bli viktigt för analys togs beslutet att dessutom markera amplitud, upprepningar, tankeord och pauser. Dessa markeringar avsåg att ytterligare tydliggöra

det kollektiva meningsskapandet genom att visa på tveksamheter, betoningar och upprepningar, men även på vilka sätt de medverkande förhandlade om talutrymme, skapade kollektiv konsensus eller hamnade i konflikt. I de första analysstegen studerades samtalets innehåll i relation till temat, samt hur den sociala interaktionen och det kollektiva meningsskapandet stod i relation till detta tema. Med andra ord, på vilka olika sätt lärarna själva konstruerade mening kring sitt musiklekläraruppdrag. En sådan företrädesvis induktiv analys avser att identifiera och synliggöra de kategorier som artikuleras av informanterna själva, så kallade ”indigenous concepts” (Patton, 2002: 456–457) men försöker samtidigt uppmärksamma sådana mönster som deltagare inte har benämningar för.

I nästa analyssteg synliggjordes lärares meningskonstruktioner genom återkommande affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer. I dessa talhandlingar karakteriseras och värderas den gemensamma praktiken. Genom repertoarerna framträdde nya teman som, när de prövades på materialet, tydliggjorde dilemman och förhandlingar i relation till föreställningar om arbetet som musiklejare. Genom ytterligare analys synliggjordes hur dessa dominanta tolkningsrepertoarer också positionerade de medverkande subjekt – barn och föräldrar – som diskuterades. Med hjälp av de dilemman, affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer och positioneringar som framträtt kunde slutligen även lärares egna subjektspositioner synliggöras. I resultatet nedan redovisas hur affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer, affektiva subjektspositioner samt affektiva positioneringar av medverkande barn och föräldrar tas i bruk för att konstruera mening och legitimera arbetet som musiklejare. Genom dessa förhandlingar synliggörs den affektivt diskursiva praktiken.

## Etik

Fokusgruppsintervjun har genomförts utifrån informerat samtycke. Alla lärare har blivit tillfrågade om medverkan, både personligen och på ett gemensamt personalmöte. De har i förväg fått information om typen av intervju, intervjuens längd samt samtalets tema. Därefter har de själva fått välja att medverka. Enligt Vetenskapsrådets forskningsetiska regler (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017) har medverkande lärare informerats om att de när som helst har rätt att avbryta sin medverkan, att de medverkar anonymt samt att alla identifieringsmarkörer som plats, stad, namn, ålder, kön och anställningsform inte skulle komma att synliggöras i studiens resultat. Samma information upprepades innan ljudinspelningen påbörjades. För att ytterligare skydda deltagares integritet och

för att minimera eventuella risker för identifiering av enskilda, har transkriberat tal slutligen redigerats språkligt. Samtalsutdragen nedan presenteras som illustrerande narrativ i korta excerpt. De representerar därmed de transkriberade konstruktionerna så nära det av etiska skäl är möjligt.

Utifrån föreliggande studies teoretiska perspektiv förstås medverkande lärares meningskonstruktioner såsom delvis determinerade av den specifika kontexten – El Sistemas musikundervisning med sociala mål. Genom den affektiva diskursiva praktiken produceras och omförhandlas diskursiva ramar. Med andra ord, lärares meningskonstruktioner uppfattas som förhandlingar inom en affektiv diskursiv praktik, inte som uttryck för individuella åsikter. Denna praktik konstituerar och sätter gränser för vad som går att artikulera men omformas ständigt av de medverkande subjekten. Mina erfarenheter från tidigare fältarbete (Kuuse, 2018) kan medverka till en ökad förståelse för det som konstrueras under samtalets gång (jämför Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Genom den tidigare fältstudien hade jag redan etablerat en relation med lärarna. Detta faktum samt forskarrollens privilegierade position behöver dock reflekteras. Båda positioner påverkar och styr samtalets inriktning och innehåll.

## **Musikläraren och sociala aspekter av läraruppdraget**

Den inledande analysen av fokusgruppsintervjun synliggjorde lärarnas återkommande samtalsteman. I analysen av affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer och affektiva subjekspositioner blev det tydligt hur, med vilka olika retoriska grepp, som dessa teman förhandlades. Inledningsvis presenteras de teman som lärarna själva formulerade. Det är dock genom affektiva repertoarer och positioner som den affektiva diskursiva praktiken framträder. Genom dessa kategorier synliggörs hur lärare konstruerar mening och legitimerar sitt arbete.

## **Teman, affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer och positioner**

De teman som först framträdde i materialet, lärares egna uttryck, visade att arbetet i den lokala praktiken upplevdes som mycket positivt, viktigt och glädjefyllt men samma teman visade också på upplevelser av frustration och otillräcklighet samt på känslan av ett stort ansvar. Frustrationen berörde svårigheten att utföra musikläraruppdraget

inom de förutsättningar som bjöds. Specifika elever, deras föräldrar och det aktuella bostadsområdet, beskrevs vidhäftade med problem. Flera yttranden lyfte dessutom frustration över bristen på tid, samordning, ledarskap och organisation.

Genom fortsatt analys, framträdde dominanta affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer och subjektspositioneringar, vilket också synliggjorde hur praktikens affektiva kanon verkade vara komponerad. Det är affektiv kanon som avgör vilka affektiva repertoarer och positioner som blir möjliga. Affektiva repertoarer och positioneringar relaterar till varandra och används i förhandlingarna om läraruppdraget. På vilka sätt förhandlingar görs, med vilka affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer, och med vilka affektiva subjektspositioner, utgör formen för framställningen nedan. De excerpt som följer är kategoriserade under tre rubriker. Affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer behandlas under rubriken: *“Det är positivt men det är separerat från professionen”*. Dessa ofta återkommande konstruktioner kan kortfattat beskrivas som den entusiastiska, den frustrerade och den professionella tolkningsrepertoaren. Affektiv positionering av medverkande barn och vuxna behandlas under rubriken: *“Många av de här barnen”* och lärares affektiva subjektspositioner behandlas under rubriken: *“Jag ska ha så mycket kärlek”*. I de språkligt redigerade transkriptioner som bildar excerpten är sådana ord som betonats extra starkt under samtalet understruken. Tvekan och pauser i tal är markerat med punkter.

## **“Det är positivt men det är separerat från professionen”**

Det är framförallt tre olika affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer som framträder. Redan i inledningen av intervjun synliggörs den mest återkommande av dessa. Denna företrädesvis entusiastiska tolkningsrepertoar genomsyrar också hela samtalet. Genom denna artikuleras vad som är positivt och viktigt, men framförallt specifikt för El Sistemauppdraget. Kulturskolans El Sistemaundervisning jämförs med ordinarie musikundervisning men också med övrig skolverksamhet. Lärarna uttrycker att deras arbete utgör del av ett större sammanhang, ett sammanhang som kan förändra förutsättningar för de barn och familjer som medverkar:

Excerpt 1:

Lärare A: Jag tror att det... det här låter så himla knäppt, för det finns säkert i andra delar också, men det känns verkligen som alla vill förändra världen här.

Lärare A: Här är det ju ett samarbete i mycket, mycket högre grad, ett samarbete mellan varandra, alltså man är ju två lärare som jobbar samtidigt dessutom och man har mycket, mycket mer kommunikation, ... och det tycker jag vi har, kommunikationen kring allt vad gäller verksamhet, vad gäller olika barn, situationer, olika tankesätt, engagemanget, i vad det är man vill göra.

Lärarna artikulerar att samarbetet kollegor emellan är specifikt för just El Sistema, att de arbetar mycket mer tillsammans än i annan musikundervisning, och att de just därför kan utföra ett viktigt och speciellt arbete. Samarbete framstår som ett positivt laddat och återkommande begrepp i denna repertoar. Härigenom konstrueras ordinarie skol- och kulturskoleundervisning som kontexter med mindre grad av samverkan och kommunikation mellan lärare, kontexter där samma viktiga arbete inte kan utföras. Affektiv legitimering av den entusiastiska repertoarens innehåll görs med upprepningar och förstärkningar av positivt laddade ord. Den entusiastiska repertoaren utgör dessutom en grundläggande legitimering av lärarnas arbete. Vid flera tillfällen under samtalets gång definieras samverkan som en trygghetsfaktor eftersom det, enligt lärarnas utsagor, är väldigt tungt att arbeta med barn och familjer som lever i socialt utsatta områden. För att kunna hantera de känslor som sociala problem väcker, konstrueras en andra tolkningsrepertoar, den frustrerade. Genom denna kommuniceras motstridiga känslor inför det komplexa och mångfasetterade uppdraget. Det uppstår en förhandling mellan denna problemfokuserade och frustrerade tolkningsrepertoar och den som fortsätter att upprepa entusiasm, tillförsikt och samhällsansvar:

Excerpt 2:

Lärare A: Men tyngden också, att man känner; jag uttalar mig för mig själv, det är så lätt att känna sig otillräcklig när man inte riktigt vet vad det innebär alltid att jobba med detta... och att man just är lite rädda-världen-människor sådär. Jag tänker mycket på det, hur man ska få ihop det, alla delar, alla de där planen liksom. För det är på så många plan samtidigt. Det är inte bara ens undervisningsplan.

Lärare B: Jo men de planen, jag sa att man, alltså i vårt uppdrag, alltså även om vi kanske inte... även om det inte är så uttalat, så ingår det ändå att tänka liksom utvecklingsmässigt på alla plan, alltså både i den lilla undervisningsgruppen och ut i världen (några skrattar).

Lärare A uttrycker en känsla av otillräcklighet. Lärare B framställer rädda-världen-uppdraget som något stort och viktigt som ska och måste göra skillnad. Ett uppdrag

som måste utföras och som förutsätter en speciell sorts läraridentitet. Genom den entusiastiska tolkningsrepertoaren vidhålls en förgivettagen affektiv inställning (affektiv kanon) kring vikten av samhällsansvar. Samtidigt blottas osäkerhet och frustration med hjälp av den frustrerade tolkningsrepertoaren. I detta dilemma framställs det viktiga samhällsuppdraget som något annat än den musikundervisning lärarna är anställda att utföra. Genom sitt uttalande blottlägger lärare A en tydlig ambivalens inför hur de till synes olika uppdragen ska hanteras. Lärare B försöker att hantera dilemmat genom att återta den första (entusiastiska) tolkningsrepertoaren. Genom denna repertoars retoriska grepp (“alla”, “ut i världen”) legitimeras och förstärks åter värdet av det viktiga och mångfasetterade ”rädda-världen-uppdraget”. Ambivalensen kvarstår och lärarna återvänder till svårigheten att hantera både ett musikaliskt och ett socialt uppdrag:

Excerpt 3:

Lärare A: Det är ju också den musikaliska produktionen, det är ju en del, och det sociala då, som är... det är ju med integration och föräldrakontakter...

Lärare B: Gruppstärkande

Lärare A: Gruppstärkande, precis, åh hur kan man liksom få ihop de samarbetena? Jag kände ett tag, man känner, jag känner mig otillräcklig.

För att hantera dilemmat, görs ett försök att sortera mellan uppdragen. De sociala aspekterna av musikläraruppdraget konstrueras som något som befinner sig utanför musikundervisningsuppdraget. Det som sker i klassrummet med barnen benämns först och främst som musikalisk produktion. Lärare B för dock in argumentet om att musikundervisning också skulle kunna stärka gruppen och problematiserar därmed lärare A:s uttryck för ambivalens. Lärare A accepterar det gruppstärkande argumentet men vidhåller frustration och sin upplevelse av otillräcklighet när det gäller att handskas med flera uppdrag. I förhandlingen om yttre förväntningar synliggörs samma ambivalens:

Excerpt 4:

Lärare A: Men, jag tycker det är svårt med balansen. Det är bilden av El Sistema utifrån, alltså påtryckningar vad det ska vara liksom.

Lärare C: Absolut, jättejobbigt är det.

Lärare A: Det är lurigt med det där uppdraget

Lärare B: Ja det är så mycket

Lärare A: Grejen är ju också att det står ju ingenstans, vi är musiklärare punkt.

Lärare C: Men där uppstår ju också den här frustrationen eller känslan av att inte räckta till, det ställer ju omänskliga krav på den enskilda pedagogen.

Genom en tredje affektiv tolkningsrepertoar (den professionella) konstrueras musiklärarens arbete framförallt som konkret, tydligt och avgränsat. Det framställs som något de medverkande upplever att de har professionell kompetens för. Detta professionella musikläraruppdrag står samtidigt i bjärt kontrast till det mycket specifika, viktiga, ansvarsfyllda och komplexa sociala El Sistemauppdrag som lärarna förväntas göra utöver sin förmåga. I ett nytt försök att hantera dilemmat skiljs de två uppdragen åt. Den frustrerade affektiva tolkningsrepertoaren konstruerar det sociala uppdraget som mycket känslomässigt påfrestande. Det definieras som ett krävande uppdrag utifrån höga förväntningar. Den professionella tolkningsrepertoaren framställer musiklärarens arbete som ett hanterbart uppdrag utan krav på andra kompetenser än de rent hantverksmässiga:

Excerpt 5:

Lärare E: Men sen tycker jag, det påminner ju verkligen mycket om vanlig musikundervisning, alltså musik överhuvudtaget. Det är ju liksom, grundgrejerna: noter, gehör, lära sig hålla ett instrument. Det är precis som var som helst egentligen. Men sen tycker jag, jag gillar det här fokuset på att ... med kärleken, som också kan bli lite svårt att hantera ibland. För att det blir liksom, att... Jag kan tycka att ibland så gränsar det till o... , som jag själv känner, att jag känner. Jag känner mig inte professionell. För att det känns som att det ska vara så personligt ibland och då kan det kännas som att det är separerat från professionen samtidigt som det inte är det. Eller ja, det är liksom avhängigt att jag ska kunna ge saker också till barnen på ett bra sätt, och det, det är svårt också tycker jag, ibland. Men det är också väldigt roligt, att se alla barnen. Nä, men att det är viktigt liksom, att varje barn är viktigt. Det tycker jag är bra med El Sistema, och det är också svårt.

Att vara musiklärare konstrueras som något oproblematiskt, relaterat till konkreta musikaliska färdigheter. Uttalandet förutsätter lärargruppens konsensus kring vari det arbetet består, samt vad musik och musikundervisning är. En musiklärarens undervisning förväntas med andra ord att vara densamma överallt, i vilken musikundervisningskontext som helst. I kontrast till detta konstrueras det sociala uppdraget som diffust, otydligt, tungt och godtyckligt, ett arbete, som trots att det är viktigt, ligger helt utanför musikläraryrket. Sociala aspekter framställs framförallt handla om lärares förmåga att kunna ge något, och då känslor. De sociala aspekterna kopplas samman

med lokala sociala problem, till föräldrakontakter och till föreställningar om att varje barn är viktigt.

I ytterligare kontrast till det uppenbart konkreta muskläraryrket konstrueras kärlek som något förgivettaget kopplat till ett socialt engagemang. Känslan av kärlek konstrueras som något svårt, men också som något positivt, självklart och specifikt för El Sistemakontexten. Förmågan att äga och ge kärlek samt förmågan att vara personlig verkar dessutom uppfattas som förväntningar och krav utifrån. Härigenom synliggörs hur praktikens affektiva kanon är komponerad. Men, även om denna kärleksfulla förmåga framstår som förgivettaget betydelsefull konstrueras den också som något oprofessionellt. Det affektivt konstruerade sociala uppdraget särskiljs från ett mer rationellt och professionellt konstruerat muskläraryrke. Trots lärare E:s uppenbara frustration över att inte kunna hantera dilemman, att inte känna sig professionell, eftersträvas konsensus. Detta görs än en gång med hjälp av den dominanta entusiastiska tolkningsrepertoaren. Det uppenbara dilemman mellan uppdragen förhandlas genom att lärare E konstruerar det sociala, frustrerande, oprofessionella och icke-musikaliska arbetet som roligt och bra men framförallt viktigt.

De tre dominanta och återkommande tolkningsrepertoarer som används i lärarnas förhandlingar kring dilemman innehåller vissa återkommande uttryck, ordval, metaforer och klichéer. Den övergripande entusiastiska tolkningsrepertoaren har starkt stöd i den affektiva kanon och de diskursiva ramar som verkar omgärda just denna muskläraryrkepraktik. Den diskursiva praktikens affektiva kanon förutsätter nöjda, positiva, aktiva, samverkande och känslomässigt engagerade musklärare som vill göra skillnad. Legitimeringen av det specifika uppdraget görs bland annat genom att aktivt särskilja den egna undervisningspraktiken i relation till all annan musikundervisning och övrig skolverksamhet. Parallellt konstrueras ett mycket frustrerande och problematiskt (men viktigt) socialt utvecklande uppdrag. Denna frustrerade tolkningsrepertoar hamnar i antagonism till den tredje professionella tolkningsrepertoaren som konstruerar ett omöjligt men samtidigt oproblematiskt, tydligt och konkret muskläraryrkeuppdrag. Förståelsen av det renodlade och okomplicerade muskläraryrkeuppdraget verkar utgöra konsensus. Synen på musik och musikaliskt lärande reflekteras inte. För att kunna hantera det uppenbara dilemman mellan uppdragen används den dominanta och entusiastiska tolkningsrepertoar som affektiv kanon huvudsakligen verkar vara komponerad av. Inom denna lokala diskursiva praktik verkar det vara underförstått att lärare samarbetar samt att de önskar vilja förändra världen. Det verkar helt enkelt handla om att ha rätt inställning. Vari denna förändring och utveckling består problematiseras inte. Social utveckling konstrueras helt



enkelt som något förgivettaget positivt mot bakgrund av att praktikens kontextuella förutsättningar konstrueras som mycket problemfyllda.

## ”Många av de här barnen”

I den pågående förhandlingen kring dilemmat blir flera olika positioner möjliga. Med hjälp av affektiva positioneringar av medverkande barn och vuxna synliggörs ytterligare sätt att hantera ambivalensen. Flera av lärarnas uttalanden beskriver den specifika och krävande kontext där de arbetar. Medverkande subjekt (barn och föräldrar) framställs som vidhäftade med problem och svåra omständigheter samtidigt som musiken som objekt konstrueras som förgivettaget glädjefyllt och positiv:

Excerpt 6:

Lärare E: Men det är väldigt häftigt också när det är, när det liksom går bra för många av de här barnen som, som har det lite svårt för sig.

Flera av de barn som medverkar i El Sistemas verksamhet konstrueras som elever med speciella behov på grund av att de inte har stöd hemifrån och därför inte klarar skolundervisningen lika bra. Retoriken kring barn i behov av stöd får dessutom en legitimerande funktion för positionen som musiklärare med ett socialt uppdrag. Lärarna talar om ett bostadsområde med sociala problem och brist på trygghet för medverkande barn:

Excerpt 7:

Lärare E: sen så tycker jag att den största utmaningen är, som i det här området, som du sa också, ett tufft område. Man känner med de barnen som inte har ett självklart stöd från föräldrarna.

På grund av att bostadsområdet konstitueras som problemfyllt och mot bakgrund av att barnen framställs som utsatta, positioneras även föräldrarna som sådana affektiva subjekt som inte har förmågan att hjälpa sina barn. Barnen positioneras som hjälpbehövande, i behov av trygghet och relationer samt med bristande sociala färdigheter som till exempel samarbetsförmåga. Affektiva positioneringar och definitioner av problem legitimerar och förstärker behovet av en insats. De specifika kontextuella förutsättningarna samt de specifikt problematiska subjekten framställs förutsätta ett känslomässigt engagemang från verkamma lärare:

Excerpt 8:

Lärare D: Jamen det är lite grand mer en relationsbaserad pedagogik

Andra lärare: mmm, ja

Lärare D: Det bygger på att man måste ha en relation med barnet annars blir det svårare att nå

Annan lärare: alla

Lärare D: Ja och då är det också svårare att helt enkelt nå fram till musiken och vad musiken är.

Lärare B: Ja precis, själva musikundervisningen, det finns ju ingen speciell El Sistema metodik när det gäller den utan det handlar ju om vad man fyller de här, fyller resten av mötet med liksom...

Lärare D: Då hänger det på oss, att skapa förutsättningar och att bädda för att kunna vara i en grupp å alla de sakerna liksom. Så det är väl också lite speciellt eftersom vi ska vara där, där kulturskolan vanligtvis inte når barnen alltså. Man kanske inte har varit så mycket på den här skolan, just för att det har varit så tungt liksom, eller så där. Man kanske inte har, det har inte varit så många barn som har valt att fortsätta i kulturskolan här liksom. Så där har vi ju, det ligger ju i vårt uppdrag att faktiskt skapa de möjligheterna att ha musik.

Med hjälp av affektiva positioneringar av medverkande såsom hjälpbehövande blir det sociala aspekterna av uppdraget tydligare. Lärarnas arbete handlar i första hand om att skapa möjligheter och förutsättningar för att organisera musikundervisning. Uppdraget uppfattas vara styrt av de sociala behov som artikulerats. Att lärare erbjuder relationer och trygghet konstrueras som ett slags ställföreträdande föräldruppdrag. De vuxna som förväntas ta detta uppdrag positioneras istället som icke närvarande. De framställs som individer med problem på grund av svåra omständigheter.

Med hjälp av affektiva positioneringar förstärks de sociala problemen vilket också distanserar den andre – barn och föräldrar – och ger lärare en privilegierad position. Att kulturskolan inte har verkat i detta område tidigare framställs bero på de specifika problemen. För att arbeta med sociala aspekter finns, enligt lärarna, ingen tydlig metodik. På samma gång är det med hjälp av dessa sociala problem som uppdraget definieras. Sociala problem och positioneringar av den andre som socialt och känslomässigt behovande verkar kunna skapa en tydligare lärarposition. Affektiva positioneringar av medverkande utgör härmed del av förhandlingen mellan det förgivettagna och oproblematiska musikleärouppdraget och det diffusa, men känslomässigt engagerande sociala uppdraget. Enligt lärarnas retorik får det mer konkreta musikleäroarbetet stå

tillbaka för ett socialt engagemang som måste hanteras innan det ens går att arbeta musikaliskt. För att skapa mening och för att kunna hantera dilemmat mellan de tre tolkningsrepertoarerna positioneras medverkande barn och anhöriga. I dessa förhandlingar möjliggörs även subjektpositioner för medverkande lärare.

## ”Jag ska ha så mycket kärlek”

Affektiva tolkningsrepertoarer och positioneringar av medverkande barn och föräldrar synliggör även ett dilemma kring lärares olika roller. Härmed konstrueras affektiva subjektpositioner för medverkande lärare. Inledningsvis syns två mycket åtskilda positioner, en rationell, tydlig och professionell musiklärarposition och en mer emotionell, socialt och relationellt ansvarstagande position:

Excerpt 9:

Lärare E: Men det är det, precis. Och det är det som jag menar med att jag kan tycka att det känns oprofessionellt ibland på det sättet att... Det blir väldigt godtyckligt liksom, för att det finns ett socialt... uppdrag eller hur? Vi ska ta, liksom, ett socialt ansvar, men samtidigt så är vi anställda som musiklärare. Vi har fyrtyominuters-lektioner, punkt. Då är det liksom, samtidigt så är musiken ett socialt sätt att liksom umgås på, och så också, men alltså det här att liksom fånga upp de här barnen som, som ramlar ner. Det behöver man egentligen någon mer än en musiklärare för att klara av, tycker jag. Och jag tycker att det är det som jag tycker är så här oprofessionellt. Det är liksom, det är upp till mig, att jag ska ha så mycket kärlek så att jag kan ta hand om det. Och det kan ju liksom svikta om man inte känner att det är tydligt vad det är egentligen alltså.

Den rationella musiklärarpositionen konstrueras som den som undervisar i musik inom ramen för en lektion. Till skillnad från den sociala lärarpositionen är den rationella lärarpositionen både professionell och tydlig. Den sociala lärarpositionen kännetecknas istället av egenskaper som tålmodighet och en positiv inställning. Denna lärarposition förväntas kunna uttrycka starka känslor utan att egentligen veta vilken insats som efterfrågas. Det verkar snarare handla om en inställning, om något man förväntas vara. Lärare E försöker dock att förlägga dessa sociala kompetenser hos andra yrkesgrupper än musiklärare. Därmed synliggörs ett uppenbart motstånd.

Lärare E ifrågasätter det förgivettaget affektivt kodade sociala uppdraget – praktikens affektiva kanon (Wetherell et al., 2015) – genom att definiera det som både godtyckligt och oprofessionellt. Det sociala uppdraget framställs vara något som musiklärare inte har utbildning för. Genom att referera till sin tjänstetitel tar läraren avstamp i musiklärarrollen men uttrycker samtidigt att detta inte räcker. För att kunna utföra ett socialt uppdrag och klara sitt arbete uppger informanten att lärare förväntas vara kärleksfulla och omhändertagande. Lärare E:s framställning gör att den emotionella och socialt ansvarstagande lärarpositionen framträder som dominant. Denna position verkar dessutom vara förgivettaget relaterad till känslor som kärlek. För att skapa mening kring denna känslomässigt ansvarstagande, men på samma gång icke-professionella, lärarposition positioneras återigen de barn som har det extra svårt. Praktikens affektiva kanon premierar den socialt ansvarstagande lärarpositionen och understödjer därmed ambivalensen mellan lärarnas olika subjektpositioner. Ambivalensen utmanas dock med hjälp av lärarnas uppenbara frustration i och med att de konstruerar arbetet som otydligt och krävande. Trots detta är det den socialt ansvarstagande positionen som dominerar i förhandlingen om hegemoni. Genom ytterligare en position kan konsensus återskapas och dilemmat hanteras:

Excerpt 10:

Lärare C: Men i den förhoppningen då att, att räcka till. Det tycker jag, så känner jag, att det viktigaste är ju ändå att vara här över huvud taget. Att vara närvarande så att säga i stunden. Då kanske det inte innebär att jag hann göra den där övningen eller spela den där låten även ifall man gärna ville det. Man vill uppnå saker och så, men det viktiga tror jag är just att man finns och så, som en vuxen förebildande människa, och att det räcker. Det räcker väldigt, väldigt långt, också utifrån det som du beskrev, när man åker ner liksom, de här dipparna. Men jag står här i alla fall och jag försöker ändå möta det här barnet så gott jag kan liksom och jag kan inte göra mer än så. Det är fullt tillräckligt. Det är mer än tillräckligt, för många av de där barnen har ju inte ens det liksom, ja, någon vuxen som står kvar.

Lärare B: Ja precis

Lärare C: Utan de vuxna lämnar eller finns inte av olika anledningar. De mår kanske jättedåligt själva. Och då tänker jag att, i de stunderna att: åh vad jag är tillräcklig, åh vad det här är bra att jag bara är här liksom, i rummet, och inte går ifrån rummet.

När läraridentiteten verkar stå på spel tas den dominanta tolkningsrepertorens uttryck i bruk för att hantera ambivalensen mellan den professionella och den sociala

lärarpositionen. Denna tredje lärarposition, den entusiastiska, legitimeras genom viktiga värden och karaktärsdrag. Härigenom konstrueras en slags ideal lärarposition. Trots ett otydligt och tungt socialt arbete premieras kompetens och handlingskraft. Att lärare tar egna beslut utifrån kunskap om vad som är viktigt i praktiken, konstrueras som ett motstånd och som ett sätt att återta den professionella makten över sitt arbete. Trots uttalanden om sänkta musikaliska krav, ser den entusiastiska lärarpositionen positivt på ett musiklektörarbete som kan göra skillnad. Den entusiastiska lärarpositionen är dessutom mycket affektivt engagerad i relation till de problematiska omständigheter som man säger sig vilja förändra. Positioneringen av den andre, av barn och föräldrar, får utgöra motiv. Trots uttalad brist på ledning och resurser, trots en frustrerad medvetenhet om sociala problem, trots svårigheter att utföra det professionella musiklektöruppdraget, tar den entusiastiska lärarpositionen ett socialt och mänskligt ansvar bara genom att vara närvarande. Genom den entusiastiska lärarpositionen artikuleras ett motstånd mot frustration, otydlighet och otillräcklighet. Positionen verkar behövas för att utjämna ambivalensen och hantera dilemmat.

Den diskursiva praktikens subjektpositioner konstrueras extra affektivt för att bli hanterbara. Inom praktikens affektiva kanon verkar den socialt ansvarstagande och entusiastiska lärarpositionen vara dominant. Lärarna konstruerar hjälpbarhet genom att positionera den andre i problematiska omständigheter. Detta görs för att skapa mening kring det musikaliska och sociala uppdraget samt för att legitimera ambivalenta lärarpositioner. Ett socialt uppdrag legitimeras genom att konstruera problem och problematiska subjekt. I förhandlingen får vad som konstrueras vara en konkret och professionell musiklektörposition, stryka på foten tills jämvikt har uppnåtts. Undervisningens sociala aspekter verkar helt enkelt inte kunna innefattas i denna musiklektörposition.

## **Sammanfattning**

Resultatet har synliggjort lärares meningskonstruktioner samt hur legitimeringen av musiklektörarbetet görs inom den diskursiva praktikens ramar. Det musikaliska uppdraget konstrueras som tydligt och oproblematiskt men på grund av de specifika omständigheterna får detta läraruppdrag stå tillbaka. Det sociala uppdraget konstrueras som otydligt och oproffessionellt men på grund av den akuta situationen framställs det ändå som viktigast. Antagonismen mellan de båda uppdragen konstrueras inom den diskursiva ram och den affektiva kanon som verkar förutsätta

engagemang och entusiasm inför vad som framställs vara mycket viktiga och akuta uppgifter. Det affektiva engagemanget hos lärarna är också genomgående väldigt stort. Alla medverkande uttalar att de önskar göra skillnad genom sitt musiklektöruppdrag och hoppas därigenom även kunna påverka förutsättningar för medverkande barn och familjer. Det görs också jämförelser med så kallad ”vanlig” skola och ”vanlig” musikundervisning för att legitimera värdet av arbetet i den egna specifika kontexten. Samtidigt verkar lärarna uppleva höga förväntningar från ledning och organisation. De återkommer ofta till bristen på tid och praktiska förutsättningar och de efterfrågar tydligare information då de egentligen inte riktigt vet vad som förväntas av dem. Analysen synliggör ett lärarkollegium som verkar uppleva brist på support. De får ständig information om att de arbetar med musikundervisning för social utveckling men de uttrycker frustration inför hur de ska uppfatta sitt uppdrag. Retoriken pågår på en högre nivå, i ledning och organisation, i dokument och marknadsföring men verkar vara svår att översätta till praktisk handling.

Utifrån ett musikpedagogiskt, men även allmänpedagogiskt perspektiv, kan det tyckas förvånande att diskussionen, utifrån den inledande frågan: Hur är det att arbeta som musiklektör i El Sistema, till så stor del berör de specifikt lokala sociala förutsättningarna och dessutom ofta sådana aspekter som befinner sig utanför musikundervisningskontexten. Frågan avsåg att öppna för ett samtal som inrymde alla slags erfarenheter inom ramen för musikundervisning med uttalade sociala mål. Det viktiga, frustrerande men positiva arbete som lärarna genomgående talar om är snarare ett arbete som de uppfattar att de förväntas göra utanför musikundervisningen.

## Diskussion

I denna studie framställs sociala aspekter av musikundervisning vara något som pågår vid sidan av den musikaliska praktiken. Även tidigare forskning visar att musiklektörens egna föreställningar tenderar att särskilja musikaliskt lärande från ett mer terapeutiskt, känslomässigt och socialt lärande (Lindgren, 2006; Saether, Bergman & Lindgren, 2017). Lärare i dessa studier konstruerar specifika handlingar, möten med familjer, konsertverksamhet med barn från olika skolor eller möten mellan olika kulturer som de sociala aspekterna av sitt arbete, inte det som sker i och genom musikundervisningspraktiken. Retoriken kring det sociala värdet av sådana aktiviteter är dessutom mycket positivt affektivt konstruerad (Kuuse, Lindgren & Skåreus, 2016).

Även Dobson (2016) har berört den specifikt affirmativa diskurs som verkar omgärda just El Sistemas musikundervisning. Detta kan tolkas som att sociala perspektiv genererar föreställningar om specifika (affektiva) sätt att arbeta på, föreställningar som inte existerade innan de sociala aspekterna blev explicita. I föreliggande studie synliggörs hur sådana specifika arbetssätt legitimeras genom affektiva positioneringar av medverkande såsom hjälpbehövande. Hade inte hjälpbehoven funnits hade, med andra ord, inte musikundervisningens sociala aspekter behövts i samma utsträckning. I brist på reflektionsverktyg kring det sociala uppdraget verkar det som att lärarna i studien snarare tar en slags ställföreträdande föräldraroll. Den ideala verksamheten blir då den som skapar en ny familj, med trygghet och kärlek och ramar. Beror sådana meningskonstruktioner endast på en, för lärarna, svårtolkad affektivt laddad retorik kring förbättrade livsvillkor och social utveckling? Eller uppstår de i brist på tillgänglig kunskap och förståelse kring musikundervisningspraktiker som möjliga arenor för socialt lärande, i och genom ett musikaliskt handlande? Dagens musikpedagoger förmodas ha kunskaper om musik och musikundervisning som en viktig aspekt av barn och ungdomars identitetsutveckling eftersom den musikpedagogiska forskningsdebatten sedan en längre tid behandlat sådana frågor i relation till val av repertoar, informellt lärande och genus. Trots detta och trots grundläggande utgångspunkter för all utbildning: demokrati, likabehandling och inkludering, verkar det råda brist på förståelse kring hur musikundervisningen specifikt kan möta sociala aspekter och socialt lärande.

En musiksociologisk utgångspunkt på musikundervisning tillskriver själva den musikaliska praktiken flera möjligheter för utvecklandet av sociala färdigheter (Bowman, 1998; De Nora, 2000, 2003; Karlsen, 2011). Sociala aspekter utgör därmed redan del av den musikaliska praktiken genom de möjligheter för individuellt och socialt handlande som där görs möjligt. Utifrån ett kritiskt perspektiv är detta dock inte helt oproblemiskt. Musikalisk praktik uppfattad som social aktion får konsekvenser för synen på musik, musikundervisning och musikalisk handling (Bowman, 1998, 2007; Elliott, 1995; Small, 1998). Med andra ord, om musikundervisning definieras som sociala handlingar i en social praktik, hur görs samma undervisning också socialt rättvis och inkluderande? Utan pågående kritiska reflektioner kring själva betydelsen av sociala aspekter riskerar musikundervisning snarare att motverka sitt syfte och att vidmakthålla särskiljande föreställningar om medverkande (Gould, 2007). Retoriskt vida formuleringar om social utveckling och social rättvisa riskerar att grundas på oreflekterade föreställningar om sociala brister och specifika grupper i behov av hjälp (Richardson, 2007). Det framstår därför viktigt att försöka överbrygga gapet mellan demokratiska påståenden och praktik (ibid). Mot bakgrund av studiens

resultat framstår det som att svepande allmänpedagogiska mål och vida beskrivningar av musikundervisningens sociala aspekter snarare verkar skapa en osäkerhet kring musiklärarens arbete. Det finns inget att ta på. När medverkande lärare söker skapa mening kring musikundervisningens sociala aspekter verkar det, trots värdegrund och allmänpedagogiska mål, trots ofta gedigen musikalisk kompetens, inte finnas tillräcklig professionsförståelse (Angelo & Georgii-Hemming, 2014) för att hantera detta.

Ett socialt utanförskap och en ökad segregation har accentuerat sociala aspekter av all undervisning. Skola och utbildning ska gemensamt kunna hantera sådana frågor inom ramen för sin undervisning. Detta gäller även musikundervisning. Resultatet från denna studie visar att medverkande musiklärarens föreställningar kring musikaliskt och socialt lärande är mycket ambivalenta. Deras uppfattningar om sin musiklärarroll verkar befinna sig i ett affektivt laddat spänningsfält. Resultatet pekar också på att det verkar råda både en önskan och ett motstånd mot att musikundervisningen ska inbegripa sociala aspekter. Ett dilemma som i sin tur skapar svårigheter för lärarna att reflektera och förstå sitt uppdrag. Samtidigt verkar det saknas en filosofisk utgångspunkt för att resonera och förstå vad detta uppdrag i så fall skulle innebära. Här blottas både ett ontologiskt och ett epistemologiskt problem kring definitioner av musikämnet. Enligt Angelo & Georgii-Hemming (2014) behöver en sådan filosofisk grundförståelse paras med reflektioner över musikundervisningspraktiken för att generera och utveckla en nödvändig professionsförståelse. Med anledning av nya samhälleliga utmaningar och en förändrad undervisningspraktik, tydliggör denna studies resultat att en sådan professionsförståelse behöver förstärkas.

Inom ramen för skola och utbildning medverkar musikundervisning som en av flera aktörer för barn och unga. Utifrån tidigare forskning framstår dock inte musikundervisningens sociala aspekter som hjälparbete. Sociala aspekter handlar om handlingsutrymme (Karlsen, 2011), likabehandling (Hess, 2014) och demokratiska erfarenheter, övergripande undervisningsmål som inte går att förhandla bort (Skolverket, 2011). Det handlar om sociala rättigheter i den musikaliska praktiken. Demokrati är därmed något som görs, vida formuleringar och ”Big Ideas” (Richardson, 2007: 213) är endast retorik tills det blir praktik. Praktikens deltagare, behöver därför ges möjligheter till medförhandling (Uy, 2012). Dessutom behöver musiklärare själva få möjligheter att formulera sin förståelse kring praktikens förutsättningar (Gould, 2007), det är där kunskapen omsätts.

Demokratisk fostran handlar om att rustas med erfarenheter och möjligheter för att kunna medverka i ett demokratiskt samhälle. Denna studies resultat synliggör ett



behov av ytterligare forskning kring relationen mellan musikfilosofi och musikalisk undervisningspraktik, forskning som syftar till att utveckla en praktik som använder sig av musikaliska handlingar och musikaliskt lärande som de sociala aktioner de också är. Framtida forskning behöver därför fortsätta att formulera nya frågor kring hur musikundervisning specifikt, med sina specifika möjligheter i och genom musik, kan vara både ett musikaliskt, socialt och demokratiskt utvecklande forum.

