THE BLOOM OF YOUTH

Conceptualising a Theory of Educative Experience for Irish Traditional Music in Post-Primary Music Education in Ireland

Thomas J. Johnston

Ph.D. 2013
The Bloom of Youth

Conceptualising a Theory of Educatve Experience
for Irish Traditional Music
in Post-Primary Music Education in Ireland

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Submitted to the University of Limerick in satisfaction of the
requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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September 2013
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ABSTRACT

Thomas J. Johnston

The Bloom of Youth

The world of Irish traditional music is one defined by its multiple, porous, and overlapping experiential contexts. This dynamic, living, and continuously evolving system of meanings, values, and intentions is sustained by its communities of individuals who engage in complex and adaptive processes of transmission. Moving from an overview of the broad historical trajectory of Irish traditional music in post-primary music education, which includes a consideration of its present-day position as a core and compulsory aspect of the Junior and Leaving Certificate Music syllabi, this thesis explores the nature of experience of Irish traditional music as it interfaces with and negotiates the realities of the post-primary music classroom. Traversing these diverse and disparate musical landscapes, the primary focus of this thesis is its conceptualisation of a philosophically charged theory of educative experience for the experience of Irish traditional music in post-primary music education. Within this theoretical paradigm, the pedagogical considerations of Irish traditional music resonate and are deeply embedded.

An integrated action research-grounded theory methodological approach with an overarching constructivist philosophy defined a longitudinal investigation which was conducted amongst a cross-section of post-primary music teachers and in a post-primary music classroom context. The emerging theory, acutely reflexive and grounded in the experience of the participants, leans into a breadth of literature which supports a dialectical exploration of the philosophical, theoretical, and practical concerns of Irish traditional music in this educational context. Orientating the theoretical paradigm within a philosophical habitus based on the concept of ‘educative experience’, the nine principles which comprise this theory address the complex nature of transmission of Irish traditional music in this educational context. This includes an explication of the aural learning process, and an exploration of the various ways in which participants engaged with Irish traditional music to construct and gain meaning. In addition, this thesis challenges us to reconsider how we think about Irish traditional music in terms of its deeply rooted informal learning associations. Unveiling the phenomenon of an experience of Irish traditional music, the reality of experience is revealed as occurring along a continuum of formal and informal aspects of learning which interweave and unite towards the common goal of educative experience.
DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree.

I hereby declare that this is entirely my own work. No other person’s work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree in any other institution.

All research procedures reported in the thesis were approved by the University of Limerick Research Ethics Committee.

Signed: ______________________________________

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis could not have come to fruition without the support and goodwill of many people. I am deeply indebted to them for their encouragement which enabled me to meet and surmount the challenges I faced during this research.

Firstly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisors Sandra Joyce, Jean Downey, and Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, for their guidance, insight, and continuous engagement with this thesis. For their expertise, wisdom, and unfaltering resolve and support in encouraging me to reach and achieve my goals, I am eternally grateful.

I would like to acknowledge the financial support which I received while writing this thesis from the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences and The Teaching Council. This support allowed me the freedom, time, and space to engage with the research in a way which would not have been otherwise possible. A debt of gratitude also to the PPMTA, especially former Chair Ethel Glancy, for supporting and facilitating my early investigations in the most encouraging way.

To the music teachers, music students, and musicians who participated in various stages of the research and made this thesis possible. Your openness and engagement, and interest and faith in my research was and remains a constant inspiration.

A sincere thanks to Marie O’Byrne, Ernestine Healy, and Eoin Coughlan, for your time, thoughts, and invaluable advice in the earlier stages of this research. Particular thanks is due to Mick McCabe, whose creativity, skill, and patience in the latter days enabled me to realise my more artistic visions within the thesis.

A special word of thanks to friends and colleagues at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick who have helped me in so many ways on this journey. In particular, I would like to thank Niall Keegan, for always going the extra mile to assist in whatever way he can. To Paula Dundon, Melissa Carty, and Ellen Byrne, who bring an extraordinary ethos to the Academy and have always been just a calming call away in my moments of mild panic. Thanks also to those with whom I engaged at the Centre for Teaching and Learning at the University of Limerick, for the
passion for teaching, learning, and scholarship which you inspired me with during my studies. A sincere debt of gratitude to Lorraine O’Connell, whose keen eye, attention to detail, and comments on my work were invaluable in the final stages of the writing process.

In many ways, writing this thesis was a shared experience, and I am eternally grateful for the generosity, patience, and words of encouragement of many friends for whom words will never adequately express my gratitude. A special mention to Majella Bartley, Kathleen Turner, Julie Tiernan, Ruairí Ó’Neill, and Orfhlaith Ní Bhriain, for your friendships, conversations, thoughtfulness, and generosity of spirit, not to mention the lifts, sustenance, and welcoming lodgings on my frequent trips to Limerick. To Diane O’Connell, for our meandering conversations, the cups of tea, and your infinite generosity. To Aisling Morgan, Fionnuala Rooney, Jo Baumgart, Niamh Dunne, and Bríd Dunne, whose wise words and deep friendships have meant more to me than they might ever realise.

Eider, at the end of this long journey, it is difficult to express in words my eternal gratitude for your patience, understanding, positive encouragement, and constant support. Thank you for all the little things too numerous to mention and for always being there for me when I needed it most.

I wish to give a deep and heartfelt thanks to my family for supporting me in so many ways during these years. To Nana Eilish, whose strength of character, humour, and outlook on life has always been, and will always be, something to aspire to. To Nana Lala, whose love of reading, writing, poetry, and song still resounds to this day. To my sisters and brother-in-law, Jacinta, Joanne, Nicola, and Conor - thank you for always supporting and encouraging me in what I do. Finally, to my parents, Nicholas and Colette, whose encouragement, love, and enduring support over the course of my entire life was responsible for awakening in me and nurturing a love of music. You continue to, and always will inspire me in my endeavours, and for that I will forever be grateful.

Dublin, 20 September, 2013

Thomas Johnston
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INTRODUCTION

Prologue: Reflections and Motivations

In 1990, at seven years of age, without ceremony or much ado, my parents presented me with my first whistle;\(^1\) my name handwritten on a strip of paper, carefully taped down under the blue mouthpiece, in case the whistle ever went astray. Without any doubt, this was a first and defining step into a life which would continue to be influenced in many and varied ways by Irish traditional music, and arguably a moment from which would emerge the foundation upon which this thesis rests. My first vivid memory of engaging with traditional music occurred several months after receiving this instrument. While not wishing to fall into romanticising on years gone by, the memory of racing in to my resting father, ecstatic that I had learned to play my first tune,\(^2\) The Dawning of the Day\(^3\) ‘off by heart’ and of course, wishing to demonstrate my achievement, albeit many times over, resonates even now with the underlying motivations for this research. It was luck, perhaps, that a teacher at my local primary school was (and remains) a highly regarded uilleann pipes and whistle player who possessed a keen interest in teaching Irish

\(^1\) ‘Also known as a ‘tin’ whistle, this is a simple fipple-style instrument where the sound is made by blowing air through a channel against a sharp edge. Without doubt the most popular instrument in Irish traditional music today. Its simple construction and ease of playing make it cheap almost disposable, yet equally suitable as an introduction to music for beginners and for playing the most sophisticated airs and dance music’ (Vallely 2011, pp.748-750). To hear the whistle, visit a sample lesson which I recorded for the Online Academy of Irish Music available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0HmSKt_g-3E [accessed 07/11/2012].

\(^2\) An Irish traditional ‘tune’ as described by Vallely (2011) is an ‘individual piece of dance or instrumental music; a progression of notes that makes melodic sense in that it is in itself free-standing, satisfies the rhythmic ear and does not (intrinsically) leave the listener expecting more’ (p.698). Ó Súilleabháin (1990) provides a most comprehensive insight into the framework and conceptualisation of the ‘standard dance-tune’, available: http://www.mosmusic.ie/docs/creativeprocess.swf [accessed 22/01/2013]. The ‘tune’ as an instrumental piece is referred to throughout this thesis, especially in the context of the findings of Phase 2 (as discussed in Chapter 6).

\(^3\) The Dawning of the Day (Fáinne Geal an Lae) composed by Thomas Connellan (c. 1640/1645-1698) in the 17th Century is a common ‘beginner’ tune to learn as an Irish traditional musician.
traditional music⁴ in the locality. During these early years, ‘going down’ to the school for group (and sometimes individual) whistle (and eventually uilleann pipes) lessons on Monday evenings became a normal part of my weekly routine (and by default, my mother’s also). These initial experiences in traditional music were the first in a web of ensuing interconnected experiences which consolidated in my psyche the relationship which exists between traditional music and its many experiential contexts. For example: joining the local Comhaltas⁵ branch (Craobh Éamonn Ó Muirí) where I would meet other musicians and soon-to-be lifelong friends with whom I still play music to this day; receiving my first set of uilleann pipes at the age of eleven, constructed by the aforementioned primary school teacher; being transported around the county and country to music lessons and events by my dedicated, generous, and eternally patient parents; joining in with sessions at various fleadhanna and other traditional music festivals; forming Coop, a traditional band with some friends, and traveling in blissful naivety around the country to play gigs in local pubs and halls; playing music with my siblings at various family gatherings; teaching whistle in my home for the first time at age of sixteen to other young children beginning their own musical journeys; attending alone, for the first time, the week long Scoil Éigse summer school at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Listowel, Co. Kerry; traveling the world with other musicians, playing music, teaching, learning, experiencing, growing all the while. While unique to my personal experience, these memories are certainly not exceptional by any means; they tell a story familiar, at least to some degree, to those of other traditional musicians in Ireland and elsewhere.

Of course, the threads of my musical life recalled thus far relate to my experience of traditional music beyond any school-based, ‘formal’ music education. In contrast to my immersion in traditional music outside school, my experience of traditional music in post-primary music education was brief, yet decidedly formative. In June 2001, at eighteen years of age, I sat my Leaving Certificate (LC) Music examination, one of seven subjects I was studying for the examinations. However, as the school I attended did not provide curricular music at the time, I depended on the guidance of a generous friend, who was training to become a music teacher, as well as undertaking a series of

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⁴ Throughout the remainder of this thesis, Irish traditional music will be referred to as ‘traditional music’.

⁵ Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ) is an organisation dedicated to the promotion of Irish traditional music with roots going back to the 1930s, although it was formally instituted in 1951. For more information, visit: http://comhaltas.ie/ [accessed 20/01/2013].
‘grinds’ in LC Music. With this, my excursion into music at post-primary level commenced. In my third-level education which followed, a broadening and deepening of my experience in traditional music occurred with my pursuit of a BA in Irish Music and Dance at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance,6 University of Limerick. This formative step into a formal third-level education environment where traditional music was placed alongside broad areas of scholarship was in many ways the beginning of my engagement in a long, enlightening, and sometimes challenging conversation between each aforementioned experiential context.

The purpose of this personal history is to provide an insight into the kaleidoscope of musical experiences which has thus far defined my experience within a) the worlds of traditional music,7 and b) those spaces where traditional music overlaps with seemingly disparate fields of knowledge and experience, such as that of school music education. These experiences are subliminally included as they are important in guiding this thesis. While it is not my intention to delve into this musical experience to any considerable or explicit degree over the course of the following chapters, it is hoped that this short reflection is both a useful backdrop in which to contextualise my motivations and directions for this current research, and acts to illuminate the deeply reflexive edge which this investigation possesses. In a sense, this research arose from a relatively brief period of having one foot in each educational camp, so to speak; one placed a little uncomfortably in formal, school-based music education, with the other lodged deeply in

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7 It is important at the onset of this thesis to attempt to articulate what is meant by the term Irish ‘traditional music’. Coming to an understanding of what Irish traditional music is and means, has for long been the focus of sustained discussion and debate. Ó Súilleabháin’s comment that ‘Traditional music in Ireland ... can be viewed as part of a larger system of traditional music in Europe and elsewhere’ (1981, p.83) suggests the enormity of such a task. While in many ways, this thesis seeks to answer these questions in terms of traditional music and the post-primary music education context, a good starting point for orientating a concept of Irish traditional music is the Companion to Irish Traditional Music (1999 / 2011). In this publication, Vallely (2011, p.687) refers to the Irish Traditional Music Archive’s pamphlet What is Irish Traditional Music?, which provides a synopsis of what is meant by the term ‘Irish traditional’ music and acknowledges that ‘it is impossible to give a simple definition of the term’ (ibid.). As it is interpreted by musicians, it ‘is best understood as a very broad term that includes many different types of singing and instrumental music, music of many periods ... The different types, however, do have in common an essentially ‘oral’ character. That is, they belong to a tradition of popular music in which song and instrumental music is created and transmitted in performance, and carried and preserved in the memory. [...] Different people use it to mean different things; the music shares characteristics with other popular and ethnic music, and with classical music; and, as traditional culture changes, traditional music changes also, showing varying features at varying times (for an expansion of the ITMA’s definition of ‘Irish traditional music’ and its contents and characteristics, see Vallely 2011, pp. 687-690 and: http://www.itma.ie/images/uploads/leaflet1_1.pdf [accessed 07/11/2012].
the traditional music community beyond the school’s walls. From this perspective, given an opportunity to become immersed in the post-primary music education context as an acutely reflexive traditional musician and researcher, I felt that I could potentially offer some insight towards the transformation of Irish traditional music in school music education in Ireland. Long before my experience of traditional music in formal music education, my lived experience of traditional music wove a tapestry of which this thesis is a kind of inevitable extension.

**Background to the Research**

The current place and experience of traditional music in post-primary music education, arguably like many social phenomena, is an outcome of its passage through a complex historical ebb and flow of ideological circumstances. That is, since music in public education in Ireland emerged in the 1830s, an overlapping series of political, cultural, religious, and socio-economic ideologies and power struggles have combined to leave a lasting impress on the philosophical, theoretical, and practical orientations of traditional music in this educational context. In order to build a critical understanding of the present day phenomenon which is the focus of this research, and address the problem therein, a perspective of traditional music in formal education which is initially much broader in its scope is helpful. Fortunately, this broad historical perspective on factors which have impacted on music education in Ireland (McCarthy 1990, 1999a, 1999b, 2004a, 2004b) and further afield (Walker 2001) has received much deserved attention. A brief perusal of this historical perspective from this present day vantage point immediately gives clarity and focus to current issues facing traditional music in post-primary music education.8 For example, from the 19th century to the present day, we can trace traditional music’s journey from a second-level music education system which promoted the formalist notion of ‘art for art’s sake’ and conceptions of music which were elitist and Victorian; to one which functioned out of an emphasis on payment-by-results; to one based on the conservatory model of music education, paying lip service to traditional music; to one which was entangled in various cultural nationalist, political, and Roman Catholic ideals; to one which, as a result of Ireland’s colonial past, discarded traditional music as socially and pedagogically not sufficiently advanced to

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8 These issues are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 1 however a brief outline is presented here.
deem its repertoire or its methodology worthy for formal educational purposes; and finally, to one which currently recognises and promotes traditional music as a core and compulsory aspect of the Junior Certificate (JC) and LC Music curricula.

From the latter half of the twentieth century onwards, a growing awareness and criticism began to emerge in terms of the need for educational reform in the area of traditional music and formal music education; this call for greater pedagogical sensitivity towards the genre in this context has reverberated for almost four decades to the present day (Úi Êigeartaigh 1975; Garrison 1985; Ó Súilleabháin 1985, 2004a, 2004b; Veblen 1991, 1995; Smith 1996; Smith 2005; O’ Flynn 2009). For example, Smith (2005) called for a ‘pedagogy grounded in traditional practices’ where a teacher must acquire ‘a change of perspective on pedagogical technique’ and ‘learn to trust the tradition’s pedagogical expertise’ (pp.76-77). Prior to this, Ó Súilleabháin (2004b) outlined his concerns as to how an already overloaded curricula could include an enhanced presence of an indigenous oral traditional music. Almost two decades previously, Garrison (1985) was of similar sentiment where she stated that in relation to Irish traditional music, the presence of those aspects of community, identity and satisfaction should find some equivalence in the formal classroom environment. In addition, the findings of a number of reports issued by the Arts Council of Ireland (Benson 1979; Herron 1985; Richards 1976) at this time reflect an ongoing debate around the neglect of the arts in education. By the 1990s, a broadening of traditional music’s place in the post-primary music curriculum as a genre worthy of study and practice was beginning to take place; however, no accompanying pedagogy accompanied its integration into the curriculum, an oversight which did not go unnoticed within elements of the traditional music community (MacAoidh 1996). Moreover, within the broader sphere of music education, concern about the teaching and learning of traditional music through the parameters of Western art music has since rumbled on, not least through the culminating dialogue of the Music Education National Debate (MEND).9

9 MEND was an initiative sponsored by Dublin Institute of Technology and organised by its director of cultural affairs, Frank Heneghan. It took place in three phases between February 1994 and November 1996, beginning with a discussion of issues at the national level, and then including perspectives from the international music education community. The MEND initiative was seminal for many reasons, not least that, in the words of the MEND Report’s author, ‘it was the first study of Irish music education to break away from the post-colonial stranglehold of British practice and to sample a wider menu’ (Heneghan 2002).
The relationship between the wider traditional music community and school music education in terms of fostering dialogue on the teaching and learning of traditional music provides additional context for this research (Heneghan 2004; McCarthy 2004a). As a case in point, Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann (CCÉ), undoubtedly the ‘largest body involved in the promotion of Irish traditional music’ (Vallely 1999, p. 77) in Ireland and around the world, receives only perfunctory mention in the MEND Report; little evidence exists to suggest that CCÉ or any other organisation has had any significant impact regarding the embedding of traditional music in the national system of music education. Moreover, as representative of the ‘voice of the largest organisation dealing with Irish traditional music in the world’ (Nic Suibhne 1987, p. i) it is curious that Ó Murchú (1987) made no mention of traditional music in formal music education in his Ó Riada Memorial lecture entitled A Future for Irish Traditional Music; considering that one of the purposes of the lecture series was to deal with traditional music’s ‘place in the education system among other things’ (Nic Suibhne 1987, p. i). In fact, and as a brief aside, the MEND Report welcomed the move by CCÉ to borrow from formal education practices and to set up a means of certifying and standardising teaching expertise and practices; however, there was no indication that representatives from the sphere of formal music education had moved to reciprocate by borrowing expertise and practices from its ‘informal’ counterpart. While it must be acknowledged that CCÉ is but one community of traditional music practitioners and advocates, albeit a sizable one; the organisation’s seeming disengagement with traditional music in formal education arguably reflects a position held by the wider traditional music community. This position was alluded to in the aforementioned MEND report where the author describes Ó Súilleabháin’s input on the promotion of traditional music through music education at post-primary level as being ‘too tentative, as its style is reactive rather than proactive’ (Heneghan 2004, p.290); possible reasons for this are discussed below.

Another area where little attention has been given to the transmission of traditional music within school music education settings is within the field of Irish traditional

10 It must be noted however that representatives from Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann were invited to the various MEND debates but were unable to attend.

11 Historically speaking, there have been some attempts to integrate traditional music into formal music education in Ireland in meaningful and relevant ways, although these have focussed on the primary school curriculum for the most part. These are discussed in the context of Chapter 2.

music scholarship itself. This provides additional context for this research. There exists a body of research which deals with various other areas of interest: traditional music’s history within music education in Ireland (McCarthy 1990, 1999a, 2004a); a broader historical interrogation of aspects of the tradition (Ní Chaoimh 2010; Joyce 2012); an ethnomusicological orientation including research which explores the geography of traditional music (Kearney 2007-8), and traditional music and language (Keegan 1996, 2011); traditional music, representation, and cultural identity (O’ Shea 2006-7, 2008; Vallely 2008); and the area of recording traditional music (Buckley 2012; Foley 2012; Kearney 2012; Morrissey 2012; Motherway 2012; O’ Brien Moran 2012; Smith 2012). A small corpus of significant research has also been carried out on themes of performance, transmission, and identity (Smith 2005; O’ Flynn 2011). Although there are some exceptions and a great deal of advocacy, it seems that an attitude which breeds inaction has affected both the traditional music community and those engaged in scholarship. Perhaps this degree of tentativeness in taking up the challenge existed and continues to exist within these communities as a result of a combination of factors:

- the suggestion that the process of teaching and learning traditional music has been largely taken for granted (Veblen 1994) and that traditional music has always thrived within its own subculture.

- the perceived ambiguity surrounding traditional music expressed by Reiss (2003) who alludes to the fact that ‘there is no absolute consensus in Ireland as to what traditional music is, or rather, what its boundaries are’ and that ‘traditional music defines not a single community, but multiple communities with overlapping senses of identity’ (ibid., p.146). This ambiguity is found in Ó Murchú’s (1987, pp. 2-6) description of the experience of traditional music as a ‘simple philosophy of life’ which ‘takes cognizance of the source of origin, its people, its welfare and its aspirations’ (ibid.).

- a perception by some of school music education as participating in the construction and perpetuation of certain ideologies about musical value that
privileges the Western classical music style,¹³ and the belief held by some that the post-primary music curriculum and the majority of teachers are approaching the subject of music from this angle.¹⁴

• the general agreement that ethnomusicologists or folklorists have spent relatively little time investigating processes of music transmission and learning, and when they do, references are often very brief or general (Szego 2002a).

While the aforementioned concerns regarding an appropriate guiding pedagogy for traditional music in formal music education has been raised consistently as an issue for over thirty years (Uí Êigeartaigh 1975; Smith 2005; Johnston 2009), an arguably greater concern is the question of an appropriate guiding philosophy for traditional music in this context. This is a central concern of this research, given the broad acceptance that any music education system, if it is to work successfully, must have with complete certainty, an underlying philosophy with which it can connect (Bowman and Frega 2012a). This concern is not unique to the Irish context, as it has been found in an international perspective that ‘only a few scholars have engaged in a thorough theorising of the formal-informal nexus, and in building a philosophical basis for research that further explores the possibilities for music education inherent in informal learning practices (Karlsen and Väkevä 2012a, p.viii). Although it should be acknowledged that the potential philosophical underpinnings for traditional music in terms of a bicultural¹⁵ music curriculum have been somewhat probed (Heneghan 2004, McCarthy 2004a, 2004b) with no strong consensus having emerged on this front,¹⁶ traditional music as an entity in itself has not received the same degree of attention in this regard. In its pursuit of a guiding philosophy for traditional music in post-primary music education, this investigation takes as one of its starting points the conclusions of the MEND Report;

¹³ Green (2003a, 2005b) explains the ‘highly complex notion’ of ideology in music education as constructing and perpetuating musical values through the three central characteristics of reification; legitimation; and the perpetuation of social relations. While it is beyond the remit of this research to consider in depth the ideological position(s) that the JC and LC Music syllabi potentially hold, it is an important concept to address. In this regard, the historically bound ideological ties to which this thesis refers are explored in Chapter 1, while a philosophical orientation which could potentially assist in the liberation and transformation of traditional music in this educational context are explored in Chapter 2.

¹⁴ See Chapter 1, Section 1.3 for an expansion of this point raised by MacAoidh (1996).

¹⁵ That is, one which can accommodate both Irish traditional music and Western art music.

¹⁶ Related to this argument is the MEND Report’s conclusion that the case for multiculturalism (of which biculturalism is a subset) in music education in Ireland is weak, and was simply not applicable in Ireland at the time of the report.
that is, its calling into doubt the feasibility of a universal philosophical rationale for
music education which it says, would likely be barren if it were to seek the
accommodation of all views\footnote{Heneghan makes this point after deducing that just as there are so many extant theories as to the nature of music that the feasibility of a universal philosophy of music must be called into doubt, so too it must follow that the search for a universal philosophy of music education would surely raise the same doubts. Related to this line of enquiry and finding some relevance within this research is the MEND Report’s conclusions on its rationalisation of the rival philosophical stances of Bennett Reimer and David Elliott for the Irish context.} (Heneghan 2004, p. 409), and its belief that the aspiration for such a universal philosophy of music education for the Irish context must
‘metamorphose into something more adaptable to life as lived’ \cite{ibid.,p.413}.

The concerns of a broad field of interest have been consulted in order to probe these
issues and give greater focus to the gap in knowledge. Arising from an understanding
of traditional music as lived experience, a main concern of this research is the
orientation of a concept of educative experience for traditional music in post-primary
music classrooms; in this regard, a synthesis of aspects of the theories of Dewey (1934,
1938, 1958, 2007/1916) and Freire (1970, 1974) is attempted. Entangled with the
caption of musical experience are the meaning-making processes that go on in the mind
of a teacher or student who engages in various capacities with traditional music.\footnote{The various ways that participants engaged with traditional music during this study are discussed in depth in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.} To
investigate these meaning-making processes as participants engaged with traditional
music, Csikszentmihalyi’s theory of \textit{flow} (1991, 1994, 1997), a transformative state
which exists along two experiential dimensions of challenges and skills, is particularly
useful. In fact, its discovery is an example of the dialectical relationship\footnote{In the introduction to Freire’s Education as the Practice of Freedom (1974 / 2008), Goulet explains that ‘to think dialectically is to decree the obsolescence of cherished concepts which explain even one’s recent past’. He continues, ‘one of the marks of a true dialectician, however, is the ability to “move beyond” the past without repudiating it in the name of new levels of critical consciousness presently enjoyed’ \cite[ibid., p.vii]{} Jorgensen (1997; 2003) also considers the dialectical approach as a way of viewing complex issues in music education.} that
characterised this research process. \textit{Flow} has gained increasing attention in music
education scholarship \cite{Custodero 1999, 2002; Sheridan and Byrne 2002; St. John 2006}, not least in terms of its deep connection to the concept of intrinsic motivation
\cite{Dewey 1934; Swanwick 1988; Reimer 1989; Reimer and Wright 1992; Swanwick 1994; Dillon 2007}. One of the ways in which \textit{flow} relates to this research is through its
synthesis with various processes of transmission and engagement which emerged from
the findings; through this synthesis, a plethora of values and meanings integral to an
educative experience of traditional music were embedded (these aspects of the investigation, among others, are discussed further in Chapter 6).

Following this, theoretical sensitivity to certain ‘customary patterns of action and webs of belief’ (Bowman and Frega 2012, p.499) led me to various perspectives of and beyond the music classroom which helped to shape a discourse on the experience of traditional music; these include the rapidly emerging field of informal learning pedagogy. More specifically, I explore that literature which considers formal and informal learning as existing along a continuum (Jaffurs 2004, 2006; Folkestad 2005a, 2006; Väkevä 2006, Allsup 2008; Mans 2009; Rodriguez 2009; Schippers 2010; Wright and Kanellopoulos 2010; Brändström, Söderman et al. 2012; Gower 2012; Karlsen and Väkevä 2012b). An inevitable focus for this aspect of the research is Green’s (2008a) seminal research on the informal learning practices of popular musicians in formal learning contexts.

The concept of enculturation is homogeneous with educative experiences of traditional music, and with reference to prolific authors in the field (Jorgensen 1997; Campbell 1998; Green 2001; Wiggins 2005), I explore enculturation’s relationship with the aforementioned areas of informal learning pedagogy and transmission. In particular, the potential of the methods of music transmission to reveal what is considered important by the musicians and communities who shape the tradition are examined. In this regard, Schippers’ discussion of transmission as existing along various continua has been particularly influential. The relevance and potential of a cross-disciplinary insight towards understanding an indigenous musical culture in music education is also raised through perspectives from the fields of ethnomusicology (Garrison 1985; Rice 1987; Blacking 1995; Nettl 1998, 2002, 2005, 2012; Campbell 2003; Stock 2003; Froehlich 2007; Turino 2008) and cultural diversity in music education (Campbell 1991, 2004; Lundquist and Szego 1998; Drummond 2005; Schippers 2010). As an exemplary case in point, the work of ethnomusicologist Turino (2008) and musicologist Small (1977/1980, 1987, 1998, 2010) illuminate findings in this research (with regard to those principles of participatory performance and presentational performance which emerged from the investigation).

Another area of interest which provides a backdrop to this research is the concept of learning modality (Barbe and Swassing 1979; Campbell 1991), which hinges on the fact
that learning is a multi-sensory experience and espouses qualities which strongly align with processes of transmission of traditional music.\textsuperscript{20} Most notably, the beginnings of a pedagogy of listening for traditional music is articulated from the perspective of a broad theoretical base (Reimer 1989, 2009; Blacking 1995; Elliott 1995; Small 1998; Green 2001, 2008a; Goble 2003; Campbell 2004, 2005; Veblen 2004; Cutietta and Stauffer 2005; Koopman 2005b; Bowman 2005c; Ó Gráda 2011). Alongside this, the under-researched strand of obser-visual learning as a pedagogical consideration is also considered (Csikszentmhalyi 1991; Campbell 2001a; Waldron and Veblen 2008; Bowman 2009; Dunbar-Hall 2009) as is its connection to the growing body of scholarship which encourages us to consider kinesthetic and tactile learning as intrinsic to an educative experience in traditional music (Dalcroze 1921/2000; Keil 1987, 1994, 1995, 1996; Irwin 1990; Bachmann 1991; Elliott 1995; Regelski 1996, 1998; Small 1998; Bowman 2000a, 2004a, 2010; Campbell 2000, 2003; Shusterman 1992/2000b; Junutunen and Hyvönen 2004; Seitz 2005; Junutunen and Westerlund 2010). Importantly, the emergence of cognitive-function enhancing ‘cyclical continua of progression’ within the aforementioned modalities of transmission are examined, and the connection between these and Dewey’s principle of continuity of experience is discussed.

\textit{Statement of the Problem}

The issues highlighted thus far point to an observable gap in knowledge across three distinct areas. Firstly, it highlights that the processes inherent in the teaching, learning, and broad experience of traditional music are largely taken for granted within the traditional music community and associated scholarship (Veblen 1991, 1994; Heneghan 2004). Secondly, it suggests an experience of traditional music in the post-primary music education context as one which was and continues to be largely framed within a Western art music perspective (Úi Éigeartaigh 1975; Garrison 1985; Ó Súilleabháin 1985, 2004a, 2004b; Veblen 1991, 1994; Smith 1996; Smith 2005); that is, one which continues to emphasise notation-centred and analytic approaches. Thirdly, it calls attention to the absence of an appropriate guiding \textit{philosophy} for traditional music in

\textsuperscript{20} The four strands of multi-sensory learning which emerged in terms of the findings of this research are identified as aural awareness, obser-visual awareness, tactile awareness, and kinesthetic awareness with associated kinesthetic-aural awareness. These are discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.1.
this context and by default, a resultant lacuna where should exist a dynamic, dialectical relationship between theory and practice.

**Purpose of the Investigation**

The purpose of this investigation is to articulate a philosophically charged theoretical paradigm for the experience of traditional music in post-primary music education in which the pedagogical considerations of traditional music are deeply embedded. That is, the work undertaken through this deeply reflexive research aims to address both theory and practice, guided by an understanding that ‘considers theoretical concepts as philosophically loaded pragmatic tools that serve critical rationality embedded in practical action’ (Westerlund and Väkevä 2011, p. 37). Moreover, this research emphasises the need for an intimate, dynamic, reciprocal, and dialectical relationship between theory and practice in the consideration of traditional music in formal education where ‘each informs the other and is dependent upon the other for its legitimacy’ (Bowman and Frega 2012b, p. 501). Recent literature in an international context deals with the complex and sometimes confusing relationships between practice, theory, and philosophy in music education (Westerlund and Väkevä 2011; Karlsen and Väkevä 2012; Bowman and Frega 2012a). In fact, Schmidt (2005) suggests that since its beginnings, research and practice, theory and action have been dissociated in music education. According to Bowman and Frega, ‘in a field like music education, theory without practice deteriorates into an intellectual game, disconnected from the problem it exists to address; and practice without the kinds of habits and attributes philosophical inquiry seeks to introduce is technical, haphazard, even dangerous’ (Bowman and Frega 2012b, p.502). Similarly, Karlsen and Väkevä contend that ‘part of the maturation process of any scholarly field is to engage in discussion concerning its appropriate philosophical and theoretical underpinnings’; furthermore, it is important to consider the ‘areas of applicability and reciprocal relationships between theory and practice of such frameworks’ (2012, p. vii ).

To address the gap in knowledge, an investigation was conducted over two major phases: Phase 1, pre-Phase 2, and Phase 2. Phase 1 involved the distribution of an exploratory questionnaire to a cross-section (n=68) of post-primary music teachers in...
Ireland. Phase 2 and associated pre-Phase 2 involved an integrated action research-grounded theory investigation with an overarching constructivist philosophy which took place in two music classrooms over 12 weeks. Where action research methodology was the primary guiding methodology to generate data for the study, grounded theory was the primary analytical tool for the data which emerged. Two music teachers, Bríd and Amanda (pseudonyms), volunteered to become involved in the study with their respective groups of students; one, a 2nd year all-girls group (n=21) and the other, a 5th year mixed sex group (n=9). A triangulation of methods was favoured for Phase 2 using an integrated qualitative-quantitative approach, with strong leanings towards a qualitative paradigm. That is, after an initial exploratory questionnaire (pre-Phase 2), a triangulation approach involving three qualitative research instruments was employed; namely, the unstructured and informal interview method, observing as an observer-as-participant and participant-as-observer, and the Lesson Observation Critical Incident Technique (LOCIT). With this methodological orientation, and bearing in mind the background to this research and statement of the problem therein, the thesis sets out:

**Research Questions**

In responding to the areas presented above, the following research questions reflected and guided the purpose of this investigation:

1. What is the nature of the transmission of Irish traditional music and in what ways does it challenge prevailing ideologies regarding the construction of musical meaning and value in post-primary music education?

2. How does the transmission of Irish traditional music connect with the concept of informal learning and the broader experience of the genre?

3. What is an educative experience of Irish traditional music in the context of post-primary music education?
Limitations of the Research

The nature of the research area itself had the following limitations:

- The aforementioned shortage of scholarly writings on the teaching and learning of traditional music in post-primary music education is likely reflective of the sparsity of focussed scholarly attention which traditional music has received with regard to its processes of transmission beyond school music education contexts. To deal with this limitation, I initially investigated subject areas which I felt strongly resonated with issues related to the experience of traditional music in this context. These included various reports on the provision of music education in Ireland, studies on informal music learning and school music education from an international perspective, and writings in the field of Irish traditional music studies. Soon after, the scope of this reading naturally extended to include the vast area of music education philosophy, education philosophy more broadly speaking, education psychology, cultural diversity in music education, ethnomusicology, musicology, community music, and research strategies and methods. Finally, the integrated action research-grounded theory methodological design with its constructivist orientation was hugely beneficial in traversing this limitation, as the very nature of the process assisted in giving clear focus to the research, and guided the research towards scholarly writings within which the emerging findings of the research could be embedded.

In addition, the nature of the classroom-based research context had the following ‘limiting’ impacts:

- Concentration on two student groups (and respective teachers) in two post-primary schools of close proximity as a means of generating grounded theory: While the choice of participants and research contexts for the investigation revealed potential for many interesting and worthwhile areas of investigation, it also led to many areas of investigation which had to be ‘eliminated’ for the purpose of conducting a focussed, relevant, and rigorous study. For example, although Phase 2 of this research was conducted in two music classrooms across two post-primary schools, it was not conducted as a comparative study given the
disparate nature of each research context (discussed further in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.2). Other areas which were essentially eliminated given the scope of the doctoral thesis (but which are worthy of further investigation) include matters related to bimusicality, age and gender of the students, location of each school (urban based), greater variation in terms of traditional instruments ‘experienced’ by participants during the investigation, and formative and summative assessment strategies.

- The decision not to explicitly probe matters related to the composition of Irish traditional music: The absence of a strategy for composition of traditional music in the investigation is in many ways a finding in its own right, this highlighted by the fact that the area of composition of traditional music was not at any stage a concern for either of the participating music teachers. As we will see (Chapter 1, Section 1.3.1), although traditional music is very much integrated within the listening and performance strands of the JC and LC music curricula, and there is the option at LC higher level to take an elective in composition of traditional music, composition is overwhelmingly approached from a Western art music perspective. In the silent absence of the area of composition within the investigation itself, the resolve and purpose of the research to challenge prevailing ideologies, and articulate a theory for the experience of traditional music which honours the nature of ‘composition’ in the traditional idiom was ultimately strengthened.

- The decision not to include a supplementary, focussed study on the teaching and learning processes of Irish traditional musicians themselves: this was a consideration at the onset of the investigation, but it was felt that (a), such a comparative study would have been beyond the scope of this investigation, and (b), the deeply self-reflexive aspect of the investigation was suffice to address the research questions.
Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1 presents a macro-historical trajectory (c. 1850 - c. 2004) of the integration of traditional music into post-primary music education in Ireland, and considers how various power struggles and ideologies have impacted on the present day experience of traditional music in this context. Importantly, this chapter illuminates the experiential reality of traditional music through the lens of the post-primary music syllabi. Chapter 1 concludes with a consideration of the MEND Report’s rationalisation of the opposing philosophical stances of Reimer and Elliott as they apply to music education in Ireland; the place of each philosophical orientation within this research; and the need for a guiding philosophical orientation for traditional music in this educational context.

Chapter 2 firstly explores the rationale for a system of music education which considers a conceptualisation of traditional music through the lens of educative experience, and in doing so, orientates a philosophical habitus for this investigation. Literature that favours and supports this pursuit draws significantly from webs of belief spun from the seminal texts of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. Secondly, with this theoretical sensitivity to the conceptualisation of traditional music as educative experience in mind, and considering the nature of the transmission of traditional music, a review of that body of literature which corroborates informal learning approaches within the field of post-primary music education is performed. Moreover, the question is raised as to whether traditional music exists along an informal-formal transmission continuum and the pedagogical considerations of this are considered. Finally, this chapter draws from broad areas of scholarly research such as cultural diversity in music education, ethnomusicology (including presentational performance and participatory performance), and other areas of scholarship which the grounded theory process revealed as important in contextualising the findings of this research (such as writings related to the concept of learning modality and the role of media in the classroom).

The employment of an integrated action research-grounded theory based investigation with an overarching constructivist philosophy was the means through which the central research questions were addressed over Phase 1 and Phase 2 (including pre-Phase 2) of this investigation. Chapter 3 discusses this constructivist orientation through which I
assumed a relativist ontological position which epistemologically speaking, emphasised the subjective interrelationship between the researcher and participants in the investigation. In seeking a research methodology that would provide an ontological and epistemological fit with my position, I was led to explore the concept of the aforementioned integrated design; this allowed me to guide the investigation using a triangulation of methods and analyse the emerging data through a deeply inductive approach.

**Chapter 4** outlines the findings from Phase 1 of this investigation, namely the distribution of exploratory questionnaires to a cross-section of post-primary music teachers in Ireland. As well as echoing the major themes which emerged in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, this chapter further emphasises the need for a pedagogical approach in post-primary music education suited to the specific needs of traditional music, and an underlying theory and guiding philosophy for traditional music which can support this approach.

**Chapter 5** discusses that essential aspect of the collaborative action research process which involved the pre-Phase 2 identification and exploration of issues related to the experience of traditional music by the students and teachers in each of the investigation’s research contexts.

Many of the findings which emerged in Phase 1 and pre-Phase 2 are probed further in the context of **Chapter 6** which presents the findings of Phase 2, a longitudinal classroom-based study which took place in the music classrooms of two schools. At the core of Chapter 6 is the conceptualisation of a philosophically charged theory of educative experience for Irish traditional music in post-primary music education which emerged from Phase 2 data. This theory is proposed as a means through which theoretical considerations can be tightly linked to practice where traditional music in post-primary music education is concerned.

Finally, **Chapter 7** brings this thesis to a momentary close. In this chapter, a reflective overview of the thesis is presented, the research questions are revisited, the broad theoretical and practical implications of the findings of the research are outlined, and potential future research endeavours are considered.
CHAPTER 1

A HISTORY OF IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC IN POST-PRIMARY MUSIC EDUCATION

1. Introduction

This thesis, broadly speaking, is an investigation into the experience of Irish traditional music by music teachers and students in the context of post-primary music education in Ireland. Before engaging with the topic at the required micro level however, it is necessary to provide insight and capture some perspective on traditional music as a component of the JC and LC Music syllabi from a broader macro-historical trajectory.²¹ This will serve several functions, the primary one being the illumination, from a historical perspective, of the reality of the experience of traditional music by music teachers and students in today’s post-primary music education context. The following comparison of the presence of traditional music in settings beyond the school with its presence in school music education is a useful precursor to the discussion:

There are complex historical reasons why traditional music has a cult-like, though vibrant presence in the Irish music scene; it is beyond the scope of this report to address them. Nevertheless, a comment on the state of music education in Ireland, if approached from a school perspective, might very well bypass traditional music without being guilty of too grave an omission for, in relation to the hedonistic abundance of the music securely woven into the seam of the community, there is but a token presence in formal education.

(Heneghan 2004, pp.383-384)

²¹ Several studies have dealt with issues related to music education in post-primary music education on a general level, including changes that have taken place with regard to the JC and LC. For example, integration of newcomer students in post-primary schools (Byrne 2008); the composition section of the LC music syllabus (Browner 2002); a marketing audit of LC music (Hynes 1997); a comparative evaluation of the philosophies of Swanwick, Fletcher, Elliott and Langer and their relevance to and implications for post-primary music education in Ireland (Lennon 1985; McRory 1997). The aim of this chapter therefore is to focus on those issues which pertain to the overarching place and experience of traditional music within the JC and LC along a broader historical trajectory.
It follows that although the current JC and LC music syllabi were introduced in 1991 and 1997 respectively, it is necessary to pass more than a cursory glance at the profound impact on traditional music by what McCarthy (1990, 1999a) describes as the political, social, cultural, religious and economic power struggles and ideologies in the culture at large in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Ireland. In fact, until relatively recently, the debate on the state of music education in Ireland has continued, with O’Flynn (2009) highlighting the fact that generally, a critical stance has emerged over the years from classical music perspectives, traditional music and ethnomusicological vantage points, as well as music industry interests (p.52). Therefore, to trace the development of traditional music in music education along this trajectory, and tap into the consciousness of those whose voices shaped a national music education discourse, one which undoubtedly impacted on the current perception and experience of traditional music in post-primary education, a number of key publications which emerged before and after the publication of the JC and LC music syllabi are referred to, namely: Deaf Ears? (Herron 1985); The PIANO Report (1996); Crosbhealach An Cheoil - The Crossroads Conference (1996); and The MEND Report (2001).

1.1. Irish Traditional Music in Music Education c. 1850 - c. 1950

The area of change and reform in music education in Ireland in a historical context has been comprehensively researched (McCarthy 1990, 1999a). Although it is not my intention to labour excessively on matters of a historical nature, it is necessary, as mentioned, to provide an adequate degree of insight in order to fully appreciate its current context. McCarthy (1999) traces the changing historical perspectives and contexts for the transmission of traditional music from as early as the mid-1800s. At this time she explains, because of factors including perceptions of folk music on an

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22 JC was then examined for the first time in 1994.

23 Of course, given the remit of this investigation, it is not possible to provide a comprehensive historical analysis of the various ideologies which have impacted on traditional music in post-primary education today. However, these issues are considered in a most comprehensive way in McCarthy’s Passing It On: The Transmission of Music in Irish Culture.

24 McCarthy’s thesis Music education and the quest for cultural identity in Ireland, 1831-1989 (1990) and associated publication Passing it on: The Transmission of Music in Irish Culture (1999a) are an in-depth study of the interaction of heritage and musical innovation in shaping Ireland’s cultural identity, tracing the developments in Irish music education, formal and informal, from its earliest awakenings to the turn of the millennium.
international platform; an overriding commitment to Western art music traditions; and the processes of transmission associated with traditional music, traditional music had no place in national education in Ireland:

In addition to the exclusion of ballads from school culture, traditional Irish music and dance was not included in national education. At an international level, folk music was not considered favourably (if at all) in the context of formal education. It was deeply embedded in community life and not deemed necessary or appropriate in a social institution such as the school. Second, those who held control of the discourse on aesthetics and music education philosophy were English speaking, committed to Western art music traditions, and psychologically distant from the social and cultural circumstances around which traditional music revolved. Third, Irish traditional music was predominantly transmitted orally while music in education was conceived in terms of literate forms and media.

(McCarthy 1999a, p.70-71)

Following a 19th century music curriculum which was permeated by elitist and Victorian middle class values25 (McCarthy 2004a), came the 20th century where the teaching of traditional music in Ireland’s schools was caught between several agendas; namely, the political agenda of London, which was Ireland’s continued union with Britain, and the Irish agenda of cultural and political nationalism, which had as its goal complete independence from Britain. At this stage, the Gaelic League’s26 focus fell on the importance of national27 school teachers in the transmission of Irish cultural heritage, and the ensuing cultural nationalism movement of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Ireland was to greatly influence the direction of music education development.28 This growing support for the teaching of traditional music in national schools was accompanied by certain challenges which needed to be overcome however, as McCarthy outlines:

25 This resonates with Jorgensen’s (2003a) discussion of the intimate relationship between the musics of religious and artistic elites and the exercise of power. While recognising that the notion of elite is difficult to pinpoint, she cites how the ‘association between the establishment and elite music potentially subverts, marginalizes, represses, and even destroys the common music of ordinary people and devalues it in, or excludes it from, general education’ (p.32).

26 The Gaelic League is widely cited as an organisation which impacted greatly on the perception of traditional music in Ireland. Martyn (1911) commented that ‘as subsidiary work, it strives to keep alive whatever other Irish characteristics are good and likely to distinguish in an interesting manner our country from the rest of the world (p.449). Kearney (2007-8) describes The Gaelic League, which was set up in 1893 ostensibly to promote the Irish language, as utilising the social and symbolic power of Irish traditional music towards achieving its cause (p.136).

27 ‘National’ school is today’s equivalent of ‘primary’ school.

28 McCarthy points out that in reality, clear priority was given to the promotion of the Irish language as the key element in advancing the concept of Irish-Ireland (2004a, p.5).
First, no general consensus existed as to what constituted Irish music; in addition, opinions on the future of Irish traditional music varied. Traditionalists battled with modernists, conservatives with progressivists, leading to a lack of consensus as to what the child should learn as an inheritor of Irish music traditions. (McCarthy 1999a, p.88)

While primary education was caught between conflicting ideologies, intermediate music education at the turn of the century until circa 1921 had on the other hand, a ‘highly theoretical and impersonal character’ (ibid., p.105). It was deeply connected to the conservatory model of music education; as a curricular subject, ‘music was philosophically weak and pedagogically unbalanced’ (ibid., p.106). In contrast to music in national schools which responded to a variety of ideological movements abroad, music in intermediate education was built solidly on the aesthetics of Western art music and “such instruction transmitted the aesthetics of ‘high culture’, and presented music as an élitist subject” (ibid., p.99). Approaching the middle of the 20th century however, traditional music was gradually included in the curriculum in secondary schools. However, because its transmission had not been a consideration in formal education in colonial society, no infrastructure was in place to support its transmission when socioeconomic and demographic changes eventually occurred. In other words, it was heavily defined by the standards of classical musical culture already in place and had no reference to instruments associated with traditional music. As McCarthy explains:

In general, Irish musical traditions were either excluded or were adapted to concur with the values and practices of the classical tradition. The function of music education as an agent for promoting classical culture continued to be a dominant value in secondary schools ... It was not until the 1950s, when the status of Irish folk music was elevated and its social acceptance became widespread, that more serious attention was paid to native Irish music.

(McCarthy 1999a, p.130)

1.2. Irish Traditional Music in Music Education c. 1950 - c. 1990

With various economic and political initiatives occurring in the 1950s and into the 1960s, 1966 saw a new multisyllabus for music in the Intermediate Certificate (IC) and subsequently a new syllabus for the LC in 1969. In the new curriculum for certificate examinations, the role of traditional music was extended where a ‘brief survey of Irish

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29 Intermediate education is today’s equivalent of post-primary education.
music’ was introduced for the first time in the history component of the course, although this was presented as an optional question.\(^{30}\) However, this gradual expansion of traditional music into post-primary music education was still in the context of a curriculum which, from the beginning, had its roots in Western Art music, so its journey was to be a challenging one, and not without its critics. As Ó Súilleabháin recalled:

The second level student opens his music-history book (often the Irish schoolbook industry’s rehash of an outdated British colonial educational viewpoint) to be confronted with French, German, Italian, British and even Anglo-Irish names, but the great embarrassed silence is observed on the question of the musicality of the Gael.

(Ó Súilleábhain 1985, p. 46)

An interesting event which occurred in 1974 was the consideration of the expansion of traditional music in music education by the Folk Music Society of Ireland (FMSI).\(^{31}\) The FMSI included the teaching of folk music as part of its agenda,\(^ {32}\) and this meeting, which was inspired by a similar gathering at the 1973 Conference of the International Folk Music Council, held at Bayonne, is insightful for many reasons. For example, Dr. Hugh Shields posed several questions for consideration to the FMSI membership on the topic of ‘teaching folk music’. It is interesting to note that these questions were still being asked twenty-one years later at the Music Education National Debate initiative.\(^ {33}\) Included among these questions, Shields asked: ‘Are there any principles which should govern methods of teaching [folk music]?; and ‘Are there any special factors which distinguish Irish folk music from other folk music in such a way as to require special

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\(^{30}\) Before this, there was no mention of traditional music here (Rules and Programme for 1966-67, p.108).

\(^{31}\) The Folk Music Society of Ireland was set up in 1971 as a voluntary society by a committee consisting of Dr. Seóirse Bodley (chairman), Tom Munnelly (treasurer), Aoileann Ní Ógartaigh (secretary) and committee members including Breandán Breathnach, Alf MacLochlainn, Máire Áine Ní Dhonncha, Seán Ó Baoill, Proinsias Ó Conluain, Dr Hugh Shields and Caitlín Úi Ógartaigh. Its aim was ‘to encourage an informed interest in traditional music, to preserve this music and to sustain its traditions, and to promote the study of traditional music’. Its founders felt that the then recent revival of traditional music performance had not been accompanied by an equivalent growth in traditional music study and analysis. See, http://folkmusicireland.wordpress.com/fmsi-history/ [accessed 24/08/2012].

\(^{32}\) In Ireland Unplugged: The Roots of Irish Folk/Trad. (Con)Fusion, Smyth (2004) writes about the historical and present day ‘(con)fusion that exists between the terminology of Irish traditional / folk music, and the categorisation of musicians, bands, and styles of playing under each term. He discusses how the music has historically been categorised as ‘folk’ or ‘traditional’ in terms of the importance that European nationalism placed on the recovery of indigenous folk music and its formal expression. In Ireland, he says, this process was instituted in Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCE). Vallely (2011) also points out that ‘In Ireland, the term traditional is used in place of folk’ (p.281). Vallely also points to the Irish Traditional Music Archive’s (ITMA) consideration that this ‘emphasises transmission, rather than origin and circulation’ (ibid.).

\(^{33}\) MEND is discussed in detail in Section 1.4.
methods of teaching?’ (Uí Êigeartaigh 1975, p.3). At the same meeting, Tomás Ó Séilleabháin, while recognising the fact that appreciation of traditional music now formed part of the general music examination courses, argued strongly in favour of introducing a course in Irish music at LC, or at least of allowing traditional playing to be presented for the practical part of the examination, instead of classical playing (ibid., p.5). Ó Séilleabháin pointed out that ‘the competent traditional player at present gains no recognition of his proficiency in terms of marks in the music examination’ (ibid.). However, with this, questions were raised as to where the teachers and examiners of traditional playing would be found, with some members objecting on the grounds that a course in Irish music could be considered lacking in content for examination purposes. Others at the meeting were concerned that examinations might introduce ‘undesirable standardization in tunes and playing styles’ (ibid.). The approach to traditional music in the ‘secondary syllabus’ was once again questioned with Mr. Frank Corcoran (of the DES) revealing that ‘although there had been and is currently a part of the syllabus devoted to Irish music in the IC and LC music courses, the questions set have not always been such as to ensure a proper approach to the subject’ (Uí Êigeartaigh 1975, p.4). Another consideration raised at this meeting was the use of recordings which it was suggested ‘might be said to hold the same place in the teaching of folk music as printed texts in classical’, although a reservation was raised in that ‘not even the best recording was the same as hearing the live performer’ (ibid.). Finally, a pilot study was suggested by Mr. Pat Mitchell which involved the study of those schools in which the whistle and the pipes were being taught. In this study, ‘the attainment of the pupils and the attitude of the staff could be surveyed’ (ibid., p.5). In the Ceol Tire Newsletter, Uí Êigeartaigh expands on Mitchell’s suggestion and highlights the importance that was afforded to ‘listening’ by Mitchell. Also revealed are additional concerns of some of the Society’s members that resonate even today with discussions around the role and purpose of listening to traditional music within the curriculum:

He was also in favour of a course in the appreciation of Irish music right up through the school, involving a regular amount of time spent listening to the music, regular listening being more important, he believed, than concerts. The difficulty of developing an appreciation of single-line music must somehow be overcome. Tom Munnelly pointed out the difficulty that very few teachers throughout the country were interested in folk music.

(Uí Êigeartaigh 1975, p.5)

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34 Since 2010, the Department of Education and Science has been called the Department of Education and Skills.
Looking ahead a few years, the early 1980s were described as a period when curriculum change and reform was ‘one of the major issues in educational debate in Ireland, North and South’ (Coolahan 1985, p.v). It was generally felt that the arts in education lacked a ‘coherent or convincing philosophy’ (Benson 1979, p.39) and was slow to respond to changes in the cultural landscape at the time:

A fundamental problem which must be faced by Irish education in the last decades of the twentieth century concerns the means by which the educational system adjusts to cultural change and takes account of new fields of knowledge and skill.  

(Benson 1982, p.102)

Heneghan comments on the failure of the school system of music education at the time:

...the school system of music education was seen in 1985 as a failure in terms of contemporary socio/philosophical thought. With few exceptions it engaged the sympathies of neither the educators nor the learners, making music an endangered subject; the gravity of this finding was to deepen over the ensuing decade. There was insufficient concentration in the implemented curriculum; there were regional and socio-economic inequalities. Serious discontinuities between junior and senior cycles sometimes appeared as virtual deprivation; pedagogical approaches were seen as too academic and too formidable lacking in active music-making to hold the interest of the majority.

(Heneghan 2004, p.26)

Efforts to disseminate traditional music through post-primary music education were widespread, but ‘rather than creating new curricular and pedagogical structures to accommodate this set of music practices, aspects were inserted into the current curriculum’ (McCarthy 1999a, p.159). In fact, O’ Connell (2012) cites the NCCA Music Syllabus Committee’s ‘Progress Report’ (February 1990) which described the previous syllabus as ‘being weighted totally in favour of students solely with a classical background’, although it was acknowledged that ‘it does allow for some exposure to Irish traditional music’ (NCCA Music Committee ‘Progress Report’, February 1990). O’ Flynn reiterates this point where he comments that ‘prior to the mid-1990s, the post-primary music curriculum was modelled on a narrow conception of conservatoire education’ (2009, p.52). The discontinuity that existed between music at primary level and music at post-primary level was still an issue at this time, with the *Deaf Ears?* (Herron 1985) report lamenting the situation:
The majority of Irish primary school children leave school musically illiterate, with little vocal or aural training and with a repertoire of songs that is usually learned by rote. As a consequence they have no worthwhile basis from which to extend their repertoire, or to avail of music as a subject at post-primary level, the curriculum for which is anyway quite discontinuous with that at primary level.

(Benson 1985, p.vi)

In addition, the 1985 edition of *Irish Educational Studies* reveals the climate which existed at the time in terms of arts in the curriculum, with its editor referring to a number of reports which ‘highlighted the lamentable provision which exists for the arts within the education system’ (Coolahan 1985, p.v). One of the reports to which Coolahan referred, the aforementioned *Deaf Ears?* (Herron 1985), was an intensification of a sustained debate on music education at the time. It was damning on the provision of music education in Irish schools with its bleak and oft cited statement that ‘The young Irish person has the worst of all European ‘music worlds’” (Herron 1985, p.41). Benson, the Chairman of the *Deaf Ears?* Steering Committee corroborated Coolahan’s sentiment by stating that ‘by any standards the state of music education is not a happy one in Ireland’ (1985, p.viii).

### 1.3. **Irish Traditional Music in Music Education c. 1990s**

Criticism of music in post-primary education continued into the 1990s, where it was still perceived as being ‘too academic, too élitist, socially irrelevant, and emanating from a philosophy which separated art from the fabric of everyday life’ (McCarthy 1999a, p.163). In fact, the ITMA noted in 1991 that:

> The formal education system at first and second level makes little provision for traditional music, although second-level music exams, North and South, cater for players of traditional instruments. But in spite of the restrictions of the official syllabus many teachers throughout the country very successfully impart a knowledge and love of the music to their pupils.

(Carolan 1991d)

Criticism was pointed to the fact that ‘although this genre was accepted as worthy of study and practice, no new pedagogy accompanied its entry into the curriculum’ and the approach to traditional music in post-primary education was ‘regarded as an academic one along the lines of a classical education’ (McCarthy 1999a, p.163). As McCarthy
explains, all aspects of the course were assessed and ‘defined by the standards of “high” classical culture already in place’ (ibid., p.129). The problem was exacerbated, as although the DES recommended that music be included in schools, there were ‘few funds, no specialists and few teaching materials’ (Veblen 1994, p.24). Several papers touched on these prevailing issues at *Crosbhealach an Cheoil* (1996), the ‘first ever conference called to debate issues of ‘tradition’ and ‘change’ in the world of Irish traditional music’ (Vallely 1996, p.7). In his paper, MacAoidh reiterated the widely held belief that ‘despite the rare exceptions where traditional musicians are doing the actual teaching, the curriculum and the vast bulk of the teachers are approaching the subject matter from a classical music angle’ (1996, p.108). He continued, providing a stark account of the place of traditional music within the ‘formal educational structure’:

By this stage of their development, those in secondary school music classes and seeking to develop their interest in traditional music generally have obtained their training outside the formal education structure and are unlikely to have it further developed within that structure.

(Mac Aoidh 1996, p.108)

The frustration which evidently existed within elements of the traditional music community in the mid-1990s is further summed up by MacAoidh where he expressed that

I do not see any change towards greater support for traditional music in the formal system of education ... The focus therein is dominantly on classical music with commitment to traditional music argued by the author as having minimal impact on both the players as well as the overall tradition

(MacAoídh 1996, p. 111)

As we will see, these sentiments also find support in the findings of the MEND report (Heneghan 2004). Smith also admits to shortcomings within the music education system in her paper delivered at *Crosbhealach an Cheoil* (1996), and highlights the danger of music students evaluating oral traditions based on the parameters of Western art music. Smith’s quote is included here in its entirety so that its full meaning can be appreciated:

35 ‘The Critical Role of Education in the Development of Traditional Music in the Republic of Ireland’.

36 ‘The challenge of bringing oral traditions of music into an academic teaching environment’.
The emphasis upon the written in our educational system means, unfortunately, that we are training a generation of musicians (and in many cases teachers) who are not necessarily equipped to deal with music as sound in time. The performance context of Western art music, which is not so very different in its aspect and interaction from the performance context of the classroom or lecture hall, transfers relatively easily into our educational system. This, unfortunately, is not true of many oral traditions that exist in performance within their cultural envelope, and transfer poorly into the performance context of the classroom or lecture system. The quintessential meaning of music in performance, the interaction between musicians and, indeed, between the musician and his audience, is in danger of being lost in this transfer. Additionally, music students who are accustomed to defining and accepting music with certain pre-established parameters often, in my experience, evaluate other musics based on these parameters.

(Smith 1996, p.210)

Finally, the PIANO Report (1996) further highlights the dichotomy which existed at the time. While recognising that the Report’s remit was to focus on areas pertinent to the future of Irish classical music and musicians, its recommendation that the Senior Certificate music syllabus be divided into the two subject areas of ‘Music History and Criticism’ and ‘Music Performance and Composition’, without any reference to or awareness of traditional or other musics, compounds the lingering reliance on pedagogical practices and philosophical orientations associated with the Western Art music tradition which seemed to exist well into the 1990s. Over a decade after the report’s publication, this perception still existed in some quarters with O’ Flynn (2009) writing that:

...existing provision, such as it is, privileges the performance of classical music, and the pervasive influence of the classical canon is further reflected in syllabuses that continue to emphasize notation-centred and analytic approaches, along with similar tendencies in the professional preparation of post-primary music teachers

(O’ Flynn 2009, p.53)
1.3.1. Irish Traditional Music in the JC/LC Music Syllabi

The current JC music programme (examined at Ordinary and Higher level) was introduced for the first time in 1989 and has remained unaltered since. The current syllabus as well as the recent draft syllabus is divided into the three component parts of Performing, Composing and Listening. In terms of this structure, previous research has focussed on the influence of some of the prominent philosophies of music education in Ireland and internationally at the time of the design of the JC and LC syllabi. Particular attention has been paid to the influence of Swanwick’s (1979) C(L)A(S)P paradigm in influencing curriculum design and teaching practice in Ireland and elsewhere (Dillon 2001; McRory 1997; O’Connell 2012). Swanwick’s CLASP mnemonic describes an important metaphor for the promotion of procedural and experiential learning through the experiences of Composing, Audition/listening and Performance in music activity and the supporting functions of Literature and Skills.

While it is difficult to conclusively establish the particular philosophical thinking that impacted on the development of the post-primary music syllabi in Ireland, O’Connell (2012) notes that ‘the syllabus writers were conscious of such developments [in the

37 Mention must also be given to the Leaving Certificate Applied Arts Education: Music programme which is a two year programme available (in certain schools) to students who wish to follow a practical programme with a strong vocational emphasis. The LCA is an innovative programme which was established to meet the needs of those students who are not adequately catered for by the established Leaving Certificate Ordinary and Higher level programmes. There are relatively fewer students who follow the LCA Arts Education: Music programme in comparison to the established Leaving Certificate (from statistics available on www.examinations.ie: in 2009, LCA Arts Education: Music (1081 students) and established LC Music (5485 students); in 2011, LCA Arts Education: Music (1145 students) and established LC Music (5978 students)). Moreover, all students in this investigation were following the established Leaving Certificate music programme. Therefore, the LCA Arts Education: Music programme will not be considered further in this research. It is worthy of investigation at a later stage however. For further information on the LCA Arts Education: Music programme, see http://lca.slss.ie/resources/downloads/music.pdf [accessed 25/08/2012].

38 The Course Committee established by the NCCA for drawing up The Junior Certificate Music Syllabus (1989) included representatives (see number in parentheses) from the following organisations: Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland (2); Teachers Union of Ireland (2); Joint Managerial Body for Secondary Schools (1); Irish Vocational Education Association (1); Subject Association (1); Dept. of Education (Inspectorate) (2). In addition, the Leaving Certificate Music Syllabus (1996) Course Committee had representatives from the Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools (1); National Council for Educational Awards (1); and the Conference of Heads of Universities (2).

39 Christopher Small (1998) discusses performing, listening, and composing (and rehearsing) not as separate processes but all aspects of one great human activity he calls musicking. Small’s musicking resonates strongly with the findings of this research.
United Kingdom and in North America] and endeavoured to account for them in
drafting the new syllabus’ (p.79).\textsuperscript{40}

Currently, in terms of \textit{Performing on Irish Traditional Instruments}, the syllabus outlines
ten ‘approved’ instruments.\textsuperscript{41} An extensive appendix is also included which outlines
specifics for performance exams (individual and/or group performing), as well as a list
of ‘tunes suitable for most instruments’, should a student choose to ‘present a
Passing mention is made to traditional music in the \textit{Composing Skills} section of the
syllabus (\textit{ibid.}, p.10). With regard to the relationship between traditional music and
composing in the syllabi, Ó Súilleabháin’s musings on the term ‘composer’ spring to
mind where he says that ‘the term composer begins to disintegrate rapidly when it is
moved away from its original context of the Western art-music tradition’ (Ó
Súilleabháin 1982, p.59). Further to this, Ó Súilleabháin cites research at the time \textsuperscript{42} as
showing that ‘concepts of compose/composer/composition as they have come to us
from the Western art-music tradition are regarded as carrying little importance among
traditional musicians in Ireland’ (\textit{ibid.}).\textsuperscript{43} In terms of Listening Skills, the following
guidelines are offered:

\textsuperscript{40} O’Connell offers a comprehensive account of a ‘new thinking’ that influenced the development of the
Junior Certificate in particular. In her thesis, she explores the developments in music education thinking
and curriculum development in the UK to gain insight into what may have influenced the Irish context.
Three principles were identified which, according to O’Connell, are also visible in the transformation of
the Junior Certificate syllabus: ‘a generalist music education for all, the development of musical
knowledge and understanding through experiential music making, the experience of diverse musics’ (O’
Connell 2012, p.81).

\textsuperscript{41} The approved Irish traditional instruments include tin whistle, fiddle, harp, concert flute, button
accordion, piano accordion, banjo, mandolin, concertina and uilleann pipes.

\textsuperscript{42} Stephen Jardine, ‘The Composition of Tunes and their Assimilation into Irish Traditional Dance

\textsuperscript{43} The question of composition and traditional music within the post-primary music curriculum is an
interesting one. In his paper, Ó Súilleabháin continues his point saying that ‘in [traditional music]
situations where a new tune is composed, the rapidity with which it acquires anonymity as it goes through
the process of assimilation into the current repertoire is an indication of this low status [of composition].
The non-literate oral-tradition music of this country regenerates itself through creative performance, not
through composition, and this may be clearly seen in some of the terminology used. The phrase “ag
deanamh ceoil” (making/doing music), for example, refers to the act of performance, not to any process
music resonates in terms of the findings of Phase 2 of this investigation.
All candidates must show familiarity with Irish traditional music, its distinguishing features and the characteristics of different types of performances. A general account of its history and some awareness of its growth in popularity today. Irish traditional instruments and their aural recognition.

(NCCA 1991, p.14)

In the JC Music *Listening, Composing and General Study* examination, students are required to listen to three traditional music excerpts, each played twice, and answer questions related to, for example: characteristics of traditional music; types of dance tunes and time signatures; categorisation of songs; features of singing style; and features of accompaniment. In addition, students are also required to complete an essay-style question on traditional music. Although the 2008 draft syllabus is not entirely applicable to this research investigation, it is worth making some comparisons between the 1989 syllabus and the draft 2008 syllabus. Firstly, it may be worth noting that no specific mention is made of traditional music in the *Composing* section (NCCA 2008, pp.9-10), although the guidelines are open to interpretation. The *Listening* section advises that students’ knowledge should involve, amongst other outcomes, an awareness of: the music’s growth in popularity today; the various traditional Irish dance forms; the different song forms; the instruments associated with traditional music; the distinguishing features of traditional music; and (for higher level only), the differences between older and more modern performances; the preservation and transmission of traditional music etc. (*ibid.*, p.11). In terms of performance (individual and group) sources are listed ‘to give an indication of standards for Ordinary level and Higher level’ (*ibid.*, pp.22-23). In terms of the current JC syllabus, O’Connell alludes to the perception of traditional music in the syllabi:

In theory, the syllabus allows for the inclusion of diverse musical genres and styles. However, because popular music, Irish traditional music and other ethnic musics are ultimately assessed within the framework of the western classical canon, the inclusion of these musics in the syllabus potentially lead to the experience of musical alienation rather than meaningful engagement.

(O’Connell 2012, p.140)

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44 In this exam, traditional music incorporates one question, ‘Irish Music’ for which 40 marks out of a total 300 are awarded. Other questions relate to: set songs; set works; dictation; chosen songs and works; triads; melody writing; chord progressions; free composition; and general study.

45 These questions deal with areas related to traditional music instruments; the harping tradition; the collectors; the song tradition; traditional music groups and bands; composers of traditional music, etc.
All in all, the current JC music syllabus (1989) and the proposed draft syllabus (2008) are quite similar in terms of their approach to traditional music. In each, traditional music is situated, experienced, and assessed within a performing, listening, and composing framework. Although a wide range of performing activities are encouraged, performance of traditional music is ultimately assessed within a presentational performance framework. The area of listening is presented as a central consideration, and encouragingly, the features of traditional music performance are integrated in the ‘Listening Learning Outcomes’ (NCCA 2008, p.12); however, considerable focus is given to the less intrinsic activity of presenting formal knowledge as a listening learning outcome. Finally, composition is presented in the draft syllabus a similar vein as the 1989 syllabus in terms of melody writing, triads, and chord progressions (NCCA 2008, p.10).

The current LC Music syllabus (Higher and Ordinary Level) was introduced in 1997. Following the structure of the JC syllabus, the LC syllabus outlines that music students have the opportunity to experience traditional music through the Performing, Composing and Listening requirements of the Music Syllabus, with a requirement to focus on an ‘elective study’ at LC level through one of the aforementioned strands (for percentages allocated to each strand in ordinary and higher level including elective options, see Appendix A); there are no statistics available as to the number of students who choose traditional music as an elective in these areas. In Looking at Music: Teaching and Learning in Post-Primary Schools, the most recent report from the Department of Education and Science (2008), the recommendation is made that ‘greater attention should be paid to integrating and synthesising the three curricular areas of performing, composing and listening in music lessons (p.42). As it stands, the area of

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46 In terms of the findings of this research, performance is discussed in terms of what has been described as presentational and participatory principles of engagement (see, Chapter 6, Sections 6.2.2 & 6.2.3; also, see Chapter 2, Section 2.11 for a discussion on relevant literature), and how they function as the means by which students can engage with the processes of transmission.


listening\textsuperscript{49} receives the most attention in *Leaving Certificate Music Draft Guidelines for Teachers* (NCCA, 1997) (see Appendix B for extract from the Guidelines),\textsuperscript{50} and in the LC Music Syllabus itself (NCCA 1996) (see Appendix C); only cursory mention is made of approaching traditional music within the other strands. In saying this, it is important to acknowledge that in terms of the performance aspect of the LC, a student can satisfy this aspect of the exam as a traditional musician (i.e., 50% of the LC exam), and must answer the ‘Irish Music’ section of the Listening paper. Significantly, this means that a student can potentially take 55% of his/her exam as a traditional musician.

\section*{1.4. The Music Education National Debate (MEND): 1994 - 2004}

The final stop in this historical overview is a consideration of the findings and recommendations of the MEND Report (Heneghan 2004). A summary of the breadth and scope of the Report is impossible given the remit of this investigation,\textsuperscript{51} however, it will be considered here in terms of (a) its findings and recommendations on the place of traditional music in post-primary music education and (b) its position on the philosophical underpinnings of music education in Ireland before and at the time of the debate.\textsuperscript{52}

\subsection*{1.4.1. MEND and Irish traditional Music in Music Education}

The MEND initiative is one of the most recently published accounts which deals with the state of traditional music in post-primary music education. From the outset, the

\textsuperscript{49} For the LC, the ‘Irish Music’ listening question is approached in very much the same way as it is in the Junior Certificate Music Examination, in terms of the subject matter of questions. The ‘essay-style’ question relates to ‘topics’ such as: instrumentation; forms of dance music; the song tradition; innovation and preservation; collectors; fusions; regional styles; ornamentation; individual or group performers; the development of traditional music; the céilí band etc..

\textsuperscript{50} Available: http://www.stmarysballina.ie/PDF\%20Files/Leaving\%20Certificate/lc_music_guide.pdf [accessed 25/08/2012].

\textsuperscript{51} For the author’s summary of the MEND Report, see: http://journalofmusic.com/focus/mend-report [accessed 22/08/2012].

\textsuperscript{52} While it is tempting to wade into the counterpositions presented during MEND by the Reimer/Elliott philosophical debate in terms of their applicability to Irish traditional music for post-primary music education, I resist this approach given this investigation’s methodological design, and other reasons which will become clearer throughout the remainder of this chapter.
report admits that with regard to the current state of music education in Ireland ‘traditional music is a complex issue’ (Heneghan 2004, p.9) and concludes that ‘Irish traditional music is seriously under-represented in general education’ (ibid., p.377). Traditional music received considerable attention during MEND, however, the report ultimately concluded that the collected MEND commentary on traditional music was inconclusive (ibid., p.372). This is disappointing, given the awareness that surely existed of the criticism which surrounded traditional music’s then place in music education in Ireland. In saying this, much can be gleaned from MEND’s proceedings and the subsequent report wherein the issues specifically facing traditional music were discussed. The following paragraphs present a synopsis of the main findings and recommendations of MEND in terms of traditional music.

In a session titled The Role of National Music and its Potential Multicultural Extensions,53 the difficulties in importing values from traditional music were confronted, and several recommendations given.54 In summary, these difficulties were: (1) the differences between the intrinsic character of traditional music and the norms of formal education, with it being stated that ‘if the systems were to hybridize, even minimally, both would have to adapt to accommodate the newcomer without doing irreparable damage; (2) the absence of a central policy for the promotion of national culture in school music education; (3) the scarcity of suitable resources and materials; (4) an overloaded curricula; (5) and the absence of a research base to underpin music education (Heneghan 2004, pp.271-272). Dr. Kari Veblen’s observations55 offered ‘a formidable challenge ... in fashioning a framework within which the musical biculturalism of Ireland can comfortably adapt educationally in the resolution of dissonances...’ (ibid., p.276). Included in Veblen’s observations were the fact that traditional music is performance based; belongs within a rapidly evolving scenario; is heavily reliant on one-to-one interaction; has a strong social dimension; is passed on by ear; and, is presented in a pedagogically rudimentary way where technique and repertoire are seemingly inseparable (ibid., p.276).

54 This session was chaired by Mr Seán Creamer (former Dept. of Education Inspector) and reported by Ms Siobhán Kilkelly (DIT). Contributors were Professor Hormoz Farhat, Mr. Gareth Cox, Mr. Seán Creamer, Ms. Paula Zimmerman, Ms. Maeve Smith, Ms. Christine Ferguson, Ms. Nuala Staines, Ms. Peggy O’Driscoll.
55 See, MEND Proceedings, Ref. II P vi See Document 206.
It can be pointed out that the pre-MEND concern with the status of traditional music expanded into increasing awareness that the issue was but a subset of the transition to the multicultural conceptualisation of music education (Heneghan 2004, p.10). 56  Ó Súilleabháin also drew attention to the emergence of the bi-musical musician in the role that they could play in formulating a music curriculum that could accommodate both traditions 57 ‘without unduly sacrificing any of the features that contribute to a widening of musical experience and skill base’ (Heneghan paraphrasing Ó Súilleabháin 2004, p. 280). 58

Ó Súilleabháin raised wide-ranging ideas during MEND including: the appropriateness of the general music education system in promoting traditional music; the ability of an already overloaded curricula to accommodate an enhanced presence of traditional music; the adaptability and compatibility of literate and non-literate approaches; the consequences of incorporating traditional music in general formal music education; and finally, recommendations for a plan for the introduction of a ‘more balanced mix of musical repertoire into the school experience of children (Heneghan 2004, pp.11-12).

These ideas, of course, resonate strongly with the core concerns of this research. In Ó Súilleabháin’s MEND contribution, he weighs in on the initiative’s philosophical debate, contending that ‘given the vibrancy of oral-tradition music in Ireland, it is particularly inappropriate to base a music education philosophy on the primacy of music literacy’ (Ó Súilleábhain in Heneghan 2004, p.1). He continues that ‘it is essential that full recognition be given to all oral-traditional music forms if music education in Irish schools is not built on a false foundation’ (ibid.). He also believes that as an oral tradition, it is not disadvantaged in any way in terms of its complexity and depth:

It does raise issues in terms of how it is taught in the school system, either academically or practically, because any system which develops a way of teaching traditional music or introducing traditional music that would not be fully cognizant of it as an oral traditional culture, would obviously be approaching it in the wrong way.

(Ó Súilleabháin in Heneghan 2004b, p.1)

56 The multicultural conceptualisation of music education was comprehensively dealt with at MEND. While it is beyond the remit of this investigation to consider traditional music in post-primary music education in terms of the accommodation of literacy-based Western art music and aurally transmitted traditional music (i.e., the development of bi-musicality in the classroom) the issue is dealt with further in this research in Chapter 3 Section 2.7, where traditional music in post-primary music education is considered through a lens of cultural diversity. It is also discussed where findings related to the theme emerged through Phase 2 of the investigation.

57 Irish traditional music and Western art music.

58 This could be an interesting area for future research.
Ó Súilleabháin also refers to three areas of importance in terms of how music students are addressed educationally:

... the most important thing is that the students, regardless of where they're coming from, should be addressed educationally in the first instance with a respect to where they are or where they are coming from, in the second instance with a desire to widen or deepen their reflection and performance abilities in that first area and, thirdly, with a very definite educational agenda of extending the breadth and the width of their musical experience and appreciation of the ‘sense of other’ in music, whether it's within the Irish context or actually outside of the Irish cultural context.

