australian society for music education incorporated

# Ethnographic case study and teaching for engagement in classroom music

**Emily Wilson, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne**

**Thesis title:** "It's music and we came to play instruments": Teaching for engagement in classroom music

**Institution:** Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne

## Abstract

Over the past five decades there have been persistent concerns about low levels of student satisfaction with school music. Adopting teaching practices that originate in out-of-school contexts and bringing these into classroom music is thought to mitigate these concerns. Musical Futures is a student-centred approach that incorporate learners' everyday musical cultures. Despite student engagement being regularly mentioned as a key outcome when teachers adopt this approach, less is known about the teacher practices that foster engagement from a classroom perspective.

This ethnographic case study investigates teacher practices that encourage engagement in classroom music. The data collection was undertaken in a primary (elementary) and a secondary school in the outer south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, Australia, and focussed on the classroom practice of two teachers in four classes of students aged 10 to 16 years. The findings draw on participant-observation of music lessons, interviews and focus groups.

The findings revealed the relationship between student engagement and classroom music teaching is complex, fluid and situational, and the analysis revealed a complex picture of engaging teaching presented as five characteristics which are drawn together under three themes - acknowledging cultures and real-world practice, emphasising a student-centred creative approach, navigating prevailing beliefs and systems and practice.

For many years, music education researchers and educators have been concerned by the low levels of student participation in school music once it ceases to be compulsory around age fourteen (Ross, 1995). In contrast, involvement in music making outside is ubiquitous, particularly through listening to music (Lamont & Maton, 2008) but increasingly performing and creating music too. To address these concerns, there has been interest in adopting practices that originate in out-of-school contexts and bringing them into the classroom to make school music more meaningful for students by incorporating young people's everyday musical cultures (Finney, 2010; Green, 2008; Spruce, 2015).

The Musical Futures project was established in 2003 and aimed to develop new approaches to learning and teaching that increase the involvement of young people in music making both inside and outside school. To do this, learning and teaching are student-driven, focus on active involvement in music making, and draw from real-world contexts such as how popular musicians and community musicians learn to play. Lucy Green's (2002) seminal research which examines the learning processes of popular musicians informed one Musical Futures approach, the informal learning model. Green (2002) identifies five student-directed principles and the role of the teacher is to be a facilitator. Representing

a fundamental reassessment of the student and teacher roles in classroom music, Green (2008) suggests teachers use the principles alongside their established approaches. Complementing the informal learning model is Classroom Workshopping, also referred to as non-formal teaching (D'Amore, 2008). This approach is modelled on the community music leadership practices of the Guildhall School's community music outreach program. Renshaw (2005) claims Classroom Workshopping's focus on aural learning and improvisation increases student motivation and enjoyment. There are commonalities with Turino's (2008) theory of participatory music making which does not have distinct performer and audience roles, rather everyone is involved together in active music making.

Studies have found that student engagement noticeably increases when teachers incorporate Musical Futures into the learning and teaching program (Davis & Blair, 2011; Green, 2008; Hallam, Creech & McQueen, 2011; Jeanneret, 2010; Jeanneret et al., 2011; Ofsted, 2006; Wright et al., 2012). Less is known about the specific teacher practices that promote engagement.

## Aims and research question

My examination of the theories and findings in the music education research literature revealed a noticeable lack of research that details how teachers enact principles of engaging classroom music teaching broadly, and Musical Futures specifically, in their day-to-day teaching. However, any principle or approach is only one part of a teacher's practice. For example, Alexander's (2000) holistic framework of teaching articulates elements that are all potentially influential over student engagement.

The aim of my research is to contribute to a better understanding of classroom music teaching and its connection with engagement through exploring the teacher practices that promote engagement in classroom music when teachers are drawing on a Musical Futures approach. To address this aim, I undertook an ethnographic case study at a secondary school and a primary school to obtain a deep insight into the day-to-day practice of two teachers working with four classes of students. I selected the research methodology and methods as the best means to accomplish a rigorously constructed first-hand investigation of the phenomena.