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## Academic musicians

– How music performance students in Sweden re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence

Nadia Moberg

### ABSTRACT

*As a result of reforms across higher education in Sweden, music performance programs have been subject to processes of academization. As professional education programs are located within academic structures, the question of balance between practical and 'scientific' knowledge is crucial. Expected learning outcomes at a national level now include statements concerning students' insight into current research, critical reflection, an ability to formulate new questions and to contribute to the development of subject-specific knowledge. Students find themselves caught in the midst of these changes, where tensions rise between craftsmanship, artistic performance skills and scholarly knowledge. The aim of this study is to investigate how music performance students re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence in the light of processes of academization. By using methods associated with critical discourse studies, the specific objective here is to analyse and explain how tensions are discursively manifested as students re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence. The result is based on interviews with six master students with a classical music study-orientation at three higher music education institutions in Sweden. Results show that tensions arise primarily from ideas of musical autonomy versus adaption, between what the education provides versus what the labour market demands and between musical craftsmanship versus scholarly tasks. It is argued that ideals within higher education, in general, versus values and traditions associated with a master-apprentice tradition is one source of such tensions, which risk creating a perception of a fragmented education. Keywords: music performance students, critical discourse studies, academization, higher education, knowledge and competence*

## Introduction

Music performance programs have historically been regarded as purely professional programs with one and only one distinct mission; to educate 'good' musicians. Within these programs, the main focus has been on musical craftsmanship and artistic performance skills, and learning experiences have largely been characterized by a master-apprentice tradition. In Sweden, unlike numerous other countries in Europe, higher music education institutions are not 'merely' conservatories, rather they have academic status (Georgii-Hemming et al., 2016). Furthermore, following the Bologna declaration, higher education in Sweden has been reformed considerably. With goals of promoting mobility, employability and European competitiveness the endeavour to harmonise education has, amongst other things, led to a new degree structure. Since 2007, a degree in the fine, applied and performing arts has been offered which has specific 'expected learning outcomes' attached to it. Simultaneously, demands on research activities within music institutions have increased.

Because of these changes, music performance programs within higher music education (HME) constitute an environment where musical craftsmanship, artistic performance skills and scholarly knowledge are put in direct confrontation with each other. As such, there is a need to understand what the consequences of these changes are and what problems or issues they may bring up for students, as they are directly affected by new demands.

This article aims to investigate how master students within music performance programs re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence. The intention is to understand *what* constitutes important knowledge and competences for students with a classical music study-orientation in order to explain *how* they re-/negotiate their beliefs. The specific objective is to analyse and explain how tensions are discursively manifested as students re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence.

In explicitly exploring processes of academization, the underlying assumption here is that changes in society and higher education policies influence students' educational practice. Through this empirical study, re-/negotiations within music performance programs will be analysed and explained. Students who find themselves amidst these changes provide valuable insights into how educational reforms are received within higher (music) education.

## Background

Processes of academization, have been observed across a number of professional education programs, such as nursing, teaching, social work, journalism and librarian programs (Laiho, 2010; Borg, 2007; Soydan, 2001; Bromley, 2013; Wilson et al., 2010). Such studies have largely observed that these processes, sometimes initiated as an endeavour to professionalize certain programs, often raises a question of balance between practical and scientific knowledge. This is a core problem in the academization of professional education programs and consequently creates tensions between universities' perceived purpose to promote knowledge development and external pressures to develop skills which are instrumentally geared toward the market.

However, academization has received limited attention within music research. There are some studies concerning how, why and what happened as jazz, popular music and rock music became part of HME (Olsson, 1993; Tønnsberg, 2013) given that they were previously considered antithetical to 'serious' study. More recently, Söderman (2013) has investigated and argued that universities have taken and should take an interest in hip-hop. Popular music study became an integrated part of higher music education institutions during the 1980s (Olsson, 1993), which, until then, were institutions for the exclusive study of Western classical music. However, when it comes to HME, questions of balance between artistic, practical and scientific knowledge have mainly been discussed in relation to music teacher education (Georgii-Hemming, 2013; Burnard & Holgersen, 2013; Nielsen, 2011). Here, it is largely assumed that music teachers' professionalism depends on an ability to integrate different forms of knowledge and that such diversity thus should be viewed as a resource rather than an obstacle.

Aspects of learning and teaching within music performance programs have been studied from different angles. Some have considered these in relation to training for future professions and one-to-one tuition, which is characteristic of much instrumental and vocal teaching in HME, has received specific attention (see for example Gaunt, 2008; Gaunt & Westerlundh, 2013; Johansson, 2012; Nerland, 2003; Nielsen, 1998). In fact, the one-to-one tuition model commonly used in HME, understood as a master-apprentice relationship, has been discussed at length. Whilst some have been critical towards this model for being authoritative, resulting in imitative and reproducing learning, rather than promoting independence and critical reflection, it has also been idealized as an exclusive learning practice carried out by active musicians as teachers, an opposite to what is sometimes called mass teaching (Nielsen & Kvale, 2000). Additionally, Nielsen and Kvale (2000) argue that students within art



music learn in many different contexts and encounter several teachers which enables them to shape their own musical style.

In Sweden, specifically, the state assumed responsibility for the Royal College of Music in Stockholm and for the conservatoires in Malmö and Gothenburg in 1971 (Prop. 1971: 31), just as a national governance surrounding this education was beginning to take shape. Subsequently, the first higher education ordinance was introduced in 1977, meaning that all higher education institutions had to conform to the same regulations. In 1993, a graduate description was added for each degree (SFS, 1993: 100) meaning that, for music performance students, there were now artistic degrees in music offered which involved three associated 'national objectives'. In summary, these meant that students had to: (1) acquire skills and knowledge to be able to work independently; (2) be able to convey musical experiences and (3) build a foundation that gave them good opportunities to develop further as creative artist within a collective.

The current qualifications ordinance was implemented in 2007 (SFS, 1993:100, Amendment to the Higher Education Ordinance 2006: 1053). As a result, expected learning outcomes are now, currently, tied to three different headings: *Knowledge and understanding*; *competence and skills*; and *judgement and approach*. For a degree of master of fine arts there are nine objectives by which candidates are judged. These include amongst other things that students shall:

demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the main field of study, including both broad knowledge of the field and a considerable degree of specialised knowledge in areas of the field as well as specialised insight into current research and development work

demonstrate the ability to formulate new issues autonomously and creatively and contribute to the formation of knowledge, solve more advanced problems, develop new forms of personal expression as well as to reflect critically on his or her artistic approach and that of others in the main field of study

demonstrate the ability to make assessments in the main field of study informed by relevant artistic, social and ethical issues (SFS, 1993:100, annex 2).

These changes are also linked to the fact that in Sweden, as in many other European countries, there has been an increasing focus on quality assurance and employability

within the higher education system (Ek et al., 2013). Requirements placed on developing a more 'scientific' education coexist with expectations of meeting market and consumer demands. Furthermore, the public authority which carries the task of evaluating quality in higher education has been described as having a narrow view of knowledge where professional expertise and practical knowledge are set aside (Buhre, 2014). The need to describe and control higher education has been derived from an international tendency toward neoliberalism more broadly, which treats education as a commodity to be bought, sold and traded, rather than a process (Wickström, 2015).

## Methodology

The study here is based on semi-structured, in-depth, qualitative interviews with master students undertaking music performance programs in Sweden. The material was collected during the autumn and winter of 2016 with six master students with a classical music study-orientation, at three different HME-institutions. By choosing students from different institutions, their statements were more likely to portray commonalities amongst HME students in Sweden, generally, rather than being limited by a specific institutional discourse.

Questions were structured around students' educational concerns, with the main focus centred on what kind of knowledge and competence the students felt they attain as music performance students and require as professional musicians. Each informant was interviewed separately at their respective institution for approximately fifty minutes. The conversations were recorded and later transcribed in full and a denaturalized approach (Oliver et al., 2005) was used in the transcription. This means that, as the study concerned itself with conversational substance, transcription thus excluded speech elements such as laughter and pauses. Five of the six interviews were conducted in Swedish and one in English.

The study adopts a critical discourse framework, partly inspired by a discourse-historical approach. A distinctive feature of this context-dependent approach is the attempts of the researcher to "integrate as much available information as possible on the historical background and the original historical sources in which discursive 'events' are embedded" (Wodak et al., 2009: 7–8). The concept of context thus includes both an analysis of the immediate text internal co-text, intertextual relationships, institutional frames as well as broader historical and socio-political conditions. Therefore, in this

study, the analysis involves relating student's individual utterances to the history of music institutions in Sweden, to traditions therein and to changes in higher education policy. As a result, the study asks: what are the patterns in the re-/negotiations and how are these embedded in social contexts?

Discourse, in this context, is understood as a social practice which is both shaped by, and shapes our world. The way we talk does not simply reflect reality, but rather constructs how we perceive the world (Fairclough, 1992). We organise groups and individuals and construct meaning around objects, actions and events through discourse. Language is therefore a site where relations, ideology and power are made visible and can be challenged (Wodak & Meyer, 2016). Thus, tensions between different ideas about what constitutes valid knowledge, can be found in collective or individual statements about different phenomena. Discourses also include and exclude different aspects of the described reality and, as such, always serve a specific interest (van Leeuwen, 2016). For example, students may have different ideas than those expressed in a qualification ordinance or by teachers, since there are diverse opinions about what an education should offer. However, some ideas are validated or at least supported by institutional practices meaning that it is important to pay attention to questions of power in understanding how discourses operate. By focusing on practices, in this case students discourse, the advantage is that they "...constitute a point of connection between abstract structures and their mechanisms, and concrete events – between 'society' and people living their lives" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999: 21). Utterances should therefore be regarded as representational realizations of beliefs, always coloured by experiences and contexts, of institutional traditions, social structures and prevailing ideas. To perform an analysis of naturally occurring language not only provides knowledge about individuals and their personal conditions but, instead, generates a comprehensive understanding of where such articulations are embedded. This, in turn, works to reveal power relations and hegemonic ideas.

## **Analysis**

The interviews centred around four specific themes: 1) *perceptions of HME*; 2) *work and the labour market*; 3) *research and master thesis*; 4) *perceptions of being a classical musician*. As the overarching themes, or so called primary discourse topics were provided for interviewees, the first-level analysis involved a search for sub-topics. This first-level analysis enabled a mapping of what kind of knowledge and competences

the students talked about, in what immediate text-internal context and how they related these to one another. A guiding question in this thematic analysis was: what is this discourse concerned with (i.e. what is the content)? Here, the interest lies in mapping the discourse topics, not topics in a singular text (Krzyżanowski, 2010).

Following this, thematic interconnections were examined to understand where specific issues became prominent in the discourse (Krzyżanowski, 2008). A ‘second-level’ analysis entailed analysis of lexical and semantic features focusing specifically on explanations of how students re-/negotiated their notions through different discursive strategies. Discursive strategies themselves can be understood as “...more or less intentional plan(s) of practice” (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016: 33) which are used to reach certain goals. Lexical choices, arguments, expressions of involvement or strategies of distancing, construction of social actors and events were some of the discursive features in focus.

Furthermore, the analysis paid special attention to intertextuality (i.e. how students draw upon prior texts through reported speech for instance and thereby reproduce what someone else have articulated in another context). This aids in understanding the historicity of texts as these always have the property of “being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth” (Fairclough, 1992: 84). Using this broad definition of ‘text’, as above, captures both speaking and writing as a material activity, as different ways of making texts (Fairclough, 2015). The in-depth analysis thus sought to investigate how students position themselves and others and how they construct and re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence. To be able to explain how tensions are manifested, their statements needs to be understood in relation to prevailing and historical ideas. Through analytical movements from context to language and vice versa, contextual knowledge was utilized in the interpretations and explanations of the results.

## Results

The themes presented below emerge as a result of how interconnections between different sub-topics align using a critical discourse approach. Key findings are presented under the following overarching topics: *Autonomy and adaptation; Education and the labour market; and Musical craftsmanship and scholarly activity.*

## Autonomy and adaption

*I will not jump merely because someone tells me to jump...*

From the interviews, tensions arise between a desire to have autonomy and notions of how one needs to adapt to the education in various ways are prominent throughout the interviews. Students assert importance in the ability to make independent decisions, to take responsibility for learning and performances and to be unique as musicians. However, such notions are set against ideas about historically-informed performances and teachers' positions and influence. Personal expression or uniqueness as a musician are considered vital. It is noticeable however that there are frequent tensions between norms connected to how one *should* play, and managing to attain a personal expression. Students describe this in terms of an individual responsibility which can only be accomplished over a long period of time suggesting that these are not competences learnt directly from the education itself:

It's not anything you're encouraged to, to think freely, or 'what do you want to say?'. It's more traditions I think, that's what you learn.

Some teachers say 'yes, but you get to decide for yourself', but usually you get the framework for how it should be. And then to put a personal touch on it, I think... that you must do by yourself.

In the first statement above, the room offered within HME to develop personal expression appears limited. The question posed illustrates something which is felt to be lacking during the education. The second statement suggests that there are well-defined frames in terms of how music "should" be played, yet, simultaneously, artistic freedom and personal expression is seldom articulated as unconditional, but rather as something achieved by building up a particular cluster of pre-understandings. First, according to the interviewees, one should know their instrument and be familiar with the history of the music and code of practice. After this, artistic freedom could be considered as having been earned. The concept of artistic freedom is re-/negotiated into a knowledge-dependent competence:

I think that's where your own personal expression develops when you do what you want but there's a justification for that which stems from subject knowledge, rooted in the past, in a tradition which one can relate to and

that you really master. Otherwise I would not have to go to school at all if I say 'no, but I play as I feel like because it feels good'.

But also, artistically it means acquiring a lot of background information, listening to a lot of music, getting to know the music, getting to know the composers. It makes it easier; the more you know, the easier it becomes.

In articulations concerning gaining personal musical expression and being independent, reported speech is recurrent. These intertextual voices belong to teachers and are used as a positioning strategy by the students. The intertextuality of teachers' ideas indicates that students often view the relationship in a traditional master-apprentice way, where observation and imitation form the basis of musical development. However, there is a resistance towards this asymmetric relationship in many utterances:

I find quite often that it feels like there's a right way to do things. And if you do something in another way there's someone telling you that 'this should be done like this', 'this genre is interpreted in this way'... it can be tempos, 'this should be done this fast' even if I think that 'I think it's prettier this way' [...] So, in that regard I think that there's quite a small place for artistic freedom and your own personal expression.

Explicit talk about this relationship and the role and expertise of teachers is a central subject in the discourse. There is an expression of concern over the fact that "...you listen so much to what your teacher says, and then you take that as a truth". However, students display opposition to this asymmetric power relationship, as well as autocratic tendencies in institutional logics, through language such as teachers who "points out errors". Lexical choices such as "throne" and "hierarchies" are further examples of how an antagonistic relationship towards the notion of the master as a domineering and infallible source of knowledge is constructed. There are also a few examples where student's utterances show ambivalence, rather than opposition:

Because it's so easy to fall into this kind of trap, to simply try to satisfy the wishes of others during the education [...] But at the same time you must do it to some extent to learn something, if one is to truly embrace a teacher's knowledge, one must indulge it. Tricky.

The noun 'trap' in the above excerpt suggests students are lured into certain modes of performance against their wishes by the teacher. Students both express that they

rely on teacher's knowledge and competences on many occasions, but simultaneously assert that they themselves must be active and let their own opinions guide them in order to attain independence and by extension, their own personal expression. The student-teacher relationship is also articulated in terms of what it should *not* be. By using negations as a strategy in their argumentation students seek to refute opposing viewpoints, offering counter-arguments to presupposed ideas about the master-apprentice relationship. One person, for instance, comments that it is important "... that you're not dependent or checking with your teacher all the time, for example: am I allowed to do this?". Another remark that: "You shouldn't have to ask permission" when talking about selecting repertoire before a concert. These illustrate a notion of the teacher-as-master and how this is not seldom problematized in students' discourse. Utterances are thus frequently articulated as emancipations from this tradition and relationship:

One must, I think, at the master's level, get rid of this feeling of being a pupil. You're not all the time supposed to be a pupil to that great teacher who sits up on the throne...

I will not jump only because someone tells me to jump, I want to know why I should jump. If I have a good reason for it, then I'll jump and see how it feels.

In this respect, the tensions presented above are primarily attached to notions about the relationship between a master and her apprentice. Teachers are abundantly present in several ways as students describe what their relationship and learning experience should and should *not* be like. They use reported speech to invigorate their utterances and frequently express opposition towards an asymmetric relationship where basically all knowledge can be possessed. A recurrent use of the modal word 'must' emphasize the necessity in emancipating oneself from the teacher to gain independence as a musician. This suggests that the relationship, at least at some stage, involves musical limitations for students, which is portrayed as a natural condition during the education. In addition, it is noteworthy that as the students talk about independence, freedom or *autonomy*, it is almost exclusively connected to musical activities. This is a significant finding, as the following fields of tension rather contain ideas about *adjusting* to market principles and *accepting* processes of academization.

## Education and the labour market

*...it's not enough that you're really good at your instrument, if you don't find ways to access the market...*

Tensions in articulations lie between what knowledge and competences the education provide and what students perceive the labour market demand. Particularly, there is talk about an increasingly competitive 'market' where one needs to engage in "marketing", "PR" and being an "entrepreneur". For instance, one student observes that: "You can sell yourself as a concept in another way today" and "I think perhaps you need to make yourself into a brand more today than you had to before. And maybe be a little more driven yourself." This essentially indicates that the students conceive of themselves as both a product and a salesperson, i.e. they figure as both social actors and as objects in the discourse. Through the education, knowledge and competences to become good 'products' are obtained. Nevertheless, the skills required to become good salespersons are judged to be attained elsewhere:

You should be able to advertise for yourself. Yes, be good at promoting yourself, I think, that's something that we're quite bad at, we don't get much training in it. How to get contacts and so on.

There's a course about freelancing that was offered last year, but I don't think... what they said then was that it is good to be able to freelance, as I understood it, but not how you actually do it.

Consequently, students express an insecurity when it comes to having knowledge and competence that allow them to be salespersons. Lexical choices, here, highlight a market-orientation and appear as a natural way of speaking, rendering 'marketization' of higher education visible in the students' discourse. It is not enough to be a good musician, one must play by the rules and terms of how the market for musicians' work, even if it is expressed as something far from the core of what it means to be a musician:

How do you, if you are to freelance, how do you do that? How do you promote yourself? How do you send invoices? All those purely practical things that don't have anything to do with the music... but I think it's very important, because it's not enough that you're really good at your instrument, if you don't find ways to access the market...



You should have everything ready, all the PR and it is a bit like, 'right, that as well'. It's not only that you should be good at your thing, or the musical part, but you must also have these other things.

Students' education is described as an expert education where they have a great opportunity to immerse themselves in their field of expertise but, simultaneously, they express that musicians need to have a wide set of skills and be prepared to work within different genres. One observes that "...it's not possible to only do one thing and nothing else anymore". Another student notes that you need to "...be open to other things as well". Such statements often have temporal dimensions and suggest changes for musicians in society more generally. Yet, the concept of a "limited market" is something new which requires other types of competences and, for some, this also means developing musical breadth, rather than specific expertise:

In those kind of gigs, you must have a breadth or otherwise, you stand there and feel completely incompetent [...] How can you justify that if you have attended higher education for five years? If I think that we get it here at this school, those skills I'm talking about, that's another thing.

Freelancing is connected to notions about physically writing; being able to maintain a homepage, to write e-mails and "enticing sales texts". Freelancing is here described as a kind of survival knowledge which is essential for professional musicians. However, at the same time, the education is not seen to provide these tools to any significant extent, but neither do the students expect it to; they identify more perfunctory skills to be necessary, but how knowledge about these types of activities are obtained is unspecified. In this way, there appears to be an acceptance of what the demands from the market are, but also an acceptance of the fact that the education does not provide them with these kinds of skills.

Simultaneously, there are differences dependent on specific forms of training, as the students that aim at becoming professional orchestra musicians are more concerned with auditioning and getting an employment, while other students talk about "creating" or that they need to "come up with" their own jobs. Some want their education to provide them with skills connected to freelancing and to widen the musical repertoire to other genres. What they understand as labour market demands is accepted as a new order and skills connected to freelancing, something which is articulated as unavoidable, yet hard to attain. The most visible discourse pattern here is the discrepancy articulated between what the students acquire from their education and

what the market demands. However, this discrepancy does not appear to constitute a particular dilemma for students in a way that would be expected.

## Musical craftsmanship and scholarly activity

*Because I'm not a researcher, I'm a trumpet player.*

In articulations about activities connected to developing scholarly writing and attaining insight into research, tensions, again, are prominent. Whilst talking about writing a master thesis, for instance, students express their belief that this is something which takes time away from what someone really should invest time in to become a good musician; such activities are described as a disruption of acquisition of essential knowledge and competences.

Students are not convinced that the thesis has anything to do with generating knowledge, either for themselves or for others. There is a suspicion that one main reason for the master thesis is that the institutions receive financing dependent on students finishing the courses. As one interviewee put it: "...it's money for the school" and there are no specific, individual social actors mentioned as responsible for this being a part of their education. By this process of de-agentalization, students clearly articulate how market principles govern the education, yet the thesis was also seen as an inevitable part of a marketised education system:

It doesn't really feel like it makes us better musicians. That you must say. It takes a lot of time from what we actually need to invest our time in. But I know that it is needed, for financial reasons.

I would guess that it's for the school to allow it to qualify as an academic education, and you get lots of grants if you've examined people from an academic education. I think. Because I don't think it's for the students who go here... should, yeah, if you think it's good to practice on writing a thesis, but I don't think it has so much to do with that.

At the same time, developing competences such as critical self-reflection on practice and musicianship is something students desire more of during their education. Reflection is, first and foremost, intertwined with their own musicianship and primarily done in conjunction with performances. Expressions about analysing oneself and examining mistakes to improve one's craftsmanship is common. As one student

highlights: "... that you not just do things, but that you're able to analyse a little bit. Above all, if something was good or bad that you can determine why it went well." But this is also about reflection over music as a societal phenomenon and over musicianship in society. One person notes specifically that "it would have been good to have more reflection on what it is we do" whilst another state that "I would like to have more reflection, over all. Writing, talking about music as well, and what it is that is... why we are doing this."

In addition, when the students talk about research activities and researchers as people, they distance themselves from these through different mechanisms. One of them suggests that "it sounds a bit diffuse with artistic research". Another student reason that artistic research: "[may] not be concrete... you do not necessarily arrive at results, it might just be a thought. You research within a thought. I don't know, it's really difficult". This distancing is most evidently revealed through metaphors and figurative expressions; research is frequently described as something which is extremely far away, even out of reach on some occasions. An encounter with a doctoral candidate is described as "...very off and very far up in the air for us sitting there, it's several levels far away [...] I think people find it quite out of space" whilst another student portrays an encounter with a researcher by indicating different ways of thinking: "So, it was... it was interesting, but it was a bit difficult to reach him. He was, like, on a different wavelength." To this end, students talk about their master thesis and writing as a wholly new area of expertise which is far removed from the musical skillset/ experience. However, this new and foreign area also has potential:

And I've written a little bit, but it's not much and so I ought to really sit down and write, but it's difficult. To get that into your work routine, to have it... it's somehow like adding a whole new dimension of how to work. But I think it's great.

The articulated distance between scholarly tasks and musical craftsmanship is clearly not static. Students assert that this distance can be reduced by educators. One expresses that "a lot of people feel" that the master's thesis is "irrelevant" and that the students need more foundation as to why they do it and more "motivation" from the institution, whilst another person expresses that the institution should "lay better foundations for it". Students in general are described as showing an aversion towards writing a master thesis, but the interviewees simultaneously express how it could benefit them under the right circumstances:

You learn most things by getting good feedback. Good feedback and through raising awareness about things that occur in your own playing I think. So, if you were to take this task seriously, give it the priority that is needed to do it, I think it could be very good. But most people choose to spend that time with the instrument instead, with exercises. As, perhaps as a cop-out from it because they think it's boring, but I think there's potential to do a lot of good things with it but they... the educators, as I have understood it, they have not passed on that connection clear enough and in a good way for people to understand it.

Another statement contains a plea for the institution to give students the "desire" to write if they want to "bring music education in to this new... turning more towards research and so on". There are some positive mentions around the benefits of the thesis as it has the potential to give "new insights", to work as a "ventilator", to give a "helicopter view" and to provide an "opportunity to immerse yourself into something". However, there is more often a noticeable scepticism towards it as a mean to improve musical craftsmanship and artistry:

If I were completely honest, I don't think it benefits us as musicians [...] you become a little more university competent, if you have accomplished that. But does it make us better musicians? No, I don't think so. Perhaps a little bit more aware, a little bit. But not really.

It doesn't feel like there's any connection... if you imagine that the majority of the work is to do a concert or a recording or something, then it becomes more, then you just have to write it down. It doesn't feel like it will help so much. It's only something you must do.

As indicated above, this view is often clearly articulated from a 'we' or 'us-perspective' and in their statements students frequently talk about "the students" or that "many people feel". Students thus construe themselves as a relatively homogenous group who share the same perceptions of scholarly activities in contrast to other actors within the institutions. One interviewee, for instance, describes how the master thesis work is presented by educators (them) and received by 'the students':

I don't know how they expressed themselves, but they want you to connect it to your own persona. To your own ego. So, you yourself should be part of some process, you as a musician[...] And I perceive that as so fuzzily formulated

that people, the students perceive that as they themselves should write some kind of diary. That's an un-academic diary, really... a novel, that is.

It is clear, that students perceive their teachers to be engaged in how students perform their musical craft. However, some aspects of the education, primarily visible in articulations about their thesis, are commonly judged to be of lesser interest to teachers who expect students to submit something in order to get a degree but that "...they've got no time to get acquainted with what you are doing." This is neatly summarised in the following statement:

The instrumental teacher doesn't care at all [about the thesis] ...it feels like they just want you to manage it. That it gets done... of course they want it to be good, but it doesn't feel like we have such high expectations on us. They know that we want to do other things. Yes, sad but true.

All throughout the interviews, the one-to-one tuition teacher is considered to be the main actor, rather than the institution or external actors. Nevertheless, whilst students accord their teachers great importance and influence during their education, teachers' perceived disinterest and lack of time in the thesis, seem to constitute one of the most significant reasons for disappointment among students.

## Discussion

This article set out to analyse and explain how tensions are discursively manifested as students re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence within HME in Sweden. Tensions were identified within three main areas. Firstly, in terms of *autonomy and adaption*, ideals about reflection, personal expression and artistic freedom collide with notions of a tradition where teachers are viewed as being in possession of what is right and what is wrong. Students oppose this order through different discursive strategies. Secondly, with respect to *education and the labour market*, tensions appear because of discrepancies between what the education actually prepares students for and what they perceive to be the needs of the labour market, primarily in terms of entrepreneurial competences and musical breadth. Thirdly, in the area of *musical craftsmanship and scholarly tasks* tensions were mainly observed between opportunities to practice one's instrument versus spending time on scholarly tasks, especially in writing. This included conspicuous processes of distancing and a tension

between students as musicians and researchers as 'the other'. These findings cannot be extrapolated to all music performance students. However, they indicate clear patterns in music performance students discourse within HME in Sweden. Here, as in other work, marketization and demands on a more 'scientific' education (Ek et al., 2013) reveals to influence not only on higher education as a system, but also translating into expectations on knowledge acquisition among students.

Music performance students have strongly-held notions of what they need and want to learn during their education. It is between these notions, traditions within institutions and external demands where tensions arise. The re-/negotiations around what kind of knowledge and competences are required, are mostly tied to what a musician needs in society, to a lesser extent it is a negotiation of what the education should provide. In general, therefore, it is possible to assume that there is a satisfaction of what the education offers, but that it does not provide everything needed in order to be able to work as musicians in the future. Additionally, some aspects of the education were recurrently expressed as unnecessary; chief amongst these being academic writing in connection with the thesis. Whilst albeit potentially rewarding, the institutions were not seen as prioritizing and valuing these according to the students, which results in a view that the thesis is just something students have to do to get a degree. Similar views of writing have been expressed by students in a previous study on doctoral theses in visual and performing arts (Starfield et al., 2012) and the present article further reveals how students articulate a distance to both research and to writing in HME. Arguably, music performance programs could strive towards reducing such a distance, perhaps by involving main teachers more in the process and by explicitly introducing research earlier on during the education. Consistent with findings in this study, Gaunt (2008) demonstrates that teachers in conservatoires whose responsibilities are limited to one-to-one tuition, do not engage in nor have a full understanding of student's wider education context. As such, the risk may be that these circumstances create a fragmented education, which will not be beneficial to students.

Peter Tregear and colleagues suggests that music institutions (conservatoires) can, in addition to fostering good musicians through focusing on student's personal development and growth, also include societal aims. They state that a research culture, which is gaining ground within HME, could be used to stimulate a critical approach in teaching and learning and thereby make students become 'co-researchers' in addition to being apprentices (Tregear et al., 2016: 287). In this study, researchers and research as an activity are regarded as something distant from students everyday practice. One must

pose the question; is there such a thing as a 'research culture' within HME in Sweden? And, if so, why do students perceive themselves as detached from it?

In line with expectations, craftsmanship and artistic performance skills were seen to constitute the base to become expert musicians. Nevertheless, while musicians need to have performance skills, increasingly, they must also know how to create job opportunities, how to run a business, how to communicate in different settings, how to network and have knowledge about the music industry (Bennett, 2007). Consequently, it is not enough for classical musicians to become experts, to solely train as performers (Johansson, 2012). Bennett (2007: 186) claims that "...students often do not understand the relevance of non-performance skills." On the contrary, this study shows that students in Sweden nowadays are acutely aware of these conditions and furthermore seem to have clear understandings of what kind of additional skills are required. However, it is expected, first and foremost, that the education gives time and possibilities to refine craftsmanship and artistic performance skills. Developing other competences, which for the most part seems to be instrumental, is something which they themselves must take the bulk of responsibility for. This is partly because institutions are not seen as providing pertinent teaching in other areas; such as marketing, developing personal expression or musical breadth.

The one-to-one tuition, or 'master-apprentice relationship', which in many ways is based on observation and imitation clash with student's ideas about independence and reflection. It has been argued that students in art are able to develop their own personal expression as they meet different teachers during their education, permitting them to select and mix influences (Nielsen & Kvale, 2000: 37). From this study, this seems to be a simplified way of looking at the master-apprentice relationship within HME. The data above indicate difficulties in achieving, or at least in gaining through one's education, a personal expression. According to students, teachers reinforce a rigid distinction between a right and a wrong way to play and perform. Thus developing a personal expression is something students have to do by themselves, and sometimes the teacher can even be an obstacle. A new teacher could of course, under the right circumstances mean new influences and inspiration which can be mixed with earlier musical expressions. But, it can also be understood as a new musical room with new, yet equally limiting frames. If assertions about how meetings with different teachers automatically lead to students developing personal expression are made within the institutions, they risk prohibiting development, both for students and teachers.

## Concluding remarks

The findings in this study imply challenges for educators within HME in Sweden, with implications for HME institutions across the world. This article clearly demonstrates tensions between music performance students' discourse about knowledge and competence and political, institutional frameworks. The aim of the study was to investigate how students within HME re-/negotiate notions of knowledge and competence with the specific objective to analyse and explain how tensions were discursively manifested. Inter alia, this study shows that research and scholarly tasks are described as something detached from the main education, with perfunctory skills tied to marketing and freelancing also separated to a large extent. The former is often seen as potentially worthwhile, but at this point in time appears as something obligatory without function in relation to students' structural concerns. The latter seems to be necessary, but mainly acquired outside of their education. Craftsmanship and artistic performance skills are still seen to be the fundamental basis for students in their endeavours to be expert musicians.

These institutional tensions, to a large extent, can be connected to ideals within higher education in general versus ideas and values associated with a master-apprentice tradition within HME. Since national objectives were introduced in the higher education ordinance in 1993, the formulations for music performance programs have changed only once, in the wake of the Bologna process (2006: 1053). Yet in contrast with, for example, (music) teacher education, there is not a widely published public debate and incessant reforms influencing musician programs. Nevertheless, considering the scale of the changes implemented, it is important to ask similar questions as those posed in the debate surrounding teacher education: what kind of musicians do we want to educate? What should they know and be able to do?

This article aims to enhance an understanding of the academization of music performance programs, specifically in terms of what kind of knowledge and competences are at stake for students. To further deepen understanding, different actor's perspectives across HME institutions, should be compared. Furthermore, research specifically regarding the role of scholarly activity and research would also be interesting as there appears to be a struggle over what role it should play and because of the distance articulated by students. Academization and the environment within which tensions between traditional goals in one-to-one tuition and state formulated objectives arise, also raise questions surrounding assessment and examination.



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## **Empowering girls as instrumentalists in popular music. Studying change through Engeström's cultural-historical activity theory**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article contributes new knowledge about the music educators' role in informal learning settings, and potentials for empowering girls to transcend gender norms characteristic of popular music. Specifically, the article discusses change in the fields of music education and gender in light of Engeström's cultural-historical activity theory and the concept of expansive learning. The discussion is based upon a study of girls ages 11 to 19 offered training to play in Norwegian popular music bands in an informal learning setting. The study identified conditions and elements that allowed change to take place by providing a potential for expansive learning and development. The authors seek to highlight and illustrate how Engeström's theory can be used to analyze different actors in the field, the elements that shape their activity in the work of creating independent and competent female musicians and instrumentalists, and the actors' motivation and learning processes that can be recognized through their mastering of tools. How the context, rules, and division of labor regulate and shape the activity and its goals and objects are important details. Keywords: Informal learning; girls in popular music; music and gender; Engeström's cultural-historical activity theory.*

*“It seems quite unnatural for girls to perform on a stage with a bass and electric guitar in their hands. It seems much more natural for boys to do this. Through this Music Workshop, we get help to learn and to understand that we too can stand there with instruments, because we are at least as awesome doing it, and it looks just as good, if not even better, because we are prettier.”* (Excerpt from the study “Sure you can!” – Band practice in a Music Workshop for girls (Nysæther, 2017). From the interview with Beate, a 16-year-old guitarist and vocalist.)

## **Introduction**

In this article, the authors reflect upon how music educators can facilitate a learning environment that enables girls to act independently as instrumentalists within popular music, and furthermore, how cultural-historical activity theory and socio-cultural theory can serve as tools for understanding gender issues in student-directed learning in an informal learning context. As a backdrop, we refer to, and further reflect upon findings from the study: “Sure you can” – Band practice in a Music Workshop for girls” (Nysæther, 2017), that explored girls’ needs in an educational context when playing together in pop bands, using cultural-historical activity theory as an alternative to post-structural feminism, the latter commonly applied in research on females in music education. The study identified needs linked to both methods of informal learning and to the breaking down of barriers related to gender norms within popular music.

## **Girls in popular music in Norway**

Norway is known as one of the leading nations concerning gender equality in labor and society. However, previous research (Björck, 2011a, 2011b; Kamsvåg, 2011; Lorentzen & Stavrum, 2007; Onsrud, 2011, 2013; Stavrum, 2004, 2008) on women’s participation as instrumentalists (performing typical band instruments such as electric bass, electric guitar, drums and keyboard) indicate that women in these contexts remain a minority. Research from education, leisure and professional practice demonstrate that in certain areas of popular music, women only represent 10 or 20 percent of participants (Lorentzen & Kvalbein, 2008; Lorentzen & Stavrum, 2007). The overall

pattern indicates that female popular musicians are predominantly vocalists whereas males typically play band instruments.

The question of female representation in popular music has been a core concern of researchers. Stavrum (2008) writes that women experience resistance as instrumentalists, are expected to show that they are good enough, and have difficulties obtaining positions as studio and freelance musicians as well as getting acceptance or entering bands consisting of men. Stavrum discusses the lack of female role models playing band instruments and the perception of these instruments as being male (Stavrum, 2008). Similarly, in her study of pupils in two Norwegian secondary schools, Onsrud (2013) observes that girls sing, and boys play instruments, even in popular music lessons. Onsrud argues that this pattern is partially due to teachers' lack of insight into gender challenges combined with limited time resources for training the pupils on band instruments, and lack of equipment. She further explains this through conformity embedded in the culture of popular music itself.

Kamsvåg (2011) finds similar patterns in her study of music lessons in a Norwegian secondary school; in pupil-directed activities, boys want to perform as instrumentalist in rock bands, while girls want to sing and dance in groups. Kamsvåg concludes that the adolescents use the musical activity for gender acceptance and status through the exploration of acceptable or non-acceptable ways to behave as girls and boys. In Sweden, Björck (2011a) studied four projects that aimed to empower and recruit women into the popular music field. She points out that male codes, such as being confident, having a loud appearance, and a strong focus on technology, as well as the objectification of the female body, are obstacles for women performing in popular music. She focuses on the discourse that women need to claim space in a masculine domain. At the same time, she concludes that women need a private space of their own, away from the male gaze, in order to gain the strength and confidence needed for developing skills and genuine expressions.

The training to become an instrumentalist in popular music has traditionally taken place outside of formal education. In Scandinavian countries, several studies have shown that rock bands are a natural learning context where instrumental skills are acquired through both collaboration and individual practice (Berkaak & Ruud, 1994; Eikeland, 2009; Karlsen & Väkevä, 2012; Westerlund, 2006). In Scandinavian compulsory schools, the use of band practice as a method for learning popular music has a long tradition (Kallio & Väkevä, 2017; Karlsen & Väkevä, 2012; Ruud, 1996). However, it was when Green (2002, 2008) first introduced her research-based methods of informal learning

that learning popular music in an authentic frame gained terrain in the international field of music pedagogy. A central aspect in Green's method for informal learning is that the learners should have ownership of their practice. In order to do so, the learners should contribute in the selection of musical material, they should copy and play by ear with a holistic approach to music through integration of listening, performing, improvisation and composing in all parts of the learning process, this should preferably take place in friend-groups where students learn collaboratively, and the music educator takes on a facilitator rather than a teaching role (Green, 2008, 2014).

## About the study

In the study: ““Sure you can” – Band practice in a Music Workshop for Girls” (Nysæther, 2017), the research followed 22 girls aged 11–19 and their instructors for one semester in a municipality-based Music Workshop in a Norwegian city. The workshop involved 2.5 hours of classes per week, held at a Cultural Center where the girls were placed into four bands playing popular music. At the end of the semester, there was a concert where the different bands performed the pieces that they had been working on. In addition, a music video with a self-composed song was produced. The Music Workshop was established in 2011 as an initiative to get more girls to use the music facilities at the Cultural Center. By 2016 the distribution was equal between girls and boys, and the initiative was deemed successful (Nysæther, 2017). The research question for the study was:

What needs for skills and facilitation do girls in the Music Workshop have when they are performing in popular music band activities?