(Ó Súilleabháin in Heneghan 2004b, p.3)

With these issues in mind, according to Ó Súilleabháin, integrating traditional music within the school system presents the challenge to devise models that would allow this to happen, without restricting the music. With the immense social and political implications that would accompany such integration, it ‘also allows us to rethink our existing structures for teaching all music’ (Ó Súilleabháin in Heneghan 2004a, p.1). In a direct reference to the treatment of traditional music in the formal education system, Ó Súilleabháin asserts that ‘the school must be willing to change in order to accommodate the music rather than the other way around’. It is natural, he continues, ‘for traditional music to change directly as a result of the school experience’, but what is important is that ‘any examination system be inclusive rather than exclusive’ (ibid., p.2). Finally, Ó Súilleabháin’s concerns regarding the institutionalisation of traditional music come to the fore:

As the tools of language and music literacy (for analytical purposes and for documentation) increasingly surround a music which continues to insist on its essential links with oral transmission, there is a very real danger that something spontaneous in the music will come under threat. An expectancy may arise that it should lie down calmly to facilitate some adjudication process; that it should pause in order to be counted; that it should wait its turn until class begins.

(Ó Súilleabháin in Heneghan 2004a, p.3)

In conclusion, while traditional music evidently received its fair share of debate during MEND, it is disappointing in that it seems that the initiative served only to highlight, yet again, the shortcomings in relation to how traditional music was being treated in post-primary music education. Anything resembling a manifesto for the promotion of music education in post-primary music education was, borrowing the words of the author, too tentative, and was reactive rather than proactive.
1.4.2. MEND and an Irish Philosophical Stance

MEND was a particularly notable occasion in the broad historical trajectory of traditional music in post-primary music education in that it brought to the fore, arguably for the first time, issues pertaining to a philosophy of music education in an Irish context. It was proposed during MEND that for any music education system to work successfully, there must be as an absolute priority, an underlying philosophy which suits the context (Heneghan 2004, p. 20). The purpose of this initiative was, among other things, ‘to establish what the context is for the Irish case’ (ibid.). As the title of this thesis establishes, a philosophical underpinning for traditional music in post-primary music education in Ireland is a core concern of this research. It is therefore essential that the degree, if any, to which music education in Ireland in general is underpinned by a philosophical orientation is established. Considering the thematic approach of the MEND report towards seeking an underlying philosophical position for music education in Ireland, and the fact that it was, in relative terms, published only recently (2004), the report is considered herein as somewhat of an authority on the matter. As Heneghan explains:

the first important finding of MEND was to draw attention to the need for a well-debated and consensus-supported music education philosophy together with the educational processes to insinuate philosophical dialectic into teacher training so that the underlying and underpinning truths about music education, however varied and disputed, might be well aired and understood.

(Heneghan 2004, p.359)

The MEND debate occurred through the lens of existing philosophical enquiry, with the report pointing to the fact that during MEND, ‘there was no shortage of philosophical advocacy, nor did a consistent view emerge, even amongst those which received special consideration at MEND’ (Heneghan 2004, p.8). According to Heneghan, the philosophical pool from which MEND drew inspiration failed to measure up to the pluralistic and contextual needs of the Irish context. Reimer, in fact, while proclaiming his academic interest and personal responsibility, admits some frustration which in his words ‘stems from the assumption on the part of the organizers on the (MEND) debate that voices from a North American perspective could add something meaningful to it’ (Reimer 1998, p.1). Heneghan explains however, that the confrontation between the philosophies of Reimer and Elliott during MEND (and in many subsequent publications on the international stage) was enormously helpful in that attempts were made to
analyse and rationalise each stance; however, he concludes that, ‘it is ... not at all to dismiss the wealth of philosophical wisdom urged upon us to find that nothing quite fitting the Irish context emerged’ (ibid., p.402). In relation to Irish music education’s philosophical discourse, two of the MEND findings are particularly stark:

(1) There was little evidence at MEND of a consistent philosophical stance underpinning music education strategy in Ireland, apart from what has been tacitly imported as part of various methodologies favoured from time to time. There is a need for greater awareness and discrimination in this respect.

(2) Without the benefit of ongoing philosophical dialectic, prospective teachers have been starved of opportunities to engage in philosophical discourse and to apply considered philosophical principles to their teaching situations. The route for philosophical underpinning to communicate effectively from original thinkers to the taught cohorts is therefore inhibited.

(Heneghan 2004, p.402)

Although Reimer, the architect of *Music Education as Aesthetic Education* (MEAE) voiced ‘some doubt as to whether the organizers of MEND were justified in assuming that American philosophers could contribute useful ideas in an Irish music education context’ (Heneghan 2004, p.113), he did provide observations for the Irish situation. Although described as ‘deceptively simple and disarmingly lucid’ (ibid.), Reimer’s queries as yet reach to the core of this research. In summary, he asks, how does a national culture influence what music education should be?; How can the ‘pop music versus art music’ issue be handled?; What are the appropriate roles of performing and of listening as educational objectives? (ibid.).

1.4.3. Bennett Reimer, David Elliott, and the Irish Context

By the time that MEND commenced, it had as a backdrop the chasm separating the two main schools of philosophical thought in music education, both of which originated in the north American Continent; the first, Bennett Reimer’s *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1989) has become associated with Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE), and the second, challenging the position of the reigning aesthetic philosophy, was the praxial philosophy of David Elliott (1995). During MEND, Heneghan was quite explicit in his intention to involve both Reimer and Elliott towards a rationalisation of their respective philosophies for an Irish audience; from an international perspective, issues surrounding these opposing philosophies have since
been extensively discussed and debated (e.g., Alperson 1991; Bowman 1991a, 2003, 2005c; Regelski 1996, 2000; Spychiger 1997; Koopman 1998; Walker 2001; Goble 2003; Maattanen 2003; Panaiotidi 2003; Westerlund 2003; Cutietta and Stauffer 2005; Elliott 2005a, 2005b; McCarthy and Goble 2005; Alperson 2010). A plethora of insightful and invaluable contributions occurred during MEND in terms of Reimer and Elliott’s philosophical points of view, and these are useful to this day. Heneghan defends MEND’s strategy to involve the American philosophical lobby in the debate as follows:

...let it be said that Ireland was ready for the novelty of personal inputs and further fertilization from the English-speaking world but from a pool not just defined by her British neighbours, whose thinking, with which we were familiar, had dominated Irish music education from its inception in the nineteenth century and through both the colonial and post-colonial eras ... Bennett Reimer should not have been mystified by our interest in the nature or maturing problems of the world’s most progressive democracy. That Ireland was not planning the flattery of imitation but seeking instead the benefits of vicarious hindsight should have suggested itself; contrast is perhaps a more potent model than similarity for critical analysis, as proved also to be the case. (Heneghan 2004, p.89)

Perhaps ironically, given Reimer’s aforementioned concerns, I take his comments as a starting point for this philosophical journey into the context of the post-primary music classroom and the experience of traditional music therein:

There is a lesson to be learned here, I believe. All of us can learn from expert others, but we also, finally, have to solve our own problems as only we fully and deeply understand them (my emphasis).

(Reimer 1998, p.1)

1.5. Conclusion

Since its introduction into post-primary music education, and into school music education in Ireland more broadly speaking, it could be said that Irish traditional music has long been subject to the thinly veiled influence of complex ideologies and power struggles. Exploring traditional music in post-primary music education during this time of change and reform can assist us in coming to a more informed understanding of the place and experience of traditional music in post-primary music education today. The MEND report was ultimately inconclusive in terms of the then place of and future directions for traditional music in school music education. However, it did highlight
consensus on the difficulties of incorporating the processes and values inherent in
traditional music into ‘institutional’, school music education contexts. Moreover, the
report concluded that in light of the absence of a consistent philosophical stance for
music education in Ireland, there was need for greater awareness in this respect, so as
the lacuna which exists on account of the absence of an ongoing philosophy dialectic
could be addressed. To deal with these broad issues, Chapter 2 introduces the concept
of ‘educative experience’ as one through which we can not only challenge the
ideological framework within which traditional music is currently experienced in post-
primary music education, but also one through which traditional music can be liberated
towards a consideration of traditional music as educative experience.
CHAPTER 2

SHAPING A DISCOURSE ON EDUCATIVE EXPERIENCE AND IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC

2. Introduction

This thesis posits that traditional music is a vibrant form of the experienced reality of those who engage in various ways with the tradition, intimately connected to and integrated with their lived experience. One of the purposes of this chapter is to orientate a concept of experience within which an idea of traditional music in the classroom as lived and educative experience can be considered. To orientate this concept, this research draws largely from the works of Dewey (1934, 1938, 1958, 2007/1916), Csikszentmihalyi (1991, 1994, 1997), and Freire (1970, 1974) who have each had a lasting impact on educational thought in and beyond the spheres of music education. In addition, a broad range of perspectives of and beyond the music education context are consulted in order to provide a scholarly grounding for this research.

A synthesis of the concepts of Dewey, Freire, and Csikszentmihalyi towards establishing an idea of ‘experience’ for this research is particularly resonant with increasing scholarly interest in the various forms of musical learning as they take place in what has been described as informal contexts outside of schools. This research is concerned with ‘informal learning’ and traditional music from three primary perspectives: informal learning as it occurs outside of schools; informal approaches to teaching and learning within school music education; and importantly, that literature which considers informal learning as occurring within an informal-formal nexus. These concepts of informal and formal learning and their place in the experience of traditional
music are core to this research. Folkestad (2005a) highlights that a significant body of 
music education literature during and especially prior to the last decade which deals 
with music education in schools focusses on formal learning practices, which he argues 
is ‘based on the assumption, either implicitly or explicitly, that musical learning results 
from a sequenced, methodological exposure to music teaching in a formal setting’ (p. 
280). In contrast, this chapter will draw attention to informal learning practices, 
especially that research which considers informal approaches to teaching and learning in 
the formal educational context of the school (Green 2001, 2008a). This change in 
perspective has resulted in a shift in focus from how to teach and the outcome of 
teaching, to what to learn, the content of learning, and how to learn (Folkestad 1998). 
Such perspectives are found in the areas of ethnomusicology, music teaching and 
learning in cross-cultural perspectives, and music education philosophy. Moreover, 
literature which frames an educative experience of traditional music within a formal-
informal nexus is considered in response to (a) the theoretical findings which emerged 
from this research, and (b), the broad field of scholarship which considers the 
transmission of traditional music solely within an informal learning paradigm.

Finally, arising from the theoretical framework of grounded theory, consideration is 
given to other bodies of literature which informed the study. These include: 
transmission and learning modalities (Barbe and Swassing 1979; Campbell 1991); aural 
awareness (Reimer 1989; Elliott 1995, 2005a; Veblen 2004; Campbell 2005; Green 
2008a; Waldron 2009c; Vallely 2011); observational and visual learning (Waldron and 
Bachman 1991; Bowman 2002b, 2004a, 2010; Seitz 2005; Bowman and Powell 2007; 
Juntunen and Westerlund 2010); tactile awareness (Juntunen and Hyvönen 2004; 
Bowman 2004a); participatory and presentational performance (Lave and Wenger 1991; 
Small 1998; Wenger 1998; Turino 2008); and the role of print, electronic, and new 
media in the educative experience of traditional music (Keegan 1996; Waldron and 

Given the nature of the transmission of traditional music, these new multilayered 
developments in scholarly research which challenge the music education status quo, and

59 They are discussed in this chapter in terms of relevant literature (Section 2.4 - 2.7), and with regard to 
the findings of this research (Chapter 6)

60 That is, through the grounded theory methodological process, various areas of enquiry were revealed.
which resonate with the challenges facing traditional music in post-primary music education today (as outlined in Chapter 1) are a core consideration of this research, and are discussed throughout this chapter. A central aspect of this discussion is the potential of educative experiences\textsuperscript{61} in Irish traditional music to challenge what Green (2008b) describes as the historically-bound, limiting, and oppressive musical ideologies, values and assumptions which can be constructed through music education and come to be accepted as common sense. It is hoped that over the course of this thesis, these broad yet interconnected insights might contribute to a greater understanding of the experience of traditional music in post-primary music education in Ireland.

\subsection{Dewey’s Pragmatist Aesthetics, Experience, and Education}

The idea of traditional music as educative experience is contingent on the concept of ‘an experience’, an idea most notably interrogated by Dewey as having its own aesthetic quality (1934, 1938, 1958),\textsuperscript{62} one characterised by a ‘satisfying integration of means and ends’ (Shusterman 2000b, p.50). Dewey presents his view on lived experience in an educational context by saying that there is an ‘intimate and necessary relation between the processes of actual experience and education’ and that the positive and constructive development of a newer philosophy in education ‘depends upon having a correct idea of experience’ (1938, p.20). Dewey stresses that ‘the more definitely and sincerely it is held that education is a development within, by, and for experience, the more important it is that there shall be clear conceptions of what experience is’ (ibid., p.28). Therefore, Dewey’s ideology which looks towards an intimate relationship between experience and education raises many questions for traditional music in post-primary music education. For example: what should an educative experience of traditional music in the music classroom be?; Is there anything inherent in this experience which ‘tends towards

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  \item As opposed to ‘mis-educative experiences’ of which Dewey (1938) speaks.
  \item It is important that Dewey’s concept of aesthetic experience is not confused with Reimer’s Music Education as Aesthetic Experience. Määttänen (2003) explains that the philosophical frameworks of Reimer and Dewey are completely different as Reimer takes one feature from Dewey and the rest of Dewey’s philosophy is ignored. Heidi Westerlund (2002; 2003) also criticises Reimer for misunderstanding Dewey, and argues that Dewey’s view of aesthetic experience does not bear the characteristics that Elliott, Regelski, and Bowman have ascribed to the aesthetic. The result of Reimer’s misunderstanding of Dewey is, as Elliott points out, a conception of aesthetic objects which exist to be contemplated in a disinterested or distanced way; that is, with what Shusterman refers to as ‘disinterested neutrality’ (2000a).
\end{itemize}
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progressive organisation of its contents?’ (ibid., p.20); what is the place and meaning of subject-matter and of organisation within experience?; how do we remove ourselves from the familiar ‘old school’ concept or organisation and develop a conception of organisation in line with a philosophy of experience? To approach these and other concerns, we need to consider Dewey’s aesthetic experience in terms of education. Before we do this however, an insight into his understanding of the concept of aesthetic experience is necessary, of which Shusterman (2000b, pp.55-56) provides a useful summary:

...aesthetic experience involves the whole vital creature and sustains integrative unity in variety, both in itself and in connection with the rest of experience (AE 42-9, 61-3, 166); it is comparatively intense or heightened, having a special pervasive quality which binds its parts together as a distinctive whole (AE 22-4, 33, 196-9); it is active and dynamic, with rhythmical processual progress that involves moments of comparative rest (AE 57-60, 159-62, 177); it is shaped through obstacles and resistance which enable it to be aesthetically expressive rather than simply emotive (AE 67-70); it is an experience of satisfying form, where means and ends, subject and object, doing and undergoing, are integrated into a unity (AE 53-5, 142-4, 201-4, 253-5); above all, it is an ‘immediate experience’, whose value is ‘directly fulfilling’ and not deferred for some other end or experience (AE 87, 91, 120-6). Dewey even defines ‘cumulation, tension, conservation, anticipation, and fulfillment as formal characteristics of an aesthetic experience’ (AE 149).

(Shusterman 2000b, pp.56-57)

2.1.1. Continuity, Interaction, and Reflective Experience

In terms of the role of aesthetic experience in education, core elements of Dewey’s (1938) philosophy of experience include: the principle of continuity of experience; the interaction of both factors of objective and internal conditions in experience; and, reflective experience. Each of these elements of Dewey’s philosophy were found to strongly underpin and inform the theoretical findings of this thesis (discussed in Chapter 6), and as we will see, the core attributes of aesthetic experience align considerably with the theories of Csikszentmihalyi (1991, 1994, 1997) and Freire (1970, 1974).

Central to Dewey’s principle of continuity of experience is the idea that every experience ‘both takes up something from those [experiences] which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those [experiences] which come after’ (Dewey 1938, p.35). This concept of continuity of experience forms the basis for the principles
of transmission which emerged from this research. Also related is Dewey’s assertion that ‘in a certain sense every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality’, and that this ‘is the very meaning of growth, continuity, reconstruction of experience’ (ibid., p.47). However, Dewey warns that this ‘growth’ and development, which are exemplifications of the principle of continuity, may take many directions and tend towards certain ends, not all of which may be educative. That is, while the principle of continuity of experience applies in some way in every educational context, the quality of the experience influences the way in which the principle applies (ibid., p.37). It is then the role of the more experienced person (or the music teacher, in most cases), as having greater maturity of experience and insight, to see in what direction an experience is heading, and to guide their students along the experiential continuum where a desire or intrinsic motivation\(^{64}\) to go on learning can be formed.\(^{65}\)

The greater maturity of experience which should belong to the adult as educator puts him [sic] in a position to evaluate each experience of the young in a way in which the one having the less mature experience cannot do. It is then the business of the educator to see in what direction an experience is heading.

(Dewey 1938, p.38)

Dewey’s second major principle which allows us to interpret the educational potential of an experience is that of the interaction of both factors of objective and internal conditions in experience. Dewey contends that both objective and internal conditions have a responsibility in deciding what kind of experience is had by the teacher and student. Objective conditions\(^{66}\) in this regard cover a broad range including the music teacher’s pedagogical processes, all resources and materials with which a student will interact, and ‘most important of all, the total social set-up of the situations in which a person is engaged’ (ibid., p.45). Historically, traditional education emphasised the

\(^{63}\) Discussed and illustrated in Chapter 6, Section 6.1 and Figure 6.1.

\(^{64}\) Intrinsic motivation is discussed further as an important consideration of Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of flow (Chapter 2 Section 2.2.1 and Section 2.2.2, and in Chapter 6 Section 6.3).

\(^{65}\) This of course has significant implications regarding the music teacher’s own experience of traditional music in initial teacher training and other contexts. Furthermore, it resonates with Freire’s philosophy where through dialogue, the teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches in the conventional sense, but the one who is taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught, also teach.

\(^{66}\) As we will see (Chapter 6 Section 6.2), Dewey’s interpretation of ‘objective conditions’ connects with what I have described as the Principles of Engagement of this research which emerged as the ‘objective’ means of engaging learners in the transmission of traditional music. Additionally, the Principles of Transmission can be interpreted through Dewey’s notion of ‘internal conditions’.
external objective conditions that entered into the control of experiences and paid little attention to the internal factors which also determine the kind of experience that a student will have. As Dewey states:

> the trouble with traditional education was not that educators took upon themselves the responsibility for providing an environment. The trouble was that they did not consider the other factor in creating an experience; namely, the powers and purposes of those taught.

(Dewey 1938, p.45)

Although school music education contexts today have unquestionably evolved far beyond what Dewey describes, his advocation, on the other hand, for an interplay of and ‘equal rights to both factors [objective and internal] in experience’ (ibid., p.42) still holds relevance for this research; that is, in considering the ways in which we engage students in traditional music as ‘objective conditions’, and the processes of transmission of traditional music as ‘internal conditions’. In other words, to ‘learn from experience’ he says, ‘is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence’ (Dewey 2007, p.117). Dewey also makes the point that experience is not something that goes on internally, exclusively within an individual’s body and mind (such as the cognitive processes of transmission as outlined in Chapter 6), but each experience has an active side which ‘changes in some degree the objective conditions under which experiences are had’ (Dewey 1938, p.39).67 There are, he says, sources outside an individual which give rise to experience, and educators should know how to use and take into account their physical and social surroundings if we are to base a system of education upon the necessary connection between education with experience.

The two principles of continuity and interaction outlined above and as evidenced through this research are not separate from each other; they are intimately connected, intercepting and uniting, and are as Dewey describes, ‘the longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience’ (ibid., p.44). Through these kind of experiences, students form the attitude of desire and motivation to go on learning (that is, experience flow), gain an appreciation of things which are worthwhile, of the ‘values to which these things are relative’, and importantly, gain an ability to extract meaning from future experiences as

67 In line with Dewey’s theory, this research (see Chapter 6) also considers how the participants’ experiences, while engaging with the principles of transmission, changed in some degree the objective conditions, or principles of engagement, under which educative experiences were had.
they occur (ibid., p.49). Dewey describes how these ‘aspects of experience’ interact to provide ‘the measure of the educative significance and value of an experience’:

Different situations succeed one another. But because of the principle of continuity something is carried over from the earlier to the later ones. As an individual passes from one situation to another, his world, his environment, expands or contracts. He does not find himself living in the same world but in a different part or aspect of one and the same world. What he has learned in the way of knowledge and skill in one situation becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with situations which follow. The process goes on as long as life and learning continue. (Dewey 1938, p.44)

Another area which I wish to visit in terms of Dewey’s (2007/1916) interpretation of experience is that of reflective experience. Reflective experience is particularly embedded in this investigation’s concept of experience, especially in its relationship to the concept of flow, and considering, in particular, the reflective modes of aural and kinesthetic awareness which, it is suggested, were aspects of the transmission of traditional music during this investigation. ‘No experience having a meaning is possible without some element of thought’ (2007/1916, pp.121-122) and reflective experience refers to the phase of thought which occurs with the ‘intentional endeavor to discover specific connections between something which we do and the consequences which result, so that the two become continuous’ (ibid.). Dewey explains that all our experiences have an inherent phase of trial and error, and reflective experience occurs where we push our observation further and ‘analyze to see just what lies between so as to bind together cause and effect, activity and consequence’ (ibid., p.122). With this extension of insight, foresight becomes more accurate and comprehensive and practical control is extended. Moreover, the cultivation of this phase of thought in essence constitutes thinking as a distinctive experience. As a traditional musician, I would suggest that Dewey’s concept of reflective experience can be seen to relate strongly to the experience of performing, where it feels as though a continuous phase of thought is being unveiled with an almost simultaneous interaction between something which I do (that is, engaging as an intrinsically motivated musician with various processes of transmission) and the consequences which result (that is, the music that is played). This is the way in which Dewey’s ‘reflective experience’ is being interpreted to underpin findings which emerged during Phase 2 of the investigation.

68 The meaning that results from Dewey’s interaction and continuity, resonates with the meaning that, it is argued, was gained by this investigation’s participants as they experienced flow (Section 2.2.1 and Chapter 6 Section 6.3), and the intrinsic motivation which was derived as a result of this flow experience.
2.2. Experience and Meaning

Irish traditional music along with its many and disparate overlapping experiential contexts are entangled with and permeated by layers of musical meaning, and those who engage with the tradition are known to extract significant meaning from their experiences. According to Green (2008b), any musical experience usually involves some kind of meaning-making processes that go on in the mind of the listener, and as we will see, these processes are important not least as potential motivational aspects of learning traditional music. In terms of articulating a theoretical position in which to consider meaning-making processes, it was previously considered how Dewey’s principles of continuity and interaction can intercept and unite in a way which encourages students to extract meaning from educative experiences in music education. Several other insights from recent literature are also considered here (Green 1998, 2006, 2008b; Csikszentmihalyi 1991, 1994; Dillon 2007) to shine light on these ‘meaning-making processes’ and explore the role of the teacher and student in creating meaning through their engagement with traditional music.

2.2.1. The Concept of Flow and Experience

Csikszentmihaly’s concept of flow (1991; 1994), the essence of optimal experience, has gained increasing attention in music education scholarship (Custodero 1999, 2002, 2010; Sheridan and Byrne 2002; St. John 2006), and more specifically with regard to the area of musical experience and musical meaning (Dillon 2007). The flow paradigm, according to St. John, is ‘useful as it honors the individual nature of musical experience unfolding in the moment’ (2006, p. 1651). It is considered particularly appropriate for this context given the responses of students when describing various experiences of traditional music in the classroom. In terms of its resonances with the other theoretical concepts which informed this study, flow is particularly interesting in light of: (a) Dewey’s discussion on the intercepting principles of continuity and interaction; (b) those aspects of transformation and liberation inherent in Freire’s philosophy; (c) the consideration of flow as ‘intellectual change’; and (d) meaning making processes inherent in music making.

69 Discussed further in Chapter 6, Section 6.3.
Csikszentmihaly spent over thirty years researching the qualities of optimal experience, identifying that people who are challenged and have the capacity to meet that challenge feel *flow*, and suggesting that people who experience *flow* (often through arts and sporting activities) find it significant, valuable and meaningful. Csikszentmihaly suggests that the phenomenology of what he terms optimal experience has eight major common characteristics, each of which were identified at various stages over the course of Phase 2 of this investigation. According to Csikszentmihaly, ‘when people reflect on how it feels when their experience is most positive, they mention at least one, and often all, of the following’ (1991, pp.49-67): confronting a challenging activity that requires skills, and that we have a chance of completing; a merging of action and awareness occurs where concentration is deep and the person’s attention is completely absorbed by the activity; the task undertaken has clear goals and provides immediate feedback; one acts with a deep but effortless involvement that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life; exercising a sense of control over one’s actions; a loss of self-consciousness occurs, yet paradoxically the sense of self emerges stronger after the *flow* experience is over; finally, the sense of the duration of time is altered, with time seeming to no longer pass the way it ordinarily does.

Internally realised, *flow* is deeply connected to and contingent upon the concept of intrinsic motivation or the attitude of desire to go on learning of which Dewey speaks; as Dillon (2007, p.71) points out, the intrinsic nature of arts activity has been consistently discussed amongst music and arts education theorists (Dewey 1934; Swanwick 1988, 1994; Reimer 1989; Reimer and Wright 1992). The *flow* paradigm provides a sense of discovery, a creative feeling of transporting the person into a new reality, pushing the person to higher levels of performance, and leading to previously undreamed-of states of consciousness (Csikszentmihaly 1991, p.74). In this regard Csikszentmihalyi represents a *flow* activity as existing along two dimensions of experience namely ‘challenges’ and ‘skills’, where the individual evaluates challenge and skill based on personal perception in-the-moment (*ibid.* 1991, p.165). To sustain this optimal experience, ‘skills must improve to meet new challenges, and in turn, challenges must improve to continue attracting enhanced skills (Custodero 2002, p.4). For example, activities such as listening to music, performing music, or the ‘body rhythms’ activity of Phase 2 were particularly conducive to the experience of *flow* (see Chapter 6, Section 6.3). The graph below (see Figure 2.1) adapted from Dillon (2007, p.47) and Csikszentmihalyi (1991, p.74) represents Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of *flow*
The two dimensions of flow, namely ‘challenges’ and ‘skills’, are inherent qualities of the four principles of transmission\(^{70}\) which in many respects, enable the learner to engage with Dewey’s principle of continuity of experience towards the attainment of reflective experience.

Figure 2.1 *Flow and musical experience*

According to this graph, if a certain task (such as learning a tune) is too challenging then the result is anxiety, while if is not challenging enough the result is boredom. The *flow* channel represents the point where the challenge and the ability to meet the challenge (skills) intersect, and this results in a feeling of the task flowing from our bodies and mind effortlessly (Dillon 2007, p.47); in short, transforming the self by making it more complex (Csikszentmihalyi 1991, p.74). These aspects of transformation and complexity resonate with Custodero’s (1999, p.5) consideration of cognition as ‘intellectual change’ and her portrayal of the strong relationship between *flow* experience and cognition. As we will see, this is an important direction for this research in terms of the cognitive processes associated with a learner’s engagement with the principles of transmission (Chapter 6 Section 6.1). According to Custodero:

Evidence linking the measurement of *flow* with learning and cognition suggests an important, unexplored approach for increasing awareness of children’s musical understanding.

(Custodero 1999, p.7)

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\(^{70}\) Discussed and illustrated in Chapter 6, Section 6.1 and Figure 6.1.
Moreover, Custodero proposes the concept of *flow* as a window on cognitive processes where ‘the interface between cognition and flow can be defined not only through the parallelism between individuals’ attempts to maintain flow through increasing their own challenge levels and the notion of a transformational imperative’ (1999, p.6) but also by the individuals’ own perceptions of high challenge and high skill for a given activity (ibid. 2002, p.3). In this way, Custodero’s sentiments highlight the connection between flow experience, cognitive function, and intrinsic motivation. These matters are discussed in Chapter 6 in terms of the investigation’s findings.

### 2.2.2. The Concept of Flow, Meaning-Making, and Intrinsic Motivation

According to Csikszentmihalyi, creating meaning involves bringing order to the contents of the mind by integrating one’s actions into a unified and seamless flow experience. Csikszentmihalyi describes four areas of such meaning in relation to flow. The first relates to the ‘needs of the organism’ while the other three are termed ‘self-interest’, ‘community/family’ and what he calls ‘reflective individualism’ (1994, p.222).

In terms of music making, Dillon (2007) finds that Csikszentmihalyi’s areas of meaning align with his own research. In relation to the findings of this current study, we will see that the interaction of the principles of transmission and the principles of engagement align considerably in respect of Dillon’s categories of meaning. These are his concepts of: ‘personal meaning’, where the activity and experience of making music are intrinsically motivated with the music making activity communicating with us personally; ‘inter-personal meaning’ where music has meaning in a social sense and meaning is about the relationship between the self and others (such as the music teacher); and ‘cultural meaning’ which is located in a combination of intra- and inter-personal meaning and fundamentally ‘is a sense of well-being and self-esteem gained through music making and it is predicted upon a reciprocal interaction of the music product and the music maker with the community’ (Dillon 2007, p.68). Moreover, Dillon’s categorisation of meaning resonates in some respects with Dewey’s previously outlined internal (that is, personal meaning) and objective (that is, inter-personal meaning) conditions of experience, and the interaction (that is, cultural meaning) of both factors of experience. In conclusion, Dillon suggests that each of these ‘meanings of music’ are potentially motivational aspects of learning music which may occur in combination or individually. Furthermore, he refers to the importance of the
relationship between teacher and student in creating meaning. This aligns with the principle of transitioning roles of more experienced person(s) and less experienced person(s) in this research,\(^{71}\) where the ‘teacher as builder’ can encourage an intrinsically motivating environment. In ‘living through’ the experience of others (such as the teacher) and sharing a meaning, the student can, according to Dillon, arrive at an intrinsically motivating experience (ibid., p.70).

### 2.2.3. Ideology and the Construction of Value

Another theory on musical meaning which connects with the motivations and findings of this research is presented by Green (2008b) as existing between two different ‘virtual aspects’ of meaning she identifies as ‘inherent meaning’ and ‘delineated meaning’. According to Green, positive or highly affirmative responses to inherent meanings likely occur when individuals are highly familiar with the musical syntax, and contrastingly negative experiences arise when they are unfamiliar, often resulting in the musical syntax being perceived as ‘too repetitive’ or ‘not very catchy’ (see Chapter 5, Table 5.4 Group A & B Responses: Students’ perceptions of Irish traditional music). Similarly, we have a range of responses from positive to negative in relation to delineated meaning. Positive responses to delineations occur when the delineations correspond, in the students’ view, to issues they feel good about; for example, that traditional music ‘brings people together’, is ‘fun’, and ‘make[s] you smile’ (ibid.). On the other hand, negative responses to delineations occur when they feel that the music belongs to a social group that they cannot identify with (for example, Group A students were initially of the opinion that traditional music was for ‘old people’, ‘people in the country’, and was not ‘cool’ (Group A observation 21/09/2009). Furthermore, musical ‘alienation’ occurs when the students feel negative towards both inherent and delineated meanings (Green 2006, p.103). Green suggests that although inherent and delineated meaning must always co-exist, we do not always feel the same way about each of them. For example, in a music education context, a student may be negative towards one aspect of musical meaning, such as the syntactical detail of a reel (inherent meaning), but may be simultaneously positive towards the other, such as the social event of céilí dancing (delineated meaning). Finally, musical ‘celebration’ is experienced when ‘a

\(^{71}\) See Chapter 6 Section 6.2.1.
positive experience of inherent meaning is accompanied by positive inclinations towards delineations’ (ibid., 2005, p.83).

These aspects of musical meaning are important in that Green asserts that the focus by a music teacher on one value over another already contains implications on the value that they are placing on a particular music. That is, in all musical experience, both the inherent and delineated aspects of meaning must occur (Green 2006, p.101), but she argues that the focus by a teacher on one over the other already indicates to the student what value the music holds. For example, if a teacher presents music only, or largely in terms of its ‘inherent’ aspects, the suggestion is that its significance derives from factors that are not tied to any specific social situation. For example, according to Green, the teaching of classical music generally focusses on ‘inherent’ technical aspects of music, that is the notes and how they are composed and performed or the inter-sonic relationships of musical material, whilst the treatment of other musics involve concentrating largely on extra-musical or delineated aspects such as the uses of the music; the connotations that the music carries, that is, its social, cultural, religious, political or other such associations. Green continues that drawing attention mainly to the social contexts or ‘delineations’ of the music, suggests that the ‘music itself’ is of less complexity and importance. In other words, the music is a servant of its social context, it cannot be universal, eternally valid or autonomous. Green concludes however, that both aspects of musical meaning music occur in all musical experience, ‘for we could not notice any inherent musical meanings without simultaneously conceiving of a fundamental delineation’ (Green 2006, p.103). Where these aspects of musical meaning gain increasing relevance to traditional music in post-primary music education is in consideration of students’ (as well as the teachers’) responses to inherent and delineated meanings.72 For example, in the Phase 1 exploratory questionnaire, teachers expressed positive responses (e.g. beautiful, intricate, uplifting etc., see Chapter 4, Table 4.1) and negative responses (e.g., boring, tuneless etc., ibid.) to inherent and delineated meanings when asked their opinions and thoughts on traditional music.

72 This issue is dealt with comprehensively with regard to teachers’ and students’ responses to inherent and delineated meanings during Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the investigation.
In applying Green’s research to classroom music, unfortunately many students have ‘ambiguous’ experiences, or worse, ‘alienated’ experiences resulting from negativity towards the inherent and delineated meanings of much ‘classroom’ music. This, as we will see, did not seem to be an issue in this investigation, with a majority of the investigation’s participants feeling that a connection did generally exist between music in school and music outside school (see Chapter 5, Section 5.1.1). In terms of traditional music however, listening to music such as traditional music was simply not part of the cultural practices of the majority of participating school children (see Chapter 5, Section 5.1.3), and without this regular listening, positive experience of inherent meaning is unlikely to occur. Green outlines the further complexity of the situation, given the fact that any music’s delineations are sure to change when brought into a new context of reception; for example, in terms of traditional music, from a community to classroom, and more often than not, ‘exam’ context. As a result, traditional music that carries positive delineations inside the classroom is hard to sustain as part of a curriculum, as once inside the curriculum it tends to be treated by teachers, exam boards and National Curricular requirements largely as though its inherent meanings warrant the same kinds of attention as those of classical music (Ó Súilleábhain 1985, 2004b; McCarthy 1999a, 2004b; Smith 2005; O’Connell 2012); where it is ‘ultimately assessed within the framework of the western classical canon’, as O’Connell (2012, p.140) points out.

To counter this, Green moves to reclaim or retrieve the notion of ‘musical autonomy’ whereby she suggests that by paying attention to how children learn informally, we allow an engagement with musical inherent meanings as a theoretical aspect of virtual musical autonomy from social contexts. For example, considering Green’s suggestion, imagine a class where young teenagers experience traditional music by way of a pedagogy which is disassociated to some extent from practices with which it is usually associated; then imagine a contrasting situation where the pedagogy is sensitive to traditional musicians’ learning practices beyond the classroom (as occurred during Phase 2 of this research, for example), and where musical affirmation then arises from

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73 For example, it was found during Phase 2 that a minority of participating students listened to Irish traditional music in their personal time, and of these students, the majority responded that it only happened on rare occasions.

74 This thesis’ articulation of a theory of educative experience for Irish traditional music in post-primary music education aims to present a theory within which a suitable assessment strategy could potentially be developed.
‘a virtual experience of inherent meanings logically set free from delineations’ (Green 2005b, p.89). It is through such experiences, according to Green, that new musical and social horizons can appear. In this way, the students are bringing inherent meanings into being, and are able to imbue the music with a new delineated meaning of their own. The previous delineations are then exposed as ideological historical contingencies, and the potential freedom, or autonomy, of such content from previously taken-for-granted assumptions is thus exposed (ibid., 2006, p.114).

2.3. Freire’s ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ and Critical Pedagogy

As another layer of the philosophical habitus orientated for this research, Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970) has become increasingly relevant in terms of the need for fostering a consciousness that leads to experiences in music education which are revealing, liberating, and transformative. Freire developed his methodology as well as his educational philosophy to directly engage the question of how to confront what he called oppressive forces and create emancipatory or liberating education for the ‘oppressed’. He contends that through the process of emancipatory education, or what he calls conscientização (or conscientization, discussed in Section 2.3.2), transformation and liberation in oppressive situations can be achieved. Freire’s philosophy is considered in this thesis for various reasons. Firstly, if we reflect on the historical trajectory of traditional music in post-primary music education as outlined in Chapter 1, it could be argued that traditional music is, at least in some ways, experienced and assessed within an ideological framework which leans towards the western classical canon, and the ideological construction of musical value associated with this canon. This point resonates with Green’s assertion that there is little disagreement nowadays that in its concentration on Western classical music for at least the first three-quarters of

75 Green (1988) deals comprehensively with the highly complex notion of ideology and the construction of musical values in music education through the three central characteristics of ideology; these are, reification, where an abstract concept is made ‘more real’, with ‘thing-like’ properties; legitimation, which means that it tends to appear morally justifiable; thirdly, where ideology helps to perpetuate social relations through these processes of reification and legitimation, by making social relations seem natural and legitimate ‘as they already are’ (p.4). Interestingly, Green contends that Adorno, a provocative writers on ideologies about music, should have given more consideration to the nature of musical experience as it takes place in time, if he was to avoid reifying both music and musical ideology (p.12).

76 Pedagogy of the Oppressed, which is the ‘pedagogy of people engaged in the fight for their own liberation’ (Freire 1970, p.35) outlines Freire’s approach to libertarian and transformative education.

77 Freire’s work was focussed in the North East of Brazil.
the twentieth century, ‘music education participated in the construction and perpetuation of certain ideologies about musical value that privileged this musical style’ (Green 2005a, p.85). Secondly, this research finds a dialogue with Freire’s educational philosophy deeply formative in orientating a concept of experience, not least considering Freire’s penchant for demonstrating the dialectical relationship between theory and praxis throughout his work; but also considering the role of enculturation (considered later in terms of its relation to the processes of transmission associated with traditional music) in enabling a group to transform itself across generations (Jorgensen 2003a, p.19). Thirdly, further justification for a consideration of Freire’s ideas as informing a philosophical orientation for this research is the emphasis which Freire places on the role of the teacher and student, where the students are critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher. This concept resonates with the idea of an educative experience of traditional music as being grounded in teachers’ and students’ lived and shared experience.

2.3.1. ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ and the Irish Context

Although it is beyond the remit of this research to provide a broad analysis of Irish music education through the lens of Freire’s oppressor / oppressed dichotomy, some attempt will be made to situate the Irish context within Freire’s philosophical theory and with this, further the orientation of a concept of experience. If we consider, as Freire does, the teacher/student relationship, and even the music education system and those of us who operate within it through the lens of an oppressor/oppressed analogy, Freire’s conviction is that no matter how submerged in a ‘culture of silence’ an individual or people may be, given the appropriate tools, he/she or they is/are capable of looking critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others. With these tools, Freire maintains that we can begin to recognise a system of oppressive relations, and our place in that system. In commenting on the Irish context, Freire stated that the objective in education is to be involved in a process of knowing, that is, ‘knowing - how to challenge the oppressed people of Ireland to know, to read their reality’ (Freire and Kirby 1982, p.48). In other words, to be conscious of one’s reality and ‘know that you

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78 In 1982, Peadar Kirby (Professor Emeritus of International Politics and Public Policy in the Dept. of Politics and Public Administration, University of Limerick), interviewed Paulo Freire for The Crane Bag.
know’. Freire gives a portrayal of an oppressive social structure as silencing the institution of education under the mask of the ‘democratic’ ideology-of-the-day; perhaps not dissimilar to the use of traditional music in Irish education to further certain ideologies since the 19th century (as discussed in Chapter 1). From this macro viewpoint however, Freire gives us the critical tools to reflect on and understand the process through which we come to know what it means to be at the periphery of the intimate yet fragile relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed (Macedo 2000, p. 11). In terms of this research, positioning the experiential reality of post-primary music teachers and students according to Freirean perspective gives rise to some probing questions which we can use to reveal and critique the experience of traditional music in the post-primary classroom.

2.3.2. Liberation and Transformation through Conscientization

As previously mentioned, according to Freire (1970, 1973) the way out of the dilemma of oppression is through the process of emancipatory education, or what he calls conscientization. This is the phenomenon that occurs where both students and teachers realise that they ‘know that they know’. 80 Conscientization implies knowing that includes understanding and the ability to act on the learning in such ways as to affect change. With conscientization, students (and teachers) would experience the total reality of traditional music in the classroom as opposed to seeing traditional music as a cultural artifact. Jorgensen (2003a) describes how alternatively, the force of tradition can result in the status quo being comfortable for, and protecting the interests of those who have been accepted into a social system (p.40); where, in the words of Freire, teachers and students prefer the security of conformity to a system to a creative communion produced by freedom (1996, p.30). On the other hand, a consideration of Freire’s theory for this research proposes a scenario of an experience of traditional music in post-primary music education not as a closed situation from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which teachers and students can liberate and transform.

79 Jorgensen (2003a) also states that these dehumanising and oppressive forces are systematic, permeate every societal institution, and are embedded in institutional beliefs, values, norms, structures, and practices (p.6).

80 This is not unlike the learning or ‘lightbulb’ moments described by teachers and students during the Lesson Observation Critical Incident Technique (LOCIT) process, discussed in Chapter 3 and throughout Chapter 6.
In order for this liberation\textsuperscript{81} and transformation to happen however, the teachers and students must firstly perceive the experience as being limiting\textsuperscript{82} and this realisation must then become the motivating force for \textit{conscientization}.

\subsection*{2.3.3. Intercommunication, \textit{Banking}, and the Role of the Teacher}

Education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students.

\begin{center}
(Freire 1996, p.53)
\end{center}

Any pedagogy of the oppressed cannot be developed or practised by the oppressors, but those who recognise or begin to recognise themselves as oppressed must be among the developers of this pedagogy. In other words, the revolution is made by students and teachers acting together in unshakable solidarity as \textit{actors in intercommunication} (Freire 1996, p.110).\textsuperscript{83} This, the first stage\textsuperscript{84} of a libertarian pedagogy occurs when the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation (\textit{ibid.}, p.36). As Freire explains, ‘it is absolutely essential that the oppressed participate in the revolutionary process with an increasingly critical awareness of their role as Subjects of the transformation’ (\textit{ibid.}, p.108). Any ambiguity regarding their role in this process will result in the oppressed merely imagining that they have been liberated.

Freire makes a distinction between the concept of \textit{banking education} and one which encourages the simultaneous nature of teaching and learning through problem posing

\begin{list}{}
\item \textsuperscript{81} Liberation according to Freire is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it (1996, p.60).
\item \textsuperscript{82} The music teachers’ initial motivation to become involved in the research is perhaps an example of how they perceived the experience of traditional music in their own classrooms as being somewhat ‘limiting’. Each teacher at the onset of the investigation referred to the challenges of bringing traditional music into the classroom in relevant and meaningful ways. As the action research aspect of the investigation progressed, the teachers’ relationship (and that of their students) with traditional music was seen to transform in line with Freire’s \textit{conscientization}. That is, we arrived to a point in the investigation where the participants ‘knew that they knew’. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.
\item \textsuperscript{83} This resonates with the purpose, motivation, and direction of this research investigation.
\item \textsuperscript{84} In the second stage, in which the reality of oppression has already been transformed, the pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy of all people in the process of permanent liberation (Freire 1996, p.36).
\end{list}
(that is, a liberating or dialogical education). Banking education focuses on ‘a preconceived structure of the subject rather than on the student’s psychological mind-set of personal construction of knowledge’ (Jorgensen 2003a, p.35). This resonates with Small’s (1977 / 1980) criticism of the idea of knowledge which pervades the entire system of schooling from beginning to end as being ‘an independent entity, that is, as existing outside the knower ... regardless of whether anyone knows it or not’ (p.184). Small also contends that the very physical structure of the physical classroom supports this idea of the pupils as ‘consumers of knowledge’, where ‘it is clear, before a word has been uttered the direction from which knowledge is to come’ (ibid., p.185). Furthermore, according to Small, the syllabus, ‘the outward and visible sign of the subject ... which lays out what the student is required to learn and on what he is to be examined ... effectively cuts him off from learning, since everything lying outside the syllabus is not examinable and therefore not worth teaching’ (ibid., p.186):

The syllabus narrows the student’s vision of knowledge and cuts him off from precisely those fuzzy areas at the edges of subjects that are the most interesting and rewarding - if, in fact, he is allowed to become aware of their very existence.

(Small 1977 / 1980, p.187)

Although there were many examples of each teacher teaching beyond the syllabus requirements, an example of a limiting aspect of the syllabus emerged during Phase 2 where Bríd commented on the area of regional styles, which is not on the JC syllabus, that ‘the Department kind of make it a complicated concept’ and that exploring regional styles with 2nd year students ‘would be going beyond what I would have taught’ (Bríd meeting 13/10/2009).85

Freire states that those committed to liberation must reject the banking concept in its entirety, and replace it with the posing of the problems of human beings in their relations with the world (1996, p.60); this, he explains, will involve a constant unveiling of reality. Importantly, in terms of the role of the teacher and student, Freire maintains that through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist, and a new concept emerges where the teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches in the conventional sense, but the one who is taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teaches. He continues, ‘they become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow ... the students - no longer docile

85 This is discussed further in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1.
listeners - are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher’ (*ibid.*, p.61). For the dialogical, problem-posing teacher-student, ‘the program content of education is ... the organized, systematized, and developed “representation” to individuals of the things about which they want to know more’ (*ibid.*, p.74). As Freire explains:

> there is another kind of teacher, the teacher who is absolutely convinced not because somebody told them but because he or she experiences strongly this certainty, that it is impossible to teach without learning. It is impossible to dichotomise teaching from learning, educating from being educated

(Freire and Kirby 1982, p. 45)

Working towards a synthesis of the concepts of Dewey and Freire to orientate a concept of educative experience, close connections can be identified between Freire’s dialogical teacher-students and what Dewey refers to as the ‘general principle of social control of individuals without the violation of freedom’ (1938, p.54). With this general principle, ‘the primary source of social control resides in the very nature of the work done as a social enterprise in which all individuals have an opportunity to contribute and to which all feel a responsibility’ (*ibid.*, p.56). That is, Dewey explains, ‘the control is social, but individuals are parts of a community, not outside of it’ (*ibid.*, p.54). By way of social control, Dewey proposes that the more experienced educator should use their greater knowledge of the world to ‘arrange conditions that are conducive to community activity’ (*ibid.*, p.58). This principle of social control has potential implications for the post-primary music teacher, as Dewey explains:

> When pupils were a class rather than a social group, the teacher necessarily acted largely from the outside, not as a director of processes of exchange in which all had a share. When education is based upon experience and educative experience is seen to be a social process, the situation changes radically.

(Dewey 1938, p.59)

As well as alluding to the teacher regarding his/her role in the classroom, this ideology also speaks to the student regarding his/her role in the educative process. In his discussion of critical pedagogy which is grounded in a Freirean perspective, Schmidt also discusses the role of the student and teacher where he exclaims that:

86 There are also close connections in this respect with Lave and Wenger’s (1991) reconceptualisation of learning as a process of social and personal transformation within communities of practice. The ideas of Lave and Wenger are discussed further in Section 2.11.
Music education needs to connect the experiences that students and their teachers bring to the classroom. Music classrooms can be the most opportune place for this to happen. Music education could impart knowledge through the eyes and voices of individuals that, themselves, constitute these cultural and social backgrounds rather than through harmonious consensus and careful representation of certain cultural and social elements (Schmidt 2005, p.9).

As Dewey says, ‘there is, I think, no point in the philosophy of progressive education which is sounder than its emphasis upon the importance of the participation of the learner in the formation of the purposes which direct his activities in the learning process’ (1938, p.67). What this means is that the more experienced teacher’s suggestion should be a starting point ‘to be developed into a plan through contributions from the experience of all engaged in the learning process’, through ‘reciprocal give-and-take’ (ibid., p.72), where everyone involved grows and develops through a shared social process.

### 2.4. Informal Music Education: An Emerging Approach

Freire’s dialogical approach to education finds a kindred spirit in the informal approach to education; in fact, informal education has been described as education for social change and liberation (Smith 1997, 2002). As has been alluded to, informal learning approaches in formal music education contexts is a rapidly emerging field of study, with consensus growing that musical learning should be considered in a much broader context than is typical of much contemporary research literature (Folkestad 2006; Karlsen 2012). In fact, in recent years, several peer-reviewed journals and a recent publication (Karlsen and Vakeva 2012) have focussed exclusively on the broad area of informal learning. The general consensus has been that the study of informal learning outside institutional settings has contributed important knowledge to aspects of music education. Gower (2012), for instance, exclaims that ‘Integration of informal approaches into the music classroom is one of the most significant initiatives in secondary music education in recent years and practitioners are accessing resources developed by teachers for teachers and adapting these to suit their particular circumstances’ (p.17). By describing such learning variously as informal or non-formal,

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a distinction is drawn between this kind of learning and *formal* learning (Kanellopoulos and Wright 2012, p.133), and as Jaffurs (2006) suggests, ‘how we define the formal setting and practice has implications for the study of the informal scenario’ (*ibid.*, p.5). As the terms ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ seem to provide us with ‘many inconsistencies and mixed interpretations’ (Mans 2009, p.81), each approach is given due consideration throughout this chapter so that a clear picture of how the findings of this thesis relate to each approach can be subsequently determined.

### 2.4.1. A ‘Formal’ Paradigm

Firstly, in terms of the formal education environment, Strauss (1984) defines the formal paradigm of schooling as emanating from the ‘industrialized West’, going on to define Western schooling as a form of education that is ‘deliberate, carried on “out of context” in a special setting outside of the routines of daily life, and made the responsibility of the larger social group’ (p. 195). Formal learning has been described as that which occurs in a traditional pedagogic environment where clarity of goals and procedures are clearly defined in advance and where learning results in certification or assessment. Eraut (2000) also gives a clear description of his interpretation of formal learning including ideas such as a prescribed learning framework, organised learning event, presence of a teacher, award of a qualification, and specific outcomes. It is by its very nature structured, outcome-orientated in terms of achievement of a set of standards and it usually led by a person with acknowledged expertise and relevant experience (Turner 2006). Folkestad describes the formal learning situation from a music education perspective:

> In the formal learning situation, the activity is sequenced beforehand. That is, it is arranged and put into order by a ‘teacher’, who also leads and carries out the activity. However, that person does not necessarily have to be a teacher in the formal sense, but a person who takes on the task of organising and leading the learning activity, as, for example, one of the musicians in a musical ensemble. Moreover, this position does not have to be static, although this is commonly the case.  

(Folkestad 2006, p.141)

Bowman (2004b) describes the formal teaching environment from this perspective as being ‘frozen’ and problematic because there ‘frequently comes with institutionalized study a degree of technical polish and refinement uncharacteristic of praxis in the field
outside’ (p. 41). ‘Formal’ is also widely utilised in an Irish context as a descriptor for primary, post-primary, and third-level education settings in Ireland.

2.4.2. An ‘Informal’ Paradigm

In general terms, Turner (2006) presents informal learning as a broadly based concept with a vast potential to be explored and suggests that informal learning has at least three components: learning through experience; implicit learning, as part of the intuitive process (that is, what we know but often cannot tell); and non-taught learning. Similarly, Eraut (2004) suggests that informal learning has three elements: implicit learning, which involves a lack of deliberation or conscious effort to learn; reactive learning, which is based on immediate action with little or no time for any form of reflection; and deliberative learning, where definite learning goals are identified. It also occurs outside traditional learning environments, is not the result of deliberation and does not normally result in certification (Eraut 2000). In relation to music education, informal learning is discussed in detail below with reference to recent literature in the area (Green 2001, 2008a; Jaffurs, 2004, 2006; Folkestad 2005a, 2006; Väkevä 2006; Allsup 2008; Rodriguez 2009; Wright and Kanellopoulos 2010).

2.5. Lucy Green’s ‘Music, Informal Learning and the School’

As one of the most prolific academics in the field of informal learning in music education (1988, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2012), Green’s findings in relation to informal learning (albeit in the context of popular music) play a central role in this research. Therefore, considerable mention is given to them throughout this chapter. In a research and development project, as outlined in Music, Informal Learning and the School (2008a), Green attempted to adopt and adapt aspects or ‘principles’ of popular musicians’ informal music learning practices for use in the formal environment of the school classroom. These actions were taken to counteract the core problem of popular music’s presence being restricted to a change of curriculum content, a concern which resonates
strongly with the integration of traditional music into the post-primary music curriculum. As Green explains:

In developing this content, we have focussed mainly on the music itself - the product - and have largely failed to notice the processes by which this product is transmitted in a world outside the school. Thus the changes we have made in our curriculum content lacked any corresponding change in our teaching strategies.

(Green 2006, p.107)

Green’s eventual aim was to consider how classroom pedagogy could draw on informal learning practices outside the school, with specific regard to the popular music genre, in order to ‘recognize, foster and reward a range of musical skills and knowledge that have not previously been emphasized in music education’ (2008a, p.1).\(^88\) It could be argued that Green’s previous and seminal text, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education* (2001) helped to legitimise popular music as a field of education research and cleared the way for its inclusion in schools. As Allsup (2008, pp.2-3) explains, it is of importance in that it is amongst the first of a wave of music education research which looked at popular music from the standpoint of teachers, schools, and applied instruction. Since then, an expanding field of scholarship is flourishing around the importance of popular music and the way in which it is taught (Folkestad 2005a; Green 2006, 2008a; Väkevä 2006; Rodriguez 2009). The context for Green’s research was the existence of a general unawareness of the informal music learning practices through which young popular musicians seemingly teach themselves. Furthermore, little was known about the pedagogical practices of popular musicians, the common experiences of those involved in informal music learning, the experiences popular musicians have had with formal music education, how informal music learning practices may have changed over the years, or the possibilities that these practices may hold for the field of music education (Heuser 2005). Of course, these considerations are deeply resonant with current and future directions of traditional music in post-primary music education in an Irish context, and as such they have informed the theoretical findings of this research.

\(^{88}\) Green’s work on informal ways of music learning and the introduction of new pedagogical methods in the classroom became a major inspiration for Musical Futures, which began its journey as an initiative to find new and imaginative ways of engaging all young people, aged 11 - 18, in meaningful music activities. Information on Musical Futures is available at: http://www.musicalfutures.org.uk/ [accessed 10/112011].
2.5.1. Green’s Five Fundamental Principles of Informal Learning

In her study of how popular musicians learn, Green identified the informal learning practices of popular musicians. From this, she articulated five fundamental principles of informal learning. These are outlined here as they are useful in terms of how they relate to the principles of educative experience which emerged during Phase 2 of this research (see Chapter 6).

- Firstly, popular musicians tend to acquire musical skills and knowledge ‘first and foremost through being encultured in, and experimenting with, the music which they are familiar with’ (Green 2008a, p.6), which they already ‘understand, like, enjoy and identify with’ (ibid., p.10). In terms of the classroom, this translates into an emphasis on student autonomy, where the beginning of the learning experience uses as a starting point what the student already knows and likes.89

- Secondly, and by far the most overriding learning practice, is to copy recordings by ear. In this respect, Green distinguishes between two ways of listening.90 The limited use of notation in the popular music sphere is also highlighted, and when it is used, ‘it is never used on its own, but is always heavily mixed in with purposive listening and copying (ibid., p.8).

- Thirdly, a popular music learner tends to engage with a community of peers, rather than in a ‘master-apprentice’ or ‘teacher-student’ model where the onus of transmission is from a more experienced musician. That is, the entire way in which skills and knowledge are transmitted in the popular field is largely in the hands of learners themselves, through self-directed learning, peer-directed learning, or the more specific approach of peer teaching. This involves the conscious sharing of knowledge and skills, and that of ‘unconscious’ group learning, where learning takes place through watching and imitation during music-making, as well as conversing about music outside actual music making. This results in the teacher

89 Dillon’s (2007) educational journey in Music, meaning and transformation also begins with the child’s personal experience of music.

90 Green’s strategies for listening are discussed further in this chapter in Section 2.10.1 A Pedagogy of Listening: An Aural Awareness of Irish Traditional Music. Furthermore, a cyclical continuum of aural progression has been identified in this research for traditional music across six listening modes; from remote listening, to reflective listening, the latter of which incorporates those ideas put forward by Dewey (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1 and Chapter 6, Section 6.1.1).
assuming the role of ‘learning assistant’ as opposed to ‘lesson-leader’, an aspect of Green’s method which is not without its critics (see Section 2.4.2).

- Fourthly, skills and knowledge in the informal realm tend to be absorbed and understood fully in ‘haphazard, idiosyncratic and holistic ways, starting with ‘whole’, ‘real-world’ pieces of music’, as opposed to the contrasting formal approach of simple to complex (Green 2008a, p.10).

- Finally, the informal approach involves a deep integration of listening, improvising and composing throughout the learning process, with an emphasis on personal creativity. Green contrasts this aspect to the emphasis on reproduction and focussing on just one of these activities at a time, which tends to characterise the formal realm.

### 2.5.2. Issues with Green’s Approach

While the significance of Green’s approach is widely acknowledged, it has also raised epistemological and pedagogical issues around the notion of informal learning (Allsup 2008; Rodriguez 2009, 2012; Allsup and Olsen 2012). Allsup (2008) raises four concerns: Firstly, Green conflates informal learning with a genre-specific art form (or popular music), which may, according to Allsup and Olson, ‘lead to the unintended consequence of narrowing musical possibilities rather than expanding them’ (2012, p. 12). Secondly, this has implications for the training of future music teachers as teachers must make a ‘substantial shift in informal learning, such that they must become experts in helping students to make things happen for themselves’ (Rodriguez 2009, p.39). In this regard, Allsup advises that second-wave research must empirically describe and philosophically justify that which it seeks to replace or modify (Allsup 2008, p.4; Allsup and Olson 2012). The third concern constitutes teacher quality in informal settings where ‘even a friendly critic is left wondering just how a music educator is trained in informalist teaching, to what uses are put a teacher’s context expertise, and the degree to which an acquaintance with instructional theory is even necessary’ (Allsup 2008, p.4). Finally, Allsup worries whether the methods and processes of informal learning are sufficient in rising to meet the problems that popular music brings to the classroom, and suggests that no matter how rewarding the processes of informal learning turn out to be, ‘it seems prudent to provide formal spaces in which dialogue and critique can occur’ (ibid., p.6).
From a Swedish perspective, Georgii-Hemming and Westvall (2012) also describe significant issues related to the inclusion of informal practices in school:

Experiences from music education in Sweden today raise questions regarding the process of learning, the roles and functions of music and education, as well as the role and function of the teacher in the students’ learning experiences

(Georgii-Hemming and Westvall 2012, p.103)

While it is acknowledged (Wright and Kanellopoulos 2010, p.73) that teachers’ changing roles in Green’s work has been taken out of context by some critics, it is also acknowledged that her work presents significant challenges to the development of teacher education in the area of non-traditional modes of musical practice (ibid., p.74).

2.6. Informal versus Formal Learning: Promotion of a False Dichotomy?

There is so much to learn from opening our eyes and ears to the world of informal musical engagement, as well as that of formal music education, and most particularly from considering the interface between the two.

(Green 2010c, p.92)

Even a brief perusal of the recently expanding literature on the teaching and learning of musics in formal music education is bound to lead the reader to matters related to the informal nature of learning associated with various musical genres, albeit most notably in the field of popular music (Green 2001, 2008a; Jaffurs 2004). The argument has recently been made however (Folkestad 2005a, 2005b, 2006; Schippers 2010; Rodriguez 2012) that this definition is problematic and music learning should be considered in a much broader context than is typical of comment in much contemporary research literature (for example, that formal music learning is synonymous with western classical music learned from sheets of music, and informal learning only occurs outside school). In the wider arena of post-primary education in Ireland, there is also some agreement with the assertion that the formal and informal aspects of learning should not be considered to be dichotomous but to be seen as lying on either end of a learning continuum (Turner 2006). There are, according to Jaffurs (2006) clear intersections in formal and informal musical learning. Interestingly, Rodriguez (2009, 2012) recognises the formal qualities of informal learning and believes that we might do well to explore
these intersections as a means of helping students more fully develop their musicality. On the matter of informal versus informal learning, Folkestad’s position on the matter is clear where he suggests that:

Formal - informal should not be regarded as a dichotomy, but rather as the two poles of a continuum; in most learning situations, both these aspects of learning are in various degrees present and interacting.

(Folkestad 2006, p.135)

### 2.6.1. Informal versus Formal Learning and Irish Traditional Music

In the sphere of Irish traditional music, processes of transmission are routinely associated with the informal learning approach (Ó’ Canainn 1978; Veblen 1991; Mac Aoidh 1996; Waldron and Veblen 2009), and those processes are often ascribed properties which are held in opposition to that of music learning in formal settings. In addition, a burgeoning area of research concerns informal music learning on the internet (Waldron 2009a, 2009c, 2011a, 2011b). Processes of transmission which are often associated with the informal learning of traditional music, including ‘passing it on’, ‘playing by ear’, ‘learning by ear’, and ‘oral process of transmission’ work to promote a dichotomy of formal vs informal learning which is perceived to exist where learning traditional music beyond classroom contexts is concerned (Ó’ Canainn 1978; Veblen 1991; Mac Aoidh 1996; Waldron and Veblen 2009). In fact, MacAoidh epitomises this viewpoint. He states in his discussion on the structures which are established for the teaching of traditional music that ‘there exist in the Republic of Ireland today two overall structures involved in traditional music education, namely, the formal educational structure and the informal education structure’ (1996, p.107). Heneghan also refers to the respect which should be afforded traditional music in formal settings:

Although it is an oral/aural tradition, the processes of transmission, which can be systematic and complex, should not be pejoratively deemed informal, in the haphazard sense; they should be respected in so-called formal settings.

(Heneghan 2004, p.290)

Of course, any examination of the characteristics of learning within the Irish traditional musical tradition will reveal a certain reality concerning the interconnecting spheres of ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ learning within the tradition, as McCarthy alludes to in her discussion of patterns of music transmission in Irish culture (1999a, pp.173-195). This
research takes this a step further and proposes that placing traditional music solely within an informal sphere is questionable, if not misguided, and that those who do so are potentially accommodating the aforementioned ideological processes of reification and legitimation of which Green (2008b) speaks.Ó Súilleabháin has much to say on the question of the informal nature of transmission, and the interaction of formal and informal attributes, which can be summarised in the following quotation:

I think we can over-emphasise the so-called informal nature of the transmission. It may seem a lot more informal than it is and it depends on how you define informality. The transmission of the music has its own formal attributes which sometimes lie hidden behind an apparently informal approach and the use of the word 'informal' here may seem to imply something that's thrown off or let lie, or something like that, but in fact it may also mean that there are formal processes at play beneath the surface which are very very minute, very very detailed and very, very efficient.

(Ó Súilleabháin in Heneghan 2004b, p.6)

### 2.6.2. Recent Studies on Informal and Formal Learning

While informal processes of learning are undoubtedly fundamental to learning within the tradition, where participants of the tradition immerse themselves in the music and the musical practices of the community, it would surely be a fallacy to say that formal pedagogical methods play no part whatsoever in the transmission of traditional music. In fact, in this regard, but from a popular music context, Rodriguez also comments that the more he becomes familiar with informal learning, the more formal qualities he sees in it:

The most basic learning process of listening to and copying recordings becomes more efficient with experience as musicians gradually acquire skill in predicting and remembering changes, auditing through chord progressions without having to play them, and so forth

(Rodriguez 2009, p.37)

To address this issue, Folkestad (2006) provides a useful synopsis of several studies on formal and informal learning (Ziehe 1986; Fornäs, Lindberg et al. 1995; Lilliestam 1996; Jorgensen 1997; Folkestad 1998; Johansson 2002; Saether 2003; Soderman and

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91 These issues are discussed in the context of the findings of this research (see Chapter 6).

92 For example, we will see in Chapter 6 that even the process of learning ‘by ear’, usually described as informal, occurs along what could be described as a ‘formal’ structure; that is, a cyclical continuum of aural progression (see Chapter 6 Section 6.1.1 Principle of Aural Awareness).
Folkestad 2004). From this literature, some of which are referred to in the following paragraph, he identifies four different ways of using and defining formal and informal learning which may be helpful: the situation (where the learning takes place); learning style (the character, the nature and quality of the learning process); ownership of the decisions of the activity (what to do as well as how, where and when); and intentionality (towards what is the mind directed - towards learning how to play or towards playing).

An early example of informal learning to which Folkestad refers is Thomas Ziehe’s book, *New Youth: on Uncommon learning Processes* (1982). Ziehe defines two types of learning; common and uncommon. Uncommon learning refers to ‘learning that takes place without the person being aware of it’ (Folkestad 2006, p.137). The main distinction between these two categories is how and not where the learning occurs. In another example, Fornäs et al. (1995) in their study of rock bands, found that learning processes within this informal music learning practices included more than musical aspects. From this, Folkestad understands that ‘informal learning typically involves more than just the core subject of learning, in this case the music; it features an integrated learning on a more holistic level’ (Folkestad 2006, p.137).

In Lilliestam (1996), a central aspect of informal learning, playing by ear, is described as consisting of three major steps: listening, practicing and performing. Performing in front of an audience is, according to Lilliestam, ‘an important part of the learning process - often neglected in formal music tuition’ (Folkestad 2006, p. 138). Folkestad also presents a distinction between formal and informal ways of learning with respect to intentionality:

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

(Folkestad 2006, p.138)

Finally, Folkestad refers to Saether’s (2003) study of the attitudes to music teaching and learning among jalis in the Gambia; where, on a surface level, and from the perspective and prejudice of Western music education, that which seemed to be an informal

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93 This is Folkestad’s translation from the original title, *Ny ungdom. Om ovanliga läroprocesser.*

94 As we will see, this also emerged in the findings of this research, with regards to the transitioning roles of teacher and learner; the concept of flow; a sense of community etc..

95 This is identified as presentational performance in terms of the findings of this research.
practice, was in fact found to be a very formalised way of knowledge mediation (Folkestad 2006, p.140-141). This is true in light of Ó Súilleabháin’s earlier comments on informal and formal transmission with respect to traditional music.

Folkestead is of the opinion that existing research on formal and informal is far too simplified, and actually false to say that formal learning only occurs in institutional settings. He arrives at the conclusion that there is no casual relationship between orality and informality; a connection he suggests is, implicitly or explicitly, taken for granted in much literature in this field (2006, p.141). As alluded to, a significant finding of this research concurs with Folkestad’s viewpoint regarding this oversimplification of formal versus informal in regard to traditional music, and the prevalent convictions which link aurality with informality in a post-primary music education and wider Irish context are addressed throughout the findings. The simplified and static view that formal learning only occurs in institutional settings and that informal learning only occurs outside school should be ‘replaced with a dynamic view in which what are described as formal and informal learning styles are aspects of the phenomenon of learning, regardless of where it takes place’ (ibid., p.142); a phenomenon where informal and formal aspects are shifting continuously. According to Folkestead, what characterises most learning situations is the instant switch between these learning styles and the dialectic interaction between them. Also, he suggests that since what is learned and how it is learned are interconnected, what could be most important might not be the musical content as such, but the approach to music that the content mediates and requires (1998, p.26). Lilliestam compounds this view where, in terms of orality and literacy, he believes that ‘the opposition between orality and literacy ought not to be seen as an opposition between two conditions, as a dichotomy, but rather as a continuum where cultures have different degrees of literacy’ (1996, p.197). Perhaps the same could be said of traditional music in terms of orality and literacy. These arguments suggest that much needed research is yet to take place within traditional music communities to thoroughly investigate the formal versus informal transmission process beyond what has already been documented. In the meantime, for the purposes of this research, Folkestad’s earlier conclusion is positioned here as a lens through which the largely undisputed ‘informal’ transmission process of Irish traditional music can be considered:
The analysis of the presented research within this area suggests that formal - informal should not be regarded as a dichotomy, but rather as the two poles of a continuum, and that in most learning situations, both these aspects of learning are in various degrees present and interacting in the learning process.

(Folkestad 2006, p.143)

2.7. The Place and Role of Musical Enculturation

Generally speaking, the process of enculturation is one through which a set of experiences within a culture is shared by every member, and as we ‘learn to behave and think in certain ways we are learning our culture’ (Campbell 1991, p.80). Enculturation is continuous in that the process requires a frequent location within situations where the musical material is composed, created, developed, transformed and performed within its culture (Wiggins 2005, p. 15). Lucy Green (2001) recognises this enculturative approach to learning as ‘the acquisition of musical skills and knowledge by immersion in the everyday music and musical practices of one’s social context’ (p.22) and draws on established ethnomusicological approaches citing Merriam (1964) and Nettl (1983). Enculturation, according to Green, includes all three ways by which we engage with music: performing, creating, and listening (2008a, p.5). Most folk and traditional musics of the world are learnt by enculturation, she continues (although we must remember the oftentimes formal associations of learning traditional music as highlighted previously), and extended immersion in listening to, watching and imitating the music and the music-making practices of the surrounding community (ibid., p.6). Similarly, Jorgensen (1997), who describes enculturation as one of five ways in which people come to know music (discussed in Section 2.7.2), refers to the social aspect of enculturation as:

a life-long process whereby people acquire a personal and collective cultural identity as humans - a way of life individually experienced and corporately shared within the context of a particular socio-economic group or society in which they live

(Jorgensen 1997, p.23)

Described as a continuous process of acquiring musical knowledge and awareness of a particular culture (Merriam 1964), enculturation has been widely discussed in music education scholarship, with the general thoughts and perspectives on the process falling along similar lines. It is viewed as an area of enquiry to which both ethnomusicologists and music educators should turn their attention (Merriam 1960, 1964; Campbell 1991;
Jorgensen 1993, 1997, 2003a; Green 2001). Enculturation, the cultural component of music learning, with its roots in anthropology, is integral to the nature of learning activities in ‘traditional’ musics (Wiggins 2005). It refers to the continuous process and important avenue of acquiring knowledge, awareness, and understanding of a particular musical culture. According to Mans:

Enculturation in a musical world involves immersion in the intra-musical sound structures of the culture—the rhythms, tonal patterns and combinations, preferred timbres and performance modes—of that culture.

(Mans 2009, p.84)

Enculturation, it could be argued, is almost homogenous with the concept of informal music learning and lived experience. As has been suggested in this research however, learning traditional music possesses attributes associated with both informal learning and formal learning. As a theme of interest therefore, enculturation is viewed as being of particular importance in terms of its place in the music education context of the post-primary music classroom, and the potential for overlap of education and enculturation. This homogeneity of enculturation and informal music learning is highlighted where Green (2001) describes informal learning as a set of ‘practices’ which include:

encountering unsought learning experiences through enculturation in the musical environment; learning through interaction with others such as peers, family members or other musicians who are not acting as teachers in formal capacities

(Green 2001)

2.7.1. Musical Enculturation, Pedagogy, and Transmission

Regarding pedagogical methods of music learning, the musical enculturation paradigm highlights the role of the learner and emphasises the process rather than the end result.96

It [enculturation] is about the process of learning rather than one of instruction, and a key part of this is the control of direction, development and pace given to the learner rather than the teacher - not an institutional approach... This [frequent exposure] has to be key in understanding what can be said and why, rather than how to say it - in other words, understanding the function and meaning of the music rather than simply its realisation.

(Wiggins 2005, p.15)

96 This characteristic of enculturation resonates with the principle of participatory performance, which this research identified during Phase 2 (see Chapter 6, Section 6.2.2).
Pedagogical considerations through the musical enculturation paradigm can be expounded upon through an increased awareness and analysis of the processes of transmission of a particular music. It is widely agreed upon that the way music is transmitted is as vital to the music as the product itself, being inextricably linked to the specific music tradition that is being transmitted, its contexts, and the underlying value systems (Garrison 1985; McCarthy 2004a, 2004b; Schippers 2010). For example, Gatien (2012) suggests that ‘while categories of music ... can be difficult to define according to strict musical characteristics, a better understanding of musical transmission - of how a music is passed on and learned - may provide insight into the nature of a musical category itself’ (p.53). The concept of transmission, therefore, is an important one. Drawing from Nettl (1983a) who acknowledges that ‘a musical system, its style, its main characteristics, its structure, are all very closely related with the particular way in which it is taught, as a whole and in its individual components’ (p.324), Schippers has two conclusions on the concept of transmission. These are:

analyzing methods of music transmission can be used as a tool to establish what is considered important in the learning process of any specific tradition by the musicians and communities who shape it, and at the next level, to understand what aspects of any particular music are seen as essential in order to be able to transmit it successfully

(Schippers 2010, p.62)

From this observation Schippers’ (2010) develops his Twelve Continuum Transmission Framework (TCTF) (Figure 2.2). Schippers presents the TCTF as a potential ‘powerful and effective instrument for a better understanding of music transmission processes’ which can be viewed from the four perspectives of: the tradition, the institution, the teacher, and the learner. Schippers posits that in addition to experiencing the musical material itself, the complexity of underlying values and attitudes largely plays out across the TCTF’s four domains which he describes as: issues of context, modes of transmission, interaction between learner and teacher/facilitator, and approaches to cultural diversity. Given that the process of music transmission is rarely all aural, all static, or all collective, for example, Schippers represents the various

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97 In this respect, this research has also discovered that the Principles of Engagement, which resonate with the characteristics of enculturation in many respects, are the means through which individuals can engage with various processes of transmission. That is, a consideration of the musical enculturation paradigm along with the processes of transmission can assist in coming to an understanding of the pedagogical considerations required to meet the needs of Irish traditional music.

98 Schippers’ TCTM is a reincarnation of his earlier seven-continuum transmission model (2005).
domains in the form of continua. As a set of continua it ‘constitutes a powerful
instrument in determining approaches to complex issues when planning strategies for
learning and teaching music from various cultures’ (2010, p.61). There is, he explains,
some coherence among the continua: a tendency to the left (static concepts, notation,
hierarchical, monocultural) generally points toward formal, institutional settings; a
tendency to the right toward more informal, often community-based processes.

In terms of the *modes of transmission* element of Schippers’ *TCTF*, he discusses
transmission across the three continua of: ‘tangible - intangible’; ‘notation based -
aural’; and ‘atomistic/analytic - holistic’. In the ‘tangible - intangible’ continuum
Schippers asserts that in each moment of music transmission, choices are being made in
terms of the appropriateness of five aspects of transmission he terms (1) technical
(instrumental and vocal) skills, (2) repertoire and performance practice, (3) theory
(explicit or implicit) (4) creativity and expression, and (5) culture and values. The
‘notation and aurality’ continuum explores the choices lying on a continuum from
‘completely notation-based to utterly aural (*ibid.*, p.81).99 Finally, ‘an atomistic/
analytical’ approach corresponds more closely to an emphasis on mono-directional
didactic teaching of a ‘single truth’ while a holistic approach is a student-centred
approach, where the teacher leaves more room for learners to construct their own
musical knowing, ‘even if the body of knowledge is quite closely defined’ (*ibid.*, p.85).

Each realm in the form of continua comprises key choices, which can then serve as
indicators for the approaches that characterise individual transmission processes.
Importantly, Schippers suggests that in order to accommodate traditional music in
formal music education, we must constantly monitor not only the sounds, ‘but also the
underlying systems of belief of the forms of music with which we engage’ (2005, p.33);
a point with which this research strongly concurs. Towards this end, the *TCTF*, he says,
may facilitate a critical discourse with traditional culture bearers100 and young
representatives of specific traditions, and allow music educators to deal with the
dynamics to tradition and authenticity to create rewarding learning experiences in

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99 This aspect of Schippers’ TCFT contrasts with the findings of this research in that aurality, or what this
research describes as ‘aural awareness’, is described as a Principle of Transmission, while notation-based
learning is included within the Principle of Media Integration as a means of engaging with aural
awareness. That is, importantly, the use of notation is included not as a means of transmission, but as a
support to the process of aural awareness.

100 Schippers defines a ‘culture bearer’ as a person who represents a specific (musical) culture by birth or
enculturation. Schippers also refers to Patricia Sheehan Campbell who he says endorses ‘culture bearers’
or ‘representatives of a culture’ to determine what is authentic musical and cultural representation.
contemporary contexts. Finally, Schippers makes an interesting observation which sheds some light on the challenges facing the implementation of the Irish traditional music curriculum in post-primary music education:

When a right-oriented tradition finds itself in a left-oriented environment, there is an increased risk of friction and unsuccessful transmission process. This may help to explain some of the problems reported from projects trying to introduce community, popular, folk, and world music in European and American formalized environments.