The question that guided the investigation was: What characterises teaching for engagement in classroom music?

My experiences over 15 years of school-based music education were pertinent to the research and its design including my familiarity with government schools and the model of classroom and co-curricular music that comprises music programs in Victoria. Throughout my teaching career, I have developed a deep interest in practices that engage students.

## Methodology

My musical and teaching background informed how I conducted the research. I was interested in developing an in-depth and holistic understanding of the complex lived classroom experiences of teachers and students within the culture of the classroom. In this context, meaning making and knowing is socially constructed, dynamic and context-dependent (Hammersley, 2011; Merriam, 2009; O'Toole & Beckett, 2013). I sought to generate a multi-vocal, descriptive and contextualised representation of music education in a particular setting.

A constructivist position gives emphasis in qualitative research to "what people say and do, and why" (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010, p. 28). Understanding such lived experiences requires a complex and emergent research process that seeks understanding through dialogic and iterative cycles of thinking and interpretation (Hammersley, 2011). This dialogue is socioculturally situated and occurs between the researcher and participants to interpret and communicate meaning. Methodologies that align with this positioning are ethnography and case study.

## Ethnography

Ethnography is both a process and product aimed at describing culture (Wolcott, 1999). The goal of the ethnographer is to "share in the meanings that the cultural participants take for granted and then to depict new understandings for the reader and for outsiders" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 31). In my research, the music classroom is a cultural space and the students and teacher are a culture-sharing group. In-depth fieldwork over an extended period is a defining characteristic of ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). My deep immersion in the context facilitated the building of collaborative dialogical relationships with the teacher- and student-participants.

My research was also informed by ethnomusicology, a particular interpretation of ethnography that gives attention to the sonic characteristics of the music created within the cultural context in which it is situated (Bresler & Stake, 2006; Stock, 2003). In common with ethnography, ethnomusicology gives emphasis to fieldwork, immersion in the site and participant observation. In addition, it involves learning the music itself and adopting the role of participant-observer in learning to perform in the musical tradition under investigation to gain an insider understanding.

Ethnomusicology takes a holistic and relativistic view of music making in its cultural context which Campbell (2001) recommends for music education research. The transmission of music from one context to another is recognised as a cross-cultural phenomenon, which is relevant to considering pedagogy across cultural boundaries (Campbell, 2001). Popular music can be considered the musical culture of students' out-of-school lives which is then brought into the culture of the classroom (Green, 2008). Campbell (2001) also supports investigating music education using ethnomusicological methods because this may contribute to the further development of effective teaching practices.

## Insider-outsider perspective

Much discussion in ethnography and ethnomusicology has focussed on the distinction between the researcher and the researched and whether researchers bring an insider or outsider perspective, also referred to as an emic or etic perspective (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Nettl, 2005). Inherent assumptions result from whether the culture or musical tradition is close to or distant from the researcher's (Nettl, 2005). In ethnomusicology, an issue has been outsider researchers implicitly positioning themselves as experts because they feel they can understand the musical culture under investigation in a relatively short period of time. Similarly, Deshler and Selener (1991) comment that "what we decide to research and the way we conduct our research is a political statement about who and what is important to us" (p. 9). More recently, however, music researchers have been examining their own cultures where they are better positioned to understand the music (Rice, 2013). In turn, a criticism of insider research is the potential for a lack of objectivity. Further complicating the insider/outsider position is that even within what appears to be a homogenous setting, there are still insiders and outsiders. For example, a researcher from the metropolitan area studying rural music in the same general region can still be an outsider. A spectrum more accurately describes insider and outsider perspectives (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

I brought both an insider and outsider perspective, which made navigating my role complex and challenging. As a classroom music teacher, I was an insider. I drew on accumulated knowledge as an experienced teacher in schools in Australia and the UK including being Head of Department. This experience was fundamental in being able to "read the classroom" and to interpret teaching and engagement in the complex aural environment. My prior experience was invaluable in building rapport and being accepted as an insider by the teachers; both teacher participants largely viewed me as a peer. Music teachers frequently work in one- or two-person departments which can result in isolation.