The study employed an ethnographic approach with participant observation in own culture (Fangen, 2004; Fuglestad, Aase & Fossåskaret, 1997; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1996; Wadel, 1991). The study gathered a large amount of empirical data. Nysæther was present in the field for 58 hours. In addition; a large number of observational notes and 16 independent field interviews were recorded. The fieldwork was supported by three independent qualitative data acquisition methods: 1) Rotating idea development (RID)<sup>1</sup>, 2) a written 50-question mapping survey for the group, includ-

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1 Rotating idea development (RID) is an idea development method incorporated by the project. The method focuses on student participation in the process of planning goals and content of the semester.

ing both open-ended and closed questions, and 3) a group interview with one of the bands resulting in 33 pages of interview analyses following the model of Kvale, Brinkmann, Anderssen, and Rygge (2009: 226). The data were triangulated and analyzed through Engeström's cultural-historical activity theory (Engeström, 2000, 2001, 2015; Engeström & Glaveanu, 2012; Sannino, Engeström & Lemos, 2016).

## **Socio-cultural foundation and the concept of expansive learning**

We will give our readers an account of the socio-cultural and cultural-historical theoretical framework through five principles, as a point of departure for this article:

1) Knowledge is distributed and exists in a culture before the individual appropriates it into her own practice and mindset. In this way, knowledge is not seen only as an individually owned concept, but shared between individuals in collaboration, and collectively developed through time and history (Dysthe, 2001; Säljö, 2001, 2006).

2) Learning is situated in a context and individuals act through practice in collaboration with the context; they both affect and get affected by it. A context is an interactive system or community where individuals join forces to act together in different roles, expertise, tasks and identities to accomplish something, and their activity is maintained and adjusted by rules and cultural norms given by the specific context (Dysthe, 2001; Säljö, 2001, 2006). Context can be viewed as a community of practice and learning as legitimate peripheral participation as presented in the theories of Lave and Wenger (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). However; in this article, context will mainly be presented and analyzed through the framework of an activity system (Engeström, 2000, 2001, 2015).

3) A central relational aspect of learning in a socio-cultural understanding is the idea of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), first presented by Vygotsky and further developed by others (Dysthe, 2001; Illeris, 2006; Säljö, 2001, 2006). The movement through ZPD can be hard and painful for the learner. Without sufficient support from a more competent "other", the learner can experience defeat, resign,

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Every participant gets to input their own suggestions into categories concerning the planned activities in the Music Workshop.



or even experience apprehension when dealing with similar situations in the future (Illeris, 2006). This risk for resignation, if the resistance in the learning process becomes too overwhelming for the learner, is also a central aspect in Flow theory by Csikszentmihalyi (2014), who argues that Flow is located in a zone somewhere between two outlines: anxiety and boredom. Lack of Flow in a given practice can lead to poor motivation and participants quitting the activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1975).

4) Human knowledge is throughout history transformed into and “saved” inside cultural tools or artifacts and gets activated when individuals or cultures grasp the artifact and use its resources or functions to accomplish something they set their minds to (Säljö, 2001, 2006). This is illustrated by the term double stimulation (Engeström, 2015; Säljö, 2006; Vygotskij, Cole, John-Steiner, Scribner & Souberman, 1978), coined mediation, by which the tools and artifacts become mediating artifacts. When an individual is learning to use a certain tool, whether it is physical or mental, she goes through a process of slowly appropriating the tool into her own practice (Säljö, 2001, 2006).

5) New knowledge, practice, tools and technology are continuously developed. These expansions, and further potentials for change, can be understood and analyzed through the complex frame of an activity system or in the meetings and networks between two or more activity systems (Engeström, 2001). The idea of ZPD is further developed in this understanding to not only applying to the acquiring of existing knowledge, but also to the creation of new knowledge through an innovative boundary crossing coined expansive learning (Engeström, 2000, 2015; Illeris, 2006).

In the field of music education, these five principles underpin an understanding where learning to practice popular music is an appropriation of tools and context in an existing, interactive culture that holds its own practice, methods, norms and musical and visual expressions. In the field of popular music, new genres, expressions, practices and technology are continuously modified and invented. The understanding of learning as expansive gives an interesting approach to both the practice and research on music education in popular music. Furthermore, when we add the issue of gender and girls as a minority in the field, the theory can help clarify why initiatives like the all-girls' Music Workshop may help empower girls as instrumentalists in popular music, and some of the gender-related issues one must pay attention to in this field (Nysæther, 2017). Expansive learning provides insight into learning as the development and creation of something entirely new: “Expansive learning is a creative type of learning in which learners join their forces to literally create something novel, essentially

learning something that does not yet exist.” (Sannino et al., 2016). Thereby we can understand how changes occur and what effects the changes might have. We can even intervene into an existing practice to promote changes. Cultural-historical activity theory can also contribute to explain why an activity becomes static, and why change is so hard to accomplish. But expansive learning cannot fully be understood without the analytic framework that Engeström developed in his exploration of the theory.

In the next paragraph, we will show how Nysæther (2017) used Engeström’s cultural-historical activity theory (2000, 2001, 2015) as a methodical frame of analysis in his study on the Music Workshop with girls. Thereafter we will expand upon this and further analyze the Music Workshop as a ZPD for expansive learning.

## Cultural-historical activity theory as a methodological frame of analysis

Engeström’s cultural-historical activity theory has been developed through three generations. The first was Vygotsky’s idea of mediation through double stimulation, that Leontjev put into a model of a triangle that shows how individuals act to stimulate or manipulate an object using a tool (Engeström, 2000, 2001, 2015; Vygotskij et al., 1978). But Leontjev was also concerned with the overall activity and described how complex chains of individual actions lead to a common accomplishment for the activity (Leontyev, 1981). Engeström expanded Leontjev’s triangle of subject, tools and object – to include the whole activity, adding three components of context: rules, community and division of labor, making the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation as presented in the figure below.

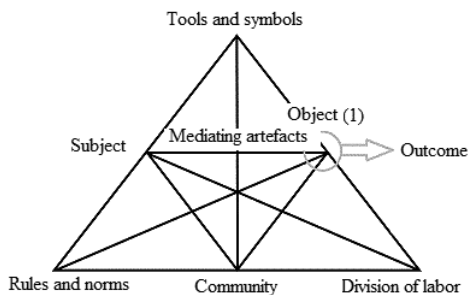


Figure 1: 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Activity Theory (Engeström, 2015)

The top of the activity system shows the subject's relation to the object through the mediating artifacts, tools and symbols, what is defined as the components of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation. This is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation supported by three new components: The rules are explicit and implicit stated norms, rules, and conventions, which control and adjust the participants in their actions; the community shows the group of participants sharing a goal and perceiving themselves as members of the same group. The division of labor is the expertise and specialization of tasks and roles, clarifying the distinction between individual actions with their own goals, and the common motive and object for the activity (Engeström, 2000, 2015). An object can be concrete, like the semester concert, or abstract, like a vision or a concept like "what does it mean to be a woman in popular music". The object is the leading component of the activity system, but it will first become a real object when it responds to a need, and when the participants at the same time add meaning and motivation into it (Engeström, 2015). An object is always under construction and change, is often multi-faceted and fragmented, and can hardly be grasped solely by the individual, but must be understood in relation to the community (Sannino et al., 2016). Later, when the theory got international, issues concerning conflict, interaction and dialogue between different traditions or perspectives became prominent. This is addressed through the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation, where two or more activity systems interacting through the negotiation or construction of a potentially shared object, is the smallest unit of analysis (Engeström, 2000, 2001).

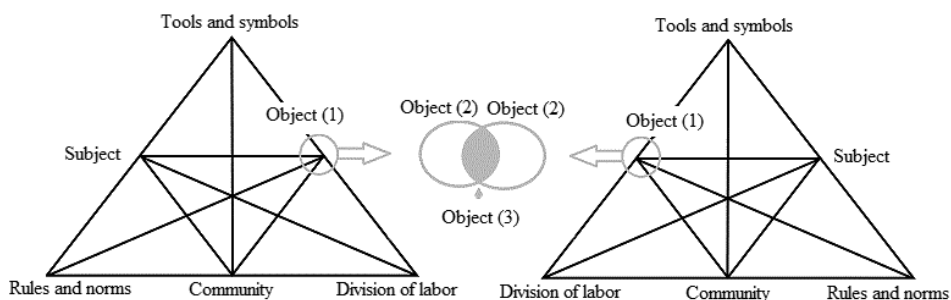


Figure 2: 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Activity Theory (Engeström, 2001:136)

In Nysæther’s (2017) study, the concept of 3<sup>rd</sup> generation was applied to the girls (pupils) and the instructors (educators) practice and collaboration in the Music Workshop. Using the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation model, he viewed the multi-faceted and fragmented object “what we focus on in our practice” (1–3) as seen and described in the empirical data from the two groups of subjects – the girls and the instructors. The research question for Nysæther’s study was placed as the shared object, but the needs were displayed by the five components in each of the two activity systems, as shown in the figure below:

**The interaction between the pupils- and educators perspective analyzed through Cultural-Historical Activity Theory**

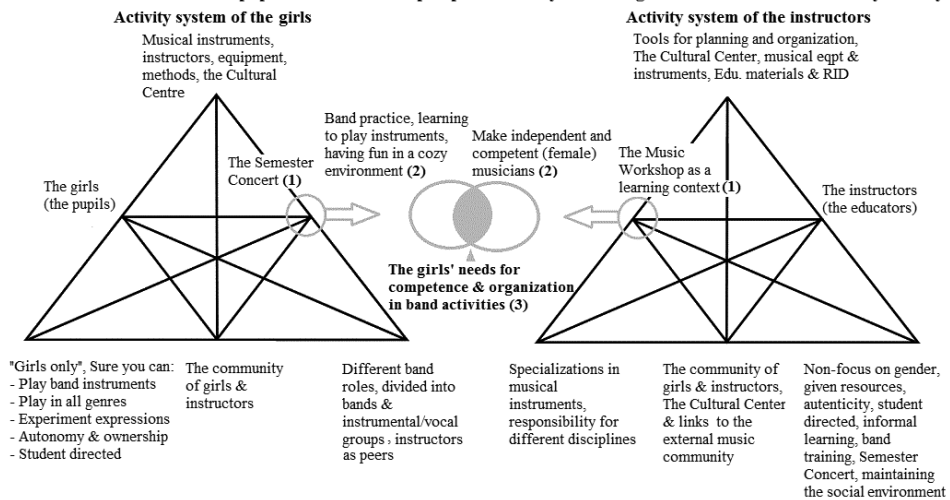


Figure 3: The girls’ and instructors’ activity (Nysæther, 2017: 79)

The girls were focusing on their vision for the semester concert (1). This was made into a more concrete object by (2) the practice of rehearsing individually and collectively to make a great show for the audience, or what the girls described as: “Practicing in our own band, learning to play musical instruments and have fun in a cozy environment”. From the girls’ perspective, they expressed their needs (3) for facilities, guidance and tutoring as immediate needs in relation to the present challenges that they faced, given the context of their activity. The instructors (educators) focused on the vision of the Music Workshop as a learning context and community of practice (1), and their practice was directed to the long-time work of creating competent and independent (female)

musicians by facilitating and educating them in the practice of playing in pop bands (2). However, the fact that the pupils were female, was not a subject of great attention in their practice as educators and facilitators, although it was an implicit aim for the project to empower girls as musicians. By providing equipment, by setting clear rules to fill all band roles, to aim their practice at the semester concert, and by challenging the girls in their creative work, the instructors also created needs for the girls (3) to master new tools and become sufficiently competent to achieve their goals for the concert. Nysæther found that the girls' needs acted as a potentially shared object (3), that was shaped and negotiated by both subjects, and that expressing, creating and responding to needs, were indeed at the core of the interaction of learning and tutoring in the Music Workshop.

Engeström's five principles (Engeström, 2001: 136,137) were deployed in the further analyses of the data. The five principles are: 1) The activity system is the prime unit of analysis. 2) The activity systems are multi-voiced, meaning that activity systems exhibit different opinions, intentions and views. 3) Historicity implicates that the activity system should be viewed in light of its own history. 4) Contradictions, understood as latent tensions embedded within or between activity systems, are sources of change and development, and finally 5) The potential for expansive transformation is seen as a collective journey through the ZPD (Ibid.).

## **Analyzing the findings through the concept of expansive learning**

Nysæther identified several interrelated aspects of the activity that took place in the learning context, which were decisive to produce independent and competent female musicians (Nysæther, 2017: 69 FF). We have further analyzed some of these findings, and outlined how we see the essential elements of the learning process of the girls, as showed in the model below:

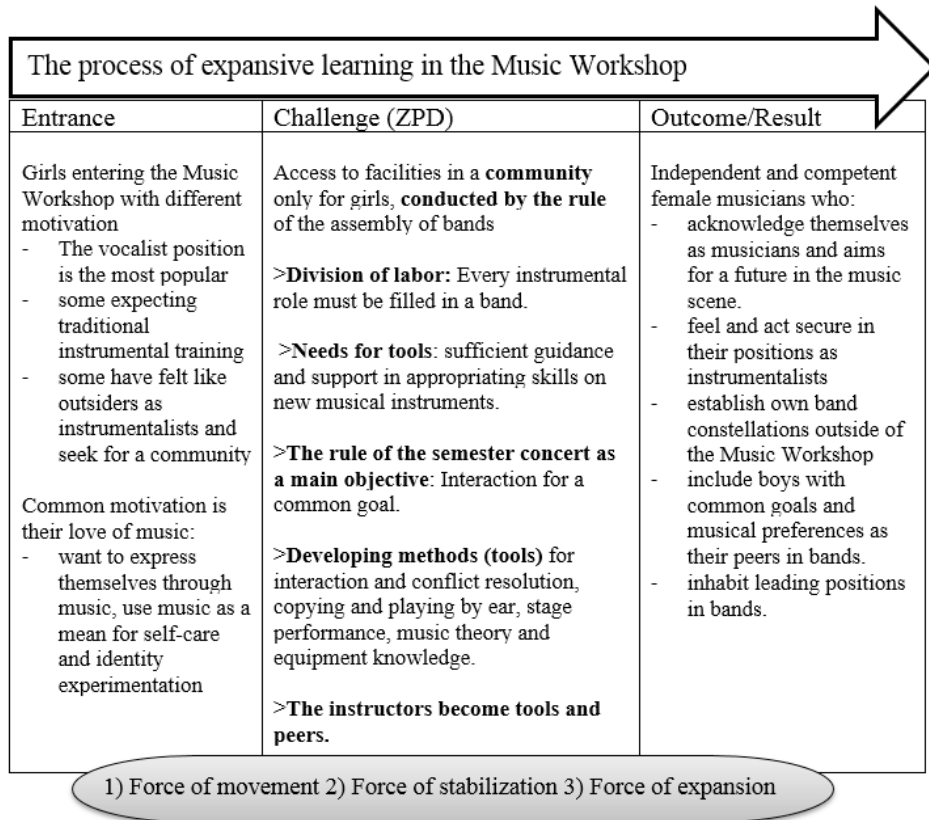


Figure 4: The process of expansive learning in the Music Workshop.

The figure shows that the girls enter the Music Workshop with different expectations and intentions that meet the principle of multi-voicedness. Still, they share the same love of music and a motivation for self-expression, seeing music as a means of self-care and self-technology (DeNora, 2000; Ruud, 2013a, 2013b; Stålhammar, 2006). As members of the Music Workshop they are challenged to establish bands and fill all the instrumental roles. As there are no boys to play the instruments, the girls must learn to take the instrumentalist roles, even if they lack experience and need to start from scratch. They also need to learn to collaborate and interact as a band unit, which demands skills for practicing together and resolving conflicts. They need to learn the methods of rehearsing in popular music styles, including the reading of chord progression forms, copying and playing by ear, in addition to other skills like stage performance, music theory and equipment knowledge. The girls seek guidance when

needed, and the instructors (educators) become background facilitators and tools, rather than tutors, in the girls' music activities. After being members for a while, more girls want to start their own band projects outside the Music Workshop. Some girls then feel ready as members and move on, while others remain in the Music Workshop and continue to use its community and competence, as an incubator to gain skills, which they use in their practice outside.

What were the crucial elements that had to be present for the girls to pass the challenge of the Music Workshop, and reach the point of independence and empowerment? We believe that the three constituting forces illustrated in our figure are essential for shaping of the Music Workshop activity as a ZPD for expansive learning: The first is the force of motivation through "having fun, being in the zone" interpreted in a balance between mastery and resistance, safety and unsafety, that drives the activity forward through the ZPD, the need for, and anticipation of experiencing Flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), giving the girls the spirit to overcome challenges and reach the other side as competent and independent musicians (Nysæther, 2017: 80, 81, 93). The second is the force of stabilization that makes the girls stay in the activity over time. The contradiction between the volunteerism of the workshop as a leisure activity on the one hand, and the strong commitment to the band and its dependence on each participant's expertise on the other, made both the girls and the instructors engage in maintaining a safe and cozy social environment where the girls were free to express themselves as musicians. This second force was therefore found in the activity system's division of labor ("I am needed in my expertise and role in the band"), the community ("we take care of each other"), and in the rules ("we are free to express and experiment with our identity") (Nysæther, 2017: 82). Finally, the third is the force of expansion, driven by the agency of the participants leading to change, beyond the activity of the Music Workshop. By the autumn of 2016, when Nysæther did his fieldwork, the Music Workshop had resulted in creating a growing environment for girls in and around the Cultural Center, which then again contributed to the local music community. But what was the vital element that had led to this development? Applying the principle of historicity, Nysæther found that a key success factor was that the activity of the Music Workshop was maintained over time, allowing the formation of repercussions where experienced members became role models for novices, and experienced instrumentalists gained status within the community of girls. Former members established bands and networks that recruited new members to the Music Workshop. This effect of girls acting as change agents through actions of transformative agency (Engeström, 2015; Nysæther, 2017: 87, 88), proving time after time that girls with instruments were possible, natural and

cool, had over time driven the activity into expanding circles (Engeström, 2015: xx, xxi, xxii), that challenged the existing cultural perceptions of girls as musicians, and had caused a transformation of the object “girls as musicians”.

## **The music educator’s role in empowering girls as instrumentalists**

There are ongoing discussions concerning the educator’s role in popular music. Green (2002, 2008) has, in her informal learning method, divided the learning process into different steps, where the teacher sometimes just observes the students, and sometimes intervenes in the process. Green advocates that the activities ought to take place on the student’s terms, that students should choose both the song material and the instrument (Ibid). Green’s strong focus on the student’s freedom of choice and management has been problematized in the research community (Karlsen & Väkevå, 2012).

The sense of ownership to both their music material, band management, and the overall community in the Music Workshop, was also of great importance for the girls to engage in the activity and do the hard work of learning to use new instruments (Nysæther, 2017). In this matter, the instructors were part of the girls’ tool-kit, and in the girls’ method of rehearsal and creating musical products, they used the instructors to get feedback on their own actions and products. Another significant task for the instructors was to provide other kinds of tools, such as elements of music theory, methods of musical interaction, and new techniques on their musical instruments.

## **The balance between intervention and withdrawal**

The instructors expressed that the balance between intervention and withdrawal in the girls’ band practice, was the most challenging task in their role as educators in an informal context. The instructors had learned through experience that the degree of intervention had to be rapidly assessed in the actual situational context and in response to the immediate needs of the bands. The instructors had to be constantly present as observers and collaborators in the practice room with the band. In other words, there were no sneak-offs to the coffee-machine when the bands were practicing. The girls got accustomed to the instructors hanging around and did not seem bothered



by their presence. The girls expressed that they did not want to be left alone while practicing, because they needed the instructors' presence as a safety line, with the possibility to quickly seek guidance when needed. The data gathered from the Music Workshop point to a shared intention between learners and educators, to find the most efficient learning method and to avoid periods of stagnation and conflicts, because time moved fast towards the semester concert. We will argue that in an informal learning context, the presence of the teacher is important, and the ownership and control of the process is pending, negotiated between the students and the educator as a near-peer collaborator. The educators' task has shifted from "convincing" dissemination of expertise and knowledge, where the educator would traditionally have to explain why the given subject is important to learn, to providing instruction driven by demand, where the primary objective is to improvise the support asked for by the students. The educators must also foresee needs for new tools that the students might lack the ability to identify themselves.

## **The music educators as empowerment agents**

Nysæther (2017) found certain aspects of the student-directed learning to be particularly important for girls. Establishing rules for the division of labor was crucial to enable the girls to make the leap to become instrumentalists and band musicians. When the girls had to play all roles in a band, not everybody could be singers, although the vocalist role was the most coveted. "Girls play all instruments" came in direct conflict with the norm: "girls sing, boys play" that existed in the community outside the Music Workshop. Over time, the activity of the all-girls Music Workshop community, with the new division of labor, had created a culture expressing that playing instruments is natural for girls. When new girls entered this established community of practice, they met experienced role models who were good at playing band instruments. It was crucial that the instructors expressed a "Sure You Can" attitude, where the values were translated into words that provided the power to open new practices for the girls. This is illustrated by the following quote a group interview with the rock-band:

"...then you got the question: "Do you want to play rock music?", and I was like:" Yep, keep it coming". (...) and I was told that I could do it! And that was what gave me the guts to do it, the guts to play rock music. That I was told that sure I could do it, that I could learn it, to hit as hard on the guitar as I pleased, yeah, just keep it coming! The Music Workshop helped me a lot in this matter". (Nysæther, 2017: 57)

One might imagine that girls easily identify and grasp all the possibilities that are available to musicians, but this is not necessarily the case. It is important for girls that the educator recognizes and projects opportunities that mobilize their actions and prospects in the role of a musician. As educators, we must assume that our own attitude, and what we express, may have a greater impact than we might think. Girls need to hear that they can, they need to be challenged to explore new practices – and when supported through this practice, they experience that it is indeed true that girls can play “boys’ instruments” and express themselves musically and personally in a variety of different ways, as impressively and naturally as any boy.

## **The challenge of gender norms when seeking authenticity**

The girls in the Music Workshop were familiar with the gender norms that limited their practice, although this was a topic that was not much talked about. Several places in the empirical material, we found examples of the girls attributing to the instructors the power to open boundaries. It seemed that the girls felt a need for validation of their ability to cross over and gain access to new domains.

Nysæther (2017) also discovered the necessity to establish rules for deciding on the goal of the music activity. Here is an example from the study: The whole group of girls was to make a music video of a self-composed song by one of the bands. In this process, the girls laid the premises for the content, genre and the musical and visual expression. Although the instructors arranged studio sessions and instrumentalists recorded a piece of music in a funk-rock arrangement, this was at the end rejected by the group of girls, because they did not want to identify themselves with this type of music in a music video. The process ended with a soft-pop song with electronic beats produced solely on the computer by an instructor, with no room left for the instrumentalists. The girls provided the vocals, wrote the manuscript, did each other’s hair and makeup, and posed as actors in the visuals of the video. There was no visual representation of girls playing or self-staging with instruments in the video either, just a group of girls singing. The girls expressed that they were satisfied and proud of the result, which became an authentic professionally produced music video, similar to the kind of videos their idols in the popular music industry are presenting.

First of all, this example illustrates that the girls had a strong focus on the product. It was less important how the process had taken place and who had done the work. Even

though one of the instructors made the music and mixed the song, and an external director had done the filming and editing, the girls had a clear view that this was their music video. This corresponds with what Lave and Wenger write about as legitimate peripheral participation in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991, 2000; Wenger, 1998, 2000). Even though the students had only participated in peripheral roles in the production of the music video, they experienced great ownership of the product. More important is the second issue, that the girls, wanting to make something authentic, nice and appropriate, were drawn to the expected normalcy for female representation in the music industry. In other words, when the activity was free of rules, the girls picked rules from a familiar activity system and implemented these rules in their own activity. This can also be understood through the concept of reification (Wenger, 1998). The girls had a strong opinion on what they valued as a “real” music video that they would benefit from. For the girls to engage in the process, they needed to see the music video as meaningful, and they found meaning by aligning the representation of themselves on the video with the norms of the popular culture. This shows “realness” and normality as powerful mechanisms (Schei, 2007). Nysæther concluded that the making of the music video conflicted with the intention of the Music Workshop, which was to empower the girls as instrumentalists and to be bold stage performers. Instead the instrumentalists and bands were rationalized away, and only the vocalists remained. Like Hargreaves, Marshall, and North (2003), Nysæther concludes that powerful technology challenges existing practice and enforces the development of new methods in the field of music education. Furthermore, the example of the music video also shows the girls’ clear move towards fulfilling conformity in the choice of music expressions and genres. This illustrates that gendered conventions are embedded in popular music (Björck, 2011a, 2011b; Green, 1997; Hawkins, 2017; Onsrud, 2011, 2013; Ruud, 2013b; Stavrum, 2008; Vinge, 1999), affecting the activity through constraints encapsulated in the cultural history of the activity. The question arises as to how we as music educators can facilitate such activities in an authentic, student-oriented and informal context without amplifying these norms. It seems important that the authenticity must be found in the tools of the activity system, and in the training to master the tools. With tools, we are referring to the instruments, methods of rehearsal and informal learning and collaboration, methods of performance, industry knowledge, equipment and technology that is authentic to the popular music scene. Nevertheless, the rules for instrumental roles and gender configurations cannot be directed solely by the students. If the students are left to choose their own rules, this would potentially result in the attraction to gender conformities and a stereotypical division of labor, where “girls sing, and boys play instruments” (Björck, 2011a, 2011b; Kamsvåg, 2011; Lorentzen & Kvalbein, 2008; Lorentzen & Stavrum, 2007; Onsrud,

2013; Stavrum, 2004, 2008). This pattern could, in a typical classroom context, be perceived as if the girls are overrun by boys, and therefore excluded from the roles of instrumentalists. However, even though boys are absent, girls still choose to fulfill the expected norms of what is suitable for a girl to do in popular music. The educator must therefore play a significant role in facilitating a division of labor in the community and be aware of the latent gender biases associated with popular music culture.

## **The need for a private space?**

Björck (2011a) has discussed female musicians' need for space as both agency and privacy. She found that women were expected to claim their space in the male domain of popular music. At the same time, women needed a private space of their own to gain strength and seek community. Nysæther (2017) found that a community consisting only of girls made it necessary, and hence easier, to enter the role of instrumentalists. However, is it necessary to exclude boys in order for girls to become instrumentalists? In the educational system in Norway, gender segregation as a measure is strongly regulated by law (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017). Nevertheless, in leisure activities, there is widespread practice of separating girls and boys (Fasting, 2008). Regarding the stereotypical behavior and participation in school music lessons (Kamsvåg, 2011; Onsrud, 2013), what can be done in the school context to ensure the same possibilities for girls and boys acting as instrumentalists, or vice versa, as singers? Nysæther's research suggests that establishing rules is a key element, and that the exclusion of boys is just a very efficient way to change the rules concerning division of labor. We believe that rules also can be changed by highlighting and paying attention to gender issues in the rule-setting and framing of an informal learning context. This subject warrants further research. Cultural-historical activity theory can be a useful tool in developmental research (Engeström, 2001, 2015; Engeström & Glaveanu, 2012; Sannino et al., 2016), and we will encourage researchers to approach action-oriented methods in music education that safeguards the gender perspective in informal learning contexts inside and outside the classroom.

## Conclusion

In this article, we have reflected upon issues concerning girls as instrumentalists in an informal learning context in popular music, with the study of an all-girl Music Workshop in Norway as a backdrop (Nysæther, 2017). We have outlined several elements to be considered when facilitating learning environments that respond to girls' needs when they are learning to become musicians. By using cultural-historical activity theory as a tool for analyzing the impacts made by the Music Workshop, we have argued that this theory can bring new insights to the issue of empowering girls as instrumentalists.

We have discussed the role of the educator in an informal setting, where we argue for pursuing negotiation and collaboration between the students and the educators in the learning activity. It is also vital for the educator to be aware of the importance of recognizing opportunities that mobilize girls in their role as musicians. Establishing bands and creating common goals of performing in a concert seem to be strong motivators for girls to learn instrumentalist skills. It is also important to establish a safe community, which over time allows girls to be role models for each other, and to engage in band practice, with both girls and boys, outside of the educational context.

When the goal was shifted to producing a music video, the girls adopted norms and expressions from the popular music culture, and the instrumentalist roles were abandoned in favor of the attractive, stereotypical pop vocalist role. From this, we can see that the establishment of rules may be essential when working with aims of authenticity. The authentic elements should be carried out by the access to and mastering of tools, and not by the rules and the division of labor. These two components should not be uncritically adopted in an educational context or left open to be managed by the students. This brings forth the need of developing educational methods in informal learning where the educator also can be a clear director who sets the rules for the activity in order to facilitate a context that addresses the gender issues related to popular music.

We have reflected upon the effects of a single gender context, and we believe that the absence of boys is just an effective means to change the rules and the division of labor, so that "girls sing, boys play" gets replaced by "girls play all instruments".

This article has shown that it is possible to study girls in popular music without utilizing a post-structural feminist perspective. Cultural-historical activity theory poses

the potential for change as more important than the fact that the target group is girls. This theory, as an analytical method, focuses on potentials for constructive change and development, rather than consolidating a perspective that highlights patriarchy, male hegemony, and gender-based discrimination. Studying gender in a relational and practice-oriented perspective can give new contributions to the research on gender in music education, providing new insights to how the gender norms can both be challenged and changed through practice.

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## Relational perspectives in the practices of choir directors

Pia Bygdéus

### ABSTRACT

#### ***Mediating tools in the practices of choir directors***

*Skills are relational, that is, they are developed in a relationship and interaction with the environment, and through the mediation that takes place in social processes. From a socio-cultural perspective this paper has its focus on the interaction in choir practice and the importance for the development of the individual, since it is in this interaction that learning, creativity and other cognitive skills are developed. This study of choir conductors applies a combination of methods, creating an opportunity for the participants to verbally express their thoughts, and also made it possible to examine silent dimensions of knowledge. It is practice-based, qualitative and longitudinal in character. Four choir directors were observed closely while working with their children and youth choirs and took part in semi-structured interviews. The empirical data material consists of observation notes, reflective writing, individual interviews, focus conversations, videotapes and stimulated recall interviews. With an overarching approach to learning and creativity as mediated and relational, the key concepts are tools, mediating tools, socially situated cultural practice and collective memory. In the case of professional choral directors, the relational aspect can be described as the ability to stand beside the recently performed actions, reflect on what has just happened and work on this experience over time. The Performing approaches and mediating tools become available in a social, situated and cultural practice. In conclusion, choral conducting involves a great variety of negotiations and renegotiations of working approaches and mediating tools, and the choir is a mediating tool for the choir director.*

*Keywords: choral conducting, choir director, mediating tools, relational*

## Introduction

This paper reports the outcomes of my PhD thesis, a study on choral conducting in the field of higher music education (HME), a study of choir directors work with children and young people. In previous studies (Bygdéus, 2000, 2006, 2012, 2015) I have described the choir director's practice as a complex activity, demonstrating a variety of working tools. When working with a choir, the same individual often has several roles, and in one of the previous interview studies on how choir directors talk about leadership, six aspects of their professional role were identified: the pedagogue, the conductor, and the leader, all combined with administrative, social and artistic functions (Bygdéus, 2006). The results from my research (Bygdéus, 2006, 2011, 2012, 2015) demonstrate that the role of the choir director is complex. The aim of *Mediating tools in the practice of choir directors* (Bygdéus, 2015), is to describe, verbalize and make visible the mediating tools used by choir directors working with children and youth. The study is qualitative and longitudinal in character: four choir directors were observed closely while working with their children and youth choirs. They also took part in semi-structured interviews. The empirical data material consists of observation notes, reflective writing, individual interviews, focus conversations, videotapes and stimulated recall interviews. With an overarching approach to learning and creativity as mediated and relational, the key concepts are tools, mediating tools, socially situated cultural practice and collective memory. Two questions have guided the data collection and analysis since 2009: *what does choir director do?* and *how does s/he do it?* When working with a choir, choir directors often use several aspects of their professional role. Analysed from a sociocultural perspective, the result points towards eight categories of working approaches (Bygdéus, 2015): (a) A listening attitude towards the choir, with the music in focus; (b) a variation in ways of working with the choir; (c) the use of musical routines; (d) the choir director acting as a role model in shaping musical expression with the group; (e) a concentrated cooperation with the choir through short and expressive commands and instructions; (f) reflection in practice by planning and self-evaluation; (g) storytelling, which results in memory training, stimulation of the imagination and the sharing of common experience, and (h) the use of target images expressed as visions, goals or jointly stated, communicated targets. These categories are generated through the analysis of the choir directors' actions and activities in their work with the choirs. This is situated in choir singing as a social and cultural practice. The participants display great individual variation in their choices of strategies for communication and in their decision-making when working with children's and youth choirs. A large variety of cultural and mediating tools are used. In order for the cultural tools to work in practice, the choir director

must have relational abilities. Relational ability is reflected in psychological aspects of using the tools; what and how choral conducting takes place, what is mediated and how. Role models at different levels and in all ages, assimilation, and the ability to shift perspectives, are aspects of the work as a choir director, necessary for the instrument – the choir – to develop and deepen in a context, as well as for the choirs to grow and recruit new members. These results, the eight approaches, are based on three research questions: which working approaches are used by the choral directors?; which cultural tools are used by the choral directors?; and how are these tools applied in the practice of choral leadership?

## **Literature overview – research vs handbooks**

Given that research on choral conducting with children and young people is not a specific field of research, the overview in this paper includes literature of various kinds, connected to aspects of musical leadership. The literature overview (cf. Geisler, 2010) demonstrates that choral research is spread across many disciplines and applies a variety of methods. Research is also conducted in areas other than the musical fields, e.g. in studies of choir and choir singing from psychological perspectives or as a historical, social phenomenon. Considering the focus of this study, however, the emphasis is on choir singing and choral leadership as a contemporary musical practice, histories and practices (Geisler & Johansson, 2010, 2011, 2014; Geisler, 2012).

Research on choral leadership often focuses on choir directors as transmitters and receivers, and describes how choir directors communicate and express musical actions in relation to the choristers. Multidimensional approaches, diverse strategies, different repertoires of actions and different elements interact. The balance between these elements is described as crucial for the choir's existence, as well as for the choral leadership (Kerley, 1995; Sandberg Jurström, 2009; Balsnes, 2009; Ludwa, 2012; Jansson, 2013; Erkkilä, 2013). Handbooks on choral conducting are usually written by practitioners and describe ways of working with the choir and aspects of choral conducting; approaches, tools, resources, technologies and methods. Generic terms such as leader, pedagogue and conductor for choirs are used in the literature and can be associated with the various aspects of leadership in choir (Ericsson, Olin & Spångberg, 1974; Bjerger & Sköld, 1993; Caplin, 2000, 2017; Dahl, 2003). The voice as an instrument is also central in handbooks for choral directors. A variety of means for developing singers' vocal treatment are described, and these can all be seen as

choral directors' tools in their work with the choral music (Carlén, Haking-Raaby Kristersson & Larsson-Myrsten, 1999). The singing situation contains a complexity in terms of how singers hear themselves in the collective choral sound and how the choral director works with the acoustic aspects (Daugherty, 2003; Ternström & Karna, 2002). Sandberg Jurström (2009) presents six different conductors' repertoires of action: the pantomimic, the performative, the typical, the associative, the conceptual and the evaluative repertoires of action, which can be connected to the themes found in the handbooks presented above. Sandberg Jurström's repertoires of action relate to common themes that I have found: a) knowledge of gestures, wordless bodily expressions (Dahl, 2003; Fagius, 2007), b) knowledge of modeling by/through piano, voice and speech (Caplin, 2000, 2017; Elliott, 2009), c) knowledge of one's own voice (Bjerger & Sköld, 1993; Carlen et al., 1999; Elliott, 2009), d) knowledge of how to use associations/metaphors with/of concepts outside the music, for example, to achieve a certain feeling or sound (Caplin, 2000, 2017; Bengtsson, 1982), e) knowledge of how to explain musical concepts with a fact-oriented focus (Alldahl, 1990; Elliot, 2009), f) knowledge of how to use values, confirmation and correction of choral singers' voices (Bengtsson, 1982; Bjerger & Sköld, 1993; Fagius, 2007).

Children's musical learning can be expected to take place in different cultural environments, such as kindergarten, preschool, church, various leisure situations and formal school contexts. Especially the church is an important agent, since 1/6 of Swedish choral singing takes place in church contexts, and church musicians constitute a large part of Swedish choir leaders. Children's choirs make up around 1/3 of the Swedish church's choral activities (Borgehammar, 2013). Several studies investigate how boys and men construct their masculinity through participation in choir singing and demonstrate how this leads to social as well as health-connected advantages (Ashley, 2002; Kennedy, 2002; Freer, 2006; Bailey & Davidson, 2005; Faulkner & Davidson, 2006; Faulkner, 2013). This is of relevance for the present paper since it underlines the importance of choir singing in the identity construction process, both in and out of school. Today's children's choir leaders need to be able to work with people at different ages, with different voice qualities, and from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Growing up in a choir, growing up with choral singing and growing into the profession as a choir leader through participation in the choir are all aspects where identity and belonging are important. Working with children's and young people's experiences, memories and identity formation in choirs through musical learning represents a certain challenge (McPherson, Davidson & Faulkner, 2012; Welch et al., 2010; Freer, 2009).

In Sweden, approximately 5 % of the population sing in a choir or a singing group (Statistics Sweden, 2009) which is a similar percentage as in neighboring Norway (Balsnes, 2009). This means that in Sweden about 500 000 people, plus a number of choral conductors, regularly meet in choir related practices. In this cultural context there are different ways to become a choir director in Sweden today. Choir and choral conducting appear in many different contexts, for example in schools on all levels, in colleges, universities and various religious and secular communities. To this can be added health and quality through choral singing, workplace choirs and free choirs. In several professions, such as music teacher, organist and choir director, choral conducting forms an important part. These professions are connected to different formal learning paths, that is, the training and educational programs differ. In addition to formal training there are also informal ways to become a choir director; choristers who shift their position into standing in front of the choir as leaders, or music teachers and singers who gradually broaden their musical activity. As a researcher, musician and music teacher myself, I find that education in music takes place in an exciting field where different disciplines overlap and interact. There are connections between the three domains of music (in artistic practice), music education and musicology, which open up opportunities to transcend borders and investigate issues with different focuses and different methodological choices. In 1988, music education was established as a research discipline in Sweden and demonstrated already from the beginning an interest in the interaction between pedagogy and artistry (Sundin, 1994). The content and direction of music education as a research field has continuously been discussed (Folkestad, 1997, 2007; Jørgensen, 1995, 2009; Nielsen, 2002; Olsson, 2001) and musical learning processes are studied and explored in different contexts where the core interest is the meeting between people, with and in the music and music-making (Folkestad, 2006, 2007). Choral leadership as a musical practice is an activity where the links between music-making and musical learning can be studied on individual as well as collective level. Through stories from the inside and the analysis of these, the purpose is to investigate choral leadership by describing and analysing the choir conductors' actions as well as the approaches, resources, techniques and methods that they use. Consequently, the focus is on studying the use and understanding of cultural tools. Cultural tools as a concept is a theoretical approach to analyze and understand relational perspective.