(Schippers 2010, p.125)

Figure 2.2 Schippers’ (2010) framework or understanding music transmission in culturally diverse environments.
2.7.2. Enculturation amongst other ways of coming to ‘know’ music

Enculturation has been proposed as one of several ways of acquiring musical knowledge and culture (Merriam 1964; Jorgensen 1997; Campbell 1998; Folkestad 2005) and understanding the distinctions between each way can lead to a greater awareness of the relevance of each, if any, to traditional music in post-primary music education. For example, Merriam (1964) proposes that learning occurs in three ways: enculturation, as we have discussed; training; and schooling. Training, as opposed to enculturation, involves the ‘conscious efforts of teachers and students in the acquisition of knowledge through experiences relegated to some, but not all, members of a culture’ whereby the individual consciously seeks information and is presented with the means of acquiring the knowledge and skills (Campbell 1991, p.81). Schooling, a more formal type of cultural learning, occurs in specific locations removed from the home environment, such as that of a music classroom. Campbell concedes that music and music education practices in much of the world today are based on Western models, and in some cultures, ‘schooling has largely replaced the process of learning through enculturation’ (ibid., p.205).

Similarly, Campbell (1998) categorises types of learning that encompass formal and informal processes as enculturative, partly guided, and highly structured (all of which can happen in the classroom, as the findings of this research will reveal). Jorgensen (1997) on the other hand posed five ‘ways’ or sub-concepts of how people come to know music, from the most formal to least formal: (i) schooling in the traditional understanding, which occurs when students are ‘pointed in particular directions and constrained such that their independent, hedonistic tendencies are shaped into beliefs and actions that the school public deems desirable, and they follow paths laid out for them by their teachers’ (p.5); (ii) training, which gives preeminence to the practical aspects of music, where the student is taught or learns skills governed by procedural rules on how things are to be done (p.9); (iii) education, with which this research is primarily concerned, where the student is at the heart of the process, the ‘active agent’
so to speak, and an environment is created for the child which is growth-orientated;101 (iv) socialisation, a dynamic, evolving, and life-long process whereby a group (or institution) shares its beliefs and values in a learner constructed experience, and ‘ensures that its members continue to act in certain approved ways and hold particular shared beliefs’ (p.18); and (v) enculturation, a life-long multidisciplinary approach which ‘implies understanding the place of music in and through culture and also culture in and through music’ and ‘facilitates the development of musical skills, cultural understandings, and a deeper awareness of self, world, and whatever lies beyond’ (p. 25-27).

Folkestad (2005a) interprets enculturation within Jorgensen’s model as being the outer circle of socialisation, and therefore an even more general learning, where the key concept in describing these processes is transmission, that is, ‘the process whereby isolated traditions or considerable blocs of custom are passed on by one group to another’ (Jorgensen 1997, p.24). Folkestad (2005a) views Jorgensen’s first two categories as describing formal learning situations, while the last two categories might be seen as descriptions of informal learning situations. His views on education particularly resound with the purpose and focus of the concept of educative experience for this research. That is, he describes education, on the other hand, as ‘the meeting place of formal and informal learning’; where it is formal ‘in the sense that it is organised and led by a teacher’, but informal in the sense that the kind of learning that is obtained and the ways in which this is achieved has much in common with the characteristics of everyday learning practices outside school’ (ibid., p.25).

2.8. Cross-Disciplinary Insights: Music Education/Ethnomusicology

Although I do not wish to delve too far into ethnomusicological perspectives on transmission and acquisition or teaching and learning given the breadth of this field, the argument is made that ethnomusicology is an area of interest which is of increasing and

101 For Dewey (as previously discussed), experiences that produce growth are ‘educative’, whereas those that prevent or hinder growth are ‘miseducative’. As in the natural world, Jorgensen comments, what is not growing is decaying (in the sense that the individual is losing the power to adapt to the environment). She believes that ‘some teaching methods contribute to this decay, including those that rely on repetition or routines (or drill) as a way to develop habits, and it is vitally important that teachers avoid these approaches (1997, p.14).
mutual relevance to understanding a musical culture in music education. In fact, given Rice’s insight that ‘Ethnomusicology, like any academic field, is constantly being created and recreated through the research, writing and teaching of its practitioners’ (1987, p.469), any such diversion would surely be beyond the scope of this research.

If we accept Nettl’s assertion that ‘musical cultures transmit a set of concepts, values, and attitudes that are essential to producing and understanding the music’ (1998, p.28) then the border-crossing between music education and ethnomusicology, ‘an approach to the study of music in culture’ (Merriam 1960, p.112) is surely a potential area of discourse where understanding a musical culture can occur. Nettl (2012) later outlines that the understanding of learning and teaching in the broadest sense, that is, how a society transmits the content and values of its music, has moved from a kind of study virtually ignored to a major component of ethnomusicological research. In his attempt to relate the field of ethnomusicology to issues and approaches in music education concludes as follows:

The way music is taught and learned is a major and essential component of any musical culture and must play a vital role when a music is studied by scholars in the field, and also when it is imparted to students at primary and secondary levels in the classroom (Nettl 2012, p.122)

Blacking also claimed that ‘ethnomusicology has the power to create a revolution in the world of music and music education’ (1976, p.4). Campbell, in fact, goes as far as saying that the ‘intersection of ethnomusicology and music education is a point at which the means for understanding music, education, and culture may be found’ (Campbell 2003, p.28) and highlights the ethnomusicological method of ‘transmission and acquisition’ as being akin to the ‘pedagogical practice’ of music educators’ ongoing attention (p.25). In fact, Campbell asserts that in order to achieve a broader understanding of music teaching and learning as a human phenomenon, the combined efforts of educators, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and ethnomusicologists are needed (1991, p.97). Dunbar-Hall (1999) notes that increasing awareness of the connections between each discipline highlights the benefits of looking at ways music is taught and learnt in settings outside the classroom. Schippers also advocates that ‘an obvious source of inspiration for reexamining constructs in music education is ethnomusicology’ (2010, p.36). While it may seem obvious that music
education and ethnomusicology are mutually beneficial to one another, not least given
the fact that live music-making lies at the core of ethnomusicological research (Stock
2003), it is only recently that a ‘two-way trade of insights’ is growing between the two
intrinsically linked dynamic disciplines and considerable histories of ethnomusicology
on the one side, and that of music education on the other (Campbell 2003; Froehlich
2007). For example, as mentioned above, Nettl who chronicled ethnomusicology
throughout much of the second half of the twentieth century, signaled transmission as a
strongly emerging focus within the discipline (as quoted in Schippers, 2010, p.37): ‘one
way ethnomusicology has changed since the 1950s involves the vastly increased
importance of learning and teaching’ (Nettl 1992a, p.388).

According to Campbell (2003), the conditions for these ‘border-crossings’ have never
been better, they are happening in both directions, and the potential exists for the fields
to ‘learn from one another in order to construct deeper understandings of music,
education, and culture’ (2003, p.17). Tracing a history of the field of ethnomusicology,
Campbell reckons that the likelihood of the growing discourse of ethnomusicologists
with teachers seems to be related to the extent to which ethnomusicologists have
established themselves as recognised and experienced scholars on specific music
cultures.102 The many potential border-crossings between ethnomusicology and music
education become more apparent when we consider that the point of these
ethnomusicologists’ fieldwork is to ‘attune oneself to the culture, its music, and its
musicians, and to develop an understanding of the ways humans relate to music, and
through music to other ideas about their culture’ (Campbell 2003, p.23). This ‘attuning
oneself’ is explicated by Merriam (1964) where he presents twelve areas of inquiry to
which ethnomusicologists will turn their attention during an intensive study namely (i)
culturally held concepts about music; (ii) the relationship between aural and other
modes of perception (synesthesia); (iii) physical and verbal behavior in relation to
music; (iv) musicians as a social group; (v) the teaching and learning of music; (vi) the
process of composition; (vii) the study of song texts; (viii) the uses and functions of
music; (ix) music as symbolic behavior (the meaning of music); (x) aesthetics and the

102 Campbell cites the writings of John Blacking, Charles Keil, Bruno Nettl, Tim Rice, Anthony Seeger,
and Charles Seeger among those scholars whose work is particularly relevant to music education. For
example, Nettl on music of the Blackfoot of Montana, Seeger on the musical culture of the Suya of the
Brazilian Amazon region, and Blacking (1964) who's famous work with the Transvaal Venda people of
South Africa helped to establish the importance of ethnographic research in music education.
interrelationship of the arts; (xi) music and culture history; and (xii) music and cultural dynamics.

Unfortunately however, although the ‘ethnographic study of music transmission and learning in ethnomusicology predates that of music education’, according to Szego, there is general agreement that ‘ethnomusicologists and folklorists have spent relatively little time studying these processes or the ways that they are shaped by culture’ (Szego 2002a, p. 710).

Because of the holistic nature of ethnography, ethnomusicological accounts do frequently contain reference to music transmission and learning; but these references, embedded in larger discussions of socio-musicological phenomena, often are very brief or general.

(Szego 2002a, p.710)

This is confirmed by Rice, who, as quoted by Schippers (2010, p.37), finds that few ethnomusicologists have examined the process of learning music in the many aural traditions that they study; furthermore, there are only a few studies that document the learning process in any detail. Virginia Garrison was of similar sentiment in her observation of music educators where she felt that there was a lack of attention given by music educators to the study of teaching and learning practices in traditional instrumental folk music (1985, p.6).

However, notwithstanding this lack of apparent investigation into the processes of teaching and learning in ethnomusicological discourse, it is certainly worth looking to the fieldwork of those ethnomusicologists (and anthropologists) who have concerned themselves with this theme, to inform our views on how Irish traditional music teaching and learning could potentially occur in the classroom. An argument for such cross-disciplinary discourse is reinforced by the fact that those such as John Blacking, Charles and Anthony Seeger, Bruno Nettl, Timothy Rice, and Thomas Turino, to name but a few, have called attention to musical conventions outside the mainstream of the Western classical music canon. Bruno Nettl called for the study of music transmission as key to understanding music, musical culture, and culture (1983a). Blacking went so far as modeling an approach for informal learning that occurs through cultural immersion, which according to Froehlich (2007) is akin to immersing oneself in the study of instruments indigenous to a particular culture, such as the Irish fiddle (p.68). Others
such as Holmes’ (1990) explored as a participant-observer the aural-techniques of a fiddle player in a community outreach programme, which led her to develop a model for aural instruction applicable in many teaching contexts. The significant potential for increased discourse exists where Kari Veblen (1991) observed and interviewed Irish traditional musicians, and stayed as a participant-observer member of the Irish traditional music community over the course of her investigation. Similarly, Garrison (1985) focussed on the teaching and learning practices of the fiddle players, teachers, and students of Cape Breton Island, and the physical and social contexts in which this teaching and learning occurred, and even provided a Summary and Model for the Study of Teaching and Learning Practices in Cape Breton Fiddling (p.268). Interestingly, Garrison presents four traditional learner characteristics as suggestions for the music educator in non-traditional situations which emerged from her investigation: Self-Motivation; Love of the music; A sense of being responsible for one’s own learning; and awareness of and determination to develop one’s own ‘natural talent’ (ibid., pp. 289-294). Meaningful crossovers from Veblen, Garrison’s and others’ work could result in what Smith describes as a ‘pedagogy grounded in traditional practices’ (2005, p.77) in formal music education as a result of learning from the tradition’s own teachers. This apparent widespread endorsement of the interdisciplinary sharing of knowledge does comes with a word of caution however, with Cooley’s (1997) suggestion that ethnomusicologists feel as if they are chasing shadows in the field when striving to perceive and understand musical meaning, calling attention to the potential ‘shadows’ which are being created, with respect to a teacher and student’s understanding of a particular musical culture.

Through their research, ethnomusicologists have engaged in the performance of musical traditions in order to study and understand a particular musical culture. The questioning of teaching and learning and transmission have therefore concerned scholars in ethnomusicology as well as music education and evidence points to a growing and more

103 Wiggins (2005) posits that by disregarding a music’s cultural context, the music teacher is effectively collaborating with the learner in the creation of another ‘shadow’, ‘a personal one located with respect to the learner’s experience mediated through the teacher’ (p.13). Furthermore, he believes that is it virtually impossible for an institutional context to provide an appropriate method of handing down a tradition in respect of most musics. At the same time however, he suggests that an institution located close to the origin of the music may come close to maintaining traditional formats of instruction, but ‘that [institution] will often have acquired various pedagogical requirements and approaches that may militate against the tradition’. The best that we can aim for, he continues, is a ‘negotiation between and understanding of different methods of learning, and cultural knowledge about the music (not of the music) appropriate to the level of the learner’ (p.20).
focussed interest in this topic. However, it still has a modest presence in academic discourse and in schools and according to Schippers, ‘the flow from advanced philosophical and policy frameworks into the practical realms of teacher training and finally into the classroom may be the greatest challenge’ (2010, p.39). Finally, in support of the idea that music education can learn much from the ethnomusicological method of ‘transmission and acquisition’ and other shared concerns towards understanding a musical culture, Schippers makes a case for the role of ethnomusicology in its interaction with what he calls ‘systems of learning’, stating:

With its emphasis on “music in culture” and “music as culture,” ethnomusicology can play a central role in contributing to a more complete understanding of domains that, individually and in their interaction, are decisive for the sustainability of any music culture

(Schippers 2010, p.134)

2.9. Learning from Music-Learning in Cross-Cultural Perspectives

In 1995, the beginnings of an interdisciplinary discourse addressing the transmission and learning of musical cultures in formal and non-formal settings commenced in no small part with the publication of a landmark publication *Teaching Musics of the World* (Verlag 1995). Traditional music can be considered in the context of cultural diversity in music education for several reasons. One reason is that the accommodation of the realities of cultural diversity in music education would require ‘a reappraisal of implicit values and belief systems, as well as different approaches to the formal organization of music education’ (Schippers 2010, p.36). That is, a reappraisal of the as-of-yet apparent hegemony of Western classical music culture in Irish post-primary music education (as discussed in Chapter 1). For these and other reasons outlined below, it is proposed here

104 Of particular interest is Jessica Cawley’s ongoing doctoral thesis at School of Music and Theatre (University College Cork) entitled ‘The Musical Enculturation of Irish Traditional Musicians: An Ethnographic Study of Learning Processes’. Focussing on the process of becoming a musician, this research draws on methodologies and theories from ethnomusicology, education, and Irish traditional music studies. It suggests that longevity of participation and engagement in multiple learning and performance opportunities foster the enculturation of Irish traditional musicians.

105 This is supported by the fact that there are two separate organisations in Ireland representing ethnomusicological interests (ICTM Ireland) and music education interests (SMEI Ireland).

that much insight can be gained from challenges and developments emerging from the broad sphere of cultural diversity in music education.

In *Cultural diversity in music education*, compelling arguments are made which would support a consideration of traditional music in post-primary music education through a lens of cultural diversity. For example, Drummond (2005, p.2) presents a justification for culturally plural music education saying ‘societies/nations/communities/the world have become/are becoming more culturally plural, and education can enable this change to be managed well’. Given the fact that Ireland is becoming an increasingly multicultural, multiracial society, and that Irish post-primary classrooms have become and are becoming increasingly culturally plural (INTO 2001; Haran and Tormey 2002; Devine 2005), a cultural diversity in music education lens could be utilised as a way of ensuring that all students regardless of background, and all music classrooms regardless of context, can participate fully in an education in music which is culturally plural, and one where traditional music is experienced in a truly meaningful way.

Schippers (2010) provides a synopsis of how three prominent international philosophers of music education (Keith Swanwick, Bennett Reimer, and David Elliott) place cultural diversity in their philosophies of music education. He does this while expressing his belief that ‘monoculturality, with Western (art) music at its center, still pervades much of the thinking on music and music education in the Western world and most of its practice’ (p.35). According to Schippers, while Swanwick (1988) was one of the first to break a number of preconceptions about music education in culturally diverse settings by reacting against the ‘strong cultural bias in most practices of culturally diverse music education’, he seemed to be at the same time ‘caught in remnants of exoticism’ (2010, p.33). Shippers’ criticism of Reimer’s *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1989) is interesting in that he suggests that Reimer ‘does not see cultural diversity as a reality on the inside of music education but rather as a foreign presence on the outside’. He continues, ‘he does not question the basic parameters of an

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107 Although Drummond recognises that the claims made for the benefits of cultural diversity in education and in music education are ‘credible’ and ‘powerful’, he also recognises that they are not without flaws. One of the main flaws Drummond cites lies in the ‘little acknowledgement of the actual processes of identity formation’ (2005, p.8).

108 Schippers (2010, p.32) also cites the following figures as having explored cultural diversity: John Paynter, Christopher Small, Barbara Lundquist, Kathy Marsh, Marie McCarthy, Patricia Sheehan Campbell, Teresa Volk, Peter Dunbar-Hall, Heidi Westerlund and ‘many others’.
essentially Western philosophy of music education, taking as a starting point the need for people to be rooted in understanding one’ (2010, p.34). Finally, Schippers focusses on Elliott, who as we will see later in this chapter, challenges the parameters of Reimer’s philosophy by what he terms a “praxial” approach. In discussing Elliott, Schippers cites Volk (1998, p.57) who points out that Elliott favours “dynamic multiculturalism” in which “musical concepts original to the culture replace a strictly Western aesthetic perspective”. In light of Elliott and Reimer’s seemingly conflicting positions on cultural diversity in music education, Schippers concludes that while Reimer seems to take the hegemony of Western classical music as a starting point, Elliott challenges the core of the organisation of Western music education.

Campbell’s approach to music learning and teaching is addressed very much from a multicultural or globally orientated perspective, and this seems to follow a general consensus that because schools operate within societies that value cultural democracy, music as a curricular subject is intended to be taught and learned from the perspective of more than a single “dominant culture” (Leith-Philip and Gurtzwiler 1993; Floyd 1995; Stock 1995; Anderson and Sheehan Campbell 1996; Campbell 1996, 2004; Banks and Banks 2001; Lundquist and Szego 1998; Reimer 2002). However, while she contends that cultural diversity is valued in principle by music teachers, the curricular infusion of musical expressions of the world is in its infancy (Campbell 2004, p.13). Regarding music transmission in the classroom from this cross-cultural perspective, Campbell suggests that as ‘the development of cognitive and creative processes may progress naturally through common stages of human growth throughout the world... there may be culture-specific aspects of transmission to consider as well’ (1991, p.102). This issue of the universality of learning is alluded to where Campbell asks, ‘How can music learning be defined in ways that are fitting for genres and styles across cultures and historical eras?’, and ‘Are traditional folk music and classical music learned in similar ways?’ (ibid., p.80).

This cross-cultural phenomenon is of increasing interest to teachers who strive for what Campbell terms a ‘broadly conceived template of pedagogical considerations that

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109 In Lessons from the World: A Cross-cultural Guide to Music Teaching and Learning (2001), Campbell surveys music teaching and learning from several cross-cultural perspectives and presents a series of cultural samples from Japan, India, Thailand, China, Indonesia, the Middle East, Africa (cultures south and west of the sahara Desert), Europe (Ireland, The Balkans, Norway, Italy), and the Jazz World.
transcend cultural boundaries’ (2001, p.215) which would allow teachers to engage in ‘culturally appropriate means of teaching selected dimensions of the musical culture’ (ibid., p.216). In other words, folk and traditional musics are transmitted in logical ways suited to specific cultural values and behaviours; and although specific cultural needs have shaped traditional teaching and learning processes, every society has processes that they ‘share’, such as the development of aural skills and imitation. The shared, most frequently observed commonalities of music’s transmission across various cultural contexts seems to be Campbell’s focus here, where all observable principles ‘commonly found in a variety of world traditions today - as they were also practiced throughout history - are relevant to teaching and learning in contemporary classrooms and studios’ (1991, p.102). While Campbell states that it would be foolish and premature to accept the view that music’s transmission (teaching, learning, acquisition) is all the same, she believes that we would do well to note several phenomena at play in the transmission process as ‘cross cultural operations’ which surface repeatedly in varied contexts. These components of the learning act she claims could be the beginnings of a ‘template of music transmission and pedagogy’ (2001a, p. 225):

the aural-oral techniques of demonstration and imitation; the visual-kinesthetic network; the spectrum of holistic to analytical reception of skills and knowledge to be acquired; the necessity of eye-hand co-ordination and the perception of gestural patterns for instrumentalists; and the role of the expert (from a master of the tradition to a peer whose knowledge is only slightly greater than the learner).

(Campbell 2001a, p.225)

Several years later, Campbell (2004) presents various strategies which she proposes that teachers need to keep in mind to bring about the broadest possible understanding of multicultural musical expressions (p.14). She suggests that we should recognise each musical culture for what it offers in the way of understanding music as music, as human experience, as culture, and in context; study unfamiliar music cultures by listening, reading, viewing, tapping in to the expertise of local musicians, culture-bearers, and scholars as resources; teach in culture specific units so that students can become immersed in the music and its cultural meanings and functions; teach in a comparative manner finding multiple examples of a concept across cultures; and, honour the pedagogical system in which the music is embedded, for example, teach via oral/aural techniques if they are traditional to the music culture.
Finally, Villegas and Lucas (2002) offer a vision for approaching music in a way that is ‘culturally responsive’ with teachers who (a) are socioculturally conscious, (b) have affirming views of students from culturally diverse backgrounds, (c) see themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable, (d) understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting knowledge construction, (e) know about the lives of their students and their communities, and (f) design instruction that builds on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar.

2.10. Transmission, Pedagogy, and the Concept of Learning

Modalities

In terms of the transmission of traditional music in post-primary music classroom, and the associated pedagogical considerations, an area of learning which emerged as central to the findings of this research (and to which Campbell (1991) also refers) is that of the concept of learning modality. Similar to that as purported by Barbe and Swassing (1979), the concept of learning modality hinges on the fact that learning is a multisensory experience, and claims that there are three modalities or sensory channels through which individuals acquire musical techniques and repertoire, and instruction is organised around one or more of these channels: aural, visual, and kinesthetic/tactile. In short, Barbe and Swassing’s concept of learning modality as a theory of music learning proposes that visual learners learn by seeing, and observing others; auditory learners benefit from musical examples presented by the teacher, another student, or recordings; and kinesthetic learners develop knowledge and skills by feeling, participating, ‘and becoming directly involved with music in a physical way’ (Campbell 1991, p. 90). Although learning modalities are considered here in a considerably different light to Barbe and Swassing’s interpretation (and align with Campbell’s interpretation to a greater degree), it is worth noting that they propose that every person can claim a dominant modality through which he or she learns most efficiently, as well

110 For example, the Principles of Transmission in Irish traditional music which this research identified were found to engage with the multi-sensory channels of aural awareness, kinesthetic awareness, tactile awareness, and what I have described as obser-visual awareness (see Chapter 6, Section 6.1).

111 Kinesthetic according to Barbe and Swassing includes large muscle movements, small muscle movements, and a sense of touch (Barbe and Swassing, p.5).
as secondary modalities that compliment the dominant channel. Campbell furthers their interpretation with a proposal that there may also be cultures that emphasise one sensory channel more than another. It is proposed here that this concept is of considerable relevance to traditional music in post-primary music education as, aside from considering the concept of learning modality in terms of the individual, we can look at the musical tradition in question (traditional music) and investigate the learning modalities inherent in that music’s transmission, and the prevalence (if any) of one learning modality over another in that transmission. This, of course, would then assist the music teacher in selecting appropriate instructional approaches for traditional music in the classroom across the realms of aural, visual and kinesthetic learning (Campbell 1991, p. 90).

As emerging from this research’s data, it is discussed in Chapter 6 of this thesis that we can consider the transmission of Irish traditional music across four strands of learning namely: (1) aural awareness, (2) obser-visual awareness, (3) tactile awareness, and (4) kinesthetic awareness. We will see that each of these strands are intrinsically linked, inseparable, and co-dependent on each other. Jaques-Dalcroze (1865-1950) alludes to this holistic nature of learning in terms of aural and kinesthetic processes in this short extract: ‘If we wish [a student] to become a musician, first we must make him listen to music and then imbue the whole of his body and being with the gradations of all musical sounds and intervals, so that his Aural Sense is profoundly developed’ (1935). This idea is expounded upon in this research, with the breadth of scholarship hereafter going some way in supporting this claim.

2.10.1. An Aural Awareness of Irish Traditional Music

John Blacking was of the opinion that listeners are as much a part of the process of music-making as composers and performers (1995). It is fitting then that recent literature in music education research is challenging us to reconsider the value that is placed on listening in the classroom as an end in itself. This literature includes a number of approaches which encourage aural learning among their goals, including Dalcroze Eurhythmics (Jaques-Dalcroze (1921/1980); Irwin 1990; Bachmann 1991; Juntunen and Hyvönen 2004; Seitz 2005) and various techniques employed by
advocates of Kodály (Szonyi 1973; Chosky 1981) and Orff. Csikszentmihalyi also refers to listening in terms of achieving the optimal experience of flow (1991, p.111). However, while the value of aural learning *is* certainly acknowledged in the broad sphere of music teaching and learning, in depth analyses of the actual processes of listening seem neglected in many quarters. Green alludes to this sense of neglect when it comes to assessing listening in particular:

> Music education has developed a sophisticated set of criteria and practices for assessing performance [...] However, the assessment of music listening is much less developed. It has tended to rely on requiring learners to produce some kind of account of what is going on inside their heads while they listen. Such accounts can range from general descriptions of the music, to naming specific properties or relationships within it, to taking down music by dictation. All in all, it is hard both to enhance and to assess music listening thorough education, other than as an offshoot of other activities.

(Green 2008a, p.67)

To address these among other issues, the area of listening is dealt with in this section from five broad perspectives. Three of these perspectives are related to listening as perceived in the philosophical discourse surrounding Reimer’s *Music Education as Aesthetic Experience* (Reimer 1989, 2009) and Elliott’s *Praxial Philosophy* as articulated in *Music Matters* (1995). A fourth is from the perspective of listening in the Irish context, and the final perspective draws from the more pedagogically framed assertions of Green (2001) and Campbell (2004, 2005).

(i) **Listening and the Philosophical Orientations of Reimer and Elliott**

As was discussed in Chapter 1, the opposing philosophies of Reimer’s Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE) (1989) and Elliott’s Praxial Philosophy (1995) have been widely debated in music education discourse in an international context (Alperson 1991; Reimer 1991a; Spychiger 1997; Koopman 1998, 2005a, 2005b; Sundin 2000; Westerlund 2003; Bowman 2005c, 2005d; Cutietta and Stauffer 2005), and also comprehensively from an Irish perspective in the MEND report (Heneghan 2004). The following section aims to give further insight into where Reimer and Elliott place music listening in the context of their respective philosophical orientation. Concurrently, it is worth bearing in mind that in the context of widely accepted philosophies of music education, it is argued that key issues involved with nurturing listening skills are unresolved or unaddressed. Moreover, it has been strongly suggested that the
importance of repeated listening (and movement) needs to be accounted for in a philosophy of music education if it is to be useful to the profession as it exists today (Cutietta and Stauffer 2005, p. 140).

(ii) Reimer’s Aesthetic Philosophy and Listening

Following Heneghan’s claim that ‘Reimer has probably influenced more music educators than any other music-orientated philosopher’ (2004, p.89) the aesthetic philosophy is considered here in terms of its relevance to the experience of traditional music in post-primary music education, more specifically the place of listening therein. Although Reimer would himself suggest that his aesthetic philosophy is an evolving orientation (Reimer in Heneghan 2004; Reimer 2009), incorporating ‘quite subtle shifts of emphasis which reflect the concurrent evolution of social/cultural and political/cultural values’ (Heneghan 2004, p.133) the place of ‘aesthetic’ listening has remained at centre stage since he first articulated MEAE in his seminal A Philosophy of Music Education (1989):

In music, perceiving and reacting (aesthetically experiencing) occurs through listening. One need not compose in order to experience music. One need not perform in order to experience music. But one cannot experience it without listening. Further, no matter how well one might compose or perform, one’s ability to experience a vast diversity of music of any level of complexity through listening will always far outstrip that tiny bit which one can compose or perform oneself.

(Reimer 1989, p.168)

Reimer advocates that the aesthetic perception of listeners must be ‘intrinsic’, ‘disinterested’, and ‘distanced’, with ‘no utilitarian purpose’, where the listening experience is for the sake of the experience in and of itself. Although MEAE enjoyed unprecedented popularity as a philosophical orientation in music education over several decades, it has recently experienced an increasing degree of skepticism however, especially in terms of how it positions listening as aesthetic experience. The most vocal detractor has been Elliott (1995) whose objections to the concept of aesthetic experience arise from the ‘supposed disinterestedness of the aesthetic experience which he sees as a source of depersonalization’ (Panaiotidi 2003, p.73). Elliot argues that an aesthetic perception of music listening is a perception of the aesthetic qualities of music object alone, in abstraction from the object’s context of social use and production. Secondly,
Elliott criticises that Reimer places undue emphasis on the listening experience, rather than the productive and creative experience. Shusterman alludes to the passivity of the aesthetic of disinterested and detached contemplation (1997, p.111; also 2000b, p.184). Bowman also outlines his concerns regarding listening in Reimer’s philosophical orientation:

The aesthetic is concerned primarily with receptivity rather than productivity, with consumption rather than agency, which almost unavoidably and invariably implicates (albeit implicitly) the shortsighted view that appreciative listening is the quintessential mode of musical engagement. That, of course is not the case.

(Bowman 2000, p.8)

Reimer continues to promote listening as valuable in its own right however, calling on it to be ‘rescued from the neglect or indifference in which it tends to exist in music education’ (2009, p. 234). In spite of criticism over his philosophical standing and in the face of increasing critical onslaught, Reimer continues to articulate his aspiration for his interpretation of aesthetic listening in music education throughout his satire ‘Merely Listening’:

Perhaps listening can be recognized, finally, as a genuine, precious role in and of itself, not only as a means to other ends. As with every other way to be musical, but more urgently given its primacy in our musical culture, the role of the listener deserves the full devotion of our energies and intelligences, to face its dilemmas, devise useful means to surmount them, and position ourselves thereby to make the fullness of contribution our culture deserve from us.

(Reimer 2009, p.234)

(iii) Elliott’s Praxial Music Education and Listening

In Music Matters (1995), Elliott challenges music educators to consider music listening from a different paradigm and to change our definition of listening, including what music listening is and how expertise in listening develops (Cutietta and Stauffer 2005). It is well documented that Elliott built his philosophical argument in opposition to Reimer’s Music Education as Aesthetic Education, and quite recently was given finer focus to the Irish context in Heneghan’s report on MEND (2004). At the core of Elliott’s praxial theory is the assertion that music making is the only way to acquire certain types of musical knowledge, and this has considerable implication for the place of listening within Elliot’s praxial philosophy. He argues that ‘learning to listen deeply
and intelligently for the music of a particular practice requires that students learn music from inside musical practices, from the perspective of *reflective musical practitioners* (Elliott 1995, p.101). A central tenet of Elliott’s philosophy is that music listening is an internal form of thinking-in-action and knowing-in-action that is *procedural* (action-centred) in essence (*ibid.*, p.81). According to Elliott, procedural knowledge is the most important manner in which to learn (Koopman 2005b), and he implies that procedural knowledge acquired through actively making music is *essential* to developing listening expertise (Cutietta and Stauffer 2005, p.128). In his paper which pragmatically compares the praxial philosophies of Elliott and Regelski, Goble (2003) refers to Regelski who challenges Elliott’s claim in *Music Matters* that only those who have experience as *performers* of music can fully experience music. In Elliott’s view, according to Regelski, ‘the ability to listen to music intelligently or competently is directly and necessarily dependent on cognitions and insights that only result from the ability to perform music intelligently or competently, and vice versa’ (Goble 2003, p. 37). In fact, Elliott wrote on *listening* in *Music Matters* (in his denunciation of MEAE) that:

Underlying the MEAE focus on record listening are the mistaken beliefs that ‘one need not compose in order to experience music’ and ‘one need not perform in order to experience music’ (Reimer 1989, p. 168). Perhaps students can learn to experience music in the passive sense of becoming distanced and impersonal consumers without learning how to make music well. But achieving an experience [as a listener] of the special kind of the special kind of event-performance we call a musical work requires an understanding of musical performing; it requires that students learn how to perform and improvise competently themselves, as well as to compose, arrange, and conduct. (Elliott 1995, p.102)

Elliot’s second assertion is that musical experience is embedded in and sensitive to cultural context and therefore always includes several kinds of information in addition to the purely acoustic data that human brains use to construct tonal-rhythmic structures (1995, p.84). It follows from this that Elliott believes that musical experience can be deciphered only by a listener who is likewise embedded in the culture.

Elliot’s praxial philosophy where listening is concerned is not without its detractors. For example, Koopman believes that Elliott’s claim that, while performance partakes of

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112 Elliott argues that there are at least four other kinds of musical knowledge which contribute to the procedural essence of music making namely: formal musical knowledge; informal musical knowledge; impressionistic musical knowledge; and supervisory musical knowledge. Taken together, Elliott states, ‘these five forms of musical knowing constitute musicianship’ (Elliott 1995, p.53).
the whole self, listening anesthetises part of it, is ‘grossly overstated’ and regards his suggestion that listening to records automatically leads to passivity as ‘unwarranted’ (2005b, p. 89). According to Bowman, Elliot’s praxial orientation has ‘encountered predictable animosity in those with commitments to reception-centred curricular arrangements, most notably advocates of aesthetic sensitivity who regard listening as musically fundamental and have invested heavily in instructional approaches where it is central (Bowman 2005c, p.143). Moreover, Bowman believes that ‘listening constitutes a valid musical praxis and an instructional method different from and, indeed, superior to performance (pp.143-144). In comparing Elliott’s *Musicing* with Small’s *Musicking* (1998), O’Toole points out that:

...although Elliott is arguing for experiencing a “fuller measure of the human values that musicing and listening involve” (Elliott 1995, p. 201), he limits musicing to performance, has a separate category for listeners, and does not include any other kind of participant nor the identity issues that Small addresses.

(Toole 2005, p.299)

(iv) **Listening and the Irish Context**

Within Irish traditional music, it is widely accepted that aural learning is the basis of traditional music (Veblen 2004; Waldron 2009c; Vallely 2011). The Irish Traditional Music Archive states, for example, that ‘gaining listening experience is an essential part of learning’ (ITMAa 1991). Speaking from a Northern Ireland perspective, Burgess has the following to say:

Since the aural tradition is the basis of traditional music, especially where style is concerned, young players can learn the rudiments of music and the technicalities of their instrument in a class situation but when they have achieved a certain degree of fluency on their instrument they must, personally, discover their own style by careful study and imitation of the best players which they can hear live or on many of the fine recordings which are now so readily available.

(Burgess 1996, p.51)

Veblen also describes the attributes of memory development and ear training through a process of repetition and sequencing, and draws on a number of musicians’
approaches\textsuperscript{113} who describe their ‘format’ of learning a tune as ‘bit by bit, phrase by phrase’ (1994, p. 26). However, it seems there exists a general air of content in going no further than describing a generic music teaching and learning process of ‘passing it on’ or ‘learning by-ear’ (Ó’ Canainn 1978; Garrison 1985; McCarthy 1999, 2004a, 2004b), without ascribing any great detail to the actual processes at play. Recently however, there have been one or two exceptions, with Ó Gráda (2011) in An Fheadóg Mhór: Irish Traditional Flute Technique outlining his three distinct steps of what he terms critical listening as: describe (a high level personal reaction to the playing); illustrate (identifying particular passages within the playing that support the words and descriptions used in describing) and; examine (where you listen closely to the playing in these passages and identifies how the player is achieving the impact you describe) (pp. 45-46). In addition, Ó Gráda states:

\begin{quote}
Listening is part of practicing and is the key part of learning. When learning an instrument it is important that you educate your ears to recognise and understand what is happening in the playing of those you admire. It is through this process that you begin to develop your ‘musical sense’ that will in turn lead you to develop your personal style of music expression.

(Ó Gráda 2011, p.v)
\end{quote}

In terms of listening and the post-primary syllabi, some of the current Junior and Leaving Certificate books (Kearns and McFadden 2007; Costello and Kerin 2009) give brief, if any, mention to the aural learning process: ‘Music was passed down from generation to generation orally and aurally’ (Kearns and McFadden 2007, p.121). Even the short entry on aural learning in the Companion to Irish Traditional Music (Vallely 2011) broaches the topic in quite general terms: “Traditional music in most cultures was learned ‘by ear’, and the ability to learn and teach the music aurally is still greatly valued”, and diverts to discuss rote learning and comparisons with classical music, and bimusicality (Vallely 2011, p.28). In the student textbook, Soundscapes: A Coursebook for Leaving Certificate Music - Irish Music and Aural Awareness (Long in Sealy 2006), in a substantial section entitled ‘Notes on Aural Awareness’ (Sealy 2006), the focus is clearly biased towards Western Art music. Aural awareness is discussed in terms of: Western Art music periods in music history, style and genre; melodic, rhythmic and

\textsuperscript{113} Veblen interviewed the following for her research: Mary Begley, Nicholas Carolan, Tara Diamond, Josie McDermott, Harry McGlone, Dermot McLaughlin, Liam McNulty, Mary Mitchell, Francie Mooney, Kathleen and John Nesbitt, Denis O’Brien, Rose O’Connor, Micheál Ó hEidhin, Maire O’Keeffe, Kieran O’Malley, Peadar Ó Riada, Michelle O’Sullivan, Paddy Ryan, Michael Tubridy, Fintan Vallely.
harmonic dictation; scoring of voices and classical music instruments; technique vs. device; classical music phrasing and formal structure, expression markings in music, as well as other features such as harmonic rhythm, register, mood etc. (pp.155-162). Perhaps this seeming indifference in recent traditional music literature to the aural learning processes inherent in Irish traditional music transmission is in someway a by-product of those as-of-yet prevalent ideologies\footnote{For example, in discussing the ideology of music being transmitted through the soundscape of the natural environment, McCarthy refers to John Doherty (In Feldman and O’Doherty, The Northern Fiddler, p.50) where he says: ‘The old musicians in them days would take music from anything. They would take music from the sound of the sea, or they would go alongside the river at the time of the flood and they would take music from that. They would take music from the chase of the hound and the hare’}. which capture and portray the ‘mystery, magic and myth that underlie the transmission of traditional music in Irish culture’ (McCarthy 1999a, p.173), coupled with widespread acceptance of the hegemony of western art music philosophy and pedagogy, amongst those other issues discussed in Chapter 1.

All this being said, a deeper consideration of listening in terms of pedagogy (and philosophy) is beginning to occupy music education research, and the importance of developing skills in knowing how to listen is beginning to emerge, along with a general consensus that ‘knowing how to listen, and what to hear, are parts of what constitutes musical culture’ (Dibben 2003, p. 201). In this respect, the two pedagogies of listening to which this research resonates and gives focus are Campbell’s three phases of musical involvement (2005) and Green’s three types of listening (Green 2008).

(v) Towards a Pedagogy of Listening

Patricia Sheehan Campbell advocates for a greater focus on listening maintaining that ‘pedagogically speaking, listening is the heart and soul of a musical education’ (Campbell 2005, p.35).\footnote{Of course, Campbell believes that a thorough understanding of music also involves a study of cultural contexts, functions, and human behaviour, but ‘music is nothing if it is not known for its sonic self’ (2005, p.35).} Campbell believes that:

Classrooms at all levels contain students at various points of a spectrum of music-making experience, and teachers are challenged to intrigue and entice them to know music in thoughtful listening and active participation.  

(Campbell 2004, p.9)
Campbell rightly draws attention to the great variance within which music teachers often approach the activity of listening where some teachers may consider it a passive process in which case it has no central place during the music class, while others will proclaim the merits of careful listening, but without focussed attention on approaches to deep-listening experiences (2005, p.30). She believes however that there are ‘multiple facets to a pedagogy of listening, and not one of them is passive’ (2005, p.30).

To counter this perception of passivity, Campbell presents her ‘pedagogy of listening’ which she claims is universally useful in advancing the development of their knowledge of all musical expressions:

> While these techniques are already part of the pedagogy of world music, they are as applicable to knowing Bach better as they are to understanding Balinese gamelan, and as relevant to students knowing the music of B. B. King as to students studying the music of the Ba-Benzele pygmies.  
> (Campbell 2005, p.31)

- The first of these phrases, Attentive Listening, is a teacher-directed approach to listening that focuses on musical structures. It uses specific points of focus or listening points, often merged with diagrams or visual cues that the teacher selects or creates to draw students’ attention to specific musical elements and events.
- Campbell’s second phase of Engaged Listening is related to participatory listening or learning while doing, drawing the listener into greater participation with the music. It therefore actively involves the listeners to some extent in music making, such as singing, playing an instrument, performing a rhythm, playing percussion, moving eurhythmically, or dancing to music.
- The third phase of Campbell’s pedagogy of listening, Enactive Listening, involves listening with a view to recreating music, and ‘requires intense listening to every musical nuance... for the purpose of re-creating the music in performance in as stylistically accurate a way as possible’ (2005, p.32). According to Campbell, enactive listening allows the listening act to guide musicians to culturally appropriate performance, and students can learn the music or oral cultures aurally.

A ‘natural outgrowth’ of aural learning according to Campbell is that of imitation (Campbell 1991, p.104; see also 2004, p.6) which we will see is inherent in the

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116 This aligns with the findings of this research, where even during what I have identified as ‘remote listening’ certain cognitive functions are taking place.
pedagogical processes associated with the acquisition of traditional music skills and repertoire. Similarly, the musical enculturation paradigm also emphasises that, ‘imitation forms an important part of music learning and that it may well be a universal first step in the process’ (Merriam 1964, p.147). Campbell explains the phenomenon of acquisition through the critical device of imitation in a cross-cultural context:

In many musical traditions, the performance of music as it has been earlier performed is a desirable goal. Whether in reference to a single phrase or a complete work, imitation demands an exact duplication of the music. Both visual and aural senses come into play in the lesson, class, or rehearsal, as students observe the sound, performance position, and techniques of the fingers, hands, wrists, and embouchure. The student models the teacher immediately following the performance of a single musical passage and over a period of time, using a trial-and-error system

(Campbell 1991, p.105)

In terms of what happens beyond the imitative aural learning process, Campbell points to the considerable variation which emerges between performances, given the fact that music in folk traditions and oral culture is transmitted from person to person without the aid of notation. Campbell’s insight in this regard is useful in that it further deconstructs the aural learning process:

While the fundamental shape of the piece usually remains the same and certain key motifs are maintained, the details of each successive performance give a somewhat different flavor to the music. The performer carries a mental image of the music’s function, its design, instrumentation, and fundamental aural characteristics, but he or she may personalize the music as directed by his or her feelings at the moment of performance.

(Campbell 1991, p.113)

Green (2008a),\footnote{At the time of writing, Green is Project Leader of the Ear Playing Project (EPP). According to its website, the central aim of the Ear EPP approach is to give pupils a relevant, accessible and enjoyable skill, which they may not otherwise come across, and which they can continue to build on for the rest of their lives if they so wish; and to give teachers some simple strategies for teaching ear playing and other aural work, which they may find helpful and interesting [online] available: http://earplaying.ioe.ac.uk/aims_object.html [accessed 19/09/2012].} when focussing on listening in her investigation, highlights the often elusive form that music listening assumes given the difficulties that music's relative ‘invisibility’ gives us when we try to apply names to its component parts. Green refers to the importance of music listening amongst music educators who ‘value listening as an end in itself’ (2008a, p.67). She distinguishes between two different types of listening, ‘each situated at the opposite ends of a pole’ (ibid., p.6).
• At one extreme there is ‘purposive’ listening, which concerns how students approached listening to their CD when they were attempting to copy it instrumentally and/or vocally in groups. Is it as Green describes, ‘listening with the conscious purpose of adopting and adapting what is heard into one’s own practices’ (*ibid.*, p.7).

• At the other extreme there is ‘distracted’ listening, which concerns how students responded in a receptive, rather than a productive mode. Distracted listening according to Green ‘goes on effortlessly, feeding into learning practices either unconsciously through enculturation or at occasional moments of spontaneous, dawning awareness’ (*ibid.*, p.73). It happens when music is heard in the background, but is not attended to by the person in a focussed way, instead, entering the mind almost entirely through unconscious enculturation (*ibid.*, p.7).

In terms of listening and assessment, one of the findings that emerged from Green’s research was that through a certain amount of informal learning, students accessed music in a meaningful way which was free from any linguistic concepts. This of course has ramifications for an assessment system which seems to have over-leapt the stage where music students are allowed to come to an understanding of music through immersion in the music and associated relationships, without having to comment on the them and prove themselves (*ibid.*, p.71).

2.10.2. An Obser-visual Awareness of Irish Traditional Music

It is not unreasonable to suggest that the observational and visual aspect of teaching and learning traditional music in post-primary music education (and in the traditional music community) is an important (and under-researched) pedagogical consideration. However, the findings of this research will show, through the Principle of Obser-visual Awareness which emerged from the investigation (see Chapter 6, Section, 6.1.2), that visual means of learning should occupy a more central place than it now does. The prevailing opinion is that ‘Music is an aural experience, it is not a visual one’ (Vallely 2011, p. 28). To develop my argument I draw from various avenues of enquiry such as: Campbell’s interpretation of Barbe and Swassing’s concept of learning modality; Csikszentmihalyi’s interpretation of flow through the ‘joys of seeing’; observations of participants over the course of this study; my experience teaching and learning within
the tradition; and various literature on the teaching and learning of music where the observational and visual aspects of learning have been recognised.

Waldron and Veblen (2008) distinguish between visual and observational learning, where visual commonly refers to learning through written notation. Breathnach (1986) also discusses the place and purpose of staff notation for traditional musicians such as its role in elucidating a twist or turn in a tune that the musician’s ear has failed to pick up, or recalling ‘to memory a tune once played but now forgotten’ (p.8). It is, he says, ‘of use if one is familiar with the system of music for which it is intended’ (ibid.). In terms of observational learning, Waldron and Veblen (2009) refer to participants of a study who devised self-teaching strategies such as ‘watching other Celtic musicians’ fingers while playing at sessions’ (p.58). From another traditional music perspective, Boullier (1998) maintains that Irish music belongs to an oral tradition yet states that ‘tunes are learned by listening, watching and trying to imitate other players’ (my emphasis) (p.15).

The term obser-visual awareness is employed in this research to refer to the broad spectrum of learning which encompasses all visual means of transmission, with the ‘obser’ prefix emphasising the intentionality which accompanies learning through obser-visual means. As a brief aside, intentionality is at the heart of this research’s interpretation of obser-visual learning; it resonates with Freire’s call to abandon the educational goal of deposit making through ‘problem posing’ education which embodies communication, where the learner responds to the essence of consciousness, that is, intentionality (2005, p.79). In other words, obser-visual refers to the conscious or intentional use of observational and visual means (along with kinesthetic and aural strategies) towards the goal of traditional music transmission.

It seems from a review of literature that any discussion on observational learning (as opposed to visual learning) is superseded by a focus on aural learning strategies, and to a lesser extent, kinesthetic learning. Perhaps this is due to the fact that traditionally, philosophical enquiry in music education has been influenced by perspectives from the field of Western art music. For example, Dunbar-Hall points out that in orchestral setups ‘performers all face the one direction and thus cannot have visual contact with each other’ (2009, p.70). Bowman also refers to the ‘out-thereness’ of visual
experience, in contrast to the participatory, intimate, inward, inward characteristics of sonorous experience (2009, p.121).

However, there are some, if few, exceptions. For example, in his discussion of culturally contextualised learning as an agent of change, Dunbar-Hall (2009) refers to the constant visual contact between Balinese gamelan players in typical ‘boxed’ teaching situations. Campbell also refers to the ‘visual-kinesthetic channels of information’ in terms of children learning songs where they ‘find demonstration and imitation as not only an aural but also a visual and kinesthetic experience’ (2001a, p. 220). In the same discussion, Campbell speaks of aspiring gaida players in Bulgaria who become engaged in the use of visual-kinesthetic strategies that favour a holistic rather than an analytical route to learning (ibid., p.223). Csikszentmihalyi advocates for the use of the eyes to make flow happen, suggesting that people do not ‘cultivate systematically the potential of their vision’ given that visual skills ‘can provide constant access to enjoyable experiences’ (1991, p.107). In Irish traditional music scholarship however, perhaps as a result of the engrained and profound emphasis on transmission via oral and aural means, there remains a glaring omission when it comes to a consideration of the observational or visual aspects of transmission.

2.10.3. A Kinesthetic Awareness of Irish Traditional Music

Our accounts of musical cognition are ... curiously disembodied. What troubles me about that is that to my way of thinking and in my experience, music is an inextricably bodily fact: it is uniquely corporeal or somatic

(Bowman 2000b, p.12)

There exists a broadening body of scholarship which urges us to consider bodily movement, or knowing-through-action as intrinsic to music education (Jaques-Dalcroze (1921/1980); Keil 1987, 1994, 1995; Irwin 1990; Bachmann 1991; Elliott 1995; Regelski 1996, 1998; Small 1998; Bowman 2000a, 2004a, 2010; Campbell 2000, 2003; De Nora 2000; Shusterman 2000a, 2000b; Juntunen and Hyvönen 2004; Seitz 2005; Dewey 2007; Juntunen and Westerlund 2010). Scholarship on traditional music which refers explicitly to the importance of the body towards understanding the music is rare. Waldron (2009b, p. 57) however, identifies ‘dance integrated with music’ as an aspect of the lives of those music teachers who she labeled as ‘encultured into Celtic music’.
Beyond traditional music scholarship, Small proposes that ‘to music is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by rehearsing or practicing ... or by dancing’ (1998, p. 8). Shusterman (2000b), after tracing the exclusion of the body from the philosophical text that founded modern aesthetics, Alexander Baumgarten’s *Aesthetica* (1750/1758), explores the body’s crucial and complex role in aesthetic experience through a field he introduces as *somaesthetics*. *Somaesthetics’* goal is to end the neglect of the body (Shusterman 2000b, p.267) and is concerned with the body’s lived experience; it queries the use of one’s body as a locus of sensory-aesthetic appreciation, given that our senses belong to and are conditioned by the soma (Shusterman 2000a, p. 139). Westerlund (2002) provides a thorough analysis of Reimer’s ‘non-bodily ideal’ where he separates the technical-critical level which has only a *means-value* (orig. italics) to aesthetic ends (p.125). In contrast to Reimer, Dewey felt this distinction was ‘*the* problem of experience’ (1958, p.369) (italics in original). Dewey’s philosophy emphasises that we are embodied beings whose ability to think and reason cannot be isolated from our earthly existence (Dewey 1934; Maattanen 2003). With the severing of consciousness from the physical organs of activity, Dewey bemoans the ‘evil results which have flowed form this dualism of mind and body’:

The intimate union of activity and undergoing its consequences which leads to recognition of meaning is broken; instead we have two fragments: mere bodily action on one side, and meaning directly grasped by ‘spiritual’ activity on the other.

(Dewey 2007, p.118)

From an ethnomusicological point of view, with obvious implications for music education, Keil’s opinion on the matter is clear:

Music is about process ... music is not so much about abstract emotions and meanings, reason, cause and effect, logic, but rather about motions, dance, global and contradictory feelings; it's not about composers bringing forms from on high for mere mortals to realize or approximate, it's about getting down and into the groove, everyone creating socially from the bottom up.

(Keil 1995, p.1)
In fact, in rejection of the modern notion of the aesthetic, Keil suggested as far back as 1966 in *Motion and Feeling through Music* that ‘it may be our notion of an aesthetic that is rather crude and restricted for a greater awareness’ and asks:

Need an aesthetic be exclusively verbal? Can we not infer a great deal from choreographic responses or “symbolic action,” from the “conversation” between dancers and musicians (the stimuli and responses go in two directions, I suspect), not to mention the relationship between man and instrument? If music “is so closely associated with bodily effort,” why not build a bodily aesthetic adequate to the task? (Keil 1966, p.340)

Over four decades later, it is still being argued that ‘bodily knowing’ is the basis of all knowing, and without embodiment, a non-linguistic and non-propositional style of cognition, conceptual knowing remains mechanical and thin (Juntunen and Hyvönen 2004, p.211) The actual role of the body movement in musical learning and knowing has been little researched however (ibid., p.200) and this emerging scholarship is likely a reaction to the general disembodiment of experience in relation to knowledge in western culture. For example, Juntunen and Westerlund (2010) argue that the body is not only an instrument through which musical thinking takes place, but that the body can be taken as a conscious and explicit object of transformation (p.204). They believe that what can be known via bodily experience is known at a deeper level than verbal expression, and furthermore, they suggest that body movement represents ‘pre-reflective knowing’ (p.200). Given that the “body has had a pretty ‘bad rap’ in Western philosophy” as ‘Other to the knowing mind’, Bowman reminds us that ‘bodily experience is the basis for perception of such essentially musical qualities as rhythm, groove, movement, gesture, tension and release, and all manner of so-called expressive qualities’ (2010, p.4). This is counter to the valuing of conceptual knowledge over bodily knowing and experiential learning, the former reflecting the mind-body separation of Cartesian dualism that is typical of Western thinking, a move which has undoubtedly influenced post-primary music education to some considerable degree.

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118 This would substantiate the argument made in Section 2.7 that ethnomusicology is an area of interest which is of increasing and mutual relevance to understanding a musical culture in music education.

119 Juntunen and Westerlund (2010) provide a comprehensive overview of the emergence of dualism where detachment was valued over lived experience. They refer to Taylor (1989) who traces the disembodied human being back to Plato who created dichotomies such as the soul versus the body and the eternal versus the changing (p.116). These dualities were then reinforced in the modern sense by Descartes in what came to be known as Cartesian dualism.
Blacking (1976) was one of the first to point out the cultural and social aspects of bodily experience in his discussions of Venda music and music-learning processes, repeatedly bringing attention to the deep involvement of the body and the constant relationship of music to dance as means of reinforcing the concepts and techniques of musical performance and of structures contained within music. To Blacking, the sensuous, bodily experience of music was both an end and a means to an end, and through his work he underscored the extent to which music perception and cognition are linked to physical movement, and dance towards achieving greater musical understanding. Similarly Turino (2008) refers to the shift in thinking of music making as a social activity involving live people performing with or for other live people, to music as an object (p.24). Furthermore, he describes four musical fields where participatory performance is a special type of artistic practice where individuals actively contribute to the ‘sound and motion of a musical event through dancing, singing, clapping, and playing musical instruments when each of these activities is considered integral to the performance’ (ibid., p.28). He continues that ‘Attention is on the sonic and kinesthetic interaction among participants’ and ‘on the activity, on the doing, and on the other participants, rather than on an end product that results from the activity’ (ibid.).

Before Blacking (and Turino), Jaques-Dalcroze had also acknowledged the social aspect of the body, emphasising that music, and the rhythms of the human body embedded in it, have been the basis of human emotion down all ages (1985/1930, p.7). Jacques-Dalcroze (1921/1980) seems to have been among those who tried to break the modern paradigm in music education (Juntunen and Westerlund 2010, p.205), coming to the conclusion that musical learning and understanding should be based on bodily experiences, where mental, emotional and physical, or bodily, aspects are inseparable, and are approached through music within a culture:

Dalcroze Eurhythmics seems to be a practice that awakens the possibility of experiencing music and movement in a sensitive way by attuning the body’s sensitivity towards the quality of its movements and that of music. Applying body movement in teaching music develops above all bodily knowing of music. In this mode musical understanding is manifested in bodily action, which can be seen as a physical metaphor bridging the concrete and the abstract.

(Juntunen and Hyvönen 2004, p.211)

120 Turino (2008) describes four musical fields involving ‘real time musical performance’ as participatory and presentational music making, the high fidelity field, studio audio art (p.26).
In this natural framework of holistic duality the mind and body are inseparable from, although different aspects of the human organism as a functional whole (Dewey 1958, p. 285; Williams and Bendelow 1998). The most significant and far reaching innovation that Jaques-Dalcroze brought to the teaching of music was to incorporate a meaningful rhythmic movement experience to the learning process (Juntunen and Westerlund 2010, p. 210). His goal was to establish a system of music education (Dalcroze eurhythmics) in which the body is the intermediary between sounds and thought, where there is communication between feeling and understanding, and between sensations which inform the mind and those which recreate sensorial means of expression. Jaques-Dalcroze’s challenge was to develop the psychophysical being within and through music and action, the senses, body, mind, emotions and music fuse into one experience (p. 210). Finally, in terms of Csikszentmihalyi’s flow, the pursuit of flow experiences is based on the use of physical skills, where even the simplest physical act becomes enjoyable when it is transformed as to produce flow:

The essential steps in this process are: (a) to set an overall goal, and as many subgoals as are realistically feasible; (b) to find ways of measuring progress in terms of the goals chosen; (c) to keep concentrating on what one is doing, and to keep making finer and finer distinctions in the challenges involved in the activity; (d) to develop the skills necessary to interact with the opportunities available; and (e) to keep raising the stakes if the activity becomes boring

(Csikszentmihalyi 1990 / 1991, p.97)

2.10.4. Considering a Tactile Awareness of Irish Traditional Music

Unfortunately, relatively few have written first-hand accounts of the ways the lived body engages in or negotiates musical action, including tactile awareness (Bowman and Powell 2007, p. 14). This, unfortunately, also applies to the scholarly field of Irish traditional music studies, further highlighting the need for this research. From an ethnomusicological point of view, Rice (1994) describes the combination of aural, visual, and tactile modalities of learning in his study of the Bulgarian gaida. An important distinction is made in this research between kinesthetic awareness and a more sensory tactile awareness. Juntunen and Hyvönen (2004) refer to this distinction where they describe the illustration of a melody in the air by an individual’s hand as kinesthetic, while the sensation in the fingertips of the positioning of a hand on a guitar’s fingerboard is described as a ‘tactile icon’ (p.207). Moreover, they cite Stubley
(1999) who describes the act of hearing as ‘a very physical thing’ where the eardrum receives sounds initially as tactile vibrations that resonate through the body. Bowman (2004a) also reminds us that at the most fundamental level of musical experience, the body gives us the experience of timbre, ‘sound’s tactile core’:

Sound’s tactile core, timbre is no secondary quality with which a sonic stimulus is optionally overlain. Its roughness or smoothness, its intrusiveness or warmth, are functions of the way sound touches and engages the body qualitatively. Indeed, there can be no coherent talk of timbre, of tone’s “quality,” without the body.  

(Bowman 2004a, pp.29-50)

2.11. Participatory and Presentational Performance

A final area of scholarship which encompasses many of the areas which have been discussed so far, but which necessitates consideration in its own right in terms of its place in an educational context, is that of performance; more specifically, active participation in two types of performance, participatory and presentational performance (Small 1998; Turino 2008). The importance of participation in the music learning process has been highlighted recently by Green (2012) who believes that:

... there is much that remains to be done in attempting to return the enjoyment of music-making to what I believe most music-educators agree is its rightful place—a participatory aspect of what it is to be human

(Green 2012, p.188)

In other words, while many of the areas which have been discussed throughout this chapter121 are recognised as being integral to the experience of traditional music through the very act of music making or ‘playing an instrument’, types of performance and their social function are considered here in terms of their potential integration with the concept of an ‘educative’ experience of traditional music in post-primary music education. Lave and Wenger’s (1991) conceptualisation of learning as a process of social and personal transformation within communities of practice is a useful one within which to consider performance-as-educative experience. While recognising the limitations of this socio-cultural theory in terms of an educational environment, Karlsen and Väkevää (2012) highlight the value of Lave and Wenger’s communities of practice

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121 For example, aural, kinesthetic, tactile, and visual awareness as well as those aspects of transitioning roles and the concept of flow.
for the purpose of analysing music-making groups ‘according to what is going on within them in terms of learning and distribution of knowledge’ (p.xiii). Lave and Wenger’s approach emphasises the situated nature of learning and the development of knowledge as relational and contextual (Karlsen 2012, p.85). Furthermore, Karlsen explains that ‘a central task of the newcomer is to learn to behave within a particular discourse and negotiate ways of being a person in a particular communal context’ (ibid.). Through situated learning within a community of practice, the focus is not on learning itself; instead, the theoretical starting place is learning situated in the practices of communities where the novice or less experienced individual ‘negotiates and renegotiates participation in the community of practice’ (Matusov, Bell et al. 1994, p.918). Therefore, rather than asking what kinds of cognitive processes and conceptual structures are involved, Lave and Wenger ask what kinds of social engagements provide the proper context for learning to take place (William F. Hanks in Lave and Wenger (1991, p.14)).

Lave and Wenger’s communities of practice resonates in many ways with Turino’s (2008) conceptualisation of performance in terms of its participatory and/or presentational values; Turino’s classification of performance types strongly informed this investigation’s emerging theory. To begin with, Turino conceptualises music making in relation to different realms of artistic practice and provides a framework which ‘requires shifts in the very conception of what ‘music’ is’ (2008, p.27). Turino’s focus is on the types of activity, artistic roles, values, goals, and people involved in specific instances of music making and dance; and how the goals, values, practices, and styles of musicians within a given field are shaped by their conceptions of the ideologies and contexts of reception (original italics) and the purposes of music within that field (ibid.). In an extensive discussion on participatory performance, Turino (2008) summarises this mode of performance as a:

...specialist type of artistic practice in which there are no artist-audience distinctions, only participants and potential participants performing different roles, and the primary goal is to involve the maximum number of people in some performance role.

(Turino 2008, p.26)

122 For example, the end of term gathering in Phase 2 was one such social engagement which provided context for such learning to take place.
Although Turino seems to suggest at times that a continuum exists in participatory traditions, participatory music making/dancing is, he says, ‘the most democratic, the least formally competitive, and the least hierarchical’ (ibid., p.35) and occurs in some form or other in traditions which are guided by participatory goals. A participatory tradition will have a variety of roles that differ in difficulty and degrees of specialisation required. Furthermore, opportunities to improve one’s skills are common, the learning curve is audibly and visually present, and the roles have an ever expanding ceiling of challenges. One feature which differentiates participatory from presentational traditions involves issues of the distinctive values which underpin each; for example, participatory values place a priority on performing in ways that invite participation while in presentational music there is much more room for personal expression. Participatory performance is more about the social relations being realised through the performance, connecting with others and experiencing flow (ibid.). Turino (2008, p. 36-51) compiles a list of ‘sound features’ and performance practices that characterise participatory traditions including: heightened degree of repetition of melodic material; the beginning and end of pieces are not sharply delineated; rhythmical and social synchrony and identity (leading to social comfort), i.e. paying special attention to the sounds and motions of others on a moment-to-moment basis thus enhancing the potential for flow; a direct sense of being together, moving as one, and of deeply felt similarity; dense textures and timbres; virtuosity subtly submerged with the overall collective sound; the idea of sequential participatory music where individuals take turns to perform and social pressure to perform is strong. According to Small (1998), a musical performance is a ‘much richer and more complex affair than is allowed by those who concentrate their attention exclusively on the musical work and on its effect on an individual listener’ (p.8). Small also raises notions of the social aspect of participatory performance and the ‘entire set of relationships that constitutes a performance’ (ibid.) where he says that:

...the way that people relate to one another as they music is linked not only with sound relationships that are created by the performers, not only with the participants’ relation to one another, but also with the participants’ relationships to the world outside the performance space, in a complex spiral of relationships, and it is those relationships, and the relationships between relationships, that are the meaning of the performance

(Small 1998, p.48)

123 For example, Turino speaks of ‘highly’ participatory traditions.
124 This can be understood in relation to Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theory.
125 Turino expresses that a role can vary from tapping a beat to playing core instrumental parts.
Presentational performance, on the other hand, is a field involving one group of people (the artists) providing music for another (the audience) in which there is a pronounced artist-audience separation within face-to-face situations (Turino 2008, pp.51-52). According to Turino, presentational music is prepared by musicians for others to listen to, and the social responsibility differs from that of performers in participatory contexts. For instance, musicians must provide a performance that sustains the interest of an audience that is not participating in making the sound or dancing (*ibid.*); this leads to a greater amount of attention to detail and arrangements. The music must be interesting and varied for an audience, the complete program to be presented tends to be planned and rehearsed in advance, and the program generally offers both coherence and internal contrasts to keep the audience attentive. Turino also points to the different ‘head’ or mindset among musicians who operate in one or other of the participatory and presentational fields. In terms of the contextual features of presentational performance, ‘the presentation of a given musical style creates a fulcrum around which given identity groups can form or be maintained’ (2008, p.61) which leads to cultural cohorts often forming around particular presentational styles. In terms of the learning potential which presentational performance provides, the ITMA posits that ‘imitating live performances’ is a useful way of ‘learning to perform, whether solo or in combination with others’ (Carolan 1991b):

> By imitating live performances. This is the best method, but it has the drawback that it is difficult to pick up by ear all the details of a performance. Even if you do find it possible, slavish imitation is not the ultimate goal, but you need to assimilate the characteristics of the music as it comes to you before you begin to introduce your own personal touches.

(Carolan 1991b)

Finally, Turino posits that a consideration of the transformation of a participatory tradition into a presentational one (such as Irish traditional music, which encompasses both traditions) can aid in understanding the differences between participatory and presentational styles. With this in mind, he presents ‘style features’ that he has identified as being characteristic of presentational performance:

Closed, scripted forms; organised beginnings and endings; extensive variation available; individual virtuosity emphasised; repetition balanced with contrast; variability of rhythms possible; transparent textures/clarity emphasised; varied textures and density for contrast; piece as a set item

(Turino 2008, p.59)
2.12. The Role of Print, Electronic, and New Media

Any discussion on the experience of traditional music in post-primary music education must take into account the integral and disparate roles that print, electronic, and new media (hereafter described together as media) have played and continue to play in engaging individuals within the genre. In fact, Phase 2 participants identified the role that each medium played in terms of their engagement with traditional music both in school and beyond the classroom context. The evolving media landscape is also particularly relevant when considering the fact that 63% of the Phase 1 Post-Primary Music Teachers’ Questionnaire 2007-8 respondents felt that there was not an adequate number of resources available in their schools to effectively facilitate a class on traditional music.

Although there is a growing body of literature related to the relationship between Irish traditional music and media in an ethnomusicological sense, there is a relative paucity of research in terms of media and its place in classrooms with regard to the experience of traditional music. As far back as 1984, White drew attention to the need to determine ‘the social and musical effects of modern communication media and their role in [Irish] folk music (1984, p.13). Although it is doubtful that White was referring to the role that television or radio can play in effecting the experience of traditional music in music education, the question still remains as to the potential role that the broad spectrum of media can play in this context. A brief overview of the three main media which associated with the transmission of traditional music and which emerged in Phase 2 of this research follow. Where possible, they are contextualised with regard to their place in music education contexts.

126 See Chapter 6, Section 6.2.4.
127 Discussed further in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.
128 For example, the International Council for Traditional Music Ireland dedicated its 2009 conference (UCD School of Music) to the theme of ‘Recording’.
129 The Leaving Certificate Music Draft Guidelines for Teachers contains a list of recordings which ‘may be used to illustrate the range and variety of Irish music as practices today, the general influences on Irish music and of its contribution to the folk music of other countries’ (NCCA 1997). The current draft syllabus for the Junior Certificate music programme in Section 3: Listening, states that students’ knowledge and experience of Irish music should involve an awareness of ‘the different ways it is preserved and transmitted, i.e. orally, and via print and recorded music’ (NCCA 2011, p.11).
The historical role of print media in the preservation and propagation of traditional music is unquestioned (Keegan 1996; Whelan 2008; Downey 2009) and many of today’s traditional musicians are musically literate and are familiar with the standard Western staff notation system (Vallely 1999, p.256). As Vallely notes on its use:

Staff notation, in simple form, remains the most widely used graphic representation system for traditional music. For all players, however, it is only a means to learning the notation of the tune, an aid to working out difficult ‘turns’ or variations. Notation is never regarded as a set of instructions - as it may be in classical music - rather it is a map to which the player must travel by their own taste, ingenuity and communally derived aesthetics in order to play the piece ‘properly’

(Vallely 1999, p.258)

The ITMA also includes ‘teaching yourself from written versions of songs or tunes’ (Carolan 1991c) as a way of learning traditional music:

This method is best used for adding items to your repertory after you have otherwise absorbed the idiom of the music and acquired sufficient technique. It is also useful for learning details which might have escaped your ear, or for getting ideas for variations of an item you already know.

(Carolan 1991c)

Recent research (Moloney 2000; Joyce 2012) also points to a continuing interest in the printed collections of traditional music. Downey (2009) cites the importance of Aloys Fleischmann’s *Sources of Traditional Irish Music, c. 1600–1855* completed in collaboration with Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin (Fleischmann 1998), in contributing ‘to a growing responsiveness to Irish music in music education’ (p.49). Moreover, a perusal of *Recent Publications and Acquisitions* on the website of the *Irish Traditional Music Archive* highlights the continuing role of printed tune sources today. Notwithstanding, the limitations of print media as a transmission tool have been raised; for example, Downey (2009) cites Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann who advise that, although the vast collections transcribed by many collectors of Irish music are a valuable resource, music notation may not be the best way to get a ‘feel’ for traditional music:

Irish traditional music generally cannot be notated exactly the way it is meant to be played, and music notation doesn’t always lend itself well to the transcription of Irish ornamentation

(Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann 2006)

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Electronic media (EM) gives access to traditional music on sources such as video and DVD recordings, audio recordings, and online content, and includes that EM which transmits traditional music such as radio and television. EM have a continuing and profound role in the transmission of traditional music, a role which is widely accepted and documented (Hamilton 1996). Its role has been explicitly and implicitly referred to since the record industry induced the growth in popularity of traditional music among the North American Irish diaspora in the 1920s and 1930s. Since then, generations of traditional musicians in Ireland and further afield have employed audio/audiovisual recordings as a means of engaging with and learning traditional music. In fact, the ITMA highlights the benefit of learning from ‘recorded performances’:

> By imitating recorded performances. This method has the advantage of allowing you to slow down performances, and play them over and over, so that you can pick up details. But there are elements of a performance that are not captured on a recording. The lack of personal interaction with others makes it a somewhat arid way of learning. It is however the most feasible method for very many people.

(Carolan 1991c)

In the wider field of music education, the role of recordings in music education has been a somewhat contentious issue, especially with regard to the place of listening in the philosophies of Reimer and Elliott, as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1. For instance, Elliott states that recordings ‘ought to be introduced parenthetically, in direct relation to the musical practices into which students are being inducted’ (2005, p.13), a stance which Reimer’s MEAE challenges. Heneghan has a clear opinion on the matter, stating:

> It is difficult to resist a negative reaction to both as read. To suggest pejoratively that listening to recordings is considered to be the proper focus for general music programmes is overstating and distorting the MEAE case, as if there is no intrinsic pleasure to be derived from listening as an activity. This is just an unacceptable premise and is an insult to the skills of teachers who may use that mode of listening as part of their teaching schemes.

(Heneghan 2004, p.91)

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132 There is a breadth of literature and commentary on the role that the record industry played in the early 1920s in promoting traditional musicians who laid down definitive stylistic markers such as fiddle players Michael Coleman and James Morrison, and pipers Leo Rowsome and Tommy Reck (see Vallely 2011, pp. 563 - 569).
The learning and teaching of traditional music in online music communities is a recently emerging field of research (Waldron and Veblen 2008; Waldron 2009a, 2011a, 2011b, 2012). The ever-evolving and complex nature of this medium for teaching and learning traditional music ensures its relevance for post-primary music education and this investigation. For example, in an examination of music teaching and learning in the Irish traditional virtual music community, Waldron and Veblen (2008) contextualise their investigation in Marshall McLuhan’s ideas regarding media interaction; they survey various online mediums used by traditional musicians for online music learning (including websites, blogs, forums, and YouTube videos) and note the multiple, fluid and overlapping ways in which the traditional music community defines itself. Waldron (2012) notes however that few research investigations have ‘examined how online and offline music communities overlap, integrate and converge with the other, instead focusing only on the online music community in question’ (p.2). She contends therefore that as a field, ‘music educators have not fully understood or utilized the power of the Internet in facilitating informal music learning in convergent on- and offline communities (ibid., p.12). Furthering this field of research, Waldron (2011b) introduces her investigation into the Online Academy of Irish Music (OAIM), an ‘intentional music learning and teaching community [that] was established with the specific purpose of providing high-quality Irish traditional (IrTrad) music instruction via the Internet’ where ‘teachers ... combine aural/oral and observational modes typical of informal music learning consistent with IrTrad practices’ (ibid., pp.195-196). Finally, in relation to new media and school music education, Waldron (2009a) identifies how over the past decade, various online communities of practice have evolved online formed around different folk music genres and suggests that:

Integrating diverse musics of specific local physical communities into local school music education programmes, and introducing and combining these musics with their global online musical Communities of Practice counterparts could be one way to produce a school music education that, along with being more relevant to students, could also place students on the path to becoming lifelong music learners.

(Waldron 2009a, p. 108)

133 Francis Ward’s ongoing doctoral research titled ‘The Effect of New Technologies on the Transmission of Irish Traditional Music’ at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance (University of Limerick) recognises the growing presence of new forms of technology, principally the internet, in the Irish music tradition. His research acknowledges the omnipresence of new technologies in the ‘passing on’, or transmission of, Irish traditional music, and details the effects that these technologies are having on the music, and in particular the transmission of Irish traditional music.

2.13. Conclusion

This chapter, while broad in scope, has aimed to provide a focussed contextual grounding within which to situate, consider, and probe issues related to the experience of traditional music in post-primary music education. It firstly establishes a philosophical habitus which comprises ideas espoused by John Dewey and Paulo Freire; a habitus whose philosophical concepts promote the idea of traditional music in education as educative experience; one whose themes of continuity, interaction, and reflective experience resonate with the idea of traditional music as transmitted along an informal-formal nexus; and one which promotes the ideal of a transformative and liberatory music education which emphasises the role of the dialogical, problem-posing teacher-student. As well as drawing inspiration from recent international studies in the area of informal musical learning, a theme of interest which this chapter has looked to is that of enculturation; in particular, the potential of the processes of transmission of traditional music to inform pedagogical considerations in a music education context which a) facilitates a formal-informal learning nexus and b) promotes learning in ways which have much in common with everyday learning practices outside school. The area of ethnomusicology is also highlighted as an area which, through meaningful crossovers, has potential to inform such a pedagogy grounded in traditional practices. Likewise, a consideration of the area of music learning in cross-cultural perspectives provides additional impetus for a pedagogy which transmits traditional music in ways which honour the specific cultural values and behaviours of those who engage with the music beyond the context of the school.

Finally, and aligning with the grounded theory approach, a body of literature is orientated within which we can situate the many findings which emerged from the Phase 2 investigation (discussed throughout Chapter 6). Firstly, the concept of learning modalities was a useful one in which to consider the broad areas of listening (aural awareness); visual learning (observer-visual awareness); bodily movement (kinesthetic awareness); and the more sensory tactile awareness. Secondly, a body of literature which deals with how students engage in traditional music encompasses such disparate areas of relevance as participatory performance, presentational performance (and socio-cultural functions of these types of performance), and the role of various media, from print to new media forms.
3. Introduction

While the chapters thus far have served to contextualise this research, this chapter elaborates on the methodological design devised to conduct an integrated action research-grounded theory investigation with an overarching constructivist philosophy. To address the central research questions, a methodological design was devised which was sensitive to the educational context wherein this research took place, and which strongly aligned with and took into account the research’s theoretical framework. An example of this connection, the ways in which Csikszentmihalyi (1991), Dewey (1938), Dillon (2007), and Green (2008a) perceive meaning-making resonates deeply with a constructivist orientation, where similarly, meaning is constructed not discovered. Furthermore, Freire’s (1970) dialogical teacher-student connects with the ideals of an action research methodology, where research participants are engaged through a collaborative, participatory, and involved investigative process. Finally, the grounded theory methodological approach revealed areas of enquiry which in turn informed an evolving theoretical framework. The methods were chosen with the aim of: (1) obtaining information on and a clear insight into the experience and practice of participants; and (2) employing an appropriately reflexive and resultant dialectic approach to the research given the researcher’s extensive and longitudinal experience as a traditional musician. According to Charmaz, ‘a method provides a tool to enhance seeing but does not provide automatic insight’ (2006, p.15). Therefore, this dual approach was developed to provide this insight, and ensure that the emerging findings would be robust and deeply reflective of the nature of experience of traditional music in
3.1. A Paradigm of Constructivist Research Inquiry

An appropriate and essential starting point for this chapter rests at a level which precedes any discussion of particular methodologies, and instead aims to create an understanding of the overarching constructivist paradigm which guided how the study’s methodology was designed and conducted. To ensure a strong research design, researchers must choose a research paradigm that is congruent with their beliefs about the nature of reality (Mills, Bonner et al. 2006, p.2) and as Abeles and Conway reveal, ‘How one thinks about the world may affect different aspects of a research study’ (2010, p.281); this was certainly true in terms of the impact of this investigation’s constructivist orientation. In terms of Phase 2 in particular, it was vital that the research actions took into account, and were guided by considerations of the nature of the social reality being investigated, in order to achieve an understanding of the phenomena under investigation. These initial considerations guided the researcher towards the paradigm of constructivism, where ‘meaning is constructed not discovered, so subjects construct their own meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon’ (Gray 2009, p.18). Guba describes these considerations as ontological, epistemological, and methodological in nature (1990, p. 18) and they assist in determining the particular paradigm a researcher uses in guiding his/her actions. That is, ‘how one aligns oneself in this particular debate profoundly affects how one will go about uncovering
knowledge of social behaviour’ (Cohen & Manion 1994, p.6). In fact, the very knowledge that arises from a research inquiry such as this is determined by the paradigm applied as ‘when each paradigm is applied to education, it produces a different type of knowledge according to the value assumptions inherent in the paradigm and its corresponding methodological assumptions and research practices’ (Skrtic 1990 p.128).

The ontological and epistemological views in this investigation’s constructivist paradigm disallow the existence of an external objective reality independent of an individual from which knowledge may be collected or gained (Costantino 2008, p. 116), ‘asserting instead that realities are social constructions of the mind, and that there exist as many such constructions as there are individuals (although clearly many constructions will be shared)’ (Guba and Lincoln 1989, p. 43). The basic ontological assumption of constructivism is relativism, under which ‘there can be no “objective” truth’ (Guba and Lincoln 2001, p.1). Epistemologically, constructivism emphasises the subjective interrelationship between the researcher and participant, and the coconstruction of meaning (Hayes and Oppenheim 1997; Pidgeon and Henwood 1997; Mills, Bonner et al. 2006). Taking this subjectivist position, the ‘inquirer and inquired into are fused into a single entity’ and findings are ‘literally the creation of the process of interaction between the two’ (Guba 1990, p.27). Rodwell describes the process as being one where ‘one attempts to enter the role of the individual under investigation in order to understand the individuals’s inner experience related to his or her outward actions’ (1998, p.27). She continues that the researcher ‘attempts to reach understanding about the phenomena under investigation by understanding the internal and intangible processes of the minds of the inquiry participants’ (ibid.). This resonates with Cohen and Manion’s assertion that ‘individuals behaviour can only be understood by the researcher sharing their frame of reference: understanding the individuals interpretations of the world around them has to come from the inside, and not the outside’, where ‘the social world can only be understood from the standpoint of the individuals who are part of the ongoing action being investigated’ (1994, p.26) This ‘inner experience’ was accessed in this research through rich findings which arose from close interaction between the ‘inquired’ and ‘inquired into’, where the interaction between the researcher and participants very often led to rich dialogue and insight. Constructivism’s assumption that through interaction, the investigator and respondents create the data of the research is particularly pertinent to the methodological concern of
reflexivity, discussed in Section 3.2. Finally, the basic methodological assumption of constructivism is ‘hermeneutic-dialecticism, that is, a process by which constructions entertained by the several involved individuals and groups in an investigation are first uncovered and plumbed for meaning and then confronted, compared, and contrasted in encounter situations’ (Guba and Lincoln 2001, p.1).

The constructivist approach was therefore employed as it encourages the researcher to theorise in the interpretative tradition, where constructive analysis (of classroom observations, teacher interviews etc.) can piece together and interpret implicit meanings that constitute various categories, thereby showing how a mundane statement can potentially allude to an array of meanings and experiences (Charmaz 2006, pp. 146-147). Moreover, I was led to explore the concept of an integrated action research-grounded theory approach (discussed in Section 3.3) which would provide an ontological and epistemological fit with this constructivist position.

### 3.2. Reflexivity

Reflexivity raises the most fundamental issue that can be raised for modern social enquiry.

(Bonner 2001, p.267)

Another of the major attractions of the constructivist approach was that it enabled a deeply reflexive stance towards the research process to consider how the theory evolved, where both researcher and research participants could interpret meanings and actions. This was important considering my position as a reflexive researcher / Irish traditional musician in this research context. Charmaz sums up the reflexive stance of the constructivist researcher as following:

Any [constructive] analysis is contextually situated in time, place, culture, and situation. Because constructivists see facts and values as linked, they acknowledge that what they see-and don’t see-rests on values. Thus, constructivists attempt to become aware of their presuppositions and to grapple with how they can affect the research. They realize that grounded theorists can ironically import preconceived ideas into their work when they remain unaware of their starting assumptions. Thus, constructivism fosters researchers’ reflexivity about their own interpretations as well as those of their research participants.

(Charmaz 2006, p.131)
Mead (1962) describes reflexivity as a turning-back of one’s experience upon oneself, while Steier (1991) notes that the ‘self’ to which this bending back refers, and the experience upon which this process is predicated, must also be understood as socially constructed (p.2). These ideas align with Campbell’s assertion that in the 1980s, there was a ‘recognition that the researcher’s own personality and background should be considered carefully in the research and writing process’ (2003, p.23). Reflexivity ‘concerns itself with the impact of the researcher on the system and the system on the researcher’ and ‘acknowledges the mutual relationships between the researcher and who and what is studied’ (Lichtman 2006, p.206). Reflexivity can be translated as ‘thoughtful, self-aware analysis of the intersubjective dynamics between researcher and the researched’ which requires ‘critical self-reflection of the ways in which researchers’ social background, assumptions, positioning and behaviour impact on the research process’ (Gough and Finlay 2003, p.ix). Furthermore, reflexivity can help us to ‘examine the impact of the position, perspective and presence of the researcher’ and ‘open up unconscious motivations and implicit biases in the researcher’s approach’ (ibid., p.16). As well as allowing my voice to permeate the research process, reflexivity was also used as a methodological tool to draw attention to my role as the data was co-constructed through interviews, observations, and analysis.

Employing a deeply reflexive stance enabled a recognition of the fact that I was included inside, rather than outside the body of research. It allowed the data of my previous experience to be taken into consideration throughout the process, and placed value on those aspects of self-dialogue and discovery. Gough and Finlay term this variant of reflexivity as *reflexivity as introspection* and explain that it challenges the researcher to ‘use personal revelation not as an end in itself but as a springboard for interpretations and more general insight’ (2003, p.8). In other words, the researcher’s own reflecting, intuiting and thinking are used as primary evidence (Moustakas 1994). With this, the researcher becomes more explicit about the link between knowledge claims, personal experiences of both participant and researcher, and the social context (Gough and Finlay 2003, p.8). Through reflexivity as introspection, the profound impact that my experience (as a traditional musician, an educator, and an individual who had immersed himself in traditional music scholarship for over 10 years) was to have on the entire research process was acknowledged, as was the fact that I had a role to play in co-constructing the collection, selection, and importantly, the interpretation of the data.
3.3. Integrating Action Research and Grounded Theory

With the constructivist orientation and reflexive stance in mind, a methodological design using an integrated action research-grounded theory approach was deemed appropriate for Phase 2 of the investigation. Lincoln (2001) in fact sees strong connections between an action research approach and constructivism, both of which claim the impossibility of value-free knowledge. Although action research and grounded theory are distinct approaches to qualitative inquiry, each approach brought overlapping but different strengths to the research. As Charmaz points out, ‘grounded theory methods can complement other approaches to qualitative data analysis, rather than stand in opposition to them’ (2006, p.9). In spite of their differences, the case for integrating these contrasting methodological approaches in this research is presented here. Put simply, the action research methodology for this study was action orientated, a cyclical process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, where the approach was participative and grounded in experience. Grounded theory methodology which is about converting ‘information and experience into theory’ (Dick 2007, p.401) was added to make theory building through the study more systematic and rigorous. Put another way, ‘action research is more explicit about how understanding informs action’ and ‘grounded theory is more explicit about how theory is built from evidence’ (ibid., p. 398). Grounded theory’s emphasis on the emergence of theory from data allowed for the exploration of the teachers’ and students’ experiences at various stages by way of the action research process. It could be said that where action research methodology was the primary guiding methodology for the study, grounded theory was the primary analytical tool for the data which emerged over the course of the study. An additional reason for engaging with this integrated approach was that action research is often preoccupied with ‘developing local theories for practical problem solving’ (Poonamalle 2009, p.69) and this integrative action research-grounded theory approach ensured that theory would be developed which would have the greatest potential of being transferable beyond the sole context of the particular research contexts involved, to the wider context of post-primary music education in Ireland. To understand the rationale for employing this integrative approach, each approach will now be considered in isolation.

135 The grounded theory approach employed in this research draws from an evolved grounded theory approached with a constructivist intent. Several authors including Charmaz (2000, 2005, 2006) identify grounded theory when it is underpinned by a constructivist paradigm. This is discussed in Section 3.4.2.
3.3.1. Action Research Methodology

The research method which was found to encompass, or at least espouse a quietly determined sensitivity towards the guiding beliefs and values of constructivism outlined above was that of action research. In terms of this study, it is useful to think of action research not so much as a research methodology, but as ‘an orientation to enquiry that seeks to create participative communities of inquiry in which qualities of engagement, curiosity and question posing are brought to bear on significant practical issues’ (Reason and Bradbury 2008, p.1). Action research occurs when ‘communities of enquiry and action evolve and address questions and issues that are significant for those who participate as co-researchers’ (ibid.). It is an involved and collaborative process which ‘forms a bridge between practitioner understanding and the generation of theoretical knowledge to inform action’ (Somekh 2008, p.6). In action research, researchers are ‘inextricably bound up in the lives of those they research’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.38). The important consideration of who is involved in an action research intervention goes some way in defining this particular research design with collaboration being one of the key aspects. What defined this investigation with regard to the aspect of collaboration was the fact that each music teacher worked alongside and cooperated with the researcher in a sustained relationship over the course of the investigation (Cohen and Manion 1994, p.189).

This action research approach was deemed suitable for this investigation for many reasons in addition to those mentioned already. Many of these can be situated within Winter’s (1996) six key principles of action research which permeated the study. In short, Winter outlined his principles of action research as: reflexive critique, which is the process of becoming aware of our own perceptual biases, and which strongly aligns with the ideals of constructivism and is important here considering the musical background and experience of the researcher; dialectical critique which is a way of understanding the relationships between the elements that make up various phenomena in the research context; collaboration, which is intended to mean that everyone’s view is taken as a contribution to understanding the situation, in this case, the views of teachers, students, visiting musicians, and collaborating individuals; risking disturbance, which is an understanding of one’s own taken-for-granted processes and willingness to submit them to critique; creating plural structures, which involves developing various accounts and critiques, rather than a single authoritative interpretation, in this case, actively
seeking feedback from all individuals involved in the study through LOCIT; and theory and practice internalised, which is seeing theory and practice as two interdependent yet complimentary phases of the change process (which aligns with the primary purpose of this research). As will be seen, these key principles were found to resonate strongly with an investigation which was concerned with everyday experience and the development of living knowledge, and as such they were influential guiding principles across the investigation.

One of the central attractions for which the action research design is noted is its potential as a powerful tool for change and improvement at the local level (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.297; Cain 2008) where ‘improvement and involvement are central’ (Robson 2002, p.215). Abeles and Conway describe action research as referring ‘specifically to a research design in which teaching practice is likely to change as a result of the study’ (2010, p.299). This ‘change and improvement’ often occurs in action research as a result of the self-reflective spiral, or cyclical process of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Although change and improvement in the post-primary music classroom were not the primary objectives of this study, the implementation of the ‘action research cycle’ involving Lewin’s (1948) four main stages of ‘planning, acting, observing and reflecting’ (Cohen and Manion 1994, p.304), allowed for a thorough investigation into the experience of Irish traditional music in the classroom and the potential for change and improvement to occur in this context. In action research, and as occurred in this investigation, the ‘improvement’ which often arises from the self-reflective spiral goes beyond that of improvements in a pedagogical sense, and has been referred as the improvement of the action researcher’s own educational practices, their understandings of these practices, and the situations in which they practice (Robson 2002; Carr and Kemmis 2004). It followed then that the implementation of an action research design in this study would allow the researcher to work collaboratively with the teachers and students involved to investigate their educational practices, their understanding of these practices, and the educational contexts in which they practice.

The aspects of ‘collaboration’, ‘involvement’ and ‘participation’ are central features which set action research apart from other research designs, and the centrality in action research of close collaboration between the researcher and those who are the focus of the research, and their participation in the process, increased its suitability for this
investigation. Action research is rooted in participation and as Kemmis (2006) puts it, the action research participative orientation is about opening communicative spaces. Over the course of the investigation, the communicative spaces which emerged from the action research process meant that the researcher was working with the teachers not as ‘subjects’, but instead, relationships were built between the researcher, teachers and students as co-researchers. This participative approach meant that all participants were ‘engaged as full persons’ and the exploration was based ‘directly on their understanding of their own actions and experience, rather than filtered through an outsider’s perspective’ (Reason and Bradbury 2008, p.8).

Concerning the procedures for action research or how the action research model was actually carried out, Lewin (1948), as mentioned previously, codified the action research process into four main stages, that of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. While Cohen et al’s (2007) acknowledge that the action research process is ‘complex and multifaceted’ (ibid., p.297), they manage to outline an eight-stage process of action research (ibid., p.307) which was instrumental in guiding this particular investigation, although it was amended slightly to align with the requirements of this investigation’s integrated grounded theory approach (Figure 3.2). They term the first stage of an action research project as the identification of a problem in an everyday teaching situation. This resonates with Kemmis and McTaggart’s (1992) suggestion that the first stage of the action research process begins with a general idea that some kind of improvement or change is desirable. This ‘desire’ was evident from the results of an exploratory Phase 1 questionnaire which was conducted amongst a cross-section (n=68) of Ireland’s post-primary music teachers prior to the Phase 2 classroom-based research commencing (discussed in Chapter 4). The second stage of the action research framework involved preliminary discussion and negotiation among the interested parties, that is, discussion occurred between the researcher, Amanda and Bríd (Phase 2 music teacher participants), and research advisors, prior to Phase 2 taking place. This was a crucial stage of the action research process as it was critical that the objectives, purposes and assumptions were made clear to all concerned at this time. The third stage was concerned with the selection of ‘research procedures’ which included discussions with each teacher on subject content, methods of teaching and learning, resources available, allocation of resources and so on. The fourth stage was concerned with the choice of evaluation procedures which would be used with McNiff (2002, p.98) making the point that it is important to set evaluative criteria as ‘without success criteria it is impossible for the
researcher to know whether, or how far, the action research has been successful’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.308). It was decided that the evaluative criteria for this investigation would lie across three strands; the first would look at the extent to which each teacher engaged with the research process for the duration of the study; the second would concern the effectiveness to which the planned methods for gathering data (observations, interviews, questionnaires, feedback forms) were implemented, and the third would consider the implementation and impact of the LOCIT process towards the end of the study. The fifth stage involved the implementation of the project itself, including the conditions and methods of data collection. The sixth stage involved the interpretation of the data and overall evaluation of the project through the aforementioned constructivist grounded theory approach. The seventh and final stage involved a review of the research literature to find out what could be learned from comparable studies; this stage overlapped and integrated with the requirements of a grounded theory study (discussed in Section 3.3.2).

**Figure 3.2 Stages of Action Research**
3.3.2. Constructing Grounded Theory

‘Grounded theory methodology and methods are now among the most influential and widely used modes of carrying out qualitative research when generating theory is the researcher’s principle aim’ (Strauss and Corbin 1997, p.vii). Charmaz (2006) has emerged as the main advocate of employing grounded theory in terms of the constructivist paradigm, where the researcher is revealed and included as the ‘author of a coconstruction of experience and meaning’ (Mills, Bonner et al. 2006, p.7). Charmaz’s evolved grounded theory is an interpretative theory which calls for the imaginative understanding of the studied phenomenon, a type of theory which assumes ‘emergent, multiple realities; indeterminacy; facts and values as inextricably linked; truth as provisional; and social life as processual’ (Charmaz 2006, pp.126-127). This dynamic and processual theoretical approach emphasises practices and action and was deemed suitable for this research as it enabled analysis of negotiations within and between individual participants and the collective student groups at various levels. That is, the interpretative paradigm allowed for the ‘construction of individual and collective action and the intersections between them’ (ibid., p.129). This evolved grounded theory approach, integrated with the aforementioned action research design, was the central methodological approach within which the researcher engaged during this investigation.

Since grounded theory originated in the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967), its purpose has been to develop theories which are grounded in the data: which fit the data, which work in practice, and are relevant to the researched situation (e.g. Glaser, 1982). To explain further, ‘the methodological thrust of the grounded theory approach to qualitative data is toward the development of theory, without any particular commitment to specific kinds of data, lines of research, or theoretical interests’, where such theory is developed ‘in intimate relationship with the data, with researchers fully aware of themselves as instruments for developing that grounded theory’ (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p. 6). It is a way of ‘carrying out research and analysis starting from data and building concepts and theories from the ground up’ (Nilsen 2008, p.87). It is, as Strauss explains, ‘not really a specific method or technique’, instead ‘it is a style of doing qualitative analysis that includes a number of distinct features’ (1987, p.5).

Grounded theory methods were employed during this study as ‘systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’
in the data themselves’ (Charmaz 2006, p.2). That is to say, grounded theory methodology was used to analyse qualitative data which was gathered through the action research process: interviewing and holding informal conversations with the music teachers; through the classroom observation process; and through LOCIT. What ‘grounded theory’ meant for the investigation was that, instead of entering the classroom and interviewing music teachers and students with an hypothesis or theory to test over the course of the project, an inductive approach was used where the theory was co-constructed from the data that was collected over the course of the study. It allowed for a study of the phenomenon of the classroom setting and various processes occurring therein, and the formation of ‘a conceptual rendering of these actions’ (ibid., p.22) within the classroom setting. Grounded theory in the context of this study resonates strongly with Charmaz’s thoughts where she says that ‘as we learn how our research participants make sense of their experiences, we begin to make analytic sense of their meanings and actions’ (2006, p.11). That is, as the experiences of the study’s participants emerged over the course of the study, grounded theory helped make analytic sense of the participants’ meanings, actions, and experiences. It is also important to stress that this research considered grounded theory through a lens of the aforementioned reflexivity, where it was assumed that as researcher ‘we are part of the world we study and the data we collect’ and we construct our grounded theories ‘through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices’ (Charmaz 2006, p.10). In keeping with this study’s constructivist paradigm, a ground theory strategy was employed where it was assumed that ‘social reality is multiple, processual, and constructed’, where the researcher’s position, privileges, perspective, and interactions were taken into account as an inherent part of the research study (Nilsen 2008, p.469). That is, my extensive experience and prior knowledge within the traditional music community sensitised me to conceptual issues at the beginning of the study, but new theoretical interpretations were sought as I interrogated the data and emerging analyses through the grounded theory approach. Grounded theory was also effective in allowing the researcher to make connections between events or critical incidents which occurred in each of the classrooms. The logic of grounded theory entails ‘going back to data and forward into analysis’ (Charmaz 2006, p.23) with the strength and core of the method being that it ‘prompts taking a fresh look and creating novel categories and concepts’ (ibid., p.24). It was these ‘novel categories and concepts’ which helped create the theoretical underpinning of the experience of Irish traditional music in the classroom, that is, the
conceptualisation of educative experience of Irish traditional music in post-primary music education, and there were various steps to follow before this could occur.

In terms of the steps followed for the grounded theory approach (for an outline of the grounded theory analysis process see Figure 3.3) it is firstly important to say that the process involved a continuous iteration between data collection and analysis and between different levels of coding. The first step involved gathering rich data and thick description of the experiences of the participants as ‘researchers generate strong grounded theories with rich data’ (Charmaz 2006, p.14). Examples of these can be seen in Appendix K. Line-by-line qualitative coding was the second step in analysing the unstructured interview and observation data.136 Line-by-line coding entails naming each line of your written observational data (Glaser 1978) with a label (free node) that ‘simultaneously categorises, summarises, and accounts for each piece of data’ (Charmaz 2006, p.43) with words that importantly ‘reflect action’ (ibid., p.48). It is seen as an ‘enormously useful tool’ (Glaser 1978, p.50) in that ideas can occur that would otherwise escape the attention of the researcher when reading data for a general thematic analysis. Through coding each line of data in this way, the aim is to ‘produce concepts that seem to fit the data’ (Strauss 1987, p.28) and you ‘gain insights about what kinds of data to collect next’ (Charmaz 2006, p.53). A close cousin of line-by-line coding was also used at this stage, namely, incident-by-incident coding. This involved a comparative study of incidents through the data and at times worked better than line-by-line coding as the classroom observations already consisted of my own words. Through line-by-line and incident-by-incident coding during and after Phase 2, 128 initial free nodes were identified (see Appendix D which describes my processes of thought and analysis as I negotiated the data) with themes such as: self-directed learning; teaching the teacher; having fun; feeling uncertain, learning visually; breaking down the tune, YouTube clip playing etc. After this second step, the third step of focussed coding involved scrutinising these initial codes for the most frequent and most telling codes, after which tentative categories or ‘tree nodes’ were constructed in their emerging theories. This process identified 22 sub-themes (tree nodes) and 9 major themes or ‘conceptual categories’ (see Appendix D). This process of gathering rich data, line-by-line and incident-by-incident coding, and focussed coding helped the researcher to shape an analytic frame from which the analysis of the study was built.

136 QSR NVivo 9 software was used for the entire Grounded Theory process.
Another important stage involved writing extended notes called memos on ‘telling codes’ and this helped to develop ideas through the entire research process. Memos form the core of grounded theory and as Charmaz explains, they ‘provide ways to compare data, to explore ideas about the codes, and to direct further data-gathering’ (2006, p.12); they ‘catch your thoughts, capture the comparisons and connections you make, and crystallise questions and directions for you to pursue’ (ibid., p.72). They are, as Birks and Mills explain, ‘written records of a researcher’s thinking during the process of undertaking a grounded theory study’ and as such ‘they vary in subject, intensity, coherence, theoretical content and usefulness to the finished product’ (2011, p.10). Memo writing, which involved writing informal notes about the codes and data from the very early stages of planning until completion, prompted an analysis of the codes and data early in the process. During classroom observations for example, initial memos enabled the outlining of and initiated discussion between ideas which struck the researcher. On a regular basis, ideas would come to mind when coding the data and these were quickly jotted down in a dedicated project diary, and as I was writing, the links between various codes would gradually become clearer. After the early memo process where I explored and filled out the qualitative codes, advanced memos allowed for the categorisation of data. That is, the memos were used to raise the initial focused codes to conceptual categories mentioned above (or in other words, to put together codes within categories), and these categories began to represent my theoretical definition of what was happening in the data.

The fourth and final step in the grounded theory process involved what is termed theoretical sampling. For instance, at various points during Phase 2, categories began to emerge after writing focused codes on the data and then writing memos on these focussed codes. It was felt that while these categories looked promising, they felt thin and underdeveloped. The grounded theory answer to this predicament was to gather and observe more pertinent data which focussed on the category and its properties, and this helped in developing the emerging theory. An example of theoretical sampling involved writing focused codes and corresponding memos which led to the identification of presentational performance as a principle of educative experience. However, with a sense that this ‘category’ looked comparatively underdeveloped during Phase 2 in terms of the other emerging principles, more pertinent data was gathered on presentational performance during LOCIT. This approach aligns with Charmaz’s perspective on grounded theory’s final step where she explains, ‘you conduct theoretical
sampling by sampling to develop the properties of your category(ies) until no new properties emerge’ (2006, pp.96 - 97). She continues, ‘thus, you saturate your categories with data and subsequently sort them to integrate your emerging theory’ (ibid.). It is a means of ‘sampling to flesh out or refine theoretical categories to increase the precision of the emerging theory’ (Nilsen 2008, p.472).

The following is an outline of what the grounded theory process involved:

![Grounded Theory Analysis Process](image)

Figure 3.3 The Grounded Theory Analysis Process
3.4. **Triangulation**

The benefits of employing triangulation, that is, a mixed method approach to research by viewing the investigation through a number of different lens in data collection, has been highlighted by many social scientists as a means of ensuring transferability, accuracy, and reliability. These are concerns which permeated each stage of this investigation and, as is described below, three categories of triangulation were employed with the integrated action research-grounded theory approach. Abeles and Conway point out that ‘the use of multiple angles for examining a setting can strengthen claims about findings linked to shared points of view among participants’ and continue that ‘using multiple angles of approach can at the same time provide qualitative researchers with a way to compare and contrast findings that are different across participants’ (2010, p.298). Furthermore, according to Patton (1990), data gathered using triangulation can be seen to be more reliable because the researcher is constantly comparing and contrasting the consistency of data derived by different means and at different times. According to Bresler (1995), ‘the strength of fieldwork lies in its “triangulation”, or obtaining information in many ways’ (p.4). She continues:

Triangulation is supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures (checking with different sources, applying different methods, attaining corroboration by different researchers, and examining through different theorists) agree with it, or at least do not contradict it.

(Bresler 1995, p. 4)

Triangulation was employed also as a means of increasing the transferability of the research findings. Generalisability in the constructivist paradigm is interpreted as transferability, where transferability to another situation is not established by the researcher, but by others through their interpretation of clear, detailed and in-depth description. Therefore, the triangulation approach outlined below enabled thick description of the research context and in turn provided greater potential for transferability of the research findings.

Denzin (1970) presented a typology of six categories of triangulation, four of which are frequently used in education (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.143), of which three were used in this study, namely: time triangulation, which utilises longitudinal designs to seek stability of observations over time; space triangulation, which attempts to
overcome the limitation of studies within one subculture; and methodological triangulation, which in this case, used different methods on the same object of study. The three categories of triangulation and how they were employed are outlined here:

3.4.1. Time Triangulation

Phase 1 of the investigation took place between May 2007 - May 2008 and involved the design, distribution, and analysis of questionnaires to a cross-section of post-primary music teachers in Ireland. Pre-Phase 2 took place in the summer months preceding Phase 2 and also overlapped with the first week of school term, where student questionnaires were distributed and further teacher meetings took place. Phase 2 took place over one school term, that is, 10 weeks approx. between September and December 2009 (before and after the mid-term break). In addition, the final stage of Phase 2, the LOCIT element of the study, took place in May 2010. It is Phase 2 of the investigation which has most relevance in terms of the employment of triangulation in the study. An outline of the entire study can be see in Appendix L and Appendix M (pp. 351-352).

There were several reasons for conducting Phase 2 of the study utilising this longitudinal approach. Firstly and in terms of triangulation, this longitudinal approach allowed for the collection of data from the same group at many different points in the investigation’s time sequence, and allowed for the consideration of the factors of change and process in the group. It was also important that the duration of the study allowed for a number of classes to take place that was representative of the time that each teacher would normally assign to their teaching of the Irish traditional music section of the Junior and Leaving Certificate music curricula, and the time that students and teachers would normally have to experience Irish traditional music over the course of a school term. This longitudinal approach avoided disruption to the normal teaching schedule, allowed for observation to occur under normal conditions, and enabled the observation of teaching and learning in relation to many various aspects of Irish traditional music within the curricula. Finally, this prolonged stay is often necessary in education research in order to develop familiarity with participants and determine important issues, establish participant trust which allows a researcher access to what is often a semi-private setting, and observe participants behaving naturally (Bresler 1996, p.134).
3.4.2. **Space Triangulation**

A cross-school approach was used to overcome any limitations that might have arisen as a result of conducting the investigation with one ‘sub-culture’, i.e., with one teacher and one group, in one classroom, in one school etc.. Two teachers (given the pseudonyms Amanda and Bríd) and their respective schools were invited to become involved in the study. School A is an ‘all-girls’ school which is situated in close proximity to an urban centre in Ireland, while School B is a ‘mixed’ school which is located on a section of parkland in a busy suburban area of the same city. It is important to point out that the investigation *did not* set out to employ a comparative approach in terms of each teacher and group, and this is is clear from the data analysis and findings. Instead, employing a space triangulation approach was an attempt to overcome a limited or narrow outlook and increase the validity and reliability of the findings within the constructivist paradigm; this meant investigating a representative sample of students located in each school. As the results of a study such as this can only be generalised to the population from which the sample was drawn, ensuring a representative sample increased the potential to transfer the findings of the study beyond the chosen sample. In other words, as the table below demonstrates, the two student groups, comprised of one 2nd year group (namely Group A in School A) and one 5th year group (namely Group B in School B), in two separate schools, one an ‘all girls’ school and another a ‘mixed’ school, was an attempt to overcome any parochialism that may have impacted on the transferability of the studies findings. That is, researching within two outwardly similar yet essentially disparate research contexts led to thick descriptions which in turn, increased the transferability of the research findings through grounded theory analysis. Furthermore, critical incidents which were observed less regularly in one group of students, were crosschecked with the other group to ascertain their importance and relevance to the findings. And finally, although each context differed in many respects (for example, with regard to the age, gender, and previous experience of the students in each group; the experience and interests of each music teacher; and the fact that each group had a difference focus in terms of the JC and LC) the data from *each* context was found to inform the emerging grounded theory in practically equal measure; this ensured the reliability of the findings.
### 3.4.3. Methodological Triangulation

Lastly, a triangulation of research methods was favoured in the context of the current research using an integrated qualitative-quantitative paradigmatic approach, with strong leanings towards a qualitative paradigm. There are important epistemological differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods and it should be noted that quantitative methods were used as supplementary methods to explore the field and illuminate the qualitative data (this is discussed later in this chapter).

According to Bryman (2001), quantitative research involves the implementation of measurement techniques, where the aim is to get explanations and predict future happenings. On the other hand, the qualitative paradigm as an avenue of enquiry possesses key characteristics which are are grounded in the constructivist world view:

They include a holistic way of approaching reality, which is seen as time and-context-bound, rather than as governed by a set of general rules; a strong emphasis on "thick" description and interpretation; and the incorporation of the "emic" (insiders') perceptions and perspectives (Geertz, 1973; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An underlying assumption of the qualitative paradigm involves the relationships of the researcher and the researched. The researcher is not seen as separate from the researched, but, to quote the famous Geertzian phrase, "as an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun" (Geertz, 1973). Because researchers are part of the reality they study, their neutrality is impossible.

(Bresler 1995, p.1)

Within the qualitative paradigm itself, a triangulation approach involving three qualitative research instruments was employed, namely the unstructured and informal interview method, the observation method, and LOCIT. In addition, a supplementary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Group</th>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Music Teacher</td>
<td>Bríd</td>
<td>Amanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching experience of teacher</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Year</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior or Senior Cycle</td>
<td>Junior Cycle</td>
<td>Senior Cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Students</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of students</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>male and female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.1 Outline of Group A and Group B in terms of space triangulation**
qualitative method that was used was that of the teachers’ reflective journals. This methodological triangulation approach involving the qualitative instruments (unstructured and informal interview method, the observation method, LOCIT, and supplementary teachers’ reflective journals) and quantitative instrument (the teacher and student questionnaire) is outlined throughout the following sections:

(i) The Unstructured and Informal Interview

Many qualitative studies in music education follow an interview design, employing interviews as the primary source of information (Abeles and Conway 2010, p.293). As occurred at specific points during this study, ‘researchers may conduct both individual interviews and focus group interviews with multiple participants’ (ibid., p.295). Cohen and Manion (2007) point out that ‘the interview is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard. It is, they continue, ‘a powerful implement for researchers’ (ibid., p.349) and one of the most effective qualitative research methods (Cohen and Manion 1994, p.271) which allow for greater depth of investigation than is the case with other methods of data collection, through direct verbal interaction between the ‘inquirer’ and the ‘inquired into’ (ibid.).

Interviews may be ‘very structured or quite un-structured and more conversational’ (Abeles and Conway 2010, p.295), with interview methodology being further defined in terms of the structured interview, the unstructured interview, the non-directive interview and the focused interview (Cohen and Manion 1994, p.355). An unstructured interview methodology as that employed during this study is often employed during a study to ‘allow latitude for probing and following the interviewee’s sense of what is important’ (Bresler and Stake 1992, p.85). In other words, ‘the more one wishes to acquire unique, non-standardized, personalized information about how individuals view the world, the more one veers towards qualitative, open-ended, unstructured interviewing’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.254). The unstructured interview is an ‘open situation, having greater flexibility and freedom’ (Cohen and Manion 1994, p.355) and as Kerlinger (1970) notes, although the research purposes govern the questions asked, their content, sequence and wording are entirely in the hands of the interviewer. The unstructured interview is ‘non-standardized, open-ended and in-depth’ and has been ‘compared to a lengthy, intimate conversation’ (Robson 2002, p.278). This does not mean, however, that the unstructured interview is a more
casual affair, for in its own way it also has to be carefully planned (Cohen and Manion 1994, p.355) in order to ‘ensure the establishment of rapport from the outset, which is necessary to elicit the best results’ (O’Hanlon 2003, p.79). In this respect, planning of informal interviews with both Amanda and Bríd took into account Kvale’s seven stages of an interview investigation that can be used to plan interview based research, namely, thematising, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting (Kvale 2009).

Initial informal interviews took place with each teacher approximately four months before the study commenced, an informal interview took place at each of the teacher’s private residence, with the interviews lasting for approximately two hours in duration. Immediately prior to the study commencing, additional unstructured interviews took place and were recorded with each teacher in the staff room of one school, and in the classroom of the other school, with these interviews ranging from forty-five minutes to one hour in duration. The function of these interviews were five-fold. The first was to meet with each of the candidates individually to discuss what their participation in the research would involve and to answer any queries that they may have had regarding the research process. This aligns with Guba and Lincon’s first of two phases of constructivist evaluation, namely the ‘discovery’ phase, which ‘represents the evaluator’s effort to describe “what’s going on here” the “here” being the evaluand and its context’ (Guba and Lincoln 2001, p.2). The second was to address the results of the questionnaire distributed to a cross-section of music teachers in Ireland, and determine the extent to which each candidate’s experience of Irish traditional music aligned with the experience of those music teachers who had completed the questionnaire. In this way, the unstructured interviews served to probe and explore the issues raised in the questionnaires findings. The third function was to discuss the candidate’s own experience of Irish traditional music, teaching Irish traditional music in the classroom, their attitudes and perceptions of Irish traditional music outside the context of the classroom etc.. The fourth function was to plan in detail how the study would proceed and be implemented, with the logistics of school holidays, homework, timetabling issues etc. being discussed during this initial interview during subsequent unstructured interviews. Finally, the fifth and one of the most important functions of the informal interviews with Amanda and Bríd was to allow for the verbal acknowledgment of my position as an Irish traditional musician and reflexive researcher throughout the research.
process, and in turn, a negotiation of the investigation with a greater degree of awareness and consciousness of my biases and prejudices.

In addition to these initial interviews, shorter informal interviews were held with each teacher over the course of the study, and these usually took place for ten to fifteen minutes in each respective classroom immediately prior to a music class taking place, or after a music class had occurred. Robson (2002) describes this type of informal interview as a ‘valuable part in virtually all flexible research design’ and ‘an opportunity that arises to have a (usually short) chat with someone in the research setting about anything which seems relevant’ (p.282). He continues, ‘this might arise after a period of observation to try to seek clarification about the meaning or significance of something that took place’ (ibid.). As such, it was important at various stages of the inquiry to engage with the research participants using informal interview methodology, and while it was often not feasible to record these interviews, detailed notes of the interaction were made as soon as possible afterwards.

While interview methodology was implemented at critical stages of this study, with an unstructured interview being carried out with each teacher several months prior to the study commencing, and also on an informal basis at various stages of the inquiry, as has already been discussed, they did not feature as the primary source of data. Instead, interviews were used along with observations in the classroom and LOCIT methodology to examine the experience of Irish traditional music in this context. The interview being used in conjunction with other methods in this research undertaking allowed for the exploration of the potential relationships between the researcher’s own observations in the classroom context, and the opinions, beliefs and observations of the study’s participants. This method can also be used, for example, to follow up on unexpected results, or to validate other methods, or to go deeper into the motivations of respondents and their reasons for responding as they do (Kerlinger 1970). This approach has established a place in education research, with Abeles and Conway referring to Ferguson (2003) who in his study used interviews along with observations to examine the relationship between preservice teachers’ experiences in a university string project and their understandings of themselves as teachers. Green in ‘Informal Learning and the school’ outlines this approach to data-collection methodology where she describes her use of:
unstructured participant observation of pupils working together in small groups within class music lessons; observations of whole-class lessons or sessions within lessons; audio recordings of group work; audio and video recordings of performances and other whole-class activities; tape recorded semi-structured interviews with pupils and teachers at regular intervals, and tape-recorded teacher team meetings

(Green 2008, p.15)

In his research concerned with national identity and music in Ireland, O’Flynn discusses his use of this two pronged approach using interview and observation, and his reasons for approaching his study in this way is particularly relevant to this study:

First, I set out to interview groups of audience members during or after each concert, gig or session. This yielded 28 interviews with a total of 67 attendees across the various events. Second, I recorded my own observations on each event under the broad categories of venues, audiences, sounds, atmosphere, musicians, modes of presentation, and any publicity/paraphernalia pertaining to the acts in question. This was critical since I wished to explore the potential relationships between, on the one hand, musical texts and contexts as observable by myself-as-researcher, and on the other hand, people’s beliefs pertaining to the same texts and contexts.

(O’Flynn 2009, p.19)

(ii) Classroom Observation

It is generally accepted that observation is a primary research method in both action research (O’Hanlon 2003, p.72) and grounded theory methodology (Charmaz 2006) and it followed that observation was utilised as the primary strategy to gather data over the course of this inquiry. Observation took the form of both personal classroom observations where comprehensive notes were taken right from the start, and each music class was also video recorded for further observation and analysis (through LOCIT and grounded theory methodology) at a later date. In terms of the classroom observations, the distinctive and unique strength of observation as a research process is that “it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather ‘live’ data from naturally occurring social situations”, where the researcher can ‘look directly at what is taking place in situ rather than relying on second-hand accounts” (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.415). Patton (1990) suggests that observational data should enable the researcher to enter and understand the situation that is being described. The use of observation as a principle mode of research thus has the ‘potential to yield more valid or authentic data than would otherwise be the case with mediated or inferential methods’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.415). However, used alongside these other research methods as occurred
during this research, data from the process of observation ‘contrasts with, and can often usefully complement, information obtained by virtually any other technique’ (Robson 2002, p.310). That is to say, an observation can sometimes provide clarification on ‘discrepancies between what people say they have done, or will do’, in an interview or questionnaire, and ‘what they actually did, or will do’ (ibid., p.310). Thus, the process of observation was highly valuable in this research inquiry in that it: (1) enabled the discovery of participants’ perspectives and meanings as well as issues, concerns, and opinions that participating teachers might have not spoken freely about in the questionnaires and interview situations; (2) allowed the researcher to move beyond perception-based data such as the participants’ opinions in the questionnaires and interviews; and (3) enabled the researcher to understand the context of Irish traditional music as experienced in the classroom, and to observe various phenomena, activities taking place, and significant events in the classroom that might otherwise have been missed. Observation was a powerful tool in this inquiry not only in that it was the primary method for data collection in terms of the methodological triangulation as previously discussed, but also in that the multiple observations of collaborating researcher, teacher, and student(s) during LOCIT towards the end of Phase 2 led to an internal triangulation in how observation was carried out.

The Roles of the Researcher during Observation

One of the most important considerations before the inquiry commenced was that of the type of observation which would be conducted, and the role that the researcher would assume during any observation activity. Recent publications which consider the processes of observation in educational contexts tend to agree that the kind of observations available to the researcher ‘lie on a continuum from unstructured to structured, responsive to pre-ordinate’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.416). For example, Robson (2002) highlights the dichotomy of approaches to observation as ‘formal or informal observation’, where informal approaches are ‘less structured and allow the observer considerable freedom in what information is gathered and how it is recorded’ (p. 313), as opposed to a structured approach which is systematic with the researcher adopting a ‘passive, non-intrusive role, merely noting down the incidence of the factors being studied’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.417). Resonating with the requirements of a grounded theory study and constructivist philosophical orientation,
this study was designed to align with the unstructured observational approach which in contrast, ‘operates within the agenda of the participants’, where ‘selectivity derives from the situation rather than from the researcher’, and where a rich description of a situation is provided which ‘can lead to the subsequent generation of hypothesis’ (Cohen and Manion 1994, p.417). This also allowed the researcher to enter into the situation and observe what was taking place before deciding on its significance for the research.

The kind of observation pursued by the researcher is inextricably linked to a second dimension concerning the role that the ‘researcher as observer’ then plays. For example, Abeles and Conway refer to the nonparticipant observer who ‘may choose to maintain a passive presence, being as unobtrusive as possible and not interacting with students in the class’ (Abeles and Conway 2010, p. 294). On the other hand, they explain that a participant observer will actually participate in the class, act as a collaborating outsider, and ‘seek to become some kind of member of the observed group’ (p.294). Cohen, Manion et al also describe the role of the researcher along this continuum as a move from ‘complete participant to complete detachment’ with the mid-points of this continuum striving to ‘balance involvement with detachment, closeness with distance, familiarity with strangeness’ (Cohen and Manion 1994, p.397). It was at this mid-point where the observational approach of this research inquiry fell, with the researcher negotiating between the degrees of participation of observer-as-participant and the participant-as-observer at various stages of the inquiry.

In an observer-as-participant role, the researcher has only minimal part in the social setting being studied but their status is made known to the participants at the beginning of the study (Gold 1958). For example, before this study commenced, students (and their parents) were made aware that an observer would be present in the classroom (with recording equipment) for a substantial period of time. The music teachers were of course acutely aware of the fact that an observer would be present in the classroom over this period. In the observer-as-participant role, the recording equipment was set-up at the beginning of the class in an unobtrusive position, and the class was observed by the researcher from either the back, or the side of the room, out of direct eye-line with the teacher and students. A longitudinal study was designed to reduce the impact that an observer being present would have as in ‘participant observational studies the researcher stays with the participants for a substantial period of time to reduce reactivity effects.
(the effects of the researcher on the researched) (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.404). As the study proceeded, it quickly became easier to maintain the ‘observer as participant’ role given the students’ and teachers’ increased familiarity of having an observer in the classroom situation.

During the study, there was often occasion when the researcher assumed the role of participant-as-observer and was ‘a part of the group being studied’ (Gold 1958). In practice, this meant that during classroom teaching and learning activities, the participant-as-observer asked teachers and students to ‘explain various aspects of what is going on’ and tried to ‘establish close relationships with members of the groups’ (Robson 2002, p.317). As Charmaz points out, ‘one way of respecting our research participants is through trying to establish rapport with them’ (2006, p.19). This was of immense importance where the relationship between the teacher and researcher was concerned, as Charmaz warns, ‘if researchers do not establish rapport, they risk losing access to conduct subsequent interviews or observations’ (ibid., p.19). In a participant-as-observer role, the ‘fact that the observer is an observer is made clear to the group from the start’ (Robson 2002, p.317) and the observer ‘is part of the social life of the participants and documents and records what is happening for research purposes’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.404). Of the participant-as-observer role, Glesne writes: ‘...the researcher carefully observes, systematically experiences, and consciously records in detail the many aspects of a situation’ (1999, p.46). The researcher assumed the role of participant-as-observer on several occasions during this action based study. For example, when Amanda or Bríd would on occasion ask the researcher to explain something to the class, become involved in an activity, or clarify something in relation to a particular subject matter; when the observer was in the role of ‘visiting musician’ and demonstrating his instrument, a particular rhythm, teaching a tune etc. to the class; when the teacher would request that the researcher ‘lead’ a particular class or segment of a particular class, with the teacher then acting in an observational role; when the researcher participated in the end of Phase 2 music gathering; or when the researcher participated in the dance class along with the students and teacher. Maintaining this dual role during Phase 2 was at times challenging and as Robson points out, ‘maintaining the dual role of observer and participant is not easy; acceptance will be heavily dependent on the nature of the group and the interaction of particular features of the observer with the group’ (2002, p.317).
The Lesson Observation Critical Incident Technique (LOCIT) is a qualitative data analysis tool (Figure 3.3) which was found to resonate with this research’s constructivist orientation and work in conjunction with the integrated methodological approach. A slightly amended version of LOCIT was used (due to time, available technology, and space constraints) in this investigation to provide additional rich data to support the construction of theory grounded in said data. The LOCIT process was developed as an inclusive approach involving teachers and their learners in co-constructing a shared understanding of successful learning (Coyle 2011) and was used at the end of Phase 2 to involve teachers and students in constructing a shared understanding of their experiences in Irish traditional music. The principles of LOCIT start with an analysis of ‘lived through’ lessons by both students and teachers, using ‘playback’ reflection and critical incident technique (CIT) (ibid.). For the purposes of this research, critical incidents were defined for teachers and students as ‘positive learning experiences’ or ‘light bulb moments’ which were thus created by the way the teachers (and subsequently students) perceived and interpreted a particular music class, or moment during a particular music class. Also important in this process was the acknowledgement that reliability as consistency in observations is not always necessary (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007), where one event can occur ‘which reveals an extremely important insight into a person or situation’ to ‘offer the researcher an insight that would not be available by routine observation’ (ibid., p.404). For these reasons, the LOCIT process resonates strongly with this investigation’s constructivist orientation where students and teachers had the opportunity to reflect on and articulate and share their understanding about their experiences of Irish traditional music throughout the investigation.

The LOCIT process was used as a catalyst to support teacher-student owned class-based enquiry where the first step involved asking Amanda and Bríd to identify a number of classes which they felt positively about in terms of classroom practice and student engagement and justify their choices, i.e., where they felt that positive learning experiences had occurred. As each class over the course of the investigation had been video recorded (Group A n=19 classes recorded and Group B n=18 classes recorded), Amanda and Bríd could choose from any class which had taken place during Phase 2 of the investigation. The second step involved students from Group A and Group B
working in small groups to watch the selected video recordings, with each group then selecting their own ‘positive learning moment or experience’, after which each group was asked to justify their selection. Although an unstructured discussion ensued between each clip and afterwards, some of the guiding questions that the students were asked to consider were: *When was there a positive learning experience?*; *What was happening at this time?*; *Who was teaching?*; *Who was learning?*; *Who was participating?*. The *third* step involved a discussion between teacher and students where various responses were discussed, compared, and expanded upon.

Coyle (2011) acknowledges that critiques of the process may question the validity and reliability of the ‘learning moments’ and the multitude of factors which will affect their identification. However, as she explains and as was the purpose of LOCIT in the context of this investigation, the learning moments themselves were triggers or a catalyst for collaborative reflection and discussion between Amanda, Bríd, and the students to encourage dialogic interaction and shared understanding to emerge regarding their experiences of traditional music during the investigation. Resulting from this, additional thick description of classroom experiences from the perspective of participants were provided. The LOCIT process encouraged the investigation’s participants to focus as much on the experiential process as the outcomes of it, and to collaboratively frame the experience of traditional music from their own perspectives.

**LOCIT: Lesson Observation Critical Incident Technique**

![Diagram](http://homepages.abdn.ac.uk/locit/?page_id=13)

**Figure 3.4 The LOCIT Process**

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137 Depicted by Professor Coyle, Professor in Learning Innovation at the School of Education, University of Aberdeen, available: http://homepages.abdn.ac.uk/locit/?page_id=13, [accessed 25/07/2012].
(iv) **Supplementary Qualitative Instrument: Teacher’s Reflective Journal**

At the beginning of the investigation, Amanda and Bríd were each asked to keep a reflective journal where they could provide comments and feedback on how they felt the project was proceeding, any concerns they had, what they enjoyed or did not enjoy about a lesson, how comfortable or confident they were during a particular lesson, and what they would change if they were to give the lesson in the future etc.. Broad themes were provided under which they could each comment, and while the journals were useful in that they gave some indication as to how each teacher felt over the course of Phase 2, it was found that the aforementioned informal conversations before and after classes were much more illuminating. It was felt however that the reflective journals were useful in that they assisted in maintaining the action research process, and the teachers’ journal entries, although succinct, were also useful in terms of validating certain findings in the analysis stages of the research.

(v) **The Quantitative Instrument and Initial Explorations**

As previously mentioned, Phase 1 involved the distribution of questionnaires in an exploratory capacity to gather information from a cross-section of post-primary music teachers \(n=68\) in Ireland. In the preliminary stages of Phase 2, a questionnaire was also employed in order to define the student population of Group A and Group B more clearly. This approach aligns with Bresler’s assertion that few research studies are purely qualitative (Bresler and Stake 1992) and Merton and Kendall’s sentiment:

> Social scientists have come to abandon the spurious choice between qualitative and quantitative data: they are concerned rather with that combination of both which makes use of the most valuable features of each. the problem becomes one of determining at which point they should adopt the one, and at which the other, approach:

> (Merton and Kendall 1946)

At this juncture, it is important to say that although quantitative methodology was regarded as unsuitable for the vast majority of the study, a quantitative methodology was utilised to probe and illuminate certain aspects of the qualitative data. Utilised as a non-experimental quantitative strategy for Phase 1 and at the beginning of Phase 2, each questionnaire served to provide a primarily descriptive analysis of respondents across a
range of subject areas. This quantitative approach during each phase acted as a precursor to the qualitative study which followed, and it was the intention that the data emerging from the qualitative data would illuminate and validate the quantitative and be validated by it. The questionnaire for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 were made up of closed-questionnaire questions that were analysed using quantitative methods; open-ended questions were also used, the chief advantage of the open question being ‘the freedom it gives to the respondents’ (Oppenheim 1992, p.112).

Phase 1 and pre-Phase 2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires, a well-established method that has proven to be effective in gathering data from large groups of people in a relatively short period of time were designed and included during Phase 1 (Appendix E) and pre-Phase 2 (Appendix F) in each case to ‘gather information from a group of people’ (Abeles and Conway 2010, p.288). The aim of the exploratory questionnaire developed for the purposes of Phase 1 was four-fold. Firstly, it was employed to ascertain the experience of a cross section of post-primary music teachers in Ireland, if any, of Irish traditional music prior to commencing their initial teacher training. This included questions on whether or not they played an Irish traditional musical instrument (including voice) and the means by which they had learned their instrument; their experience of attending Irish traditional music gigs/concerts/sessions/festivals; the moment in their lives that they remembered first encountering the genre; the degree of exposure they had to Irish traditional music before commencing their undergraduate degree; and their own perception of their understanding of Irish traditional music. Secondly, it was employed to ascertain a music teacher’s experience of Irish traditional music during their initial teacher training. This included questions related to how the respondents felt that they were equipped to teach the Irish traditional music elements of the syllabi at this stage; the level of access they had to Irish traditional music in the context of performances, workshops, lessons etc.; their perception on whether or not they felt that improvements could be made in how teachers were ‘trained’ to teach Irish traditional music, and what these improvements could be; and the place of extra-curricular learning projects during initial teacher training.

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138 This will be referred to as the Post-Primary Music Teachers’ Questionnaire 2007-8 in subsequent chapters.
training. Thirdly, the questionnaire queried the various pedagogies employed by the teacher their classroom, including their thoughts and opinions on how this genre is taught in the classroom. Lastly, the Phase 1 questionnaire was employed to ascertain a music teacher’s opinion on the availability, use and, effectiveness of resources pertaining to the genre.

At the beginning of Phase 2 of the study, the Group A and Group B student participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, the purpose of which was five-fold. Firstly, the questionnaire queried the students’ personal musical backgrounds and interests beyond and including the Irish traditional music genre. Secondly, it was employed to ascertain the students’ experience of Irish traditional music during their primary education, and what this experience involved. This included questions on the instruments, if any, that they had been taught, and the particular pedagogies within which they had been encouraged to engage during this time. Thirdly, the questionnaire was employed to gain an insight into the students’ experience of the subject of music at post-primary level, and the connection which they perceived did or did not exist between music ‘in’ school and music ‘outside’ school. Fourthly, the questionnaire investigated the students’ previous experience of Irish traditional music more broadly speaking, and included questions on whether or not they played an Irish traditional music instrument; teaching and learning contexts; the students’ experience of listening to Irish traditional music; their familiarity with and preference for the genre; and the presence of Irish traditional music in their home environments. Lastly, the questionnaire sought information on the students’ attitudes to the study of Irish traditional music for the Junior and Leaving Certificate music examinations.

It was important to ensure that each questionnaire was well designed so that the necessary information would be elicited from the participants. As Bordens and Abbott warn, ‘a poorly designed questionnaire yields data that are confusing, difficult to analyze, and of little value’ (1996, p.183). There were many issues which had to be taken into consideration when designing each research questionnaire to ensure that meaningful answers were elicited from the respondents. For example, ‘the ordering of the questionnaire is important, for early questions may set the tone of the mindset to later questions’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.336). In addition, and as applied to Phase 1 and Phase 2 questionnaires, Oppenheim (1992, ch. 7) suggests that the sequence within sections of the questionnaire is important where the researcher can use funnels
(to move from the general to the specific) and filters (used to include and exclude certain respondents) within a questionnaire section. This also ensured that the more time consuming questions did not appear in close succession to each other in order to ensure that a high number of teachers and students would respond to them. Moreover, it was important given my position as reflexive research in this context that the questions were framed in a non-biased manner. To this end, a number of professional colleagues acted as reviewers of the questionnaire, and consultation and training was also held at the Statistical Consulting Unit (SCU) at the University of Limerick. These interventions were important given that the author of a questionnaire is so close to the research that even the most obvious errors may go unnoticed (Litwin 1995). Following the reviews by colleagues and members of SCU, the questionnaires were amended over the course of several drafts, which were necessary to ensure that the length, readability, and layout of the questionnaires were going to receive adequate and meaningful results.

In terms of the questions themselves, a variety of question types were used in each questionnaire, depending on the information that was required from the respondent. The majority of questions were closed-questions and were considered suitable, as the primary aim of the questionnaire was to obtain descriptive quantitative data. However, in an effort to limit any frustration that the respondent may have experienced given that all potential responses could not be included, a space for ‘other’ responses was included, as well as a space for respondents to explain and remark on their answer(s). Open-ended questions were also included as they are useful if the possible answers are unknown or the questionnaire is exploratory (Bailey 1994, p. 120). They ‘enable participants to write a free account in their own terms, to explain and qualify their responses and avoid the limitations of pre-set categories of response’ (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.321)

**Questionnaire Administration**

There are numerous modes of questionnaire administration, and in the case of this research, both self-administration and internet administration were employed for various reasons as outlined below. Administration of surveys via the internet is growing in popularity, and the type of internet-based survey employed in this research involved using a ‘URL-embedded message in the text of the e-mail, so the respondent simply
clicks on the hypertext link, which then evokes the Web browser to present the respondent with the Web-based survey’ (Berends 2006, pp.630-631). One of the key principles for questionnaire administration ‘is to assure privacy and non-threatening surroundings when completing a questionnaire and total anonymity when analyzing the responses’ (Boynton and Greenhalgh 2004). For this reason, the administration of questionnaires for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 was based on a principle of consent where it was made clear to all participants that participation was entirely on a voluntary basis and that confidentially would be protected at all times. For this reason, Teacher 1, 2, 3 etc. and Student 1, 2, 3 etc. will be attributed to questionnaire responses when required. The aims of the research project were explained on an information sheet and/or in person to each group and this was of importance as ‘if respondents are clear about what you are trying to find out and why, they are much more likely to respond appropriately and helpfully or indeed at all’ (2000).

In terms of Phase 1, a dual approach involving both self-administration along with internet administration was employed to ensure a high response rate. Firstly, forty questionnaires were distributed at the Post Primary Music Teachers’ Association’s (PPMTA) Annual Conference (November 2007) and respondents were encouraged to complete the questionnaire over the course of the weekend, and return upon completion. In total, twelve post-primary music teachers completed the questionnaire at this time. Following this event (January 2008), the questionnaire was distributed through the mailing lists of the PPMTA and respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire via electronic means.139 Between these two administration methods, 59 music teachers returned questionnaires, with 56 of these usable for the purposes of the research.

In terms of the Phase 2 questionnaire, the questionnaire was distributed to Group A (2nd year) and Group B (5th year) students and they were asked to complete the questionnaire without the presence of the researcher, i.e., ‘at home’, and return the following day. Although this strategy has its downsides (Cohen, Manion et al. 2007, p.

139 Although it is difficult to ascertain the precise number of music teachers who received the questionnaire via online distribution, PPMTA membership of 518 music teachers in 2010 (this was the earliest membership information available received via email from PPMTA Vice Chairperson Mairead Edmonds, July 2013) gives some indication as to the number of music teachers who potentially received the questionnaire via email in 2008. The distribution of PPMTA members in 2010 was as follows: Cork (59); Dublin (143); Donegal (22); Galway (38); Kildare/Wicklow (40); Limerick, Clare, Tipperary (57); Longford, Leitrim, Roscommon (22); Mayo (26); Midlands (27); Sliabh Luachra (41); South East (4).
344), it is ultimately helpful in that ‘it enables the respondents to complete the questionnaire in private, to devote as much time as they wish to its completion, to be in familiar surroundings, and to avoid the potential threat or pressure to participate caused by the researcher’s presence’ (*ibid.*). In total, 30 questionnaires (100% response rate) were returned during Phase 2 (Group A *n*=21 respondents and Group B *n*=9 respondents).

**Descriptive Analysis of Questionnaires**

Descriptive analysis of Phase 1 and Phase 2 questionnaires involved coding the participants responses in order to facilitate the input of data into the SPSS statistical analysis software package. For example, questions such as ‘In which county is your school located?’ and ‘To what degree did you feel equipped to teach traditional music section of syllabi emerging from Initial Teacher Training’ have different variables and needed to be coded accordingly. Moreover, the responses to each question needed to be classified in terms of the type of data being processed - nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio variables. The questionnaire data was then analysed to summarise and describe overall trends in respondents’ previous experience of traditional music in contexts in and beyond the school. In order to do this, and given that the majority of the data was qualitative and categorical, the modal value as a measure of central tendency was deemed most appropriate. As Creswell explains:

> the mode is the score that appears most frequently in a list of scores. It is used when researchers want to know the most common score in an array of scores on a variable. (Creswell 2012, p.185)

In addition, exploratory data analysis (Seltman 2013) was used as a means of open-mindedly exploring the data through plotting the raw data on graphics to reveal new, often unsuspected insight into the data.
3.5. Ethical Considerations

The field of music education research is by its very nature one which often requires the immersion of the researcher in the research setting, with this transition into the classroom context often evoking questions of involvement and participation. As occurred during this investigation, the music education researcher immerses themselves within the classroom setting very often over a considerable period of time as the primary tool for gaining knowledge and information on the particular issue being investigated. It is these arising questions of involvement and participation in music education research which led to it being an area permeated by ethical considerations. Dealing with these ethical issues is of extreme importance in order to ensure protection of the study’s participants, rigour over the methodological implications, and transferability in the results of the study. Four primary ethical considerations which arose before and during the classroom based study were: ethical considerations under the constructivist paradigm; the representation of truth during the study; the process of recruitment for participation; and the relationship between the researcher and the participants.

The prevalence of ethical considerations in this study were undoubtedly consequential, to a great extent, of the constructivist paradigm on which this study was based. Researchers in educational contexts have increasingly come to value the personal nature of the field and this in turn has led the classroom community and societal context to becoming more than ‘abstract variables’, as would be the case in a purely quantitative research design (Bresler 1996, p.133). The underlying assumptions of a qualitative paradigm according to Bresler, ‘necessitate different types of ethical considerations from the ones used in the positivist paradigm’ (p.133). These ethical considerations were employed across the investigation to shape the research design and data collection, and in doing so to establish truth in this constructed reality, and allocate space for the various voices to be heard.

As mentioned, the establishment and representation of truth during the study and the allocation of time for the various voices in the study to be heard were important ethical considerations during Phase 2 of the investigation. In Section 3.3, we saw how reflexivity was used as a methodological tool to establish truth. Where quantitative
researchers are interested in finding the single truth about a phenomenon (Hoepfl, 1997), qualitative researchers work in environments where truth and reality are perspectival, contextual, and multiple (Bresler 1996, p.135). Bresler addresses this issue of finding truth where multiple realities are being constructed, such as that of a constructivist orientated investigation, and points out that ‘with no single truth available, researchers are confronted with the question of whose truth’ (1996, p.136).

This led to the careful and sustained questioning of how, and to what extent, the participants’ ‘truth’ should be considered? The teachers’ truth? The researcher’s truth? Which of the participants’ truths in the study should be considered? These considerations from an ethical point of view were hugely influential in shaping the aforementioned research design and data collection, which in turn helped to define the allocation of time and energy for different voices to be heard, and shape the form and voice of the findings of the research.

As an integrated qualitative-quantitative (albeit qualitative for the most part) research design involves ethical choices at each stage of the research, another major ethical concern and responsibility of this researcher was in ensuring that the process of recruitment for participation in the research process maintained certain ethical standards. As Phillips remarks in his discussion of recruitment within the research context:

The choice of subjects is one of the major decisions made by a researcher on the subject of choice of subjects in the context of an experimental study... The choice of minors is problematic because of the need for parental/guardian permission... Extreme caution must be taken when using underage students in any research study. The complete nature of the research must be revealed to the parents or guardians of all subjects, and written permission must be granted by them for the students to participate. Typically, parents must be given the option to withdraw the students at any time from the investigation.

(Phillips 2008, p.163)

As research within the post-primary education context is by its nature centred primarily around the underage participant, it was vital that certain procedures were followed in this study before any research took place. Procedures which allow entry to such a research setting entail ‘multiple levels of gatekeeping ensuring informed consent is received from all participants’ and in addition, ‘for each setting, researchers must find out what the procedures are for undertaking research, and ensure that these are followed ethically’ (Roulston 2006, p.164). Before this study could commence certain
procedures were adhered to and ethical clearance was sought and received from the University of Limerick Research Ethics Committee (ULREC). The ‘gatekeeping’ process involved the submission of student (Appendix G), parent (Appendix H), visiting musician (Appendix I), teacher information sheets, and informed consent forms (Appendix J); questionnaire and interview questions; risk assessment forms; and acceptance of the UL Child Protection Form. The right for any participant to decline participation questionnaire any stage of the study was highlighted before the study commenced, and it is important to note that at no point throughout the research process did any participant express concern over their involvement in the research.

Finally, an important ethical consideration over the course of the investigation was the consideration of the relationship between the researcher and the researched, i.e. the teachers and students. In terms of this constructivist orientated and integrated action research - grounded theory study, the collaborative aspect of the relationship between teacher and researcher in the construction of new knowledge necessitated answers to questions such as, ‘How can the desire of the teacher to receive feedback after any observation or interview be reconciled with the need to avoid influencing the informant’s behaviour?’ (Sabar 1994, p. 3). Another important ethical consideration in the domain of action research is the ‘commitment to cooperation between the researcher and informant’ (ibid., p. 4), with questions such as ‘What is a truly informed partnership’, ‘What level of mutual agreement between teacher-informant and researcher is needed’, and ‘Should there be partnership in interpretation of the findings and in reporting the research’ being core ethical considerations from the onset of this study (ibid.).

3.6. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, the reasons and motivations for pursuing this broad methodological approach are briefly outlined. As alluded to throughout, the constructivist paradigm through which this research was conducted ensured that as a deeply reflexive researcher, I was immersed in the world of the post-primary music classroom and aimed to understand the phenomenon of the experience of Irish traditional music therein from the perspective of those experiencing it. A constructivist
orientation and a reflexive stance resonate deeply with one another, with an introspective awareness ensuring that my previous experiences acted as a springboard for interpretations and insight into the experiences of the investigation’s participants. As has been pointed out, it could be said that where participatory action research methodology was the primary guiding methodology for the study, grounded theory was the primary analytical tool for the data which emerged over the course of the study. This integrated approach paved the way for the employment of deeply qualitative methods, such as unstructured interviews and classroom observations, although supplementary quantitative methods were used to illuminate this qualitative data. This discussion on the methodological approach employed and methodological considerations that arose over the course of the investigation prepares the way for the analysis of the Phase 2 data which occurs in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.
 CHAPTER 4

EXPLORING THE FIELD: POST-PRIMARY MUSIC TEACHERS
PHASE 1 SURVEY

4. Introduction

In Chapter 3: Methodological Design, it was outlined how during Phase 1 of the research, questionnaires of an exploratory nature were distributed to a cross-section of post-primary music teachers in Ireland. The questionnaire’s purpose aligns with the first stage of Kemmis and McTaggart’s (1992) action research process and it was designed for the broad purpose of investigating the participants’ experience of traditional music: prior to commencing initial teacher training; during initial teacher training; in the music classroom; and, with regard to the availability, use and, effectiveness of resources pertaining to the genre. In general, the broad sphere of findings points to the need for increased attention in the area of traditional music in post-primary music education. In particular, the following areas were illuminated through the data: the place of listening across the 1st to 6th year music education continuum; instrumental teaching and learning; the primary/post-primary music education continuum; an insight into resources used; and concerns with regard to Continuing Professional Development and Initial Teacher Training.

4.1. Location and Distribution of the Represented Schools

In total, 68 music teachers were surveyed, with respondents’ schools distributed in various locations around Ireland (Figure 4.1). A greater number of teachers’ schools were located in counties Dublin, Limerick, and Cork (Figure 4.2), most likely due to the
fact that large urban areas are located in these counties. In total, 16 counties were represented in the survey.

Figure 4.1 Distribution of Phase 1 respondents’ schools

Figure 4.2 Distribution of Phase 1 respondents from each county
4.2. Respondents’ Personal Experience of Irish Traditional Music

The respondents were representative of a broad spectrum in terms of number of years teaching, with 42% of those surveyed having taught music for five years or less, 15% for between six and ten years, 30% for between eleven and twenty years, and 13% for over twenty years. Before going on to probe deeper issues, it was felt that situating the respondents in terms of their own experience of traditional music would be a useful endeavour. Regarding their self-perceived understanding of traditional music, over half of teachers agreed (44%) or strongly agreed (10%) that they deeply understood the genre, while 25% were ‘unsure’ (Figure 4.3). In addition, a majority (60%) revealed that they did not play an instrument or sing traditional song. Of those who did play, just less than half (48%) played one instrument, with the whistle, fiddle, and song being the most popular; 22% of teachers played two instruments, with the whistle and another instrument being the most popular combinations; while 30% of those who did play traditional music, played three or more instruments, with the whistle, fiddle, song, and flute being most popular. In other words, 52% of music teachers who did play traditional music, played two or more instruments.

Traditional music seemed to be popular amongst a small majority of the respondents, where 30% listened to traditional music on a regular basis and 44% listened occasionally; just over a quarter of teachers rarely (19%) or never (7%) listened to traditional music (Figure 4.4). In terms of attending live gigs, previously described as presentational performance (Chapter 2, Section 2.11), the majority of respondents attended once (19%) or twice (43%) during an average year; or ‘never’ in the case of some (22%) (Figure 4.5). Interestingly, the respondents were more likely to go to a traditional session, previously described as participatory performance (Chapter 2, Section 2.11), with 28% attending one at least once a month (Figure 4.6). Moreover, almost half (47%) of the respondents had previously been to a traditional music festival. What could be deduced from these initial explorations is that while a diverse spectrum of experiences characterised the respondents’ engagement with traditional music, it is clear that not every teacher had the opportunity to previously engage with traditional music in the context of a ‘community of practice’ (Lave and Wenger 1991). These findings emphasise a requirement for the provision of educative experiences of traditional music in terms of ITT and CPD.
Figure 4.3 Respondents’ opinion on whether they ‘deeply’ understood traditional music

Figure 4.4 How often respondents listened to traditional music in their personal time

Figure 4.5 How often respondents attended a traditional music gig
To ascertain the meaning which traditional music held for the music teachers, the respondents were asked to give their perception of Irish traditional music in one or two words. The responses highlight the rich and wide-ranging meanings associated with traditional music in the minds of the teachers; from ‘earthy’, to ‘dynamic’, to ‘irrelevant’, to ‘informal’ (Table 4.1). Of course, we can consider these meanings with reference to Green’s (2008b) previously discussed inherent and delineated meanings and the positive or negative responses which they elicited from the teachers. The varied responses, primarily affirmative, resonate with those given by the Phase 2 student participants (Chapter 5, Section 5.2.3) and they urge us to look closely at the meaning-making processes that individuals engage with to attach such meanings to the music.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.1  Words that respondents used to describe Irish traditional music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>spontaneous, intricate, lively, irrelevant, nationalistic,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beautiful, meaningful, earthy, real, repetitive, entertaining,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhythmic, tuneless, energising, individual, cultural, heritage,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important, dynamic, progressive, simple, culturally diverse,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotional, alive, national identity, energetic, fun, easy,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passion, twee, clickish [sic], intimidating, pride, constantly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evolving, exciting, uplifting, easy on the ear, ‘what we are’,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liberating, free, enjoyable, authentic, deep, varied, uplifting,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenging, engaging, legacy, Ireland, oral tradition,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social, invigorating, fast, evocative, driving rhythms,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uplifting, Seán Ó Riada, Micheál Ó Súilleabháin, limited,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grows on you, complicated for students to learn, historical,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>musical, tempting, communicative, heart, exhilarating,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsupported, isolated, under-publicised, Gaelic, boring,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taught badly in the past, spirited, resonant, nostalgic,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>youthful, changing, accessible, balanced, unique, expressive,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rich, sense of homeland, informal, relaxing, playful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3. Listening to Irish Traditional Music in the Classroom

The importance of the process of *listening* associated with learning traditional music and with music education more generally speaking has been previously emphasised (Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1). This aural aspect of educative experience is further examined in terms of the findings of Phase 2 and the principle of aural awareness (Chapter 6, Section 6.1.1). Campbell (2005) among others maintains that listening ‘always has been and will continue to be the core of the musical experience’ (p.35). As such, listening was one of the central considerations in terms of exploring, through the teachers’ survey, the nature of experience in the respondents’ respective music classrooms. While it is encouraging that 47% of teachers ‘regularly’ listened to traditional music with their students, and 47% ‘occasionally’ listened to traditional music (5% rarely listen), what is more revealing is the amount of listening that occurred with each year group; that is, the school year in which the teacher placed a greater priority on listening. As the bar charts depict (Figure 4.7 - 4.7.5), the majority of teachers were spending ‘up to ten minutes’ in an average week listening to traditional music with their 1st year to 3rd year groups; also evident is that slightly more teachers were spending longer listening to traditional music with 2nd year students than they were with 1st year students (6% more in each of the ‘up to 10 minutes’ and ‘11-30 minutes’ brackets). Fourth year generally broke this trend (Figure 4.7.3), which is likely due to the fact that ‘transition year’ occurs at this time, with students heavily involved in various extra-curricular activities. The most dramatic difference in the teachers’ pedagogical habits can be seen between Junior Cycle and Senior cycle. As a student progressed to 5th year, there was a significant increase in the number of teachers who listened to traditional music with this group for between 11-30 minutes (Figure 4.7.4). This trend occurs again with more teachers spending longer listening to traditional music with 6th year students (i.e., Leaving Certificate year). What the overall trend shows is that music teachers were more likely to focus on listening to traditional music with 6th year students, the final year of a student’s music education, than they were with 1st year students. In other words, generally speaking, the least amount of traditional music listening occurred in the early years of a student’s music education.
Figure 4.7 Listening to traditional music/wk with 1st year students

Figure 4.7.1 Listening to traditional music/wk with 2nd year students
Figure 4.7.2 Listening to traditional music/wk with 3rd year students

Figure 4.7.3 Listening to traditional music/wk with 4th year students
Figure 4.7.4 Listening to traditional music/wk with 5th year students

Figure 4.7.5 Listening to traditional music/wk with 6th year students
4.4. Enjoyment, Confidence, and Changes of Perception

In general, the survey respondents professed to enjoying teaching the traditional music section of the syllabi, with 45% saying they enjoyed it ‘a lot’ and 30% ‘thoroughly’ enjoyed it (Figure 4.8). On the other hand, the respondents felt that only 5% of students ‘thoroughly’ enjoyed learning about traditional music, while the majority of students either enjoyed it ‘a little’ (50%) or ‘a lot’ (38%) (Figure 4.9). This aspect of ‘enjoyment’ is investigated further in relation to flow experience during Phase 2 (Chapter 6, Section 6.3).

![Figure 4.8 The extent to which respondents enjoyed teaching traditional music]

![Figure 4.9 How much students enjoyed learning about traditional music]
Of those surveyed, 47% stated that their perception of traditional music had changed since they commenced teaching (41% had not had a change in perception, while 12% were not sure). The responses (Table 4.2) highlight a rich diversity of experiences and point to the role of the dialogical (using Freire’s (1996) terminology, see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3) teacher-as-learner as they embark on teaching traditional music. That is, their responses reveal that traditional music as it is organised in the syllabus is merely a representation of the things about which they can know more. As Freire maintains, ‘it is impossible to dichotomise teaching from learning, educating from being educated’ (Freire and Kirby 1982, p.45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent 3</th>
<th>It has made me realise how rich the culture is - the breadth and style of music available. The historical side is also very interesting as a lot of students are lacking in Irish history.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 7</td>
<td>Appreciate it more as up until I started teaching I hadn’t a clue! Have grown to really enjoy it! Also, the idea of fusion with other genres – I wasn't aware of it as much before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 20</td>
<td>It has given me a greater understanding and appreciation of the tradition and listening to great exponents e.g. Martin Hayes, has made me realise the very high level to which Irish music can be taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 23</td>
<td>I’ve learned more about the dances and development of the music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 45</td>
<td>Previously I was unaware of the depth behind Irish Music and I now have a greater appreciation for the music than before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 46</td>
<td>It has forced me to become familiar with this tradition. The best way as a teacher to learn something is when you have to teach it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 48</td>
<td>Absolutely, it has exposed me to many different types of music which I would never have paid attention to. I am grateful for this and my love and appreciation for traditional music is growing every year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 56</td>
<td>Although I never actually played traditional music I was always interested in listening to it. Teaching traditional music as part of the JC and LC programmes has increased my understanding and appreciation of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 17</td>
<td>I believe with the introduction of the JC and more so, the introduction of the newer LC, as a music teacher, I have to be more fully up-to-date with the fusion and stylistic changes which are occurring in the traditional sphere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were generally confident teaching the traditional music areas of the syllabi, with 41% saying they felt ‘quite confident’ and 30% felt ‘very confident’ in their
approach (Figure 4.10). In addition, 47% of teachers taught a traditional instrument. This in contrast to the finding that only 40% of teachers actually played a traditional instrument, which suggests that a number of teachers who did not consider themselves a traditional musician were engaging in some aspect of instrumental teaching. This is an important observation in light of one teacher’s comment that ‘teachers who are not Irish traditional music players seem to be very afraid of the subject’ (Teacher 18 Post-Primary Music Teachers’ Survey 2007-8). Interesting, in light of the debates of Reimer and Elliott on the place and purpose of music listening, and with regard to those other aforementioned perspectives on various types of music listening (Campbell 2005; Green 2008a) is the fact that a significant percentage of teachers did not teach a traditional instrument (53%). That is, it can be assumed that a significant number of students did not have the opportunity to experience that type listening which occurs when learning to play a traditional instrument.\(^{140}\) Of those teachers who did teach a traditional instrument, the year groups that teachers were most likely to teach an instrument to were 1st and 2nd year (76% and 77% respectively), compared to 5th and 6th year (35% and 28% respectively). Overwhelmingly, the whistle was the most popular instrument in this regard, with 87% of teachers who taught an instrument choosing to teach whistle; other instruments taught included the fiddle, bodhrán, flute, piano accordion, and voice. However, of those teachers who did teach a traditional instrument, 35% had concerns at their ability to teach instrumental skills (Table 4.3).