## Theoretical approaches

The theoretical approaches that I have employed to interpret and understand relational perspectives in the practices of choir directors, *what does s/he do* and *how does s/he do it*, draws inspiration mainly from Vygotsky (1934/1999, 1995/2010). Other important theoreticians are Wertsch (1985, 1998), Säljö (2000, 2005), Daniels (2001), Mead (Mead, 1934; Blumer, 1986, 2003) and von Wright (2000). I also relate to Alex Kozulin's preface to his translation of Vygotsky (1986) and his interpretation of the key concepts of Vygotsky's theory. With a holistic approach to learning and creativity as mediated and relational (Vygotsky, 1978; Daniels, Cole & Wertsch, 2007), the key concepts are tools, mediating tools, socially situated cultural practice and collective memory. Unlike animals, human beings create tools and symbols for constructing and interpreting reality (Vygotsky, 1934/1999). Tools, signs and symbols can also be psychological (Vygotsky, 1978; Daniels et al., 2007). According to Vygotsky (1934/1999, 1995/2010) human consciousness is shaped in a dialogue with other people, in contexts where tools, signs, symbols and artefacts are used. Human cognition and perception lead to the creation and utilisation of tools.

From a socio-cultural perspective, the interaction with other people is important for the development of the individual, since it is in this interaction that learning, creativity and other cognitive skills are developed. Consequently, skills are *relational*, that is, they are developed in a relationship and interaction with the environment, and through the *mediation*, i.e. the intermediation that takes place in social processes. In the case of professional choral directors, the relational aspect can be described as their ability to stand beside their own recently performed actions, reflect on what has just happened and work on this experience over time. According to Mead (Daniels et al., 2007: 89), experience can be seen as experimental and not merely as a sum of past events. Thus, there is no obvious sharp distinction between phenomena and experience. For Mead, the process of experience is fundamental, and relationship is where meaning is created. Creating meaning is then a result of the choral directors' reactions to gestures, actions and objects in the social and musical interaction. Kozulin argues that higher mental functions manifest themselves as a result of a mediating activity (Vygotsky, 1986). Interpersonal communication and psychological tools act as mediators in this process. The visible action and activity contains something more than the mere use of a physical tool. A tool is then the visible expression of an idea in the musical practice. In an activity, tools may be converted into verbal communications and actions:

Moreover, there is, as I see it, a connection between Gibson's affordances and mediation described by Vygotsky: that which is culturally and historically mediated by the tools in a situated activity also becomes possible affordances offered to the creator (agent) as means of his/her agency. (Folkestad, 2012: 196)

The functions of artefacts are determined in specific practices (Säljö, 2005). Researchers following Vygotsky have developed thoughts about the use and situatedness of physical tools (Wartofsky, 1979). The use of the term *artefact* goes back to Wartofsky, who describes three types of artefacts: primary, secondary and tertiary. Wartofsky's use of the term artefact makes it possible to specifically demonstrate the utility of various kinds of tools and mediation practises (Cole & Derry, 2005; Säljö, 2005; Jakobsson, 2012). Hedegaard (2007) interprets Wartofsky:

Wartofsky argues that all human functions are related to the historical changes in the form and modes of human practice. [...] In Wartofsky's theory, perception is related between the person and the world, mediated by culturally produced artifacts that are created historically through human practice. (p. 258)

In a practical context, it is often not possible to clearly distinguish between physical and psychological artefacts. Rather, they are connected with each other, as, for example, the artefacts in choral conducting in a socially situated, cultural practice.

## Method pluralism as design

Through the selection of data collection methods, such as observations, interviews and video recordings, as well as portfolio writing, reflection, communication and dialogue, makes it possible to access different types of data (Bresler & Stake, 1992), in this case in the practice of the choral conductors. The studies of choir conductors (Bygdéus, 2011, 2012, 2015) applies a combination of methods, methods of pluralism as design, creating an opportunity for the participants to verbally express their thoughts, and also made it possible to examine silent dimensions of knowledge (Rolf, 1991). By combining a method pluralism where I refused to bother the conductors and myself writing through the process of different data collection, as a researcher, I gain access to an additional dimension of collective memory that is possible to visualize through



observations, writing and follow-up interviews. From a phenomenographic approach (Marton & Booth, 2000) and emphasizing a hermeneutical approach (Ödman, 2007), two questions have guided the data collection and analysis: *what does s/he do?* and *how does s/he do it?* (Bygdéus, 2011, 2012, 2015). The data collection encompassed ten phases, aiming to get close to each choral leader, follow the analysis process with a holistic approach to learning and creativity as mediated and relational, through my contact as a researcher with the socially situated cultural practice and collective memory:

1. Each choir director was observed during six lessons, which equals a total of 24 observations.
2. At the end of each lesson/observation, the choir directors were asked to answer five questions. The five questions, or portfolio notes, were the same each time: *how does the lesson start, how does the lesson end, what do I think was good with today's lesson, what can I change/improve to the next lesson, other thoughts.*
3. By answering the same questions over time, different phenomena occur and become visible to the choral leader and for the researcher, individually and collectively. Therefore, after the end of the observation period, the choir directors were asked to summarize their written material on each question and produce a conclusion of the five summaries, which was handed in and discussed in one of the interviews.
4. The observation notes were compiled for each choir director in a document called 'Observations'.
5. One interview was conducted with each choir director. This was divided into two parts: (a) the choir directors talked about their portfolio notes and their work with the children during the observation period. They then handed over their portfolio notes to me, which gave them a chance to ventilate their reflections more freely. (b) During the second part of the interview I read and presented a written summary of my observation notes to each choir director, who then had the opportunity to comment on my observations. At the end of the interview, the choir director was given a written compilation of my observations. All interviews were filmed and took around one and half up to two hours.
6. During the spring of 2010, the choir directors met for three separate joint conferences, which were documented by the researcher.
7. The four choir directors and I met for a two-hour-long focus discussion after the completion of steps 1–5, which started with a spontaneous personal and collective summary of the past year. After about one hour, the focus discussion transformed into a group discussion that dealt with two, previously prepared,

- themes: a) What form does the artistic aspect of working with a choir take?  
b) The leadership model A-S-K (Bygdéus, 2006) was introduced to the group (Bygdéus, 2015, fig. 1 chapter 4). The focus discussion was filmed in its entirety.
8. Each individual interview generated notes and footage for the first analysis.
  9. The focus discussion generated text and footage for the first analysis (Bygdéus, 2012).
  10. Follow-up talks (in the form of one individual interview each) (Alexandersson, 1994) took place 3,5 years after phase 1–9. Each individual interview generated recorded material and notes, which enhanced the study's validity and made a deeper analysis of the data possible.

In order to discuss a musical practice that takes learning and teaching into account, the study must encapsulate the content. Folkestad (2011) develops and describes how studies on learning and knowledge building need an analysis of the relation between *what*, *how* and *where*. My dissertation (Bygdéus, 2015) cover texts from twenty-four observations, observation notes, four individual interviews and one focus interview, portfolios, the observantes written reflections and filming of the interviews. The empirically driven observation and analysis work began in autumn 2010, followed by individual follow-up dialogues in December 2013 – January 2014. The content from these four recordings was the foundation for the deepened analysis work, phase 2, and a validity test of phase 1. Leading analytical questions concern *what* and *how*, based on the two observation questions. By studying the relation between what is being done, how it is done and where it takes place, it is possible to get closer to the activity; what happens between the choir leader and the group, what is expressed and which actions and activities can be interpreted and understood within the framework of the concept *mediating* tools.

Several phases of this design have a very strong integration of the research partners, which reminds forms of design-based research. A strong integration of the research partners is something I have developed during several studies (Bygdéus, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2012, 2015) to be close to the practice in my research interest of practice-based research in socially situated cultural practice and collective memory (Vygotsky, 1978; Daniels, Cole & Wertsch, 2007) with a holistic approach to learning and creativity as mediated and relational.

## Images of choir directors and their modes of working

The four observed choir directors, named Anna (A), Beatrice (B), Carl (C) and Desirée (D) illustrate how the work is conducted/analyzed on an individual and collective level below.

On an individual level; the four choir directors' actions and activities represent patterns for each choir director: (i) the rehearsal is seen as a meal with different dishes; (ii) storytelling with stories as the main thread, in which each song is placed in a context; (iii) the choir director uses his/her own energy and enthusiasm, and focuses on the voice and sound production in the work with the choristers; (iv) the choir director uses eurhythmics as an integrated subject in the choir-singing.

Choral conducting in the practice studied, includes different communicative actions and activities between the participants. These are used to stimulate fantasy, memory and scenic practice in the form of movement practices, storytelling and the visualisation of pictures/images. The choir director carries visions and goals/targets which are transferred to the choristers through actions and activities, and stimulate children and youths to understand the piece of music in various ways. The social relations are there in both the music-making and during the breaks from this.

On a collective level, the breadth and variation of the choir directors' work are categorised in eight working approaches. Each mode has a certain approach and includes the perspectives of *what* and *how*, briefly commented on below:

1. a listening attitude;

Yes. And listen to each other. You must be here and now, totally here and now. And that is what you do as a choir leader, all are here and now, without that there are no results. (C)

2. a variation in ways of working;

As soon as I'm a bit tired or haven't planned well enough I automatically fall into this very traditional way, now we sit on our chairs, now we pick up our sheet music and start to sing from the beginning. [...] But when I'm a bit extra alert or have focus on something extra difficult or new, or now I have to shape up, now I have to think about how to study this piece, then I work with much more variations. (A)

3. the use of musical routines;

If we talk about children and youths they have a need for a certain security, they shall more or less know what is going to happen when they enter the room, where they shall sit, how they shall handle their binder, how the lecture begins. That is routines [...] they shall recognise what is happening and they shall understand that now we are learning something new [...] they shall experience that they are getting better and more capable. (A)

4. acting as a role model;

I know for example that you use the words "be quiet now" fairly often instead of saying "listen", and that is a thing you can concretely work with. It's very good to record yourself, even if it's extremely boring to sit there and hear yourself saying "quiet" 25 000 times in 40 minutes [...] it is so easy to use a negation. (B)

5. concentrated cooperation;

Conducting is a way to give commands. [...] That is what's so good, to suddenly be able to use another tool, to give commands, and not having to use your voice. (B)

6. reflection in practice;

P: These quick decisions, what do you think they come from?

A: Well, they come from, I mean if you don't think but just do ... like this. Then it's very spontaneous and very intuitive and if I stop and think and think about how to do now, get another second, then it's more of a choice between a couple of alternatives. Then I can make my decision based on tactics or planning, that I have thought this through. But quick decisions is the trade mark for choir leading work, and we make perhaps 245 decisions during one exercise. (A)

7. storytelling;

I also worked a lot with pictures, I sketched, and it's perhaps only because I heard so many times that you have different ways to learn things, and one of them is picture memory, and especially for the children where I worked who don't have

Swedish as their first language, that it was very important to use picture memory as well, a possibility to attach that as well. (B)

8. the use of target images;

If you know the song by heart the body is prepared, and then the body will do what the brain is telling. (D)

*A listening attitude* becomes an approach in the contacts with the group/individuals, both in the choir director's bodily and facial contact with each individual and when addressing them, but also when listening to how the choristers sound together. The choir directors must vary their methods and use a *variation in ways of working*, ranging from the safe *musical routines* to testing something new and unknown. To achieve a balance between concentration, work and rest, short commands can help create focus, concentration and a way to continue with the work. In practice the choir directors act as *role models* by using the piano and their own voice and body. *Concentrated cooperation* includes both short commands and musical expression/interpretation through the use of the voice, the piano and the directing. Voice training and intonation develop the choristers' individual voices, part-singing and sound. Through *reflection in practice*, the choir director's own reflection and reflection with the choir and other choir directors, goals/targets and visions can be made more concrete and clear, on the basis of the choir directors' ability to change, negotiate and renegotiate their choral conducting. *Storytelling* provides an opportunity to create a context for musical learning. Clear and explicit *target images* make it easier to focus on joint projects with the choristers. All actions and activities the choir director uses in their work with children and youths can be described through these eight working approaches which interact in the work with choral conducting.

The eight working approaches might be placed in one of the two theoretical categories of physical and psychological tools, which enables descriptions of the choir director's use and combination of modes of work in their practical choral conducting. In a socially situated, cultural practice, all tools are psychological in their contexts. Below the cultural tools and artifacts presents on a collective level.

## Cultural tools and artefacts in practical choral conducting

Many and various *cultural tools* in choral conducting have been identified in the analysis:

a) *Sight/vision and listening*. Sight/vision (in both inner and outer sense) is the choir director's tool both for seeing what is going on in the room, and to predict what is needed in the choir's work and what consequences different instructions might have. Listening is used by the choir directors as a tool to listen to what is sung and how it sounds musically, and to what is said and communicated in the dialogue with the group. Listening is also an inner tool in preparations and in the practical work in the rehearsals. By listening, the choir director implements their goals/targets and visions with their instrument; the choir.

b) *The speaking and singing voice*. The speaking voice is used for conveying instructions and information. The choir director uses various expressions and voices in the dialogue with the choristers. The singing voice is perhaps the most commonly used tool by the choir directors. *Call and response* and imitation of the choir director's instructions, using singing as a tool, is a frequently used form of communication.

c) *Music-making and musical variation*. The choir director's ability to lead the group in choir-singing is used to practise the group's joint expression and interpretation. Making music is an immediate and direct tool for communication, for finding joint interpretations, and for concrete practice of various musical aspects. For example, exercises might include shifts between the choir director's speaking voice and singing voice. Musical variation is used as a tool in exercises of various elements in a piece of music, for example text processing, quality of tune, intonation, part-singing, concentration, timbre and movements. Variation is used to facilitate musical learning and music-making.

d) *Gestures, respect, feedback and dialogue*. Gestures are the choir directors' tool to communicate with their instrument, the choir, through posture, gestures and directing. Respect as a tool means that the choir directors deliberately adopt a respectful attitude towards their choristers and their individual abilities and potential to develop the choir-singing. Children and youths have the ability for fast musical learning, but do not understand irony, and should not be exposed to this. Feedback and dialogue are tools used to verbalise a joint/common understanding of the choir directors' goals/targets and visions for the choir and its work.

e) *Vision and formulation of goals/targets.* Vision is a tool in which the choir director works with ideas of how the choir should sound and the work needed to achieve this, as well as how the ideas are implemented in the choir. Vision is a long-term and general cultural tool, but does not have to be clearly defined. The group needs time and maturity to develop the vision. A vision is related both to experiences of something, and to a desire to communicate this experience to the children, which also includes spatial experiences. The formulation of goals and targets – in both inner and outer senses – is used by the choir director as a tool in the preparations and in the dialogue with the choir. The tool is concrete and well-defined in character. The goals/targets formulated can concern for example rehearsals, concert projects, choir days, trips and recordings, but also how the choir is supposed to sound concretely.

f) *Piano and rhythm instruments.* The piano is a tool used to transform and communicate the choir directors' musical intentions to the choristers. The potential of the piano as a tool for musical learning in choirs is dependent on the choir director's ability to play the instrument, and to form character, style and phrasing by means of this. This is dependent on the choir director's ability to play the instrument. Rhythm instruments are used by the choir directors to exemplify different musical styles and arrangements. Rhythm instruments as tools become an integrated part of musical learning in a choir; to experience pulse and rhythm physically.

g) *Written music and paper.* Written music and scores are used as tools to convey information from a composer/arranger of music pieces that can be monophonic or polyphonic. The knowledge of reading music is trained successively in the practice. Paper is used as a tool to remember song lyrics, for information and other things the choir director wants to communicate to the choristers. The choir director uses notes and pens as tools in their continuous teaching to develop a joint/common understanding of musical learning.

h) *Boards, images, computer and discs.* Boards with pens, including coloured pens, are used to convey text, images, notes and information as a stage in musical learning and memory training, and to stimulate fantasy and memory in storytelling, lyrics and the role of music in various contexts. Images are used to communicate and illustrate stories, musical content and/or lyrics, with the aim of engaging the choristers and stimulate fantasy, memory training and sense-experience. Computer and overhead, including screen, are used when the choir director wants to show texts or images to the whole group. Projecting text and notes on a screen is a complement to the papers and notes in the binder, and it creates concentration and a joint/common direction

forward for the whole group. Discs and audio systems are used to play choir music, in role modelling and to illustrate goals/targets and visions in choir-singing. Shifting between different elements is common, in this case between recorded choir music as a tool, scores and dialogues about the music.

i) *Binders, music stands and chairs.* Binders are used by the choristers to compile their papers and notes. The choir director successively trains the Choristers in using the binder as a tool, and in using notes and paper in their choir singing. Music stands are used by the choir director, when standing in front of the choir. Music stands might also be used by the choristers when they stand in front of the group. Chairs have the function of giving the choristers a “home ground” in the choir. With a chair of their own, the choristers can feel safe in the room and have somewhere to work from and return to. The chair and the binder contribute to creating a tool defining the choristers’ own space in the room.

A tool can have several functions and be used in different ways. Choral conducting often requires a combination of tools. An analysis shows that the choir directors’ ways of working can be related to three factors: the choir director’s childhood/upbringing, education and practical experiences of choral conducting. An interesting observation is that several of the choir directors’ answers and statements indicate that they have not developed their knowledge during their formal education. They all say that they have had certain abilities before starting their education, or that they have developed their knowledge in their professional work, but they can rarely describe exactly where the tools emanate from. They present different opinions and descriptions of their university-level music studies. The ability to collect musical content and express underlying factors of a composition is dependent on the choir director’s own childhood/upbringing and the surrounding environment.

Further development of tools as physical or psychological artefacts can increase the understanding of different levels of cultural tools. Such an analysis of primary, secondary and tertiary artefacts can be used to study the categorisation of the working approaches and their tools as physical, bodily, intellectual, mental or linguistic entities. The primary artefacts are physically concrete and manufactured/produced objects, whereas the secondary and tertiary artefacts are based on linguistic, intellectual, communicative, mental and discursive levels. All tools in a certain practice become tools with psychological aspects. They require a chain of thoughts, reasoning and a conclusion, which in practical choral conducting is done continuously in a choir rehearsal and in the choir director’s individual planning and preparation.



The views and images of choir directors can be seen as secondary artefacts from the perspective of secondary artefacts as reproduction of understanding and knowledge, which provides models for the choir director on how the choristers should think and act. Models become representations, which help the choir director to organise the choral conducting.

The working approaches can be seen as tertiary artefacts, representing creative expressions and understanding, and are products of activities. The working approaches include the choir director's abilities regarding speaking, singing, music-making, musical variations, listening, feedback, respect, visions, formulation of goals/targets, and reflection; that is, the breadth and variation which constitute the collective level of tools in choral conducting.

In order for the cultural tools to work in practice, the choir director must have relational abilities. Relational ability is reflected in psychological aspects of using tools; *what* and *how* choral conducting takes place, what is mediated and how. Role models at different levels and in all ages, assimilation, and the ability to shift perspectives, are aspects of the work as a choir director necessary for the instrument – the choir – to develop and deepen in a context, as well as for the choirs to grow and recruit new members.

## **Choral conducting in practice: A discussion**

When the choir director uses a cultural tool, for example the piano, to demonstrate a phrase or a musical character, an accompaniment or a style, the piano becomes a mediating tool used by the choir directors in their communication with the choristers. The choir director's thoughts and intentions are mediated through the ways in which the piano is used and the choir music is transformed. The piano both functions as a sounding role model and sends musical information through the ways in which the choir director handles and plays the instrument. Several stages of the work with making the music sound and progress with the group depend on the choir director's ability to use and vary the tools. With inspiration from Wartofsky (1979), the piano, depending on how it is used and what it mediates as a tool, might represent either a primary, a secondary or a tertiary artefact:

The piano as a *primary artefact* has its place in the room and in the context, and has a clear function as a tool. It has an obvious purpose, appearance and physical character.

An implicit meaning of the piano in the work is illustrated in expressions such as “let’s do this without the piano” (Anna).

As a *secondary artefact*, the piano is used to preserve/maintain and extend what the choir director can keep in mind and include in the reflections of the music. In the sounding music, what Wartofsky (1979) describes as “production” through a secondary artefact, musical information is formed and communicated. In this way, the piano represents the choir director’s ideas of musical interpretation, through the ability to use the piano and act as a role model. Wartofsky (1979) describes a secondary artefact as something that is used to preserve/maintain and extend, in this context what the choir director can keep in mind and include in the thought about the world, as representations of ways of acting. Representations which help people organise everyday life (Jakobsson, 2012) could be represented in the patterns which appear in the four images of choir directors:

1. The rehearsal is seen as a meal with different dishes.
2. Storytelling with stories as the main thread, in which each song is placed in a context of storytelling.
3. The choir directors uses their own energy and enthusiasm, focuses on the voice and sound production in their work with the choristers,
4. The choir director uses eurythmics as an integrated subject in the choir-singing.

The patterns used by the choir directors provide individual help for them to structure their work.

The piano as a *tertiary artefact* can inform us about more than for example a pitch or rhythm. As a tertiary artefact, the piano constitutes a world or worlds of imagined or pictured practice. Playing the piano exemplifies how people, in this case the choristers, can perceive and experience things through musical communication. The piano contributes to the communication and does not stand between the choir director and the choristers. Tertiary artefacts allow an arena or a scene and exemplify how people can perceive things. The eight modes of work in this study could be seen as examples of tertiary artefacts, in that the choir director’s modes of work illustrate how the context with the choristers can be developed, for example how an inner vision of the choir director takes shape in the interplay and dialogue with the choristers. The

choir director has an impulse, through outer or inner stimulation, and replies with an impulse through the artefact. This has consequences for the representation of the artefact, which according to Cole and Derry (2005) indicates that there is a meaning integrated in the environment in which people are active, and the consequences are greater than the use of the artefact itself. The artefact leads to different forms of musical learning, depending on how the instrument is played and what is communicated and conveyed. Thus, in this study the piano also represents an artefact which the choir director uses as a tool with different shapes: physically, bodily, intellectually, mentally and linguistically. Similarly, as the piano can be interpreted and understood in different ways depending on how it is used, scores and written music might also represent different kinds of information. On the basis of the actual musical information in written music, the score might be seen as a secondary artefact, but in a deeper understanding and ability to interpret the world and messages, choir director's interpretation of the score makes it also possible to see it as representation of a tertiary artefact.

Methods and goals/targets that come with the use of primary artefacts form the basis for secondary artefacts (structure, social forms for organising the use, relationships), which enable the preservation and transfer of primary artefacts.

In the study, the choir directors talk about spontaneity, intuition, reflection, tactics, planning, experience and ideas:

If I don't think too much but just do [...] it is very spontaneous and intuitive and if I stop and reflect on what I should do now, get an extra second [...] then I can base my decision on tactics, or a plan (A).

Why you do things is very hard to know. [...] Sometimes you just have experience, and know that it actually works, or you base your work on an idea you've had (B). [my translation]

In line with the concept of the *personal inner musical library* (Folkestad, 2012), choral conducting experience interacts with spontaneous and intuitive actions, and ideas that develop through many different alternatives for action and in interplay with all their previous musical experiences. For the choir director, choral conducting means to create, model and sculpture music with their instrument, the choir.

The choir directors observed in this study talk about pedagogy and artistry as being impossible to separate, and the study shows that when all inner and outer knowledge

interacts, an artistic experience can occur. Using tools in choral conducting leads to several social actions which give the tools their mediating function (Vygotsky, 1934/1999; Daniels, 2001; Säljö, 2005). Good conditions and prerequisites as described by Erkkilä (2013) are a part of the social actions and thereby also a part of the mediating process between the choir director and the choir. It is a continuous interpersonal interaction (Vygotsky, 1978) where social actions are an important factor for the use of tools. In the meeting with a continuous interpersonal level they permeate the intrapersonal level and the individual knowledge (Wertsch, 1985). The two analytical concepts *action* and *activity* are interpreted and understood on the basis of *actions* being expressed on an individual level – four individual *images of choir directors* – and *activities* being expressed on a collective level – eight *working approaches* and many various *cultural tools*.

When people, in this case choir directors, show shortcomings, fantasy takes over and brings about actions which form thoughts, wishes and fantasy (Vygotsky, 1995). To be able to express music and communicate with the choir, the choir director must be able to shift between many different abilities in one and the same lesson/rehearsal. By raising the level of awareness of these shifts and use of different abilities, a strategy might be created for developing the choir director's musical ambitions, visions and social interaction with children and youths in choirs. Shifting perspectives (von Wright, 2000) is a foundation for the many decisions the choir directors has to make in their work, for example in a rehearsal. Choral conducting leads to musical learning. The choir director's ability to shift perspectives becomes evident. Alternately, the choir director takes in other people's thoughts, values and ways of reacting, expressed through the choir director's breadth and variation. Gradually, the mediating tools become available for the choir director through their leadership, craftsmanship and cultural tools, which are manifested in their modes of work in choral conducting. People's inner and outer communication (von Wright, 2000) is of help in understanding the continuous changes occurring in musical learning in choral conducting.

In choral conducting, the *I* communicates with the *Me*, when the choir directors practise to view themselves from the outside, that is, when looking at their own previous actions and reflecting upon them, quickly and continually. Similar to the ability to see themselves in the choristers' situation, the ability to reflect on their own actions through introspection is another aspect of the choir director's ability to adopt new perspectives. On the basis of Mead's perspective, awareness is a relation which exists in time and action in practice (von Wright, 2000). On the basis of reflection (Schön, 1983) as a tool, the supply of mediating tools can be extended. The ability to understand a

situation and work in a developing direction in a certain practice, in this case choral conducting, can be described as an ability to use reflection as a tool at different levels. In this study, different levels refer to what the choir director does with the group, in cooperation with different groups, with different individuals, and within themselves in their own continuous reflections. This means that tools are developed and gradually become available for conscious use. With reflection as a tool, each moment in a musical practice is an on-going work for the choir director, both before, during and after a joint activity. This makes reflection a tool which pushes the work forward. Mediating tools are represented by the different modes of work and many cultural tools used and combined, and there is pluralism in the choir director's work in the local, cultural context. Mediating tools are created in practical situations, in which also the choir as an instrument becomes one mediating tool. Thereby, ability and skills are relational, that is, they are developed in a relationship and interaction with the environment, and through the mediation that takes place in social processes. From a socio-cultural perspective this paper has been focused the interaction between people and the importance for the development of the individual, since it is in this interaction that learning, creativity, mediating tools and other cognitive skills are developed. This is one way of analysing relational perspectives in the practices of choir directors.

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# Gender and equality in education. Key themes, changes and the contemporary focus on achievement

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The field of gender and education historically and currently addresses a range of issues of equality in education. Key themes include power relations, curriculum and school practices, achievement patterns, and femininities and masculinities produced with/in education. This article briefly reviews key themes and changes in the field of gender of education, and then explores the prominent contemporary issues concerning gender and achievement, many of which focus on boys' said underachievement. It draws on Nordic and international research, and especially a recent Swedish research project on achievement and gender. This project, and others before it, showed a dissociation between dominant youth masculinities and study patterns, but also a widespread celebration of talent that has significant implications for the understanding of everyone's achievements. The presentation also highlights the problems of homogenising gender groups and the need to explore variation between social groups and contexts.*

*Keywords: Gender research, debate, achievement, celebration of talent*

## Research on gender and education in the Nordic countries

A recent analysis of the field known as gender and education concludes that it emerged in the 1970s, following the development of new social movements such as feminism and civil rights, which influenced both politics and attitudes towards social structures and fields of knowledge (Öhrn & Weiner, 2017). Early investigations in the field often took gender differentiation and power relations in society at large as their starting points, and asked what role schools and other institutions played in their reproduction. This often meant focusing on school structures and practices, such as gender bias in textbooks, gender differentiation in the curriculum, and gendered practices in the classroom (ibid.).

Anglophone studies have influenced both the theories and methodologies adopted and developed in Nordic research in this field since it began. Particularly notable influences include quantitative research from the USA during the 1970s and early 1980s, and British ethnography and critical theory from the 1980s onwards. Additionally, poststructuralism has become increasingly influential since the 1990s, as has Australian research.

This Anglophone influence has been important to the Nordic field because it is a valuable source of knowledge, methods, theories and empirical themes. However, it is also troublesome in some respects because it has largely been unidirectional: influence commonly extends from Anglophone countries to other parts of the world, but rarely in the other direction. Moreover, it strongly affects which issues and perspectives are considered important or central (Öhrn & Weiner, 2017). Consequently, non-Anglophone results and theories are more likely to be considered case specific, whereas Anglophone research is recognised as generalisable. This is reflected in the frequent labelling of Anglophone research as 'International' and is perpetuated by international journals and other publications that influence this field as many others (c.f. Larsson, 2006), both nationally and internationally (Öhrn & Weiner, 2009).

However, there is also a strong joint Nordic tradition in research on gender and education. This tradition dates back to the field's early days in the 1970s and thrived through a parallel developmental process, with researchers from Denmark, Norway and Sweden being especially prominent. Central to this development were joint Nordic forums such as Nordic research seminars supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers in the 1980s and the Nordic Educational Research Association (NERA) from the late 1980s. These forums provided space for discussion, the development of ideas, and exchanges of research findings. Norway and Sweden have consistently

been very active in this joint development, but the Danish contribution diminished in the 1990s and Finnish involvement grew rapidly. Despite these changes over time, I would say that there is still a strong Nordic exchange and discussion in gender and education research that has been more substantial and durable than similar efforts in many other areas of education research.

From the start, Nordic research on gender and education relied heavily on sociology (not least due to the early contributions of Norwegians such as Hildur Ve, 1982) and less on the feminist teacher activism that was strongly represented in countries such as Britain (Weiner, 1994). Nordic efforts have also received substantial state support due to so called women-friendly policies (Borchorst & Siim, 2008), and in Sweden, many women who promoted these policies had previously been active feminists (Almgren, 2006). Also important for the field's development is that gender equality was and remains an issue of strong symbolic policy value in the Nordic countries. Education has been central to the development of the Nordic welfare systems, which emphasise the importance of equal educational opportunities for social cohesion. Gender equality was and still is an important dimension of equality within these efforts. For instance, the Swedish policy that schooling should promote equality, with explicit references to gender equality, dates back to the compulsory school curricula from the late 1960s (Skolöverstyrelsen, 1969). Gender equality has thus been a vital part of the democratic and democratising dimensions of schooling in Sweden for some time.

## **Changing themes in research on gender and education; from social power relations to (boys') individual achievements**

As noted above, early research on gender and education mainly took wider social relations and power structures as points of departure and asked what role schools and other institutions played in maintaining societal gender patterns and relations. The earliest research in the field typically focused on the kind of fostering provided by institutions and its relationship to power structures, particularly female subordination. Of particular interest were knowledge content, school practices, teachers' differential treatment of students, and the kinds of power relations, femininities and masculinities that they might further. From the late 1980s theoretical and methodological changes prompted a shift in focus towards variation within gender groups and various actors' views of positionings, sexualities and performativity. As stated elsewhere (Öhrn, 2000), this meant a greater emphasis on variations, intersections,

performativity, and how various gender groups viewed schooling, gender and other social relations. Later and contemporary research places less emphasis on institutions, their messages, values, and teaching than earlier work, but issues of social (power) relations furthered by institutions and the emergence of various gendered norms and identities/subjectivities remain central.

Another prominent theme has been academic preferences and success, which have been examined in analyses of teaching methods, gendered subject constructs and content, and gendered differences in school outcome and further education. This has included research on various groups' responses to schooling, especially working class boys', whose anti-school attitudes were analysed in terms of classed resistance and the depreciation of school's bourgeois values in Paul Willis' study *Learning to Labour* (1977). This work discussed boys who distanced themselves from the classed ideals in schooling, developed anti-school attitudes and as a result of this rejection, did not achieve the requirements for admission to further education. This ultimately reproduced their class position (see also Kryger, 1990 for a Nordic analysis, and Davies (1984) for an analysis of working class girls). Later and contemporary research has often focused on boys' attitudes to schooling more generally, without targeting certain class strata or ethnicities, to analyse their achievement. It has been argued that a central contributor to boys' lower achievement as a group (compared to girls) is that studying is typically less consonant with dominant youth masculinities than youth femininities (e.g. Epstein, 1998). Accordingly, boys distance themselves from studying and behaviours indicative of a desire to perform well in school. Some, like Carolyn Jackson (2002), have conceptualised this as a 'self worth protecting strategy' with boys acting to protect their self-worth from suspicions of lack of ability. This relates to the fact that in the education system, academic ability is central and intertwined with feelings of self-worth. Many will fear failure and so will distance themselves from studying to protect their sense of self-worth; if they fail to achieve, they can attribute their failure to their lack of effort rather than to lack of intellectual capacity. Moreover, if they succeed without appearing to have studied, it is likely to be seen as a result of talent, which is greatly celebrated (e.g. Nyström, 2012). The idea that students might distance themselves from studying to protect themselves from visible failure is commonly used to explain boys' lack of studying. One remaining issue here is whether this conceptualisation plays down the importance to girls of appearing talented. I will return to this later.

In Sweden and many other countries, girls have outperformed boys academically for a long time. Since the 1960s, girls have also outscored boys in comprehensive school

by attaining higher marks than might be expected based on test results. Some have suggested that these higher marks are not based on girls' knowledge but are given because of their more docile behaviour (e.g. Emanuelsson & Fischbein, 1986), while others have emphasised that the tests in question measure a smaller range of competences than marks (e.g. Wernersson, 1988). Also, even early studies noted that girls' higher marks do not correspond to better incomes or positions in society at large (Svensson, 1971; Wernersson, 1988). Persistent gender wage gaps favouring males exist in both the Nordic countries and elsewhere, despite the higher grades generally achieved by girls (European Commission, 2014; Mukherjee, 2015).

In summary then, issues of policy, identity and achievement have all been central to the field of gender and education from its early days; analyses and discussions of achievement are not new to the field. However, the present *focus* in media and policy discussions on comparisons of gender differences in tests and marks is a rather recent phenomenon and not one furthered by research. Instead, it is a travelling discourse that has moved between countries and largely ignored national patterns and contexts (e.g. Arnesen, Lahelma & Öhrn, 2008). This discourse typically emphasises binary gender differences while ignoring issues such as the impact of social background, which is more influential on marks (e.g. Bakken & Elstad, 2012; Skolverket, 2017). Also central to this discourse is an antagonistic presentation of gender relationships (girls versus boys), with one gender losing to the other's benefit.

This media and policy debate has prompted research into boys' achievement, in some countries sometimes to the extent that research on femininities and girls has been neglected. For instance, in Britain, Riddell (2007) notes that research on gender in education became narrowly synonymous with concerns about boys' 'under'achievement, and Archer & Leathwood (2003: 227) observe that "the overwhelming obsession with boys, men and masculinities has effectively silenced work on girls, women and femininities." This has not happened in the Nordic countries, but there certainly are issues of achievement and gender in Nordic school systems that need further explorations. For instance, we might conclude that there is substantial support for explanations based on differences between dominant youth masculinities and femininities, which to varying degrees are consistent with school commitment and central to boys' reluctance to (admit that they) study. However, this knowledge relies heavily on analyses of relations and hierarchies within friendship groups, for instance young persons' popularity among peers or their positioning in class (e.g. Holm, 2008), and less on whether and how issues of school achievement, grades and gender are communicated in teaching. There have been fewer studies of these aspects of classroom interactions/



teaching in contemporary Nordic research than there were in the past (e.g. Lahelma & Öhrn, 2011). Furthermore, contemporary studies have raised questions about students' future aspirations and their impact on educational efforts and achievements. For instance, girls as a group might consider themselves more in need of high grades as they are more likely to go on to higher education, partly because traditional female occupations more often require university-level qualifications than traditional male jobs in the Nordic countries (see Arnesen, Lahema & Öhrn, 2008). This also relates to questions about local labour market conditions, and the kinds of paid work and positive gender identities that they offer (see Weis, 1990). This might be expected to influence students' perceived need for educational performance and merits.

## **Findings from a study of gender and achievement**

Building on the above discussion, I will present some results from a Swedish study of achievement and gender,<sup>1</sup> that took as a starting point the aforementioned research themes, as well as gender theorising by researchers as Raewyn Connell (e.g. Connell & Messersmidt, 2005), Carolyn Jackson (e.g. 2002) and Beverly Skeggs (e.g. 1997). The study's aim was to investigate understandings of gender and achievement in various secondary teaching settings and local contexts by exploring: 1) the understandings of school achievement that are communicated among various groups of young people in school and their relations to dominant femininities and masculinities in those groups: 2) the understandings of school achievement and gender that are communicated in teaching: and 3) young people's conceptions of the significance of academic achievement for their present and future lives.

The study used a compressed mode of ethnography (Jeffrey & Troman, 2004) to examine nine 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes from areas in different parts of Sweden with different socio-economic status. Four of the researched schools were located in the same large city but in different socio-economic areas, one school was located in a community outside a large city, one was in a town, and three were in small villages. The empirical study was carried out between 2011 and 2013, and its main data sources were observations of lessons and breaks (474 lessons observed), fieldwork conversations, and formal interviews with students (100 girls and 80 boys). In addition, a small sample

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1 The research project 'Achievement and gender. On teaching, youth groups and local conditions', was funded by the Swedish Research Council 2011–2013 (VR 2010-4869).

of teachers were formally interviewed (28 interviews). The observations focused on student-student and student-teacher interactions, and discourses of achievement and grades in relation to gender. The interviews asked about specific incidents observed during the fieldwork as well as common themes concerning experiences/conceptions of gender and achievement in school.

Below I will discuss two central empirical themes from the study. They both map on to the above discussion about gender and achievement; one relates to discourses of performance, work and talent and the other to students' resources for handling individualised teaching. The text draws on a full Swedish report (Öhrn & Holm, 2014) and a previous English presentation (Öhrn, Asp-Onsjö & Holm, 2017).

### Discourses of performance, work and talent

Like some earlier investigations, the study showed a dissociation between dominant youth masculinities and school work. Boys were generally, by themselves and others, considered and expected to study less than girls and were also deemed to have a more "relaxed" attitude towards studying and performance. The latter, however, largely appeared as a discursive presentation and was not confirmed by gender differences in students' observed classroom behaviours, which indicated that individual students were generally interested in their own study results (cf. Martino, 1999; Aasebø, 2008). Neither did it appear problematic for boys to achieve well. High-achieving students were generally found to be well positioned in their classes, and boys were no exceptions. As pointed out by Skelton & Francis (2011), there are dominant, high-achieving young masculinities, exhibiting high levels of academic knowledge and self-esteem. Central to all youth masculinities, however, is that academic achievement should appear effortless (Jackson, 2002), and this was apparent in the participating schools.