Figure 4.10 How confident respondents were teaching traditional music

\[^{140}\text{The modes of aural awareness associated with learning to play a traditional instrument are investigated in the context of Phase 2 participants (see Chapter 6, Section 6.1)}\]
Table 4.3 Concerns in terms of teaching traditional music instrumental skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Concern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I am not now, nor have I ever been a traditional musician. I feel you need to play traditional music to truly understand it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I am not familiar with specific ornaments for specific instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I haven’t been trained in traditional performance and lack confidence teaching it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I cannot help students improve on their technique if they have some tin whistle/flute repertoire already before they come in to my class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>We would learn some slow airs, but beyond that not much. We would do a little bit of ornamentation, but not much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I just don't have the background in it but would be willing to work on this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Since I do not perform on a traditional instrument, I would find it difficult/challenging to teach this aspect of traditional music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>I do not play a traditional instrument and therefore do not teach it. We do sing Irish songs but I don't feel confident about style and ornamentation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5. Exposing the Primary/Post-Primary Continuum Fracture

The issue of continuity of experience emerged as an important factor regarding the experience of traditional music across primary and post-primary music education contexts. Exposure of the primary/post-primary continuum fracture has occurred over the past few decades by way of the aforementioned Deaf Ears? Report (Herron 1985), MEND Report (Heneghan 2004), and by McCarthy (1999b) who concluded that ‘it is clear that the Irish education system is not structured to accommodate and support a primary-secondary continuum in music education’ (p.51). Although the primary/post-primary continuum fracture is an issue beyond the scope of this research, it is unfortunate that such discontinuity is illuminated once again by the findings of the questionnaire. That is, it emerged that that an overwhelming majority of teachers (68%) felt that 1st year students did not have a satisfactory foundation in traditional music when entering post-primary music education (Figure 4.11), i.e., not having a basic awareness of traditional instruments and the music itself.
4.6. Resources, Visiting Musicians, and Available Instruments

Looking at Music (DES 2008) reported that ‘the proper provision of resources is vital to ensuring an effective teaching and learning environment for music (p.13). The area of resources continues to raise itself as an issue in post-primary music education, but also in terms of Initial Teacher Training (ITT). During ITT, it was suggested by one respondent that ‘more time could be spent on this area [traditional music] with emphasis on resources’ (Teacher 17, Post Primary Music Teachers’ Survey 2007-8). For example, one respondent felt that ‘aspiring teachers should be pointed towards suitable resources’ (Teacher 28, *ibid.*); while another thought that it would be a good idea to receive a resource pack of CDs and DVDs at ITT ‘to get started’, before explaining that ‘newly qualified teachers are often unaware of what CDs, etc. to buy’ (Teacher 1, *ibid.*).

Although almost all respondents used one form of resource or another (evidently, 8% stated that they did not use *any* resources), a significant majority of respondents (63%) felt that there was not an adequate number of resources available in their schools to effectively facilitate a class on traditional music. The following are resources that were being used (listed in order of popularity): CDs; course books; TV programmes; syllabus notes; PPMTA notes; music magazines; the students themselves; and, local musicians. Regarding keeping up to date with developments within the tradition, 64% of teachers were unaware of any resources that could assist them in this respect. Also revealing is the fact that the music students themselves and local musicians were placed...
last in terms of ‘usage’ as a resource; revealing because, although 58% of teachers knew another member of staff who played traditional music, and 66% knew a local traditional musician, the findings would suggest that traditional musicians in or near the school are the most obvious, yet most underused resource. This being said, 95% of teachers indicated that they would welcome the support of a visiting musician, although the ‘visiting musician’ was not a common occurrence in the majority of schools, with only 36% having had one (17%) or more (19%) traditional musicians visit their classroom in the previous year (Figure 4.12). Moreover, although 67% of respondents were interested in encouraging a greater awareness of the ‘community’ aspect of traditional music in their classrooms (Figure 4.13), incorporating this community orientated aspect (listening to local musicians, learning local songs etc.) into the experience of traditional music in the classroom would likely provide some difficulty to the respondents. For example, a significant number of teachers stated that they would find incorporating this ‘quite difficult’ (40%) or ‘extremely difficult’ (3%); on the other hand, 22% of respondents said they would find it ‘not very difficult’ (16%) or ‘not difficult at all’ (6%) (Figure 4.14). This difficulty possibly arose from the fact that only 13% of teachers were encouraged during ITT to develop extra-curricular or community orientated learning projects in traditional music with future students (80% were not encouraged in this regard, and 7% were unsure). This considered, in 59% of schools, traditional music occurred as an extra-curricular activity either ‘occasionally’ (34%) or ‘very regularly’ (25%); while in 41% of schools, traditional music occurred on this basis either rarely (20%) or never (21%) (Figure 4.15).

In line with the number of teachers who felt that they were not adequately resourced to teach traditional music (i.e., 63%), 61% stated that there were no traditional instruments available in their school for students to play. Of those schools where traditional instruments were available for use, 39% had whistles; 14% had whistles and bodhráns; 11% had whistles, bodhráns and another instrument(s), usually a fiddle, piano accordion or harp; 32% had four or more instruments; and 4% had only bodhráns. While audio equipment and a keyboard were a standard fixture in all classrooms, only 35% had access to a computer. Moreover, even fewer had access to the internet at the time of writing (25%), although this situation has likely changed since then. What this figure does reveal however, and drawing from the work of Waldron (2012), is the immense potential which exists for the integration of online resources and communities within
the classroom context to encourage music learning in convergent on- and offline communities.

Figure 4.12 The amount of times that a ‘visiting musician’ visited schools in the previous school year

Figure 4.13 Whether or not respondents are interested in encouraging community orientated aspect of traditional music
4.7. Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

A strong sense of commitment emerged in terms of the teachers’ interest and willingness in engaging in CPD in traditional music. That is, an overwhelming majority (82%) of teachers expressed an interest in developing and advancing skills in traditional music, while 11% stated that they might be interested in CPD (Figure 4.16). Unfortunately, in the year prior to the survey being conducted, 90% of respondents indicated that they did not have the opportunity to advance and develop their skills in the area (Figure 4.17). Of note is the fact that 92% of respondents said that they would
avail of an opportunity to bring students on an educational field-trip on traditional music; in this regard, 50% of respondents felt that organising such an activity would be ‘not very difficult’, while 24% felt that this would not be ‘difficult at all’ (Figure 4.18). In saying this however, 75% were not aware of any funds which could assist in organising such activities. Below (Table 4.4) is a selection of comments and suggestions raised by respondents in respect to their in-service needs, many of which refer in particular to the need for increased support in the area of performance. The focus by the respondents on the need for performance-based in-service is reflective of the fact that a majority (53%) did not teach a traditional instrument, and of those who did teach a traditional instrument, 35% had concerns at their ability to teach instrumental skills.

Table 4.4 Needs of the respondents in terms of developing skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent 5</th>
<th>More in-service ... yearly, especially in performing aspects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 6</td>
<td>Any in-service on this subject would be welcome. CCÉ are opening a new centre on the north side of Dublin and I would love to link up with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 14</td>
<td>More in-service in the areas of Irish music, perhaps curricular/website for music teachers to share information as there is little material available for teachers suited to the levels needed for Junior and Leaving Certificate exams. There is a need for more available information regarding the practical aspect of the examinations, where the student chooses to perform on an Irish instrument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 15</td>
<td>Workshops on Irish music. The one run by the PPMTA on Sean Nós singing last year was excellent, but there should definitely be more of these.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 20</td>
<td>More in-service for active teachers in area and greater opportunity for undergraduates to explore traditional music by playing instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 21</td>
<td>Improvements can definitely be made. In-service in this area would help!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 22</td>
<td>A short in-service with follow up workshops on instrumentation, ornamentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent 24</td>
<td>I would really appreciate any in-service going on traditional music. It's a big question marks-wise on both JC and LC. Most music teachers come from a classical background and would benefit greatly from any help at all.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.16 Whether respondents were interested in developing skills in traditional music

Figure 4.17 Whether or not respondents had the opportunity in the previous school year to develop skills in traditional music?

Figure 4.18 Degree of difficulty in organising an educational trip
4.8. Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

The area of ITT is of significant relevance to this research, not least given the MEND Report’s concern for the adequacy and relevance of teacher training for music education in Ireland. Although an in-depth perusal of this area is impossible at this time, it is important to cast an eye on this aspect of a music teacher’s education and its unquestionable, lasting, and direct impact on post-primary music education. Reflecting on MEND (Heneghan 2004) for a brief moment, it is encouraging, given the nature of this research, to see its strong emphasis on the importance of ITT, and the need to keep it relevant to the music curriculum and its informing philosophy.

...it is not sufficient that teachers be relevantly trained in the pedagogical and methodological implications of the curriculum flowing from the philosophy. They must be familiar with the detail of the philosophy itself, if possible by involvement in the drafting of schemes of instruction or in ongoing reappraisals of the success of the philosophy in action. This involves the insinuation, for approval and acceptance (and even for modification in context), of the philosophy (or contending philosophies) at the earliest opportunity in the teacher training cycle (Heneghan 2004, p.22)

The area of ITT was strongly alluded to where almost half of teachers (49%) stated that they had ‘not very much’ exposure to traditional music prior to commencing third-level studies (Figure 4.19). The fact that a large minority of respondents did not encounter traditional music until post-primary (21%) or third-level education (15%) further highlights the essential nature of an ITT experience which engages with traditional music’s pedagogy-theory-philosophy concern (Figure 4.20).

The teachers surveyed had trained to become post-primary music teachers across all the major teacher training institutions in Ireland. A bleak response was given in terms of the teachers’ feelings on how they were equipped to the teach traditional music (Figure 4.21). For example, 32% felt that they had been ‘not very well equipped’ and 37% felt they had been ‘not equipped at all’; 27% felt ‘quite well equipped’, while only 3% felt ‘extremely well equipped’. This could be due to the fact that many of the respondents (43%) had trained to become teachers over ten years previous to the survey being conducted, and many changes have taken place in the area of ITT over this time. This could also be related to the fact that only 54% of respondents experienced ‘live’ traditional music during ITT (another area which has seen immense change over the past ten years); that is to say, it was revealed that in general, those who did experience
live traditional music during ITT felt more equipped to teach the traditional music aspect of the syllabi (Figure 4.22). In other words, 20% of those who did experience live traditional music during ITT felt ‘quite well equipped’ compared to 7% of those who did not experience live traditional music at this time. Of those who did not experience live traditional music, 23% felt ‘not very well equipped’ and 23% felt ‘not equipped at all’, which compares to 8% having felt ‘not very well equipped’ and 13% having felt ‘not equipped at all’ for those who did experience live traditional music. With this in mind, it is unsurprising that a vast majority of respondents (90%) felt that improvements could be made on how teachers are trained in the area of traditional music during ITT (8% did not think that improvements could be made, and 2% were unsure); although it is important to bear in mind that ‘there's always room for improvement’, as one respondent put it (Teacher 2 Post-Primary Music Teachers’ Survey 2007-8).

Many of the respondents raised several concerns regarding ITT which as we will see, resonate with aspects of Phase 2 of this investigation, a sample of these are given below (Table 4.5). The emerging themes included: a ‘fear’ of traditional music (Bríd, Group B’s teacher, mentioned during Phase 2 how she believed that some teachers were ‘afraid’ at times of certain aspects of the Irish traditional music LC course. This is referred to in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2.); the need for closer involvement with the traditional music community and exposure to live music (the role of the ‘visiting musician’ is discussed in Chapter 6, but particularly in Section 6.2.1); having a greater focus on learning an instrument during ITT that they can then go on to teach their students (each music teacher learned to play whistle during Phase 2 and this is discussed in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1 and throughout Chapter 6); issues of time constraints during ITT; more time focussed on Western art music; methodology that should be from a traditional music perspective, and, focusing on the aural element of the music (aural learning is discussed in depth in Chapter 6, Section 6.1.1 in the context of the principle of aural awareness which emerged from Phase 2 of the investigation).
Figure 4.19  Exposure to traditional music before commencing third-level education

Figure 4.20  The stage that respondents first encountered traditional music

Figure 4.21  The degree to which respondents felt equipped to teach traditional music section of syllabi emerging from ITT
Figure 4.22 The experience of ‘live’ traditional music during ITT compared with how well teachers felt equipped to teach the traditional music area of the syllabi

Table 4.5 Respondents’ comments on what improvements can be made, if any, in terms of Irish traditional music at ITT

| Respondent 3 | That the fear of the music should be removed. I gained my teaching qualification in an Irish traditional music orientated university. I think other universities are not as like-minded and a stronger grounding and understanding is needed in these establishments. Also some Higher Diploma training in music doesn’t involve classes with the on-campus department which would also help! |
| Respondent 7 | Exposure to live music .. Visiting guest performers to illustrate how the instruments are made and played. It would be good to receive tuition in a very simple instrument such as the tin-whistle that you could then pass on to your students. Time should be spent teaching the traditional music section of the syllabi to the trainees. It is always ignored and you’re left to figure it out yourself. |
| Respondent 8 | Irish traditional music isn't really covered in some BA/MUS courses and some of my friends who are qualified music teachers with an honours dip wouldn't be able to tell me the difference between a reel and a jig. |
| Respondent 9 | Teachers are not trained in colleges on how to teach the criteria of what is on the curriculum - we are not instructed as time is limited on the dip too, how to approach teaching the subject. |
| Respondent 10 | More workshops. |
| Respondent 11 | Closer involvement with specialist teachers/performers ... session experience in school ... working with musicians in school time. |
| Respondent 12 | Universities are not totally (and are not meant to be) geared to providing answers to secondary teaching. |
| Respondent 13 | It depends on the university they went to. In-service would help I suppose. |
| Respondent 16 | More time is focused on classical music and less on traditional Irish music. |
| Respondent 18 | Teachers who are not Irish traditional music players seem to be very afraid of the subject. |
| Respondent 19 | 1. To start with, it should be included as part of courses. Student teachers should leave their course with at least a solid grounding in the area.  
2. Student teachers should be made familiar with what is exciting and dynamic in traditional music in general  
3. Approaches to methodology should be thought through from a traditional music perspective (e.g. learning by ear). |
| Respondent 23 | Added on to the syllabus would be a start. I did nothing on traditional music in college. |
| Respondent 25 | A greater focus should be put on it. |
| Respondent 26 | I'm really not sure what happens currently in teaching training for traditional music but I feel that there should be designated modules to introduce student teachers to Irish music and should include at least the playing of tin whistle. |
| Respondent 27 | More hands on experience. |
| Respondent 28 | The requirements for JC and LC Irish Music should be highlighted. |
| Respondent 30 | I don't think that music students nowadays have to perform on traditional instruments / voice (in an exam type practical as part of their degree course). It was something that I wasn't too fond of during my undergraduate days but it does definitely help in the classroom situation. I can play a few tunes on the tin-whistle and demonstrate ornaments etc. Music courses should make this compulsory (as all of them should also make a practical performance exam compulsory. Having had seven Music H.Dips in my classroom over the last eight years - I think that performance should be made a large portion of any music degree - especially if the music students want to go on to teach). |
| Respondent 31 | It should be based on more practical and aural elements of Irish music. |
4.9. Conclusion: Irish Traditional Music as ‘Lived Experience’

In the words of those who teach, this chapter probes and reveals many issues concerning the experience of Irish traditional music in post-primary music education today. The exploratory survey was conducted amongst a cross-section of music teachers whose experience ranged from those who had taught for less than 5 years, to others who had taught for more than 20 years; in all, sixteen counties were represented. The findings are significant in several respects. Firstly, they highlight the diverse and essentially haphazard experiences of traditional music in the lives of the respondents, and with this, they consolidate the need for the provision of educative experiences in Irish traditional music for all music teachers during ITT and CPD. In the areas of ITT and CPD however, the findings reveal significant potential for development, although it must be acknowledged that there have been developments in these areas since those respondents who had taught for 10 years or more trained to become music teachers. The potential for the emergence of a dialogical teacher through educative, meaning-making experiences was also reflected in the responses of those teachers whose perception of traditional music had changed as a result of teaching the genre. Another of the major findings regards the area of ‘listening’, where the contrast in the amount of traditional music ‘listening’ that a student had the opportunity to engage in during their music education was revealed. Embedded in the area of listening is the considerable number of teachers (47%) who taught a traditional music instrument to their students, although a significant number (35%) of these teachers had concerns regarding their ability to teach instrumental skills. Other issues which emerged relate to the availability and use of resources in the classroom, the place of the ‘visiting musician’, and matters concerning the confidence and enjoyment of those teachers and students who engage with traditional music in post-primary music education. These issues are probed further in the context of Phase 2 (Chapter 6). I conclude this chapter with the sentiments of one teacher who inadvertently struck on one of the defining concerns of this research; the need for a guiding philosophy for traditional music in this context, and the inescapable need and responsibility to recognise ‘lived experience’ within this philosophy. With these words we can look positively towards a future of traditional music in this context:

Irish Music is a lived experience. Commitment to that experience is necessary to teach it effectively.

(Teacher 4 Post-Primary Music Teachers’ Survey 2007-8)
CHAPTER 5

LOOKING BACK: INITIAL INSIGHTS INTO THE EXPERIENCE OF PHASE 2 PARTICIPANTS

5. Introduction

An essential aspect of the collaborative action research process involved the pre-Phase 2 identification and exploration of various issues related to the experience of traditional music by the students and teachers in each school; preliminary discussion and negotiation among the interested parties at this time also ensured that participants understood the objectives, purposes and assumptions of the investigation. In terms of the participating students \( n=30 \) and as an initial stage of the action research process, it was essential that an insight was gained into their prior experience of traditional music, broadly speaking, before Phase 2 commenced. As previously outlined, two student groups took part in this study; Group A comprised second year students \( n=21 \) and Group B comprised fifth year students \( n=9 \). Students were asked to complete an exploratory questionnaire which dealt with the following themes: experience of Irish traditional music at primary level; familiarity with and previous experience of Irish traditional music ‘outside’ school; musical backgrounds and interests; opinions on the connection between music in school and outside school; and the importance of traditional music in post-primary music education.

At the time of the investigation, Bríd had been teaching music in School A for 20 years, while Amanda had been teaching music in School B for 6 years. Each teacher’s musical experience was grounded in Western Art music; Amanda played classical piano and Bríd was a singer and choir conductor. From the onset of the investigation, it was clear that Amanda and Bríd’s extensive experience and expertise had significantly impacted...
on the wider musical culture of each school; this was evident from the many music events, choir competitions, orchestra rehearsals, school rock bands, etc., that I was aware that the students from each group were involved in over the course of the investigation. As regards the extent of Amanda and Bríd’s previous experience learning and teaching Irish traditional music, this emerged during pre-Phase 2 unstructured conversations and at various stages over the course of the study, and is outlined throughout this chapter. Furthermore, initial concerns which emerged regarding each teacher’s anticipation of Phase 2 are also presented.

5.1. The Students’ Experience of Irish Traditional Music at Primary School

The primary/post-primary education continuum fracture has been raised previously as a concern (Herron 1985; McCarthy 1999b; Heneghan 2004), not least through the post-primary music teachers’ exploratory survey (Chapter 4, Section 4.5). A mixed response emerged from the students’ questionnaire in terms of the degree of continuity which the students experienced between each educational context. For example, a minority of students ($n=11$) expressed that they had been taught traditional music during their primary education (Group A $n=9$ and Group B $n=2$), while a majority of students had not had the opportunity (Group B $n=14$); five Group B students ‘were not sure’ if they had been taught traditional music or not. When those who had experienced traditional music in this way were asked what this experience involved, the majority of students responded that they had learned to play whistle and to sing songs, with a number of Group A students describing the activities that took place as follows: ‘the teacher gave us music and then tried to explain it’; we only did simple Irish music and learned Irish music that was well known’; and ‘[we learned] the basic songs (Mary had a little lamb)’. A Group B student responded that ‘we learnt Irish songs on the recorder’. Furthermore, a small majority ($n=18$) of students (Group A $n=10$ and Group B $n=8$) responded that they were not given the opportunity to listen to traditional music recordings in primary school. In addition, only 3 students (Group A $n=1$, Group B $n=2$)
expressed that an Irish traditional musician had visited their class over the course of their primary education.\footnote{The role of the ‘visiting’ musician in school music education is discussed in terms of Phase 2 in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1 principle of transitioning roles of more experiences person(s) and less experienced person(s).}

While these findings point to significant contrast in terms of the students’ experience of traditional music at primary level, they also highlight the different degrees of maturity of experience that the music teachers were faced with when the students first entered post-primary music education. Moreover, taking a broader view, the fact that the majority of students in each group expressed that they had few opportunities to listen to traditional music in primary school is potentially compounded by the fact that a majority of music teachers (see Chapter 4, Figure 4.7.1) listen to traditional music with first year students for between 0-10 minutes in a typical week.

5.1.1. ‘School’ Music and Music in the Lives of the Students

Broadly speaking, music held a central and important place in the lives of the students, with students feeling that it was either ‘extremely important’ (Group A \(n=15\) and Group B \(n=8\)) or ‘Quite Important’ (Group A \(n=6\) and Group B \(n=1\)) to have music of some sort in their lives. Generally speaking, the students felt that music was important for their identity and the feelings of enjoyment, happiness, and the calm that it brought to their lives (Table 5.1). In light of Green’s discussion on the delineations of music,\footnote{See, Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3; also Green (1988, 2006, 2008a, 2008b).} Dillon’s (2007) interpretation of meaning arising from Csikszentmihalyi’s ideas on flow, and resonating with the perceptions of teachers as outlined in Chapter 4 (Table 4.1), the students’ responses and reasonings were quite revealing in terms of the value- and meaning-laden potential that exists for the experience of traditional music in and outside school. The following are the responses received from Group A and Group B students:
Table 5.1  Group A & B Responses: The extent to which music is part of students’ lives

| Group A | For me it’s a way of life and it brings life to everything whether it is slow, fast, sad, or happy it always suited to something and catches your attention; music is really cool and makes everything better - it fills the gap of silence and is great to listen to; music is fun for me not to mention a way to escape; it’s something that you can enjoy any time and it’s fun to play; if music wasn’t there most things would be boring and you wouldn’t be able to sing along to the radio; I would be a dull person if I didn’t have music because it keeps me happy; I wouldn’t be able to do anything without music!!!; Music helps some people and makes them feel calm and happy sometimes; Because it’s a way to get away from all the work and stress; Without music in my life it would be very boring; I love music and I love to sing; Because I love singing and someday I would love to be an artist; I enjoy playing my violin and tin whistle; Because music gives you a sense of relaxation; I love listening to music and I would sing along with anything although I can’t sing; Whenever I do my homework I always do it whilst listening to music and like I always have my ipod on me; It’s quite important for me because if I ever wanted to be a musician or singer an instrument would help me if I wanted to write songs or anything; Music is a big part of my life because I’ve been playing it since I was little; I love listening to music and singing; Well without music life would be very boring and you wouldn’t have anything to watch because nearly all movies and TV shows include music; I love music so I think it’s important for it to be a part of my life; Without music in my life I would get very sad because everywhere you go there is music; I really love music and I think that there is always a song that you can relate to in your mind |

| Group B | Music is a part of me; It is everything; Parent’s don’t bug you if you’re playing music; I think that life would be very boring without music; I just love listening to and playing music of all sorts; Music is all I do when I have free time; Music is my life; I listen to music all the time whether in my room/bed or going to school or coming home |

Students were also asked to give their opinion on whether or not there was a connection between music as a subject in school, and music in their lives outside school. This question was asked to those students who had studied music at post-primary level prior to the investigation taking place, of which there were 22 (Group A n=17 and Group B n=5). Given the centrality of music in the lives of the majority of students, it was encouraging to see that an overwhelming majority of students (n =20) felt that a connection did exist between music in school and music outside school (this in contrast to Green’s notion of musical ‘alienation’ as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3). Of those students who responded ‘yes’ to this question, many of the reasons referred to their increased awareness of and ability to understand music outside school, and the fact that they use music that they learn in school, outside school; a minority of students in Group A (n=3) felt that there was no connection between the two contexts. The reasons for each response are outlined in Table 5.2:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Table 5.2 Group A &amp; B Responses: Students who thought there was a connection between music in school and music outside school</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group A</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group B</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Table 5.2.1 Group A &amp; B Responses: Students who thought there was not a connection between music in school and music outside school</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group A</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2. The Students’ previous Experience of Other\textsuperscript{443} Musical Genres

A broad range of experiences characterised the students in terms of the musical genres within which they engaged, including the musical instruments they played (Table 5.3); students performed in such disparate genres as jazz, rock, classical, blues, metal, and pop. In total, 29 students (Group A \(n=21\) Group B \(n=8\)) identified themselves as playing music other than traditional music, and therefore as being familiar with pedagogies associated with other musics. The students’ responses included genres and instruments such as:

\textsuperscript{443} That is, musical genres aside from Irish traditional music.
Table 5.3  Group A & B Responses: Experience engaging with other musical genres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Experience engaging with other musical genres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>classical piano; classical violin; new songs and old known songs on voice and piano; classical guitar; choir; classical flute; classical and some jazz on flute, recorder, and piano; pop singing; clarinet and recorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>classical and rock (piano and guitar); piano/sax/clarinet; piano, mostly contemporary acoustic; classical violin; keyboard; electric guitar, drums and bass; rock/metal/blues guitar; classical piano and pop/rock on guitar; classical and electric guitar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.3. The Students’ previous Experience of Irish Traditional Music

As was previously discussed (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3), Green (1988/2008b, 2006) presents musical meaning as existing between ‘virtual aspects’ of meaning she identifies as inherent meaning and delineated meaning. The inherent / delineated meaning concept is interesting when considering the reasons given by students as to whether or not they liked traditional music; that is, whether or not students concentrated on the ‘inherent’ inter-sonic relationships of musical material, or focussed on the social contexts of ‘delineations’ of the music. Firstly, a small majority of students indicated that they liked Irish traditional music ‘a little’ (Group A \( n=11 \) and Group B \( n=5 \)), while a significant minority of students indicated that they liked Irish traditional music ‘a lot’ (Group A \( n=9 \) and Group B \( n=3 \)); one student from each group was unsure whether or not they liked traditional music. Those who liked traditional music ‘a little’ preferred ‘more modern’ and ‘catchy’ music, and ‘less boring’ music, while those who liked traditional music ‘a lot’ were attracted to the music in terms of its inherent meanings such as the ‘beat’, ‘speed’ and ‘pureness’ of the music, and the liveliness of the music. In terms of the delineated meanings associated with the music, students referred to the ‘togetherness’ of traditional music, its association with Irish culture, the way it made them feel, the sense of community which they associated with it, the stories associated with the music, and its participatory nature. The meanings which students associated with traditional music also resonate strongly with the Turino (2008) inspired principle of participatory performance which emerged over the course of Phase 2.144

144 Discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Perceptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>‘a lot’</td>
<td>It has a good beat; I like the way that it has a good beat and it’s recognisable all over the world; that it’s very recognisable rather than e.g., Finland’s music; I like the way it is very jolly; I like the variety and sounds of traditional music instruments; I like the way it can be very lively; I like that traditional music is fun and that there is a lot of different instruments that you can listen to or play. Also, it is very easy music to dance to; I like the togetherness and how it can always make you smile; I like the upbeat and lively feel to it; I like the way some of the songs are really upbeat and fun to dance to; I like the beat and the feeling you get when you’re listening to and playing Irish traditional music; It’s fast and upbeat; I like when someone starts playing you can just play along; I love the pureness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>‘a lot’</td>
<td>It brings people together and is a reminder of our culture, especially as it is played for entertainment in groups of people who come together to play for a good time; really repetitive Irish dance and I like slow airs and sean nós; I like the rhythm and energy, tells good stories; You can relate to some stories; It’s part of my culture of being Irish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>‘a little’</td>
<td>It isn’t very catchy; I don’t enjoy it as much as modern music; I like the tempo and energetic songs with melodies and solo playing. I’m not a huge fan of sean nós singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>‘a little’</td>
<td>I prefer less repetitive music; I like when they play really fast and I like the uilleann pipes on their own; some of it is boring but also some it energetic; the atmosphere is easy going</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of students from each group felt that they were ‘quite familiar’ Irish traditional music (the different types of instruments, how the music sounds, different musicians etc.) (see Figure 5.1). In terms of playing traditional music, a total of 11 students across the two groups responded that they played a traditional instrument (Group A $n=10$ and Group B $n=1$) and they indicated that they began learning their instrument at various ages: four ($n=2$); six ($n=1$); eight ($n=1$); nine ($n=1$); ten ($n=2$); eleven ($n=2$); thirteen ($n=1$). The range of Irish traditional instruments played by Group A students included whistle ($n=1$), fiddle ($n=1$), guitar ($n=1$), piano ($n=1$), piano and song ($n=1$), low whistle, song and drums ($n=1$), whistle and flute ($n=2$), and whistle and flute.

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145 Interestingly, all of the students from Group A who did play traditional music also indicated that they engaged in a musical genre other than traditional music. Eithne Vallely (2011) cites Mary Nugent’s 2009 study which found that half of learners at CCE’s Scoil Éigse engaged with some form of Classical music or song, and a lesser number with Rock and Pop. Broadly speaking, Nugent’s current doctoral research, as outlined in an email to the author (October 2012) focuses on the learning process and experience of learning bi-multimusically and emerging themes include differing conceptions of music learning and making, socio musical engagement, and identity.
fiddle \((n=1)\), while the student who identified themselves as an Irish traditional musician in Group B played whistle and fiddle. When asked whether any member of their family played Irish traditional music, 12 students responded that a family member did play Irish traditional music (Group A \(n=9\) and Group B \(n=3\)). A greater number of students from Group B responded that they had previously attended an Irish traditional music session (Group A \(n=9\) and Group B \(n=7\)), while fewer students indicated that they had heard Irish traditional music at a festival or fleadh (Group A \(n=7\) and Group B \(n=3\)).

The contexts in which the students in Group A had previously learned traditional music were varied and included one-to-one and participatory group music making scenarios,\(^{146}\) for example: one-on-one lessons (Group A \(n=4\) and Group B \(n=1\)); along with a group of other musicians (Group B \(n=2\)); from a primary school teacher, a family member, and in a one-on-one lesson (Group A \(n=2\)); from a primary school teacher, a post-primary school teacher, in a one-on-one lesson, and along with a group of other musicians (Group A \(n=1\)); and from a primary school teacher, a post-primary school teacher, a family member, a friend, and in a one-on-one lesson (Group A \(n=1\)). These findings highlight the prevalence of the one-to-one lesson in terms of the students’ experience and by default, the role of the more experienced traditional music teacher; also highlighted is the fact that several students associated learning traditional music with a variety of disparate learning contexts.

\(^{146}\) This finding supports the emergence of the principle of transitioning roles of more experiences person(s) (MEP) and less experienced person(s) (LEP), and the principle of participatory performance as discussed in Chapter 6.
In terms of where the students said they usually they played their instrument(s), the majority of students from Group A responded that they played their instruments ‘at home’, ‘at school’ and ‘in the same place that I go for lessons’, while the Group B student who played Irish traditional music indicated that she played her instrument solely ‘at home’. Of the 11 students who did play Irish traditional music, 6 of these students (all Group A students) responded that they were currently having lessons on their instrument(s), while the student from Group B was not currently taking instrumental lessons. In other words, what these findings portray is the fact that 80% (n=24) of the students surveyed were not currently engaging with traditional music in a one-to-one teaching and learning capacity. When asked if they had ever attended an Irish traditional music workshop or summer school, 1 student from Group A indicated that they had attended such an event, while 9 students had not; the student in Group B who played Irish traditional music was ‘not sure’. These findings demonstrate the significant potential that exists for the provision of educative experiences for the students at post-primary level, and the role that the music teacher can play in such provision.

The students who were currently having lessons on their instruments (n=6) were asked to choose from the following three options to describe the method through which they learned to play their instruments: option (a), the teacher writes out the tune using the letters A, B, C etc. and I learn it from that was chosen (n=3); (b), the teacher gives the tune to me in staff notation (n=2). Only 1 student indicated that they engaged in learning aurally in conjunction with other methods, and chose option (c), the teacher plays the tune and I learn it by listening to, and copying what he/she plays along with aforementioned option (b). While it is surprising that only one student was learning traditional music by aural means, these findings highlight the continued use of print media by traditional music teachers as ‘a map to which the player must travel by their own taste’ (Vallely 1999, p.258).147

With regard to the students’ perception of whether traditional music was becoming more or less popular today, half of all participants felt that it was becoming ‘less popular’ (Group A n=8 and Group B n=7) mostly as a result of the influence of popular

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147 The role of various media in engaging learners in Irish traditional music is discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.4 in terms of the principle of media integration
music and culture, while 12 students felt it was becoming ‘more popular’ (Group A \( n=10 \) and Group B \( n=2 \)); 3 students were unsure as to the popularity of traditional music (Group A \( n=3 \)). The following were the students’ reasons for determining Irish traditional music’s popularity:

| **Table 5.5 Group A & B Responses: Why traditional music is becoming less/more popular** |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Group A ‘more popular’**                      | Because music students learn about it; the fascination of americans; because of how it sounds; because it is being taught a lot in schools; because a lot more people are playing and it is now being played a lot more on the radio; because everyone seems to be promoting it; because parents are passing it down to their kids; more people are starting to take it; because people are trying to get their heritage back; younger people are starting to play it more. |
| **Group B ‘more popular’**                      | More groups are starting up e.g. High Kings and Young Wolfe Tones; there’s a lot more of it! |
| **Group A ‘less popular’**                      | I think people might think it’s “uncool”; because most young people do not like it; I’m only hearing it in class; young people mostly prefer pop music; as a couple of years ago everyone used to play; because more hit pop singers are coming out; I think that it is still very popular but before everyone was playing Irish traditional music. |
| **Group B ‘less popular’**                      | Commercial radio and music has more of an influence on young people; less emphasis on Irish artists; the popular culture of music is not traditional music; people grow up only listening to mainstream; rock and pop music is becoming more dominant; even on Lyric FM you don’t hear much of it. |

Given the centrality of aural awareness in the Irish musical tradition (as emphasised by the principle of aural awareness which emerged during Phase 2, see Chapter 6, Section 6.1.1), the previous experience of Group A and Group B students in terms of listening to traditional music beyond the classroom was also queried, with no degree of consistency emerging in terms of the kind of listening that was taking place, or the music being listened to.\(^{148}\) It was found that a minority of students listened to Irish traditional music in their personal time (Group A \( n=6 \) and Group B \( n=5 \)), while the majority of these students responded that this only happened on rare occasions (Rarely \( n=5 \), Occasionally \( n=3 \), and Regularly \( n=3 \)). On closer investigation, of those who did listen to traditional

\(^{148}\) The findings of this query with regard to the various media that students used for listening purposes is discussed further in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.4, principle of media integration.
music, a wide range of artists were included by the students within the Irish traditional music genre. The following responses give an indication as to the particularly wide net that was cast by students in terms of their identification of Irish traditional musicians and singers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.6 Group A &amp; B Responses: Listening to Irish traditional music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Irish traditional music artists to whom Group A &amp; Group B students listened</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The High Kings; The Wolfe Tones; The Dubliners; Pogues; Flogging Molly; The Chieftains, Christy Moore; Sharon Shannon; Finbar Furey; The Bothy Band; Planxty; Moving Hearts; Davie Arthur; Liam O’Flynn; Willie Clancy; Mary Bergin; Micho Russell; The Corrs; Líadan; Kíla; Luke Kelly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.4. Irish Traditional Music and the Junior and/or Leaving Certificate

Finally, students were asked whether or not they thought it was important to study traditional music for the JC and/or LC. The majority of students felt that it was ‘quite important’ (Group A \(n=13\), Group B \(n=6\)) while a significant number felt that it was ‘extremely important’ (Group A \(n=4\), Group B \(n=3\)); a minority of students felt that it was ‘not very important’ (Group A \(n=2\)) or ‘not important at all’ (Group A \(n=1\)). The majority of reasons that students gave for choosing this way (Table 5.7) were interestingly, rooted in a sense of a need to *preserve* Irish culture and keep the Irish musical tradition ‘alive’, rather than for reasons of engaging in a lived experience of the genre. Other themes that emerged were related to the importance of knowing about the many other genres of music, as opposed to ‘just another commercially produced band of our current era’ (Group B Student Questionnaire). Opposing views were also found in terms of one student who referred to the need to experience a musical genre other than classical music, while another felt that ‘there’s more important things to be studying like Bach or Mozart’ (Group A Student Questionnaire). A consideration of traditional music in post-primary music education through a lens of cultural diversity, such as that espoused by Shippers (2010) and Campbell (2004), is suggested by one student who believed that ‘you need to look at music in a different way than classical’ (Group A Student Questionnaire).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>‘Quite Important’ or ‘Extremely Important’</th>
<th>You don’t need to know everything but have a good understanding; Because it depends on if you want to study traditional music when you leave school; I think that it’s important to keep Irish music alive because it’s a big part of our culture; So young people know the importance of the Irish culture; All types of music are important for the Junior and Leaving Certificate; Well, without it you would lose marks!; It comes up in the two exams and it is very important to study it because it’s interesting, it’s our native music, and why wouldn’t you listen to it; It is very important for our heritage; Just so you know all kinds of music; Because there are a lot of marks going for it and because it is our culture and heritage; Because we need to know about our own culture and not just music from different countries; Because we are Irish and if we didn’t there wouldn’t be a lot of traditional players; Because it’s quite a big part of the exams and because it’s our heritage; You need to look at music in a different way than classical; There will be questions on it but most questions will be on our set songs; As Irish traditional music was extremely important to many of our ancestors and type of music is unique to Ireland.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>‘Quite Important’ or ‘Extremely Important’</td>
<td>It’s part of our culture and influenced a lot of music we hear today; It is the history of music from our own country so we are not losing our heritage, and that way the music we learn to appreciate isn’t just another commercially produced brand of our current era; A lot of marks go for Irish music; We need to study it to keep the Irish heritage going; I think that it is important to learn about as many types of music as possible; It’s part of our culture and if there is Irish in you, if you go abroad, you might be able to play Irish music and discuss it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>‘not very important’ or ‘not important at all’</td>
<td>I don’t really like it that much so I don’t think it’s that important; There’s more important things to be studying like Bach or Mozart; I don’t think it’s important for everyone because music does not have an important role in everyone’s life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.2. The Teachers’ Experience of Irish Traditional Music

A pre-Phase 2 meeting was held with each teacher where we discussed their involvement in the investigation and that core aspect of the action research process where they would learn to play traditional music on the whistle and then teach traditional music to their students.
5.2.1. **Learning Irish Traditional Music**

During one such encounter, Amanda revealed that she had learned whistle during her Primary education, but then 'took up' recorder during Initial Teacher Training 'because all the kids were doing recorders' (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009). Amanda’s comment and tone at the time suggested that there was a general acceptance during Initial Teacher Training that the de facto instrument of choice (by teachers) for children to learn at post-primary school was the recorder. Amanda also revealed her confusion over the dissimilarity of the two instruments:

Amanda: I played tin-whistle in Primary.. I took up recorder because all the kids were doing recorders when I did my Dip. and I completely missed... swapped... my mind works recorder... for some reason I thought that they were very similar but they’re not... I’ve forgotten the tin-whistle... it’s been so long.. I just looked at the recorder and I’ve just been teaching myself but they are different

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

In terms of learning by-ear, Amanda revealed that she had ‘never learnt by ear completely’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009) but would have no problem in doing so, saying that 'I can pick things up myself by ear... I can play by ear no problem' (*ibid.*). Once Amanda began focussing on classical music as a child however, her primary method for learning music was via Western Art music notation, and although Amanda had attended Comhaltas lessons for a while, she would have always ‘had the notes’ (*ibid.*). However, once she ‘went to the classical’ as she described, it was ‘notes all the way’ (*ibid.*). Bríd (Group B teacher) expressed that she had no previous experience of learning traditional music on any Irish traditional musical instrument, or on the recorder for that matter; in fact, Bríd’s first whistle lesson began with her learning how to hold the instrument. As she explained:

Bríd: I would’ve done no music in primary school at that time. I would’ve done piano. I would’ve played piano and double bass when I was in school. I wouldn’t have ever played tin-whistle, or the recorder or anything like that.

(Brid meeting17/09/2009)

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149 Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann is an Irish organisation with branches worldwide which is dedicated to the promotion of the music, song, dance and the language of Ireland. The name of the organisation is often abbreviated to Comhaltas or CCÉ.

150 This observation is discussed further in Chapter 6, Section 6.1.3, in terms of the principle of tactile awareness.
Interestingly, and recalling adverse delineated and inherent meanings she associated with an early music experience Bríd expressed her belief that the musical experience of a primary school student very much depends on that child’s teacher, and gave an interesting account of her experience of music at primary school, and the opinions she had formed on it:

Bríd: It does (really depend on your teacher), it does.. it really does... there used to be this awful instrument called the melodica.. it was like a keyboard that you blew into.. the teacher used to take it out... and I knew that I hated the sound of it... I hated the sound of it... it was an awful sound... I don't know what she was trying to do with it... I just hated the sound.. and when she’d take it out I’d go... ‘aww I don't know about this’. I liked music but I didn't like this!

(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

What was poignant in this exchange with Bríd, was the fact that she had experienced music in Primary school, but did not seem to personally connect with this music, whatsoever. In other words, Bríd did not connect with the music as she had not had a positive experience of the inherent meanings of it; however, she later revealed that she did connect with music in other areas of her life. This resonates with the importance of music as referred to by the investigations student participants (Students’ Responses 5.1) and those responses given by students who did not see the connection between school music and music ‘outside’ school (Students’ Responses 5.2).

5.2.2. Teaching Irish Traditional Music

During Phase 1 (see Chapter 4), broad insight was gained into the diverse experiences of a cross-section of post-primary music teachers in Ireland. This insight was useful during pre-Phase 2 as it helped to orientate Amanda and Bríd in the research in terms of their own pedagogy and practice. While the pre-Phase 2 meetings were useful in establishing each teacher’s previous experience, Phase 2 itself, including the informal meetings which took place before and after classes, were also invaluable in terms of the additional insight that was gained. Arising from the pre-Phase 2 discussions, it was clear that each teacher felt that there were significant pedagogical differences in how traditional music was taught, learned, and generally experienced, compared to teaching

151 Drawing, once again, on the work of Green (2008a).
and learning practices associated with other musical genres.\textsuperscript{152} There was a strong sense that each teacher was acutely aware of their own musical experience lying beyond that of Irish traditional music, as previously mentioned. For example, during a conversation with Amanda where we spoke about how she might teach whistle by-ear to her students, she revealed: ‘you see, I’m just so not used to that way of teaching’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009). Although Amanda could ‘pick things up by ear’ (\textit{ibid.}) as she described, she used staff notation as a primary method for teaching her students at orchestra practice, for example. At the same time however, she was aware that Irish traditional music usually entails the adoption of an alternative pedagogical approach:

> Amanda: I have the sheet music in front of me all the time. At the orchestra this evening, we’ll get the sheet music the minute they walk in the door. Do you know?
> Researcher: And with this the last thing that they’ll get is the sheet music...
> Amanda: Yeah.

\textit{(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)}

During the same conversation, Amanda referred to her previous experience teaching recorder, but arrived at the conclusion that ‘it [the recorder] is quite different really, but that’s what I have kind of been used to’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009). Although Amanda had previously taught recorder using aural methods, she explained that the students would have had access to notation also. This multi-method approach, not dissimilar to the multi-sensory experience inherent to Barbe and Swassing’s (1979) concept of learning modalities, had raised some issues for her:\textsuperscript{153}

> Amanda: But they would’ve had notes with them as well and you’d notice that some kids would look at the notes and never look at you and then others would look at you and they wouldn’t even bother with the notes.

\textit{(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)}

Prior to the investigation taking place, Bríd had never taught whistle or Irish traditional music in an instrumental sense in the classroom and had never played traditional music. Bríd seemed to suspect that she might have been one of few music teachers who could \textit{not} play Irish traditional music, asking, ‘Would you find many music teachers who can’t play the tin-whistle at all?’ (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009), while the reality is quite the

\textsuperscript{152} Most notably Western Art Music.

\textsuperscript{153} This observation is expanded on in Chapter 6 (Section 6.1.2), principle of obser-visual awareness.
contrary as was indicated in the teacher questionnaire findings (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2 *Teachers' personal experience of traditional music*). When discussing how she had previously dealt with teaching the traditional music section of the curriculum, Bríd expressed that this was something that the other music teacher in the school would often ‘cover’ for her, as a second music teacher in the school played Irish traditional music on several instruments. Bríd also mentioned how she would sometimes draw on music students who played Irish traditional music to explain certain aspects of the music to the other students; she also referred to the use of the *Sounds Good!* (Kearns and McFadden 2007) Junior Certificate music book prior to the investigation commencing:

Bríd: We kind of looked at it very quickly... we had one class where we introduced Irish music because you were coming actually Thomas.. we did it.. right wasn’t that it.. and I knew Thomas was coming with his pipes and we looked at it in our book.. in our Sounds Good! book.. wasn’t that it?

(Group A observation 21/09/2009)

Bríd occasionally alluded in conversation to her feelings of hesitancy and under-confidence in her approach to teaching traditional music. For example, in the moments after a class which focussed on regional styles through an integration of listening activities, audio-visual experiences via YouTube, group discussion, as well as the incorporation of anecdotes from Bríd and several students, findings emerged with respect to Bríd’s previously held feelings of under-confidence and her subsequent increase in confidence in providing experiences in traditional music to her students.154

Bríd: That’s really lovely now... that’s lovely... it [the class] was very relaxing... lovely wasn’t it.

Researcher: It’s a shame that the likes of that [regional styles] isn’t on the Junior Certificate.

Bríd: No it’s not [on it] no... and it’s on the Leaving Certificate and it’s the ‘really scary part of it’ [for other teachers] because people are going... ‘now I don’t know much now about regional styles’.

Researcher: And it’s not at all.

Bríd: I mean... with this now... I could do a question with my Leaving Certs (students)... and I’d... I’d (the teacher says very cautiously)... I’d feel ok... I’d feel ‘ok I can do this’... do you know?? Whereas before, I didn’t feel qualified either because the thing was I wouldn’t recognise a regional style.. I think why they’re [other teachers] afraid of it is... they keep thinking... ‘well if I had to do this in an aural test I might... I might... get it wrong...’... but so what... it’s fantastic!

(Bríd meeting 15/10/2009)

154 This comment also reveals distinctions between the Junior and Leaving Certificate in terms of Irish traditional music, and the fear that music teachers possess with regard to the genre (this resonates with the questionnaire findings in Chapter 4 Section 4.2);
During the planning meeting for this class, Bríd’s comment on the incorporation of regional styles in a 2nd year class resonates with Small’s previously mentioned argument (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3) that the syllabus can effectively ‘cuts [the student] of from learning’ (Small 1977 / 1980, p. 187). This emerged where Bríd commented, in terms of regional styles which is beyond the Junior Certificate syllabus that ‘that would be going beyond what I would have taught... that would be going beyond... taking them through regional styles’, and ‘but the department kind of make it a complicated concept... you know I think that this way to introduce is... very gentle’ (Bríd meeting 13/10/2009).

Bríd offered an insight to her own teaching philosophy after a class during which she felt that she had shared an enjoyable and inspirational teaching and learning experience with the students. In summary, she expressed her belief that if a teacher was genuinely interested in a topic, he/she would ultimately engage and inspire the students:

Bríd: That was such a nice class... that was such a nice class... yeah it was really nice now. And it’s not a class that I’d say a lot of teachers would have... done... it’s just so important to the history of the music... it seemed to grab them.

Researcher: Yeah they really tuned in.

Bríd: Yeah this class and... any class... you know... it comes from you that you like it... it’s like sometimes if you really are interested in something... then you’ll really inspire a class... whereas if you’re not... yeah it’s funny... you know I used to teach Leaving Certificate English... oh a good few years ago and we were teaching one poet that I wouldn’t love and there’s these other poets that I would love and I decided... I said to another teacher listen would you ever teach that poet... and she said ‘oh I love that poet’ and she said ‘oh I hate Hopkins’ and I said ‘oh I love Hopkins’... so we swapped... so I said ‘so will you teach my class’... so we swapped anyway so I taught Hopkins to my class and to her class!

(Bríd meeting 19/10/2009)

5.2.3. Formal Musical Knowledge and the Junior & Leaving Certificate

An additional theme which emerged in terms of how each teacher approached traditional music in the classroom is related to the area of ‘formal musical knowledge’ (Elliott 1995, p. 60),155 which is associated in many respects with the exam-

focussed nature of the subject, and the requirement to ‘learn off’ material. Elliott describes formal musical knowledge as including verbal facts, concepts, descriptions, theories – ‘in short, all textbook-type information about music’ (ibid., p.60).

Considered here initially however is the emergence of ‘formal musical knowledge’ as a theme in terms of those critical incidents which were chosen by each teacher to be included as part of the LOCIT process, as well as other related instances. For example, in terms of Amanda and Bríd’s whistle lessons, the moments where formal knowledge was transmitted most often occurred after they each had the opportunity to think-in-action, that is, after they had played a phrase or attempted to play an ornament during a whistle lesson. Filtering formal musical knowledge into the teaching-learning situation parenthetically and contextually allowed Amanda and Bríd to reflect on the reasons why a certain ‘action’ went to plan, or perhaps did not go to plan during the course of their focussed learning. Formal knowledge would often be requested from Amanda and Bríd during lessons on some aspect of learning, teaching, and/or performance, but more often than not, it was I who felt that some aspect (such as information on a type of tune or a musician who I associated with a particular tune) needed further clarification in order for the teacher to fully absorb the learning experience and in turn effectively teach their students. This aligns with Elliott’s view that ‘formal musical knowledge is a proper but secondary goal of music education’ (1995, p. 62). Formal musical knowledge was also deeply integrated into each visiting musician’s interaction with each group. For example, on request from Bríd to explain the technique of ‘dampening’ on the harp ‘because we might not be very clear’; Leah (visiting harp player) then proceeded to explain this technique. This was one of many example of the transmission of formal knowledge during the musicians’ visits:

Leah: It’s like using a pedal in the piano... you know there’s pedal in the piano that allows a note to ring... sound longer than you play it... yeah... so you play it once and the sound keeps going... well it’s the same thing for a harp.. when my fingers come off the sound keeps going.. what I’m doing is pressing back down on it to stop the sound.. so instead of [plays harp] and all them sounding together we dampen [plays harp] to stop the sound before you go into the next one.

(Group A observation 26/11/2009)

Amanda and Bríd emphasised the importance of formal musical knowledge at various times, mostly in relation to students preparing for the JC or LC exams. This theme first emerged during my second pre-Phase 2 meeting with Amanda where, when discussing
and planning the investigation, we browsed an A4 notebook which was to be used as a resource for Group B, and which consisted of Irish traditional music notes and essays. The essays, as she explained, dealt with the various exam topics on traditional music, for example ‘The Harping Tradition’, ‘The Collectors’, ‘Composers of Irish Music’, ‘Seán Ó Riada’, ‘Riverdance’ etc., and were given to her music students to assist them in learning material for the end-of-year exams. Amanda’s disclosure was revealing in terms of formulating my initial understandings of how formal knowledge of traditional music was approached in Group B’s classroom. Although to a considerable degree, each teacher’s pedagogical practice also involved the integration of listening experiences in traditional music through the use of a CD and accompanying workbook (Kearns and McFadden 2007), it seemed a strong emphasis was placed on the provision of information through listening for the purposes of the exams. This was one of the areas in Phase 2 that I was keenly interested in investigating.

This theme emerged on several occasions with Group B, likely connected to the fact that those students were preparing for the Leaving Certificate music examination. As a facilitator of the action research process, this highlighted the need to facilitate experiences through the process which somehow included formal music knowledge. As Amanda explained:

Amanda: They’ll take down in their notes copies a couple of just solid points on reels. It’s great... it’s brilliant what we’re doing with the body rhythms... but they walk out the door and they won’t remember all of that. They’ll remember the best bits probably... but they’ll still need to remember solid points... an example of a reel, you know... if they’re doing an essay on the reel... I’m always conscious of exams, unfortunately, yeah.

(Amanda meeting 28/09/2009)

On occasion, Amanda expressed her concern that she was ‘not getting through the Irish music in the textbook’ (Amanda meeting 28/09/2009) during each class and wished to focus on relaying the textbook information to the students to a greater extent. While Amanda alluded to the unfortunate nature of this approach, the impression was given that this was a compromise that had to be made in order to get through the required traditional music course content during the weeks which would be allocated to traditional music; usually several weeks during 5th Year.156 Once the topic had been

156 Amanda explained early in the investigation that this allocation of time was determined in part by the weighting of points for Irish traditional music in the Junior and Leaving Certificate exams.
completed, Amanda suggested that it was unlikely that it would be dealt with in any great depth at a later time. In other words, it became clear pre- and during Phase 2 that Amanda’s teaching of Irish traditional music was influenced to a considerable degree by approaching exams, and while she felt that the other activities (learning whistle, body rhythms, visiting musician etc.) were ‘brilliant’, her students’ experience would be dictated to a significant extent by a focus on the Leaving Certificate exams, as the following exchange demonstrates:

**Student:** Will we be given that much for the leaving certificate?

**Amanda:** Yeah you would be expected... if you are given an essay on the song tradition... all the essays are a page long you know... it’s just the song tradition is kind of broad... there’s a lot of things in the song essay... you can have... you might take this down... a few bullet points... you’ve got sean-nós... now that’s an essay on it’s own... right... so that’s one type... you’ve got English song... so Irish songs in the English language... you’ve got macaronic songs... you know what that is... in two languages... and then you’ve got the type of songs... so there’s kind of four different entities there... they’re all songs but you can look at sean-nós songs on their own and get asked about those... you can get asked about English language songs and they’re mainly ballads... they’re kind of an English language version of sean-nós... then you’ve got the English and Irish songs... then you’ve got the different type of songs... what do you know about sean-nós?... solo... nasal quality... unaccompanied.

(Group B Observation 12/10/2009)

Another discussion with Group B was also revealing in terms of the responsibility of each teacher to meet the requirements of the curriculum through giving students what they ‘need to know’ (Amanda meeting 06/10/2009); again, this finding is undoubtedly linked to the fact that Group B had the Leaving Certificate examination as a focus:

**Amanda:** We may be just easing off on Irish traditional music and going on to something else in the ‘double’ [...] For the double class, for the first few weeks, I’ll just give you what else you need to know about Irish music... get it out of the way... and then I’ll probably do harmony... and backing chords and bass lines [...] Getting the Irish music done now is a lot.

(Amanda meeting 13/10/2009)

While a vibrant and collaborative action research process got underway, this theme emphasising the importance of formal musical knowledge resonated through the study with regard to each group, but especially with regard to Group B, for reasons mentioned. The following comments from Amanda summarises these findings:
Amanda: I always give them the harping essay.... always give them that to learn off. But, it now means that I have two weeks to supplement... to give them the really important material, in essay form. But the aural part of it is very much tackled... the fifteen marks out of twenty-five. The only thing now with the aural would be something like fusion. They’re such a good class. I’m very happy anyway [...] Thomas, I’m going to have to go and cover everything else that hasn’t been covered, kind of wrap it up, as in I have to go back and give them solid notes on songs and maybe, ceili band. I mean there isn’t an awful lot left to be touched on you know [...] I think I can probably get the rest covered you know in their notes and stuff and give them their handouts [...] They’ve done an awful lot of listening now.. they really have been exposed... if you want to focus completely independent of me and I’ll just go and do what’s left and make sure that they have everything in their notes copies and stuff... you see there isn’t really that much that we haven’t covered... like Micheál Ó Súilleabháin now... I could do him in one class. I’d be ok with him.. you know I could give them an essay and play a few examples... if you wanted to focus completely on the practical stuff... you could bring in more whistle... and I know that we haven’t done much on the whistle... what you’re doing is brilliant... what I really need to do is them them notes on songs... and I need to give them the notes on dancing.. the names of tunes.. you know the nitty gritty bits... [...] because I do feel that I have to go back on certain things... like we’re only talking about six or seven weeks... it’s not much

(Amanda meeting 13/10/2009)

5.2.4. The Teachers’ Initial Concerns regarding Phase 2

(i) Notation vs. Aural Learning

Both Amanda and Bríd voiced initial concerns regarding how they would teach whistle to their students. When I first met with Amanda in her classroom for a whistle lesson, one of the initial concerns which she had was whether or not she and the students would receive the notes to the tune that I intended teaching to her. Her concerns were evident when she reacted to my first attempt to teach her a tune ‘by ear’:

Amanda: You see I’m just so not used to that way of teaching. I have the sheet music in front of me all the time. At the orchestra this evening, we’ll get the sheet music the minute they walk in the door. Do you know?

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

As Amanda began learning a tune by ear and I attempted to engage her in the aural learning process, she quickly asked, 'So we don't get notes, do we not?' (Amanda whistle 22/09/2009), while at the same time exclaiming with mock panic, 'Where's my
music? (ibid.). Of course, it was explained that the students would learn ‘by ear’, to which Amanda enquires with greater sincerity, ‘so basically I’m... and so do even I get the tune?’ (ibid.). ‘You'll have the tune!’ (ibid.), I responded in an effort to ease her concerns. ‘I'll have the tune’ (ibid.), she responded thoughtfully, after which she asked:

Amanda: So I’m playing it for them and they repeat? And do I give them the letter names?
Researcher: No, well I think that it's important that they go away with the notes, but it's probably...
Amanda: So you do what I'll be doing then and I'll be the kids
Researcher: Yeah... yeah... I'll do what you'll be doing
Amanda: So show me how you'd teach

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

In the class where Amanda taught the tune ‘by ear’, she once again referred to the unusualness of the pedagogical approach in her experience:

Amanda: We’re going to try a tune, Mo Ghile Mear.. I’m not going to... I’ll try... the notes are there but I’m not going to look at the notes... even though I’m very tempted!

(Group B observation 23/09/2009)

Learning the whistle was a completely new experience for Bríd. During her first lesson she was slightly hesitant and seemed to counter these feelings of hesitancy and slight frustration by asking questions about the process at hand. At one stage, Bríd enquires whether ‘Is it ok for the class know that I didn’t play the tin whistle’ (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009); which of course, it was. Concerns also arose where Bríd was having some problems with a squeaking sound emanating from her whistle, and I attempted to guide her to ‘find the note’ (ibid.). Her reaction at this stage describes some of the feelings of slight panic that Bríd was experiencing:

Bríd: Oh my God... they’re going to be doing this!? They're going to be doing this!?

(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

Later in this lesson, Bríd’s concern was once again highlighted when the subject of ‘going through’ the tune with the students was mentioned. Bríd reflected on the role of whistle teacher that she was preparing to play, while imagining what the students might say in the situation:

Bríd: Imagine... ‘Miss, you’re doing that wrong... Miss, you sound terrible!’.

(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)
Amanda’s understanding of the aural learning process emerged when she asked, with regard to the students learning aurally, ‘And do you want them to actually remember the notes just on the spot in their head?’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009). Concerns regarding the aural learning abilities of the students were raised once again in terms of Amanda and her students’ previous experience of classical music where she exclaimed:

Amanda: Because I know straight away that they’ll say ‘what was the first note again’? Without having it.. so many of them are classically trained.. like myself.

Researcher: Well... yeah well we’ll see.. we’ll just see how we get on.
Amanda: Well I might be able to remember it but I don’t know about [the students].

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

Amanda was once again concerned with how the students would manage to learn the tune that she was being asked to teach, enquiring if I intended for the students to ‘just find the notes?’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009). The stream of thought concerning the aural learning process continued where Amanda attempted to articulate the process:

Amanda: So, em, sorry, would they mirror me, more than anything? Do your students look at your fingers and remember where your fingers were or do they remember what the note was?

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

In her first lesson teaching the students ‘by ear’, Amanda explained to the students that:

Amanda: We’re learning it by ear because Irish music is an aural tradition, so it was passed on by ear back back down the generations... ok... so we’re leaving our classical training aside... and leaving the music and trying to get it by ear which is the way they learnt and still learn traditionally, ok?

(Amanda whistle 22/09/2009)

The language that Amanda used here to describe aural learning was insightful in that she attempted to (a) gain an understanding of the aural learning process, and (b) figure out how she would approach the aural learning process with her students. At the same time, the issue over whether or not her students would or would not be able to use sheet

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157 Amanda’s query as to whether the students were being asked to ‘just find the notes’ relates directly to her understanding of the processes of transmission of traditional music. Ultimately, the theory of educative experience conceptualised in Chapter 6 addresses this question.
music seemed novel and unconventional for the teacher. In the end, Amanda agreed that ‘that’s the way that it is’ (ibid.). However, the fact that Amanda was being asked not use sheet music seemed to place her beyond her comfort zone.

5.3. Conclusion

This chapter firstly illuminates the many different perspectives on traditional music which students in each group had as a result of their disparate experiences of the genre. In one respect, the exploratory questionnaire emphasised a primary/post-primary education continuum fracture and the responsibility that this subsequently placed on each teacher. In another respect, it highlighted the significant previous experience of many of the students in traditional music as a result of their engagement with the genre in and beyond school music education. Moreover, it revealed the students’ extensive experience in engaging with various other musical genres. Each student group therefore possessed a maturity of experience and insight on many levels that not only ensured a rich environment for thick description, but also a vibrant and dynamic action research process in collaboration with each of the group’s respective teacher.

Secondly, it is important to remember that each teacher had relatively little experience in learning traditional music by ear before the study took place; therefore, a perspective from each group’s teacher is offered in terms of their previous experience learning and teaching traditional music. One of the prominent issues to emerge during this stage of the investigation was each teacher’s concern regarding learning by-ear and the process of teaching by-ear. When combined with the fact that the investigation took place in the context of an exam-focussed curriculum, several other issues were also identified which were then addressed over the course of Phase 2. Notwithstanding Amanda and Bríd’s apparent inexperience learning traditional music compared to the musical genre within which they each practiced, each teacher was completely open to engaging with the action research process. From the onset of Phase 2, Amanda and Bríd welcomed the opportunity to experience traditional music with their students and researcher and in the process, co-construct meaning and work towards the conceptualisation of a theoretical paradigm of educative experience for Irish traditional music in post-primary music education.
CHAPTER 6

CONCEPTUALISING A LIVING THEORY FOR A LIVING TRADITION

6. Introduction

This chapter is the nucleus of this research in that it responds to many of the issues raised in the initial chapters of the thesis, and in particular, connects with many of the ideas outlined in Chapter 2, *Shaping a Discourse on Educative Experience and Irish Traditional Music*. Developing theory from the findings of the research data through a deeply reflexive and dialectical approach, a philosophically charged theoretical paradigm of educative experience for Irish traditional music in post-primary music education has been conceptualised. This paradigm and the principles of which it is comprised are outlined and discussed throughout.

Throughout this action research guided investigation, the participants’ broad experience of traditional music was observed, explored, and analysed as a means of establishing what is important in the transmission of traditional music in the post-primary music classroom. Moreover, observations, informal interviews and findings from the LOCIT process, as well as my influence on the data as a reflexive researcher revealed, not only methods of *transmission* of traditional music (identified herein as principles of transmission), but also systems of *engagement* (identified herein as principles of engagement) which encompass what was considered important in the educative experience of traditional music. Furthermore, among the central findings of this research, is the fact that both informal *and* formal approaches to learning were identified as informing the theoretical paradigm of educative experience. These

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158 Two groups of students in the music classrooms of two schools, namely Group A (a second year single-sex group, n=21) and Group B (fifth year mixed-sex group, n=9); each music teacher (Bríd and Amanda respectively); visiting musicians; and the researcher.
findings and their potential to inform classroom practice resonate strongly with Schippers’ assertion that ‘the way music is taught and learned is inextricably linked to the specific music tradition that is being transmitted, its contexts, and the underlying value systems’ (2010, p.62).  

In analysing the data from Phase 2 by way of the aforementioned dialectical critique and grounded theory, several ‘value systems’ emerged which describe the methods of transmission and contexts of engagement associated with the participants’ experience of traditional music. The outcome of this deep and sustained conversation are what I call the principles of educative experience of Irish traditional music in post-primary music education, which encompass the principles of transmission, principles of engagement, and the principle of flow experience. In turn, the nine principles of educative experience, when considered as they relate to (a) one another and (b) the concept of educative experience orientated in Chapter 2, are conceptualised as a philosophically charged theoretical paradigm of educative experience for Irish traditional music in post-primary music education; in other words, the investigation’s grounded theory. Before proceeding, it may be useful to elaborate somewhat on the term ‘principles’, which is employed in this research as meaning ‘generalities that capture the determining characteristics or essential qualities of a phenomenon or activity’ (Reimer 1992, p. 22). That is, the principles which emerged during the investigation are the essential qualities of educative experience of the phenomenon which is Irish traditional music in post-primary music education. Furthermore, it is imperative that we go beyond considering solely the meaning of principles and consider how principles are applied, as to neglect their application would surely result in possible misinterpretation as they are put into practice in the music classroom. In fact, Dewey refers to this application of principles where he states that:

\[\text{159 See Chapter 2, Section 2.7.1 (p.75) for an expansion of Schippers’ ideas and the two conclusions which he draws regarding the analysis of music transmission.}\]

\[\text{160 My interpretation of ‘principles’ in this context aligns with the thoughts of Dewey where he advises that during any ‘new movement’, we must be careful that principles are not developed negatively rather than positively and constructively in rejection of ‘the aims and methods of that which it would supplant’ (1938, p.20).}\]

\[\text{161 The application of principles (that is, the articulation of a pedagogy) while considered intermittently, is presented as an area for further study; although as we will see, their application is discussed by default in terms of the action research process from which they emerged.}\]
Now, all principles by themselves are abstract. They become concrete only in the consequences which result from their application. Just because the principles set forth are so fundamental and far-reaching, everything depends upon the interpretation given them as they are put into practice in the school.

(Dewey 1934, p. 20)

The principles of educative experience which comprise the theoretical paradigm are illustrated in Figure 6.1 and 6.2. The quadrants in Figure 6.1 illustrate the four principles of transmission; these comprise four intrinsically linked and co-dependent sensory learning modalities (see figure 6.1 on the following page and Chapter 2, Section 2.10) through which the participants acquired musical techniques and repertoire. Within the principles of aural awareness and kinesthetic awareness (top left and bottom right quadrant respectively), each segment outlined by concentric circles represents a different mode of awareness within a Dewey inspired continuum of experience, along which the participants progressed from what I have termed ‘remote’ (at the circumference) to ‘reflective’ (at the centre) modes of awareness. Importantly, the broken lines within the principles of obser-visual awareness and tactile awareness suggest an aspect of progression within these principles. That aspect of continuity of experience, characteristic of each principle (and in fact, of each mode) is represented by way of the intensifying colour gradient in each quadrant. Finally, the black line at the interface of each quadrant represents a flow channel, along which challenge and the ability to meet the challenge intersected (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1).

162 The purpose of these illustrations (Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2) is to provide a visual representation of the theory of educative experience within which the principles of educative experience can be explored. It is hoped that they are a useful reference point from which to consider the remainder of this chapter.
**Principle 1:** Aural Awareness
comprising Cyclical Continuum of Aural Progression across six modes (CCAP)

**Principle 2:** Obser-visual Awareness

**Principle 3:** Tactile Awareness

**Principle 4:** Kinesthetic Awareness
comprising Cyclical Continuum of Kinesthetic Progression across six modes (CCKP)
with associated Cyclical Continuum of Kinesthetic-Aural Progression (CCKAP)

(Principle 9: *Flow experience*)

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Figure 6.1  Illustration of the Principles of Transmission (clockwise from top left: Priniple of Aural Awareness; Principle of Obser-visual Awareness; Principle of Kinesthetic Awareness; Principle of Tactile Awareness

The principles of engagement (Figure 6.2) emerged in conjunction with the principles of transmission and comprise the four principles of: transitioning roles of more experienced person(s) (MEP) and less experienced person(s) (LEP); participatory performance; presentational performance; and, media integration. The principles of engagement are so-called as they were identified as the means through which the participants engaged with the principles of transmission to achieve educative experience. In other words, the common thread that united the principles of engagement was their role in supporting the participants’ engagement with the

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163 Although the principle of flow experience is illustrated within the principles of transmission in Figure 6.1, for reasons which will become clearer throughout this chapter, it is discussed as the last (9th) principle of educative experience (that is, after I have discussed each of the principles of transmission and principles of engagement) as it is considered an underpinning principle of educative experience.
principles of transmission. As we will see (and as the illustration below depicts), much overlap occurred between each principle of engagement, with participants engaging with one or more of the principles at any given time in their experience of traditional music.

**Principle 5:** Transitioning Roles of More Experienced Person (MEP) and Less Experienced Person (LEP)

**Principle 6:** Participatory Performance

**Principle 7:** Presentational Performance

**Principle 8:** Media Integration

Figure 6.2 Illustration of the principles of engagement (clockwise from top left: principle of transitioning roles of more experienced person (MEP) and less experienced person (LEP); principle of participatory performance; principle of presentational performance; principle of media integration

### 6.1. Principles of Transmission

As depicted in Figure 6.1, the principles of transmission comprise four interconnected and largely interdependent sub-principles namely: *aural awareness* comprising the cyclical continuum of aural progression (*CCAP*); *obs-visual awareness*; *tactile awareness*; and lastly, *kinesthetic awareness* comprising the cyclical continuum of kinesthetic progression (*CCKP*) and associated cyclical continuum of kinesthetic-aural
progression (*CCKAP*). The principles of transmission include those processes and means through which traditional music was transmitted and musical technique and repertoire was acquired. Participants (students and teachers) were observed to engage with one or more of the principles towards a more experienced place in the tradition. In other words and potentially speaking, within the principles of transmission, the broad spectrum of participants’ experiences of traditional music during Phase 2 could be situated and contextualised.

It is important to note that while the principle of aural awareness and kinesthetic awareness emerged as *primary* principles of transmission, the principles of tactile awareness and of obser-visual awareness were found to play important and necessary *supporting* roles; this is discussed throughout this chapter. The ‘cyclical’ aspect of the principles of aural awareness and kinesthetic awareness refers to the regularity of repetition of the principles that was observed during Phase 2. As previously alluded to, the ‘continuum’ aspect of the principles refers to the aspect of progression inherent in each principle, and draws on Dewey’s principle of continuity of experience (See Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1) and Csikszentmihaly’s concept of *flow* (*ibid.*, Section 2.2.1); that is, in order to progress within the continua associated with these principles, the students were *challenged* by the teacher and met this challenge by taking something from an experience that went before (increased *skill*), which modified the quality of experience that came after. Through grounded theory analysis, the principles of transmission emerged from data associated with the whistle, dance, and body percussion classes which each teacher chose to be included in the LOCIT process; however, data from other aspects of the investigation also informed the principles. Moreover, the nature of each principle of transmission was further explicated and consolidated through observing the teacher meetings which were associated with those classes chosen for LOCIT and an accompanying deeply reflexive process.
6.1.1. Principle of Aural Awareness

Looking closely at the principle of aural awareness (Figure 6.3), six modes of aural progression were observed and identified along a cyclical continuum of aural progression (hereafter referred to as the CCAP) during aural learning encounters as illustrated in Figure 6.3.1. The six listening modes which emerged were identified as: (1) remote listening, (2) prefatory listening, (3) attentive listening, (4) responsive listening, (5) enactive listening, and (6) reflective listening. While there is some overlap in the nature of the CCAP with Campbell’s (2005) pedagogy of listening and the two different types of listening which Green (2008a) identifies,\(^{164}\) there are crucial distinctions. These are explained as the six modes of aural progression are outlined. As alluded to above, it should be stated that the CCAP refers to aural progression in the

\(^{164}\) As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.10.1.
context of the broad listening experiences of the teachers and students. This includes, for example, listening which occurred when: each teacher learned to play traditional music over the course of the study, and in turn taught their students to play ‘by-ear’; a CD was playing in the classroom; a visiting musician played for the students; a teacher was learning a scale on the whistle, and; a student listened to herself and the rest of the group as they learned to play music together. This is significant in that the very act of learning to play traditional music (as well as playing traditional music), is discussed here partially\(^\text{165}\) through the lens of aural awareness, where three modes of aural progression, namely responsive, enactive, and reflective listening,\(^\text{166}\) refer to the listening with which the participants engaged as an aspect of performance. This has potential implication for the interpretation of listening within the strands of a JC and LC curricula which arguably aligned (and continues to align) itself with Swanwick’s (1979) CLASP framework.\(^\text{167}\) The centrality of aural awareness and the role of the other principles of transmission in the context of aural awareness also highlight the inextricability of each principle of transmission in traditional music educative experience; this will become clearer as we discuss each principle in turn.

**Emergence of a Cyclical Continuum of Aural Progression (CCAP)**

What has been identified as a cyclical continuum of aural progression (Figure 6.3) could be described as a six-mode deconstruction of Green’s purposive listening (discussed in Chapter 2) which, as Green explains, ‘has the particular aim, or purpose, of learning something in order to put it to use in some way after the listening experience is over’ (2001, p.23-24). It is proposed that each listening moment that was observed during Phase 2 can be interpreted and understood through one of six listening modes. Among other qualities, this aspect of the CCAP promoted a student-centred approach\(^\text{168}\) to teaching and learning traditional music whereby each individual in a classroom context was guided by a more experienced individual (in this and most cases, the

\(^{165}\) The three other principles of transmission are also considered in terms of ‘playing’ traditional music.

\(^{166}\) The names which describe these modes were inspired by the works of Campbell (2005) and Dewey (2007/1916) as discussed in Chapter 2.

\(^{167}\) See Chapter 1, Section 1.3.1 for a discussion on those philosophies which likely influenced the development of the JC and LC curricula.

\(^{168}\) Or as we will see in the context of the principle of transitioning roles in Section 6.2.1, a less experienced person centred approach.
teacher) further along the continuum, in respect of the mode of listening with which each individual had the cognitive ability\textsuperscript{169} to engage. In this way, the CCAP, in an optimal relationship with the other principles of transmission and principles of engagement, encourages and supports Dewey’s (1938) idea of continuity of experience, Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of flow where challenge and the ability to meet that challenge intersect, and Freire’s notion of the dialogical teacher-student. It also allows us to consider how one student might have been aurally engaging with the music at one particular mode on the continuum, while another might have been engaging with the music ‘further along’ the continuum.\textsuperscript{170} Therefore, what the CCAP describes in particular is the cognitive function development of the participants, with each mode of aural progression representing the absorptive capacity of the participant along each stage of cognitive function development.\textsuperscript{171} Nootboom interprets and describes absorptive capacity as the ‘domain of cognition: the phenomena one can make sense of (original italics), i.e. which one can perceive, interpret, evaluate’ (2000, p. 73). Learning, he continues, entails extension of cognitive function, and it follows that in terms of this research, each participant’s cognitive function or learning extended as they moved along the cyclical continuum of aural progression.\textsuperscript{172} By suggesting that aural learning occurred in this way during Phase 2, a certain formality is attached to the process of learning traditional music by-ear; of course, more informal means of learning were also observed (and are discussed), but by and large, teaching and learning by-ear during Phase 2 followed this more structured, formal approach.

As we will see, engaging with the listening modes along the CCAP was shown to effectively lead both teacher and students to a place of greater inherent and delineated meaning in terms of their engagement with traditional music on the whistle, and to a greater understanding of traditional music in a broader context. However, when the

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\textsuperscript{169} Cognitive function is also discussed later in this chapter (Section 6.3) in terms of its connection with Csikszentmihalyi’s (1997) theory of flow.

\textsuperscript{170} Although an important finding, this characteristic of the CCAP is not discussed extensively throughout the findings, as the study was investigated primarily from the point of view of each group, rather than focus to a significant extent on individual students.

\textsuperscript{171} Cognitive development in this context resonates with Bowman’s account of cognition which recognises and includes the somatic/corporeal moment in human cognition, where ‘knowing is inseparable from action: knowing is doing, and always bears the body’s imprint’ (2004a, p.25).

\textsuperscript{172} While it is important to draw attention to cognition in terms of how the participants acquired knowledge during the study, an in-depth discussion of learning styles is beyond the scope of this research. For scholarly insight on learning styles including concepts of cognitive learning styles, consult Should we be using learning styles? What research has to say to practice (Coffield, F., D. Moseley, et al. 2004).
teacher or student did not progress sequentially along the CCAP, or engaged in a way which resulted in a misalignment of their cognitive function development with the challenge being presented, the outcomes for the listener were adverse feelings of confusion, frustration, and interrupted flow\textsuperscript{173} during the learning process. In other words, when the participants engaged with aural learning along the CCAP, the result was deepened and more effective learning than occurred when they did not engage with aural learning via the CCAP. The stages of aural learning which were observed in the study resonate with Amanda’s interpretation of the aural learning process as learning ‘by step’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009), and were often found to occur simultaneously with the principles of kinesthetic, obser-visual, and tactile awareness (each of which are discussed later).