This was reflected in the tension between the statement that "everyone can succeed" and the disregard of some ways to do this. There was a common discourse that students can choose their level of performance and hence, the grades they receive. Students in every studied class claimed that everyone can succeed with sufficient willpower and hard work. However, only some forms of success were recognised. The claim that "everyone can succeed" refers to equal opportunities to study, but studying is a down-graded activity; the students expressed that educational success should be the result of talent rather than studying. Therefore, in order for achievement to be acknowledged, it should appear to result from what students called "natural talent", and being "smart"

or "intelligent." There is almost an enticing shimmer around these capacities, which can be seen in Ante's explanation of natural talent as something "you just *have*":

Ante: I mean you can have very high marks without being intelligent, actually. --- It's more difficult for some to learn, but *everyone* can achieve the highest marks, if they only make an effort. But being a natural talent then you just *have* it." (Interview). (Öhrn et al., 2017: 179).

The dissociation between studying and hegemonic youth masculinities is well known from previous research (e.g. Phoenix, 2004; Holm, 2008; Francis, 2009), but as shown in our analyses, studying is not seen as particularly desirable for or by *any* group of students. Consequently, this perception also has implications for evaluations of girls' higher grades, which are typically associated with hard work and studying, and thus devalued (Holm & Öhrn, 2014). Some boys even referred to studying as "cheating", or claimed girls' higher grades to be, as one boy put it, "undeserved", since they were not considered to reflect talent. Similar devaluations were voiced by high-performing girls themselves, such as Rosita who stated, "I don't think I'm smart, I think I'm just swotting a lot, so I never feel smart" (see Öhrn, Asp-Onsjö & Holm, 2017: 180). The students' perceptions in this respect mirrored those of their teachers, who were more likely to talk about male students as gifted or having potential irrespective of their present achievements. As pointed out elsewhere (Öhrn & Weiner, 2017), there is an ambivalence in the positioning of girls and femininities; on the one hand they are associated with success in school examinations, but on the other, they are less likely than boys to be seen as talented or intelligent.

### Resources for handling individualised teaching

As demonstrated by the above discussion, the students typically understood talent or intelligence as something that is 'fixed', rather than being developed or developing through hard work (see Dweck, 2009); it is "the effortless academic achievement equated with authentic intelligence" (Jackson & Nyström, 2015: 394). Since having talent was equated with not needing to work to perform well, studying was also compromised because it could be suspected to indicate a lack of talent/intelligence. This is obviously a difficulty to manage for students in general, but posed a particularly severe problem for boys who need and want to study.

The urgency of this relates not only to ideals of masculinity, but also to present teaching practices. Contemporary Nordic research shows teaching to be highly

individual-centred. Carlgren et al (2006: 319) conclude that this stems from the adoption of a neo-liberal educational policy "with the individual self-reliant learner at the centre", and that self-regulatory individualised ways of working has been quite widely adopted in Sweden and Norway in particular. Such teaching styles are especially demanding for groups with little access to cultural capital, because they typically cannot rely on their family to compensate for a lack of support and help in school. Access to such support is further reduced in some schools if (as in the case of Sweden), there is a tendency for increased area segregation and differences between schools that make individual schools more internally homogenous (see Öhrn, 2011). Students' achievements vary with their social and ethnic background, but also with those of their class-mates. Students whose classmates have highly educated and Swedish-born parents are more likely to do well, irrespective of their individual background (Skolverket, 2012). In the schools we researched, some students mentioned attempts to compensate for a lack of tuition by getting help from others, usually their family or classmates, but many could not rely on such support. Girls seemed to manage this problem to some extent by studying on their own and also voiced various explicit strategies, which were frequently based on some form of student cooperation (see also Dalland, 2014). For boys, to whom ideals of effortless achievement appeared particularly pressing, this was less of an option because student cooperation would inevitably risk revealing that they were studying. Consequently, they found it particularly challenging to develop workable strategies.

However, school organisation can provide conditions that promote the development of such strategies. For instance, in one school we identified a group of boys with higher grades than would be expected given their migrant and working-class backgrounds (Gustafsson, 2014a). This particular school had a 'football profile' that attracted students from different backgrounds, and so had a larger socio-economic and ethnic blend than most Swedish schools. Furthermore, it explicitly sought to create cohesion between students by offering joint activities such as parties and school trips, where different groups of students met and mixed. The group of boys in question drew on the openings for mixing provided by the school and developed social networks with older schoolmates, which gave them access to knowledge about rules and routines, and to groups of girls with cultural capital who helped them with their studies. This provided them with support to act adequately within the organisation, to study and perform. For instance they worked in mixed study groups with some of the girls:

Both the boys and some of the football girls are sitting together and working with the rehearsal questions. The girls have a well-developed strategy; first they work with the

questions, after that, they begin with the timelines, mind maps and summary. Then they work with the rehearsal questions once more. A pervasive pattern between the girls is that they help each other if needed and the boys are often included in this interaction. (field notes). (Gustafsson, 2014b: 248).

The girls in question also gained from the collaboration by receiving help and support, but in general, girls were seen to collaborate in all classes and in this respect appeared less dependent on the school organisation than boys.

## Concluding remarks

Much research points to the dissociation between dominant youth masculinities and school work. This is not at odds with ideals of achievement or performance; both Anglophone and Nordic research have highlighted the existence of valued masculinities characterised by high achievement, academic knowledge and self-confidence (e.g. Skelton & Francis 2011; Nyström, 2012). It is essential however, that achievement appears to be the result of 'talent' or 'intelligence', rather than hard work. This ideal of effortless achievement (e.g. Jackson & Dempster, 2009), was also highly visible in the schools examined in this article. However, as shown in our analyses, the widespread celebration of fixed intelligence has implications for the understanding of all groups' achievements. Studying is not seen as particularly desirable for *any* group of students. Consequently, it also affects the evaluation of girls' higher grades, which are typically associated with hard work and studying, and thus devalued.

This suggests that some arguments put forward to explain boys' ('under')achievement in school do not only apply to their achievement, but are central to understanding students' performances and grades more generally, albeit in somewhat different ways for the genders. Furthermore, the focus on binary gender differences and boys in achievement debates is problematic because it hides central within-group differences (such as those relating to social background) and reproduces or may even deepen the divide between groups. For instance, concern about boys' achievements prompted some teachers in the researched schools to focus more on them in class (Asp-Onsjö & Öhrn, 2015). However, rather than targeting low-achieving students, this attention led to a stronger focus on the already highly visible high-achieving boys and helped to promote their participation and good academic positioning in class. Actions based

on homogenising discourses about boys' under-achievement can thus provide already successful ones with additional help and attention.

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## **Nordic choral conductor education: Overview and research agenda**

*Dag Jansson, Pia Bygdéus & Anne Haugland Balsnes*

### **ABSTRACT**

*The choral movement holds a prominent position in the Nordic countries, and choral singing is one of the top social activities in terms of the number of people involved. While all these choirs need conductors and depend on choral leadership competence, we have limited knowledge of the existence and level of available competence, qualitatively or quantitatively. Music academies and universities are key providers of competence and capacity to meet the demands of amateur and professional ensembles alike. This paper seeks to establish a picture of university/academy-based education in choral conducting, with focus on the Scandinavian countries. Existing research is scarce, and the overall aim of this initial effort is to provide a foundation for further research. We have pursued the following related research questions; which educational programmes exist, what are their profiles in terms of the underlying thinking and ensemble needs they serve, and what is the capacity in terms of number of students? A variety of research data has been gathered, including curriculum reviews and interviews with conducting teachers and students from selected institutions. Although we have been able to answer the research questions to some degree, the study opens a series of new questions, which suggest an agenda for further research.*

*Key words: choir, choral conductor, education, curriculum*

## 1. Introduction

The choral movement holds a prominent position in the Nordic countries, and choral singing is one of the top social activities in terms of the number of people involved. While all these choirs need conductors and depend on choral leadership competence, we have limited knowledge of the existence and level of available competence. The music academies and universities are central in the provision of competence and capacity to meet the demands of amateur and professional ensembles alike. A number of shorter and less formal courses also exist, and these play an important part in serving the needs of the conductor population.<sup>1</sup>

This study seeks to establish a picture of university/academy-based education in choral conducting, with focus on the Scandinavian countries.<sup>2</sup> Existing research is scarce, and the overall aim of this initial effort is to provide a foundation for further research. We have pursued the following related research questions; which educational programmes exist, what are their profiles in terms of the underlying thinking and ensemble needs they serve, and what is the capacity in terms of number of students. A variety of research data has been gathered, including curriculum reviews, interviews with conducting teachers and students from selected institutions. We align with an outlook on the choral conductor role which, with a broad brush, could be denoted a “qualitative and holistic” research tradition (Durrant, 1998, 2003; Gumm, 2012; Jansson, 2015; Varvarigou & Durrant, 2011).

### Definition and delineation of the practice

The choral field is wide and varied, involving a large number of participants. It ranges from the professional music field to informal collective singing, within and outside institutions. It follows that choral leadership is equally varied, conceptually as well as regards practice—it is difficult to “nail” the role precisely (Jansson, 2018b). Another implication is that choral conductor competence is more situated than is explicitly discussed and consciously reflected in conductor education. We observe the multivalence of the choral field not least considering how a number of similar labels are used to denote the leader. Words like choral leader, choral conductor, choral pedagogue, and ensemble leader have, at times, the same meaning, and are at times used to highlight

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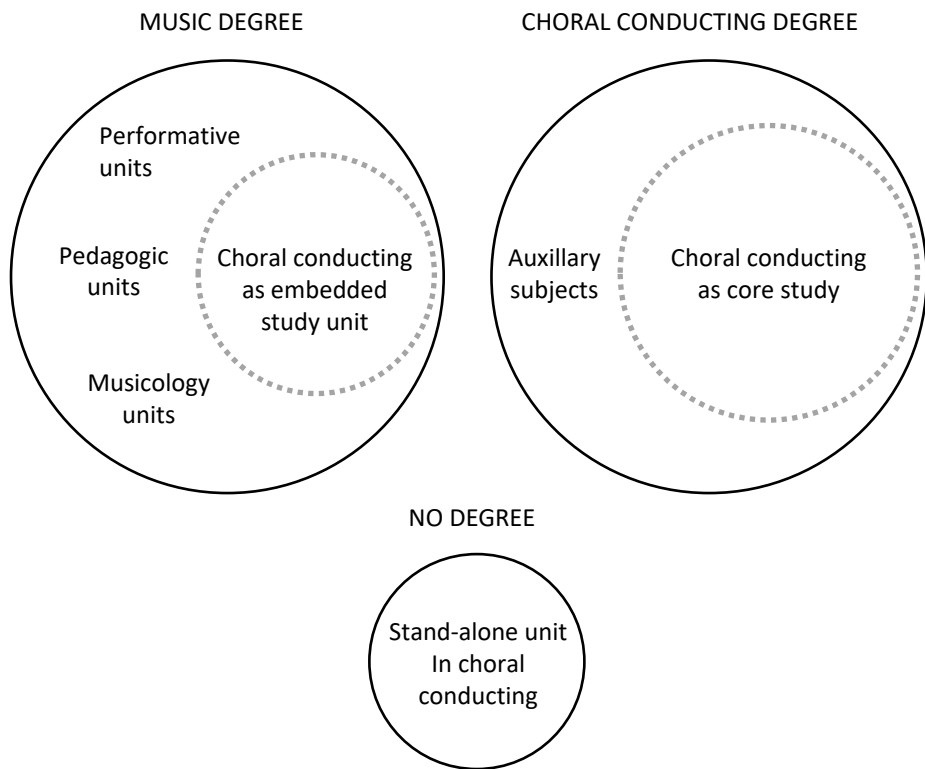
1 Various kinds of less formalised training is at times brought into the discussion, although it is outside the primary scope of this paper.

2 The focus on Scandinavia rather than the entire Nordic region is purely a pragmatic choice, given the researchers’ locations and readily access to primary data.

a particular feature (Bygdéus, 2015). The prefix *choral* is used to distinguish from orchestral, although a number of ensemble situations are in fact mixed, and some educational programmes blend the two. The various labels may reflect a tradition, professional identity or aesthetic outlook, and institutions sustain a certain educational canon by how words are used interchangeably or distinctively. For the purpose of this study, we will not delineate the field or define the role in terms of including or excluding certain practices. Instead, we define the role and the implied competences according to their “centre of gravity” or focus—by how they are actually understood and nurtured within programmed education in academic institutions. Any ambiguity of terms used is therefore seen as a property of the role in its own right. Such an open-ended view also recognises that choral conductor education might be a rather blunt instrument in two particular ways. First, education is not necessarily targeted effectively at those working situations in which conductors find themselves (Balsnes, 2009). Second, there are ways other than academic education alone whereby conductors acquire their competence (Jansson, 2018a). Both cases represent salient features of the choral leadership practice in Scandinavia.

### Definition and delineation of educational programmes

In this study, we distinguish between five major categories of educational programmes for choral conducting, which differ in terms of the type of degree awarded; (1) a master’s degree in choral conducting, (2) a bachelor’s degree in choral conducting, (3) a church musician’s degree with choral conducting embedded (“minor”), (4) music educator’s degree with choral conducting embedded (“minor”), and (5) stand-alone study units in choral conducting, at basic and advanced levels. While this taxonomy is straight-forward with regard to degree, it is more blurred as regards the extent and content of the choral leadership curriculum. For example, aural skills and score study could be part of a conducting study unit on one programme and a generic music topic on another programme. Because choral conductor competences share a number of elements with the generic musician competence base, it is simply not possible to quantify the “weight” of conducting in a programme. Moreover, because choral conducting competences constitute an open-ended skill set, there are no clear criteria for including or excluding a given competence element. Figure 1 illustrates that the boundaries are, to a large extent, arbitrary.



*Figure 1: Illustration of blurred boundaries between core and auxiliary elements in choral conductor education*

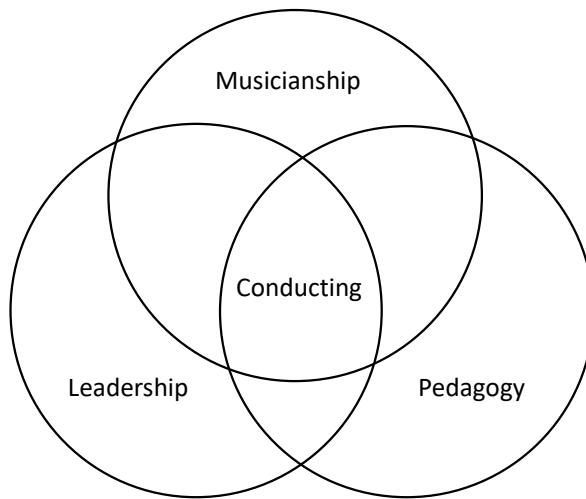
## 2. Research on choral conducting

When we investigate the conductor's role and conducting competences, it is not at all clear in which scholarly discipline and research tradition we find ourselves. The first challenge is to cope with the great variety of choral situations, from the community choir to the professional ensemble, adults as well as children and, not least, musical genres which call for different conceptions of choral leadership. At the same time, there is clearly some common ground, as evidenced by how quite different situations might form part of a conductor's work-life. The second challenge is that even within a single ensemble situation, the conductor faces competing demands, to the extent that they could be seen to represent different roles (Hunt, Stelluto & Hooijberg, 2004).

Alternatively, these competing demands might be viewed as different needs which must be balanced in order to enact musical leadership well (Jansson, 2015). These needs translate into functions which are headlined as *artist, craftsman, mentor and manager* (Jansson, 2018b). The conductor as artist is the one who creates meaning from the musical material and establishes an aesthetic idea of the sounding music. The craftsman moulds the sound towards this idea, by correcting errors, blending voices, shaping timbre, and unifying expression. The conductor mobilises, guides, and enthuses singers to come forward with their individual contributions, by understanding and responding to their needs—an act of mentoring. The conductor is also the one who organises the preparation process, which often includes a host of extra-musical issues—a managerial function.

The various functions of the role call for an array of skills and behaviours which are research domains in their own right. Conducting might be understood in terms of such widely differing subject matter as the semiotics of musical gestures (Billingham, 2001; D'Ausilio et al., 2012; Garnett, 2009; Godøy & Leman, 2010; Sandberg-Jurström, 2009), relational aspects of music-making (Atik, 1994; Green, 2005; Malloch & Trevarthen, 2009; Schiavio & Høffding, 2015), and the perception of choral sound (Daugherty, 1999; Daugherty, Manternach & Brunkan, 2013; Ternström, 1991, 1994, 2003). However, conducting remains an inherently integral phenomenon, and partial views tend to leave little room for the “gestalt conductor”, or how it all comes together (Durrant, 2003, 65). Moreover, the role itself appears in different guises, contingent on ensemble type, the particular phase of the music-making process and, not least, music culture and genre.

Choral leadership is situated at the intersection of three partially overlapping fields, as shown in figure 2; *musicianship, leadership and pedagogy*. The conducting practice emerged from the position of the ensemble member and has been shaped by the needs of the music and the given ensemble, reflecting its music-cultural era (Durrant, 2003; Schonberg, 1967).



*Figure 2: The choral leadership practice field*

The conductor is first and foremost a co-musician in a situation where competences are shared with singers and instrumentalists alike. On top of these, musicianship is expanded to accommodate the dedicated functions of the conductor. Leadership is a vast academic field, and even a subset of the wider field of organisation studies. The intersection between leadership and musicianship is ontologically ambiguous. On the one hand, conducting may simply be considered a specific instance of leadership, which allows the application of general leadership theory in the music domain (Apfelstadt, 1997; Armstrong & Armstrong, 1996; Bush, 2011; Davidson, 1995; Dobson & Gaunt, 2015; Goodstein, 1987; Linstead & Höpfl, 2000; Wis, 2002, 2007). Conversely, conducting may be seen as an aesthetic practice which contains certain “leaderly features”, in which case aesthetics inform leadership, rather than the other way around (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012; Koivunen & Wennes, 2011; Pearce et al., 2016; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015). A special case of the latter view is the pervasive use of jazz as a way to understand leading and following (Hatch, 1999; Weick, 1998; Williamson, 2013).

The intersection between musicianship and pedagogy is experienced by most musicians, when they engage in teaching or guiding ensemble members. It is particularly pertinent for the conductor role, as rehearsing and teaching are analogous: “One might argue that everything involved in rehearsing and conducting can be characterized via a teaching paradigm, even in a professional ensemble environment” (Price & Byo, 2002, 236). Unsurprisingly, the great majority of research on choral conducting has

been carried out within a pedagogical frame (Geisler, 2010), in US high-school and college settings in particular (Cox, 1989; Grimland, 2005; Gumm, 1993; Scott, 1996; Skadsem, 1997; Yarbrough & Madsen, 1998). The didactic orientation of choral conducting literature is complemented by non-academic handbook-style writing—"how to be a good conductor". However, studies of choral conductor education are scarce (Durrant, 1998; Varvarigou, 2014), which is why we, as researchers, developed an interest in the topic. Each of our doctoral dissertations addressed some underlying theme; Balsnes (2009) showed how an academy-educated conductor fails the needs of an amateur choir, whilst Jansson (2013) described how singers experience choral leadership, and Bygdéus (2015) addressed a series of approaches and mediating tools at the choral conductor's disposal.

### 3. Analytical concepts

If we attempt to understand the various specific competence elements associated with choral leadership, we cannot avoid an eclectic approach to available theory and research. Any theory that sheds light on some aspect of the role would be useful, to a greater or lesser extent. However, when we study the *conductor gestalt*, we depend on some form of integrative framework. Varvarigou and Durrant (2011) have proposed one such framework to facilitate the discussion of education and curricula, bringing together various theories of effective teaching and learning choral conducting. The framework situates conducting education based on six parameters; learners, tutors, music repertoire and choir, process, and learning outcomes. We do not address these parameters systematically, but they do serve to situate some of the discussion points. Goodlad (1979) proposed five different manifestations of a curriculum which may be headlined as (1) ideal, (2) formal, (3) perceived (by tutors), (4) operationalised, and (5) experienced (by learners). The present study does not distinguish clearly between these, however, the collected data is a blend of three of them; formal curriculum via official web pages and administrators, perceived curriculum via interviews with tutors, and experienced curriculum via interviews with former students.

Learning outcomes deal with conductor competences, that is, what it is we assume that choral conductors must master in order to fill the role. A holistic and comprehensive model of conductor competences is proposed by Jansson (2018b). Here, conductor competences comprise (1) the musical-technical, (2) the situational-relational, and (3) the conductor's existential foundation. *Musical-technical competences* comprise score



proficiency, repertoire knowledge, aural/error detection skills, gestural vocabulary, vocal technique, language skills, and choir acoustics. These competences can largely be acquired outside the ensemble situation. Their relevance and relative importance will vary greatly, depending on the context. One of the most puzzling issues with regard to musical-technical competence is the significance of gestural skills. On one hand, this is the most iconic and defining feature of the role, and it is beyond dispute that a certain gestural proficiency is very useful. Conducting gestures serve multiple purposes, from basic synchronisation to unifying expression, also including the enhancement of singers' bodily preparation, and supporting a voice-friendly posture (Durrant, 2003; Fuelberth, 2003; Gumm, 2012). On the other hand, conducting gestures may not be a determining factor when assessing the conductor's effectiveness (Durrant, 1994). What is more, given the great variety of conducting styles, including those of legendary conductors, the gestural conventions of conducting are not as self-evident as is commonly assumed, and few gestures can be seen as emblems with consistent meanings (Benge, 1996; Luck & Nte, 2008; Luck & Sloboda, 2008; Scott, 1996; Wöllner & Auhagen, 2008). A troubling observation is that the importance of conducting gestures seems to oscillate between two end points; paramount, and of marginal significance. A key issue for any choral leader curriculum is therefore how gestural skills are positioned with regard to other competences, both in terms of time spent, how they are blended with other learning topics, and what attention they are given in students' time with real ensembles.

*Situational-relational competences* comprise overall rehearsal organisation and the host of possible interventions the conductor might execute at any given rehearsing moment and during performance. Also included is the ability to provide timely and appropriate guidance to ensemble members—mentorship. Because the choir is a “living instrument”, the conductor also needs to facilitate the spacing and placement of singers which both supports the intended sound and promotes the singers' security and ability to contribute. An overarching competence, which permeates choral leadership on multiple levels, is the ability to balance control with empowerment. This applies to every interactive moment, from correcting errors or letting singers self-improve to the choice of gestures and signals during performance.

The third competence layer concerns the conductor's *existential foundation*, which is partly about the quality of the commitment with which the conductor comes to the ensemble situation and partly about the potency of that commitment. The quality is characterised by presence, devotion, and sincerity. The potency is characterised by authority and aesthetic will-power. While the elements of the existential foundation

may seem rather elusive, they are in fact easily recognised and appreciated by choral singers, and notably, when lacking, the value of other competences is undermined (Jansson 2013).

To sum up, we rely on Varvarigou and Durrant's (2011) framework for situating conductor education and Jansson's (2018b) model of conductor competences. They provide a theoretical foundation for the interviews with tutors and former students, primarily by ensuring a comprehensive coverage of themes. However, the theories are not stringently applied in the analysis of the relevant institutions and available curricula, because data is largely available on a more aggregate level. However, wherever possible, the discussion ties back to these models. Furthermore, the models also guide the discussion of a research agenda for future work.

## 4. Methodology

In the process of compiling data on choral conductor education in Scandinavia, we have used several collection methods, qualitative as well as quantitative. Beyond a general survey of the field, which draws on an ethnographic tradition (Fetterman, 1989; Silverman, 1985), the study was designed as multiple case-study (Stake, 1995, 2000; Yin, 1989). In order to understand the overall picture of the choral field in Scandinavia, information about numbers and types of choirs, choral organisations and conductor supply was collected as background data. The sources were the choral associations in the three countries in question, and these were contacted during the autumn of 2016.

### Denmark

Estimates of the number of choral singers in Denmark vary considerably. The organisation *Sangens hus* has identified around 50 000 choral singers in 2000 choirs.<sup>3</sup> Pedersen and Jensen (2004) estimate that there are around 3000 choirs with at least 75 000 singers. *Europa Cantat*<sup>4</sup> reports that there are nearly 150 000 Danes engaged in collective singing, suggesting that the unorganised field is larger than the organised one. The majority of choirs are found within churches, complemented by a variety of school

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3 "Kortlægning av den danske korverden", unpublished report by Heidi Kudahl, 2013, issued by Sangens Hus. The calculations in the report were based on analysis of "Kulturvaneundersøkelsen" i 2012: [http://kum.dk/Documents/Publikationer/2012/Bogen%20danskernes\\_kulturvaner\\_pdfa.pdf](http://kum.dk/Documents/Publikationer/2012/Bogen%20danskernes_kulturvaner_pdfa.pdf)

4 "Singing Europe", report published by [www.singingeurope.org](http://www.singingeurope.org) in 2017.

choirs and community choirs. Half of Danish choral leaders are employed by churches or by education associations (“oplysningsforbund”). There are nine professional or semi-professional choirs in Denmark.<sup>5</sup> Choirs are easily able to attract qualified conductors in the larger cities, while it is more difficult in rural areas. Several choral organisations aiming to promote choral singers in Denmark offer training courses for conductors.<sup>6</sup> Half of the Danish choirs are organised in such associations, which comprise approximately 1000 choirs. They cooperate through the umbrella association *The Joint Council of Amateur Arts Associations* (“Amatørenes Kunst og Kultur Samråd”).<sup>7</sup>

## Norway

The organised choral field in Norway comprises nearly 3000 choirs and more than 80 000 singers. More than one third of these are members of *Norges Korforbund* (the Norwegian Choir Association). The second largest association is *Norsk sangerforum* (the *Norwegian Singer Forum*). Two associations specifically organise church choirs (*Ung kirkesang* and *Norsk kirkesangforbund*); *Ung i kor* is an association which organises children’s and youth choirs, and there are several associations affiliated with religious organisations outside the Norwegian Church. More than 200 000 Norwegians sing in choirs (Balsnes, 2009) and *Europa Cantat* reports the total number of people who engage in collective singing to be 246 000, which suggests that the organised choral field is only about one third of the total. There is an ongoing process of creating more publicly funded professional choirs. The field ranges from the full-time professional *National Opera Choir* via the part-time *Norwegian Soloist Choir* to the newly created regional part-time project choirs.<sup>8</sup>

## Sweden

Sweden holds the most prominent position in the Scandinavian choral field, in relative as well as absolute terms. *Europa Cantat* reports that 561 000 people are engaged in collective singing in Sweden, or 6% of the population, a higher share than Norway (5%) and Denmark (2.6%). While we do not know the number of choirs in Sweden,

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5 Det Kongelige Operakor, Den Jyske Operas Kor, DR Vokalensemblet, DR Koncertkoret, Ars Nova Copenhagen, Mogens Dahl Kammerkor, Kantoriet i Københavns Domkirke, Vokalselskabet GLAS.

6 The largest is Folkekirkens ungdomkor with 475 member choirs and approximately 12,000 choral singers and choral leaders. The second largest is Kor72, which organises 278 member choirs with 8200 singers, and in addition has a separate youth organisation. Danske folkekor has 72 member choirs, most of which are traditional «folkekor». Other choral organisations include Dansk sangerforbund for male choirs and Dansk arbeidersanger- og musikerforbund (DASOM), whose members are both choirs and orchestras.

7 [www.akks.dk](http://www.akks.dk)

8 Edvard Grieg Kor, Kilden Vokalensemble, Trondheim Vokalensemble, Vokal Nord.

a simple extrapolation of the situation in Denmark and Norway would indicate 6 000 choirs or more. Choral singing in Sweden is supported by a somewhat different structure than in Norway and Denmark, comprising five “choral centres”, four of which are named according to their regional affiliation. *The Eric Ericson International Choral Center*, founded on the legacy of the late legendary conductor, tutor and “founding father” of the present-day Swedish choral field, even has a prestigious concert hall dedicated to choral singing—*Eric Ericsonhallen* in central Stockholm. The role of each choral centre is similar to the others, albeit with some variation in profile, as they all have the aim to promote choral singing in a broad sense. These centres are complemented by the largest choral associations: *Sveriges Kyrkosångsförbund* (the Swedish Association of Church Singers), *Sveriges Körförbund* (the Swedish Choirs Association), *UNGIKÖR*—an association for children’s and youth choirs, and *Föreningen Sveriges Körledare* (the Federation of Swedish Choral Leaders). A large number of choirs are not members of any associations. The two most well-known professional choirs are *Eric Ericson Kammarkör* and *Radiokören*. Moreover, there are three professional opera choirs (Gothenburg, Malmö, Stockholm) and a handful of other ensembles where singers are paid.<sup>9</sup>

## Selection of institutions

The research team scanned the availability of academic programmes<sup>10</sup> in Denmark, Norway and Sweden with focus on the following data: institutions offering programmes/courses in choral conducting/leadership, the number of student slots and/or degrees awarded over the last three years, who the tutors are, and the aim and orientation of the various studies. Websites were investigated, and administrative staff members were contacted via e-mail and follow-up phone calls with additional questions. The surveyed institutions are shown in table 1.

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9 Ensemble Syd, Göteborgs Symfonikers Vokalensemble, Vokalharmonin, Voces Nordicae.

10 The selection included programmed college/academy choral leadership education in state institutions. Orchestral conducting was excluded, as well as non-academic schools (for example «folkhögskola») and courses organised by choral organisations or private persons.

INSTITUTION (LOCAL NAME)	INSTITUTION (ENGLISH)	ACRONYM	LOCATION
<b>DENMARK</b>			
Det jyske musikkonservatorium	The Royal Academy of Music	DJM/RAMA	Aarhus
Det jyske musikkonservatorium	The Royal Academy of Music	DJM/RAMA	Aalborg
Syddansk musikkonservatorium	Danish National Academy of Music	SDMK	Esbjerg/Odense
Det kongelige danske musikkonservatorium	The Royal Danish Academy of Music	DKDM	København
<b>NORWAY</b>			
Norges musikkhøgskole	Norwegian Academy of Music	NMH	Oslo
Nord universitet	Nord University	NU	Bodø
Universitetet i Tromsø	The Arctic University of Norway	UiT	Tromsø
Høgskolen i Innlandet	Inland Norway University of Applied Science	INN	Hamar
Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet	The Norwegian University of Science and Technology	NTNU	Trondheim
Høgskulen i Volda	Volda University College	HiV	Volda
NLA-høgskolen Oslo	NLA University College	NLA	Oslo
Universitetet i Bergen	University of Bergen	UiB	Bergen
<b>SWEDEN</b>			
Kungliga Musikhögskolan	Royal College of Music	KMH	Stockholm
Musikhögskolan vid Luleå tekniska universitet	The music school at Luleå University of Technology	LTU	Pitå
Högskolan för scen och musik vid Göteborgs universitet	Academy of Music and Drama at University of Gothenburg	HSM	Göteborg
Musikhögskolan i Malmö vid Lunds universitet	Malmö Academy of Music at Lund University	MHM	Malmö
Musikhögskolan i Örebro vid Örebro Universitet	School of Music, Theatre and Art at Örebro University	Oru	Örebro
Ersta Sköndal Bräcke högskola	Ersta Sköndal Bräcke University College	ESH	Stockholm
Stockholms Musikpedagogiska Institut	University College of Music Education in Stockholm	SMI	Stockholm
Linnéuniversitetet	Linnæus University	Lnu	Kalmar/Växjö
Uppsala universitet	Uppsala University	Uu	Uppsala
Musikhögskolan Ingesund vid Karlstad universitet	Ingesund School of Music at Karlstad University	KAU	Ingesund
Umeå universitet	Umeå University	Umu	Umeå

*Table 1: Overview of surveyed institutions*

Five cases were selected for further scrutiny; the Royal College of Music in Stockholm (KMH), the University of Gothenburg (GU) in Sweden, the Norwegian Academy of Music (NMH) in Norway, and the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus/Aalborg in Denmark (one institution which is treated as two owing to the difference in profile between the two locations).<sup>11</sup> The selection sought to ensure a balanced coverage of Scandinavia, as well as including the largest institutions. All five have master's programmes in choral conducting and they are located in the major cities of their respective countries. The Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen was not studied since their master's degree was launched as late as in 2017. In the interest of readability, in some sections of this paper, *location* is used to denote the institutions, rather than institution name or acronym.

In addition to curriculum reviews, the main tutors at these institutions were interviewed during the spring of 2017.<sup>12</sup> The interviews were qualitative and semi-structured (Kvale, 1996, 2007), following the same template. To some degree, the interviews must be considered as peer-conversations, because the researchers are active choral conductors. Based on recommendations from the interviewees, we identified candidates for student interviews—more precisely, choral conductors who had completed their degrees from these institutions during the last three years and were in the initial phase of their careers. Group interviews of these former students were conducted in each country during the spring of 2017, based on a common interview guide. A total number of twenty interviewees participated.<sup>13</sup> Interviews were sound-recorded and analysed qualitatively, based on the broad theme categories of the interview guide. On the basis of the resulting case material, we sought common themes across institutions and countries.

## 5. Results

Tables 2 and 3 show which programmes are offered by the various Scandinavian institutions, in the sense that the curriculum exists. However, some of these do not currently have any students. In other words, choral conducting curricula must to some degree be considered a “void space”. Table 4 shows the number of students who have

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11 The two campuses have completely different focus and approach—classical choral conducting in Aarhus, and rhythmic choral conducting in Aalborg.

12 Two individual interviews in Norway, two individual interviews in Denmark, two group interviews in Sweden (two in each)—eight tutors in total.

13 Four in Aarhus (group interview), three in Aalborg (e-mail exchanges because these students resided in three different countries), three in Oslo (group interview), one in Stockholm and one in Gothenburg—twelve former students in total.

graduated from the various types of programmes over the three-year period 2015–2017. There is significant uncertainty associated with the numbers on an annual basis for a particular institution and programme because there is generally no single source within each institution to verify the numbers. The sources comprise tutors as well as administrators. In some cases, the numbers cover the period 2016–2018, which then includes some enrolled but not yet graduated students. The fact that a conducting “class” is often composed of students admitted in different years and belonging to different programmes contributes to a rather non-transparent picture, also for the institutions themselves. By aggregating three-year totals, some of this uncertainty is reduced. The purpose of table 3 is to establish a picture of education capacity (where previously no such data existed), rather than attempt any accurate estimation at this stage.

	DENMARK	NORWAY	SWEDEN
Master and postgraduate programmes in choral conducting	Copenhagen, Aarhus, Aalborg, Esbjerg*	Oslo	Stockholm-KMH, Göteborg, Piteå
Bachelor programmes in choral conducting	Aalborg	Oslo	Stockholm-KMH
Stand-alone choral conducting units (>7.5 ECTS) - advanced level		Oslo, Tromsø	Örebro, Uppsala
Stand-alone choral conducting units (>7.5 ECTS) - basic level		Oslo, Tromsø, Bodø (Levanger),	Piteå, Göteborg, Örebro, Uppsala

\*) Programme in performing music with optional choral leadership "major" (65 ECTS).

*Table 2: Institutions offering programmes in choral conducting*

	DENMARK	NORWAY	SWEDEN
Master programmes in music education with choral conducting	Copenhagen		Stockholm-KMH, Piteå, Göteborg, Malmö, Ingesund, Kalmar/Växjö, Umeå, Örebro
Bachelor programmes in music education with choral conducting (>10 ECTS)	Copenhagen, Esbjerg*)	Volda	Stockholm-SMI
Master in church music with choral conducting	Aarhus		Stockholm-KMH, Malmö
Bachelor programmes and intermediate programmes in church music with choral conducting (>10 ECTS)	Aarhus, Esbjerg, The Danish Church Music Colleges (3)	Oslo, Tromsø, Bergen	Stockholm-KMH, Piteå, Göteborg, Malmö, Stockholm-ESH

\*) Including the "Brobygger"-programme ("Bridge-builder"), a hybrid between a music educator and a performing music programme.

*Table 3: Institutions offering music programmes with choral conducting embedded*

	DENMARK	NORWAY	SWEDEN	SCANDINAVIA
Master and postgraduate programmes in choral conducting	38	4	12	54
Bachelor programmes in choral conducting	6	6	4	16
Stand-alone choral conducting units (>7.5 ECTS) - advanced level	9	21	13	43
Stand-alone choral conducting units (>7.5 ECTS) - basic level	0	46	220	266
Master programmes in music education with choral conducting	5	0*	387*	392
Bachelor programmes in music education with choral conducting (>10 ECTS)	14	29	32	75
Master programmes in church music with choral conducting	2**	0	10	12
Bachelor programmes in church music with choral conducting (>10 ECTS)	8	24	52	84

\*) The contrast partially reflects reality and partially the choice to disregard courses of less than 7.5 ECTS.

\*\*\*) Numbers for the church musician colleges of the Danish Church are not included.

*Table 4: Choral conducting education capacity. Total number of graduates during the three-year period up until summer 2017*

## Denmark

The three conservatories—in Copenhagen, Aarhus/Aalborg and Esbjerg/Odense—come from different traditions and have different profiles. *The Royal Danish Academy of Music* (KDM) in Copenhagen launched as late as in 2017 a master’s programme (“kandidatuddannelse”)<sup>14</sup> in classical choral leadership. Church musician and music educator degrees are offered at bachelor’s as well as master level’s, both with the option of a specialisation in choral leadership.

*The Royal Academy of Music* in Aarhus/Aalborg (JMK) offers a master’s programme in classical choral leadership, as well as a two-year advanced postgraduate diploma (“solistuddannelse”). Similar to the conservatory in Copenhagen, choral conducting education is offered as part of church musician and music educator degrees, both bachelor’s and master’s. Campus Aalborg is uniquely focused on rhythmic choral leadership, with bachelor’s, master’s and advanced postgraduate degrees. These

14 120 ECTS.



programmes are also unique with regard to organisation and content. *The Danish National Academy of Music* (SDMK) has campuses in Odense and Esbjerg, offering master's programmes in classical choral conducting and church musician programmes at bachelor's and master's level. It also offers a blended education ("brobygger") which combines performative and educator trajectories, in which choral leadership may be embedded.