A central aspect of the CCAP regards the intention of the more experienced teacher at any given time in determining which mode of aural awareness they were attempting to engage the students in. That is, identifying the intention of each teacher during aural learning activities was helpful in differentiating one mode of listening from the next. This said, the presence of the teacher was not necessarily always a condition for a student to engage with the CCAP, although it is likely that it enabled a more efficient engagement with the CCAP. For example, an intrinsically motivated student who had an encounter which, in the words of Dillon (2007), led to ‘a willingness to be involved with an increasingly more complex encounter with music experience’ (p.48), could themselves progress along the continuum, given their intention was to do so, and given they had acquired the necessary skills to progress from one mode to the next\textsuperscript{174}

\textit{Aural Awareness Mode 1: Remote Listening}

Remote listening is the first mode of the CCAP and resonates to a significant extent with Green’s self-regulated listening practice she calls distracted listening (as discussed in Chapter 2) in which the music is being attended to ‘on and off’, and a listener listens without any specific aim of learning to play but purely for enjoyment, entertainment, or

\textsuperscript{173} The principle of flow is dealt with in detail in Section 6.3.

\textsuperscript{174} For example, it is suggested that this occurred when students spoke of engaging with traditional music for homework activity (i.e., without the guidance of the teacher), and an example of this is discussed later in this chapter.
as background music (2001, p.24). As Figure 6.4 depicts, it is the first or outermost stage of the CCAP and as such, the intention of the student differed from the subsequent listening modes in that it was arguably the least focussed mode of listening. Remote listening in this study occurred where traditional music was present, but was not necessarily being intentionally listened to for the purpose of ‘learning to play’ or more cognitively advanced purposes. It was a widely accessible listening mode. From classroom observations and from conversations with teachers and students, it was clear that remote listening was observed to have occurred at various stages over the investigation, for example; when Bríd and other teachers in the school commented during informal conversations that they had listened to students playing whistle in and around the locker area of the school; when Amanda and Group B students listened to another student playing a tune during a class; when students from each school listened to others perform at the end of term gathering; or when the students from each school attended a traditional music lunchtime concert by the band Buille which took place at a music venue nearby.

Remote Listening Mode

Figure 6.4 Illustration of the Remote Listening mode of the Principle of Aural Awareness

The evidence of remote listening and its associated value and purpose which emerged during a Group A discussion following the Buille concert is described in Table 6.1. It is

proposed that remote listening occurred on this occasion as the concert was being attended for enjoyment purposes, and the intention of the students, generally speaking, was to listen for purposes beyond those of learning to play and the advanced cognitive functioning associated with this. The post-Buille concert discussion served to highlight some of the value associated with remote listening and the meaning that was extracted from listening within this mode. That is, Bríd (in this example) and Group A students commented on and gave their opinions on inherent aspects of the music, as well as the associated delineations,\textsuperscript{176} as the following examples portray:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|p{12cm}|}
\hline
\textbf{Table 6.1 Group A Responses to Buille: Instrumentation and musical concepts} & \\
\hline
Bríd Student & Wasn’t he a fantastic player? [referring to the concertina player in Buille] \\
Bríd Student & Yeah. \\
Bríd Student & Anything else that you noticed about the concertina that you didn’t notice before? \\
Bríd Student & It was really high-pitched. \\
Bríd Student & It was very high-pitched, wasn’t it. \\
Bríd Student & I thought that it was another instrument to start with. \\
Bríd Student & I thought that it was something else playing as well... it was so high! And that kind of took me by surprise as well... anything else? I think that it was kind of a powerful instrument for the smallest instrument there... wasn’t it? \\
Bríd Student & Were they miked up? \\
Bríd Student & No. \\
Bríd Student & I couldn’t hear the guitar. \\
Bríd Student & It was an acoustic performance... maybe write that down... \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|p{12cm}|}
\hline
\textbf{Table 6.2 Group A Responses: the ‘delineations’ of Irish traditional music} & \\
\hline
Student & I didn’t like the names of the songs because I thought that they were too boring... I didn’t like the names of the songs. \\
Bríd & You thought the songs were better than the names? \\
Student & Yes! \\
Student & I liked the names of the songs because there was like a story behind them. Like, they were all named after something. \\
Bríd & That kind of made it that you understood the songs. \\
Student & And I liked the audience! \\
Bríd & Yeah I liked that as well... would you like to do it again? \\
Students & Yeah!!! \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{176} In this context, I am referring to Green’s (2008b) definition of ‘inherent’ and ‘delineated’ meaning.
Table 6.3 Group A Responses to Buille: musical preference and taste, ‘feel’ of the music, and contrasts within Buille’s musical style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>I thought that it was very, very good and I didn’t expect to hear a piano at all!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
<td>So it was unexpected... did you like the piano?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Yeah I did... I thought that it was really nice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
<td>I liked it as well... I thought that it was so different! What did you say you liked?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>The solo...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
<td>The solo... it was great.. having the piano solo and then it went into something else. What did you like the most?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>I liked the liveliness kind of and they way that they got into it. I thought that sometimes the piano sounded a bit out of place, but I really liked the solo that he did... but sometimes I thought that it sounded a little out of place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
<td>what did you think?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>I liked the mixture of the accordion and the concertina but sometimes the piano doesn’t work with the... other sound...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
<td>Ok... you didn’t love the sound of that combination?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>No!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>I thought that it was cool! Some of the sounds didn’t sound that traditional to me with the piano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
<td>Rebecca what did you think?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>I said that it was very lively and the musicians obviously enjoyed it a lot and I thought that the main instrument was the concertina.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aural Awareness Mode 2: Prefatory Listening

Prefatory listening, the second mode of listening along the CCAP (Figure 6.5), occurred where the teachers and students listened to traditional music at the early stages of cognitive growth and development, often after remote listening had taken place and before engaging at the next, more attentive level. Prefatory listening emerged where an intention was held by each participant to listen-to-learn. During prefatory listening, the participants began to listen for the ultimate purpose of learning to play the tune that the more experienced teacher played, usually in its entirety, for them. However, they could only engage with the music at a cognitive ‘arms length’, metaphorically speaking. Prefatory listening served to give the participants an initial sense of the entire tune and to lead the participants to a greater familiarity of the melodic and rhythmic contour of the tune. However, its purpose was not to enable the listener to process the musical

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177 As it could be argued that it was not necessarily the students’ intention to learn a tune, this is where it is important to point to the teachers’ role as MEP, where the teacher led the students to a place where this became their intention. This resonates strongly with the work of Freire as discussed in Chapter 2 with regard to the teacher’s role; these ideas are also discussed later in this chapter in Section 6.2.1 Principle of Transitioning Roles of More Experienced Person(s) (MEP) and Less Experienced Person(s) (LEP).
knowledge that was to be received at the later, deeper, cognitively advanced attentive mode.

**Prefatory Listening Mode**

![Figure 6.5 Illustration of the Prefatory listening mode of the Principle of Aural Awareness](image)

The Teachers’ Experience of Prefatory Listening

The prefatory listening mode was identified in the following exchange where I discussed with Bríd how she would teach whistle to her students. During this interaction, I initiated the prefatory mode of the aural learning process by asking Bríd to listen to the tune as I played it once through:

**Researcher:** Usually, just to let them hear it, I'd play it once or twice maybe, before you'd go to teach it. Even, if you want, I can play somebody singing it on CD, I have a lovely version of it. Play that, and then if you want to play it...

**Bríd:** You better teach it to me so...

**Researcher:** I'll play it for you first, just so you hear it! [I then play the first part of the tune through slowly with little, if any, ornamentation and Bríd listens] That's the first part of the tune, played twice.

(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

The following extract highlights the prefatory listening mode where Amanda came to an understanding of the nature of prefatory listening *leading* to the next mode of attentive
listening. In this, I suggest that Amanda should ‘break it [the tune] down into really manageable parts’. With this exchange, an emerging formal approach to teaching and learning by-ear was revealed, one which can be situated in Ó Súilleabháin’s (2004b, p. 6) sentiments that ‘the transmission of the music has its own formal attributes which sometimes lie hidden behind an apparently informal approach’:

Amanda: So I’m playing it for them and then they repeat
Researcher: Yeah.
Amanda: Do I give them the letter names?
Researcher: No... you just...
Amanda: [sings the notes] DDD E GA B
Researcher: I think that it’s important that they go away with notes but it’s probably...
Amanda: Yes... so if you do what I’ll be doing then and I’ll be the kids...
Researcher: I’ll do what you’ll be doing.
Amanda: So, show me how you teach.
Researcher: I’d start by... I’m going to have a recording of Cara Dillon and Iarla Ó Lionáird singing it.
Amanda: Lovely!
Researcher: And then, if you then play the melody twice that’s the way it usually works... play it really, really simple... and then break it down into really manageable bars.
Amanda: A couple of bars at a time?

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

As alluded to in each interaction, a version of prefatory listening (albeit arguably closer on the continuum to the ‘border’ of the remote mode) was identified as including moments where the students’ attention was focussed on listening to CD recordings and YouTube clips178 of an instrumental or song orientated nature. The students listened to the music or song in their entirety from the various media, and more often than not, the students did not progress further along the CCAP when listening to YouTube clips or other recordings in this way.

The Students’ Experience of Prefatory Listening

During Phase 2, Bríd confidently led Group A in learning the traditional tune *Mo Ghile Mear* on the whistle. An aspect of the associated aural learning experience involved engaging the students in prefatory listening where Bríd played the tune several times

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178 This, of course, connects with the principle of media integration which is discussed later in this chapter (Section 6.2.4.).
through (prior to engaging the students in more focussed listening). In another example, after relaying to the students that ‘we’ll go on to the next part’ (Group B observation 29/09/2009), Bríd played the second part of the tune for the students to listen to in its entirety, before inviting the students to engage with the melody at a deeper level. As I mentioned to Bríd in the extract above, a variation of prefatory listening could involve playing a recording of a tune or song on a CD or YouTube where the teacher’s intention was for the students to proceed to learn the tune. Amanda also referred to this mode of listening when she spoke of playing a recording of a traditional singer’s interpretation of *Mo Ghile Mear*, which she then intended to teach the students to play:

Amanda: I’ve Mary Black singing it so I’ll get that out the next day to play!
(Amanda meeting 23/09/2009)

*Aural Awareness Mode 3: Attentive Listening*

My learning moment was when we were playing the tin-whistle and learning it by ear. The whole class was learning and this was happening because everyone was listening and focussed

(Group B Student LOCIT Discussion)

The third stage of the principle of aural awareness (Figure 6.6), for which I have borrowed the term *attentive listening* from Campbell (2005)\(^ {179} \) is similar to the ‘call’ aspect of ‘call and response’ to which Amanda referred during the investigation. Attentive listening (Figure 6.6) is where the learner was directed either by self or another to listen with greater focus than prefatory listening to specific sections of the tune, such as the musical phrases, bars of the tune, and specific ornaments.\(^ {180} \) Attentive listening was observed to occur during whistle lessons after prefatory listening had taken place. This stage was characterised by the process of the teacher ‘breaking down’ the tune into shorter sections and demonstrating, allowing the learner to aurally focus more attentively on the tune. The length of each demonstrated sections varied from one bar of a tune to a complete phrase. Longer phrases were presented to the learner once his/her familiarity with the melody grew.

\(^{179}\) See Chapter 2 (p.97) for a discussion on Campbell’s (2005) listening phases.

On another level, attentive listening also included those times when a particular ornament or intricate feature of a tune was presented to the students for their more focussed attention. This would suggest that a continuum exists within the attentive listening mode itself where, for example, attentively listening to a phrase of a tune would fall on the continuum closer to the prefatory listening mode, while listening for the nuances of an ornament would constitute a deeper form of attentive listening. Repetition was an essential element of the attentive listening mode in order to achieve progress along the CCAP to the next stage. Veblen (1994, p.26) highlighted the importance of the process of repeated listening in the development of musical memory and ear training. Cuttietta and Stauffer (2005, p. 140) also stressed the importance of accounting for repeated listening in the development of a philosophy of music education. Repeated attentive listening was also identified where students were directed to listen in a focussed way to aspects of a YouTube clip or CD recording. This was a common form of attentive listening during Phase 2 where workbook activities required the students to focus on and answer predetermined questions on features of a recording.
The Teachers’ Experience of Attentive Listening

After listening to the tune being played twice through (i.e., prefatory listening) during a lesson, the following exchange took place where Bríd was encouraged to focus on (i.e., attentively listen to) specific phrases of the tune:

Researcher: So the first little bit is... we'll... I'll play it and then you can.. try and play it.. so... [I then play the first phrase of the tune] So it's [I sing] D D D E [and Bríd joins in playing after engaging in attentive listening]
(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

In the following example, I attempted to facilitate attentive listening when I discussed with Bríd how she could incorporate ornamentation into the tune to teach Group A:

Researcher: Maybe we could do something like [I then play Mo Ghile Mear and put some cuts into the tune] That's your.. your cut
Bríd: You'll have to show me how to do that
Researcher: I'll just play through the tune [I then play the tune through to feel where the most appropriate places are to incorporate cuts and slides, and the teacher listens]. So a cut basically is your... basically it's usually used to separate two identical notes so say... so say in this slip jig where the two notes are like [I then play an example of a slip jig where a cut separates two identical notes and explain where and how the cut is incorporated]. Where those two notes are repeating you could put in the cut.. a cut is always from the note above [I play an example]
Bríd: Right, ok
Researcher: The cut sounds so [I then play some examples of each variation] Do you want to just try that? [Bríd then begins to play the notes while attempting to incorporate the cuts which I have just shown her]
(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

Bríd also highlighted the use of the attentive mode when she commented on the difficulty of differentiating between certain musical ornaments. This exchange also demonstrates one of many moments where Bríd assumed the role of dialogical teacher-student of which Freire speaks, where she was observed to teach in dialogue with the students; that is, while also assuming the role of learner (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3):

Bríd: Do you know what I find difficult? I find it difficult when I’m listening to Irish music, that I can hear all those ornaments, but I can’t differentiate between them when I hear them... because they’re played so fast... but maybe you’re not meant to differentiate between them!
(Group A Observation 28/09/2009)
In the following exchange, we discussed how Amanda might teach *Mo Ghile Mear* and incorporate ornamentation (attentive listening leading to responsive listening):

Researcher: Let's say... to maybe tie in the cuts, slides in the next class... say maybe next week we could do maybe... [I then proceed to play Mo Ghile Mear incorporating some cuts and slides].

Amanda: Hmmm.. what's the last one you did there? A slide?

Researcher: That's [sings] G E cut D.

Amanda: Lovely... yeah cut first...

Researcher: [sings] slide...

Amanda: Slide... lovely... yeah

Researcher: [I continue to play a few notes and the teacher picks up her whistle]

Amanda: Very good... how do you do that?

Researcher: So basically a slide is always going up to the next note, so you're...

Amanda: [Amanda then begins to play the slide]

Researcher: That's it [I also use my hand to dictate the movement and speed of the slide]

Amanda: Something like that?

[Amanda repeats the slide once again.  I then play it one more time with her before the door opens and students begin to enter.  Lesson stops.]

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

Having experienced the tune by listening to it through the mode of attentive listening, and having gained a greater understanding of the initial modes of the *CCAP*, Amanda and Bríd had now gained a greater understanding of a particular ornament sequence and a greater sense of where this sequence belonged in the context of the tune. Bríd, for example, commented, ‘lovely, yeah cut first’ (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009). When the attentive listening mode was overlooked, as in the example below, it disrupted and impeded progress along the *CCAP* process, until such time as attentive listening commenced once again. When learning *Mo Ghile Mear*, Amanda, while engaging in attentive listening as I played the first phrase of the tune, joined in and continued to play melody *beyond* what she had attentively listened to, until she became confused and stopped playing. When this occurred, she asked, a little bewilderedly, if I wanted the students to ‘just find the notes’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009), thus demonstrating her developing understanding of the learner’s journey along the ‘listening’ continuum (*CCAP*). Amanda’s observation following this is an important one; she came to the realisation that she should have listened to me play the tune ‘phrase by phrase’ (attentive listening), and she seemed to realise how her approach had thus far had a somewhat negative impact on her learning.

Amanda: I obviously went ahead of myself there. I should’ve just listened to you every phrase and taken it bit by bit!

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)
The Students’ Experience of Attentive Listening

Our learning moment was when we were learning the tin whistle and doing the ornaments. Everyone was paying attention, and playing together.

(Group A LOCIT Discussion)

I observed that Bríd engaged the students in attentive listening as she encouraged Group A to listen ‘attentively’ while she played a tune phrase-by-phrase during a class, before asking the students to attempt to play (which would constitute the next phase: responsive listening). Evidently, this was a learning process for both Bríd and the students, as initially Bríd played a phrase that was much too long for the students to grasp through attentive listening. Through a process of trial and error however, Bríd adjusted the length of the phrase which she was teaching and in doing so, it is suggested that she aligned what she was playing to a greater degree with the students’ cognitive functioning as attentive listeners. A similar incident occurred where a student was having difficulty playing a particular phrase of a tune, and raised her hand commenting, ‘I get really confused at the end because I don’t know which notes you’re doing’ (Group A observation 05/11/2009). In response, Bríd broke the phrase down into much shorter note sequences and also verbally called out the names of the notes. The student was observed listening attentively before joining in once again to successfully play the tune. Further along the attentive listening mode’s continuum, Bríd engaged the students in more focussed listening where she directed students to listen to particular ornaments such as cuts, rolls, and slides.

Attentive listening was also evident amongst the students in Amanda’s class. On one occasion, she explained to Group B that the tune is ‘in about eight phrases’ and after calling out the notes of the first phrase, she asked them to ‘just listen to it again and watch me’ (Group B observation 23/09/2009),\(^\text{181}\) thus encouraging the attentive listening mode. Interestingly, Amanda played each phrase of the tune for the students to attentively listen to, and followed this by singing the notes of the phrase, thus encouraging cognitive functioning. During a subsequent class, Amanda repeated this process and when students began to play ahead, without listening attentively to Amanda playing, she was quick to interject and say, ‘No, I’ll play it and you repeat!’ (Group B observation 01/10/2009). This incident reflects the learning which Amanda experienced

\(^{181}\) This comment indicates the interconnectedness of the various principles of transmission; in this case, the use of aural awareness and the supporting obser-visual awareness (discussed in Section 6.1.2).
during her own lesson as discussed previously, and importantly, reveals a process of aural learning which follows a formalised structure. This method of demonstrating the tune phrase-by-phrase continued through each whistle class as Amanda encouraged the students to listen attentively before continuing to the next stage on the continuum. Amanda also asked the students to listen attentively to various ornaments and interestingly, it was the students who provided attentive listening experiences for their fellow students as illustrated in Table 6.4, where they each took it in turns to name and play cuts, slides, and other ornaments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.4 Group B example of an attentive listening experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responsive listening describes the listening which occurred while the learner participated in imitating the tune or section thereof as demonstrated by the teacher, that is, after attentive listening occurred. Imitation, as is widely accepted (Merriam 1964; Campbell 1991) is a critical device of music learning in cross-cultural contexts. Responsive listening in this context involved listening while playing, as the students responded to or imitated their teacher (or as each teacher responded to me during whistle lessons). As such, responsive listening (Figure 6.7) is embedded in performance and is considered a deeper mode of listening which enabled the learner to respond to what (s)he had listened to through attentive listening.182

For example, in the role of more experienced whistle player, I encouraged the mode of responsive listening when saying ‘repeat after me’ to Amanda and Bríd; where ‘after me’ referred to attentive listening, and ‘repeat’, referred to the responsive listening mode. This iterative nature of the attentive and responsive modes was observed where the responsive listening mode interchanged seamlessly from one moment to the next with the previously occurring attentive listening mode, with the learner moving back and forth between one mode and the other with ease, guided by the more experienced

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182 This resonates with Dewey’s principle of continuity of experience as discussed in Chapter 2.
teacher. The iterative process was also highlighted where Amanda, when seeking confirmation on how she would engage with the process asked, ‘So I’m playing it for them and then they repeat?’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009); this once again highlights an emerging, formal pattern inherent in the process of aural learning. As mentioned previously, Amanda defined her idea of aural learning early in the investigation as ‘call and response’, so while attentive listening arguably involved the ‘call’ aspect of this binary, responsive listening referred to the ‘response’ aspect of the same.

Responsive listening manifested itself in one of two ways after attentive listening where (a) the student listened to him/herself and to his/her fellow students while playing along with the teacher, or (b) the student listened to him/herself and/or to his/her fellow students without the guidance of the teacher playing along.183 Responsive listening was often initiated by the whistle teacher ‘counting in’ or ‘tapping in’ the learner, to ensure that all participants began simultaneous engagement with the responsive listening mode. Again, repetition was an essential aspect of responsive listening and it enabled the learner to listen to themselves while attempting a particular phrase, to ensure that they were playing it to their own, as well as to their teacher’s satisfaction. During LOCIT, one student referred to this mode of listening with associated repetition, and the value of this mode of listening in terms of improving the students’ playing of the tune:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Playing and listening really brought us on. We heard the wrong notes that we were playing and we played them again and got them right!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The Teachers’ Experience of Responsive Listening

Responsive listening was observed when, as the following exchange describes, a phrase of the tune was firstly played for Bríd (i.e., attentive listening), after which she was encouraged to play it along with me (i.e., responsive listening):

183 The teacher would often take this opportunity to stop playing and listen to the students for signs of progress so that she could then give feedback on any achievements observed.
Similar exchanges occurred during each of Bríd’s whistle lessons where responsive listening followed attentive listening, and Bríd eventually played longer phrases until she could perform the entire tune. For example, when teaching Bríd a phrase of *Mo Ghile Mear*, she repeated the phrase four or five times (responsive listening) until she was completely satisfied with how she was playing it, after which she indicated that she was ready to proceed to the next section of the tune. In this way, responsive listening increased the autonomy of the learner by allowing Bríd to progress at a co-determined pace with her learning. In addition, the repetitive back and forth movement between attentive listening and responsive listening ensured that appropriate challenge was sustained throughout the lesson in terms of the learner’s skill level at any given time.\textsuperscript{184}

Furthermore, the teachers’ ability to meet the challenges presented through the cyclical *continuum* of aural progression process suggests an increase in cognitive functioning, which was supported by the transitioning of roles of more experienced person and less experienced person (discussed in Section 6.2.1).

Of course, during the teachers’ whistle lessons(s), ‘responsive listening’ was not referred to at any stage (or any of the other aural awareness modes for that matter), this term being conceived of in analysis of the data. However, in my observations, I note how I attempted to describe the idea of responsive listening to Amanda during a whistle class, when the transition from attentive to responsive listening faltered. The following extract describes where I attempted to articulate and demonstrate the importance of the responsive listening mode:

\[\text{Researcher: } \text{You're flying away [as Amanda continues to play the melody]}\]
\[\text{Amanda: } \text{But that's because I know the tune...}\]
\[\text{Researcher: } \text{I'd say that that might be familiar [to the students] but maybe not...}\]
\[\text{Amanda: } \text{Do you want them to just find the notes rather than...}\]
\[\text{Researcher: } \text{Well I'll be here.. I'll be playing as well..}\]
\[\text{Amanda: } \text{Ok.... I obviously went ahead of myself there... I should've just listened to you every phrase and taken it bit by bit}\]
\[\text{Researcher: } \text{But then you're really familiar so...}\]
\[\text{Amanda: } \text{I know the tune...}\]

\textsuperscript{184} This relates to the concept of *flow* and is discussed further in Section 6.3.
The Students’ Experience of Responsive Listening

The data demonstrates how each teacher facilitated responsive listening and a smooth iterative transition between the attentive listening and responsive listening modes by encouraging the students to ‘listen’ (in order to promote attentive listening) and to ‘play it with me’ (in order to promote responsive listening in the next moment). After playing the tune once through with the students while they engaged in responsive listening, Amanda provided an interesting insight into her understanding of aural learning, which seems to refer to the modes of remote listening and responsive listening:

Amanda: [to the students] Can you feel... like you’ve got the tune in your head... like you know it from the television which is good... can you feel when you need to go up or down? Can you feel that naturally? Can you? Kind of? A little bit? So if you can hear the tune in your head as you’re getting there... if you’re always with the music a couple of seconds ahead of yourself... so you know where to go next ahead of yourselves... so you know where to go next...

When Bríd had the opportunity to teach a melody to Group A, I observed that she followed the same structured (and it is suggested, formal) process that I had used to teach her. It was clear that this experience was a learning curve for both Bríd and the students, as initially Bríd played a phrase that was evidently too long for the students to grasp through attentive listening. In response to this, Bríd repeated a shorter phrase for the students to listen attentively to, before they successfully engaged with the phrase through responsive listening. Bríd also asked the students to repeat this and other phrases a number of times, saying ‘we’ll try it again... and again... and again’ (Group A observation 29/09/2009) until she was satisfied that all students could play the phrase. Similar to the attentive listening mode, a continuum was observed to exist within the responsive mode itself. In other words, when Bríd asked the students to listen to a roll, cut or another more intricate and challenging aspect of the melody, a deeper responsive listening experience would ensue. Finally, during Group A’s LOCIT process, one
student described her learning moment during a whistle class in terms of ‘picking out each ornament’ (attentive listening) and the group ‘trying it together’ (responsive listening):185

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What was your learning moment?</td>
<td>I said when you were picking out each ornament and then we were trying to learn them ourselves and then we were all playing together and stuff.</td>
<td>So how did that work? How did it go from me..?</td>
<td>Like we’re all listening and we’re all talking about it together and we’re all trying together... makes it easier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So listening and then trying it out?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 6.6  Group A example of a responsive listening experience**

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**Aural Awareness Mode 5: Enactive Listening**

Enactive listening (Figure 6.8) is a deeper and therefore more challenging mode of listening along the CCAP which was observed and identified during Phase 2. This more intensive mode of listening, generally speaking, occurred in the moments after the attentive-responsive listening process had concluded. Enactive listening borrows its name from Campbell’s third phase of listening which she describes as ‘a pathway to the performance of music’ (2005, p. 35). Enactive listening allowed the learner to concentrate on ‘timbral qualities, the dynamic flow of the piece, its melodic and rhythmic components, and the interplay of its parts’ (*ibid.*). After acquiring the tune through the previous modes, enactive listening describes where the learner played the tune and the focus was generally on engaging with the basic melodic and rhythmic structure of the tune; that is, playing closer in style to the music which the more experienced music teacher had played to this point. As an individual within a group, each student’s focus during enactive listening was also on playing in time and in tune with the other students (preparation perhaps, for listening which occurs through participatory and presentational performance, discussed in Section 6.2.2 and 6.2.3).

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185 This comment also connects with the ‘inter-personal meaning’ of which Dillon (2007) speaks (discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2), where music making activity has a meaning in a social sense in terms of the relationship between self and others. This is discussed further in Section 6.3.
Enactive Listening

Figure 6.8 Illustration of the Enactive Listening mode of the Principle of Aural Awareness

When teaching Amanda and Bríd, enactive listening allowed each teacher to play the tune in its entirety and simultaneously listen for areas in which they could each improve, such as the rhythm, melody, breathing, speed, dynamics and so on. Of note is that while each group of students engaged in enactive listening, each teacher was observed assisting in and guiding the students’ engagement with this mode through supporting obser-visual awareness strategies whereby the students intently watched the teachers’ finger movements (as discussed in Section 6.1.2). If the challenge was too great, and the students had not yet acquired the tune, the teacher would revert to the iterative attentive-responsive process of engagement before leading the learners once again to the enactive mode, as the following Group A interaction depicts. There were numerous examples of this over the course of Phase 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.7 Group A example of an enactive listening experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bríd</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aural Awareness Mode 6: Reflective Listening

*Reflective experience*, a phase of thought described by Dewey (2007/1916) \(^{186}\) as being characterised by a deeply intentional endeavour to discover connections between what we do and the consequences which result, gives rise in this research to the mode of reflective listening (Figure 6.9). *Reflective listening*, the final mode of listening at the heart of the *CCAP* and at opposite ends of the continuum to remote listening, is by its nature a highly specialised mode of listening which it is proposed occurred during traditional music performance. It describes an advanced cognitive functioning where it could be perceived that an almost simultaneous interaction occurred between an internal listening ‘activity’ and an external listening ‘consequence’. As was my aim in the role of ‘whistle teacher’, each teacher’s aim - as the more experienced person - was to lead all students further along the continuum towards reflective listening. It is conceived as occurring at the innermost point along the *CCAP* where the greatest amount of skill and challenge was required, and was therefore the mode of listening which was the most challenging for the teachers and students to ‘reach’ and engage with during Phase 2. As a consequence, it was the *least* frequently observed mode of listening throughout the study. The challenge of engaging at this mode is illustrated by a Group A student who attempted to bring her performance beyond what had been experienced in class, through incorporating ornaments into her performance of a tune for a homework exercise. Such an activity, it is suggested, involved reflective listening. It is interesting to note that when asked how she had managed, the student simply replied that ‘it didn’t work’ (Group A observation 01/10/2009).\(^{187}\)

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\(^{186}\) As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1.

\(^{187}\) This demonstrates the relative difficulty of engaging with the reflective listening mode as a learner, and highlights the consequences of a learner not being able to meet the challenges presented. This is discussed in terms of the concept of flow in Section 6.3).
Reflective Listening

The moments during which reflective listening was identified involved students\textsuperscript{188} whose previous experience (or advanced cognitive functioning) in traditional music allowed them to engage in reflective listening while playing music for others in the class. Like responsive listening and enactive listening, it is proposed that reflective listening occurred during performance, and was the deepest form of listening. It necessitated an interplay of quick and interchanging reflection and action grounded in listening on the part of the individual musician. Through reflective listening, it is suggested that having gained experience and ‘growth’ during the previous stages on the continuum, the musician re-interpreted and re-imagined the music within traditional music’s boundaries, as established by the traditional music community, and as understood by the musician through their previous experience of engaging with the tradition. This was done with the support of the teacher as more-experienced person. Reflective listening occurred ‘in the moment’ and as a mode of listening, it was therefore essential to musical performance. Improvisation might perhaps be one way of describing what occurred during this mode of listening, but it might also assist in coming to an understanding of the processes at play during reflective listening.

\\textsuperscript{188} As well as the visiting musicians.
Reflective listening also draws parallels with Ó’Canainn’s description of where the traditional musician ‘finds a personal challenge in refashioning the basic material, putting his own seal on it and expressing his musicality through it’ (1978, p.4). The following is a written observation which I made where it is proposed that Chloe (pseudonym), a student in Group A, engaged in the mode of reflective listening:

Bríd asks the students to get out their whistles and says ‘let’s hear what you did’. Many of the students are playing their whistles randomly and seem to be in their own worlds. I can hear the melody of ‘Mo Ghile Mear’ being played throughout the classroom, the tune that the students had learned during the previous class.

Bríd: Girls, girls no playing. Now... I asked you if you’d like to put in some cuts and slides and anything that you wanted, and I also said that I’d ask people who were comfortable and wanted to play it. Now I’m sure that you can all do it, I’m sure that you can all do it. Anyone like to play it? [No one responds] Bríd then asks a student to play, and she doesn’t want to play in front of the class. She then asks another student, Chloe, and Chloe agrees to play. Immediately, several of the students begin to clap in encouragement. Bríd then says with surprise, ‘oh are you going to stand up’, as Chloe stands up at the top of the class. The student, Chloe, has gone to the top of the classroom and stood up on her own accord. ‘Off you go’, Bríd says to Chloe. Chloe then raises her hands, in mock fashion as if to say, ‘here I am, here I am’. You can see Chloe’s classmates are watching her intently and smiling. Everyone seems to be really enjoying this moment, and we all know from classes previous that Chloe has played Irish traditional music on the whistle for several years. Chloe begins to play and there is silence as her fellow students as well as Bríd listens. It is clear that Chloe has played the whistle for some time but this fact isn’t raised at any stage during the class, she was simply asked to play. Chloe stands and faces the class and plays a really lovely version of Mo Ghile Mear for the class, including the cuts and slides that the class had been working on in the previous class, but also putting in a lot of her own ornaments and nuances into the tune. She really makes the tune ‘her own’, When Chloe finishes playing, the whole class bursts into applause and are quite vocal in how impressed they are. Many of them look towards me as if to say, ‘We’re impressed, I didn’t know that she could do that!’ Bríd says, ‘Now that was really brilliant’. A student can then be heard saying, ‘Now that was really well done’. Bríd then makes a few comments basically saying that she can’t play as well as that. This absolutely doesn’t seem to be an issue at all with the students. It’s all part of the experience it seems. The teacher asks Chloe, ‘do you find that easy to do that?’. Chloe replies, ‘yeah’. The teacher asks, ‘do you even have to think about that?’, and Chloe replies ‘Not so much’. Bríd then responds saying, ‘Isn’t that fantastic... I’d love to be able to do that’. ‘Would you love to be able to do that?’, Bríd asks the students. The students all smile, verbally agree, and nod their heads in agreement.

(Group A observation 01/10/2009)

During LOCIT, the majority of the students in Group A identified the above scenario as a ‘learning’ moment, and in doing so, they positioned Chloe as a more experienced person (see Table 6.8). It is suggested that Chloe’s ability to engage in reflective
listening\textsuperscript{189} placed her, as student, in this role, and the responses of the other students in the Group A attest to this:

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|p{12cm}|}
\hline
\textbf{Student} & \textbf{Researcher} \\
\hline
What was the question? Well remember when you said when something is shared... well I said when Chloe played something on her own and when Joanne played something on her own... and when we learned the slide and cut and ornamentation & So they were sharing moments... excellent. I answered the question... I said when Chloe started playing the class was paying more attention. And what was happening at this time... Chloe was playing... and who was teaching... Chloe... who was learning... the rest of the class... and was everyone participating... I said that everyone was listening to her. \\
\hline
Yeah so even though you were listening did you think that you were still involved in what was going on? & Yeah \\
\hline
Great! (I then approach another focus group) How did you get on? When Chloe and Joanne were playing. They have styles and stuff and we were all really bad at the start & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Group A example of a reflective listening experience}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{189} In this case, through presentational performance (see Section 6.2.3).
6.1.2. Principle of Obser-visual Awareness

My learning moment was when we learned the slides and cuts etc., and when we had to concentrate and learn by looking at Thomas playing instead of reading it on a piece of paper

(Group A LOCIT Discussion)

Figure 6.10 Illustration of the Principle of Obser-visual Awareness

An analysis of Phase 2 data points to a second way in which learning occurred during Phase 2, namely through obser-visual awareness (Figure 6.8). It is recognised that visual as well as aural senses come into play in music lessons (see Chapter 2, Section 2.10.2), with Campbell suggesting that a visual-kinesthetic network should be included in the beginnings of a template of music transmission and pedagogy (2001a, p.225). In this investigation, what I have described as obser-visual awareness was a prominent means by which the participants first began to experience traditional music and acquire familiarity with and skills on the whistle. In fact, the data is permeated with references which are associated with this principle of transmission. In recent years, the visual aspect of teaching and learning in traditional music has become increasingly apparent in my music teaching activities in various teaching and learning contexts. It followed, through the investigation’s deeply reflexive process, that obser-visual awareness (orientated in literature in Chapter 2, Section 2.10.2) emerged during Phase 2, and in its supporting role, was observed to occur concurrently with the principles of aural awareness; tactile awareness; and kinesthetic awareness. As mentioned in Chapter 2,
the term *obser-visual* awareness is used here to refer to the broad spectrum of learning which encompasses all visual means of transmission, with the ‘obser’ prefix emphasising the place of observation in learning, and the degree of intentionality which accompanies learning through obser-visual means. In particular, the principle of transitioning roles of more experience person(s) and less experienced person(s) and the principle of media integration were found to support the principle of obser-visual awareness, although each of the four principles of engagement held such a role at one stage or another (see Section 6.2).

In terms of the teachers’ and students’ degree of engagement with obser-visual learning when learning to play the whistle, what I discovered was that in general, their engagement with obser-visual learning was characterised by varying degrees of intensity as they progressed along the aforementioned CCAP (although this of course varied from learner to learner and situation to situation). This was certainly the case when teaching Amanda and Bríd to play whistle, and in my observations as Amanda and Bríd then taught their students to play whistle.

Although a continuum of sorts is likely an inherent characteristic of the principle of obser-visual awareness, I am reluctant to include this aspect as a central tenet of this principle (in contrast with the principle of aural awareness, for example) as analysis of the data did not yield a comparable degree of evidence that would be required to justify this attention; this is illustrated by the broken line in Figure 6.8. Nevertheless, it is important that the principle of obser-visual awareness receives due recognition as a principle which supported the transmission of traditional music throughout the investigation.

**The Teachers’ Experience of Obser-visual Awareness**

During Amanda and Bríd’s lessons, I initially observed how each teacher’s gaze was transfixed on my fingers as I played the tune and then demonstrated phrases of the tune to elicit a response; that is, while each teacher was engaged primarily in prefatory and

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190 This corresponds to Barbe and Swassing’s (1979) concept of learning modality, which proposes that every person can claim a dominant modality through which he or she learns most efficiently, as well as secondary modalities that compliment the dominant channel.
attentive listening. During a whistle lesson with Amanda, the principle of obser-visual learning was highlighted when I observed her intently directing her gaze from my fingers to hers while learning the scale of D major, G major, and *Mo Ghile Mear*. In fact, in attempting to understand the learning and teaching process, Amanda placed such regard on the obser-visual aspect of learning that she asked:

**Amanda:** So, em, sorry, would they [the students] mirror me, more than anything? Do your students look (original emphasis) at your fingers and remember where your fingers were, or do they remember what the note was?

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

Amanda once again revealed the integral nature of obser-visual learning in her experience of learning traditional music to 'see where [the melody] is going’, as she described:

**Amanda:** And I mean, there are kids in the class who’ll get it straight away, they won’t have to look... and there’ll be kids who really have to watch me!

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

The principle of obser-visual awareness, as well as the level of complexity that comes with the requirement to consider other pedagogical methods, was emphasised where Amanda recalled her previous experience of teaching recorder to a group of students. The following extract highlights the different types of obser-visual awareness that the students engaged in, depending on the means of engagement available. For example, the medium of notation, which corresponds to the principle of media integration (Section 6.2.4); and the teacher, which corresponds to the principle of transitioning roles (Section 6.2.1).191

**Amanda:** I would’ve taught recorder like (original emphasis) that but they would’ve had notes with them as well and you’d notice that some kids would look at the notes and never look at you and then others would look at you and they wouldn’t even bother with the notes! So there’s two things really going on all the time in such a big class, I think.

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

During a class where Amanda was teaching the whistle, she referred to the obser-visual aspect of learning, saying, ‘Can you all see me? You’re better off just sliding your chairs somewhere where you can see’ (Group B observation 29/09/2009). Similarly,

191 These are discussed further throughout Section 6.2.

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Bríd highlighted the principle of obser-visual learning when she attempted to learn a section of *Mo Ghile Mear*. In this moment, Bríd engaged in responsive listening as I played a phrase of the tune, but referred to a somewhat conflicting obser-visual learning moment saying ‘as soon as I looked at you I thought I was wrong!’ (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009).

**The Students’ Experience of Obser-visual Awareness**

Group A and B students were observed engaging in obser-visual learning over the course of Phase 2, and several examples are presented here. One student commented that ‘it’s good to watch at the start to get the notes but then I had to look away to concentrate on making it sound right’ (Group A LOCIT Discussion). Several Group B students also referred to learning moments as incorporating watching YouTube clips, watching a student dance, and observing what the visiting musicians were doing (Group B LOCIT Discussion). For example, Leah, the visiting harp player, highlighted the place of obser-visual learning in the wider learning experience where she commented to Group A that ‘you’ll see me doing little bits on my left hand just to complement the right hand’ (Group A observation 26/1/2009). In addition and as mentioned, obser-visual learning was observed to have occurred at varying degrees of intensity along the *CCAP* in terms of each participant learning whistle. That is, it functioned as a supporting learning modality through which students were enabled to progress along the *CCAP*. For example, as Bríd attempted to teach the students the whistle, it became clear that some students were having difficulty at the responsive listening mode, with one student remarking, ‘I wouldn’t know that by ear!’ (Group A observation 29/09/2009). Bríd initially said, ‘come on girls, try and do it by ear!’ *(ibid.)* before finally asking the students to ‘have a look!’ *(ibid.)*, after which they intensely observed Bríd’s finger position on her whistle. Other occasions such as this occurred, for example, when a student asked ‘How do you do a high E again?’ *(ibid.)*, after which Bríd obser-visually demonstrated this note on her whistle. The obser-visual experience of learning was again evident when Bríd asked the students to ‘wait until you see it!’ *(ibid.)*, as they attentively listened while I played a phrase of a tune, before attempting to engage in responsive listening. Finally, a Group B student commented that her learning moment occurred ‘when the teacher showed us the fingering and played the tune for us’ (Group B LOCIT Discussion).
6.1.3. Principle of Tactile Awareness

In contrast to the relatively little research which exists on the tactile dimension of learning in music education (see Chapter 2, Section 2.10.4), tactile awareness, involving those sensory aspects of learning such as feeling and touch, emerged alongside the other principles of transmission as an important and necessary component of the broad experience of learning traditional music. Although it could not be concluded beyond doubt that a continuum existed within the principle of tactile awareness, the differing degrees of emphasis placed on tactile awareness as the participants learned to play the whistle and engage kinesthetically suggests that a continuum of sorts existed. As this was not conclusive however, this aspect of the principle of tactile awareness is tentatively included and represented as a broken dotted line (Figure 6.9).

![Figure 6.11 Illustration of the Principle of Tactile Awareness](image)

Tactile learning emerged as an important consideration when I taught Amanda and Bríd various technical aspects of playing traditional music, and when each teacher then taught whistle to their respective groups. Although it was not a pre-conceived strategy to impart knowledge through tactile awareness, it evidently played a central role and was deeply embedded in each participant’s experience as they engaged within the principle of aural awareness (that is, along the CCAP).
There were many examples of tactile awareness which support this principle’s integration into a theory of educative experience. For example, each teacher was often encouraged during whistle lessons to ‘relax’ their shoulders, arms, and hands when attempting to form various phrases or ornaments; to ‘bend’ and ‘reach up’ to certain notes; to put more or less pressure on the holes with their fingers; to feel the outline and edge of each whistle hole under their fingers; to use their tongues for articulation purposes on the ‘roof of their mouths’ or against the mouth of the whistle; to breathe lighter or heavier; and to take longer or shorter breaths in various places of a tune. Bríd seemed to refer to this sense of awareness where she commented that, ‘it’s really just to get the feeling of it, isn’t it!’ (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009). Early in the investigation, an initial concern which Bríd had regarded how she should hold the whistle, and I explained that she should attempt to balance the whistle using her two thumbs:

Bríd: I couldn’t even hold the whistle that way. It’s the balance... because I’m holding it really with my right hand. My thumb of my right hand is holding it.  
(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

During this lesson, Bríd discovered the importance of this sensory aspect of learning, when she referred to what she called ‘pursing your lips’ to reach the high notes on the instrument:

Bríd: Even the idea of finding where on the whistle... getting the higher notes... and how you do it! Getting the note and feeling it yourself... like pursing your lips... I wouldn’t have known that.  
(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

In the following example, the significance and value of tactile awareness if further revealed where Bríd was encouraged to apply pressure to the instrument to gain a greater sense of spacial awareness and achieve certain techniques and ornaments:

Researcher: So if you just stick to the B G G and then the cut would be [I demonstrate how the cut would be incorporated and Bríd joins in with me, playing the cuts].
Researcher: That’s it! [I encourage]  
Bríd: It has to be quicker than that. [Bríd plays it again]  
Researcher: That’s it... let’s hear it... [Bríd plays the cut again]  
Researcher: That’s it... a wee bit... a wee bit snappier. [I then vocalise the notes and Bríd tries it once again]  
Bríd: It’s not lifting my finger too far from it (the hole)... [Bríd tries the cut once again]
Bríd’s discovery of tactile learning was further reinforced when she commented that:

Bríd: It’s how you blow it... in terms of getting it flat or sharp... I think that’s a whole art... isn’t it! And, it helps that if the breathing, if you can stop it!

(Bríd whistle 17/09/2009)

When discussing how we could overcome a particular part of the tune in which Bríd was having some difficulty, and getting increasingly frustrated, she very interestingly described the tactile element to the experience, that is, how the sensation felt, by comparing it to a visit to ‘the dentist’:

Bríd: And when you don’t play it, your fingers aren’t... there! It’s like having an anesthetic when you go to the dentist and he says, ‘now push your teeth together’, and you can’t find them. Like, it’s a bit like that. Now for you now, your fingers are there, mine aren’t. My fingers aren’t there. They’re just not in that position. So when you say ‘play it again’, you have to find the notes. It’s like finding your teeth. Then you get your teeth together and you go, ‘ohhh yeah’ (laughs).

(Bríd meeting 19/09/2009)

Amanda also highlighted the principle of tactile awareness on several occasions during Phase 2. For example, when I observed as she practiced the whistle without actually blowing into the instrument, only feeling where her fingers should be placed on the whistle holes to later play the notes. I also observed as the students from each group engaged in similar tactile activity, that is, feeling their fingers on the whistle holes without actually playing, as each teacher attempted to engage the students in responsive listening. During Amanda’s first whistle class, as I demonstrated how she should play C natural, I suggested to her to ‘pull back your finger, just like that, with the tiniest wee movement’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009). The notion of tactile awareness was also alluded to by Leah (harp player) when she visited Group A and described how she played the harp using her fingertips:
Leah: The harpers years ago used to use their fingernails to play... and I mean that was the only thing they did and they played slow tunes and airs and lullabies but now everyone uses their fingertips... it’s a much nicer sound than using your nails [Leah plays the harp for a few seconds] and it allows you to do an awful lot more as you can move it much quicker as well.

(Group A observation 26/11/2009)

6.1.4. Principle of Kinesthetic Awareness and Kinesthetic-Aural Awareness

‘You made me like traditional music... feel it... appreciate it’

(Group B LOCIT Discussion)

Kinesthetic awareness, the final principal of transmission to build a theory of educative experience, refers to the integral role of body movement in the students’ and teachers’ traditional music experience, learning, and knowing. Resonating strongly with that body of literature which deals with the importance of the body in music education were the many instances of kinesthetic responses to aural stimuli which were observed during Phase 2 and highlighted by participants during LOCIT. One of the significant findings of this investigation was that the kinesthetic activity of the participants was also experienced within and along a cyclical continuum of progression, which is described herein as a cyclical continuum of kinesthetic progression (CCKP). As Figure 6.12.1 illustrates, the six modes of progression which comprise the principle of kinesthetic awareness are: remote kinesis; prefatory kinesis; attentive kinesis; responsive kinesis; enactive kinesis; and reflective kinesis. Moreover, it will be shown how the principle of transitioning roles of MEP and LEP (see Section 6.2.1), the principle of participatory performance (see Section 6.2.2), and the principle of presentational performance (see Section 6.2.3) supported the students engagement with the principle of kinesthetic awareness (Figure 6.12) towards achieving an educative experience of traditional music.

192 As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.10.3.
194 For example, the recording of a tune, the dance teacher lilting, a live performing group in concert, a whistle or other musical instrument playing (in the case of the visiting musicians), among other aural stimuli.
195 As we will see, the stages of progression along the CCKP emerged and were categorised similarly to the CCAP.
It also emerged that the students’ kinesthetic awareness along the *CCKP* was found to support an intrinsic *aural* progression, namely, a cyclical continuum of kinesthetic-aural progression (*CCKAP*). There is an important distinction to be made in terms of the *CCKAP* and the aforementioned *CCAP* (discussed in Section 6.1.1). That is, while engagement within the *CCKP* was observed to directly support the students’ aural progression (among several other important outcomes to be discussed), it is suggested that the aural progression associated with the *CCKP* was somewhat contrasting in nature to that associated with the *CCAP*. In other words, while the *intention* of the kinesthetically engaged student, generally speaking, was to learn to *dance* to the music, thereby increasing their cognitive functioning along the *CCKP*, the student’s intention was generally *not* to listen for learning-to-play purposes. Therefore, to

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196 And by default, come to some understanding of and extract meaning from the associated music through listening along the *CCKAP*. 240
determine the particular listening continuum (CCAP or CCKAP) within which the participants engaged, we can ask: were the participants listening with the intention of learning to play a tune?; or, were they listening as an important aspect of learning how to dance to a tune? This focus on intentionality has other implications in terms of the formal-informal dichotomy; if we recall Folkestad’s (2006) distinction between formal and informal ways of learning with respect to intentionality (see Chapter 2, Section 2.6.2), the presence of an intention to learn within the principle of kinesthetic awareness, and within each of the other principles, would imply that learning traditional music in this instance is imbued with formal rather than informal characteristics.

With respect to how the modes of aural progression associated with the CCAP and those associated with the CCKAP are identified using similar descriptive headings (prefatory, attentive etc.), it must be emphasised that they are being considered as complementary yet contrasting modes of listening. That is, the very nature of the kinesthetic activities in question (not least the intention of the dance teacher) ensured that the students’ aural progression within the CCKP, while a valuable outcome of the various kinesthetic activities, was only one of several outcomes of a broader kinesthetic experience. In other words, aural progression, while an embedded aspect of kinesthetic activities, was not necessarily the focus of these activities. Therefore, each mode of kinesis has an associated aurality or listening mode\footnote{remote-kinesthetic-listening; prefatory-kinesthetic-listening; attentive-kinesthetic-listening; responsive-kinesthetic-listening; enactive-kinesthetic-listening; reflective-kinesthetic-listening.} which together comprise a cyclical continuum of kinesthetic-aural progression (CCKAP). As it is proposed that the CCKAP occurred simultaneously with the CCKP during Phase 2 kinesthetic activity, the modes of the CCKAP are not discussed separately in this section, but are discussed in the context of their respective CCKP modes.

**Exploring Irish Dance and ‘Body Rhythms’ as Kinesthetic Activity**

Although dance-orientated kinesthetic activity was a central consideration of Phase 2 for reasons outlined below (not least given the obvious connection between Irish dancing and Irish traditional music, and the inherent value of such activities as outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.10.3), given issues such as classroom layout and the logistics of
the schools’ timetables (for example, to organise a suitable space for dancing), it was felt that there was potential to introduce and explore the place of additional and alternative classroom-based kinesthetic activities (what became known during Phase 2 as *body rhythms*) in the experience of traditional music. To initiate this aspect of the study, some weeks before Phase 2 began, I held exploratory conversations with Úna, a renowned Irish dance teacher whose teaching practice is carried out in close proximity to the urban area wherein each school was located, and with Eamon, a local musician (guitar player/singer/songwriter) who often incorporates body rhythms in his community orientated work. With Úna and Eamon, it was discussed how kinesthetic activities could potentially be introduced as a means of exploring the connection, if any, between kinesthetic awareness and the experience of Irish traditional music.

It was agreed that Úna, who has extensive experience as an Irish dance teacher both locally, nationally, and internationally, and as an educator more broadly speaking, would teach each group of students (with music teachers invited to participate) over the course of a ‘double class’ (approximately 80 minutes in total). While I discussed with Úna the general nature of my research, I decided that I would not direct her towards any particular purpose or methodology, but allow her to approach each group as she would generally teach dance to a group of teenagers who were relatively inexperienced in Irish dancing. In terms of the body rhythms, in the days following a meeting with Eamon, during which he outlined various strategies for integrating body percussion into a music workshop, I devised a series of relatively straightforward body rhythms which could connect with various dance tune types, that is, a double jig (6/8), reel (2/2), hornpipe (2/4) and slip jig (6/8). My intention was to then introduce these rhythms to Amanda and Bríd at an appropriate stage of the action research process and discuss how, if at all, we could incorporate the rhythms in the investigation and observe any outcomes of this intervention. This body rhythms aspect of Phase 2 was a collaborative process, with each teacher offering constructive feedback in terms of particular movements which they thought might work best with the students, or particular strategies which they anticipated would be most effective to introduce and develop the body rhythms. In fact, after consultation with Bríd (see p.240), the slip jig rhythm which I had originally devised was altered to incorporate a more effective movement inspired by Bríd’s extensive choral conducting experience; this ‘new’ movement was then introduced to Amanda’s group who fully adopted it, in what could be described as a cross-school collaboration.
From the onset, Amanda and Bríd expressed the opinion that introducing the various kinesthetic activities into the classroom would be a positive learning experience for all involved, and they were open to full engagement with the process. Emerging from the dance and body rhythms kinesthetic interventions came the crux of kinesthetic awareness, that is, the cyclical continuum of kinesthetic progression and associated cyclical continuum of kinesthetic-aural progression. These findings are discussed throughout this section.

**The Intrinsic Nature of Kinesthetic Activity and Aural Awareness**

One of the outcomes of kinesthetic activity was the perceived greater understanding\(^{198}\) of musical elements within traditional music such as rhythm, beat, speed, phrasing, duration, and various other musical elements to which the students were led as a result of increased kinesthetic awareness. Over the study, there was a general consensus held by teachers and students in each school that the two primary kinesthetic activities of dancing and performing body rhythms were deeply connected to an aural awareness of traditional music. In a meeting with Bríd for example, she commented on the ability of students who had previously engaged with Irish dancing to differentiate between the various types of tunes much quicker than those who had not had such experience:

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\(^{198}\) This thesis acknowledges that ‘understanding’ as a conclusive outcome is difficult (or perhaps impossible) to measure as an abstract concept. As such, I can only deduce from observations that understanding did occur, and I do this by plotting the students’ experience along the cyclical continua of aural and kinesthetic progression which emerged.
Bríd: They can’t put it in words but they know it. Or if they’ve done set dancing or anything like that they know it, they just know it! It is fantastic!

(Bríd meeting 05/10/2009)

Bríd also commented that, ‘how you respond to music is very important’ (Group A observation 29/09/2009) and a student from Group A, when asked by the Úna whether she would ever practice dancing without listening to music, responded that she would ‘imagine the music in her head’ (Group A observation 12/11/2009). For the purposes of analysis and discussion, I wish to focus on how each aforementioned kinesthetic activity connected to an aural awareness of traditional music, and also contrastingly, how the disconnect that was occasionally observed between aural awareness and kinesthetic activity was as revealing.

**Irish Dance and Aural Awareness**

During Úna’s dance classes with each group, kinesthetic-aural associations were often referred to. Úna clearly approached teaching various dances in terms of understanding the music and in the process, highlighted the dialectical relationship between the music and the dance. Úna asked Group A, for example, ‘What has to be right in terms of the music?’ (Group A observation 12/11/2009). In the following exchange, Úna presented an interesting analogy to Group B when explaining a particular dance that she was preparing to teach:

| Table 6.9 Group A link between Irish dance and aural awareness (example 1) |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Úna             | Have you ever had a three-legged race?      |
| Students        | Yeah...                                     |
| Úna             | Right... this is a three-legged race to a beat! |

From Úna’s demonstrations and explanations, the students gained a sense of how certain movements were ‘repeated in terms of the music’, how the dance actually ‘connects to the tune’, and how ‘the tune actually reminds you what’s coming next’ (ibid.). Students also had the opportunity to choose music which they thought ‘fitted better’ in terms of the dance and the dance teacher and students discussed how certain movements were ‘more with the tune’, where the students ‘just felt the beat more’ (Group A observation 12/11/2009). They also discussed the differences, if any, between dancing music and
listening music. In the following exchange, which occurred after the students had learned the dance movements without the music, before dancing with the music, the link between kinesthetic activity and aural awareness was highlighted:

| Table 6.10  Group B link between Irish dance and aural awareness (example 2) |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Úna**       | Does it make a difference when you hear the tune?                           |
| Student       | Yes.                                                                          |
| **Úna**       | Ok, so, Why?                                                                 |
| Student       | You’ve a better understanding...                                             |
| **Úna**       | Of what?                                                                     |
| Student       | The tune.                                                                    |
| Student       | The music.                                                                   |
| Student       | The beat.                                                                    |
| Student       | The rhythm.                                                                  |
| Student       | The timing.                                                                  |

The connection between dancing as kinesthetic activity and listening to music was again emphasised after Úna asked, ‘What did it feel like to be dancing?’ (Group B observation 10/10/2009), with one student replying ‘Awesome! When you went into the beat it was cool!’ (ibid.). During LOCIT, Group B students referenced the deep connection between kinesthetic and aural awareness after watching a video segment of their dance class. The following are some of the responses to a question posed to Group B regarding the connection of dancing and music:

| Table 6.11  Group B link between Irish dance and aural awareness (example 3) |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Researcher**| So how did it [the dancing] tie in with the music? Or maybe it didn’t?       |
| **Student**   | We got the rhythm!                                                           |
| Student       | At the start it didn’t... at the start it was just like... (the student then pretends too not know what he is doing by waving his arms in the air). but then it was... |
| Student       | It helps you feel it like... you sort of automatically just realise what the timing is. |
| **Researcher**| You’re not dancing thinking...                                               |
| **Student**   | I said that you find out what ceilí dancing feels like as opposed to just hearing it... and now knowing where we’re going... and we started getting the rhythm to the music after that! |
| **Student**   | We said that it was fun!                                                     |
| **Student**   | You understand it more... you just... you don’t say ‘now that’s a jig!’     |
| **Student**   | You can apply things you learnt to it like... like the rhythms and stuff.    |
| **Student**   | You made me like traditional music... feel it... appreciate it!              |
Finally, the following is the response from a student from Group A during LOCIT when asked for their thoughts on the connection of dance to music:

**Table 6.12 Group A link between Irish dance and aural awareness (example 3)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>And the dance class, I don’t have it, you won’t be asked to get up and dance for the Junior Certificate, but did that help you in any way? You know, that learning moment?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>You know the way we were doing the difference between the reel and the hornpipe... it was like a more fun version of learning that. It was like different dances for different types of songs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Body Rhythms and Aural Awareness**

Our learning moment was trying to do the thing with our hands, to the music. We all thought we could do it until the music started, then we all struggled, but the second time the music played we could do it!

(Group A LOCIT Discussion)

The body rhythms as a kinesthetic intervention was particularly revealing in terms of the strong connection between kinesthetic and aural awareness. Without being given any prompt, body rhythms as a kinesthetic activity was contextualised in the classroom by each teacher before the activity was introduced. For Group A, Bríd situated the body rhythms class within the frame of traditional music in the following way:

**Table 6.13 Group A link between body rhythms and aural awareness (example 1)**

| Bríd | In Irish music we’re really, really lucky to have that dance tradition. But we have that dance tradition because music first wasn’t listened to. People didn’t sit down and listen to Irish music. What did they do? They danced! What do you call that kind of music that’s there for a purpose? What do you think? There for a purpose? Would it make sense if I said that Irish music was a functional music? Yes. Dance music didn’t exist away from the dancers. People didn’t come to houses and listen to Irish music just for the sake of listening to it. They came to dance to it. Whereas now, today, we’re going to sit down in a concert setting, and we’re going to listen to dance music, and I’m sure that they’re going to listen to dance music. Years ago the musicians were deemed as good as how well you could dance to their music really. So the musicians would’ve been useless if you couldn’t get the beat from them! |
| Students |  |
| Bríd |  |
| Students |  |
Amanda contextualised the introduction of body rhythms for Group B in the following way, pointing to a kinesthetic-aural association:

Table 6.14 Group A link between body rhythms and aural awareness (example 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amanda</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Amanda</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There’s eight bars in each section, but a different eight bars. So how many original bars of music do you have?</td>
<td>Sixteen.</td>
<td>How many bars do you have in a full rendition of a tune?</td>
<td>Sixteen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And it’s played all over again... sixty-four bars, but only original bars. The first eight bars is called the tune, and the second eight bars is called the turn. The tune is the main melody, and the turn, it develops and brings it up to a higher register. So the reel first of all, does anyone know the time signature.</td>
<td>And what’s it divided into... is it mainly minimis, or crotchets, or quavers?</td>
<td>Crotchets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight, so the majority of bars we’ll have six to eight quavers... so in the Leaving Certificate exam you’ll have to recognise dances. You’ll have to say whether they’re a reel, jig, the three different times of jig, a hornpipe, a polka. And, sometimes when you’re sitting there you have to have a quick way of getting them. The metre is one way of getting them because the metre of... say 4/4 time the metre is ‘two’ because it’s two groups of four. In a slip jig the metre is ‘three’ so you’ll naturally hear the metre. I gave some of you rhymes before, for the reel... [teacher sings a rhythm beat]... black and decker, black and decker, black and decker... for the jig we went [teacher sings a jig rhythm]... 6/8 time... is rashers and sausages, rashers and sausages... or humpety dumpety humpety dumpety. So Thomas is going to show us a way of feeling the rhythm, feeling the beats a bit quicker, than actually getting the words in your head.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Essentially, body rhythms became a useful tool for observing the degree of aural awareness of each student. For instance, when observing Group B performing body rhythms with various CD recordings, the connection between kinesthetic and aural awareness was again revealed, Úna commented that ‘[the body rhythms] has worked as foolproof way of identifying the tune’ (Group B observation 10/11/2009). In another example with Group A, after engaging with the associated body rhythms learning process, a CD recording of a jig was played, and the students attempted to perform their body rhythms along with the music. I observed as they firstly attempted a reel rhythm, followed by a slip jig rhythm, before a heightened awareness and realisation ensued throughout the class that the tune was in fact a double jig. Each student was subsequently observed as they managed to ‘connect’ what they were listening to with the appropriate rhythm. To this, Bríd commented that ‘I put on anything, and they're
doing [the rhythms], and they'll try to fit the rhythms into anything’ (Group B observation 12/11/2009). Similarly, during a Group B lesson, I played a reel on the whistle and observed as the students attempted to connect the body rhythms to the music that I was playing, before observing the moment that learning occurred for each student. In this way, the kinesthetic activity was utilised as a means of assessing the students' ability to cognitively engage with the music. In this regard, Amanda commented that:

Amanda:  Rhythms of reel and hornpipe were excellently incorporated into this lesson using the new ‘body rhythms’. The students can feel the beat much better this way. I am very happy with the progress with which they have learnt these tunes using the body rhythms. Similarly, the jig and slip jig were learned in 15-20 minutes!

(Amanda Feedback Sheet 3)

Kinesthetic activities were a regular occurrence during Phase 2, and after the teachers’ initial body rhythm lessons, each subsequent kinesthetic experience was initiated and led by the teachers themselves. Sentiments which pointed to a kinesthetic-aural outcome were also strongly expressed during LOCIT where a Group B student commented as follows with regard to the body rhythms class:

199 Note the emergence of self-directed learning and the physicality of ‘finding’ the beat.
Disconnect between Kinesthetic Activity and Aural Awareness

As previously mentioned, the intrinsic nature of kinesthetic activity and aural awareness was sometimes most evident whenever any difficulty or challenge arose with the students’ ability to kinaesthetically engage with the music. In such moments, an intervention from the more experienced music (or dance) teacher ensured that the focus always returned to the importance of listening to the music. This connection between kinesthetic and aural awareness is an example of how kinesthetic activities were facilitated in a way which supported and extended the students’ aural progression. It reflects Bowman’s (2010, p.4) conviction that bodily experience is the basis for perception of the range of musical qualities as rhythm, groove, movement, and gesture. The following LOCIT exchange with Group B, after they had observed a body rhythms video segment, demonstrates the students’ emerging understanding of the disconnect that can occur between kinesthetic activity and listening, and how this can ultimately impact on educative experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Where was the balance between listening, performing, and composing in that? Was there loads of one or was it equal? Was there listening, performing, and composing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>There was no listening anyway!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>We weren’t really listening... that’s why we were doing it wrong!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>You were... you were listening to the CD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Yeah but we were doing it badly!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kinesthetic Awareness Mode 1: Remote Kinesis

Remote Kinesis

Figure 6.13 Illustration of the Remote Kinesis mode of the Principle of Kinesthetic Awareness

Remote kinesis (Figure 6.13) is the first and ‘outermost’ mode of the CCKP and was the mode of kinesthetic awareness that occurred during the aforementioned mode of remote listening.\textsuperscript{200} During remote kinesis, the intention of the participant was not necessarily to kinesthetically engage-to-learn or progress kinesthetically, but was primarily for enjoyment purposes. In other words, the remote response did not signal the participant’s intention to progress \textit{further} along the continuum. Therefore, it describes instances of kinesthetic response which could be described as unintentional, or even distracted. Remote kinesis was a regular phenomenon which was observed with respect to each group throughout Phase 2. It describes, for example: the student in Group B who unconsciously tapped along with his pen on his desk as he listened to traditional music playing via a YouTube clip; the trio of students in Group B who waved their arms in the air during a class, in time to a jig that was playing on a CD recording; the teachers and students as they simply used their feet to tap along to the music during instances of remote listening (for example, when Leah, the visiting harp player played a tune for Group A), the line of heads bobbing to music as students from Group B waited for a particular dance to start; or the students who clapped and tapped along as they watched

\textsuperscript{200} In this regard there is little, if any, distinction between the mode of remote listening associated with the aforementioned CCAP and the mode of remote listening associated with the CCKP.
their classmate dancing (as she likely engaged in *reflective* kinesis, which is discussed later) during the end of term gathering. Remote kinesis was so commonplace throughout the study that it is suffice to say that it was kinesthetic activity which relatively speaking, took place at cognitive distance, and as mentioned, was the outermost or first mode along the *CCKP*.

*Kinesthetic Awareness Mode 2: Prefatory Kinesis*

Prefatory kinesis (Figure 6.14) occurred where the teachers and students engaged kinesthetically along the *CCKP* at the early stages of cognitive growth and development. The *intention* of the teacher and/or student was key to the shift from remote to prefatory kinesis, and given Folkestad’s interpretation (2006, p.138) of intentionality, this signaled the beginning of a more formal learning process. As such, the prefatory mode of kinesis emerged where the intention of the student, or at least the intention of Úna or the music teacher, adjusted from the more distracted enjoyment-orientated remote kinesis, to an engage-to-learn prefatory kinesis, in response to various aural stimuli (i.e., prefatory-kinesthetic-listening). A more focussed mode of kinesis, prefatory kinesis and its associated prefatory-kinesthetic-listening were observed on several occasions over Phase 2. For example, it emerged when Amanda asked Group B students to 'feel where it’s natural to tap your foot' in response to the music, and reminded the students that 'tapping your foot [will] really help you in an exam' (Group B observation 29/09/2009). The value of prefatory-kinesthetic-listening was highlighted where I played an example of a jig on the whistle and asked Group A students to 'tap along', with the *intention* of enabling the students to feel the beat. The students began to tap too quickly however, and Bríd reminded them to 'listen to it' (Group A observation 05/10/2009),201 which focussed the students on the music, after which they began to engage with the music using an appropriate tapping rhythm.

201 Another example of prefatory-kinesthetic-listening.
A moment of prefatory kinesis occurred when Úna, before teaching a dance to Group A, encouraged the students to improve their posture by tracing an historical context of posture in Irish dancing. She drew this comparison to the present by saying, ‘the connection to the music is still the same but the physical posture is different’ (Group A observation 12/11/2009). Instances of prefatory kinesis were often accompanied with reminders from Úna and each teacher to listen closely to the music; again, demonstrating the place of intention in this and subsequent modes of kinesis. Leading the students further along the CCKP, it is suggested that prefatory kinesis occurred where Úna asked Group B students to 'start marching to the music' (ibid.) after which the degree of challenge was increased when she then asked the students to alter their movement to a ‘more sideways step’ (ibid.). This continuity of experience (aligning with Dewey’s theory) was further encouraged where Úna then asked the students to perform a movement which required alternatively clapping the beat and tapping the beat on their legs. During this activity, students were observed as they disconnected with the music and performed the rhythms much faster than the music required, thus demonstrating a momentary disconnect from the CCKP, and highlighting the necessary tenacious connection between each continuum (that is, the CCKP and the CCKAP). As such, prefatory kinesis during the study was identified as a mode of kinesis which enabled the students to begin to ‘feel’ and experience the
main beats of a tune through embodied awareness. Finally, during prefatory kinesis, the focus of the students was shifted to a listen-to-kinesthetically engage purpose, as a result of the particular intention of the teacher or of the students themselves.

**Kinesthetic Awareness Mode 3: Attentive Kinesis**

Attentive kinesis is located further along the CCKP (Figure 6.15). It occurred where the student was directed by either self or another (the teacher) to give greater focus (than prefatory kinesis) to a kinesthetic activity which was more challenging and required more advanced cognitive functioning than that of prefatory kinesis. The students did not necessarily engage kinesthetically during attentive kinesis, but were instead ‘attentive’ to the kinesthetic engagement and intention of the teacher through attentive-kinesthetic-listening and observer-visual awareness. Attentive kinesis is therefore included as a mode of the CCKP which supported the students’ progression along the continuum towards responsive kinesis, and ultimately towards the modes of enactive, and reflective kinesis.

![Attentive Kinesis](image)

**Figure 6.15 Illustration of the attentive kinesis mode of the principle of kinesthetic awareness**

In particular, attentive kinesis was found to occur during each group’s dance class where at regular intervals, Úna demonstrated aspects of the dance to the *listening, observing,*
and \textit{kinesthetically engaged} participants. Attentive kinesis was observed where the students carefully listened to the rhythm of the movements as dictated (by calling directions in the tune’s melody) and demonstrated by Úna. Similar to the attentive \textit{listening} mode, demonstration and repetition were essential elements of attentive kinesis. As the students were engaged within the attentive mode, Úna was observed demonstrating more advanced movements which increased the challenge in the responsive kinesis mode which followed; this aspect is linked to the notion of increasing challenge and skill (discussed with regard to \textit{flow} experience in Section 6.3). Similarly, during the body rhythms classes, a process ensued where I (and each teacher) demonstrated movements to the students (as they engaged in attentive kinesis and \textit{observing} awareness). In my observations, I note how it was required that I break the movements down to demonstrate in shorter phrases, in order to successfully engage the students.

\textbf{Kinesthetic Awareness Mode 4: Responsive Kinesis}

Responsive kinesis generally occurred immediately after the attentive mode, and was a means by which the learner could \textit{respond} to what they had experienced through attentive kinesis. Similar to the responsive listening mode which involves \textit{imitation} of the experienced teacher by the less experienced student, it was through responsive kinesis (Figure 6.16) that Úna, as more experienced person, could ensure that each student had cognitively engaged with the previous attentive mode of kinesis. A smooth iteration and transition back and forth from attentive kinesis to responsive kinesis was observed as the students responded to the new challenges that were presented to them by Úna and each teacher (in the case of body rhythms). If, on any occasion, the students were finding the mode of responsive kinesis overly challenging, Úna reverted back to attentive kinesis to repeat the movement (often at a much slower pace) in an attempt to more effectively engage the students. This also occurred during the body rhythm classes where, for example, after one student in Group A commented that ‘the double movement is really hard’ (Group A observation 29/09/2009), Bríd responded, ‘ok silence now’ (\textit{ibid.}), before repeating the challenging movement for the students.

Interestingly, as the students engaged in responsive kinesis, Úna again called the names of the movements in \textit{melody} to the tune and the students were observed to
kinesthetically respond to this strategy; this, as well as the listening which occurred while responsive kinesis took place demonstrates the embedded responsive-kinesthetic-listening mode. While engaging in this mode, students in each group were observed to concentrate deeply on the task at hand, before displaying feelings of achievement once they had met, through responsive kinesis, the challenges presented by Úna or the respective music teacher (this is discussed further in the context of flow in Section 6.3).

Responsive Kinesis

![Responsive Kinesis](image)

**Figure 6.16 Illustration of the responsive kinesis mode of the principle of kinesthetic awareness**

**Kinesthetic Awareness Mode 5: Enactive Kinesis**

Enactive kinesis (Figure 6.17) is the fifth mode of the principle of kinesthetic awareness and is a deeper mode of kinesthetic engagement. This mode of kinesis was observed when the students collectively responded beyond responsive kinesis to engage with the music in what could be described as a more performance orientated, participatory (and sometimes presentational) approach (discussed in Section 6.2.2 and Section 6.2.3 respectively). Enactive kinesis was observed when students, after learning the various dance and body rhythms movements during the previous modes, had the cognitive function capacity to engage kinesthetically with the music with greater awareness, confidence, and depth of understanding, and could demonstrate a deeper kinesthetic and associated aural awareness of the music through enactive-kinesthetic listening.
Enactive Kinesis

Figure 6.17 Illustration of the enactive kinesis mode of the principle of kinesthetic awareness

During enactive kinesis, there was a much greater fluidity and flow to the kinesthetic activities than had occurred previously, and a general sense of the entire group 'coming alive' together, and experiencing fun and enjoyment. In terms of the aural associations of this mode, I observed a strong sense of group coherency as the students engaged in enactive-kinesthetic-listening with the music, as opposed to the previous responsive kinesis where responsive-kinesthetic-listening played a more minor role. During enactive kinesis, the students were observed to rely less on Úna during the dance class and instead focussed on listening to a greater degree to the music that was playing at the time. This also occurred during the body rhythm class with each group, where I observed as the students ceased to rely on whoever was teaching body rhythms for guidance through obser-visual or verbal (that is, through attentive-listening) means. A poignant moment of enactive kinesis and associated enactive-kinesthetic listening occurred when, during a ‘visiting musician’ class, the students from Group A spontaneously began to perform body rhythms along with Leah (harp player) who was playing a set of reels at the time. As they were performing along with the musician, there was an observable sense of enjoyment and participation, with students smiling at one another, and one student actually asks the musician afterwards 'is it too late to start playing [the harp] now?' (Group A observation 26/11/2009).
Finally, the enactive kinesis mode was most evident on occasions where several contrasting tunes were played to each group so that the students could identify whether the tune they were listening to was a reel, hornpipe, jig, and so on. When this occurred, I observed as each student engaged with the music in an attempt to connect an appropriate body rhythm to the music. To describe this scenario, the following is an observation which I made as I observed students from Group B:

The students are listening to a reel playing and attempting to perform their 'reel body rhythm' along with the fast moving tune. For the reel, there is a 'boom' movement in the first beat of the bar and it is performed by a hand-to-chest movement. Amanda suddenly says 'don’t fly away with it either... because sometimes the Irish dance is moving so fast that you get caught up that all that fits and it actually doesn’t.... right... so we’ll keep going with that... just get the boom first of all... that first beat’. The students then listen again and try to ‘get the boom’ - using their hands on their chests. It seems to be starting to work! The teacher helps the students to feel the ‘boom’, the first beat of each bar, while listening to the music by counting ‘one, two, three’ and says ‘well done’ when they begin to connect the body rhythms with what they are listening to. It’s fantastic, the students are getting it! Amanda asks me ‘is that too fast or...’ but I say that ‘that’s it!’.

(Group B observation 29/09/2009)

The following LOCIT exchange (Table 6.18) describes what Group A students felt was happening after observing a body rhythm class. On analysis, I deduce that the intention of the students was to engage in what I have described as enactive kinesis and enactive-kinesthetic-listening:
Table 6.18  Group A example of enactive kinesis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>We can start with you... for a learning moment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brid</td>
<td>I think when we put it the first time to the music and we realised how fast a reel was.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Yeah yeah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bríd</td>
<td>And we couldn’t keep up... I think that was a learning moment... that it was fine to do it in theory but when we put it to the music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>You got it listening to each other... you definitely got it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>When we were learning the reel rhythm and everyone was kind of paying attention but everyone was having fun!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Is this before the music?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Both times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Both times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>I thought that it was a great laugh anyway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>That sense of fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Yeah it looks so fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Yeah it was a fun class... Yeah I love that we had it together and then I went to play the music and it just exploded...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>[laugh]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>It was like... what just happened there? That was fun! Because we were all getting on great and then it came to the music and we were all... [laughs]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>What was your learning moment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>When after the music, when no one realised that they could do it... and we had to concentrate to be able to do it eventually!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>So you thought the first time that you could do it and then what happened then?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Like before the music we all thought that we were great... like it was so easy... and then with the music we were like, ‘we can’t do this!!!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>What happened the second time that the music was played?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>We were ready for it... it had sunk in a bit more and we got it!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Kinesthetic Awareness Mode 6: Reflective Kinesis**

What is described as a reflective mode of kinesis (Figure 6.18), while it was observed during Phase 2, was the mode of kinesthetic engagement which was observed least often. This thesis proposes that reflective kinesis and associated reflective-kinesthetic listening are optimum modes of kinesthetic awareness, in that they lie at the heart of the CCKP-CCKAP continuum binary. They involve the deepest mode of kinesthetic awareness where the participants kinesthetically responded to the music in a way which demonstrated a profound and deepening understanding of the complexities of the music. Further to this, reflective kinesis described a kinesthetic engagement with the music which was re-interpreted and re-imagined, and therefore unique to each engaging individual. As such, this mode of kinesis, when it did occur, primarily concerned the individual student, rather than the group as a whole. Therefore, it could be argued that in terms of each teacher’s intention to lead the student along the kinesthetic continuum,
reflective kinesis was the most challenging mode to reach and engage with. This being said, it is argued that there were occurrences of students' engagement with this mode at various stages of the study.

Reflective Kinesis

Figure 6.18 Illustration of the reflective kinesis mode of the principle of kinesthetic awareness

For example, Amanda inferred a notion of reflective kinesis when she asked a Group B student, who was already an experienced Irish dancer, to demonstrate how to dance a hornpipe. Although the student was reluctant at the time to dance in front of her class, Amanda's request for her to 'dance a small little bit and it’ll make a big difference to us and we’ll understand’ (Group B observation 29/09/2009) would seem to indicate that the student’s demonstration of dancing to a hornpipe would assist Amanda and the other students in their 'understanding' and progression along the CCKP. During the end of term gathering, this student danced in front of Amanda, Bríd, and Group A and Group B students, and while she was not interviewed in terms of this particular performance, the suggestion is that this moment was an example of the occurrence of reflective kinesis and reflective-kinesthetic listening on the part of said dancer (while the other students arguably engaged in remote listening and obser-visual awareness).

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202 This moment also has relevance in terms of the Principle of Transitioning Roles of MEP and LEP discussed in Section 6.2.1.
My interpretation of reflective kinesis and embodied awareness is strongly alluded to in the following extract where Marie, an accomplished professional traditional musician (flute and song) who visited each group, described how performance is a ‘whole body thing’ where she tries to use ‘a little bit of everything’; and how for her, her breath is her ‘engine’ and ‘powerhouse’.

Using your diaphragm, it was a part of me that I was using all the time anyway for flute playing... so thankfully it didn’t take to long to change over [to use it for singing]. I think that the very biggest thing that changed my voice and my way of singing was learning how important breath is and that’s like your engine.. it’s your powerhouse.. I think I was always singing from here [Marie points to her throat] you know... and if there was a high note I’d be going like that [Marie strains her neck and voice] instead of realising that it all happens here (points to her diaphragm).. and we just open up and let it out through here [Marie points to her throat]. This [your diaphragm] is your engine, this [your throat] is just the doorway if you know what I mean... so getting your head around that and learning that it’s a whole body thing... it suddenly becomes so much easier... you realise that you were straining one tiny part of you... instead of using a little bit of everything... it should be maximum impact for minimum effort... so I’m learning all the time how to try and achieve that!

(Group B observation 12/10/2009)

6.2. Principles of Engagement

In Chapter 2, the breadth of literature which underpins and informs the principles of engagement (as well as the other principles of educative experience) was outlined, and Section 6.2 will outline the Phase 2 findings which deeply relate to that literature. As previously mentioned, the principles of engagement comprise the four sub-principles of: transitioning roles of more experienced person(s) (MEP) and less experienced person(s) (LEP);203 participatory performance; presentational performance; and, media integration. They emerged through the grounded theory process as the collective means through which participants engaged with the principles of transmission to achieve educative experience. Moreover, it was through the lens of the principles of engagement that participants were able to extract meaning from their experiences (as discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2). As the illustration depicts by way of the overlapping circles, each teacher engaged the students in traditional music transmission through one or more of the principles; examples of these ideas are presented and discussed throughout this section.

203 Hereafter called the ‘principle of transitioning roles’.
6.2.1. Principle of Transitioning Roles of MEP and LEP

The principle of transitioning roles is closely aligned with Freire’s (1970) idea of dialogical teacher-students, where students ‘unveil reality’ in dialogue with the teacher.

Teachers and students [...] co-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators. In this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement.

(Freire 1996, p. 51)

Figure 6.19 Illustration of the Principle of Transitioning Roles of MEP and LEP

The context wherein this research took place was for the most part in the music classroom of each school, while on occasion, informal conversations took place in the school staff-rooms, in the common areas of each school (hallway, library or another room), in the teachers’ homes, or over the phone. In my primary role of researcher in each of these contexts, I observed how the investigation’s participants assumed and transitioned between various roles over the course of Phase 2. As previously alluded to, these roles were characterised by the particular intention of the participant (researcher, teacher, and student) during any given experience. The principle of transitioning roles is identified as being of central importance in engaging participants in the principles of transmission. It is worth noting that the Department of Education and Science also
recognises the important role of the teacher in this way, as reflected in its *Looking at Music* (2008) report:

> Although the level of students’ engagement was good in most instances, opportunities to promote an atmosphere of autonomous learning were missed when teachers relied on the more traditional didactic methods, with an emphasis on teacher talk.  
> (Department of Education and Science 2008, p.26)

Up to this point, the roles in which the investigation’s participants have engaged have been described invariably as ‘learner’, ‘teacher’, ‘student’, ‘dance teacher’ etc.. Findings from the investigation suggest that these roles are much more complex in nature and that traditional terminology has a potential limiting effect in understanding of the place and role of *experience* in the post-primary music classroom; that is, that the teacher teaches, and the students learn. This section explores the role of the ‘teacher’ and ‘student’ much more broadly speaking, as assuming either a ‘more experienced person’ (MEP) or a ‘less experienced person’ (LEP) role; where the teacher assumes an MEP role generally speaking, but participants having the potential to transition between one role and the other. The MEP and LEP terminology is useful in bringing attention to and describing these roles for three main reasons. Firstly, MEP and LEP are used in an attempt to cast light on transitioning roles through the lens of Freire’s understanding of a dialogical teacher (1970) with Dewey’s understanding of a teacher as having a greater maturity of experience and insight than those he/she is leading (1938). That is, embedded in my interpretation of the teacher as MEP and LEP are Freire and Dewey’s concept of the role of the educator. Secondly, MEP and LEP are used as an attempt to negate or at least increase awareness of the deeply rooted associations we might unknowingly hold regarding the terms ‘teacher’, ‘learner’, ‘student’ etc. in a post-primary education context, and in doing so allow for greater objectivity in discussion. Thirdly, given this objectivity, the usage of these terms might initiate a conversation in which we carefully reconsider the definition of the teacher and student role where Irish traditional music is being experienced in the classroom. With this in mind, the roles that emerged on these occasions were those of: researcher-as-MEP; teacher(s)-as-LEP; teacher(s)-as-MEP; students-as-MEP;204 and visiting musician-as-MEP. Each is now discussed in terms of its connection with the principle of transitioning roles.

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204 Students as ‘LEP’ is not discussed here as it is assumed in the context of this research that students generally fulfill a LEP role. Therefore, the majority of the findings of this thesis refer to students in the LEP role. However, when this was not the case, and students were acting within a MEP role, this will be stated explicitly.
Emergence of the Researcher as More Experienced Person

Although my primary role in this process was that of ‘researcher’, one of the participant-as-observer roles throughout the study within which I engaged was that of whistle teacher, where as a MEP, I negotiated between (i) teaching the teacher how to play the whistle,\textsuperscript{205} and (ii) to a somewhat lesser extent, having conversations with and directing each teacher on how they could then proceed to teach whistle to their respective music students. In this respect, a dual approach defined my interaction with each teacher where ‘teaching the teacher to play’ (as discussed throughout Section 6.1) emerged as an intrinsically linked yet separate mode of engagement to ‘teaching the teacher to teach’. Although the whistle classes took place in each of the teacher’s classrooms, I recognised and experienced a familiar teaching and learning dynamic on each occasion to that of my practice in communities beyond the school. This dual role was discussed and agreed upon in the early stages of the investigation and I met with each teacher for whistle lessons on several occasions before and over the course of Phase 2 of the investigation. Upon the commencement of each one-to-one lesson, I established myself in a MEP role, working with Amanda and Bríd towards for example, correctly holding the whistle; learning the scales of G and D major; learning a tune; performing ornaments etc.

Teaching the Teachers How to Teach Whistle

This section deals with those moments during whistle lessons where the focus fell firmly on how each teacher would approach teaching traditional music to their respective groups. As well as incorporating methods already discussed under Principles of Transmission (Section 6.1), guiding each teacher in terms of incorporating traditional music in the classroom involved a two-tiered approach of: (a) role playing with verbal explanations of the teaching and learning process itself; and (b) listening to the suggestions of each teacher given their extensive experience teaching in the classroom.

\textsuperscript{205} As this particular role of the researcher has been dealt with comprehensively with regard to the principles of transmission, it is not discussed hereafter in the context of the researcher as ‘more experienced person’.
During analysis, evidence suggesting a degree of ‘role playing’ emerged where, during lessons with each teacher and on their request, I enacted their role as more experienced person teaching whistle to the group of students, while simultaneously teaching the teacher. That is, instead of Amanda and Bríd observing my teaching process, in order for each teacher to then contextualise my pedagogy for their own classes, they each initially requested specific instructions regarding how they should approach teaching whistle to the class. Interpreted through a Deweyan (1938, p.38) lens, what these moments reveal is each teacher requesting that I: assume the role of a person of ‘greater maturity of experience’; evaluate each teacher’s experience; know what direction an experience is heading; and guide them towards a place of more mature experience. The following are four examples where this occurred:

**Example 1:** During an initial whistle lesson, Amanda required some clarification on how she would teach the whistle to her class and for a time, her focus was on how she should teach the whistle, rather than learning the instrument. The aspect of ‘role playing’ emerged towards the end of an exchange with Amanda, where she requested that I ‘show her how’ I teach, and interestingly asks that I ‘do’ what she will be doing, and she would ‘be the kids’. In short, when teaching Amanda, in order for her to gain an understanding of my whistle pedagogy, I spoke with her as if engaging with a group of learners, saying for example:

Amanda:  So I’m playing it for them and then they repeat  
Researcher: Yeah  
Amanda:  Do I give them the letter names?  
Researcher:  No.. you just..  
Amanda:  DDD E GA B  
Researcher:  I think that its’ important that they go away with notes but it’s probably...  
Amanda:  Yes... so if you do what I’ll be doing then and I’ll be the kids...  
Researcher:  I’ll do what you’ll be doing...  

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

**Example 2:** When discussing the concept of demonstration and imitation with Amanda (outlined previously in terms of the attentive - responsive listening iteration process), I explained that when teaching the whistle, I usually begin by saying, 'Ok, repeat after me’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009). I also demonstrated to Amanda how
she should use her foot to keep the students 'in time' when teaching the whistle, and demonstrated how she could take an exaggerated breath at the beginning of a tune to enable the class to begin at the same time and follow along.

Example 3: In the following example, I elaborated with Amanda on my approach to teaching whistle:

Researcher: And then, if you then play the melody twice that’s the way it usually works... play it really, really simple... and then break it down into really manageable bars.
Amanda: A couple of bars at a time?
Researcher: So I’ll play it for you and I think that the first part is loads to look at for the time being so...

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

Example 4: With Bríd, a similar method of role-playing as music teacher was employed, while simultaneously offering verbal explanations of my suggestions:

Researcher: Class-wise... Maybe say, ‘fingers on... everybody play D... make sure fingers are on’.. there might be some who haven’t played... or haven’t played in years... so ‘everyone on and play D’.. (play D)... ‘go again’... (play D)... ‘E’... (play E)... ‘F’ sharp (play F sharp)... (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

(ii) Listening to the Suggestions of each Teacher

Evidence of Amanda and Bríd’s own extensive experience as music teachers from the onset of Phase 2 and during each whistle lesson, with their previous experience enabling them to come to a clear, practical understanding of what I was attempting to transmit. For example, Amanda’s own musical experience emerged during a whistle lesson when I was teaching the scale of D major, and she attempted to contextualise her previous knowledge to the learning of the scale:

Amanda: So the C natural, D, E, F, G... D, E, F sharp, G, A, B... C sharp... is all off... is all off... D... and that D is the same D as the 5th one in the G major scale?

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)
Emergence of the Teacher as Less Experienced Person

While it may seem an obvious observation, it is important to highlight the context wherein the activity of ‘teaching the teacher’ occurred, and how this impacted on the emergence of the various roles; in this case, the emergence of each teacher-as-LEP. The context of which I speak is I, in the roles of researcher/traditional music teacher-as-MEP, positioning myself in each teacher's classroom, often during busy school days, and proceeding to engage with each teacher-as-LEP. While many of the meetings with the teachers occurred for the action research purpose of reflecting on and planning music lessons, a significant number of meetings took place where the purpose was for each teacher to learn the whistle (that is, teacher-as-LEP), with a view to then teaching it to their students (that is, teacher-as-MEP). The teachers’ whistle lessons aligned with the Freirean perspective in terms of the emergence and transitioning of roles of each teacher and the observable change that occurred in the teacher (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3).

Challenges arising from the Teacher-as-LEP Role

Almost immediately, certain challenges in establishing and understanding our particular roles in this teaching and learning context became evident. When I met with each teacher for the broad purpose of teaching whistle, there was a heightened sense of their learning something new, a sense of venturing into unfamiliar territory, excitement, enjoyment and even humour (A case in point being where Bríd’s unfamiliarity with the whistle led to her feeling as though she was going to let the instrument drop). In terms of the early challenges faced in this situation, there existed some confusion ‘in the moment’ of how these teaching/learning situations would proceed. For example, while I attempted to introduce some concepts to each teacher at the beginning of our first whistle lessons, thus assuming a MEP ‘teacher’ role, it almost immediately became a challenging situation in that I felt as though our particular roles were not yet established. This element of uncertainty led to occurrences of a teacher playing whistle at the same time as I was explaining certain ideas, which in turn led to an interruption in the flow experienced during the lesson; an interruption in the aforementioned cyclical continuum of aural progression; and confusion over the lesson’s direction. This observation arises from my decade-long experience of teaching Irish traditional music in various contexts.
where democratic interaction between each party, and a sensitive awareness of the need for often unspoken, formalised, exchanges best poises the learning traditional musician to achieve more during the learning process, than if these aspects are missing. So, while it is important and necessary for a traditional musician to play and 'try out' what (s)he is trying to learn during any lesson, the blurring of roles at the early stage of one teacher’s introduction to the whistle provided a challenge in my role as MEP. To give another example, while attempting to teach Amanda *Mo Ghile Mear* by ear, a flurry of questions preceded my attempt (related to the aural learning capabilities of the students, the tonality of the whistle etc.); when I eventually began teaching the tune via aural/observers/visual/tactile means, the teacher, given her familiarity with the tune's melody, attempted to figure it out for herself, continued to play until she was unable to play the tune any further, and became confused and frustrated. The teacher’s response to this challenge was interesting from the point of view of her and I coming to a greater understanding of the processes of transmission and engagement; an understanding which subsequently informed the development of the aforementioned principles of transmission and engagement and of course, the identification of Amanda’s role in the process. With my exclamation that she was 'flying away' (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009), Amanda eventually came to the realisation that:

Amanda: I obviously went ahead of myself there... I should’ve just listened to you every phrase and taken it bit by bit

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

Amanda’s eagerness to learn the whistle, paying varying degrees of attention to the assistance and direction I was offering, is interesting in terms of the roles that each person was playing (or attempting to play) in the moment, and the learning curve that existed for each of us in that moment. There was an element of the teacher trying to learn the scale by herself, via a process of trial and error, and it was clear that this was a new venture for Amanda with an accompanying heightened sense of unsureness.

**Evidence of the Teacher-as-LEP Role**

The emergence and establishment of the 'teacher as LEP' role became more and more evident as the whistle lessons progressed. Both Amanda and Bríd ultimately positioned me in a 'teacher' or MEP role (and by default, positioned themselves in a learner or LEP
role), one where they could learn from me and improve their practice (whistle skills). This was evident where Amanda, after attempting a sequence of notes or an ornament asked, ‘Is that alright?’ (Amanda meeting 22/09/2009). In the following example, Amanda takes a leading role in advancing her whistle playing by simply asking, ‘how do you do that?’ (ibid.):

| Amanda: | What’s the last one that you did there? A slide? |
| Researcher: | It’s E cut D and slide. |
| Amanda: | How do you do that? |

(Amanda meeting 22/09/2009)

Bríd on the other hand quickly assumed a ‘learner’ or LEP role which is evident from the following exchange:

| Bríd: | Is it ok for the class know that I didn’t play the tin whistle? |
| Researcher: | Oh yeah! |
| Bríd: | Yeah... Like it’s OK for them to know that... that I’m learning it like they are? |

(Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

The teacher-as-LEP role was also evident during Bríd’s first whistle lesson where she learned to play the note D on the whistle and asked, 'So where do I put my finger? Here?' (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009). During the same lesson, when Bríd was learning the D major scale and had her fingers placed incorrectly on the holes which led to a squeaking sound emanating from the whistle, she asked 'Is there a way of blowing it, is there?' (ibid.). Bríd’s understanding of her transitioning role in the study was captured quite succinctly when another teacher walked into the room during the lesson; with a surprised look on the other teacher's face, Bríd responds that she is learning the tin-whistle 'and the scary thing is I have to teach it!' (ibid.). During the initial whistle classes, Bríd positioned herself in the teacher-as-LEP role, often looking towards me as MEP for guidance; furthermore, she was willing to assume a LEP role during the music classes themselves, commenting that ‘Isn’t that fantastic! I’d love to be able to do that’ (Bríd observation 01/10/2009), after listening to a student play whistle during one particular class.
As Phase 2 progressed, a subtle transition from a teacher-as-LEP to a teacher-as-MEP role was observed in whistle lessons, and the lines between roles became somewhat blurred. These moments of transition were often moments of discovery where the ‘penny dropped’ and they were observed where the teacher seemed to be experiencing flow, and was engaging in the process without any seeming hesitation or fear of playing the ‘wrong’ notes, for instance.

For example, in a whistle lesson, Bríd discovered that a phrase in the first part of *Mo Ghile Mear* was a little difficult (a slightly complicated finger movement where the notes moved from B to C natural using a ‘half finger’ movement and back to B), admitting that ‘it's just hard up there’ (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009). Bríd’s realisation, while in a LEP role, led to her coming to an understanding that she was ‘going to kind of know where [the students] are going to find it hard’ and she later resolved that ‘if it is [difficult] we can change it’ (*ibid.*). Bríd also demonstrated her change and growth into the role of MEP where she predicted that ‘that'll take them [the students] a while to get that now’ (*ibid.*). These moments of transition allowed Amanda and Bríd to become involved in the learning process from the perspective of teaching the students, as well as learning the whistle for themselves. An example of this occurred where Bríd commented that if the difficult part of the tune was an issue while she was teaching, then ‘we can change it’ (*ibid.*). With this statement, Bríd seemed to be taking greater ownership of the learning process and hence the process of transmitting traditional music to her students.

The transition from teacher-as-LEP to teacher-as-MEP was also marked by Amanda and Bríd's increase in confidence over the course of their lessons. For example, they began to verbalise with greater confidence particular ornaments and sounds that they did or did not particularly like, or the particular approach that they were taking to learning a phrase of a tune. This was evident where Bríd exclaimed in a whistle lesson that, ‘it’s hard to get there isn’t it... I’m spending too long on the F sharp!’ (*ibid.*), and suggested that we attempt certain ornaments, for example, to ‘go for the cut from the E’ (*ibid.*). Significantly, the teachers’ confidence in learning the whistle shifted to an increased confidence in assuming the teacher-as-MEP role. During a lesson, I suggested to Bríd that she wait for a few weeks before teaching a particular ornament to the class. This
subtle transition to teacher-as-MEP, as well as her willingness to challenge herself and her students, emerged where she responded that:

Bríd: It might be a good one to do straight away I think, because it's a nicer sound, and they mightn't be used to it.  

(Bríd meeting 05/10/2009)

When each teacher's ability to play a scale or tune increased during their lesson, along with their ability to verbalise what the process entailed, so also did their input into how the whistle classes would proceed during the following week. Some weeks into the study, I suggested to Bríd that she should teach her class the D major and G major scales, but she did not seem convinced of this approach, keenly suggesting that instead she ‘maybe give them one phrase [of a new tune]’ (Bríd meeting 28/09/2009) to motivate and encourage the students:

Bríd: Because I think that if they come out thinking... ‘I played a tune’ [and smiles]... there’s something... I mean everyone learns scales!! Then if they could even do one [tune]... I got through the scales and...

(Bríd meeting 28/09/2009)

Amanda and Bríd’s increase in confidence in teaching the whistle during Phase 2 was also marked by my transition from participant-as-observer to a purely observer role (as discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.3 (ii)). That is, the classroom dynamic changed from a situation in the earlier stages of Phase 2 where Bríd, for example, would ask if I would ‘lead’ the whistle class, to one where there was barely any acknowledgement of the fact that I was present in the room, with the students-as-LEP completely focussed on the teacher-as-MEP.

Emergence of the Student as More Experienced Person

Another role which emerged during Phase 2 was that of the student-as-MEP. The potential for the student-as-MEP role was highlighted quite succinctly, although it was in the context of emphasising the student-as-LEP. This occurred where Bríd asked the students, ‘Would anyone like to try [to play a tune] who isn’t a traditional musician’, before asking a student who volunteered, ‘So you’re not a traditional musician?’; after this student played, Bríd commented once again, ‘That’s excellent, wasn’t it? Excellent,
and you’re not a traditional player?’ (Group A observation 01/10/2009). When discussing the possibility of encouraging students who played traditional music to teach students who did not play traditional music, or did not have as much experience, Bríd was particularly open to the idea, commenting 'sure.. sure... yeah... well there are some whistle players [in the class] so that would be good' (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009). Bríd elaborated on the idea, although her reasoning had an exam-orientated focus:

Bríd: that always works because I’ve had great recorder players now, and they’ve taught people recorder for me and they’ve done the exam... the Junior Certificate exam... and I’m telling you that the girl who has taught them is more nervous on the day of the exam than the child... and they play duets and everything with them... it’s lovely... it’s lovely to see it... it’s great, it’s brilliant! (Bríd meeting 17/09/2009)

In Section 6.1.1 and Section 6.1.4 it was suggested that students who had prior experience playing traditional music before the investigation, had a greater cognitive ability to engage with the music at a reflective mode of aural and/or kinesthetic awareness. Given that several students indicated that they had experienced learning moments during ‘visiting musician’ classes (see below), it could be deduced that a student-as-MEP (such as Chloe) has the potential to provide learning moments for the student(s)-as-LEP (and also teacher(s)-as-LEP), and lead ‘less experienced’ students to a more optimum experience of traditional music. It was also observed that when students brought their experiences of traditional music from ‘outside’ the classroom, other students professed to having experienced learning moments; as such, these students could also be considered as having ‘greater maturity of experience’. The acknowledgement of the student as a more experienced person is important if contextualised through Freire’s interpretation of a dialogical teacher-student, and through Dewey’s (1938) principle of continuity of experience, where the more experienced person sees the direction that an experience is heading, and judges what actions are actually conducive to growth and what are detrimental. The following LOCIT exchange describes a learning moment during the study where Ailbhe, a Group A student, shared a story about her granddad which connected to a sean nós song that the students had listened to on YouTube; it would seem from this discussion that Ailbhe was effectively positioned in an MEP role by her fellow students:
Table 6.19 Group A responses on student as MEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Ailbhe     | That was your learning moment? Do you have anything else? Down the back?  
           | Oh yeah it was said about Ailbhe’s granddad... was it her granddad?  
           | It was her granduncle  
           | It was my granddad’s  
           | And why did that little story stick out more so than the other 40 minutes?  
           | Because there was a student saying it. Because there was a connection. It was just remembered that...  
           | So it sort of made it... what did that connection do?  
           | The whole class got involved.  
           | It makes you remember it. It makes you go... ‘oh yeah that was Ailbhe’s whatever...’  
           | So what was your learning moment? (to teacher)  
           | I think again the connection again with Ailbhe’s granddad... I just felt that the class changed at that moment... it just kind of made it real or something. We had just listened to this lovely song and then the next day we realised that your granddad had collected it... it had come from him. Isn’t that right... so the whole recording was made possible because of him. It just made that... that to me was the learning moment. It just made it real. |

Emergence of the Visiting Musician as More Experienced Person

In Phase 1, it was discovered that 58% of teachers knew of another member of staff who played traditional music, and 66% knew of a local traditional musician. Furthermore, the pre-Phase 2 student questionnaire discovered that just over half of all students indicated that they knew of someone from their locality who played Irish traditional music (Group A n=10 and Group B n=6), while 4 students were not sure if they knew someone from their locality who played (Group A n=3 and Group B n=1). As a result, the phenomenon of the ‘visiting musician’ was an action research intervention which each teacher and I wished to explore. On agreement with Amanda and Bríd, two experienced traditional musicians; Leah (harp and banjo) and Marie (song) were each invited to visit each group during Phase 2. The purpose of these visits was to explore the impact, if any, that bringing a traditional musician into the classroom would have on the students’ experience of the genre. While I discussed with each musician the general nature of my research,206 I decided that I would not direct them towards any specific purpose or methodology, but simply asked them to demonstrate their instruments, chat with the students about their experience learning and playing traditional music, and answer any questions that the students might have. The students were aware of the instruments that the musicians played and had little background information on the

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206 This was a similar approach that which I took with Úna, the dance teacher.
musicians themselves, and in the preceding classes, were asked to formulate questions that they would like to ask the musicians.

In terms of Marie visiting the Group A, Bríd firmly placed Marie in a MEP role and outlined her hopes for the musician’s visit in a pre-visit meeting:

Bríd: The main thing would be that they see her love of it and enthusiasm you know... and that it is a living art... I think that’s the main thing... ‘Aw I never thought about songs before’ and ‘aw look it she was fantastic’ and if she can show us that enthusiasm... that’s going to be better than ‘can you show us these types of songs’ or anything.

(Brid meeting 05/10/2009)

During each musician’s visit, the students received a broad and personal outline of the musician’s experience in the tradition, for example: how and where they learned their music; specific insight into their respective instruments; musical influences; discussions on their own personal musical style; matters related to the health and wellbeing of musicians; and life as a touring professional musician. The following account is an example of one such discussion, where Marie alludes to how she was enculturated into the tradition from an early age:

I’m from West Kerry... west of Dingle... that’s where I was raised for most of my life... my father worked from the islands... and so we went around to different islands when I was a small child... and in a way I think that that was an amazing experience when you’re really, really little... we just had loads of freedom... There was a lot of music and a lot of Irish and it was just very natural... it was never a thing that I went and learned... it was never a thing that I formally took training in... it was just... I was really fortunate to come from an area that was so rich culturally that it was just all around... and you’d just pick it up... the way you’d pick up any songs... the same way you hear things on the radio and they go into your head and suddenly know the words of it... it was things like that you know. So I just started as a really young child... sitting in a session... playing the whistle and not even really knowing the tunes... and probably playing all the wrong notes... and I remember my dad would be here and then there’d be a few older... elderly fellas really that would have all been in their sixties... and they were very kind and never told me to shut up although they probably should have... and they were very encouraging... and what was a part of that as well was that there was always singing.

(Group A observation 12/10/2009)

Interestingly, Group A students suggested that the musicians’ visits were ‘more interesting [than regular classes]’ (Group A LOCIT Discussion) given that ‘something was actually going on’ (ibid.), rather than ‘doing it out of the book [where] it could become boring and monotonous’ (ibid.). The LOCIT responses from Group A regarding
Leah’s visit, as well as Bríd’s response that the ‘visits’ were ‘good for me too’ (ibid.) seem to place both Leah and Marie in the roles of MEP.

| Researcher | So we didn’t get watching too much of that but if you can remember back to that class or what happened when Marie came into sing or when Leah came with the harp? |
| Student    | She was so good |
| Researcher | Or when Mairead came in to dance... how did you feel about those classes? |
| Student    | I loved the harp one. |
| Student    | They were more interesting. |
| Student    | They were much more interesting that just talking... something is actually going on... when they’re showing you how to play their instrument... the parts of it... you are looking at something interesting... something that you don’t see everyday. They are somebody new. |
| Bríd       | Awwww hurt!! |
| Student    | You know what I mean. |
| Bríd       | It was very good for me too! |
| Researcher | What stood out for you? |
| Student    | The harp one. |
| Bríd       | Why the harp one? |
| Student    | She had so much information on it. |
| Researcher | The same information might be in your book so what’s different? |
| Student    | She was doing some really cool stuff... like some more lively... hard to get words. |
| Student    | When you’re doing it out of the book it could become boring and monotonous... |
| Bríd       | What??? |
| Students   | [Laugh] |
| Student    | Like boring when you’re speaking on the one tone... but when she was there and in front of everybody she was really nice... she was lovely |
| Researcher | She really brought it out of the book... but you don’t necessarily need someone to come into the class for that to happen... like when we had the little stories... that’s bringing it out of the book and into the classroom |

Table 6.20 Group A responses on ‘visiting musician’ as MEP
6.2.2. Principle of Participatory Performance

The principle of participatory performance borrows heavily from Turino’s (2008) specialist type of artistic practice’ (p.26) of the same name and is underpinned by Small’s (1998) view that the meaning of a music performance is deeply entwined within a complex spiral of relationships between performers and the world outside the performance space (p.48). With the guidance of Turino (2008) and Small (1998), participatory performance and the learning which occurred in this social means of engagement emerged as an integral performance practice during Phase 2; as such, it is identified herein as a principle of engagement. Participatory performance was implicitly acknowledged by participants throughout the study as being highly valued and a central pillar of their experience of traditional music. During the investigation’s introductory class for example, images which depicted traditional music in various contexts were shown to the students in each group with a view to ‘breaking the ice’ and generating some initial discussion around the theme of Irish traditional music. During Group B’s introductory class, Amanda infers the notion of participatory performance when one student recalls going to a local pub to hear an Irish traditional music concert. To this, Amanda enquires if it was a ‘concert or a session’ (Group B observation

207 Discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.11.
Participatory performance has emerged as a principle of educative experience given its position as a phenomenon through which participants engaged with and experienced Irish traditional music at various stages over the course of Phase 2. Furthermore, the principle of participatory performance highlights once again the interdependence that exists within the theory of educative experience where each principle relies on and supports the other principles. For instance, the principle of participatory performance and the aforementioned principle of transitioning roles were at times overlapping where they each acted as a means through which participants engaged with the principles of transmission, towards achieving educative experience.

In particular, the occasions where students were observed to engage in participatory performance were the body rhythms and dance class with each group, where the students performed together on instruments; an Irish traditional music fusion class (Group B); and the end of term gathering. As the fusion class and the end of term gathering have not been widely discussed throughout this chapter, the following two paragraphs give a brief background to these events, following which they are discussed in terms of their association with participatory performance.

The fusion class, as it became known, came about through collaboration with Amanda, given the requirement to consider themes of ‘tradition and innovation’ and ‘fusion in Irish traditional music’ for the Leaving Certificate examination. At a meeting, Amanda referred to notes which supported her students’ preparation for the LC music examinations (as discussed in Chapter 5 Section 5.2.2); one of the sections in this pamphlet dealt with the area of fusion. With Horslips described in Long’s Soundscapes (2006) as ‘the first band to successfully merge traditional Irish music with rock’ (p.115), we decided that Group B could work on arranging the band’s version of An Dearg Doom which used the traditional tune, O’Neill’s March, as an electric guitar riff.

The end of term gathering was organised as an event to conclude Phase 2, where each group and the teachers had the opportunity to meet in a performance space in Group B’s school, and play the tunes that they had learned during the investigation; I also invited

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208 That is, a concert involving a presentational-orientated performance, and a session involving a participatory-orientated performance.
four traditional musicians to perform with and for the students at this event. This event is interesting in the context of the principles of engagement in that, while each group had prepared to engage in what I describe below as ‘presentational performance’, a strong participatory element emerged as the event got underway. In fact, a Group B student commented during LOCIT that a learning moment for him occurred while ‘rapping against that [Group A] school’ (Group B LOCIT Discussion). As such, the end of term gathering was observed to incorporate an element of participatory performance and presentational performance.

Three particular occasions, the fusion class, the end of term gathering, and the dance class are now considered where they apply to what Turino (2008) presents as the roles, musical values, and sounds and practices in participatory performance (pp.28-51):

- In participatory performance, participants actively contribute to the sound and motion of a musical event through dancing, singing, clapping, and playing musical instruments and each of these activities is considered integral to the performance (ibid., p.28)

**Fusion class:** As Amanda planned the fusion class with Group B, there was a general consensus that all students were going to take part, regardless of musical experience or ability, with students encouraging one another to participate. There was widespread enthusiasm for the performance activity that would take place, with much discussion regarding who would play which instrument, and how they would bring their instruments to school the following day, for example. Amanda addressed each student during this class and asked how they would like to participate, before concluding, ‘Does everyone have something to do so?’ (Group B observation 14/10/2009). The instruments utilised in the fusion class were acoustic guitar, electric guitar, harp, clarinet, tin whistles, keyboards, flute, violin, and drums.

**Dance class:** At the beginning of each group’s dance class, Úna referred to the social function of dance in an historical context, in terms of how people used to connect through dance. With each group, there seemed to be an unspoken understanding between Úna, the students, and teachers, that everyone was to take part, regardless of previous experience; this was evident given the types of dances that Úna brought to each group, and also in the manner in which the Úna facilitated the classes.
End of term gathering: Students were observed to be energetic and experiencing diminished self-consciousness while clapping and tapping along as they focussed on fellow students who were participating.

- **In fully participatory occasions there are no artist-audience distinctions, only participants and potential participants performing different roles** (ibid., p.26).

According to Turino, during participatory music and dance occasions, there is a subtle and sometimes not so subtle pressure to participate, or a sense that not participating is shirking a social responsibility. During the aforementioned participatory activities, all participants were welcome to perform body rhythms, dance, and play music, and the inclusion of students with a wide range of musical abilities created a unique dynamic.

Dance class: During LOCIT, a student in Group B referred to this characteristic of participatory performance with regard to the dance class; in a ‘typical’ setting for set-dancing, he envisaged a scenario where there would be no artist-audience distinctions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.21 Group B responses on participatory performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

End of term gathering: There was a heightened expectation that everyone would take part, especially towards the end of the event when everyone seemed to have relaxed considerably. This characteristic of participatory performance was most noticeable when students excitedly and repeatedly encouraged and called on other students to play a tune or dance. The lack of artist-audience distinctions in this context created an atmosphere where unplanned, spontaneous performances occurred, and each participant had the potential to perform if he/she wished.
• Participatory values place a priority on performing in ways that invite participation (ibid., p. 33)

Fusion class: Amanda ensured that all students could contribute to the performance in some way. For example, in a participant-as-observer role during this class I taught the tune by ear to students who were played whistle, flute, and clarinet. To ensure maximum participation in performance, Amanda suggested that some students who were less experienced on melody instruments could possibly play ‘drone notes’.

Amanda: For the melody maybe.. you’ve a good few tin-whistles so maybe an idea might be holding certain notes.. like drones..

(Group B observation 14/10/2009)

Dance class: The priority of performing in ways that invite participation was also deeply embedded in each group’s dance class. Úna structured this class in a way which allowed everyone to participate regardless of previous dancing experience. For example, Úna’s first interaction with students was to ask them to march along to the music, before presenting them with more challenging movements. Furthermore, during the end of study gathering, participation was encouraged along each mode of the CCKP, from students tapping along (i.e., remote kinesis), to a student who danced for the rest of the students (i.e., reflective kinesis).

• Participatory performance also allows for experts in a tradition to participate who might participate as musicians, dancers, or dance callers (ibid., p.32)

The accommodation as ‘experts’ of visiting musicians, dance teacher, traditional musicians who played at the end of term gathering, and researcher during the study and in each of the aforementioned participatory performance contexts, supports this characteristic of participatory performance.

• One’s primary attention is on the activity, on the doing, and on the other participants, rather than on an end product that results from the activity, while quality is also gauged by how participants ‘feel’ during the activity (ibid., pp.28-29)

During each of the aforementioned participatory performance contexts, the emphasis was on the doing and the process rather than on the end product; this indicates that the
experience of engaging and the social relations which were being realised through the activities were of significant importance. At no time was significant emphasis placed on an ‘end’ performance, rather the value of each activity rested on the participants’ activity in the moment. From observing the end of term gathering, which Bríd described as being ‘fantastic’, participants seemed to be experiencing intense enjoyment with the participants’ good humour, shouts of encouragement to fellow students, and the general air of excitement supporting this finding.

- The quality of performance is ultimately judged on the level of participation achieved (ibid., p.29)

After participating in body rhythms activity, dancing, group whistle playing, and the end of term gathering, there was a general sense of elation immediately after the students had performed together, characterised by cheering, clapping, and good humoured conversation. Obviously, the quality of the performance in terms of the sound and motion was important, but there was an overriding sense that the level of participation achieved during the activity was of value to the participants. For the final fifteen minutes or so of the end of term gathering, there was a heightened sense of participation, with all students performing at one mode or another. Students who were not taking part in a core activity of playing or dancing, ensured their participation by shouting words of encouragement, clapping along and tapping their feet.\(^{209}\)

\(^{209}\) This is revealing if one considers where the participants were engaging during these moments in terms of the principles of aural awareness and kinesthetic awareness.
6.2.3. Principle of Presentational Performance

Figure 6.21 Illustration of the Principle of Presentational Performance

The next principle of engagement, and the sixth principle of educative experience, involves another type of performance activity which emerged during Phase 2, namely presentational performance (Turino 2008). Presentational performance with its characteristic of artist-audience separation occurred for example, when students, visiting musicians, and musicians at the traditional music concert which students attended provided music for others. In contrast to participatory performance as described above, examples of presentational performance include where each group attended the traditional music band Buille’s concert at a local performance venue, and when a ‘student-as-artist’ performed for his/her fellow ‘students-as-audience’. In terms of the latter example, LOCIT feedback (Students’ Responses 5.32) suggests that Chloe, the student in question, was engaging in presentational performance in this moment, which interestingly, provided the other students with an associated learning moment. Furthermore, this supports the theory that presentation performance as a principle of

\[\text{This type of performance is distinct from participatory performance for reasons outlined in Chapter 2 Section 2.1.1}\]

\[\text{This concert is discussed in Section 6.1.1 Aural Awareness Mode 1: Remote Listening.}\]

\[\text{This is discussed in Section 6.1.1 Aural Awareness Mode 5: Reflective Listening in terms of Chloe’s performance for Group A students.}\]
engagement is a means by which artist and audience can engage to some extent with the principles of transmission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>We have our tin whistles and the teacher is getting people to come up and perform tin whistle. Chloe, she goes up first and plays perfectly with added ornamentation. Chloe’s really good at the whistle... put in nice ornamentation... she finds it, so easy. She plays traditional music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>When Chloe started playing the class paid more attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Chloe was playing. Chloe was teaching. The rest of the class was learning. Everyone was listening!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A sub-theme of presentational performance is the concept of practice. Turino (2008) includes ‘preparation for presentations’ in his discussion of presentational performance, where in the presentational field, ‘rehearsals tend to be much more goal directed and detail orientated’ (p.53). Although practice was alluded to only in passing during Phase 2, when Bríd asked Group B to practice a tune at home and then perform it during class, this sub-theme is deemed important as a critical incident. The following extracts refer to (a) my meeting with Bríd and (b) when she presented her idea to Group B

Bríd (a): In fact, what might be a nice exercise for them to do is... I wonder would I give them the tune, not put in any ornaments and tell them for next week to put the ornament in, ‘you put ornaments into it using the cut and the slide’ and get them to do it and ask them individually and see what they come back with, rather than... I wonder would we do that and see?

(Bríd meeting 28/09/2009)

Bríd (b): Won’t you keep practicing that, take the tune again, and take it home with you, and practice it until you’re really comfortable, you don’t have to play it for us... just until you’re really comfortable doing it... and fit in what you can... and there’s no rule where you can or can’t fit in something... it’s up to you... that’s what’s really nice about traditional music isn’t it... where in classical music it’s all written out isn’t it.

(Group B observation 01/10/2012)

Other examples of presentational performance were observed at the end of term gathering where each group prepared and performed set items for the other group; towards the end of the event, a Group B student spontaneously began a solo performance of a Horslips’ tune; another danced a reel step while others clapped along; and a Group A student played a tune on the fiddle called The Gravel Walks. What characterised these performances as being presentational was the fact that the general
understanding was that these were solo performances and others were not expected to
join in; extensive variation and individual virtuosity was emphasised; and generally
speaking they had organised beginnings and endings.

This said however, although each type of performance occurred at the end of term
gathering, a certain continuum was observed to exist between presentational and
participatory performance; a blurring of the line between each principle of engagement,
so to speak. For example, a student from Group B began a solo performance of a tune
on his concertina, with a general understanding that this involved an artist-audience
separation; the student-as-artist performed, and the ‘audience’ listened. As the
performance proceeded however, this understanding seemed to shift, and several
musicians began to play *along with* the student, one after the other, until the entire
student body was participating in some way. The transitioning of performance types
was only observed on a few occasions during Phase 2, but as a critical incident, it is
perhaps worthy of further investigation.

Finally, perhaps the most explicit reference to presentational performance is Marie’s
insightful account to Group A of her experience as a member of a touring, professional
Irish traditional music band. Much of what Marie referred to aligns with Turino’s
interpretation of presentational performance (See Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1). The
relevant extract from Marie’s account is included in its entirety as a useful comparison
to the previously discussed participatory performance:

I toured with the lads for.. well I’m still with them.. but we toured very, very heavily for
about five years. We did two-hundred gigs a year so we were away from home
probably nine months of the year or something like that... you’d live out of a suitcase...
you got this amazing life education that I don’t think that you can get in any other way
other than by touring and it’s hard... like it’s not glamourous... it’s really, really, really
hard and your coping with all sorts of things all the time. Things like learning how to
look after yourself.. learning how to cope with different cultures and different
experiences... learning how to handle a gig... a proper full-on concert where you’re...
you’re basically MC’ing in front of a couple of thousand people and you’ve to keep the
show on the road... whether you feel up to it or not... you know... just learning how to be
I suppose a professional musician... and there’s a steep learning curve there... from
doing your little pub session or home gigs or whatever they are... to suddenly landing
up on the stage or... doing music festivals where you’ve got fifteen or twenty thousand
people... it’s just completely shocking... it was just a lot of stuff to take in for a few
years... and it was amazing... I wouldn’t change it for the world as hard as it was.. it was
incredible... and anyone that’s been on the road has that shared experience... there’s that
thing that you only really get if you’ve done it...

(Marie Group B 12/10/2009)
6.2.4. Principle of Media Integration

Our learning moment was when we were talking about the Sean Nós and the regional styles. I think the whole class was learning and participating and everyone looked interested and was looking at YouTube.

(Group A LOCIT Discussion)

![Figure 6.22 Illustration of the Principle of Media Integration](image)

It was previously outlined (Chapter 2 Section 2.12) how print, electronic, and new media have played and continue to play an integral role in the transmission of traditional music in contexts beyond school music education. The principle of media integration has emerged as the seventh principle of the theory of educative experience. Findings related to this principle have emerged from Phase 1 data\textsuperscript{213} with respect to the use of CDs, DVDs, and television programmes as classroom resources, the pre-Phase 2 student questionnaire, and Phase 2 classroom observations.

Revisiting the pre-Phase 2 student questionnaire and the students’ use of various media to engage in traditional music beyond school music education, it was found that a significant number of students had purchased a traditional music CD, DVD or downloaded traditional music from the internet (Group A \(n=5\) and Group B \(n=6\)), with one student ‘not sure’ if they had or not. This is an important finding as it highlights the resources available to students in terms of listening to Irish traditional music, and in

\textsuperscript{213} See Chapter 4, Section 4.6.
terms of the emergence of new media as engaging the students in music experience. Moreover, at least half of the students believed that a family member at home did have recordings of traditional music (Group A \( n=10 \) and Group B \( n=5 \)). As regards the students’ awareness of traditional music TV programmes, a minority of 10 students indicated they were aware of such programmes (Group A \( n=6 \) and Group B \( n=4 \)).

During Phase 2, the integration of various media into classroom activity was clearly evident, most notably audio recordings and YouTube clips, with the use of audio recordings being the most pronounced.\(^{214}\) Amanda used audio recordings to a considerable degree in terms of integrating workbook activities for class and homework, with students being directed to answer pre-determined questions supplied by the workbook. CD recordings were often used during body rhythm activity to allow the students to engage in kinetic activity. \( \Upsilon \) also used audio recordings during each group’s dance class to engage the students in the prefatory mode. When teaching Group B, \( \Upsilon \) played an audio recording and instructed the students, saying, ‘ready... I want you to listen to the music before you start’ (Group B observation 12/11/2009). During the same class, \( \Upsilon \) played another audio recording and enquired as to what type of tune was being played; when the students answered incorrectly, \( \Upsilon \) proceeded to contextualise the recording with associated formal knowledge.

The use of new media was the next most prevalent form of media integration during Phase 2; more specifically, the use of YouTube as a tool for engaging students. This is both encouraging, and a cause for consideration, given Waldron’s (2012) belief that as a field, ‘music educators have not fully understood or utilized the power of the Internet in facilitating informal music learning in convergent on- and offline communities (p.12). For example, Amanda commented that ‘the video clips are invaluable as a teaching resource’ (Amanda meeting 12/11/2009). An analysis of those classes where YouTube formed part of a teaching and learning strategy demonstrates how it was used as an effective way of engaging the students in remote and prefatory listening; remote kinesis; and obser-visual awareness. It also served to provide contextual, formal knowledge on traditional music themes highlighted by the Junior and Leaving Certificate music curricula. For example, during LOCIT, Group A students indicated that they had learnt

\(^{214}\) Print media was only referred to in the study in terms of the students requirement to learn information on the various Irish traditional music collectors as a requirement for the Leaving and Junior Certificate examinations.
about various traditional music areas\textsuperscript{215} through ‘watching the videos... and the discussion about stuff’; ‘listening to YouTube... and writing...’, and learning about various regional styles of traditional music ‘by listening to clips from YouTube and looking at the sheets’; ‘It was very good’, another commented (Group A LOCIT Discussion). Bríd also referred to the role of new media where she suggested the use of online learning to engage the students in self-directed learning:

Bríd: Just put it under research. Under research, ‘look it up’... ‘look it up online’!. They’ll do that. They’re good at that, and that you want the names of the players, and the instruments that they play, their origins where they’re from.

(\textit{Bríd meeting 05/10/2009})

Finally, a Group B student (pseudonym Luke) indicated during LOCIT, upon watching a clip of a class where YouTube had been integrated, that his learning moment was ‘hearing the commentary on the [YouTube] clip... there was extra stuff on the [YouTube] clip not just music... actually saying that this is about the city and stuff...’ (Group B LOCIT Discussion). The YouTube clip in question involved an interview with and concert by the visiting musician (Maire) who visited Group B several days later. The integration of media was an effective principle of engagement during Phase 2 and it complemented the aforementioned principles of transitioning roles, participatory performance, and presentational performance. However, given that students primarily engaged with media at the remote modes of the transmission continua, highlights the huge potential for the integration of media in school music education. The potential for media integration is also highlighted from the Phase 1 exploratory survey where it was discovered that in 67\% of schools there were no resources available (CD, DVD etc.) to facilitate engagement with traditional music beyond regular class time.

\subsection*{6.2.5. Principles of Educative Experience and the Formal-Ininformal Position}

With the principles of educative experience, the transmission of traditional music is seen as a much more complex affair than any formal-informal learning dichotomy

\textsuperscript{215}For example, Group A students highlighted the following themes: Sean-nós singing tradition; uilleann pipes; the reel; the slipjig; key of G major; the tin whistle; Altan; Connemara style; Sean Ó Riada; ceil\textsuperscript{f} band; The Chieftans; The Harp Tradition; The Belfast Harp Festival etc..
would suggest, and the usefulness of the informal-formal position in light of the potential of a theory of educative experience is questioned. Two scenarios which illustrate the complex formal-informal processes of learning are now presented.

Luke’s (Group B student) educative experience of listening to and watching a YouTube clip of Marie (visiting musician) can be plotted on the theory of educative experience as illustrated in Figure 6.23. For example, as the illustration at the top depicts, Luke engaged with traditional music through the principle of transitioning roles\textsuperscript{216} and the principle of media integration. Through this engagement, traditional music was transmitted in the following ways (bottom illustration): remote listening, as Luke’s intention was not to continue along the CCAP in this instance, as this would have involved the intention to play an instrument/sing; remote kinesis, as Luke was observed tapping along to the music as he listened and responded; and, observer-visual awareness (as Luke watched the YouTube clip).

Modeling Luke’s experience in this moment highlights the formal qualities (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4.1) of this organised activity, as well as the informal qualities of the conversation which occurred with Maire several days after Luke (and Group B) watched the YouTube clip. In this way, the potential for an educative experience of traditional music to possess formal and informal learning characteristics is identified.

\textsuperscript{216} With Luke as less-experienced-person and Amanda as more-experienced person.
Principle of Transitioning Roles of More Experienced Person (MEP) and Less Experienced Person (LEP)
Principle of Media Integration
Principle of Observer-Visual Awareness
Remote Kinesis mode of Principle of Kinesthetic Awareness
Remote Listening mode of Principle of Aural Awareness

Figure 6.23 Illustrated example of Luke’s (Group B student) experience of Irish traditional music when watching a YouTube clip
In a second example, a Group A student (pseudonym Roisín) spoke of having learned a tune at home from her brother by ‘picking it up by ear’, which she then played for the other students in her class.\textsuperscript{217} The theory of educative experience allows us to interpret this learning situation as follows.

(1) through engaging in the principles of interchanging roles\textsuperscript{218} and participatory performance, Roisín, as an intrinsically motivated student, progressed along the CCAP from remote listening to reflective listening. This progression possibly occurred with the support and intention of her brother-as-MEP. Bearing in mind Folkestad’s (2006, p.138) thoughts on intentionality, this could potentially qualify as a learning experience with embedded ‘formal’ qualities.

(2) At home, Roisín engaged with the music through ‘practice’, a sub-section of the principle of presentational performance, thereby increasing her cognitive functioning and establishing herself in the role of MEP. This interaction has more formal qualities associated with it.

(3) In Group B’s classroom, with this newly acquired experience, Roisín-as-MEP then stood in front of Group B to play the tune. In doing this, Roisín engaged with the principles of interchanging roles (as student-as-MEP) and presentational performance (as artist) as a means of achieving what I have described as reflective listening. At the same time, the Group A students engaged in remote listening and obser-visual awareness through the principles of presentational performance (as audience) and interchanging roles (as less experienced persons). The learning that occurred here has characteristics of both formal and informal learning.

(4) Although it did not occur in this instance, Roisín, as MEP, could then potentially lead the other students (as LEP) to a more experienced place within the principles of transmission, as Bríd did throughout Phase 2 when teaching whistle to the group.

Considering these examples, the transmission of traditional music is seen as a much more complex affair than a formal-informal learning dichotomy would suggest, and the usefulness of the informal-formal position in light of the potential of a theory of educative experience in questioned.

\textsuperscript{217} This moment was identified during LOCIT as a ‘lightbulb’ or learning moment.

\textsuperscript{218} Roisín-as-LEP and her brother-as-MEP.
6.3. Principle of Flow Experience

In Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.1) the concept of flow was discussed in relation to recent scholarship in the wider field of music education (Custodero 1999; Custodero 2002; St. John 2006; Dillon 2007). The subjective nature of the flow state in conjunction with the interpretative nature of observing flow experience in music making activities make certainty of occurrence impossible. Nonetheless, the principle of flow is proposed as an underpinning principle of a theory of educative experience. It is argued that the participants’ engagement with the principles of transmission through one or more of the principles of engagement provided the conditions that supported flow. That is, flow was deemed to occur when appropriately challenging conditions were put in place that allowed the learner to advance their cognitive functioning through engagement with the principles of transmission. Furthermore, the meaning gained by the participants was linked to the nature of these experiences, i.e., the particular synthesis of principles that was experienced, and intrinsic motivation was derived from the success of this synthesis. When this occurred, the common characteristics of the phenomenology of flow were observed. Although it was not feasible to consider Phase 2 in its entirety through the lens of the phenomenon of flow, it is suggested on consideration of the activity of body rhythms (discussed below) that the nature of the principles of transmission and engagement identified throughout the study lend themselves to potential flow experience.

Figure 6.24 Illustration of the Principle of Flow Experience
As I referred to in Chapter 2, Custodero (1999) discusses the interface between cognition and flow and proposes the concept of flow as a window on cognitive strategies. This is one of the reasons that ‘cognitive function’ has been discussed in relation to both the principles of transmission and the principles of engagement. The findings from this investigation resonate deeply with Custodero’s hypothesis. They suggest that many of the ‘learning moments’ identified by students during LOCIT were in fact a parallelism between (a) the employment of cognitive strategies to maintain flow through increasing challenge levels and (b) the notion of an intrinsically motivated transformational imperative.

Firstly, it is proposed that the very nature of the principles of transmission, that is, cognitively strategic cyclical processes of progression where the level of challenge and/or skills increased as students (and teachers) progressed along continua, ensured that they lent themselves to the achievement of flow. If we can assume through the previously discussed findings of this research that activity along the modes of each of these principles did get increasingly complex, this then provides clear insight as to the state of cognitive progression and flow which was occurring while the participants were engaging within the principles of transmission. The interpretation of the principles of transmission as conducive to flow has additional multilayered meaning. For example, they align with Dewey’s principle of continuity of experience, where experiences that are worthwhile educationally, such as those which occur along the inherent continua of the principles of aural awareness and kinesthetic awareness ‘should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality’ (1938 / 1997, p. 47). Furthermore, the fact that the students’ engagement with the principles of transmission required an increase in challenge and/or skill, perhaps provides a solution to Custodero’s problem of how to maintain the flow state in terms of traditional music in post-primary music education, or in her words:

The desire to maintain the flow state poses a problem: “How can this activity be made more complex?”

(Custodero 1999, p. 4)

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219 cyclical continuum of aural progression (CCAP); cyclical continuum of kinesthetic progression (CCKP) with associated kinesthetic-aural progression (CCKAP); obser-visual awareness; tactile awareness.
Secondly, it is suggested that overlapping principles of engagement\textsuperscript{220} can be employed (and were, during Phase 2) to realise and sustain flow. For example, the principle of transitioning roles was employed where more experienced persons (teacher-as-MEP) guided less experienced persons (students-as-LEP) to experience flow (during body rhythms, as outlined below) and in doing so, construct their own musical understandings. The principle of media integration and the principle of transitioning roles were employed when Group B students listened to a polka via a YouTube clip, before Bríd proceeded to teach the students through a dialogical teacher-student relationship. This resonates with the importance that Dillon (2007) places on the relationship between teacher and student to form intrinsically motivating environment, and the place of Freire’s dialogical teacher-student as having a greater maturity of experience in evaluating each experience of the student. Of course, it is also true to say that cognitive strategies were employed by individuals themselves, during intrinsically motivational participatory and presentational performance for example, in order to achieve flow.

It is important to note that while the principles of obser-visual awareness and tactile awareness were not identified as leading directly to flow experience (although further investigation could potentially prove otherwise), these principles were found to hold essential supporting roles towards the realisation of flow for the investigation’s participants. For example, obser-visual awareness was found to address challenges presented by the CCAP and CCKP, and tactile awareness was found to address challenges presented by the CCAP in particular. It could be said therefore that ideally, it was the appropriate self-selected (by the learner) combination of one or more of the principles of transmission which led to the experience of flow.

\textit{Csikszenmihalyi’s Flow, Enjoyment, and Kinesthetic Activity}

Although the experience of flow was suggested by the participants’ activities and responses at various stages during the investigation, the body rhythms activity in particular can be interrogated in terms of how it provided enjoyment for the students and was conducive to the common characteristics of the phenomenology of flow (see

\textsuperscript{220} participatory performance; presentational performance; transitioning roles; media integration.
Chapter 2 Section 2.2.1). Given Csikszentmihalyi’s acknowledgement that enjoyable experiences are not necessarily always educative experiences, enjoyable experiences in the study were considered in terms of the reasons why students and teachers enjoyed certain activities; this aspect of the investigation also considers Green’s findings on enjoyment, making music and having autonomy with regard to the experience of popular music in the classroom (2008a, pp.93-117). As mentioned, one of the activities which provided an experience of enjoyment for the students was the kinesthetic activity of body rhythms, as students from each group testified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.23 Group A responses on enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.24 Group B responses on enjoyment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
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<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During many of the body rhythms classes, I observed as students engaged in body rhythms for what seemed like long periods of time, relatively speaking. During this time, many students could be observed either falling out of time, performing a body rhythm movement in the wrong place, speeding up or slowing down, getting lost in the movements; however, they carried on, attempting to connect what they were doing with the music that they were listening to. Interestingly, none of the students showed concern of any nature while any of this was occurring, and no matter how disconnected or haphazard it may have seemed at the time, or if in the words of Bríd they ‘couldn’t keep up’ (Bríd meeting 01/10/2009), they did not stop performing because of it. The students’ tendency to keep going regardless, suggests that the students were having an enjoyable experience. Amanda also referred to the body percussion class being a positive experience saying, ‘It’s great, it’s brilliant what they’re doing with the body
rhythms’ (Amanda meeting 28/09/2009), although her comments afterwards seem to suggest a need for this type of experience in education to be accompanied by formal musical knowledge (see Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2). Of course, as mentioned, the fact that the students were experiencing enjoyment during this activity does not necessarily mean that flow was occurring, so the other conditions of flow are also taken into consideration.

In terms of Csikszenmihalyi’s common characteristics of the phenomenology of flow, firstly it can be said that the body rhythms activity was a challenging one that required skills, and the students were of the understanding that they would complete this activity. The challenging nature of the activity was clear when the students loudly exclaimed when I explained that we would perform the body rhythms to a recorded piece of music. Second, as the student’s observations show (Group B Responses 6.10), deep concentration was required during the activity. For example a student from Group A commented that ‘When after the music, when no one realised that they could do it ... we had to concentrate to be able to do it eventually’ (Group A LOCIT Discussion), while another commented that ‘everyone was concentrating on doing the rhythms’ (ibid.). In addition, action and awareness merged given the requirement of the student to kinaesthetically react to the music that they were listening to. Third, clear goals were outlined by the researcher and teacher prior to commencing the activity that they would be able to perform body rhythm along with tunes in 4/4, 6/8 etc.. Fourth, immediate and regular feedback was also given by each teacher to the students as the activity took place. Fifth, the exchange in Group B Responses 6.10 also raises that aspect of the activity where the students acted with a deep but effortless involvement or ‘zoning out’ and ‘daydreaming’. One student from Group A commented during LOCIT: ‘Yeah, because you were having so much fun you weren’t really concentrating’. A Group B student noted on her LOCIT feedback sheet that ‘the class kind of zoned out and just did it without thinking!’ . Sixth, this experience allowed the students to exercise a sense of control over their actions in that they were invited to contribute to the structure of the body percussion activity, and they could also respond to the music in a way which was personal to them (as was observed when students from Group B began to ‘make up’ their own movements during a body rhythms experience to connect with the music).
The students’ and teachers’ growing confidence to make decisions\textsuperscript{221} in terms of the movement that the body rhythm would take, and the music that they would perform along to, also pointed to a sense of control over their actions. Although the loss of self-consciousness was difficult to measure, Bríd and Amanda often commented on the participation of students who would normally have been too quiet or too reserved to engage in such activities. Finally, the length of time that activities such as body percussion continued for (often taking place after the bell for the next class rang) would suggest a ‘forgetting of the clock’ or a sense that the duration of time was altered during these activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>So what was happening? It was fun? What else happened in that moment? Was it easy or was it difficult or was it just in the middle?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>It was hard. You have to really concentrate when you’re doing it. At the start you were doing it and then you do it for a while and then you just just zone out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Like the moment I am looking for... like you all play music... or are any of you into sports? It’s that moment in sports like when everything comes together and you’re not thinking of all the movements...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>That happened me... like doing it and daydreaming at the same time... that happened me... when we were doing the clapping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Yeah maybe daydreaming is a good way of putting it. And we’ll look at a whistle class in a while with that in mind. Did that happen anyone else?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{6.4. Conclusion}

Taking the ideas of Dewey, Freire, and Csiksgentmihalyi to orientate the concept of an experience as a starting point and a philosophical lens through which to consider the experience of traditional music in school music education, this chapter has outlined nine principles of educative experience for Irish traditional music which emerged over the course of this investigation. These principles of educative experience are the building blocks of a theory of educative experience, and they address both the technical aspects or methods of transmission inherent in an experience of traditional music, as well as the means through which participants were able to engage with the various processes of

\textsuperscript{221} In terms of the students playing whistle, this decision-making characteristic of flow was observed where students and the teachers gained the confidence to contribute to a tune in terms of melodic ornamentation used, with students having the opportunity to interpret a tune on the whistle for homework and then perform it for the class.
transmission. Embedded in this theory are concepts which have consequence for the role that the music teacher and student plays in the transformation of traditional music in this context; a transformation which, as inspired by Freire, would lead to a constant unveiling of new realities for traditional music, where various layers of meaning could be extracted by all who engage with the music in post-primary music education. In addition, the findings of this research suggest that a synthesis of the principles of transmission and engagement, through appropriate practical realisation, supported various cognitive strategies that the experiencing individuals employed towards achieving flow experience. Significantly, the broad and holistic spectrum of experiences across the investigation can be situated and contextualised within the theory of educative experience. As such, the theoretical paradigm provides new meaning to and urge us to reconsider the concepts of ‘informal learning’ and ‘aural learning’ routinely associated with educative experiences in Irish traditional music. That is, the cyclical aspect of the principles of transmission, and the very fact that the experiences of the participants can be situated in the context of the theoretical paradigm (as illustrated throughout this chapter) presents teaching and learning experiences of traditional music as lying along a flux of informal-formal teaching and learning processes. These findings are significant in that they can potentially inform a pedagogy for Irish traditional music in post-primary music education, a pedagogy which would respond to a living, evolving, philosophically charged theory. These, among other considerations are considered in the final chapter of this thesis.
CHAPTER 7

IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC, EXPERIENCE, AND EDUCATION

It is only by understanding what people do as they take part in a musical act that we can hope to understand its nature and the function it fulfills in human life.

(Small 1998, p. 8)

A *living* tradition deserves a *living* and evolving theory in which the pedagogical considerations of Irish traditional music resonate and are deeply embedded; a theory which holds boundless, untiring, and unimagined potential to inform, liberate, and transform within the post-primary music education context. At the same time however, we must recognise that an understanding, through such theory, of the precise nature and function of Irish traditional music in the lives of those who experience it in post-primary music education is something that we might always strive towards, rather than hold firmly within our grasp. Perhaps such a holistic understanding of Irish traditional music and its multilayered, porous, and overlapping experiential contexts will always glimmer faintly in the distance, beckoning us in our quest to reveal and articulate a theory which goes some way to explain what it *means* to experience and ‘live’ Irish traditional music. However, rather than allowing such sentiments to become a source of frustration, resignation, or even exasperation, this thesis has attempted to embrace the sense of ambiguity which very often surrounds contemplation on the experience of Irish traditional music; and while acknowledging that there have been concerns voiced regarding Irish traditional music’s integration into post-primary music education in the past, the research has endeavoured to move beyond such issues by staying close to and within earshot of the music itself, and by looking steadfastly to the music for inspiration, strength, and guidance. What this thesis suggests, not least, is that Irish traditional music, wherever it is experienced, has always been and will always be more than the ‘music material’ itself, although the music is of course the core around which all other activity revolves. Therefore, what this research urges us to pursue is a re-
imagining of Irish traditional music as it is experienced within the post-primary music curricula, where the changing, complex, and dynamic experiential vortexes which underlie Irish traditional music wherever it goes are embraced. In constantly striving to unveil what is important to the tradition, and by challenging the ideological positions from where we might unknowingly construct our musical meanings and values, we can surely move somewhat closer to understanding the nature and function that Irish traditional music can fulfill, not only in the lives of post-primary music teachers and students, but in the lives of all those whose experience overlaps with this educational and experiential context.

This thesis has attempted to traverse this complex musical landscape and shine light on the nature of experience of traditional music by investigating, through a deeply reflexive and tripartite approach (that is, considering philosophical, theoretical, and practical aspects), what music students and teachers ‘do’ as they engage with and experience the music in the classroom. With this approach in mind, the main focus of this thesis has been its conceptualisation of a theory of educative experience for the transmission of traditional music in this context. To ensure that this theory remained centred around the needs of traditional music and its multilayered experiential contexts, a philosophical habitus was orientated based on the concept of experience; a habitus within which the emerging theory could rest, resonate, and evolve.

As has been outlined throughout this thesis, an investigation across two distinct phases was designed to deal with this investigation’s multifarious issues, address the central research questions, and arrive at this thesis’ concluding thoughts. For example, during Phase 1, which aligned with the first stage of an action research process (see Chapter 3, Section 3.4.1), a broad underlying problem in an everyday post-primary music teaching situation, and the desire of a cross-section of music teachers for some kind of change and improvement were identified through an exploratory post-primary music teachers’ survey. In response to Phase 1, Phase 2 was a classroom-based investigation where findings were co-constructed with music teachers and students through a constructivist orientated, integrated action research-grounded theory investigation. Additionally, before Phase 2 commenced, a pre-Phase 2 process identified and explored a plethora of issues related to the experience of traditional music by the students and teachers in each school. It was during each of these phases, but primarily during Phase 2 that the central research questions were addressed.
Revisiting the Research Questions

Three key research questions guided this work (these were presented previously in the Introduction to this thesis (p.13) and each is now addressed:

1. What is the nature of the transmission of Irish traditional music and in what ways does it challenge prevailing ideologies regarding the construction of musical meaning and value in post-primary music education?

2. How does the transmission of Irish traditional music connect with the concept of informal learning and the broader experience of the genre?

3. What is an educative experience of Irish traditional music in the context of post-primary music education?

The philosophically charged theory of educative experience which was conceptualised throughout this thesis addresses the nature of transmission of Irish traditional music in the post-primary music education context. It also reveals how meaning and value were constructed with respect to traditional music experience this context. It is important to view this work as a conceptualisation, in that it is proposed as a living and breathing theory; one which can potentially grow and evolve to meet the needs of traditional musicians, music educators, and music students, among others. Furthermore, the theory is philosophically charged, in that it is deeply informed by the ideals expressed through a synthesis of the philosophies of John Dewey, Paulo Freire, and their aficionados.

Needless to say, the principles of transmission (Figure 7.1) are this thesis’ interpretation of the nature of transmission of traditional music, and include four interdependent and overlapping processes or learning modalities with which the students engaged towards greater maturity of experience in the tradition. They include the principle of aural awareness, comprising the cyclical continuum of aural progression (CCAP) across six listening modes; the principle of kinesthetic awareness, comprising the cyclical continuum of kinesthetic progression (CKKP) and associated cyclical continuum of kinesthetic-aural progression (CCKAP) across six modes respectively; the principle of tactile awareness; and the principle of obser-visual awareness. The continua
(represented by the sections within the concentric circles) of which the principles of aural awareness and kinesthetic awareness are comprised represent dynamic and increasingly complex interactions between skill and challenge as the students progressed along the continua; and with this, increased cognitive functioning and the potential for the occurrence of flow experience. To support their progression along these continua, students employed (or were encouraged to employ by the teacher-as-MEP) the supporting principles of observer-visual and tactile awareness to achieve the clearly defined goal of learning a tune, and ultimately, reflective experience (depicted at the centre-point of the illustration below).

The principles of engagement (Figure 7.2), on the other hand, represent a broad dimension of experience in traditional music through which the learners could engage with the principles of transmission. They comprise the principles of transitioning roles of more experienced person(s) and less experienced person(s); the principle of participatory performance; the principle of presentational performance; and the principle of media integration. The way that meaning and value was constructed throughout the study is inextricably linked to how participants engaged, through one or more of the principles of engagement, with the principles of transmission, and as a result experienced flow. In other words, meaning-making and the construction of value were the products of some degree of interaction between the principles of engagement, which constitute multilayered personal and social dimensions of experience, and the principles of transmission. What is particularly interesting is how strongly aligned this concept of meaning-making and the construction of value is to Dewey’s (1938) principle of the interaction of both objective and internal conditions in experience; Dillon’s (2007) concepts of personal meaning, inter-personal meaning, and cultural meaning; and Green’s (2008b) aspects of meaning she identifies as delineated meaning and inherent meaning.
**Principle 1:** Aural Awareness
comprising Cyclic Continuum of Aural Progression (CCAP)

**Principle 2:** Obser-visual Awareness

**Principle 3:** Tactile Awareness

**Principle 4:** Kinesthetic Awareness
comprising Cyclic Continuum of Kinesthetic Progression (CCKP)
with associated Cyclic Continuum of Kinesthetic-Aural Progression (CCKAP)

(Principle 9: *Flow* experience)

Reproduction of Figure 6.1 (p.205)
Illustration of the principles of transmission (clockwise from top left:
principle of aural awareness; principle of obser-visual awareness;
principle of kinesthetic awareness; principle of tactile awareness)

**Principle 5:** Transitioning Roles of More Experienced Person (MEP) and Less Experienced Person (LEP)

**Principle 6:** Participatory Performance

**Principle 7:** Presentational Performance

**Principle 8:** Media Integration

Reproduction of Figure 6.2 (p.206)
Illustration of the principles of engagement (clockwise from top left:
principle of transitioning roles of more experienced person (MEP) and less experienced person (LEP); principle of participatory performance; principle of presentational performance; principle of media integration)
This interpretation of the experience of traditional music through the lens of the principles of transmission and the principles of engagement, is highly significant in relation to the concept of informal learning (i.e., the second research question). Highlighted in Chapter 2 was the fact that in terms of the transmission of traditional music, an approach to learning by informal and aural means is often unquestionably ascribed to the experience; often held in opposition to more ‘formal’ ways of learning. If we look at traditional music in terms of this thesis’ theoretical paradigm, it emerges that any experience of traditional music can potentially be situated within a highly organised and complex structure which aims to support the intrinsically motivated learner towards the attainment of educative experience. Moreover, the intention of the music teachers and students was often to progress along the continua, or to learn ‘how to play music’ (Folkestad 2006, p.138). According to Folkestad, this emphasises the formal qualities of music learning practice, although there were occasions such as the end of term gathering where the participants’ minds were directed towards the informal learning practice of ‘playing music (making music)’ (ibid.) This, of course, throws the ‘informal learning’ position into disarray, as the broad spectrum of learning processes observed during the investigation exhibit interactions between informal and formal ways of learning. Significantly, this thesis challenges us to reconsider how we think about the transmission of traditional music in terms of aural learning and its informal learning associations. If we must interpret an educative experience of traditional music in post-primary music education within the sphere of (in)formal learning, the findings of this research would suggest that learning traditional music is a phenomenon which encompasses both formal and informal means of learning; that there is no automatic relationship between aurality and informality, and that this relationship is much more complex; and that experiencing traditional music occurs along a continuum where formal and informal aspects of learning interweave and unite towards the common goal of educative, and ultimately, reflective experience. This has certain consequence for any future consideration of traditional music in this post-primary music education.

In addressing the third research question, it is proposed that through interpretation and practical realisation of the principles of transmission through the principles of engagement, an educative experience in traditional music can be achieved by music teachers and students which honours the pedagogical processes inherent in traditional music, and which is synonymous with flow experience and the construction of meaning and value. That is, the four systems of engagement, each with its own meaning-making
capacity, allowed the investigation’s participants to connect with the four principles of transmission in order to achieve flow experience. It is proposed that it was through experiencing flow along an experiential continuum that the students met increased challenge, accompanied by increased skill, and by default, transformative and educative experience, where he/she became a more experienced person within the tradition.

**Theoretical Implications**

One of the primary theoretical implications of the research is the potential of the theoretical paradigm to allow music teachers and students, music education researchers, and the wider music education community to understand, articulate, and improve their learning and teaching practice in Irish traditional music. It is proposed that what the theory of educative experience has the potential to contextualise is an infinite spectrum of experiences which are possible as an individual engages with traditional music in the post-primary music education context. Therefore, a theory which can be employed to consider and understand the overlapping worlds of Irish traditional music may aid the development of its practice in post-primary music education. In addition, it is possible that an interpretation of this thesis’ grounded theory could impact on existing thoughts and theories around the teaching and learning of traditional music and as a consequence, extend our understanding of the learning processes which have long been associated with Irish traditional music. Most significantly perhaps, the theory attempts to further and reconceptualise the area of informal learning. That is, while the important role of informal learning in the tradition is acknowledged both in this research and in other literature in the field, ‘learning to play traditional music’ is revealed in this thesis as comprising a much more complex process of educative experience incorporating both informal and formal processes.

It could be said that aural learning (or, learning by ear) is universally considered the central means of acquiring traditional music technique and repertoire. By ‘staying close’ to the music during this investigation, as I previously described, this research explicates the aural learning process associated with Irish traditional music and identifies a six-mode cyclical continuum of aural progression along which the intrinsically motivated learner can progress, thereby increasing their cognitive
functioning during educative experience. As well as consolidating the central role of aural awareness in an educative experience of traditional music, the importance and role of supporting tactile and ‘obser-visual’ learning modalities in the aural learning process are also identified and expounded upon.

Another of this thesis’ concepts which has potential theoretical implications for the field of Irish traditional music in school music education is that of embodied learning, where through a process of kinesthetic awareness, students come to experience and ‘know’ traditional music at a deeper level than conceptual knowing alone would allow. Of course, kinesthetic activity has always gone hand-in-hand with the tradition in terms of the influence of the Irish dance aesthetic on the music, and there is a current and growing awareness of the role that bodily knowing can play in music education more broadly speaking (see Chapter 2, Section 2.10.3); however, this thesis’ identification of a cyclical continuum of kinesthetic progression with associated cyclical continuum of kinesthetic-aural progression, as an aspect of the theory of educative experience, positions kinesthetic activity as a central theoretical consideration where the transmission of traditional music in post-primary music education is concerned. In terms of future research, the potential of integrating bodily knowing with Irish traditional music as it is experienced in post-primary music education could be investigated further.

In addition to the contribution of this research to existing knowledge regarding the processes of transmission inherent in an educative experience of Irish traditional music, this research has identified a system of engagement (Figure 7.2) which supports the aforementioned processes of transmission. That is, the four theoretical principles of engagement which emerged through the grounded theory process can be interpreted as various means through which students can listen to, learn to play, and otherwise engage with traditional music, and through doing so, construct and gain meaning through such experiences.

While it has been attempted to outline some of the theoretical implications of this research, it is of course possible that such implications are as multifarious as the spectrum of educative experiences of traditional music from which the theory emerged, and which it sets out to contextualise. That is to say, this theoretical perspective aligns with my hope that any theory which strives to connect with the practice of traditional
music in music classrooms will continue to evolve and mature to meet the needs of the music it serves. Therefore, just as traditional music requires its community to survive and thrive, by the same token, any theory which is to have a positive impact in terms of music teachers’ and students’ lived experience will require a community of people (school-based and community beyond the school-based) who will continuously strive for such an ideal. These communities in dialogue then have the potential to inform an evolving theoretical paradigm, which will in turn ensure the continuing transformation of traditional music in this education context. In this way, as well as informing how we think about traditional music in post-primary music education, the theoretical touchstone which this thesis proposes could inform the theoretical concerns of traditional music across primary music education contexts; third-level music education contexts; as well as contributing to dialogue on the nature of experience of other music genres in school music education contexts.

Practical Implications

If, as Dewey suggests, education should be conducted on the basis of experience, then it follows that what constitutes an educative experience of traditional music could have consequence for the realisation of Irish traditional music in post-primary education. In this respect, the theoretical implications of this research are intrinsically linked to its practical implications, and in essence, each set of implications points to the need for a comprehensive, research-based traditional music pedagogy. Broadly speaking, the impact of such theory on practice must be considered in terms of a post-primary music education curriculum which is structured on music education through the integrated strands of performing, listening, and composing, and in which music students prepare for their exams with respect to an integrated ‘performing, listening, composing’ framework. Several practical implications are outlined here for consideration:

Taking Dewey’s suggestion, the concept of ‘traditional music as educative experience’ has potential implications not least for the way in which formal musical knowledge is integrated within the curricula with respect to traditional music, and the balance which is achieved in terms of formal and informal ways of learning. In other words, as we strive to honour the pedagogical processes inherent in an educative experience of Irish
traditional music, we may have to perform an honest reappraisal of the ways in which the genre is generally approached within the music curricula. As a starting point, this could mean ensuring that each of the principles of educative experience are accommodated within the JC and LC music curricula in order for students to experience flow and advance towards reflective experience.

Additionally, the findings of this research urge us to revisit and reconsider the pedagogical framework within which music students are engaged in their experience of Irish traditional music. For example, arising from the philosophically charged theory of educative experience, emphasis is placed on participatory performance as well as presentational performance, and the inherent characteristics and values associated with each type of performance. As a consequence, the assessment strategies of the JC and LC music curricula should reflect this finding through incorporation of each type of performance activity. In addition, as the area of practice which was identified as a critical incident in this research in terms of the principle of presentational performance, further research is needed to come to a greater understanding of issues around the area of practice and traditional music in and beyond the post-primary music education context. With regard to the role of the ‘teacher of the students’ and the ‘students of the teacher’, the findings of this research reframe such roles in favour of the concept of a teacher who, while being taught in dialogue with the students, also teaches; that is, it encourages and facilitates a transitioning of roles between a more experienced teacher and a more experienced student where it is the responsibility of the more experienced teacher/student to lead the less experienced person towards educative experience. Furthermore, this research highlights the importance of building on and strategically integrating a media spectrum as a means of engaging students in the processes of transmission of Irish traditional music; that is, where a classroom experience of traditional music integrates electronic, print, and new media as a core element of any pedagogical strategy, along with the other principles of engagement. In particular, developments within the area of Irish traditional music and new media could greatly assist with a strategy to promote educative experiences of traditional music in the classroom.