The church musician colleges in Vestervig, Løgumkloster and Roskilde offer two-year programmes (120 ECTS),<sup>15</sup> in which there is a choice between specialisations in voice and choral leadership or organ and choral leadership. The programmes are of an "intermediate level", that is, neither classified as bachelor's nor master's, and specifically catering for positions in the Danish Church.

A notable feature of choral leadership education in Denmark is the specialisation in rhythmic music in Aalborg, which deserves special attention in this context. These programmes are unique and attract students from all across Europe. The programmes also stand out from the other programmes we have studied in terms of how they are organised and the methods used. Students may take part in the daily teaching sessions via digital video connection, supplemented by campus presence three times per semester. At these campus gatherings, students and tutors collaborate in a choir consisting of about 40 participants. The method being used has been developed by professor Jim Daus. His philosophy is to educate choral leaders who invite and inspire choral singers to be co-producers in the musical process, in contrast with the tradition in which the conductor, to a larger degree, pre-determines and instructs musical details. The method comprises three educational fields; (1) developing one's own musical-technical skills (intonation & pitch, rhythm & groove, sound & blend, interpretation & expression, and performance), (2) developing the "vocal painting" tool — an alternative approach to traditional conducting gesture/beat patterns, and (3) enabling the singers to expand their comfort zones for improvisation, by liberating voice, body and soul. Team-building is emphasised across all three competence areas.

## Norway

Of the five institutions that offer programmes in choral conductor education, the *Norwegian Academy of Music* (NMH) holds a dominant position, both in terms of capacity and in terms of level. It is the only institution which offers a master's programme

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15 Also offered as part-time studies.

aiming at professional ensembles, as well as a bachelor's programme. In addition, it accounts for the great majority of conductors being educated. There is apparently capacity around the country, but numbers are small and programmes are often not run. A significant contribution from NMH is how a large number of singers and instrumentalists are given a basis in conducting and ensemble leadership. It is beyond the scope of this descriptive study to assess the depth or value of these embedded conducting units. However, it is nonetheless very clear that they matter in terms of the number of individuals reached as a proxy for the number of choirs affected.

## Sweden

There are 11 academic institutions which offer choral conductor education in Sweden. Three of these offer a master's programme in choral conducting; *the Royal College of Music in Stockholm* (KMH), *Luleå University of Technology* (Musikhögskolan i Piteå), and *the Academy of Music and Drama at the University of Gothenburg* (HSM).<sup>16</sup> Only two institutions offer a master's degree in church music with the option of specialising in choral conducting; KMH and *Malmö Academy of Music* (MHM). Eight institutions offer music educator master's degrees (ämneslärarprogram musik) with the option of including choral conducting—in Stockholm, Piteå, Gothenburg, Lund, Ingessund, Örebro, Växjö, and Umeå.<sup>17</sup>

KMH is the only Swedish institution to offer a bachelor's degree in choral conducting. The various bachelor's programmes in church music and music education include choral leadership to some extent, but it is somewhat difficult to establish accurately how comprehensive the choral curricula are. Moreover, the actual numbers of students who focus on choral conducting within these bachelor's programmes from one year to another seems quite erratic. Courses offered may be listed, but are nonetheless not always held, either due to lack of applicants or budget constraints.

Several of the institutions offer comprehensive (15-30 ECTS<sup>18</sup>—some only 7.5 ECTS) stand-alone courses, at basic as well as advanced levels. Basic courses are offered in Gothenburg, Örebro, Uppsala and Piteå. Advanced stand-alone courses are offered in Uppsala and Örebro.

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16 «Magisterprogram», 60 ECTS in choral leadership.

17 For reader-friendliness, institutions are at times mentioned by campus location.

18 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

## Curricula with different objectives

The five institutions that were studied more in detail (Aarhus, Aalborg, Oslo, Stockholm, Gothenburg), have different origins and histories, and therefore varying profiles. Aalborg is the only one with specific focus on “rhythmic choral leadership”, whereas the other four are within what we would label “classical choral leadership”. However, Gothenburg is the only one of these whose curriculum specifically includes children and youth choirs, as well as choir in musical theatre. From table 4, we observe that across Scandinavia some twenty conductors graduate each year with a degree specifically in choral conducting. These programmes aim for the professional field, as expressed by Fredrik Malmberg (Stockholm): “They are going to be able to stand in front of Radiokören [...] and fix it. That’s what it’s all about, right? [...] From the outset”. The number of candidates with choral conducting embedded into other music programmes, including single stand-alone courses, is tenfold. We can assume that this ratio reflects available work opportunities to some degree. While curricula may appear to cater distinctly to the “artist” or the “teacher”, the practice field is more open and fluid.

Although there are differences between the educational systems in the Scandinavian countries, the profile differences between institutions seem more important than the differences between countries when trying to understand the variety of curricula and approaches. For example, Gothenburg serves the Swedish choral field as it de facto is, whereas Stockholm more explicitly aims for top notch ensembles, of which there are very few. Aalborg takes a different perspective, aiming to develop choral leaders for the pop/rock/jazz genres, from small vocal groups to larger choirs, without specific regard for level as such. Oslo appears to have the most comprehensive range of available courses, which includes 30 ECTS stand-alone units in addition to bachelor’s and master’s programmes. What is generally wanting across the Scandinavian field is qualifying conductors to serve a broader variety of choral situations, including the workplace, health and community settings. Notably, the lack of training for children’s choirs is the most striking, with the exception of Gothenburg and a recently launched programme in Oslo.

One marked difference between Sweden and the other countries appears in table 4. A large number of music educators at master’s level graduate with choral conducting embedded. This observation reflects how choral leadership does in fact hold a more prominent position in Sweden. However, the picture is also skewed due to the granularity of our data collection; we chose to limit the study to conducting units of

7.5 ECTS and more, which eliminated quite a few Norwegian institutions offering basic courses.

### Coverage of the competence layers

All institutions naturally cover musical-technical skills (the first competence layer), including gestural skills, aural skills, score proficiency, repertoire knowledge, and vocal technique. Whether these are taught as separate skills or are coached within the ensemble situation varies and is not fully transparent. The role of conducting gesture in these curricula is as difficult to pin down precisely as has been found to be the case in research (Jansson, 2018b)—central but not necessarily crucial. In Grete Pedersen's (Oslo) words, "gesture is just a small part of the picture, it is great when it works, but it is not enough". The rhythmic choral leadership curriculum in Aalborg expands the notion of conducting gesture beyond the classical tradition, through the concept of "vocal painting". Several musical-technical elements are also approached within a pop/rock genre frame here, such as sound, expression and performance.

The main vehicle for acquiring situational-relational competence (the second competence layer) is working with actual ensembles, comprised of paid singers or students. Working with ensembles is the scarcest and most costly resource, and all tutors ideally want more of it. To a larger extent than is the case with musical-technical skills, situational and relational mastery is inherently integral and is difficult to deconstruct. In the words of Carsten Seyer-Hansen (Aarhus), "[e]verything that involves the energy that flows between conductor and ensemble must be learnt within the situation itself. It is about mental presence, contact, breath and situational judgement. It is also about listening and understanding what goes on."

At the same time, tutors recognise that some of these elements could be addressed more explicitly, thereby taking more of a leadership and communication approach to the role. What this would mean in practice, however, is not clear. Studying leadership and psychological concepts might be of some use, but would increase the pressure on already fully-loaded schedules. At the same time, most of what choral conductors do is of a communicative nature and therefore unavoidable. Here, we find ourselves somewhat in an impasse.

The curriculum in Aalborg emphasises more than the other institutions the conductor's ability to develop the singers by building the team and enabling improvisation. Within the competence model, this exemplifies a shift in the control/empowerment

balance towards empowering singers more, making them explicitly co-responsible for shaping the music. In the words of Jim Daus, “Without such freedom in individual musicianship, it doesn’t swing—this is fundamental.”

The third competence layer—the existential foundation—is about how the conductor meets the ensemble as a human being, with all of his or her attitudes, inclinations and predispositions. Such competence is not easily addressed explicitly, however; it is impacted by the educator. Grete Pedersen (Oslo) aspires to develop conductors “who are not only respectful towards the ensemble, but equally to every member of the house staff—and not least to oneself. Conductors are there to serve the music, not themselves.” She is adamant about how students must move beyond mere mastery, that they must discover their unique contribution in terms of genre, context, aesthetic choice, line of musical projects, or in whatever format it might take. Here lies a demonstration of how important the conductor’s existential foundation is in completing the competence set. It is nurtured more than it is tutored.

A common theme across the various curricula is how the desired exceeds the possible. No time-limited programme can accommodate all elements in the competence model with any sufficiency, and the various elements compete for time and attention. For this reason, an academy curriculum is seen by tutors as a phase in a life-long learning project. The structure and execution of the various programmes (that which is denoted “process” in Varvarigou and Durrant’s (2011) framework) is to some degree shaped in a master-apprenticeship relationship—even explicitly stated, as in Aarhus. This approach is reinforced by how students across levels and programmes participate in the same “class”. Consequently, we can hardly speak of progression as an attribute of the curriculum, rather “progression is something which happens within the candidate”, as Seyer-Hansen formulates it. One newly graduated bachelor’s student considered her most important competence as knowing how to *find* the knowledge she needs in her conducting practice. One tutor, imagining an “ideal” programme, would have liked to put more demands on the students in terms of time and workload, unconstrained by formalities and ECTS standards.

## 6. Discussion

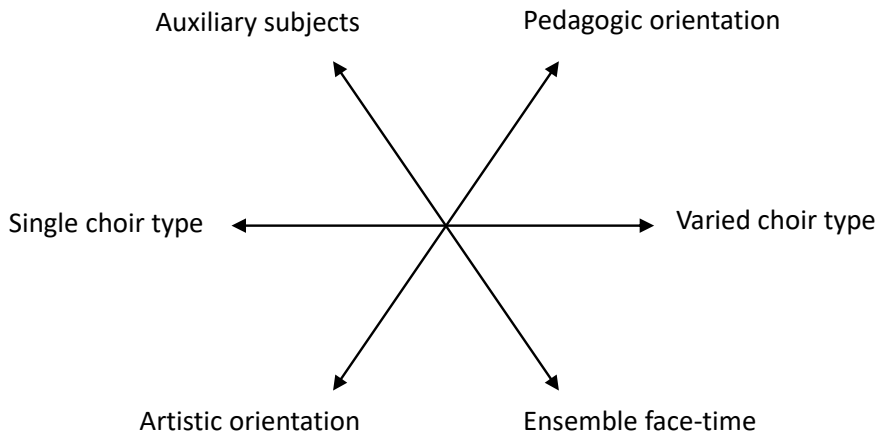
### The “impossible” demands on a conducting curriculum

The notion of a “conducting curriculum” is somewhat ambiguous, at least dependent on whether we are considering a master’s programme in conducting, a music programme with embedded conducting or stand-alone units. With reference to the three-layered competence model (Jansson, 2018b), a complete programme accommodates most of the competence elements. On the other hand, a stand-alone course, especially at a basic level, only allows a limited selection of skill elements, for example beat patterns, score preparation and error correction. Despite the centrality of working with ensembles, leading a practice choir with conducting class peers is still somewhat constructed and artificial (Silvey, 2014). Most situations in real professional life are not with paid singers. In real-life choral situations, some of the tutorial pressure is removed, while at the same time the conductor faces a host of new challenges, not least leading people with more varied competence and motivation. Students having their own regular choir may be as important as a formal curriculum (which for bachelor’s students in Oslo is integrated).

When designing a choral conducting curriculum, a number of topics compete for time, and it is impossible to accommodate all needs and wishes. Based on our investigation we find three main axes of tensions inherent in conducting curricula, which we have chosen to label (1) choir type, (2) orientation, and (3) didactics, as shown in figure 3.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> These axes may be seen as subsets of elements in Varvarigou and Durrant’s (2011) framework; 1) choir and music, (2) learning outcomes, and (3) process.



*Figure 3: Axes of tension in the design of a choral conducting curriculum*

While most curricula assume some sort of “generic choir type”, there are music genres and choral situations which are insufficiently addressed. It is challenging to accommodate the classical chamber choir as well as youth gospel choirs and rhythmic vocal groups. The orientation axis does not so much reflect a competition for time, but the weighting of learning outcomes, that is, attention to the various elements of the competence model (Jansson, 2018b). Some elements are more tutorial, whereas others are more aesthetic in orientation. Although it is always a blend, to put it bluntly, to what degree does conducting education favour the artist versus the teacher? The didactic axis is partially a competition for time and resources (if ensemble face-time involves paid singers), but just as much a question of developing a skill (error detection, for example) as a stand-alone element or integrated in the ensemble situation, together with all the other elements. In addition to these three axes of tension, “non-core” auxiliary subjects may at times be perceived to steal precious time and even be a nuisance. In sum, what we need to address in a choral conducting curriculum comes in the form of tensions and tradeoffs which are difficult to reconcile.

### Conductor experience trajectories

Our focus is on conductor education at the university/college level—“academy education”. This delineation is in principle straight-forward. However, in practice, how the choral conductors who lead the thousands of choirs across Scandinavia have acquired their competence is extremely varied. The choral field is an amalgamation of leisurely

singing and increasing professionalisation, in which conductors with and without formal education operate with fluid boundaries. Similarly, while there is certain “seniority hierarchy” in terms of who teaches advanced and less advanced levels, the tutor population is still highly connected, also considering conducting courses outside an academy setting. It is not the case that a distinct tutor population teaches a distinct learner population. The tutor population in particular is an open-ended practice community (Wenger, 1998), with academy professors as key shapers of the conducting practice, but where various degrees of legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Omidvar & Kislov, 2014) are involved. In simple terms, tutor competence and conducting competence trickles down, from professors via master’s degree practitioners, who also teach, to experienced practitioners who might also serve as mentors or at least as role models for choral singers aspiring to pursue conducting.

Among those conductors who do not have an academic degree in conducting, a number of different career paths and competence trajectories may have led to their current working situations. Research shows that six different points of departure exist (Jansson, 2018a), which are largely distinct, but also might appear in combination; (1) the educated instrumentalist, (2) the educated singer, (3) the church musician, (4) the music educator, (5) the musicologist<sup>20</sup>, and not least (6) the apprentice choral singer. Each category might be the foundation of a conducting career, which is then built through practice and a range of more or less structured programmes, courses, and masterclasses offered by the choral associations. These observations reinforce how fluid the development path for a choral conductor might be. The precise taxonomy of academic education in choral conducting does to a large extent veil how the actual competence of real conductors out in the field has been acquired. The number of possible development trajectories are manifold, and the elements of such trajectories are depicted in figure 4.

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20 Musicology is used in a wide sense, which includes performative and pedagogic research and practice.



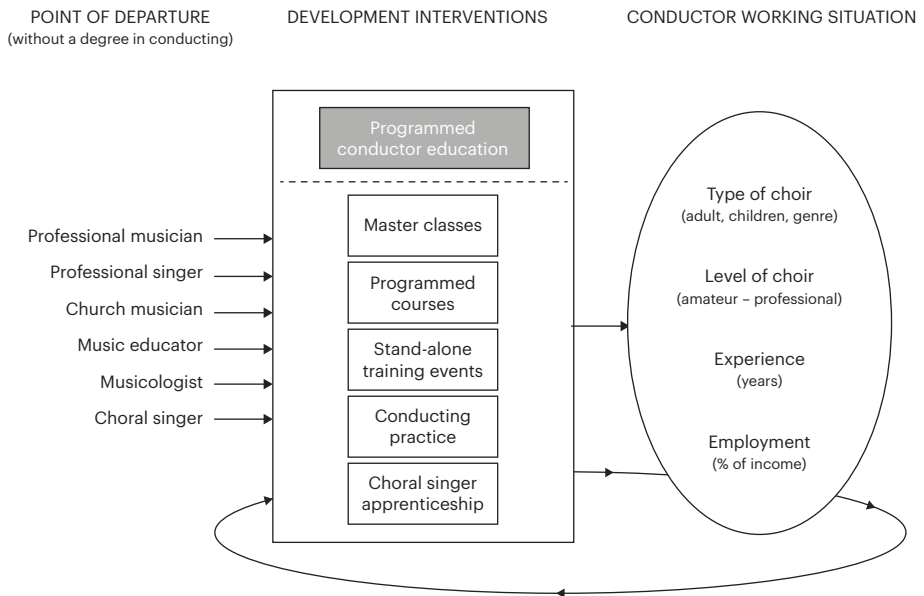


Figure 4: Choral conductor development trajectories

## The choral conducting profession

A common feature across countries and institutions is that choral conducting education serves the professional and amateur choral fields alike. Given the quantitative dominance of amateur choirs, however, education will naturally aim for a more advanced level than the working positions as such demand. In turn, this “raises the bar” in terms of repertoire, and spurs choral development in an overall sense, which is partially an explicitly articulated objective. Although *professional* and *amateur* might be distinct categories with regard to the funding and working mode of choirs, it is worth noting that, with regard to competence and education, they appear on a continuous scale. Even master’s programmes often serve the professional and amateur choral fields in combination. With reference to Varvarigou and Durrant’s (2011) model, curricula are largely not explicitly situated in terms of the parameter “repertoire and choir type”, while being implicitly skewed towards what could be denoted as “advanced classical”.

There are innumerable roads which might have led to where choral conductors find themselves in their current positions. The significance of practice and experience can hardly be overstated, even for academy graduates. In Norway, only one out of ten

conductors are full-time choral conductors, and the majority of them have only one choir (Jansson, 2018a). This illustrates how choral conducting only partially constitutes a profession, whilst it is by the same measure in part merely a capability which is applied within a leisure activity framework. Moreover, this is rather a sliding scale rather than a set of rigid categories.

Although it has been outside the scope of this study to assess the employment market for choral conductors, the qualitative data show strong indications that the following hypothesis holds—in all three Scandinavian countries:

(1) In the major cities, there is an excess capacity of choral conductors. Even mid-level amateur choirs receive several applications from academy-educated conductors when they have open positions.

(2) Outside the major cities, and particularly in rural areas, competent choral conductors are in high demand. There are more positions than candidates.

It is reasonable to assume that the funding of the choral field impacts the number of full-time conductors. Even if public funding of amateur choirs does not directly fund conductor salaries, but rather predominantly projects, the overall financial stability of choirs will indirectly enhance choirs' ability to pay conductors. Funding of the choral field is an important premise for the demand for conductor education. Along the same line of thought, the choral field is also an alternative professional route for musicians and music educators who find that their primary orientation is not viable or attractive enough. Conversely, the prevalence of part-time conductors makes the transition to non-conducting and even non-music jobs rather fluid. Given the prevalence of part-time conductors and the freelance nature of work with choirs, conductors often find that they need competences beyond the role itself, ranging from marketing and project management to funding and lobbying. However, a widened competence menu such as this is in no way different from any other profession.

## **7. Limitations of study**

In this paper's attempt to provide an overall view of choral conducting education in Scandinavia, a series of shortcomings and limitations become rather obvious. The most striking is that Finland is not included (nor is Iceland), Finland being a significant

country in terms of conductor education as well as in terms of the prominence of the choral field. We would have preferred a full Nordic view, but the researchers' access to primary data at this stage favoured a Scandinavian view. We realise that by attending to academic institutions only, we miss out on a multitude of less formal training opportunities, which in terms of how many conductors are reached may be quite significant. A related issue is that we have not systematically addressed the connection between formal education and life-long development, in other words, the importance of education versus practice. We also realise that the depth of coverage for each institution is limited, and we may not have done justice to every aspect or every quality apparent at any given institution. On a related note, the capacity numbers are associated with various kinds of uncertainty, partly because they seem to be highly variable from one year to the next, and partly because the institutions do not always have a consistent view themselves. The numbers must therefore be judged on an initial effort basis, and a starting point for more systematic scrutiny. The least obvious limitation, but perhaps the most difficult to cope with, is that we have not established a clear borderline between what lies within and without the conducting curriculum. In our defence, though, this may not primarily be a methodological problem, but rather an inherent "fuzziness" of the choral conducting phenomenon—the choral conductor role is quite distinct in terms of its functions, while its competence boundaries are fluid and situated.

## **8. Conclusions and research agenda**

We have made a first attempt to establish an overall picture of choral conductor education in Scandinavia. The large number of conductors who serve the vibrant Scandinavian choral field have acquired their competence in a multitude of different ways, where university/academy-based education is only one element. The prominence of choral leadership in the various programmes ranges from basic and limited in scope to advanced level conductor programmes. The open-ended nature of the choral conductor competence set makes it difficult to precisely describe the significance of choral leadership within programmes for church musicians and music educators.

In the research process, a variety of themes which deal specifically with education emerge, but equally there is a series of related issues. Despite the apparently straightforward research questions articulated at the outset, answering these is a rather complex endeavor for three reasons: First, choral conductors operate in a very wide

array of situations, from informal community choirs to professional institutions, including every age group and a multitude of music genres. Second, the role itself is exceptionally rich and complex, and cannot be sufficiently understood by resorting to a single scholarly domain alone. Third, there are numerous development trajectories leading to the competences conductors put to use in their current practice, of which academic education is one component. At the same time, the field is largely under-researched.

The areas of knowledge touched upon in this paper have different relevance for different constituencies. It is therefore difficult to make unequivocal priorities in terms of future research on the conductor role and conductor education. However, we see a research agenda comprising four broad strands of work:

- (1) The choral conductor role, its contexts and identities
- (2) The choral conductor competence model
- (3) The choral conductor curriculum and life-long learning trajectories
- (4) The economic situation and professional conditions of the choral conductor

The choral conductor role, contexts, and identities deal with how the conductor may be situated in a multitude of different choir types, social settings and music genres. Even if the choral conductor appears in widely different guises — as a teacher, as a community leader, as an artist — there is nonetheless something common to all these appearances. We need to understand better the common ground as well as its contingent variants. The particular issue of gender, which is not addressed in this study, clearly deserves more attention with regard to tutors, learners, and choral singers. According to *Europa Cantat*, the gender mix of choral singers in Sweden is 59% female/41% male, slightly more balanced than in Europe overall and the USA.<sup>21</sup> The majority of senior tutors in Stockholm and Gothenburg are male, whereas in Oslo they are predominantly female. Does this have any bearing on recruitment into the conductor ranks and the professional identities of future conductors?

The choral conductor competence model is a label for all the skills and predispositions which impact the enactment of the role. But it is also about understanding the integrity of the role and how the various elements come together in real choral situations. We need to verify and deepen our understanding of what the role encompasses, what it means, and how it unfolds when rehearsing and within the musical flow. While we to

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21 Share of females with year in parenthesis: Sweden 59% (2012), Europe 67% (2014), USA 63% (2008).

some extent understand the various competence elements, we need to improve our understanding of their relationships and significance in different settings. Furthermore, to what extent do curricula reflect the needs of conductors entering their careers and the demands of choirs?

Choral conducting curricula across the various institutions clearly have many features in common. At the same time, exactly what is contained within a given course or a whole programme is often ambiguous, because elements are partially explicitly stated (aural skills or repertoire studies, for example), and partially implicit or included based on the personal judgement of the tutors. The tutors of the prominent institutions are highly experienced practitioners, and the inherent logic of the education provided is stronger than can be extracted from curriculum descriptions alone. Although this study focuses on structured programmes in academic institutions, there are a significant number of shorter courses and classes which connect to a large number of choral conductors out in the field. Despite their limited scope, these are key elements of a great variety of choral conductors' development trajectories. Research on conductor educational programmes should therefore be extended to include the life-long learning path of conductors.

Choral conductor competence cannot be understood without some regard for the professional conditions in which they operate. Choral conducting is a profession in its own right, but offers only a minority the opportunity of a full-time or part-time living, within institutions or as a freelancer (Jansson, 2018a). In order to influence policy makers and public funding of choirs, it would be useful to possess a better understanding of the economics of the choir field in general, as well as for the choral conducting profession. Supply and demand conditions in the "choral market" should be of interest for several constituencies, academic and non-academic.

### Acknowledgements

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# Mesterlære – en analyse af forholdet mellem viden, kunnen og forståelse – med referencer til den musikpædagogiske mesterlærepraksis

Øyvind Lyngseth

## ABSTRACT

*Apprenticeship – an analysis of the relation between knowledge, know-how and understanding with references to the practice of music-pedagogical apprenticeship*

*What is learning and how is it constituted? Hubert and Stuart Dreyfus' analysis of apprenticeship provides the background for a discussion of the relationship between three theoretical approaches to learning: the idea of individually constituted learning, the social theory of learning (Lave and Wenger)/ Practice Theory (Schatzki) and philosophical hermeneutics. The article analyzes the relation between knowledge and know-how and examines the question of the significance of participation in social practice. It introduces philosophical hermeneutics to mediate between diverse perspectives on the concept of learning.*

*The article unfolds an immanent critique of Dreyfus' phenomenological analysis of learning. It argues that their model of learning is inconsistent. The critique highlights the significance of participation in practice, and illustrates the discussion with reference to Jean Lave's ethnographical studies of tailoring apprenticeship among Vai and Gola tailors in Monrovia.*

*The article argues that learning is conditioned by affiliation to the practice in which it takes place and that understanding (and thereby learning) is constituted by both subjective/individual and general/common matters – thus rejecting any dichotomous relation between knowledge and know-how and between individual and practice-conditioned learning.*

*Keywords: Music instrumental apprenticeship – Phenomenological analysis of learning – Practice Theory – Philosophical hermeneutics*

## 1. Introduktion

Hvad er læring og hvordan sker læring? Med udgangspunkt i Hubert og Stuart Dreyfus' mesterlæreanalyser bliver en individuelt anlagt læringsmodel relateret til social læringsteori (Lave og Wenger) og praksisteoriens (Schatzki m.fl.) læringsanalyser. Forholdet mellem viden og kunnen samt spørgsmålet om praksisfællesskabers betydning for læring bliver på denne baggrund analyseret og den filosofiske hermeneutiks forståelsesbegreb inddrages med henblik på at mediere mellem Dreyfus' fænomenologisk refererende analyser og den praksisteoretiske samt sociale læringsteori.

Artiklen udfolder en immanent kritik af brødrene Dreyfus' fænomenologi-refererende mesterlæremodel. Der argumenteres for, at modellen, anskuet fra sit fænomenologiske udgangspunkt, er inkonsistent. Kritikken fremhæver blandt andet praksisfællesskabers betydning for læring, hvilket anskueliggøres via Jean Laves etnografiske undersøgelser af skrædderfaglig mesterlære ved Vai og Gola-skrædderne i Monrovia.

Der argumenteres for, at læring er betinget af tilhørighed med eller tilknytning til den praksis, som læringen sker inden for samtidig med, at forståelse (og derved læring) udgøres af både subjektive og almene forhold, der ophæver eller afviser et dikotomisk forhold mellem viden og kunnen samt mellem individuelt betinget og praksisbetinget læring.

Artiklen undersøger denne problemstilling gennem en filosofisk analyse af nødvendige forudsætninger for læring, og hvor læringsbegrebet gennemgående bliver diskuteret gennem mesterlærebegrebet.

Ud over de eksempler fra praksis som blandt andet Dreyfus, Lave og Nielsen inddrager i deres analyser af mesterlære og læring, vil mesterlærepraksis inden for musikundervisningsområdet være den gennemgående praksisreference. Desuden vil undertegnede mangeårige erfaring med musiker- og instrumentalfaglig mesterlærepraksis blive inddraget i analysen<sup>1</sup>. Herigennem vil centrale problemstillinger blive anskueliggjort på en måde, hvor forholdet mellem epistemologi og praksis belyser det i mesterlæresammenhæng centrale forhold mellem viden, kunnen og forståelse.

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1 Undertegnede har udover at have fået sin musikerfaglige uddannelse gennem mesterlærepraksis også selv (gennem 22 år) undervist inden for denne læringsform.

Musikerfaglig instrumentalundervisning er oftest en mesterlærepraksis, der repræsenterer denne særlige undervisnings- eller læringsform på en meget traditionsrig og gennemprøvet måde. Men som det er tilfældet med mesterlære generelt (Kvale, 1999: 11-12), har dette ikke givet anledning til den store opmærksomhed i forhold til forskning i denne læringspraksis' særlige epistemologiske grundlag<sup>2</sup>. Hensigten med at adressere den musikerfaglige mesterlærepraksis er dels at bidrage med forskning, der kan inspirere og udfordre både den instrumentalpædagogiske praksis og forskning samt dels at bidrage med nye praksisnære referencer til den aktuelle praksisteoretiske diskussion af, hvad læring er og hvordan den konstitueres. Analysen vil også udfolde en kritisk diskussion af begrebet om 'tavs viden' med referencer til både instrumentalfaglig (musikerfaglig) praksis, fænomenologi, hermeneutik og praksisteori (Practice Theory).

Er den tavse videns område noget, der refererer til de mangfoldige sociale, faglige, kulturelle eller socioøkonomiske forhold som eleven eller lærlingen mere eller mindre ubevidst indlemmes i gennem sit ophold hos sin mester (i tråd med Hans-Georg Gadamer's (2004) forståelses-analyser)? Eller er tavs viden en professionsfaglig intuitiv erfaring, som mesteren kan inddrage i undervisningen eller læreprocessen, for eksempel gennem eksemplificering (som Hubert Dreyfus (1999) – uden dog at anvende begrebet 'tavs viden' – reflekterer over i forbindelse med forholdet mellem intuitive og regelbaserede handlinger)? Eller er tavs viden et kropsligt forhold, hvor kroppen lærer, reagerer og agerer uafhængig af bevidstheden (Polanyi, 1966: 15; Wackerhausen, 1997: 4).

Alt efter, hvilken epistemologisk tilgang vi benytter i analysen af mesterlæremodellen, vil begrebet om 'tavs viden' vise sig som værende et potentielt destruktivt eller konstruktivt forhold ved mesterlære. Det kan være destruktivt, hvis det udtrykker en begrebslig forlegenhed kendetegnet ved en manglende eksplicit indsigt i eksplicit forklarlige forhold, der søges afhjulpet med en eksemplificering af, hvad der ikke umiddelbart kunne formuleres. Det kan være konstruktivt, hvis det afspejler en for mesteren/læreren skjult viden, der omfatter mere end det, der eksplicit kan forklares og som for eksempel refererer til anonyme, skjult eller implicite både kropslige,

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2 Der findes en række publikationer, der diskuterer mesterlære- og læringsbegrebet inden for både den musikpædagogiske (for eksempel Nielsen & Westby, 2012; Angelo, 2012; Nerland, 2004) og praksisteoretiske forskning (for eksempel Gherardi, 2008, 2000; Schatzki, 2017; Reckwitz, 2002; Kemmis, 2017; Schmidt, 2012). Generelt er forskning, der vedrører mesterlæremodellens og læringsfænomenets videnskabssteoretiske grundlag ikke det primære anliggende i disse publikationer. Praksisteoriens (Practice Theory) mange grundige etnografiske studier interesserer sig dog for epistemologiske problemstillinger ved de empiriske analyser, hvilket i væsentlig grad refererer til filosofen Schatzki's førende position inden for feltet.

historiske, sociale, faglige, æstetiske eller kulturelle aspekter ved det, der ønskes formidlet. Gennem denne normative udlægning af den tavse videns *pædagogiske* potentiale anskueliggøres en spænding, hvor 'tavs viden' som et pædagogisk forhold udgør et forståelsesmæssigt 'benspænd' (en uventet men dog konstruktiv forhindring) – som (ideelt set) fordrer, at mesteren/underviseren forholder sig til forudsætningerne for 'tavsheden' i hans eller hendes viden. Herved inddrages den pædagogiske dimension ved mesterlærens epistemologi, hvilket åbner spørgsmålet om mesterlæremodellens særlige (lærings)potentiale til også at inddrage mesterens pædagogiske refleksioner, strategier eller handlinger.

## 2. Viden, kunnen og læring

Centralt for overstående refleksioner er forholdet mellem viden og kunnen. Benævnelsen 'mester' refererer almindeligvis primært til fagspecifik 'kunnen' og kun sekundært til disciplinær 'viden'. Sagt med andre ord: i, hvilken grad er en mesters instrumentalfaglige viden en eksplicit begrebslig del af hans 'kunnen'? Forholdet er ofte noget uklart og inden for eksempel musikerfaglig instrumentalundervisning synes der at eksistere en udbredt dagligdags forestilling om, at eksplicit disciplinær viden må være en nærmest selvfølgelig og implicit del af mesterens 'kunnen'. For eksempel anerkendes og benævnes en meget dygtig violinist som en mester på baggrund af hans eller hendes udøvende færdigheder. Den 'kunnen' som kendetegner violinistens spil er, hvad man som tilhører er interesseret i at opleve ved en koncert. Violinistens 'kunnen' er her en forudsætning og medierende faktor for hans eller hendes musikalske viden eller sans. Som elev af den samme mesterviolinist er man instrumentalfagligt set primært interesseret i at få del eller indsigt i den viden, der ligger til grund for violinistens 'kunnen'. Forholdet mellem 'viden' og 'kunnen' er således omvendt proportionalt i forhold til violinisten som henholdsvis mester-udøver og mester-lærer. Spørgsmålet om, hvorvidt violinistens 'viden' er en eksplicit eller implicit del af hans 'kunnen' er således væsentligt i forhold til forståelsen af det *pædagogiske* meningsindhold i begrebet 'tavs viden'.

Hvorvidt en eksplicit forklaring udgøres af en begrebslig formidling af propositionel viden eller om viden eksplicit også kan formidles gennem praktisk anskueliggørelse af ikke-begrebsliggjort erfarings- og praksiserhvervet 'kunnen' er i denne forbindelse en væsentlig problemstilling. Inden for 'social praksisteori' kritiseres forestillingen om, at læring er et spørgsmål om erhvervelse af viden. I bogen *Situated learning*:

*legitimate peripheral participation* (Lave & Wenger, 1991) afvises både kognitivismen og situeret læringsteori som adækvate forklaringer på, hvad læring er.

Ifølge Lave og Wenger er læring en diffus hændelse, der omfatter hele den person, der transformeres gennem deltagelse i de praksisser, personen deltager i. Læring sker således ved, at man bliver deltager eller deltagende i praksisfællesskaber – ikke blot som noget, der sker i praksisfællesskaber, men som værende en integreret del af at være deltager i et eller flere sociale fællesskaber. Læring er således identitetsskabende, idet den enkelte gennem deltagelse i praksis(er) ændres eller transformeres (ibid.: 53).

I nærværende afsnits indledning blev spørgsmålet om eksplicit begrebslig viden og kunnen/færdigheder kort diskuteret. Forholdet handler dog også om forholdet mellem begreberne viden (knowledge) og vide-hvordan (knowhow). At læring er en integreret del af deltagelse i praksisfællesskaber indebærer at erhvervelse af 'kunnen' er en mulighedsbetingelse for deltagelsen. En sådan 'kunnen' er ikke udelukkende baseret på rationel eller instrumentel viden men på erfaringer med deltagelse i praksis(er); som 'kunnen' (vide-hvordan/knowhow) (Gherardi, 2008: 517). Forståelsen af, at læring er et spørgsmål om at blive eller være deltager i praksisser ligger tæt op ad den traditionelle forståelse af læringsbegrebet, der fokuserer på praktisk viden og udlægger know-how som noget, der enten er nødvendig for deltagelse i praksisser eller er en del af bestemte praksisser (Schatzki, 2017: 33). Hvorvidt denne form for færdighed indgår i vidensbegrebet (som 'knowledge') diskuteres, problematiseres og kritiseres blandt andet inden for *practice theory*, hvor værdien og betydningen af epistemologiske analyser af læring, mesterlære og tavs viden af enkelte forskere mere eller mindre afvises (Nielsen, 2002), mens andre indtager en modsat position (Schatzki, 2017).

### 3. Metodologiske overvejelser

Inden for for eksempel pædagogiske og omsorgsfaglige professioner imødegås kravet om vidensmæssig legitimering af den faglige praksis blandt andet af epistemologiske redegørelser. På denne måde fastholdes legitimeringsdiskussionen i et epistemologisk paradigme, hvor tavs viden anskues som noget, der adresserer det, der ikke eksplicit og begrebsligt kan indfanges af en for eksempel instrumentel, rationel, analytisk eller definerbar viden. Således bliver analysen af læring udelukkende et epistemologisk spørgsmål om viden – som et forhold mellem eksplicit eller implicit og tavs viden



(Nielsen, 2002). Herved kan mesterlære forstås som en undervisningsform eller model, hvor læring ensidigt bliver til et spørgsmål om overlevering eller videreføring af *viden*.

Det forhold, at epistemologiske analyser af mesterlærepraksisser ikke favner alle sider ved denne læringsform er i sig selv ikke tilstrækkelig til at afvise epistemologiens betydning for vor forståelse af disse praksisser. Ej heller er samfundsmæssige og politiske krav til epistemologiske legitimeringer af for eksempel pædagogik- og omsorgsprofessioner en tilstrækkelig forklaring på, hvorfor epistemologien har fået en så central betydning for den professionsfaglige selvforståelse. Skal epistemologiske analysers betydning for vor forståelse af mesterlære – og læring i al almindelighed – kritiseres som værende problematiske, bør de også kunne kritiseres ud fra deres eget udgangspunkt. At læring ikke blot er et spørgsmål om 'ren' overlevering af viden – fra en der ved, til en, der endnu ikke ved – giver anledning til at inddrage for eksempel sociale, historiske og kulturelle forhold i analyserne. Dette indebærer dog ikke, at vidensbegrebet ikke spiller en afgørende rolle i og for mesterlærepraksisser.

Således skal epistemologiske redegørelser for mesterlærens læringskonstitution i det følgende kritiseres ud fra deres eget udgangspunkt. Den måske mest kendte epistemologisk forankrede udfoldelse af mesterlæren kan siges at være brødrene Dreyfus' fænomenologisk funderede læringsmodel (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Dreyfus, 1999), hvor udviklingen fra novice til ekspert udlægges som en femtrins progression og hvor ekspertniveauet essentielt præges af intuitive handlinger. Brødrene Dreyfus' mesterlæreanalyse skal i det følgende kritiseres ud fra og via dens egen fænomenologisk funderede epistemologi. Kritikens ambition er at sætte den fænomenologiske analyse i spil med den sociale læringsteori, sådan som vi finder den udfoldet inden for situeret læringsteori (af blandt andet Jean Lave, Etienne Wenger og Klaus Nielsen) og den såkaldte *practice theory* (udfoldet af blandt andet Theodore Schatzki, Silvia Gherardi, Klaus Holzkamp og Ole Dreier).

Inden forholdet mellem viden og kunnen diskuteres som en mesterlærerelateret væsentlig problemstilling skal Dreyfus' mesterlæreanalyser kort præsenteres og kritiseres. Kritikken indlemmes i en diskussion af forholdet mellem hermeneutik, fænomenologi og praksis teori (*practice theory*). Med henblik på at anskueliggøre dette forhold skal Jean Lave's etnografiske undersøgelser af skrædderfaglig mesterlære også ganske kort præsenteres.