Importantly and as previously alluded to, this research positions the philosophically charged theory of educative experience as a central pillar around which a pedagogy for the transmission of Irish traditional music could be developed, and in which the role of
aural awareness is emphasised. In other words, the activity of learning to play an instrument and performing Irish traditional music, as well as the various kinesthetic activities, were revealed as primary means of engaging with the principles of the theory of educative experience; activities which significantly, revolved around a concept of aural awareness with the incorporation of a particular synthesis of the other principles of transmission. This has implications for how listening is framed within the JC and LC music curricula; the type of listening which takes place; as well as the way in which listening is integrated within performance activities. Connected to the centrality of *listening* within the theoretical paradigm is the fact that the area of *composition* of traditional music received negligible attention in relation to the standard JC and LC approach to the Composing section. This is in spite of the fact that creative performance was evident in many of the Phase 2 activities. This suggests that the area of Composition in relation to traditional music in the JC and LC needs to be addressed as it relates to the experience of traditional music, and future research could take the area into greater focus.

Another area where the findings of this research could have potential impact is the experience of traditional music at Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and in terms of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), areas to which this research opens the door for much needed research. It is envisaged that in terms of ITT and CPD, an increased awareness and practical understanding of traditional music through the lens of the philosophically charged theory could have a domino effect in promoting and developing the practice of Irish traditional music in post-primary music education contexts. Finally, the area of resources continues to raise itself as a concern. In this regard, what the theory of educative experience supports is recognition of the place and role of the more-experienced-student as ‘resource’, as well as that of the more experienced visiting musician; of course, employing a student/visiting musician as a resource would necessitate an awareness on the part of the teacher as to how this experience would benefit the student group in terms of engaging with the principles of educative experience.
Epilogue

Although it is hoped that a sufficiently comprehensive and useful theoretical paradigm has been presented in this research, I recognise that there is immense potential for each principle of educative experience, in its own right, to be further scrutinised, probed, and investigated through the lens of rigorous, reflexive research. It is only through such continuing research which challenges the status quo and strives towards the ideal of a dialogical relationship between philosophy, theory, and practice in post-primary music classrooms that we can hope to comprehend the nature and function of an educative, lived experience of traditional music in post-primary music education.

This thesis concludes where it began, with inspiration drawn from the music itself. The Bloom of Youth, the title of this thesis, is a well known reel played and passed on by countless Irish traditional musicians over the years, and recorded by many stalwarts of the tradition. In one way, The Bloom of Youth epitomises the sentiments of this thesis as one which is infused with notions of growth, transformation, vigor, and evolution, as well as the careful nurturing of expanding minds, and the responsibility that comes with this. In another way, the title reinforces my aspiration that the conversation within these pages is but a starting point for a much broader, continuing dialogue. Therefore, rather than concluding, this thesis now comes to a momentary rest; and just as the traditional musician bides their time before the next session, or patiently awaits the next set of tunes or song, this thesis awaits the next conversation where we will continue to unveil the educative experience of the tune.

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222 Irishtune.info provides a useful discography of several musicians who have recorded The Bloom of Youth over the years including Paddy Killoran and James Morrison (1934), Bobby Gardiner (~1962), Bobby Casey (1966), Kevin Burke (~1984), John Carty (~1996), and Matt Molloy (~2007), available: http://www.irishtune.info/tune/179/ [accessed 20/01/2013].
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Percentages allocated to each strand in the LC Music syllabus

(1) At Ordinary level, students will choose one of the three activities to represent 50 per cent of their work:

I Performing 50%   Composing 25% I Listening 25%

or

I Performing 25% I Composing 50%   Listening 25%

or

Performing 25% I Composing 50%   Listening 50%

(ii) at Higher level, students will undertake additional studies (a Higher level elective) in one of the three activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performing</th>
<th>Composing</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Higher level elective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

‘Irish Music’ LC Guidelines for Teachers

Leaving Certificate Music Guidelines 19

4.4 Irish music

The syllabus requires students to listen purposefully to examples of the broad range of Irish music practices heard today. Such listening spans many different versions and genres and may be presented as solo or group performances in

- an authentic traditional manner
- a popular folk or ballad style
- an arrangement for classical ensemble
- a jazz or rock idiom
- versions in which there is more than one musical style

The inclusion of Irish music in both traditional and modern-day performing styles emphasises the local and national dimension of music and sets it within a value-framework alongside the Western European and popular musical traditions.

Appendix A below (pp.55ff.) contains a list of recordings which may be used to illustrate the range and variety of Irish music as practised today, the general influences on Irish music and of its contribution to the folk music of other countries, especially those in North America.
APPENDIX C

Sections of the LC Music syllabus which refer to ‘Irish music’

Leaving Certificate Music syllabus: Section on Listening to ‘Irish music’

2.3.3 Irish music
All students should have sufficient experience of listening to Irish music to enable them to understand, identify and describe from aural and visual perception
(i) the range and variety of Irish music heard today;
(ii) Irish musical idioms and influences.
In addition, Higher level students must be able to perceive aurally and describe
(iii) traditional and modern-day performing styles;
(iv) the contribution Irish music has made to folk music

Leaving Certificate Music syllabus: Section on Performing Requirements for ‘Irish music’

(f) In performing traditional Irish music, some use of ornamentation will be required at Ordinary level, where this is appropriate; at Higher level, proficiency in the use of appropriate ornamentation will be required.

Leaving Certificate Music syllabus: Section on Composing including ‘traditional approach’

2.2.3 Higher level elective in composing
Higher level students taking this elective must do so by portfolio in one of the following ways:
Present two short pieces and/or songs, composed, arranged, or orchestrated by themselves, as well the exercises in 2.2.2 above or present compositions and/or arrangements and/or orchestrations only (combined performance time approximately five minutes). Compositions may be presented using conventional, traditional, popular, ethnic, avant-garde or electroacoustic approaches. A combination of more than one of the above approaches is also acceptable.
The final version of each composition should be notated as fully as possible using conventional and/or graphic notation together with a full written description. Where electro-acoustic music is being submitted, a prepared tape will be a necessary requirement.
APPENDIX D

Mind map of Phase 2 free nodes, tree nodes, and conceptual categories

223 Rather than representing an overview of the findings, this mind-map represents my processes of thought and analysis as I negotiated the data during the grounded theory process.
APPENDIX E

Phase 1 Post-Primary Music Teachers’ Questionnaire 2007-8

Part One: Background

This section of the questionnaire aims to establish your exposure and experience to date of Irish traditional music

1. In which county is your school located?

2. How many years have you been teaching music as a subject at second level?
   - Five years or under ☐
   - Between six and ten years ☐
   - Eleven to twenty years ☐
   - Over twenty years ☐

3. Do you play an Irish traditional musical instrument or sing traditional song?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

   If you answered Yes, please state which instrument you play

4. How regularly do you attend a traditional music gig/concert?
   - Once a week ☐
   - Once a month ☐
   - Once every six months ☐
   - Once a year ☐
   - Never ☐

5. How regularly do you attend a traditional music session? (informal, in pub/house etc.)
   - Once a week ☐
   - Once a month ☐
   - Once every six months ☐
   - Once a year ☐
   - Never ☐

6. Have you ever attended a traditional music festival/summer school? (e.g. Blas International Summer School of Irish Traditional Music and Dance, Corofin Trad Fest, South Sligo Summer School (Tubbercurry), Gig ‘n The Bann)
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

7. What three words would you use to describe Irish traditional music? (for example, your feelings associated with the music, describing the music itself etc.)

8. How much exposure to Irish traditional music had you before commencing your undergraduate degree to become a secondary school music teacher?
   - A lot ☐
   - Quite a bit ☐
   - Not very much ☐
   - None ☐
   - Not sure ☐

9. Please place a ✓ at the correct statement:
   - I first encountered Irish traditional music (a) during my primary education ☐
   - (b) during my secondary education ☐
   - (c) during my third-level education ☐
   - (d) outside any formal education ☐
   - Please give details

10. Please read the following statement and place a ✓ at the appropriate answer

   I have a deep understanding and appreciation of the Irish music tradition

   - Strongly Agree ☐
   - Agree ☐
   - Undecided ☐
   - Disagree ☐
   - Strongly Disagree ☐

11. Do you consider Irish traditional music as being a

   a) dynamic, changing musical tradition ☐
   or
   b) a musical tradition that is firmly rooted in the past ☐

11.1. Do you consider Irish traditional music important in terms of Ireland’s cultural identity?

   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐
Part Two: Teaching

Part Two looks at the Irish musical tradition as it is experienced by you and your students in the classroom.

12. Please place the number of class periods that you teach per week, in this academic year, beside each relevant year group.

A: First year  No of Classes _____
B: Second year  No of Classes _____
C: Third year  No of Classes _____
D: Transition year  No of Classes _____
E: Fifth year  No of Classes _____
F: Sixth year  No of Classes _____

13. In your experience, have you found that first year music students possess a satisfactory foundation in Irish music education from their primary schooling? (i.e. having an awareness of Irish traditional instruments and music)

Yes ☐  No ☐  Not sure ☐

14. On average, how often do you teach Irish traditional music in the classroom?

(a) I teach the topic with all of my year groups at least once a week  ☐
(b) I teach the topic with certain year groups at least once a week  ☐
(c) I teach the topic with all of my year groups less regularly than once a week  ☐
(d) I teach the topic with certain year groups less regularly than once a week  ☐
(e) I rarely if ever teach the topic with any of my year groups  ☐

15. In the classroom, how often do you listen to Irish traditional music with your students?

Regularly  ☐
Occasionally  ☐
Rarely  ☐
Never  ☐
Not sure  ☐

16. Per class unit in a typical week, how much time do you spend on average listening to traditional music in the classroom.
Please tick the boxes that apply to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>☐  ☐  ☐  ☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>☐  ☐  ☐  ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>☐  ☐  ☐  ☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>☐  ☐  ☐  ☐</td>
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<td>Fifth</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>☐  ☐  ☐  ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. How much do you enjoy teaching Irish traditional music?

Please circle the appropriate number where,
1 = I do not enjoy it at all
2 = I enjoy it a little
3 = I enjoy it a lot
4 = I thoroughly enjoy it

1 2 3 4

17.1 In your experience, how do your students feel in general about learning Irish traditional music?

Please circle the appropriate number where,
1 = They do not enjoy it at all
2 = They enjoy it a little
3 = They enjoy it a lot
4 = They thoroughly enjoy it

1 2 3 4

18. How confident do you feel in teaching Irish traditional music?

Please circle the appropriate number where,
1 = Not confident at all
2 = Slightly confident
3 = Quite confident
5 = Very confident

1 2 3 4

19. Are there traditional musical instruments available in your school for the use of students?

Yes ☐  No ☐

If there are, what instruments are available?
20. Do you teach an Irish traditional instrument(s) to your students?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If your answer is ‘Yes, please answer the following questions. If your answer is No, please proceed to question 21.

20.1 What instrument(s) do you teach?


20.2 To what year group(s) do you generally teach this instrument(s)?

First ☐
Second ☐
Third ☐
Transition ☐
Fifth ☐
Sixth ☐

21. Are there opportunities provided in your school for students to receive tuition on their chosen instrument? (e.g. from a visiting musician)

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

22. As a music teacher, have you any concerns regarding your ability to teach performing skills (including repertoire, instrument specific ornamentation, rhythmic and melodic improvisation etc.) to your students on a traditional instrument?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If you answered ‘Yes, can you please elaborate on these concerns?


23. How regularly does Irish traditional music occur as an extra-curricular activity in your school? e.g. Irish traditional music concerts, Slógadh, Irish traditional music lessons etc.

Very regularly ☐
Occasionally ☐
Rarely ☐
Never ☐
Not sure ☐

24. Has teaching the Irish music section of the course changed your perception of Irish traditional music in any way?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

If it has, in what way?


Part Three: Teacher Training

Part Three looks at the role and function of the colleges and institutions that train secondary school music teachers.

25. At what third level institute/college did you train to become a secondary school music teacher?

___________________________________

26. During the course of your training to become a secondary school music teacher, how well do you feel you were equipped to teach the traditional music sections of the syllabi?

Extremely well equipped ☐
Quite well equipped ☐
Not very well equipped ☐
Not equipped at all ☐
Not sure ☐
27. During your under-graduate degree were you given access to Irish traditional music in the context of live performances, workshops, instrument demonstrations, lessons on a traditional instrument etc.?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

Can you please elaborate on any experiences that you had:

28. Do you think that improvements could be made on how teachers are trained to teach the Irish traditional music section of the syllabi?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

If your answer to the above question is ‘Yes, please provide any comments or suggestions:

29. During your under-graduate degree, were you encouraged to develop extra-curricular/community based learning projects in Irish traditional music with your future students?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

30. Are you aware of any resource materials pertaining to the Irish traditional music sections of the syllabi?

Yes ☐ No ☐

No ☐ (go to question 33)

If you answered ‘Yes’, what are they:

31. Do you believe that there are an adequate number of resources available to you in your school for teaching Irish traditional music?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

32. Do you use any resource materials when teaching Irish traditional music?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (go to question 33)

If you answered Yes, can you please name some of the resources (books, articles, CDs, magazines, TV recordings, local musicians), which you use when teaching Irish music

If you answered Yes, do you find these particular resource materials beneficial and effective?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

33. Please place a ✓ beside the equipment that is available in your classroom / school for your and your students use:

Audio equipment (CD player) ☐

Piano / Keyboard ☐

Television (DVD / VCR) ☐

Other ☐

Please state: _______________

34. Are you familiar with the suggested reference books and resource materials as mentioned in Leaving Certificate Music Guidelines for Teachers?

Yes ☐

No ☐ (go to question 35)

If you answered Yes, on average, how many have you used in this past academic year?

I have used none ☐

I have used one ☐

I have used two ☐

I have used over two ☐

Can you please name those, if any, that you have used:

Part Four: Resources

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34.1 Do you believe that these suggested materials in general, are useful and effective in leading to a greater overall appreciation and understanding of Irish traditional music for both student and teacher?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
If you answered ‘No’, can you elaborate why you think this.

35. In the past academic year, were you presented with the opportunity to develop and advance your skills in the area of Irish traditional music tuition? (through in-service, information days, tuition workshop for tin-whistle etc.)  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
If you answered Yes, can you please give a brief description of this occasion.

If you answered No, would you be interested in taking part in a workshop on developing such skills?  
Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐

36. Are you aware of a teacher/staff member in your school who plays Irish traditional music?  
Yes ☐ No ☐

37. Are you aware of any Irish traditional musicians living in the vicinity of your school  
Yes ☐ No ☐

38. Would you avail of the opportunity of bringing your students on an educational fieldtrip on the topic of Irish traditional music? (to a concert, an exhibition etc)  
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

38.1 Would this be difficult to facilitate?  
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

39. Has an Irish traditional musician visited your school for the purposes of demonstrating his/her instrument, a concert etc.?  
Yes ☐ No ☐  
If your answer is Yes, how often would this occur in a school year?  
Please circle the appropriate number  
1 2 3 4 5 5 +  
If your answer is No, would you welcome the support on occasion of a visiting musician specialising in performing/teaching Irish traditional music?  
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

40. Have you found it possible to incorporate any local/community aspect of Irish traditional music into teaching the Irish music section of the syllabi with the resources that are available to you? (For example, listening to local musicians, listening to tunes and songs composed by local musicians, teaching students tunes and songs from the local tradition, touring traditional musicians visiting the school etc.)  
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

41. In your opinion, would you and your students’ understanding of Irish traditional music benefit if there were opportunities during the academic year to engage with Irish traditional music in its authentic musical setting, i.e. the community?  
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

42. In your opinion, would it be difficult to facilitate this community based learning? (consider issues of timetable constraints, reaching local musicians, interest of school authorities, financial support etc.)  
Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

43. In light of Question 42, are you aware of the availability of any funds within your school that would assist in financially supporting such projects?  
Yes ☐ No ☐
44. Are you aware of any resources (magazines, radio programmes, television programmes, publications) that could inform you and your students of current movements and issues within the Irish music tradition?
Yes ☐ No ☐

If so, can you give examples.

45. Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please add any additional comments or suggestions you may have regarding this questionnaire (layout, length, difficulty etc.) or in particular, its subject matter.

Feel free to contact me at:

Thomas Johnston
ph: [number redacted]
email: thomas.johnston@ul.ie
APPENDIX F

Pre-Phase 2 Group A and Group B Student Questionnaire

UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK
OLLSCHOOL LUIMNIGH

Student Questionnaire on Irish Traditional Music

1. What year in school are you currently in?
   1st ☐  2nd ☐  3rd ☐  4th ☐  5th ☐  6th ☐

2. Have you studied music in post-primary school previous to this year?
   Yes ☐ No ☐ (continue to question 3)

   If you answered ‘YES’, for how many years have you studied music in school, not including this coming year? Answer: I have studied music for ____ year(s)

3. Can you name any musicians, bands, singers that you like and listen to at the minute?
   (you can choose these from ANY genre of music)
   _____________________________________________________

4. If possible, could you say how important it is to you to have music of some sort in your life?
   Extremely important ☐
   Quite important ☐
   Not very important ☐
   Not important at all ☐
   I’m not sure ☐

   Please feel free to explain your answer

5. Do you sing or play music, NOT including Irish traditional song and/or music?
   Yes ☐ No ☐ (continue to question 6)

   If you answered ‘YES’, what type of music do you play/sing, and what instrument is it that you play? (if you are a singer you can write ‘voice’)?
   _____________________________________________________

6. Do you play Irish traditional music or sing traditional song?
   Yes ☐ No ☐ (please continue to question 14)
7. Which of these Irish traditional musical instrument(s) do you play?

- Whistle ☐
- Piano ☐
- Button Accordion ☐
- Guitar ☐
- Piano Accordion ☐
- Harp ☐
- Fiddle ☐
- Uilleann Pipes ☐
- Banjo ☐
- Concertina ☐
- Flute ☐
- Bodhrán ☐
- Bouzouki ☐
- Drums ☐
- Voice (Traditional song) ☐
- Other instrument ☐

please state ________________

8. How old were you when you first began to learn Irish traditional music?

Answer: I was ______ years of age

9. Do you currently take lessons on this instrument(s)?

Yes ☐
No ☐ (continue to question 11)

If you answered ‘YES’ please state which instrument(s) you currently have lessons on?

_____________________________________

10. From the following list, choose the statement(s) that applies to you (you can choose one or more of these statements):

During my Irish traditional music lessons…

- The teacher plays the tune and I learn it by listening to, and copying what he/she plays ☐
- The teacher writes out the tune using letters A, B, C etc. and I learn it from that ☐
- The teacher gives the tune to me in ‘staff notation’ and I learn it from that ☐
- Other, please state ____________________________

11. Have you been to an Irish traditional music workshop or summer school?

Yes ☐
No ☐
I’m not sure ☐

12. In which of these situations have you learnt Irish traditional music?

Please tick the option(s) that apply to you.

I have learnt Irish traditional music…

- From my primary school teacher ☐
- From my post-primary school music teacher ☐
- From a parent or family member ☐
- From a friend ☐
- In a one-on-one lesson ☐
- Along with a group of other musicians ☐

Please feel free to add some further comments here:

_____________________________________________________________________________

_
13. Where do you usually play your instrument?

Please tick the option(s) that apply to you.

At home ☐
At school ☐
At a friends house ☐
In a pub session with other musicians ☐
In the same place that I go to for lessons ☐
Somewhere else, please write here: ___________________

14. How familiar would you say you are with Irish traditional music? (the different types of instruments, how the music sounds, the different musicians etc.)

Extremely familiar ☐
Quite familiar ☐
Not very familiar ☐
Not familiar at all ☐
I’m not sure ☐

15. Was Irish traditional music taught to your class in Primary school?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐ (continue to Q 16)

If you answered ‘YES’, can you please describe what took place during these classes? (E.g. how often did the lessons take place, what instrument did you learn, were there different instruments taught etc.)
________________________________________________________________________

16. Did your teacher ever play recordings of Irish traditional music to the class when you were in Primary school?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐

17. Did an Irish traditional musician ever visit your class when you were in Primary school?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (continue to Q 16) I’m not sure ☐ (continue to Q 18)

If you answered ‘YES’ can you describe what happened in class during their visit?
________________________________________________________________________

18. Can you write down three words that you would use to describe Irish traditional music? That is, what do you really think about Irish traditional music?

a) ____________________________
b) ____________________________
c) ____________________________

19. Does anyone in your family play Irish traditional music?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐
20. Have you ever been to a traditional music session?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐

21. How much would you say you ‘like’ Irish traditional music?

I do not like it at all ☐
I like it a little ☐
I like it a lot ☐
I’m not sure ☐

22. What do you like / not like about Irish traditional music?

________________________________________________________________________

23. Do you think that Irish traditional music is becoming more or less popular today?

More popular ☐
Less popular ☐
I’m not sure ☐

Why do you think this?

________________________________________________________________________

24. Do you ever listen to Irish traditional music in your own personal time?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (continue to Q 24)

25. How often would you listen to Irish traditional music in your own personal time?

Regularly ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rarely ☐ Never ☐ I’m not sure ☐

26. Can you name three (or as many as you can) Irish traditional musicians, singers or groups that you listen to or have listened to?

a) ____________________________
b) ____________________________
c) ____________________________
Resourceful learning of Irish traditional Music

27. Have you ever bought a magazine that has Irish traditional music content?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐ (continue to Q 26)

If you answered ‘YES’ can you please name one or two of these:

_________________________________________________

28. Have you ever bought an Irish traditional music CD, DVD, or downloaded Irish traditional music from the internet?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐

29. Do you ever listen to music (of any kind) on the internet?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (continue to Q 30)

30. Do you or anyone in your family have any recordings of Irish traditional music at home?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (continue to Q 28) I’m not sure ☐

If you answered ‘YES’ can you please name a Irish traditional musician, band, or singer, whose music you have on CD, laptop, ipod etc.:

______________________________________________

31. Have you been to a festival or fleadh and heard Irish traditional music?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐

If you answered ‘YES’, can you give an example of one? __________________

32. Are you aware of any TV programmes that feature Irish traditional music / song?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐

If you answered ‘YES’ can you please name as many of these as you can:

______________________________________________

33. Do you know of anyone from your county or from your local area who plays Irish traditional music or sings traditional song?

Yes ☐ No ☐ I’m not sure ☐

If you answered ‘YES’ what instrument(s) do they play? __________________
Irish traditional music at school

34. How important do you think it is to study Irish traditional music in school for the Junior and/or Leaving Certificate?

- Extremely important
- Quite important
- Not very important
- Not important at all
- I’m not sure

Can you please explain your answer here:

_____________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire. If you have any other comments or suggestions, please feel free to write them below. Please give the questionnaire to your music teacher when you have completed it and thanks again!
Title of Project
Experiencing Irish Traditional Music through the Post – Primary Music Curriculum

What is this study about?
My name is Thomas Johnston, an Irish traditional musician, and researcher from the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick. Slí an Cheoil is a project that I am organising along with your music teacher. This project which deals with Irish traditional music will take place in your classroom, and involve you and your fellow music students, your music teacher, and some Irish traditional musicians, singers and dancers who will visit your classroom on various occasions between September and Christmas. Irish traditional music is an important area of study through the Junior and Leaving Certificate Music Curricula, and Slí an Cheoil is designed to bring the tradition into the classroom!

As you may know, Irish traditional music is usually found in live music venues, in peoples’ homes, at pub sessions, or at fleadhanna and festivals around the country and the world. This study will look at what happens when Irish traditional music is brought into the music classroom - your music classroom! Over the course of the project, we will work together to consider many things, for example - how is Irish traditional music transmitted or ‘passed on’ within the music classroom? What are you and the other music students’ attitudes towards, and perceptions of, Irish traditional music? How can we create the best possible experience of Irish traditional music in the classroom for everyone involved? What does it mean to ‘be’ an Irish traditional musician, singer or dancer? Why do we have to study it at all? Is there any traditional music in the area where you live, and how can we bring this music into the classroom? Is Irish traditional music important, and if so, why is it important to us?

What will I have to do?
As a music student, your participation in this project is of immense value and your engagement with this project will enrich the music classes. All you have to do is be present in class, participate in what is going on to the best of your ability, follow your teacher’s directions, be enthusiastic, and become involved in the project over its duration.

As this project looks at the ‘experience’ of Irish traditional music in the classroom, it is important that at certain times you have the opportunity to express your own personal views and opinions on Irish traditional music and your experience of it. One way of doing this is to complete a ‘questionnaire’ that will be handed out to your class before the Slí an Cheoil project commences. It is important that you be completely frank and honest when filling out this questionnaire, and not to worry, this questionnaire will be completely anonymous and confidential.

An important element of this project is the Slí an Cheoil Céili to take place in the Performing Arts Centre, University of Limerick, in December 2009. You, your fellow music students, your music teacher and the ‘visiting musicians’, will work together over the following months with this concert in mind. Each student will have the opportunity to participate in some way at this concert, to sing, play, or dance… and the emphasis here will be on taking part and enjoying yourself!
What are the benefits of taking part?

It is the hope that this project will better our understanding of where the Irish musical tradition lies in the context of the Post – Primary Music Curriculum. It is the hope that you will have a positive and fulfilling experience of the tradition over the course of the project.

It is hoped that you will increase your knowledge of Irish traditional music, and grow in confidence across different ways of experiencing the tradition in the classroom and beyond.

Who else is taking part?

Your music teacher, along with one other music class from your school is taking part in this project. Also, one other teacher from a neighbouring Limerick school is taking part, along with two music classes from that particular school. Several ‘visiting musicians’ will visit your class over the course of the project and I will correspond regularly with my supervisors in the Irish World Academy, University of Limerick.

What happens at the end of the study?

An important element of the project is the Slí an Cheoil Céilí that you are asked to participate in, along with the ‘visiting musicians’, and the music pupils and their teacher from the other participating school. This will take place towards the end of the study in December.

What happens to the information?

At the end of the study, I will write a report on the project, and this will form the basis of a chapter in my Ph.D. thesis which is entitled: The Bloom Of Youth: Experiencing Irish Traditional Music in Post – Primary Music Education

Your name will not be used in any part of this study and if necessary you will be referred to as Student (number) or by a pseudonym that I will assign to you. This research may be partially or fully published, however you will retain full anonymity. With your permission, I may use samples of the audiovisual material for presentation purposes (at a future conference for example) and samples may also be used in the context of an introductory presentation to the Slí an Cheoil Céilí, to take place in the Performing Arts Centre, University of Limerick in December 2009.

If I wish to use the audiovisual samples for such purposes (for a conference presentation for example) I will always ask your teacher for their prior approval in each case, to ensure that they are comfortable and happy with the samples that I have chosen.

What happens if I change my mind during the study?

You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time and you may also contact University of Limerick Research Ethics Committee if you have any concerns regarding this research (http://www.ul.ie/researchethics/).

What happens if I have more questions or do not understand something?

Contact me at any time if you need any further information on any aspect of the project.

If you have concerns about this study and wish to contact someone independent, you may contact:

The Chairman of the University of Limerick Research Ethics Committee, c/o Anne O’Dwyer
Graduate School
University of Limerick, Limerick, Tel: (061) 202672
Title of Project

*Experiencing Irish Traditional Music through the Post – Primary Music Curriculum*

**What is this study about?**

My name is Thomas Johnston, an Irish traditional musician, and researcher from the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick. *Slí an Cheoil* is a project that I am organising along with your son’s/daughter’s music teacher. This project which deals with Irish traditional music will take place within the music classroom, and involve the music class, their music teacher, and some Irish traditional musicians, singers and dancers who will visit the classroom on various occasions between September and Christmas. Irish traditional music is an important area of study through the Junior and Leaving Certificate Music Curricula, and *Slí an Cheoil* is designed to bring the tradition into the classroom!

**What will my son / daughter have to do?**

As a music student, your son’s/daughter’s participation in this project is of immense value and their engagement with this project will enrich the music classes. All they have to do is be present in class, participate in what is going on to the best of their ability, follow their teacher’s directions, be enthusiastic, and become involved in the project over its duration.

As this project looks at the ‘experience’ of Irish traditional music in the classroom, it is important that at certain times they have the opportunity to express their own personal views and opinions on Irish traditional music and their experience of it. One way of doing this is to complete a ‘questionnaire’ that will be handed out to your class before the *Slí an Cheoil* project commences. It is important that they are completely frank and honest when filling out this questionnaire, and not to worry, this questionnaire will be completely anonymous and confidential.

This project will involve an element of Céilí dancing, over one or two classes in order to feel the rhythm of the music and experience the music in a different way. These classes will be led by an experienced dance teacher who will visit your son/daughter’s class, and the Music teacher will be present at all times.

An important element of this project is the ‘educational concert’ *Slí an Cheoil Céilí* to take place in the Performing Arts Centre, University of Limerick, in December 2009. Your son/daughter and their fellow music students, their music teacher, and the ‘visiting musicians’, will work together over the following months with this concert in mind. Each student will have the opportunity to participate in some way at this concert, to sing, play, or dance… and the emphasis here will be on taking part and enjoying oneself!

**What are the benefits of taking part?**

It is the hope that this project will better our understanding of where the Irish musical tradition lies in the context of the Post – Primary Music Curriculum. It is the hope that your daughter/son will have a positive and fulfilling experience of the tradition over the course of the project.
It is hoped that they will increase their knowledge of Irish traditional music, learn new ways of engaging with music, and grow in confidence across different ways of experiencing the tradition in the classroom and beyond.

**Who else is taking part?**

Their music teacher, along with one other music class from the school is taking part in this project. Also, one other teacher from a neighbouring Limerick school is taking part, along with two music classes from that particular school. Several ‘visiting musicians’ are will visit the classroom over the course of the project, and I will correspond regularly with my supervisors in the Irish World Academy, University of Limerick.

**What happens at the end of the study?**

An important element of the project that your son’s/daughter’s class is asked to participate in, along with the ‘visiting musicians’, and the music pupils and their teacher from the other participating school, is the *Slí an Cheoil Céili*. This will take place towards the end of the study in December.

**What happens to the information?**

At the end of the study, I will write a report on the project, and this will form the basis of a chapter in my Ph.D. thesis which is entitled: *The Bloom Of Youth: Experiencing Irish Traditional Music in Post – Primary Music Education*

Your son’s/daughter’s name will not be used in any part of this study and if necessary they will be referred to as Student (number) or by a pseudonym that I will assign to them. This research may be partially or fully published, however they will retain full anonymity. With the music teacher’s permission, I may use samples of the audiovisual material for presentation purposes (at a future conference for example) and samples may also be used in the context of an introductory presentation to the *Slí an Cheoil Céili*, to take place in the Performing Arts Centre, University of Limerick in December 2009.

If I wish to use the audiovisual samples for such purposes (for a conference presentation for example) I will always ask you son’s/daughter’s teacher for their prior approval in each case, to ensure that they are comfortable and happy with the samples that I have chosen.

**What happens if I change my mind during the study?**

Your son/daughter has the right to withdraw from this study at any time. You may also contact University of Limerick Research Ethics Committee if you have any concerns regarding this research (http://www.ul.ie/researchethics/).

**What happens if I have more questions or do not understand something?**

Contact me at any time if you need any further information on any aspect of the project.

*If you have concerns about this study and wish to contact someone independent, you may contact*

*The Chairman of the University of Limerick Research Ethics Committee*

c/o Anne O’Dwyer

*Graduate School*

*University of Limerick*

*Limerick*

*Tel: (061) 202672*
APPENDIX I

Phase 2 Visiting Musician Information Sheet

Title of Project

*Experiencing Irish Traditional Music through the Post – Primary Music Curriculum*

What is this study about?

This study intends to investigate ‘the experience’ of Irish traditional music, by music teachers and students, in the context of the Post-Primary Music Curriculum. It will looks at the processes of transmission of Irish traditional music within the music classroom, and the attitudes and perceptions of music teachers and their students, in their approach to this particular musical genre in this educational setting. One of the questions that I will ask throughout this project is ‘How do the requirements of composition, performance and listening within the Junior and Leaving Certificate Music syllabi connect with the ‘experience’ of the tradition in its ‘natural’ context of the community?

What will I have to do?

As an Irish traditional musician, singer or dancer, your participation in this project is invaluable. Your engagement with this project will enrich the Music curriculum in the two schools involved, and complement the pupils’ music education by providing ‘real life’ experiences of the tradition in the classroom. It is hoped that this project will be characterised by an environment of collaboration, effective communication and common purpose. During *Slí an Cheoil*, music students will encounter one another, their teachers and their own musical community (you!) in new ways. It is hoped that these experiences will lead the students further into the tradition, where they will engage with the music in a way that it gains increasing meaning and relevance in their lives, and in the lives of all those involved in the project.

The project is being implemented in two Limerick Post-Primary schools, with the 2nd and 5th year music classes in each school. I have, and will continue to work with the two music teachers involved over the project’s duration, from September to Christmas, when they will be delivering the project, i.e., the Irish traditional music requirements of the Junior and Leaving Certificate Music Curriculum. It is my intent your ‘visits’ will be represented in a fashion that will align well with existing curriculum priorities and with the practical realities of classroom teaching.

Concerning your role, at certain stages over the course of the project (which will be agreed on beforehand), you will be required to visit a number of these classes to engage, interact, and work with the music students, on a theme or topic that has been agreed on well in advance by the music teacher, the researcher (me), and you, the ‘visiting musician’.

Over the course of the project, you may be asked to take part in a short interview with the researcher. The purpose of this interview will be to get an overview of your musical life, your experience of formal music education, and your prior experience, if any, of working in the formal environment of a music classroom.
During your visit to a music classroom, you could be required to demonstrate your instrument to the students, teach a simple tune, song or dance, answer questions from the students on your experience of learning how to play, on your experience of performing, touring etc. It is worth mentioning here that the music teacher and researcher will be present at all times during these classes. To ensure that all participants (the ‘visiting musician’, the researcher, the teacher) understand how the particular class is to progress, it may be necessary at times over the course of the project to meet with you for a chat (before the class occurs for example, or at a time that suits you). At other times a phone call or email correspondence will suffice.

An important element of this project is the Slí an Cheoil Céili to take place in the Performing Arts Centre, University of Limerick, in December 2009. Music teachers will be working towards this concert with their students over the course of the project, and the classes with which you are involved will be designed with this concert in mind also. You will be required, towards the end of the project, to attend one or two short rehearsals with the other ‘visiting musicians’ who are participating in the project, to put together a short programme (half an hour) for a public performance. It is hoped that students will be heavily involved in this concert (through songs, tunes and dances that they will have learnt over the course of the project), and so it will be necessary to rehearse with these students at an agreed date and time prior to the concert. The dates for all of the above will be negotiated and agreed upon beforehand by all those involved.

Lastly, a method by which I am evaluating this project is a technique called LOCIT, devised by Professor Do Coyle, Professor of Innovation at University of Aberdeen. It would be hugely beneficial to the project if you as the ‘visiting musician’ could participate in this stage of the project at a future date. LOCIT is outlined below:

Note: LOCIT (Lesson Observation Critical Incident Technique) is a technique where teachers and students can learn from each other, and a method by which this project is evaluated.

This technique involves the following:

- The Music teacher records a sample of his/her lessons on video
- From these, 1 lesson is chosen by the teacher (this could be a lesson where he/she felt that significant progression was made) and DVD copies are made and given to pupils
- Using video editing software, the teacher edits the lesson down to no more than 15 minutes that show the key learning moments in the lesson from their point of view
- The pupils do the same from their point of view
- You get together to discuss. And hopefully a rich dialogue will occurs

**What are the benefits of taking part?**

If you have not worked in this environment before, it is hopefully in the nature of a new experience such as this that there will be the possibility of surprise and fresh discovery.

If you are a professional recording or touring artist, it will allow you the opportunity of engaging a new audience with your music/song/dance.

The learning benefits of Slí an Cheoil are not for pupils alone. It is hoped that you will experience personal and professional benefits of working in a formal classroom environment, with music teachers and their students.

**Who else is taking part?**

Two music teachers are taking part in this project, along with their 2nd year and 5th year class from their respective schools. Also, several other ‘visiting musicians’ are involved over the course of the project. I will be corresponding with my supervisors in the Irish World Academy, University of Limerick, over the course of the project, and will also liaise with Professor Do Coyle, Professor of Innovation at University of Aberdeen, for the LOCIT aspect of the project.
What happens at the end of the study?

An element of the project is the Slí an Cheoil Céilí or ‘educational concert’ that you are asked to participate in, along with the other ‘visiting musicians’, the music pupils and their teachers. This will take place towards the end of the study in December 2009.

I will conduct an interview with you at the end of the study in order to evaluate the project. I will begin the process of ‘writing up’ my report and results and conclusions will be made known to you on completion of this report.

What happens to the information?

At the end of the study, I will write a report on the project, and this will form the basis of a chapter in my Ph.D. thesis which is entitled: The Bloom Of Youth: Experiencing Irish Traditional Music in Post – Primary Music Education

Your name will not be used in any part of this study and if necessary you will be referred to as Musician / Teacher / Singer (number) or by a pseudonym that I will assign to you. This research may be partially or fully published, however you will retain full anonymity. With your permission, I may use samples of the audiovisual material for presentation purposes (at a future conference for example) and samples may also be used in the context of an introductory presentation to the Slí an Cheoil Céilí, to take place in the Performing Arts Centre, University of Limerick in December 2009.

If I wish to use the audiovisual samples for such purposes (for a conference presentation for example) I will always ask you for your prior approval in each case, to ensure that you are comfortable and happy with the samples that I have chosen.

What happens if I change my mind during the study?

You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time and you may also contact University of Limerick Research Ethics Committee if you have any concerns regarding this research (http://www.ul.ie/researchethics/).

What happens if I have more questions or do not understand something?

You may contact me at any time if you need any further information on any aspect of the project.

Thomas Johnston
Irish World Academy of Music and Dance
Desk F1-145, The Foundation Building
University of Limerick
Tel: (087) 6183301
Email: thomas.johnston@ul.ie

'If you have concerns about this study and wish to contact someone independent, you may contact

The Chairman of the University of Limerick Research Ethics Committee
c/o Anne O’Dwyer
Graduate School
University of Limerick
Limerick
Tel: (061) 202672
APPENDIX J

Informed Consent Forms

Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick

Title of Project

Experiencing Irish Traditional Music through the Post – Primary Music Curriculum

I, the undersigned, have read the Subject Information Sheet, and declare that I am willing to take part in the research project investigating ‘the experience’ of Irish traditional music, by music teachers and students, in the context of the Post-Primary Music Curriculum.

I declare that I have been fully briefed on the nature of this study and my role in it and have been given the opportunity to ask questions (personally or using contact details provided) before agreeing to participate.

The nature of my participation has been explained to me and I have full knowledge of how the information collected will be used.

I am aware that I will retain full anonymity if the results of this study are published in the future. I am also aware that my participation in this study will be recorded (video/audio). However, should I feel uncomfortable at any time I can request that the recording equipment be switched off. I am entitled to copies of all recordings made and am fully informed as to what will happen to these recordings once the study is completed. I agree to the audiovisual material being used by the researcher for presentation purposes in the future, given my prior consent.

I fully understand that there is no obligation on me to participate in this study and that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without having to explain or give a reason.

_______________________________ ____________________
Signature of participant Date
APPENDIX K

Transcriptions of informal interviews, observations, and LOCIT
(samples)

The following appendix contains samples of reflective comment about informal interviews, classroom observations, and the LOCIT process to provide the reader with a sense of reflecting in and on action, and the data which informed the grounded theory process.

Observation and Informal Interview: Amanda (Group B music teacher)
Date: 22/09/09
Category of Data: Observation and Informal Conversation

This meeting took place in School B in Amanda’s classroom. We had arranged to meet today to discuss aspects of the investigation and for Amanda to learn how to play some scales and a simple tune on the whistle. This is our first whistle lesson and I sit down with Amanda at her desk at the top of the room. It is first thing in the morning and we can hear the bustle of students at their lockers as they get ready for their first class just outside the music room door. As we begin the lesson, Amanda asks, ‘So where is the high D then?’ I respond that the clearest tone for the ‘High D’ is with the top finger off the whistle. The teacher then plays the high D note and proceeds to play ‘up’ the scale. I then proceed to explain how Amanda could improve what she is doing but she starts to play the scale of D major once again, ‘up’ the scale and ‘down’ the scale. I then ask the teacher to ‘go again’ and together we play the scale of D major together once again, ‘up’ and ‘down’.

I then try to think about a scenario in which Amanda would be teaching a group of students to play the whistle, ‘to get everyone to play together’. In this moment, I find that I am placing myself in the role of the teacher in the classroom. I then demonstrate a method by which Amanda could get her class to play the whistle together. The teacher describes this method as ‘call and response’. The teacher then reminds herself how to play C sharp going to high D, with a finger sliding action. I then say that we should think about going up to high G. The teacher tries to figure the scale of G out for herself without paying too much attention to me. I find this a little frustrating, but I do not want to interrupt the process, just yet. She describes playing the last three notes of the scale
of G as ‘overblowing’ the last three notes. She once again goes to play the scale of G major but when she gets to the C natural, asks the whistle player if ‘that is alright’. I then proceed to explain that there are two different ways that you can choose to play C natural - I go to explain that one will be used in a tune that the teacher will teach but the teacher interrupts him and proceeds to ‘try’ to play the ‘new’ C natural. Again, this is a little frustrating. We both then play the ‘new’ C natural and incorporate it into the scale. The teacher is looking at her fingers while playing the scale. I suggest that the teacher ‘relax her fingers’ and demonstrate how I ‘pull it back’ (my finger), ‘like that’, ‘with the tiniest wee movement’. The teacher continues to play the scale throughout his explanation, without paying much attention to me. Amanda then talks herself through the movements of the D major scale to familiarise herself with the scale. She doesn’t seem completely sure about it at this stage. I then join in to explain the notes. Amanda then asks if ‘that D is the same as the 5th one in the G major scale’, to which I reply ‘Yeah, yeah’. I then show on the worksheet the diagram of the two different types of C natural. The teacher then, out of nowhere, begins to explain the history of her playing whistle. This is great, as she is starting to talk openly about her experience without me having to probe with prepared questions. She says, ‘I played tin-whistle’ in Primary... I took up recorder because all the kids were doing recorders when I did my Dip. and I completely missed... swapped... my mind works ‘recorder’... for some reason I thought that they were very similar but they’re not... I’ve forgotten the tin-whistle... it’s been so long.. I just looked at the recorder and I’ve just been teaching myself but they are different’. Amanda asks what is the fingering like for the recorder and then proceeds to demonstrate how the notes are played on a recorder. She says that ‘it is quite different really’ but ‘that’s what I have been used to’.

We get back to the whistle lesson. I say that the students should start with the D scale.. to get them feeling confident and playing together. The teacher agrees. I then explain some work that the students can do at home. So we agree that the teacher will show the students the scale and then they will ‘fill up’ the worksheet at night time. The whistle player points to some info on the sheet and the teacher reminds me that the students could be asked to ‘describe an instrument’ in the exam so that information will be ‘handy’. The conversation then moves on to the ‘single class’ where there might be time to learn a simple melody after learning the scales. I say that I think that something ‘familiar’ could be taught in the class like ‘Mo Ghile Mear’. The teacher agrees... and they can work it in as a love song for the students also. The first thing that the teacher
asks is if they get notes... we laugh... ‘where’s my music??’ she says. I explain that there are notes there for the teacher and that there will be blank staves in the student packs for the student to fill in, if they wish. He explains that they will be learning ‘by ear’. The teacher then asks ‘and do even I get the tune??’. ‘You’ll know the tune’, I respond. ‘I’ll have the tune’, the teacher responds.

**Teacher:** So I’m playing it for them and then they repeat

**Researcher:** Yeah

**Teacher:** Do I give them the letter names?

**Researcher:** No., you just..

**Teacher:** DDD E GA B

**Researcher:** I think that its’ important that they go away with notes but it’s probably

**Teacher:** Yes... so if you do what I’ll be doing then and I’ll be the kids

**Researcher:** I’ll do what you’ll be doing

**Teacher:** So show me how you teach

**Researcher:** I’d start by.. I’m going to have a recording of Cara Dillon and Iarla Ó Lionáird singing it

**Teacher:** Lovely

**Researcher:** And then, if you then play the melody twice that’s the way it usually works... play it really, really simple... and then break it down into really manageable bars

**Teacher:** A couple of bars at a time

**Researcher:** So I’ll play it for you and I thin that the first part is loads to look at for the time being so...

**Researcher:** (then plays the first part of Mo Ghile Mear for the teacher twice)

**Teacher:** So are we using a C natural and a C sharp in that?

**Researcher:** No., just a C natural

**Teacher:** Just a C natural

**Researcher:** (the whistle player demonstrates again)

**Teacher:** A flattened seventh... a flattened seventh?

**Researcher:** Yeah (laughs) Now you’re...

**Teacher:** Is that not right.. it’s a D major whistle that we’re playing on but the C sharp then becomes C natural

**Researcher:** And the tune’s in G major...

**Teacher:** Ahh.. ahh right... so we’re actually starting on the ‘So’

**Researcher:** Starting on the So.. so the tonic of it.. the way I..

**Teacher:** ahh yeah.. (the penny drops)

**Researcher:** (explains how he figures out the last note of a tune)

**Teacher:** So we’re playing a G major tune on a D major tin-whistle. I have it now.. I just saw the C natural and I was like.. yeah..

**Researcher:** (then demonstrates the tune in A major)

**Teacher:** And do you want then to actually remember the notes just on the spot in their head?

**Researcher:** Yeah

**Teacher:** Because I know straight away that they’ll say ‘what was the first note again?’ without having it.. so many of them are classically trained.. like myself

**Researcher:** Well... yeah well we’ll see.. we’ll just see how we get on

**Teacher:** Well I might be able to remember it but I don’t know about...

**Researcher:** Sure we’ll see how they get on.. Sure I even teach.. all over the years.. breaking it down to..

**Teacher:** Yeah.. first phrase
I then play the first ‘phrase’ of the tune, and then Amanda plays along on the second time. She then continues playing until she cannot then figure out the notes and she gets confused. I say that she is ‘flying away’ and she laughs. Amanda finally makes it to the end of the ‘first part’ and says, ‘because that’s because I know the tune’. I then point out that the tune is a familiar one and it will probably be familiar for the students also. The teacher then asks if I want the students to just ‘find the notes’. This is interesting. I then say that I will be there and ‘playing as well’. Amanda then makes a important observation, saying, ‘I obviously went ahead of myself there... I should’ve just listened to you every phrase and taken it bit by bit’. I tell the teacher that she is familiar with the tune, and the teacher responds by saying ‘I know the tune’. I then try again to get the idea of responding across to the teacher - I say that generally a whistle teacher would say, ‘Ok, repeat after me, it’s the way I’d teach’. And I repeat the point again saying, ‘Repeat after me and then break it down to...’. Finally, Amanda ‘comes around’ and says ‘Ok, so will we do that so as an example’. I point out that the teacher should spend as long as is necessary on the D and G major scales and to not go on to the tune until the students are really familiar with the scales. The teacher responds, ‘it depends on how they go’.

Teacher: You see I’m just so not used to that way of teaching... I have the sheet music in front of me all the time. At the orchestra this evening, we’ll get the sheet music the minute they walk in the door. Do you know?  
Researcher: And with this the last thing that they’ll get is the sheet music  
Teacher: Yeah...

At this stage, the discussion between getting or not getting the sheet music is amusing and novel for Amanda. But she agrees that that’s the way that it is. The whole issue however seems to place the teacher out of her comfort zone.

I then begin to teach the tune again. I show how the fingers should be positioned on the whistle and then proceed to play the phrase once through. Amanda immediately starts to play the second time around but I stop her and tell her that I will play it for the teacher one more time. After I have played it a second time I count to ‘2’ so the teacher can join in, but says ‘OK, now everyone after ‘2’’. Amanda then plays the phrase along with me the second time. I then count to 2 again and we play it together a second time and then a third time. I then play the next phrase and explain that the tune can be broken down into short phrases. We discuss which ‘C natural’ note that we should use
and decide on the C natural using the ‘half B finger’. We then proceed to play the phrase 3 or 4 times with me saying ‘Again’ in between each playing. I then play the next phrase and points out that Amanda should show the class (demonstrating fingers on the whistle) how to play the note G. I then play the notes ‘G, E, D’ and the teacher ‘fingers’ these notes but doesn’t actually play into the whistle. I then say, ‘Together’ and we both play the phrase.

Amanda then asks, ‘so, em, sorry, would they mirror me, more than anything?’

Teacher: Do your students look at your fingers and remember where your fingers were or do they remember what the note was?

Researcher: It’s actually a mixture and I’ve thought about this quite a bit when I’m teaching children tat they’ll all be sitting around the table looking at me and I’ll be saying ‘1, 2’ and they’ll all be watching my fingers to see where I’m going and that’s fine... people talk a lot about learning aurally but it’s a lot to do with the visual as well.

Teacher: And again, there are kids in the class who’ll get it straight away, they won’t have to look... and there’ll be kids who really have to watch me. So you just have to...

Researcher: That’s fine... it’s all about manageable little pieces

I then proceed to explain to the teacher how he’d get the class to join in after playing the phrase once through - by talking an exaggerated breath or counting in ‘1, 2’. I ask how the teacher is feeling. She replies that she would’ve taught recorder like that but they would’ve had notes with them as well and you’d notice that some kids would look at the notes and never look at you and then others would look at you and they wouldn’t even bother with the notes. So there’s two things going on all the time in such a big class. I then say that ‘for this, it’s to see what can work... it’s all good’. Amanda thinks that it will work anyway ‘what we’re doing at the moment’ but that if ‘there’s a big major problem anyway’ that I will be there. I say that I think that it’s handy enough and simple enough. The teacher responds that ‘it’s mostly by step as well’, which seems to please her. After all this discussion, I ask if she would like to play it twice. I haven’t actually managed to teach the teacher the tune in its entirety, but the teacher seems happy enough. We begin to play the tune. Amanda isn’t looking and watching me. She does the C natural which is a little ‘more tricky’ but she ‘slips up’ at another stage of the tune and I slow down to help her proceed. After we have played it once, I say ‘again’ and we play the first part again. I then stand up to show how the teacher could use her foot to keep the class in time by tapping. I ask if Amanda has any questions. The teacher says that she had learnt the whistle at primary school, and that she would’ve
attended Comhaltas, but that they would’ve always had the notes. She said that she had ‘never learnt by ear completely... and then I went to the classical and it was (she demonstrates with her arm movement) notes all the way’.

Teacher: Even though I can pick things up myself by ear, I can play by ear no problem... but when I’m teaching... notes.

I explain at this stage that I teach by ear and the children always want the notes. But I say that they should learn it by ear. The teacher then says that that’s the ‘right way for Irish music’. I respond that I ‘suppose it is right.. whatever right is’. I explain that it’s just ‘developing that and you hear something and you pick it up straight away’. Amanda agrees and says ‘absolutely’. I then proceed to explain what they might do in the next class, and incorporate cuts and slides into the playing of the tune. I then begin to play the tune that we had been playing previously and insert a cut and a slide. Amanda asks ‘what’s the last one that you did there?... A slide?’ I explain that it’s ‘E cut D... slide. Amanda asks ‘How do you do that?’ She seems keen to learn how to do this particular ornament and lifts her whistle. I explain that a slide is always ‘going up to the next note’ and demonstrates with my hand. Amanda then proceeds to try it out and they try playing a slide to G a few times until some students enter the room (judging by the noise). Amanda quickly puts her whistle down. I then proceed to tell a little anecdote about when he was teaching a group of young boys the whistle before. The teacher seems to appreciate this story but she is suddenly back in ‘teacher mode’ once the classroom begins to fill with students.
Observation: Bríd and Group B
Date: 29/09/09
Category of Data: Classroom observation

The clip opens with the teacher playing ‘the fourth bar’ of a tune and the students are looking at her. The teacher then calls out the notes, in the same ‘rhythm’ as she had just played them. The students all write these letter notes down in their workbooks. One student can be seen demonstrating the fingering of these notes to another student as this is all occurring, but she is not playing. Then the teacher does a really interesting thing. She says, ‘ok will we all play that so far... pick up you’re whistles and we’ll play that so far... one, two’. Bríd is really taking the initiative here and showing increased confidence. And with this, the students all pick up their whistles to play it up to that point. What is interesting here is that the students are now all looking at their notes when playing, and not to the teacher for guidance.

Teacher: Next part, next part.

The teacher then plays the next part and one student can be seen fingering the whistle with the same notes, and continuing on even when the teacher stops. Then, without the teacher asking, or explaining, the students call out and write down the notes that were just played. The teacher praises the students on their work. A student asks ‘is it F sharp’ and the teacher answers that it’s ‘in the whistle anyway’. This is interesting terminology. The teacher continues playing the notes for the students, and the students keep calling out the correct notes and writing them down. The students look intently at the teacher’s fingers each time she plays the notes, and then they write the notes down in their copies. They are listening, observing, and making a record. The teacher calls out the notes in the same rhythm as she plays them in the tune.

Teacher: Last bar... ready last bar
Students: A G G
Student: Miss how do you do a high E again?

Then the teacher demonstrates how you do a high E, and she does this a few times. Then, the students start to copy the teacher. The teacher then asks everyone to pick up their tin-whistles and attempt the tune. When they start playing the tune, the teacher counts them in and most of them are looking at their notes, as well as listening to the teacher. The class playing as a whole are going out of time however. They are not really listening carefully to one another and it is quite challenging, what they are being asked to do. The teacher then says to play it again, ‘and this time stay in time’, to which the students all laugh, as it was obvious that they were all just doing their own thing. On the second playing, the class as a whole are playing together to a greater degree, but it is interesting that when they were just observing the teacher, they were playing together to a greater degree! The teacher continues by playing the second part of the tune, for the students to take down the notes, and the teacher then calls out the notes. Some of the students are playing the notes on their whistles as the teacher is playing also. The teacher plays the part once again and the whole class can be heard calling out combinations of letters to see if their letters are correct. The teacher is very much leading this class as the students all wait until the teacher calls the correct notes and then they take the notes down. I have really faded into the ‘background’, and the teacher is the one to look to for the students. The teacher moves on to the next part, and the same process continues. The teacher plays the notes, the students try their best to
choose the correct notes. The teacher then praises the students for getting the correct notes. The students ask the teacher questions such as ‘is it a high D miss?’.

The teacher then says, ‘look’ or ‘come on girls, try and do it by ear’. She is really encouraging the students to listen carefully. When the students gets it correct the teacher says ‘excellent’, continuously praising when they have achieved what she set out for them. At one stage a student pipes up, ‘I wouldn’t know that by ear!!’. Interestingly, the teacher just continues on at this stage. ‘Next bar’, she says. The teacher plays the next bar, and the students all watch the teacher and call out the notes and then write them down, and then the teacher calls out the notes ‘in time’. The teacher then plays the last bar, and when the students aren’t getting it straight away, the teacher says ‘have a look’. The visual aspect of learning keeps cropping up. The teacher then plays it again and then says the notes ‘in rhythm’. Some students can be see trying the notes on their whistles at various stages, without actually playing, and this has been quite common across this and similar classes. There is a little break from the teacher calling out the notes, and the students can be heard ‘finding’ the notes on their whistles, playing lightly, and chatting. The teacher then says, ‘will we play it together... here we go’. The teacher counts in ‘one, two’ and the students start playing. Most of the students are looking at their notes that they have just taken down, and it is soon obvious that the students as a group are playing WAY out of time. This is interesting. The teacher very abruptly stops the group and shows her dissatisfaction vocally, ‘ahhh girls, hang on hang on wait a minute’. The teacher asks, ‘is everyone playing at different times?’.

Students: Yes
Teacher: Do you hear the beat?
Students: No
Teacher: You play to the beat don’t you. Imagine is everyone playing Irish traditional music at their own time... what would it be like? Chaos! Listen to the beat!

Interestingly, when the teacher says this, none of the students answer, and they are usually quite a vocal group. They weren’t listening to the beat and they now know it. The teacher starts the group playing again, and while most of them are still looking at their notes, they play in time this time. When they have finished, the teacher says, ‘perfect, now you have the music in front of you... you have the rhythm in your head... don’t you.. now put in cuts and slides... or... taps... anything you want to put into it really’. There is freedom in where they go from here. While the teacher is getting prepared for the next activity, about six or seven students can all be seen, in ‘their own worlds’, trying out what they have learned from the start of the class. This continues until the teacher comes over to say, ‘put your whistles away’. End of whistle section of the class.
Teacher: Girls are we going to welcome back Thomas?

Class: Welcome back Thomas

Researcher: Thank you!

Teacher: We’re delighted to be here because actually they’re missing class

Student: History... French...

Researcher: Awww... well thanks for missing French and English and History. Are you looking forward to your holidays? Thank you for having me back. If you remember at all what we were doing from September to Christmas... it’s quite a while ago at this stage... I can’t believe how fast the months have gone. Well as you know I’m out from UL and I’m doing some research into how Irish traditional music is experienced in the classroom and you all were really really important to that. And that’s why I was videoing the classes along along and watching you and talking to you. So today we’re going to watch ourselves.

Class: No!!

Researcher: We’re going to see how much time we have but we’re going to watch three clips which are 15 or 20 minutes long or we can have them a little shorter if we run out of time. And when you’re watching these here want you to look out or what I’m calling ‘A Learning Moment’. Has anyone any idea what that might mean before I try to explain it? Anyone?

Student: Is it when you’re explaining something and then it kind of clicks with you and then you understand?

Researcher: Yeah so when you’re explaining something and it sort of clicks. It’s that moment when you’re doing something and there’s that... you know that lightbulb moment.. and the lightbulb kind of goes... ‘ping’... and it mightn’t be something that’s even said. You could watch the video and you could be sitting off in the corner of the class doing your own thing and suddenly you’ll have that lightbulb moment. So that’s one of the things you’re looking out for. So per group if we could have one spokesperson to write things down, and as I’m playing the videos you can discuss it quietly amongst yourselves if you think that there’s a learning moment. If you want to write down a few questions that might trigger an answer. So first of all, when was there a learning moment?

Teacher: So you all need to write these questions. so when was there a learning moment? So do you have paper? When was there a learning moment?

Researcher: So when was there a learning moment? What was happening at this time? And you can make up a name for your group. Who was teaching?

[I put on clip to play]

Researcher: Don’t be commenting on each other’s hairstyles. So are you writing down? So if you listen to me for one second. Who was teaching? So it might have been a case where Ms. [redacted] might have been learning something... that could have
happened. Somebody might have been demonstrating in the class. Who was learning? If you want to write that down.

Student: What was the second question?

Teacher: What was happening at this time was the second one.

Researcher: We’re going to discuss these anyway but if you write down a few points as well.

Teacher: Who was teaching?

Researcher: Was everyone participating? Again I’ll play the clip and watch it carefully and watch it and discuss it quietly amongst yourselves and we can have a chat about it later.

Teacher: Girls if we’re discussing it we have to do it quietly so we can still hear

Researcher: Ok

[plays Sean Nós clip]

Researcher: Can everyone hear it ok?

[after clip]

Researcher: So... what was it like to watch yourselves?

Student: My hair was a bush.

Researcher: How did that feel?

Student: Embarrassing. Very embarrassing.

Researcher: So did each group manage to pick one of those lightbulb moments where something was transferred across? I can go around each group. You didn’t learn one thing?

Group 1: Oh we did, we learned about Donegal style. The Donegal style and how it’s very harsh.

Researcher: And how did you learn about it?

Group 1: By listening to the clips from Youtube and looking at the sheets. It was very good.

Researcher: So listening and looking. So did you find that better than if you had of just been just listening or just looking?

Student: Because you’re able to read back on them then to just remind yourself.

Researcher: Great... well that was a learning moment. Yeah... well done. So anything here?

Teacher: So who’s the spokesperson is it you [Blank]?

Group 2: I had when we were explaining... listening to a song and explaining about it and composing.

Researcher: So more listening. That’s what was happening your learning moment great?
Student: When we were learning about the Donegal style and taking down notes and talking about it.

Researcher: So lots of listening. Was there any performance in the class or was it all listening?

Student: When [student name] asked a question or she said something (becomes muffled as students begin agreeing)

Researcher: Did you explain something in the class? (muffled noise as students begin agreeing)

Researcher: So again you were teaching something to the class. You were sharing your experiences.

Teacher: You were trying to make a connection.

Student: When Ms. [teacher name] had been giving an example of the Sean nós and we were talking about that we had been listening to a song during the week and the whole class started getting more involved and they were all talking.

Researcher: What was that story about listening during the week?

Class: That was Mairéad Ní something... Mhaonaigh

Researcher: So you were bringing in something that you had learned from a class beforehand? Does that help? If you can connect it to a class or something outside school?

Teacher: Mmm hmm... and [teacher name]...

Student: Do you know when you were saying what melismatic means? And then the way it was in the Connemara style... when you were saying Amen and giving an example.. that was kind of good.

Researcher: That was your learning moment? Do you have anything else? Down the back?

Student: Oh yeah it was said about [student name] granddad... was it her granddad?

[student name]: It was my granddad’s....

Student: It was her granduncle.

Researcher: And why did that little story stick out more so than the other 40 minutes?

Student: Because there was a student saying it. Because there was a connection. It was just remembered that...

Researcher: So it sort of made it.. what did that connection do?

Student: The whole class got involved.

Student: It makes you remember it. It makes you go... ‘oh yeah that was [student name] whatever...’

Researcher: Oh yeah... so it made it real...
Student: We picked about the regional styles and the two of you were teaching and it was kind of giving different views. And you were using youtube for a while that was good.

Researcher: So the class was almost a discussion for a while. There was an awful lot going on it that class for a while... just watching it...

Teacher: Yeah there was...

Researcher: Because I think there was a youtube clip... and then we were talking... and you describe the melismatic... so what was your learning moment? (to teacher)

Teacher: I think again the connection again with Ailbhe’s granduncle... I just felt that the class changed at that moment... it just kind of made it real or something. We had just listening to this lovely song and then the next day we realised that your granduncle had collected it.... it had come from him. Isn’t that right... so the whole recording was made possible because of him. It just made that... that to me was the learning moment. It just made it real.

Researcher: Yeah it made it alive.

Teacher: Yeah.

Researcher: The way the moment made it real and sort of brought it to life... if you’re learning... Like you have so much to learn for exams. Would you try to make those connections? Would you try to? I suppose by performing it makes it real. If you sing or if you play...

Teacher: We actually... when you were gone... we actually played a lot our chosen songs and set songs on tin whistle didn’t we after that.

Researcher: Did you?

Teacher: Yeah the ones we learned after that we played them all on tin whistle... except Good People All... that was a bit beyond us. The Wexford Carol wasn’t it... that was a little bit beyond us.

Student: The ones we could learn by step.

Teacher: The ones that we could learn by step and the ones that were in the right key but we did play them all. We even played the Brahms!
I introduce Úna to the Group B students. She says hello and it isn’t long before she is talking to the students, and giving them an introduction to Irish dancing. She says that there is ‘a social function for it’ and a ‘connection to the music’. She then talks about ‘going back to the 1920s, 30s when there were no discos, no televisions, radios, there were no cars... so you could only go to where you could cycle to or where you could walk to’. She says that there was a very small number of people that you could connect with, and ‘you all had to squash together into houses’. She then asks what ‘kinds of instruments did people play?’ A discussion follows on what types of instruments people may have had in the 1920s. Úna probes the students for answers and it is obvious that she is trying to get them to come up with the correct answers as to what instruments were available at the time. She then gives a brief historical overview of music being played for dancers, explains the Dance Hall Act and then says, ‘basic idea is that music is played for the dancers... a lot of times now it’s music because they like to play it... they’re not terribly bothered if there’s anyone dancing to the music... in fact... they’re insulted if someone gets up and gallops around... but the actual beat for the music is for dancing’. The conversation moves from ‘recorded music’ to ‘Ceilí band music’ and Úna asks if I’ll play a CD of Kilfenora Ceilí Band for her, and makes reference to the previous class where we looked at Ceilí band music.

I play a track. The tune begins to play. Some of the students begin to tap along. Úna asks what type of tune it is and some answer, ‘a reel’. She asks, ‘How do you know that it’s a reel?’, to which they begin doing the reel rhythms and get really animated. Úna then counts ‘5, 6, 7, 8’ towards the end of the part and the students perform the ‘double rhythm’, that we have worked on in a previous class. They seem really proud of themselves that they are getting the rhythm.

Úna then asks the students to form a circle in the middle of the classroom, which has now been cleared of desks and chairs. The music is playing at this point, a ceilí band playing a reel. Úna asks the students to start marching to the music, which they do. After a little while, this movement is altered to a more sideways step. The students do this without much difficulty, although so of them are moving in the wrong direction. It is obviously more difficult or some! Úna then asks the students to clap the beat and tap it on their legs. She counts ‘1, 2, tap tap tap’ etc. The students start to speed up to the music and Úna says that ‘when it’s recorded like that it can’t go faster... you have to stay with it’. They are starting to connect body movement with the music, and listening in a different way. She then asks them to do it again and they get it on the beat, and she says that ‘that’s like a metronome’. She then says something about, ‘the old by in the corner’, a little analogy about an old man in a dance hall. She praises the students that they are ‘very good’. Encouragement and praise are a big part of achieving progress, it seems. Úna says that the ‘1, 2, 3s are the basis for everything’ and then moves on to explaining the ‘moving to 7 steps, in a circle’. The group starts to move in a circle, with Úna saying that ‘you go up for one and down for two’, but it is obvious that this is causing some difficulty for the students. Some of the students are finding this tricky, and it is obvious that they are not following the beat of the music, but trying to figure out the stepping to the side movement. Is the challenge being presented too great for the students? The music is stopped so this can be looked at more carefully. Úna says that ‘we’ll leave the music for a minute... they’re not going to be ready for the music for a while’. The students really don’t seem to mind however.
Úna then tells an interesting story to show students how they should stand while dancing, drawing to the past, looking at the likes of fencing, ballet, the church, government etc.. She says that ‘the connection to the music is still the same but the physical posture is different’. She then gets the students to ‘step, close, step, close, step, close’ etc. She says that ‘we’re going on the beat’. She then moves to connect this rhythm to the music, by connecting it verbally to the movement that they did a little while ago, clapping and tapping. Úna says, as they’re moving around in a circle, ‘front, back, front, back, front, back’. There is laughing going on and people are enjoying themselves while they are doing the movements. They are having fun, but are being challenged. Úna says that ‘that’s really good, that’s really good’... and again says, ‘that’s really good’. Úna asks who has done Irish dancing, and when one has, she says that ‘we’re just assuming today like no one has ever done it’. There is no pressure on the students to perform, and everyone is in the same boat. She counts the students in once again and off they go, ‘step, close, step, close, step, close’ in a circle. The students are concentrating and laughing, and then the circle turns the other way. Úna says that ‘that’s not bad’, continues the movement, and repeats, ‘that’s actually not bad at all... there’s your basics for everything... your 1, 2, 3s and your sidestep’.

Next thing: Doing the turn - Úna goes on to show the different ways of doing the turn. She demonstrates this by picking out different students and doing the movements with them, while counting out the beats. Úna is demonstrating the dance in a more focussed way. Úna then moves to doing a ‘partner dance’ and says that they should face a certain way, and get with a partner. She asks ‘has anyone ever done a three legged race?’, to which they answer, ‘yes’. She starts to talk through the dance, ‘amach224, insteach225, amach, isteach, 1, 2, 3, 4’, and then the students all turn around. She uses the three-legged-race analogy a few times, when the students do not seem to be working together. At times, they are finding it difficult to engage in what Úna is asking them to do. Úna is making sure that the students have the movements before playing the music again. She uses the words, ‘amach, insteach, 1, 2, 3, 4’ to get the students to work together. One of the students has a learning moment, and says, ‘awww the opposite’. Úna begins the routine once again. After they have been successful with this part of the dance, the class breaks out chatting for a few seconds before Úna gets their attention once again. The next movement starts, ‘slide together, hold, slide together hold’. Úna starts the movement with her ‘pretend partner’ and the class watch on and try to join in. They slowly start to copy the movements. There is a great sense of fun and effort in the class and Úna praises the students. The boys took a few minutes before they would hold hands with one another. Úna points to the fact that they’ve done ‘the 1, 2, 3s already’... “ohhh yeahhh”, remember the students. Two of the students motion that they’re going to ‘do it!!!’ Again, concentration, fun, effort, and working together. They all face the correct direction and put the movements together. They are finding it difficult but Úna praises them and moves on quickly. The class has energy and momentum.

She then brings the dancing to the music, and asks, ‘what has to be right in terms of the music’... ‘the rhythm and...?’ . Úna then points out that you have to keep the time, and listen to the tempo whether it is fast or slow. The entire dance so far is then practiced, and the students are really moving in time with each other. There is still no music playing, and a great sense of fun and concentration. When they finish the movement,
the students automatically give themselves a round of applause, as they are really happy
that they got through the movement. This is automatic feedback that they are doing a
good job and that they have achieved the task at hand.

Úna then puts on the music, and the dancing begins. The students are working in pairs,
but doing the dance in ‘half-time’. They are listening to the music, working together,
and moving to the music. It seems to be important that at times the students verbalise
the movements that they are doing, like, ‘slide together hold, slide together hold’. They
then do the movements at the proper speed, ‘full time’. They then go to do the dance
to the music again but Úna stops them and says to ‘wait for the 8’ and then counts the
students in. That is, the students are being asked to focus on the beat of the music
before joining in together. They then perform the movements at the slower pace, and
Úna seems to be talking in time with the music that is now playing. They repeat the
dance at this slow speed and Úna then says that after that, they’re going to try it at
‘double speed’. Úna is calling directions to the group all the time. After they have done
the movement at ‘normal’ speed, one of the students shouts out ‘yes, yes!!!’, another
shouts out, ‘we made it!!’. They seem delighted that they have managed to get through
the movement and that this was quite a difficult task. Úna then moves on to a different
type of tune, ‘a march... or a jig depending where you’re from’. It is interesting that the
students have all lined up and are ready to dance the tune! They do not even have to be
asked. After they have done the movement once, Úna calls out, ‘that’s much better agus
aris226’. And they do it again. They are concentrating and moving together. Úna says
that you can teach this in any country in the world as long as you’ve three sentences,
‘slide together hold....’. At this time, Úna really verbalises the movements, and
everyone is performing the movement with ease. They are listening to the music, and
responding kinesthetically as a group. Úna then calls out to ‘take a new partner’ and
while everything ‘breaks down’ for a few moments, it only takes a few seconds before
everyone is paired up again and ready to go again. Some of the students are really
energetic and animated with their movements, while some are going quietly with the
movements. When we have performed the movement once with our new partners, Úna
says that ‘that’s really good’ and an automatic applause breaks out from everyone
involved.

After, Úna brings it back to the music, and asks which track was better for dancing to, to
which the students answer, ‘the second one’. Úna then asks everyone to ‘look at their
partner’, and then ‘look at the person who’s not your partner’. A lot of this dance
happens ‘with the person who is not your partner’. Úna tells everyone to join hands in a
ring, in a circle. Úna tells the students if they’re ‘going to the left they’ll lead with the
left’, and if they’re going to dance this she’d really like, ‘if they could dance this to
music’. Úna begins calling the dance, and the students follow her directions. There is a
great sense of fun and concentration. There is some confusion in the movements. Úna
describes how to ‘do the swing’. Then ‘we’re’ back into the dance and it looks quite
messy but the students are still going with the movements. Úna stops the dance and
explains once again what they’re being asked to do. She counts them in after a count of
‘eight’, and they begin. The count to ‘eight’ is significant here. Then Úna says that
everyone has to go ‘anti-clockwise’ and there is some confusion here. We start the
dance again and people go the wrong way. They still don’t have it together. Úna then
explains the ‘straw and hay’ for distinguishing between left and right. The dance gets
going again and there’s a definite rhythm going on, but it’s hard to know whether

226 This is the Irish language translation for ‘and again’. 

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anyone is connecting it to the music. It’s all about trying to get the movements right, as a group. There’s great fun, concentration, group work.

The music starts. Things come surprisingly together when the music starts and it is clear that they can kinesthetically respond better when the music is playing, than when it is not. The second attempt at this proves a little more successful. The students seem to be moving to the beat, changing partner with the beat. Some of the students are acting up a little but it’s all in good fun. Every so often, Úna gives praise saying, ‘that’s very good’. At this stage, it all seems to be coming together nicely. Everyone has calmed down and suddenly it erupts again in confusion at connecting the movements with music, but calms down once again. Úna wants to slow things down now and focuses on the ‘1, 2, 3s’ again. Things are nicely calm now and the students are practicing ‘getting the weights’ correct on their feet. Úna says that they’ll get a rest whenever they get it right, and then after a minute, she tells them that they’re ‘very good’. Things begin to come together at this stage, and the tempo speeds up. Úna then develops the step a little, and makes it more challenging. Úna then puts the students into two groups and tells one group to sit down. She tells the group that it’s a very easy dance, and that in Irish dancing, ‘the lady is always right’.
## APPENDIX L

### Schedule of Phase 1 & Phase 2 Music Classes and Events (School A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week / Class</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Pre-Phase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May 2007 - May 2008</td>
<td>May 2009 - Sep 2009</td>
<td>Meetings with Teacher (Bríd) and Distribution of Student Questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
<td>Meeting music teacher for whistle lessons</td>
<td>Class 1</td>
<td>Class 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>Meet the students and Intro. to traditional music. In this class, I asked questions on the participants’ perceptions of traditional music.</td>
<td>Uilleann pipes demonstration and whistle lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
<td>Learning Ornamentation on whistle and Mo Ghile Mear</td>
<td>Learning Ornamentation on whistle and Mo Ghile Mear</td>
<td>After Concert Discussion, Applying ornamentation to Mo Ghile Mear on whistle, Reel Body Rhythms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4</strong></td>
<td>Learning Ornamentation on whistle and Jig Body Rhythms</td>
<td>Body Rhythms ‘test’ and Hornpipe Body Rhythm</td>
<td>Song Tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
<td>Visiting Musician (Marie, singer)</td>
<td>Listening to CD Class and Body Rhythms</td>
<td>Regional Styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 6</strong></td>
<td>Regional Styles Continued</td>
<td>Listening to CD Class and Body Rhythms</td>
<td>Sean Nós Singing and Learning Whistle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 7</strong></td>
<td>Sean Nós Singing and Learning Whistle</td>
<td>Learning Polka on Whistle</td>
<td>Ceilidh Dance Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 8</strong></td>
<td>Ceilidh Dance Class (Una, dancer)</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 9</strong></td>
<td>Visiting Musician (Leah, harp)</td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 10</strong></td>
<td>End of term Gathering</td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Schedule of Phase 1 & Phase 2 Music Classes and Events (School B)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>May 2007 - May 2008</td>
<td>Design, distribution, and analysis of questionnaires to a cross-section of post-primary music teachers in Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Phase 2</td>
<td>May 2009 - Sep 2009</td>
<td>Meetings with Teacher (Amanda) and Distribution of Student Questionnaires</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week / Class</th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
<th>Class 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Meeting music teacher for whistle lessons</td>
<td>Uilleann pipes demonstration and whistle lesson</td>
<td>Teacher teaches polka on whistle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Meet the students and Intro. to traditional music. In this class, I asked questions on the participants' perceptions of traditional music</td>
<td>After Concert Discussion, Applying ornamentation to Mo Childe Mear on whistle, Reel Body Rhythms</td>
<td>Listening workbook and hornpipe rhythm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Learning ornamentation on whistle, listening workbook, and reel body rhythms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Learning workbook and slipjig body rhythms</td>
<td>Song Tradition</td>
<td>No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Sean Nós Singing and Learning Whistle</td>
<td>Fusion class</td>
<td>Visiting Musician (Marie, singer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Regional Styles Continued</td>
<td>Listening to CD Class and Body Rhythms</td>
<td>Sean Nós Singing and Learning Whistle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Sean Nós Singing and Learning Whistle</td>
<td>Learning Polka on Whistle</td>
<td>Body Rhythms and Listening workbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Ceilid Dance Class (Una, dancer)</td>
<td>Focus on the harping tradition</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Visiting Musician (Leah, harp)</td>
<td>Focus on the collectors</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>End of term Gathering</td>
<td>No class</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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