## 4. Hubert og Stuart Dreyfus' mesterlæremodel – en kort præsentation

I værket *Mind over Machine* (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986) beskrives mesterlære i forhold til de mekaniske læreprocesser, der indgår i design af kunstig intelligens. Mesterlæremodellens forrang fremhæves og anskueliggøres gennem eksempler fra blandt andet sygeplejerskens og skakspillerens tilegnelse af de færdigheder, der umiddelbart og intuitivt præger handlinger på disse professioners eller praksissers ekspertniveau. I artiklen *Mesterlære og eksperters læring* (Dreyfus, 1999) beskriver Hubert Dreyfus mesterlæremodellen igen, men nu i forhold til blandt andet 'neurale netværk', der danner grundlag for en maskinlæreprocedure, der anses som en rimelig tilnærmelse til egentlig færdighedstilegnelse hos mennesker. Der understreges dog, at neurale netværk ikke kan tilegne sig færdigheder, sådan som mennesker gør det, uden at være i besiddelse af den form for krop, som vi har.

Disse analyser bygger i væsentlig grad på en inddeling (og videnskabsteoretisk dekonstruktion) af praktisk mesterlære. I det følgende præsenteres de fem stadier som Dreyfus hævder, mesterlæren består af. Gennemgangen er særdeles kort og komprimeret og uden de eksempler, som Dreyfus bruger til at anskueliggøre både det enkelte stadiet og progressionen mellem stadierne.

Undervisningsprocessens første stadiet (*Novice*) kendetegnes af genkendelse af kontekstfrie træk, der udgør grundlaget for regelbestemte handlinger – ligesom en computer, der følger et program (ibid.: 56). På andet stadiet (*Avanceret begynder*) lærer eleven pr. erfaring at genkende nye situationelle aspekter. Tredje stadiet (*kompetence*) præges af, at eleven selv søger efter ny regler, der ikke på eksplicit vis er givet ved undervisningen eller i lærebøger. Den kompetente udøver vælger på en søgende måde selv sin handlingsplan. På fjerde stadiet (*dygtighed*) vurderer den dygtige udøver situationens væsentligste træk, men er stadigvæk nødt til aktivt at beslutte, hvad der skal gøres. Teoretisk tillærte regler og principper blive her gradvis erstattet af situationelle sondringer ledsaget af hermed forbundne reaktioner, hvor intuitiv adfærd erstatter overvejede reaktioner. Femte stadiet (*ekspertise*): På baggrund af et stort repertoire af situationelle diskriminationer bestemmer eksperten målet og, hvordan dette skal nås.

Med tilstrækkelig stor erfaring i mange forskellige situationer, der alle betragtes fra samme perspektiv, men kræver forskellige taktiske beslutninger, opløser ekspertudøveren hjerne gradvis denne kategori af situationer i underkategorier, der alle indebærer samme beslutning, ensartede handling

eller taktik. Dette muliggør den umiddelbare, intuitive reaktion på den enkelte situation, der – som Merleau-Ponty så – er karakteristisk for den kyndige præstation. (ibid.: 60)

#### 4.1 Kritiske bemærkninger til Dreyfus' mesterlæremodel

Dreyfus' mesterlæreanalyser præges af den særlige baggrund, som de udspringer fra. Dels udgør kunstig intelligens' maskinlæreprocedure en væsentlig baggrund for deres analyser af mesterlæren og dels udgør Dreyfus' egen indgående kendskab til, og rige erfaring med skakspillet en væsentlig reference i analyserne.

Denne baggrund er i væsentlig grad kendetegnet ved et vist fravær af færdigheds-tilegnelsesmæssige perceptuelt betingede forhold. Til trods for dette, fremhæves kroppens betydning for den intuitive handling. Forholdet peger på en grundlæggende fænomenologisk problemstilling med klare referencer til Heideggers filosofi, hvilket Dreyfus også bekendtgør (ibid.: 69).

Dreyfus' analyser refererer på implicit vis til Heideggers brugstøjsanalyser, men det sker uden, at disse referencer eksplicit inddrages eller udfoldes. Skellet mellem et analytisk og objektiverende (*vor-handen*) forhold til brugstøjet og et u-tematiseret (*zu-handen* og oprindeligt, som Heidegger benævner det) forhold udgør med al tydelighed skæringspunktet mellem de første fire niveauer og det femte ekspertniveau. I en Heideggersk terminologi udlægges de første (de analytiske) forhold som noget *forhåndenværende* (analytisk, refleksivt, forståelsesmæssigt afledt og tematiseret) og det femte (ekspertniveauet) som noget *vedhåndenværende* (før-refleksivt, forståelsesmæssigt oprindeligt og u-tematiseret). Heidegger anskueliggør i *Væren og Tid* (Heidegger, 2007) forholdet mellem de to forståelsesmodi gennem en analyse af vort forhold til og anvendelse af brugstøj. Brugstøj kan være for eksempel en hammer (Heideggers eksempel) eller i mesterlæresammenhæng måske tydeligere eksemplificeret ved for eksempel en tennisketcher, en violin eller leret i pottermagerens hånd eller det værktøj, hun anvender i bearbejdningen af dette.

I Dreyfus' model fremstilles ekspertens færdighedsniveau som værende præget af netop en upåfaldende (*zu-handen*) omgang med de forhold, som indgår i dennes (ekspertens) handlinger i udøvelsen af sin kunst, fag eller håndværk.

Dreyfus understreger, at en analytisk objektiverende tilgang til færdighedstilegnelsen kun kan spille en væsentlig rolle på de indledende stadier i færdighedstilegnelsen men, at det kropslige element i læreprocessen så at sige inkorporerer disse forhold i den intuitive handling på ekspertniveauet. Under afsnittet *Færdighedslæring via trænere og via mesterlære* (Dreyfus, 1999: 66–67) anskueliggøres dette gennem et eksempel med tennispilleren.

Foruden at give begynderen de regler og grundsætninger, der fremmer læringen på de indledende niveauer, kan man – for dem, der allerede er eksperter – aktivt intervenere som træner... Træneren kan sige til eksperteleven: 'Jeg ser, at du holder albuen højt, du bør ikke holde den så højt'. Men naturligvis vil det ikke hjælpe noget bare at sige det. Træneren er nødt til at gå ud på tennisbanen og få eleven til at ramme bolden igen og igen med lav albue. I begyndelsen vil eleven bevidst afspille reglen i tankerne: holde albuen lavere når jeg rammer bolden. Med tilstrækkelig erfaring kan denne forbedrede komponent af færdigheden derefter blive til automatisk adfærd. [...] Observation og imitation af en virkelig mester kan således erstatte en tilfældig søgen efter bedre måder at handle på. Det er en fordel ved at være lærling.

Eksemplet indeholder væsentlige problemstillinger, der både vedrører definitionen af ekspertniveauet og udlægningen af ekspertens (og ekspertelevens) upåfaldende forhold til tennis-spillet. Fænomenologisk set, er det u-tematiserede, oprindelige og upåfaldende forhold til spillet bestemt ved den forståelsesmæssige henvisningsstruktur, som det indgår i. Det upåfaldende forståelsesforhold kan i en Heideggersk sammenhæng indgå i en henvisningsstruktur vedrørende både værktøjet (håndteringen af tennisketcheren og herigennem den tekniske udførelse af tennislaget) og til tennisspillet som et 'værk':

Værket, der skal fremstilles, som hammerens, nålens, og høvlens *hvortil* (til hvad nytte) har på sin side selv brugstøjets værensart. [...] Det primært varetagne og derfor også primært vedhåndenværende er det respektive værk, der står for at skulle fremstilles. Værket bærer på den henvisningshelhed, inden for hvilken brugstøjet kommer i møde. (Heidegger, 2007: 92)

Når Dreyfus fremstiller ekspertniveauet (eksperteleven) som et forhold, der gennem analytisk bearbejdning og øvelse kan forbedres, indebærer dette, at læringsmodellens første stadier på en 'påfaldende' måde indgår i læringsmodellens øverste stadie. Skal dette forstås således, at eksperteleven i dennes analytiske træning af en lavere

albue i tennisslaget dog stadig og samtidig har et intuitivt og upåfaldende forhold til tennis-spillet andre specifikke tennistekniske forhold og/eller, at han samtidig har et upåfaldende forhold til spillet som 'værk'? Tennis-spillet som værk kan her forstås som den helhed af fysisk habitus, placeringsevne på tennisbanen, bold- og ketcherforfølgelse, blik for modstanderens spil, osv., der udgør spillets forståelsesmæssige og perceptuelle mangfoldighed. Spørgsmålet bliver nu, *hvorvidt* og eventuelt, *hvordan* disse henvisningsstrukturer kan sameksistere i den givne situation.

For at Dreyfus' mesterlæremodel skal være konsistent må det givet vis være således, at de to henvisningsstrukturer (den hhv. upåfaldende (intuitive) og påfaldende forståelsesmodus) kan sameksistere. I modsat fald ville bestemmelsen af eksemplets elev som ekspertelev ikke være adækvat. Ifølge Heideggers tænkning vil denne udlægning da også være korrekt, hvilket giver anledning til at reflektere over, hvorvidt forholdet mellem de to henvisningsstrukturer også har betydning for bestemmelsen af de to artsanaloge værensarter (dvs. det forståelsesmæssige forhold til henholdsvis brugstøjet (tennisketcheren) og 'værkets (tennisspillet som en helhed)) rolle for forståelsen af de andre stadier i Dreyfus' mesterlæremodel.

Når Dreyfus bestemmer modellens første stadie som kontekstfri læring af regler og principper, underkendes betydningen af den henvisningsstruktur, der refererer til 'værket'. En begynderelev vil allerede fra første undervisningslektion have et forståelsesmæssigt forhold til værket (for eksempel tennis- eller violinspillet). At dette eventuelt rummer for eksempel naive, ukurante eller fejlagtige forestillinger medfører ikke, at forholdet således kan udlægges som (og reduceres til at være) kontekstfrit. Desuden overser eller underkender Dreyfus betydningen af, at håndteringen af den forhåndenværende tennisketcher indebærer, at den perceptuelle mangfoldighed, der forbinder sig med det håndterlige ved brugstøjet, henviser til både påfaldende som upåfaldende sider ved aktiviteten. Med andre ord vil der samtidig med den analytiske regelbaserede indlæring på begynderstadiet også være et u-tematiseret og upåfaldende forhold til flere sider ved den regelstyrede øvelse. Denne allerede forståede medgift til læreprocessen har en afgørende indflydelse på indlæringen. Og hvad der i mesterlæresammenhæng er endnu vigtigere, så udgør disse upåfaldende sider ved regelindlæringen det nok vigtigste fokusområde for mesterens opmærksomhed i mesterlæresituationen, da det er gennem netop disse (samtidig både upåfaldende og kontekstforbundne) sider ved udøvelsen, at mesteren har mulighed for at hjælpe og vejlede eleven med indlæringen af principper og regler (der naturligvis bør samstemmes med, og indlemmes i, elevens upåfaldende sider ved indlæringsøvelsen).

Dette fænomenologiske forhold er gennemgående, relevant og væsentlig i alle fem stadier i Dreyfus' mesterlæreanalyse, hvilket bevirker, at de distinktioner, der udgør grænsen mellem de forskellige niveauer ophæves. Modellen er således ud fra dens eget fænomenologiske grundlag inkonsistent.

Kropslige forhold ved færdighedstilegnelsen spiller en betydelig rolle i Dreyfus' mesterlæremodel, men det er som om Heideggers implicitte (men dog underbelyste) medtænkning af kropslighedens perceptuelle mangfoldighed i enhver håndtering af brugstøjet ikke opdages, men underspilles eller underkendes. Frem for at fortolke vort forståelsesmæssige omverdensforhold (fænomenologiens – vor værens) kropslige betingethed, går Dreyfus og Dreyfus ud over fænomenologiens bevidsthedsmæssige værens-forankring og lader os forstå, at den upåfaldende forståelsesmodus i deres optik er et spørgsmål om, at forståelsens intuitive karakter (den vedhåndenværende forståelsesmodus) på ekspertniveauet synker ned i, eller indlejres i, en fysiologisk funktionalisme, der så at sige styrer ekspertens handlinger. Når Dreyfus & Dreyfus reducerer det upåfaldende omverdensforhold til et spørgsmål om en fysiologisk funktionel struktur i vor hjerne, forlader de modellens fænomenologiske referenceramme.

## **5. Mesterlære som social praksisteori – Jean Laves analyser af skrædder-mesterlærepraksis**

På baggrund af etnografiske undersøgelser af Vai og Gola-skrædderne i Monrovia hævder Jean Lave at mesterlære – og læring i almindelighed – primært konstitueres gennem det praksisforhold, den indgår i. Lave finder, at mekanisk reproduktion af færdigheder i for eksempel at fremstille bukser eller andre skrædderprodukter ikke var det eneste resultat af lærlingenes læreår.

I og med at skrædderlærlinge blev fortrolige med rækkefølgen af de klædningsstykker, de var ved at fremstille, lærte de også rangorden og relationerne mellem uformel og marginal og formel og socialt betydningsfuld beklædning, de lærte sociale kategorier og begivenheder. [...] Alle disse aspekter er formentlig fælles bestanddele af alle effektive læringspraksisser, der nedbryder skillelinjerne mellem læring og handling, mellem social identitet og viden, mellem uddannelse og beskæftigelse, mellem form og indhold. (Lave, 1999: 41)

På baggrund af blandt andet disse undersøgelser afviser Lave filosofiske og senere psykologiske læringsteorier, der behandler 'læring' som et helt igennem epistemologisk problem (erkendelses- og vidensteoretiske undersøgelser af overleveringens mulighedsbetingelser).

Lave konkluderer, at mesterlæreteori bør udvikles som social praksisteori (ibid.: 53).

## 6. Sociale praksisfællesskaber som forudsætning for læring

Efter udgivelsen af *Mind over Machine* er Dreyfus brødrene blevet kritiseret for at overse betydningen af forholdet mellem læring og sociale praksisfællesskaber. I artiklen *Mesterlære og eksperters læring* besvarer Hubert Dreyfus denne kritik, der i samme antologi (Kvale, 1999) fremsættes af blandt andet Jean Lave i den ovenfor nævnte artikel (Lave, 1999). Selv om Lave ikke direkte adresserer Dreyfus' mesterlæremodel, udfoldes hendes etnografiske analyser af mesterlærens social-praksis-afhængige konstitution på en måde, der får Dreyfus til at inddrage denne indirekte kritik af deres læringsteori i deres bidrag til antologien. I denne forbindelse skelner Dreyfus mellem fundamentale fænomenologiske forudsætninger for at leve i en social verden og et konkret socialt miljøes relevans for tilegnelsen af en bestemt færdighed.

Han skriver:

Den omstændighed, at al deltagelse i de bestemte sociale praksisser, der muliggør en bestemt aktivitet, er nødvendig for tilegnelsen af de færdigheder, som i alt væsentligt omfatter relationer til et fællesskab, forekommer os at være et vigtigt særtilfælde, men kravet om, at en lærling i sådanne tilfælde skal være en del af et praksisfællesskab, bør ikke forveksles med de nødvendige og tilstrækkelige betingelser for færdighedstilegnelse og mesterlære i almindelighed. (Dreyfus, 1999: 74)

I følge Hans-Georg Gadammers hermeneutiske udvikling af Heideggers forståelsesanalyser, bliver fordomme, som er 'opstået' blandt andet gennem praksisdeltagelse, konstitutive for ny forståelse. Disse forståelsesmæssigt konstitutive fordomme (den forståelsesmæssige nødvendige baggrund for 'erhvervelse' eller opkomst af ny forståelse) kan ikke udskilles fra hverken lærlingens eller mesterens hermeneutiske

tilhørighed med et eller flere praksisfællesskaber. Mesterlærens form og indhold er således altid og allerede indlejret i en henvisningsstruktur, der ikke kan reduceres til et individuelt læringsmæssigt subjekt-objekt forhold, hvor lærlingen 'står' mere eller mindre 'nøgen' over for den færdighed, der skal læres. Lærlingen indgår tvært imod altid allerede i en forståelsesmæssig eksistentiel struktur (den hermeneutiske cirkel) i selve arbejdet med færdighedstilegnelsen. Her er det netop fordommene, som er udviklet gennem tilhørsforholdet til et fagligt fællesskab (blandt andet den tradition, som fællesskabet er indlejret i), der danner baggrund og mulighed for ny forståelse og ny viden.

I kritikken af Lave synes Dreyfus helt at udelukke denne ontologiske konsekvens, med en reduktiv udlægning af mesterlærens fænomenologi til følge. Hermeneutiske forudsætninger for ny forståelse og derved læring er ikke abstrakte eller tilfældige. De vil altid referere til fordomme opståede i et eller flere mere eller mindre definerbare praksisfællesskab(er). For eksempel, vil forståelsesmæssige referencer til hermeneutisk set grundlæggende forhold som tradition eller sågar smag være udtryk for en praksistilhørighed, der kan være både anonym og implicit eller eksplicit udlagt og forstået. Som det er fremført synes dette forhold at være underkendt i både Dreyfus fremstilling af de fem læringsstadier og i afvisningen af praksisfællesskaber som mulighedsbetingelse for læring.

## 7. Musikerfaglig mesterlære

I den følgende præsentation af musiker- eller instrumentalfaglig mesterlærepraksis skal overstående problemstillinger anskueliggøres og diskuteres med henblik på at belyse relevansen af at inddrage hermeneutisk-ontologiske forhold i analysen. Inden for *Practice Theory* (Schatzki, 2016) spiller ontologien en væsentlig rolle, hvor vor praksistilhørighed udlægges som et fundamentalt forhold. Theodore Schatzki fremstår som den mest formative filosof inden for den aktuelt mange-facetterede og forholdsvis uhomogene praksisteoretiske diskurs. Hans udfoldelse af praksisteoriens filosofiske og videnskabsteoretiske grundlag synes generelt ikke at være genstand for megen kritik fra feltets etnografiske, antropologiske og sociologiske forskere.

Practice Theory understreger, at vi altid er en del af et eller flere praksisfællesskaber og, at dette forhold er en afgørende mulighedsbetingelse for læring. Praksistilhørighed er ikke kun en grundlæggende og nødvendig del af vor tilværelse; den er også noget vi



skaber og udvikler gennem den hverdagslige varetagelse af vort (sociale) liv (Dreier, 2011: 4-23). Som indledningsvis anført, er de færdigheder, der er nødvendige for deltagelse i et praksisfællesskab færdighedsmæssige former for viden (know-how), der udvikles gennem deltagelsen. Disse former for 'know-how', færdigheder eller kunnen tilegnes ikke som propositionel viden, men som en form for praktisk viden, vi umiddelbart og selvfølgeligt anvender, selv om vi ikke har en eksplicit eller konventionel forståelse af hverken dens almene eller situationsbestemte gyldighed. 'Viden' bliver således et noget diffust og åbent begreb, der ikke (eller meget vanskeligt) lader sig begrænse til, hvad vi i en traditionel videnskabsteoretisk eller begrebsanalytisk forstand eksplicit er i stand til at artikulere eller afgrænse. Bestemmes erhvervelsen af denne form for praktisk viden som værende læringens formål, essens og/eller indhold synes Lave at have ret, når hun hævder, at læringsteori bør udvikles som social praksisteori. Hvorvidt denne antagelse favner alle aspekter ved den læring, der finder sted inden for mesterlærepraksis(er) skal diskuteres med referencer til den følgende præsentation af musiker- eller instrumentalfaglig mesterlære.

Bestemmelsen af musiker- eller instrumentalfaglig undervisning som mesterlærepraksis – sådan som den almindeligvis gennemføres i Danmark – afhænger blandt andet af, hvad man forstår ved mesterlærebegrebets nødvendige formelle rammer. Der er væsentlige forskelle på en mesterlærepraksis, hvor mester og lærling eller elev gennem flere år arbejder tæt sammen på daglig basis (som for eksempel en violinbyggerlærling og dennes mester) og på en undervisningsform, hvor en elev modtager undervisning ved sin mester i ca. 30 minutter, en gang om ugen, i ca. 36 uger om året. Det sidste er tilfældet ved den musikerfaglige undervisningspraksis, der udbydes ved for eksempel de norske og danske musik- og kulturskoler. Lægger man de analyser og refleksioner som udfoldes inden for *Practice Theory* og *situated learning* til grund for bestemmelsen af de formelle og ydre forhold, der definerer en mesterlærepraksis, er der grund til at bestemme denne undervisningsform som mesterlære. Med andre ord: Hvis instrumentalundervisningens ydre forhold danner rammer for et praksisfællesskab, hvor læring nødvendigvis finder sted, er der grundlag for at bestemme eller definere denne undervisningspraksis som mesterlærepraksis. Centrale problemstillinger og forhold som for eksempel tavs viden, forholdet mellem viden og kunnen samt sociale og kulturelle sider ved instrumentalundervisningen er alle gennemgående omdrejningspunkter ved denne praksis.

Der tages i det følgende udgangspunkt i et forløb, hvor en elev på fem år påbegynder sin læretid hos en mester (en violinlærer), som strækker sig over en periode på ca. 11 år. De første møder mellem den unge elev og dennes læremester præges gerne af

en gensidig nysgerrighed og interesse for at lære hinanden bedre at kende. Hvordan forløbet skal eller bør gribes an er for begge den primære udfordring og interesse i denne fase. Elevens psyke, motoriske flair, koncentrationsevne, rytme- og klangfornemmelse, osv. giver læreren et fingerpeg om tilrettelæggelsen af undervisningslektionerne. Omvendt giver en række ikke-musik- eller instrumentalfaglige forhold, som for eksempel forholdet mellem elev og lærer, eleven mere eller mindre mod på og lyst til at lære og til at øve. Hen ad vejen bliver konkrete instrumentalfaglige forhold en større og større del af undervisningen. Der opstår ofte en særlig fortrolighed mellem parterne, og for mange elevers vedkommende bliver den ugentlige alene-tid med en voksen lærer en værdifuld relation, der ofte rummer mere end rent musikfaglige forhold. Det sker ikke sjældent, at lærerens kontakt til hjemmet eller elevens familie bliver en væsentlig side ved forløbet, og at violinspillet bliver en væsentlig del af elevens selvforståelse.

Ved at anvende violinfaglig mesterlære som baggrund for denne del af analysen anskueliggøres kompleksiteten i forholdet mellem viden og kunnen/færdigheder. At lære at spille violin er et meget kompliceret og tidkrævende arbejde. Den violinistiske dannelses- eller læreproces består af en række instrumentaltekniske problemstillinger, der rent pædagogisk formidles og dannes gennem eksplicite anvisninger for, hvordan eleven skal løse disse.

Vejledningen præges af gensidigheden mellem eksplicit instrumentalteknisk viden (knowledge) og de færdigheder (know-how), som denne viden efterhånden bliver en stadig mere implicit del af. Know-how dækker her over både instrumental- og musikfaglige forhold som klangdannelse, intonation og rytme samt kulturelle og sociale sider ved undervisningspraksissen, der for eksempel omfatter sammenspil (kammermusik og symfoniorkester), koncertoptrædener og den særlige øve- og arbejdsdisciplin som læreprocessen fordrer.

Eleven undervises i basale forhold som, hvordan buen og violinen skal holdes og i de særlige bevægelsesmønstre, der udgør de mest grundlæggende sider ved den violin-tekniske beherskelse. Herigennem arbejdes der blandt andet også med klangdannelse, intonation samt rytme-fornemmelse. Har eleven særlige problemer med disse musikalske forhold vejledes hun primært via referencer til den basale instrumentaltekniske indføring, hun tidligt i forløbet blev præsenteret for. De klangmæssige, rytmiske og andre musikalske forhold eller udfordringer, som eleven hele tiden skal arbejde med, søges med andre ord løst blandt andet gennem eksplicit forklarede forhold, der er af en musikalsk set ekstern (motorisk/violinteknisk) art. Således indføres eleven i

en særlig måde at forstå sit eget violinspil på. Er hun dygtig og har hun et udpræget violinteknisk flair vil undervisningen blive mere direkte fokuseret på rent musikalske forhold som klang, frasering, stilfornemmelse, intonation osv., uden, at disse bliver adresseret via de rent violintekniske forhold. Eleven er mere eller mindre prisgivet lærerens måde at forstå disse forhold på, og bliver først på et langt senere tidspunkt (og måske aldrig) i stand til at skabe en forståelsesmæssig distance til det violinistiske forståelsesparadigme, hun på et allerede tidligt tidspunkt i forløbet blev en del af.

Målet er, at de violintekniske forhold bliver en forholdsvis ubesværet, upåfaldende eller intuitiv del af musikudøvelsen. Dette sker gennem intensiv træning eller øvning og desto længere eleven kommer med dette arbejde, desto vanskeligere bliver det at skabe den ovenover nævnte distance til de forståelsesmæssige forudsætninger for hendes eget spil. Et eventuelt behov for at skabe en sådan distance opstår almindeligvis først på et langt senere tidspunkt (evt. aldrig) – og da ofte i forbindelse med, at eleven møder andre lærere, der præsenterer hende for andre måder at forstå violintekniske og musikalske forhold på eller ved, at hun opdager begrænsninger eller uhensigtsmæssigheder ved sin egen måde at spille på.

Den viden og indsigt, der ligger til grund for lærerens violintekniske vejledning og undervisning formidles i udgangspunktet som propositionel viden. Violinen og buen skal eller bør holdes og trakteres på præcis denne måde – måske med mulighed for mindre variationer – men generelt inden for lærerens forståelse af rammerne for hans eksplicite forklaringer. Efterhånden transformeres denne eksplicit udlagte viden til en 'know-how' – som en færdighed, der intuitivt former elevens spil. Spørgsmålet om gyldigheden, eller den violinistiske kvalitet og rigtighed, af denne 'know-how' aktualiseres primært, når eleven erkender, at violintekniske problemer udgør en hindring for udførelsen af en musikalsk idé og når henvisningerne til den tidligere erhvervelse af propositionel viden ikke kan løse elevens problem. Eleven søger nu en anden og ny eksplicit viden, der kan udvide hendes know-how, udvikle hendes violinistiske færdigheder og herigennem øge mulighederne for deltagelse i andre musikalske praksisfællesskaber (som for eksempel at spille i bedre orkestre eller med bedre musikere).

Problemstillingen anskueliggør relevansen af spørgsmålet om, hvordan instrumentalunderviseren legitimerer sin egen instrumentale faglighed. Er det med reference til hans egen eksplicite violinistiske viden, til hans 'kunnen', egen erfaring eller for eksempel til 'traditionen'? Spørgsmålet er af væsentlig betydning i forhold til arbejdet

med at udvikle det instrumentalpædagogiske område og består primært i den udfordring at erkende problemstillingens betydning.<sup>3</sup>

Forholder man overstående beskrivelse af violinfaglig mesterlærepraksis til Dreyfus' mesterlæreanalyser, kan det måske umiddelbart se ud som om, at den eksplicite viden (i Dreyfus' sammenhæng; kontekstfri og regel-refererende viden) er et socialt set eksternt og kontekstuafhængigt forhold ved den violinistiske læreproces. Dette er dog en misforståelse. Den eksplicite viden, eleven i overstående beskrivelse fandt grund til at problematisere, er anskueliggjort netop gennem forhold, hun har opdaget eller erkendt gennem deltagelse i de musikfaglige praksisfællesskaber, hun er en del af. Erkendelsen er ikke opstået gennem analytiske refleksioner over den eksplicite viden eller forståelse, hun gennem sin undervisning har tilegnet sig. Behovet for at reflektere over disse forhold er med andre ord snarere opstået gennem deltagelse i praksisfællesskab(er). Behovet for know-how har skabt behov for ny knowledge, men knowledge er nu eksplicit kontekstbestemt (praksisbestemt) som know-how. At elevens knowledge på dette stadie (som almindeligvis vil være ret avanceret) er bestemt af know-how, der fordres (som forudsætninger) for deltagelse i praksisfællesskaber, er ikke et forhold, der er opstået som et led i en trinvis udvikling mod et stadig mere avanceret niveau. Dette vil være tilfældet allerede ved første undervisningslektion. Forskellen er blot, at det eller de praksisfællesskab(er), der på det mere avancerede niveau skaber behovet for ny knowledge, især udgøres af fagspecifikke praksisfællesskaber. Som nybegynder vil et eventuelt behov for knowledge være forbundet med know-how, der relaterer til deltagelse i ikke-faglige fællesskaber- som for eksempel familien eller kammerater. Elevens færdigheder eller violinistiske kunnen på dette begynderniveau (og også senere) bliver, når den kommer i spil med hendes sociale og ikke-faglige fællesskaber, en del af hendes identitet. Hendes violinistiske know-how indlejres i den know-how, hun udvikler i-og-gennem deltagelse i disse fællesskaber.

Relaterer vi problemstillingen til *practice theory* og *situated learning*, finder vi, at know-how her tildeles en betydnings- og værdimæssig forfordeling i forhold til knowledge. Theodor Schatzki argumenterer dog for et gensidigt forhold mellem knowledge og know-how, og går herved imod de praksisteoretikere, der afviser eller underkender videns-begrebets betydning for læring (Nielsen, 2002). I ovenstående fremstilling af forholdet mellem de to videns-begreber anskueliggøres et gensidigt forhold mellem

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<sup>3</sup> Problemstillingen skal ikke diskuteres nærmere her. For en nærmere analyse af forholdet, se Lyngseth, 2017. Artiklen udfolder desuden en grundigere videnskabsteoretisk analyse af nærværende artikels instrumentalpædagogiske hermeneutiske problemstillinger.

violinelevens eksplicitte viden (knowledge) og de praksisrefererende færdigheder (know-how) som denne viden relaterer til.

Den vidensformidling, der i stor grad præger lærer-elev-interaktionen *artikuleres* gennemgående som eksplicit og instrumentel viden. Som det fremgik af kritikken af de analytiske læringsstadier i Dreyfus' mesterlæreanalyser, er denne eksplicit artikulerede viden ikke kontekstfri – idet den er indlejret i en større struktur af praksis- eller fællesskabsrelaterede forhold. Spørgsmålet er nu, hvorvidt lærer-elev-interaktionens eksplicitte (ofte regelrefererende) vidensformidling alligevel udgør et selvstændigt domæne ved læring (sådan som Dreyfus hævder, at det gør). Spørgsmålets dilemma er, hvordan det eventuelt er muligt at argumentere for, at viden på samme tid både er et praksis- og fællesskabseksternt og et fællesskabsbettinget forhold. Inden for de teoretiske rammer og de begreber, som både Dreyfus og praksisteorien udfolder i læringsanalyserne synes dette ikke muligt. Spørgsmålet er dog, hvorvidt disse teoretiske referencer tegner det fulde billede af problemstillingen.

Ved at gøre læringsanalyserne til et spørgsmål om dualistiske modsætninger mellem vidensformer eller mellem individuelle og praksisbetingede forudsætninger for læring nedtoner og overser man til dels spørgsmålets hermeneutiske karakter. Ved at relatere overstående begreber og argumenter til den filosofiske hermeneutiks forståelsesbegreb er det muligt at belyse problemstillingen på en mere produktiv måde i forhold til læringsanalysen.

## 8. Læring og forståelse

I Hans-Georg Gadamer's filosofiske hermeneutik udfoldes ontologiske analyser af forståelsens struktur på en væsentlig måde i forhold til artiklens problemstillinger. I kritikken af Dreyfus' afvisning af sociale fællesskabers betydning for læring blev det anført, at den af Dreyfus definerede kontekstfrihed, som den regelstyrede indlæring på modellens første niveau præges af, måtte afvises. Begrundelsen for afvisningen blev givet med referencer til netop Gadamer's filosofiske hermeneutik. Gadamer viser i sit hovedværk *Sandhed og Metode* (2004), at enhver forståelse er betinget af en tidlig struktur (den hermeneutiske cirkel), der inddrager menneskets historiske bevidsthed som en aktiv del i enhver forståelse. Vore fordomme vil altid spille en konstitutiv rolle for forståelsen og humanistiske grundbegreber som blandt andet smag og tradition er aktive, men dog anonyme sider ved disse konstitutive sider.

I al læring og tilegnelse af viden samt i udviklingen af både instrumentelle og sociale færdigheder spiller forståelse en afgørende rolle. Læring er i Laves optik – ligesom forståelse er det i den filosofiske hermeneutik – ikke en proces, der kan isoleres eller reduceres til logiske, analytiske eller operationelle strukturer. Læring og forståelse er for dem begge ikke noget, der kan dekonstrueres med henblik på at udlede en metode for læring eller forståelse.

Gadamer beskriver forståelse som en *sandhedshændelse* og konstruerer argumentationen for en hermeneutisk ontologi på historiens og traditionens grund. I første del af *Sandhed og Metode* afdækkes 'det almene' som et fundamentalt træk ved åndsvidenskaberne. Dette udlægges i værkets anden del som et aktivt 'forudgreb' eller en fordom i forståelsens struktur. Det vigtige spørgsmål er ikke hvilke sandheder, som forståelsen potentielt kan afdække, men, hvad det er, der sker med os, når vi forstående forholder os til verden – og på denne måde overhovedet har en verden.

Hermeneutisk set, kan de anonyme og skjulte sider ved den forståelse, der konstitueres inden for en mesterlærepraksis udlægges som en form for 'tavs viden'. Det tavse ved viden er her at forstå som de fordomme, der endnu ikke er hævet til bevidsthed. De er således aktive, men dog anonyme og skjulte og derfor tavse forudsætninger for den eksplicite forståelse, som både mester og lærling deler som eksplicit artikuleret og begrebslig forståelse. Disse anonyme forståelsesmæssige forudsætninger er konstitutive for både det, der overstående er udtrykt som knowledge og som know-how.

## 9. Færdighedstræning

Knowledge kan ifølge Schatzki udlægges som en form for know-how – lige som know-how også kan siges at være en form for knowledge. Som også Dreyfus understreger, er der ved både færdighedstræning og deltagelse i praksisfællesskaber regler, der ofte eksplicit skal læres. At denne regel-refererende viden altid vil være forbundet med know-how, gør den kontekstforbundet både til kompleksiteten i den nærmere definerede færdighed, der skal læres og til den praksis som færdigheden relaterer til. Dette var et centralt forhold ved den tidligere fremført kritik af Dreyfus' mesterlæreanalyser. Den regelrefererende del af færdighedstilegnelsen er, som det fremgik af analyserne af mesterereven (tennispilleren), et spørgsmål om træning. Målet er her, at reglerne, fænomenologisk set, efterhånden synker ned i en u-tematiseret, upåfaldende forståelsesmodus eller – som Dreyfus artikulerer det – bliver til intuitive handlinger.

Lige som det er tilfældet med undervisning, er det træningens formål at lære. Træningens læringspotentialer er ofte adskilt fra undervisning og uddannelse, men der synes ikke at være enighed om, hvad det så er (Schatzki, 2017: 41). Det virker dog indlysende, som vi også så det i Dreyfus' læringsmodel, at der er et læringsaspekt ved træning. I essayet *Practice and Learning* (ibid.) beskriver Schatzki en type træning, der ligger til grund for læring og som er i overensstemmelse med, hvordan læringsbegrebet generelt behandles inden for Practice Theory. Med reference til Wittgensteins brug af begrebet *Abrichten* (Wittgenstein, 1958), der almindeligvis oversættes med "træning", og som er særlig anvendt i forbindelse med træning af dyr (dressur), anskueliggør Schatzki træningsbegrebets rolle for børns sproglige læring. Den sproglige undervisning består ikke i forklaringer på dette stadium, men af træning, hvor barnet lærer simple referentielle sammenhænge mellem sproget og verden.

there is no explanation of, no reason that can be given for, these referential connections. The child must simply fall in line with using the words these ways. Once, moreover, the child has achieved this, it simply goes on using the words thus, without justificatory explanations or reasons. (Schatzki, 2017: 42)

At følge en regel er analogt med at adlyde en ordre. Man er trænet til at gøre dette, og man reagerer på en ordre på en bestemt måde. (Wittgenstein, 1958: § 206).

[I]f we teach a human being such-and-such a technique by means of examples, – that he then proceeds like *this* and not like *that* in a particular case [...] and thus that this and not that is the "natural" continuation for him: that of itself is an extremely important fact of nature. (Wittgenstein, 1967: § 355)

Tilegnelse af sådanne reaktioner eller reaktionsmønstre gennem træning er i følge Schatzki en form for læring, der muliggør både erhvervelse af viden, deltagelse i praksis(er) og det sociale liv. Wittgenstein beskriver sågar træning som en form for uddannelse (Wittgenstein, 1958: § 441). En person, der gennemgår træning kommer til at udføre særlige kropslige og sproglige handlinger som reaktioner på særlige hændelser og træning involverer således en kropslig dannelse eller prægning. Dette er jo sådan set også træningens formål.

## 10. Afsluttende instrumentalpædagogiske hermeneutiske betragtninger

Som nævnt indledningsvis har artiklens ambition været at forholde analysen af musikerfaglig mesterlære til både epistemologiske og fænomenologiske redegørelser (Dreyfus), *Situated Learning* (Lave og Nielsen), *Practice Theory* (Schatzki) samt filosofisk hermeneutik (Gadamer).

Kritikken af Dreyfus' mesterlæremodel blev udfoldet på modellens egne fænomenologiske præmisser, lige som refleksionerne over Nielsens afvisning af videns-begrebets betydning for læringsanalysen også blev gennemført som en immanent kritik.

Dreyfus' anskueliggørende eksempler og de her til hørende refleksioner forekommer umiddelbart at være meget overbevisende og i overensstemmelse med vore daglige eller almindelige erfaringer. Schatzki's betoning af det gensidige forhold mellem viden og kunnen og hans refleksioner over regeltillærte reaktioner understøtter – til en vis grad – Dreyfus' forståelse af det regel-refererende læringsaspekt. Dog er de to ikke enige om, hvordan forholdet mellem viden og kunnen skal forstås eller hvordan den individuelle og praksisbestemte læring skal bestemmes. Artiklen har belyst disse forhold gennem inddragelse af den filosofiske hermeneutik og har peget på forståelsesbegrebets betydning for læring. Afslutningsvis skal disse problemstillinger anskueliggøres gennem en kort analyse af et praksisnært eksempel fra den musiker- eller instrumentalfaglige mesterlære.

Strygerfagene (violin, bratsch, cello og kontrabas) mest komplicerede udfordringer knytter sig til buestrøget. Komplexiteten i bueteknikken handler i væsentlig grad om et gensidigt forhold mellem klangdannelse, artikulation og dynamik og udgøres bueteknisk set primært af forholdet mellem buens fart, tyngde og kontakt(-punkt) med strengen. For at være i stand til at kontrollere disse forhold kræves der blandt andet et perfektioneret bue-hold eller -greb. Der findes flere bud på, hvad det mest optimale bue-hold er. Inden for violin- og bratschspillet er det i dag mest almindeligt at benytte det såkaldte 'fransk-belgiske bue-hold'. Det fransk-belgiske bue-hold er generelt kendetegnet ved, at tommelfingeren – der er kurvet/bøjet – placeres over for langfingeren med fingrene placeret på buen inden for det yderste led og med en bøjet lillefinger placeret på buens top. Dette hold eller greb finder vi udfoldet i en lang række af de mest anerkendte violinister og bratschisters instrumentalpædagogiske værker og publikationer (Dalton, 1988; Menuhin, 1971; Galamian, 1962), hvor der primært fokuseres på fysiologiske forhold som muskelafspænding og smidighed.



Her præsenteres øvelser med henblik på at udvikle og styrke håndens og fingrenes smidighed og balancefornemmelse. Den pædagogiske ambition er at skabe et fysiologisk grundlag for, at den enkelte udøver/studerende kan udvikle en sansemotorisk fornemmelse, der vil styrke klangdannelsen og evnen til musikalsk artikulation. På grund af kompleksiteten i dette buetekniske forhold finder vi i de fleste violin- og bratschpædagogiske værker et vist forbehold over for den begrebslige anskueliggørelse, da man vurderer, at mangfoldigheden og kompleksiteten ved de sansemotoriske forhold ikke fuldt ud kan beskrives på almen vis.

I flere centrale værker inden for området suppleres den eksplicite redegørelse for bue-grebet med den tilføjelse, at der dog ikke er tale om et *greb*. William Primrose (der ofte anerkendes som værende tidernes største bratschist) beskriver dette således:

“... the grip (horrid word, but it will have to do [...]) As I have said, what a horrid word is ‘grip’. Let us more comely say ‘hold’ ”(Dalton, 1988: 64/71)

Dette peger dog ikke umiddelbart på behovet for at inddrage ‘tavse vidensforhold’ – for eksempel praktiske demonstrationer af bue-grebet – i undervisningen. Citatets begrebslige forlegenhed afdækker et både strygerfagligt og –pædagogisk problem, der primært må siges at være af begrebsanalytisk art.

I mesterlæresituationen vil udfordringen vedrørende den eksplicite formidling af buegrebet stadig være present som et begrebsligt anliggende. Erkendelsen af, at begrebet ‘greb’ (eller ‘grip’) ikke er dækkende og fyldestgørende giver øjensynligt ikke anledning til at reflektere over, hvordan begrebet så skal udlægges. Der synes som nævnt at være en begrebslig forlegenhed ved forholdet. I (mesterlære-)situationen kan læreren eksempelvis forklare eleven, at man ikke skal presse med fingrene om buen og, at de skal være afslappede – men samtidig aktive. Eleven, slapper (så godt som muligt) af i fingrene og hånden, men kan ikke rigtig finde ud af det. Læreren tænker måske, at det nok skal komme hen ad vejen. Der kan dog gå år med lærerens gentagne forklaringer om, at der skal være en større muskulær smidighed i bue-grebet uden, at eleven helt fanger meningen. Læreren har måske overtaget den almindelige forklaringstradition, der har med undervisningen i bue-grebet at gøre og har ikke så meget andet at tilføje end til stadighed at vise og demonstrere, hvordan det ser ud osv. Læreren er henvist til at forklare ‘det samme’ – måske i andre vendinger end tidligere – men stadig inden for det samme paradigme, der har med muskel-toning at gøre. Hvis læreren gør som den samlede publikationsrække i løbet af de sidste 100

år har gjort det, så overtager han en bestemt opfattelse af traditionen og sætter ikke spørgsmålstegn ved den.

Gennem nærmere refleksion over begrebet 'greb' (eller 'grip'), ville læreren måske have opdaget og forstået, at han har overtaget den traditionelle forståelse af begrebet, der reducerer det til et rent muskulært forhold. Derved overses det forhold, at der i enhver sammenhæng, hvor vi holder en genstand – også en violinbue – er tale om et spil mellem det muskulære og det taktile (berøringssansen). Det taktile er det, der udgør grundlaget for den muskulære del af det at holde på noget. Vi kender det fra alle mulige daglige aktiviteter: når vi for eksempel løfter et glas vand for at drikke, vil det taktile bestemme, hvordan vi rent muskulært holder på glasset. Er vore hænder meget tørre af den kolde vinterluft, vil vi sansemotorisk holde glasset på en anden måde end, hvis glasset nærmest hænger i, eller klæber til fingrenes hud, når vi løfter det.<sup>4</sup>

Den taktile del af violinteknikken er måske ikke italesat og udfoldet netop, fordi den er en så upåfaldende del af spillet og undervisningen. Komplicerede aspekter ved spillet er møjsommeligt og analytisk udfoldet, mens det mest nærliggende overses. Det er nemlig ikke givet, at den studerende opdager det mest nærliggende, før der er gået mange år efter studierne afslutning. Desuden er det heller ikke givet, at den studerendes lærer selv har opdaget og reflekteret over sammenhængen. For læreren er disse forhold måske så grundlæggende, umiddelbare og 'naturlige', at der ikke gives anledning til at italesætte, reflektere over eller begrebsliggøre dem. Eksemplet med det taktile er kun et lille, men dog væsentligt forhold, der her først og fremmest tjener til at anskueliggøre, at området for mesterlæremodellens 'tavse vidensområde' hurtigt kan blive 'tavst', fordi man ikke evner eller har tradition for at reflektere kritisk over sin egen praksis.

Udfordringen bliver således at stille kritiske spørgsmål ved alle 'tavse' vidensforhold ved mesterlæremodellen – ikke for at afvise den – men for at forbedre den. Øvelsen har en klar struktur, der er af hermeneutisk (forståelsesmæssig) karakter: Det handler om at kaste kritisk lys over vore fordomme/forforståelse ved alle – herunder de mest indlysende – forhold ved praksis. Eksemplet med det taktile i forbindelse med 'bueholdet' forekommer måske temmelig banalt, men ikke desto mindre finder vi, at forholdet er fuldstændigt overset i violinlitteraturen. Det samme gør sig gældende, når der tales om, hvordan der skal holdes på violinen eller bratschen. Den manglende

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4 Undertegnede har erfaret, at violinelever allerede på begynderniveau ret hurtigt får et mere både stabilt og smidigt bue-hold, når deres opmærksomhed bliver rettet mod de taktile forudsætninger for den sansemotoriske smidighed.

refleksion over dette forhold kan være en væsentlig grund til, at brugen af skulderstøtte (til at holde violinen mellem skulder og hage med – i modsætning til at holde den i venstre hånd) er blevet så udbredt, som den er. Skulderstøtten er som hjælpemiddel konstrueret med det formål at afhjælpe eller lette det komplicerede forhold mellem de motoriske og de taktile udfordringer, der forbinder sig med at spille violin eller bratsch (hvor den samme hånd, der holder instrumentet, samtidig også skal være fri til at udføre meget komplicerede finmotoriske bevægelser). Spørgsmålet er dog, om skulderstøtten giver anledning til, at det taktile ved spillet bliver mere diffust og, således indebærer potentielt flere problemer, end det løser.

I eksemplet anskueliggøres den filosofiske hermeneutiks betydning for mesterlære-analysen. Ved at adressere forudsætningerne for implicit (anonym eller tavs) viden kan forholdet mellem viden og kunnen artikuleres og begrebsliggøres og derved skabe nye pædagogiske muligheder samt styrke både mesterens og elevens læring. På trods af påvisningen af fænomenologisk inkonsistens i Dreyfus-brødrenes mesterlæremodel fremhæver artiklen værdien af væsentlige aspekter ved deres analyser, lige som den sociale læringsteori credo om, at al læring må forstås gennem det praksisfællesskab den indgår eller opstår i også anerkendes. Ved at relatere den individuelt- og den praksisfællesskabsbetingede læringsanalyse til den filosofiske hermeneutik mindskes – og til dels opløses – spændingen mellem disse positioner.

Artiklens praksis-filosofiske ambition har dels været at inspirere den musikpædagogiske mesterlærepraksis og dels at bidrage med en videnskabsteoretisk kritik og perspektivering på centrale positioner, der har fyldt meget i de seneste mange års forskning inden for musikpædagogisk mesterlære – og mesterlære mere generelt.

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## Forgetting the audible body. Voice awareness in teacher education

*Tiri Bergesen Schei, Bjørg Solsvik Åvitsland & Edvin Schei*

### ABSTRACT

*Voice training and voice knowledge have all but disappeared from Norwegian teacher education, in a general decline of the standing of practical-aesthetical subjects in compulsory school. Yet the voice is a teacher's primary tool for establishing authority, commanding attention, and for guiding, motivating and building a trusting relationship with students. Voice trouble is a major cause of health problems and professional dysfunction in teachers. In this article, "the audible body" denotes both voice physiology and the relational meanings that color production and perception of a human voice, within a matrix of social and cultural connotations of beauty, quality, normalcy and health.*

*The study consists of interviews with six music student teachers having received voice lessons during their three-year bachelor program, concerning voice awareness and voice care during studies and as student teachers in practice periods. The students were able to identify the relational authority and attention-producing qualities inherent in a well-functioning voice, and had learned to prevent and remedy common voice problems. Findings from the interviews are contrasted with previous survey data from a student group exposed to a minimal amount of voice education.*

*The article discusses the importance of teachers' awareness of physiological, relational and emotional influences on voice function, and of strategies for dealing with the challenges of being the audible center of pupils' attention, where pupils become the teacher's "magic mirror". The disappearance of voice training from teacher education conveys ignorance of the bodily and relational foundations of human functioning, and may negatively affect teachers' professional functioning.*

*Keywords: student teacher, the voice, the mirror-effect, self-censorship, voice shame*

## Introduction

The music subject in Norwegian compulsory school has traditionally been a subject with strong focus on singing activities (Nielsen, 1994), as reflected in previous curricula. Voice training was a compulsory part of the general program for every student teacher. For the music student teacher, individual or group singing lessons were mandatory. Since the 1970s, however, the music subject, as well as other arts-related subjects, have been reduced by approximately 20%. In 2017, singing is excluded from the general curriculum<sup>1</sup>. This development could indicate a declining understanding of the importance of the human voice as a communicative tool for the teacher.

In this article, issues concerning the teacher's voice, and awareness of its functions and limitations are outlined from various angles, and discussed in relation to the lack of emphasis on the audible body in teacher education. We suggest "the audible body" as a concept that encompasses not only the sound of the voice, but also the communicative, relational and emotional meanings that inevitably color both production and perception of a human voice, within a complex matrix of social and cultural norms connoting beauty, quality, normalcy, health and more. By talking about "the audible body", not "the voice", we want to highlight that when people hear each other, or know they are being heard, they inevitably produce complex, tacit, normative interpretations not only of the sound, but of the person whose sound it is (Schei, 2011), and of the person's presentation of self (Goffman, 1959), given the norms inherent in the concrete context. Theoretical and practical implications of applying the concept of the audible body will hopefully become clearer throughout this article.

The article presents empirical data from qualitative interviews with six music student teachers who had participated in individual voice lessons. How these music student teachers describe functions of, threats to, and protective measures for the teacher's voice serves as a point of departure for a discussion of vocal health problems, voice shame and loss of authority in music teachers, important instances of negative effects caused by unawareness of the audible body in teacher education.

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1 <https://www.udir.no/in-english/>

## Literature on voice in teaching

“A professional voice user applies to any person whose profession/livelihood relies on the use of his voice.” (Wellens & Van Opstal, 2001: 82). Research within voice pedagogy (Beeman, 2017; Bovo, Galceran, Petruccelli & Hatzopoulos, 2007; López, Catena, Montes & Castillo, 2017; Schei, 1998; Tavares & Martins, 2007; Åvitsland, 2007), speech pathology (Bele, 2008: 233; Cutiva, Vogel & Burdorf, 2013; Simberg, 2004; Simberg, Laine, Sala & Rönnemaa, 2000; Simberg, Sala, Vehmas & Laine, 2005; Åhlander, Rydell & Löfqvist, 2011) and psychology (Kenny, 2011), indicates that professional voice users are susceptible to strain injuries of the voice, and that such injuries may cause long-term health problems and sick leave. Teachers have been singled out as particularly vulnerable to voice health problems. Teaching involves hours of voice use every day, and teachers depend on voice qualities and speech techniques that help pupils listen, concentrate, and digest the content and meaning of what is being conveyed. The inherent challenge of sustaining children’s prolonged attention to the teacher’s spoken word is often compounded by noise, bad acoustics and disturbance from the surroundings.

Wellens and Van Opstal (2001: 82) state that most teachers have not had “adequate training in voicing and articulation”. They argue that not only teachers, but also professionals within military service, coaches, lawyers and business people are at risk. Voice disorders are common among teachers world-wide, and teachers are overrepresented when it comes to voice problems warranting professional help. 20–80% of teachers report that they suffer from dry throat and “vocal fatigue” without having a cold, pain around the larynx, and cracking voice, writes Bele (2008: 46).

Up until now, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the importance of the teachers’ voice quality and voice capacity in communication research on the perspective of teaching effectiveness in class. This brings us to the fact that a teacher’s voice is of great importance in the imparting of knowledge perspective related to the learner’s ability to learn. (ibid.: 45)

Several studies support this view. Chen et al. compared Taiwanese teachers with and without voice problems, and found that voice disorders were correlated with upper respiratory infections, stress and anxiety (Chen, Chiang, Chung, Hsiao & Hsiao, 2010). Teachers with voice trouble reported less emotional stability, and lower levels of job satisfaction, communicative and social ability. The major symptoms in this study were hoarseness, low-pitch speaking voice and strain (Chen et al., 2010: 189). Voice



injuries can cause long periods of sick leave, emotional lability and muscle tensions, but often the voice is not identified as the point of departure (Åhlander et al., 2011).

Disproportionately tense breathing patterns cause painful tensions in the vocal cord muscles, the tongue, the neck and the jaw (Doscher, 1993). When muscles are tense and painful, the voice is disturbed, with a constrained timbre (Yiu, 2002). Psycho-motoric physiotherapy has documented that persistent tension over time leads to several disorders, often in the form of headache, back pain and withheld breath (Øvreberg & Andersen, 1986). In their study of patients' experiences with long-lasting musculo-skeletal and psychosomatic disorders, Sviland et al. confirm the interconnectedness of voice, body and mind (Sviland, Martinsen & Råheim, 2014: 616ff).

A teacher's mission is complex (Bovo et al., 2007). Teachers contribute to their pupils' learning of knowledge and skills, to cultural formation, and to the development of relational abilities and a resilient self. Teachers achieve this partly through the content of their speaking, singing, and performing, but even more through their tacitly perceived appearance as role models – their body language, relational behavior and display of emotion, all subtly interwoven with characteristics and qualities of the voice. Pupils mirror the teacher and copy voice use and details of body language. The pupils notice immediately not only the words, but unconsciously also timbre, volume, tempo and intensity (Schei, 1998). Lévêque et al. (2012) tested how the human voice affected learners' singing intonation, compared to a synthetic sound. Their hypothesis was that singing would be more in tune when the model was a human voice. They found that "the poor singers group" sang more accurately after listening to the human model, and that "the more participants had trouble with vocal accuracy, the more the human model helped them to improve their performance" (Lévêque et al., 2012: 295). These findings indicate a mirror effect whereby the listener unconsciously copies the speaker's voice, akin to the effects of mirror neurons in other fields of behavior, as documented by Gallese (2003). Research carried out as early as the 1860's characterized the larynx as "the seat of the living voice [...] The sound of an individual's voice was taken as a sign of his person and his personality as much as his appearance and his 'manner'", writes Hoegaerts (2015: 129) about parliamentarians in Britain in the 1880's. She elaborates the way politicians used their voice thoughtfully as an effective means for communication. The politicians were conscious of the power of a good voice, a timbre that made listeners able to both hear the content and enjoy the delivery of the message. According to Schmidt, Andrews and Cutcheon (1998: 434), pupils are "likely to spend 50% to 90% of their time listening to their teachers". For pupils who have a daily relationship with teachers over years, mirroring can have

vast effects. Several studies of student teachers show correlations between teachers' dysfunctional voices and their pupils' voice use, understanding and learning (Morton & Watson, 2001; Ohlsson, Andersson, Södersten, Simberg & Barregård, 2012; Rogerson & Dodd, 2005). Rogerson and Dodd find that "any form of vocal impairment is detrimental to children's speech processing" and influence the pupils' educational performance negatively (Rogerson & Dodd, 2005: 47). They state that the mandate of the teacher is impossible to fulfill without a well-functioning and enduring voice. "One of the main aims of teachers is to deliver knowledge: in doing this they use their voices as the primary tools of their trade" (ibid.).

As indicated above, our audible bodies reach out to others and are, like our visible features, tacitly evaluated against a backdrop of norms for quality, beauty and correctness (Goffman, 1967: 87, 95; Scheff, 2005; Schei, 2011). Hence, voice trouble in professional talkers may have serious consequences for self-respect, social functioning, and mental health. Nervousness and performance anxiety are well-known conditions among musicians, but also in teachers, who have to take a leader's position in class and on social arrangements (Papageorgi, Hallam & Welch, 2007). Voice trouble often leads to fear of public speaking (Marinho, de Medeiros, Gama & Teixeira, 2017) and voice shame, (Schei, 1998, 2011) which in turn may reinforce voice problems. A vicious circle can develop, where stress and anxiety impact on the voice and make the voice problems even worse, causing more embarrassment, and so on.

Steyn and Munro emphasize the relationship between voice, body and identity, stating that "Voice is thus always more or less, but never just, object or instrument" (Steyn & Munro, 2015: 109).

The interrelationship between body (and thus voice) and identity is indivisible during any act of communication. The self is manifested, reflected and communicated through voice. The relationship between the self, identity and voice is thus processually coordinated in relation to the cultural context within which it functions. (Steyn & Munro, 2015: 111)

Voice trouble in teachers can be prevented (Chen et al., 2010: 189). Based on several studies where teachers have received voice lessons and lectures to increase awareness of vocal fatigue and personal vocal limits, Bovo et al. (2007) conclude that "vocal education programs for teachers, which include correct voice use training and vocal hygiene, may prevent the emergence of these pathologies and stimulate teachers to seek medical assistance before the onset of the vicious circle of a vocal disorder"

(ibid.: 706). This is also stated by Rogerson and Dodd, who write that teachers' self-perception will benefit from voice care education (Rogerson & Dodd, 2005: 48), and Valtasaari (2017).

Despite such knowledge in the literature, the students' voice care in professional teacher education is decreasing. As the current Norwegian curriculum has no directives for voice training as such, a consequence is that institutions might not feel bound to offer voice classes to student teachers.

## Method

In 2016–17, Åvitsland conducted semi-structured interviews with a strategic sample of six music student teachers of both genders at the department of music of a teacher education institution<sup>2</sup>. The students were unknown to the authors. They had received fourteen to twenty 45-minute sessions of song-based voice training over the span of one to two years, and were judged by their voice teachers to be reflective and well-articulated, and hence well suited as informants in a qualitative study. Our research question was: What characterizes student teachers' voice use competence after two years of scant voice training?

The interview guide addressed the students' awareness of their own voice and its functions in teaching, as well as recalls of significant situations concerning voice, such as the first time they spoke or sang in front of an audience, and the bodily states and feelings connected with such experiences. The informants were also asked about tiredness in voice and body, and differences between the speaking and the singing voice.

All interviews were recorded and stored on private digital recording equipment, transcribed, analyzed, and thematically categorized according to standard analytic interview strategies (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The interviews were summarized, and meaning condensation is used in the presentation of the informants' answers<sup>3</sup>. We have followed Malterud's descriptions of the thematic-analytical process, which implies reading, rereading, identifying and sorting meaning units, coding and

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<sup>2</sup> The study is approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) October 18<sup>th</sup> 2016.

<sup>3</sup> The authors have presented excerpts from the interview study on the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium 2016: Care of the professional Voice, Philadelphia, USA.

condensing them, and lastly, synthesizing the interview material into meaningful descriptions (Malterud, 2012).

As a basis for judging what our informants had learned from their voice education, we have compared the interview findings with results from surveys that we previously had carried out among regular student teachers, who up until then had not received any formal voice education, and had no music education in the portfolio. We offered to these students, in groups of 20, a voluntary one-hour lesson in voice use and breathing awareness, at the end of which we asked the participants to complete a questionnaire about their professional voice experiences. The results of the survey have been published in Norwegian (Schei & Åvitsland, 2016). Since we used these results to develop analytical categories and questions for the present interview study, we repeat them in some detail here, as a backdrop for discussing the interview findings.

The 282 students who participated in the voluntary one-hour voice lesson during 2011–13, constituted 50% of their classes. All 282 (100%) completed the anonymous, descriptive questionnaire at the end of their lesson. We found that 96% had experienced fatigue or hoarseness in their voice, most frequently in connection with practice periods in schools, where they were deployed for 2 to 5 weeks every semester. More detailed results from the survey are presented in the discussion, particularly statements about situations where the students reported stress and tiredness in voice and body, connected with vocal utterances and self-staging.

In the following, the informants from our qualitative interviews are represented by the letters A, B, C, D, E and F.

## **Results: What do student teachers say about voice care?**

All questions addressed in the result section are quotes from the interview guide. The results are presented without comments and analysis, which can be found in the discussion section. The three headings “Function: The voice as a tool for communication”, “Threats to the voice: Performance, emotion and acoustics” and “Protecting the voice” are the main categories developed through the analytical process.

## Function: The voice as a tool for communication

What is the importance of the voice for you as a teacher?

Informant E states that the voice is the teacher's most important tool for good communication and dissemination of knowledge. A teacher has to be an authoritative person, but in a good way, and a good way is to use the voice without constraint, and communicate with the pupils in a focused manner, with the voice as a vehicle of relaxed authority. Informant E describes that he is satisfied with his own voice. It normally functions well when he stands in front of the class:

“I find my voice to be very even. I have never thought that I am too tired in the voice to go on, even when I teach music. In fact, I appreciate my voice. I even feel that I have a very clear voice. I have noticed during the practice periods in school that I do not have to put pressure on the voice to be heard. Compared with some of my classmates, who really sound as if they struggle with their timbre, my voice is neither too light, nor too dark, just right in the middle. I can just be who I am.”

Informant B says: “I think I have a carrying voice that lasts the whole day. I do not feel tired after a day in practice. I believe that the quality of my voice is of importance for the pupils. If my voice sounds bad, the pupils will not be able to concentrate.”

Informant F:

“As a teacher you have to control your voice. If you have hoarseness, you sound tired and that brings forth a negative atmosphere that definitely will affect the pupils. I believe that they copy the teacher's mood and timbre. They might also feel uncomfortable with the situation.”

When informant A was questioned what he might have written in the log if he had to write about his voice during the practice period, he replies:

“I would probably have written that I had used my voice in a bad way, where I unconsciously spoke too loudly without using the breath support sufficiently. I know that speaking loudly is not a good way to maintain a quiet and good classroom, because as a teacher you also convey voice use to the pupils. Speaking too slowly, fast or indistinctly will definitely influence their

concentration and ability to learn. The pupils will stop listening to the content and be more concerned with the *how* of the situation.”

### Threats to the voice: Performance, emotion and acoustics

The informants identify the teacher’s situation as a complex performance in front of groups of pupils and others. They often experience nervousness, and describe that it influences the voice. Informant F says: “I speak faster and my voice tends to have a lighter timbre, the tongue feels dry and it is as if I don’t have enough time to formulate the sentences [when I’m nervous]”.

Informant E recalls situations where his voice was tired and describes the feelings: “It is as if the throat is dry and sore, the voice trembles, gets unstable, rough and fuzzy, as if I am using too much breath and get too little timbre on the voice”.

Informant C talks about how she can get exhausted in her voice after a long day if the pupils don’t listen and pay respect, if she teaches music, arts and craft, if the acoustic is challenging as in a gym class, or if she has taught a demanding lecture. This is how she describes being exhausted: “I feel my mouth is dry, and my throat is sore, I involuntarily lift my shoulders and I can feel that I am not breathing smoothly, nor am I relaxed in my body”. She adds that if she is to talk in front of an audience she gets tense in her voice. Her strategy is to engage the pupils in various tasks so that she might get to rest her voice.

Informant E says “It is worse to sing in front of 3 than 300”. He adds that he is conscious about breath support, breath awareness and the importance of vocal technique, but he is not satisfied with himself when he is singing in the tenor register, where he struggles to reach the highest notes. He knows what he should have done, namely focusing on his breathing and establishing a deep breath, instead of working with the voice from the throat.

### Protecting the voice

“I have become more conscious of my voice use just because of my practice periods in school”, states informant A. “I know now that when I need to say something very loud, I have to use more power and use the darker timbre of my voice. The power comes from my stomach.”

Informant B has had singing lessons for two years, and learned to “breathe properly”, as he puts it. He notices a difference now, because he is more conscious about breathing, muscle use and the production of the actual sound, which must not be pushed. He thinks that most people are unaware of the functions and care of the teacher’s voice:

I think that not many people reflect upon their own voice use, but if they hear a voice that is unhealthy, they will notice. A teacher at my practice school had a very unpleasant voice. It was as if she was screaming and it was so uncomfortable to listen to. I don’t think that anyone had made her aware of it, but I believe that there is a negative effect. The pupils respond to her sound level by speaking the same way and I am sure that they will get tired, stressed and not able to concentrate. In such situations the muscles get tense, and concentrated listening is hard.

Informant B has made it a habit to warm up in the morning before teaching. “Yes, I warm up, and I have actually practiced ‘phonation in a pipeline’, and it functions very well!”<sup>4</sup>

He adds:

When I have spoken about healthy voice use to my friends, they don’t understand what I mean. They say: ‘What do you mean with voice use? There is nothing to say about that, is there?’ But when I tell details from my singing lessons and what I have learned, they say that they have never reflected upon the fact that so many elements matter if you are to sustain a healthy voice.

## Discussion

The aim of the interview study was to deepen our understanding of how student teachers describe and reflect upon the functions, care and pedagogical effects of their professional voice, after a small number of regular voice lessons, as part of their education. In the discussion we will bring forth what kind of competence voice awareness might be, and in particular what characterizes the competence of these

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4 ‘Fonation in a pipeline’ is a technique of blowing into a plastic pipe, 1 cm in diameter, to get breath connection. This technique helps when the breath is withheld or the throat muscles are stiff. The pipeline is stuck into a third-filled bottle of water, and one blows into the water and feels the resistance in the body.

music student teachers. We will discuss some of their statements and relate them to results from the first study conducted in 2011–13, as well as to international research about student teachers and voice (un)awareness and possibly negative effects of the audible body in teacher education.

In today's society little consideration is given to the audible body, whereas the visible aspects of people are awash in attention; to slimness and the need for exercise, or to fashion, styling and the indispensable products required to *be* the healthy body. The voice goes mostly unnoticed, as long as the voice user is healthy, without fatigue or hoarseness. As indicated by the literature, there is a general lack of awareness about the importance of the voice and its effects on listeners, among student teachers, teachers, and education authorities.

### Addressing voice trouble

Over many years we have experienced that a large proportion of student teachers have inexpedient breathing patterns and insufficient voice control, with secondary effects such as headache, muscle tension and concentration difficulties. Some students do not regain their “normal” voice after a cold, but continue to talk as if they still have the cold, incorporating unhealthy voice habits that can be difficult and time consuming to unlearn. We learned from the survey of 282 student teachers in 2011–13 that 96% experienced fatigue or hoarseness, especially in connection with mandatory practice periods. One in five reported that this happened when they taught music and during activities such as choir singing, where there was an expectation that the student teacher should do warm-up exercises or lead the singing groups. The student teachers were expected to teach skills that they had not learned in their education. Their fatigue and hoarseness were consequences of not knowing how to sustain a healthy voice when giving instructions in crowded spaces with bad acoustics. Two thirds reported never having been taught anything about healthy breathing in connection with speech or singing. One student described how his practice teacher had demanded that he take better care of his voice and pay attention to his breathing pattern, which is a difficult task unless one has some knowledge of the connections between lack of breath support and hoarseness (Schei & Åvitsland, 2016).

In our survey, several students commented that when they increased the volume of the voice, often related to swimming lessons, arts and handcraft, or other situations with much noise or difficult acoustics, they became noticeably tired. Physical activities in big training halls, or outdoor activities, were characterized as challenging, and the



expected teacher's role was sometimes hard to live up to. When the school day was finished, they felt tired in the whole body. What we find interesting about these results is the fact that the student teachers manage to address so many details about voice trouble after only one hour of voice guidance. It might indicate that knowledge about the audible body is tacit and that such knowledge needs to be articulated in teacher education to make students aware of the consequences of bad vocal habits. Tendeland's research indicates that a focus on breathing may produce noticeable changes in voice use, and improvements of voice problems (2009: 3). Unhealthy breathing patterns may be caused by talking loudly in front of many people, or nervously singing a song, affect the timbre of the voice, the strength, the ability to speak or sing for a long time and the feeling of well-being in the body (Brown, 1996).

Findings from the survey also revealed that it is easy to talk oneself hoarse during choral instruction, with resulting fatigue. Chen et al. write that compensatory behavior, such as increased vocal loudness, "may further deteriorate a teacher's voice, ultimately decreasing a student's learning experience" (Chen et al., 2010: 188). One consequence of high pressure is to raise the voice and produce a light and pushed timbre. If students do not use the appropriate techniques in contexts with poor acoustics, or where strong voice is required, more pressure will be applied on the larynx, so that the voice quickly becomes fatigued (Boholm, 2013: 15; Kristiansen et al., 2014).

Even a minimum of voice care, like a few warm-up exercises in the morning, can have long-term effect (López et al., 2017). Adopting such strategies could help students thrive in the teaching profession. In accordance with Boholm (2013: 2) and others (Beeman, 2017; Kovacic, 2005; Willard, 2007), we would claim that in a time when there is an increasing prevalence of voice problems among teachers, voice training should be a separate subject in teacher education. Without knowledge about voice care and tools for self-healing, student teachers may experience hoarseness and fatigue when they are put under pressure, and develop chronic vocal health problems. Opera singers who perform night after night with controlled force, without fatigue or hoarseness, are good examples of professional voice users who, through purposeful practice, develop strong and resilient voices. Student teachers do not need that kind of practice to function as teachers, but they need to be made aware of and reflect upon the possibilities and limitations of the human voice. They also need to be aware of that which Rogerson and Dodd state: "In order to minimize the potential factor of reducing children's learning performance, educational authorities need to respond with voice care initiatives, either by undergraduate support or in-service training" (2005: 57).

## Always on the podium

Voice trouble is often treated as purely biomechanical, but is clearly interconnected with social life, identity and emotion. When informant E describes that “it is worse to sing in front of 3 than 300”, he confirms what many researchers have stated; namely that “the other” matters. Though people rarely reflect on each other’s voices in everyday life, there are social norms of pitch, timbre, strain and rhythm. These tacit norms of sound and talk become salient when they are breached. A distorted voice raises immediate attention, so that interlocutors may find themselves listening more to the voice than to what is being said. In children, a teacher with a “funny” voice may cause concentration problems, unleash ridicule, and cause stigmatization of the teacher.

We tend to perceive ourselves as we think others see us. “The others” contribute with their presence as mirrors and judges, which might lead to over-attentive self-assessment and negative feelings about our self-staging, whether it is speaking in class or performing a song (Goffman, 1959; Salmon & Meyer, 1992; Sartre, 1992; Scheff, 2005).

When bringing forth “the other” in this discussion, the concept of shame is necessary to outline. Shame is rarely talked about in teacher education, but it is a basic, universal human emotion like joy, sorrow or anger (Scheff, 2003). It often manifests as embarrassment or self-censorship. Voice shame arises when a person becomes aware of the other’s attention to one’s “audible body”, and believes the evaluation to be negative (Schei, 2009: 233). When informant E states that the worst is to sing in front of three listeners, it is likely to be caused by a sense of being exposed to the other, a feeling of vulnerability, of auditive “nudity”. Shame manifests as feelings of wanting to disappear, shyness, not feeling well and sometimes anger for no apparent reason. The podium offers no place to hide, and every nervous move or crack in the voice can trigger feelings of discomfort. In human relationships “the other” will always be essential for self-esteem and well-being (Marinho et al., 2017.)

Informant B’s statement that “if my voice sounds bad, the pupils will not be able to concentrate” is insightful, and reveals experiences with how an unhealthy voice will be met by the pupils. He is not only aware of how an unhealthy voice sounds. He also describes how voice is intertwined with muscles and breath-support to be healthy and endure the daily pressure with loud talking and singing in class. The informant practices “phonation in a pipeline” (Costa, Costa, Oliveira, & Behlau, 2011; Titze & Laukkanen, 2007) on a regular basis to prevent voice injuries.

The voice conveys emotions – even if the voice user does not intend to (Scherer, 2003). To be fascinated or bored by a teacher might be a mirror effect of the emotions carried by the teacher’s use of her/his voice. A task for the student teacher, then, is to develop awareness of what is happening with the rest of the body when the voice is no longer an unconscious part of the whole. An important matter for student teachers in general is to learn to decipher what is conveyed – unintentionally – when a voice is unhealthy, whether it is her/his own voice or the voice of the pupil.

The informants considered the teacher’s voice to be important in communication with the pupils. The teaching relationship always concerns more than the verbal content. Layers of meaning are embedded in body language and movement. The sound of the teacher should ideally arouse confidence. If it evokes insecurity and irritation, something is amiss. This does not have to be consciously recognized – it is stored in the tacit knowledge the pupils have about their teacher. When informant E reflected about himself in the classroom he stated: “I can just be who I am” and he related it to his voice and how he was satisfied with the timbre of it, because it allowed him to *function as teacher*.

“[S]peakers were judged competent if they could move and engage their audience”, writes Hoegaert (2015: 125). She highlights vocal practices among politicians, and how such practices affect identity. Teachers, like politicians, usually are in the midst of attention. Being a professional voice user, teachers should know that good voice training can be learned, and breathing techniques automatized. Whether the voice is smooth, soft, hard or fuzzy, monotone or wide ranging, it has an effect on the listener. The listener stores the timbre, the rhythm and the unconscious associations evoked, in a complex impression of “the other”. These impressions become tacit knowledge that allows us to recognize familiar voices immediately; it affects moods, and influences our attitudes towards others.

The audible body is as important as the visible one, but the psychological mechanisms at work are less well understood. Insights about stage fright, performance anxiety and voice shame reveal how social psychological mechanisms hamper fluent breath, smooth voicing and relaxation of tensed muscles (Kenny, 2011; Salmon & Meyer, 1998; Schei, 2011).

## Conclusion

The interviews with the six music student teachers who had received regular voice lessons during their bachelor program revealed that though they sometimes experienced voice fatigue and hoarseness during their practice periods, they were able to identify and remedy problems related to the voice. The informants could identify whether they had problems with the breath, muscle tensions, something anomalous with the timbre, nervousness, or soreness in the voice after loud speaking in bad acoustics, respectively. They also knew how they might work with various exercises to overcome their problems. This substantiates previous survey results, which revealed that even a minimal focus on breath support and awareness of healthy voice care could have a positive effect on student teachers' voices. Through voice awareness, the interviewees also revealed competence in their understandings of the voice as part of the whole human being, but whether they consider their voice as part of their *identity* as student teacher and as *becoming* teachers, is uncertain.

What we can state, is that the disappearance of voice training from teacher education reveals a regrettable oblivion of the bodily foundations of human functioning. In the case of professional voice users such as teachers, this oblivion threatens the quality of professional functioning, as well as the teachers' self-respect and health.

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# Nordic PhD-dissertations 2017–2018

## Denmark

- Johns, U. T. (2018). *Musical dynamics in time-limited intersubjective child psychotherapy – an exploration based on microanalysis of therapeutic interplay*. Aalborg Universitet.
- Story, M. K. (2018). *Guided imagery and music with military women and trauma: A continuum approach to music and healing*. Aalborg Universitet.
- Wärja, M. (2018). *Music therapy and expressive arts psychotherapy for women treated for gynaecological cancer*. Aalborg Universitet.

## Finland

- Kankkunen, O.-T. (2018). *Kuuntelukasvatus suomalaisessa perusopetuksessa : kohti yhteisöllistä äänellistä toimijuutta*. [Listening education in Finnish basic education: Towards a communal sonic agency]. Sibelius Academy.

## Sweden

- Kuuse, A.-K. (2018). *"Liksom ett annat uppdrag". Iscensättning av social rättvisa i musikundervisningens retorik och praktik*. Umeå: Umeå University.
- Leijonhufvud, S. (2018). *Liquid streaming: the Spotify way to music*. Luleå: Luleå University of Technology.
- Tullberg, M. (2018). *Timber and timbre: Affordances of the simple-system flute*. Lund: Lunds University

## Norway

- Fredriksen, B. (2018). *Leaving the music classroom. A study of attrition from music teaching in Norwegian compulsory school*. Norges musikkhøgskole.
- Jordhus-Lier, A. (2018). *Institutionalising versatility, accommodating specialists. A discourse analysis of music teachers' professional identities within the Norwegian municipal school of music and arts*. Norges musikkhøgskole.
- Kvaal, C. (2018). *Kryssende musikkopplevelser: En undersøkelse av samspill i en interkulturell musikkpraksis*. Høgskolen i Innlandet.

- Stabell, E. M. (2018). *Being talented – becoming a musician : a qualitative study of learning cultures in three junior conservatoires*. Norges musikkhøgskole.
- Strøm, R. V. (2018). *Det usikre sangerlivet. En livshistoriestudie på langs og på tvers i klassiske sangeres sosiale praksis*. Nord universitet.
- Viig, T. G. V. (2018). *The dynamics of creative music making: Et sosiokulturelt perspektiv på læring i skapende musikalske praksiser*. Universitetet i Bergen, Fakultet for kunst, musikk og design.

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The article by Elisabet Öhrn is based on a keynote presentation at the *Nordic Network for Research in Music Education* conference, organized at the *Academy of Music and Drama, University of Gothenburg*, March 14-16, 2017. This article deals with gender and equality in education, with special reference as to the contemporary focus on achievement.

The last section of the yearbook contains a list of completed doctoral dissertations in the Scandinavian countries together with the review panel and editor group data.

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