Both Chris and Eddie spoke about how valuable they found the experience of having another music teacher to speak with. As a researcher rather than a colleague, I had time for in-depth discussions about their teaching.

I was an outsider in the particular school context and as a Western art musician investigating teachers who are popular musicians. I share a similar cultural and linguistic background with the teachers as white middle-class Australians. In contrast, the students were from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Although my teaching was in government secondary schools in Australia and the UK, my students had higher socioeconomic advantage than the students in my study. It was, therefore, imperative for me to be sensitive in my approach to the fieldwork. I introduced myself to the students by my first name to avoid being perceived as a teacher. However, soon the students were addressing me by "Miss" as they did other female teachers. This reflects Bogdan and Biklen's (2009) contention that an adult researcher in a school setting is viewed as a teacher by default. Even as a student-researcher, I was viewed as "being from the university", and thus, an outsider. Despite feeling that I had a peer relationship with the teachers in the research, I was bestowed with the mantle of expert, which I most definitely was not. Eddie would introduce me to other colleagues as "this is Emily from Melbourne University". It was important for me to consider these perspectives when conducting the research and interpreting my data.

## Case Study

Ethnographic as an adjective has been used by O'Toole and Beckett (2013) to add focus or "methodical substance" (p. 52) to a case study which they explain can be either a methodology or a method. Case study necessitates careful articulation of what is to be studied. Simons (2009) defines case study as the study of the "singular, the particular, the unique" (p. 3) of the individual case, a bounded system (Smith, 1978). A case could be a person, a group of people, a classroom, a program, or a teaching context within which a phenomenon is examined (O'Toole & Beckett, 2010; Simons, 2009; Yin, 2009). Creswell's (2007) perspective differs: He emphasises the phenomenon under investigation rather than the context and defines case study as "the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system" (p. 73). Similarly, Yin (2009) holds that case studies are helpful for discovering more about a little known or understood situation, where the phenomenon under investigation is not easy to extricate from its context. My research being primarily concerned with exploring classroom music teaching which promotes engagement, which is inseparable from the context, aligns with Creswell's (2007) viewpoint. I designed the research as a multiple case study (Stake, 2006), which refers to a network of case studies on several sites. Each of the two music teachers and their respective classroom music programs were cases.

Creswell (2007) views ethnography and case study as complementary. He explains that ethnography focusses on understanding how the culture works, whereas case study investigates a particular issue illustrated uniquely through the case. Hammersley (2011) recognises a "heterogeneity of research activities" (p. 131), suggesting researchers may shift and combine methodological perspectives. I use the term ethnographic case study to describe my methodology because I primarily sought to gain insight into engaging teaching in the classroom contexts of two teachers.

## Methods

I chose methods of data collection to explore characteristics of engaging classroom music teaching, and the complex interplay between the actions of the teacher and the experience of the students. A constructivist perspective sees data being collected to document and explain engaging teaching, I sought to present a holistic picture (Kervin, Vialle, Herrington & Okely, 2006). To construct a portrait of the culture-sharing group, considerable time in the field was necessary. For this reason, and because all choices have limitations, data

was collected from multiple sources for a variety of purposes. I undertook observation of 48 music lessons using unstructured and open observations to begin, and then further focussed observations. Initial semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two teachers and final interviews were undertaken at the end of the data collection phase. Informal research conversations occurred before and after music lessons. I undertook focus groups with the students to elicit a student perspective and collected documents such as curriculum planning to add detail and contextualise other sources of data.

### Participant observation stance

In line with ethnography, I chose participant-observation as the primary method to allow me to directly experience teaching and student engagement over time. The extended time frame allowed me to gain significant rather than superficial insight, build trust and share common experiences including musical skills with both the teacher and student participants (Stock, 2003). Participant-observation occurs on a continuum from an unobtrusive fly-on-the wall stance (complete observation) to being involved in what is occurring (complete participation) (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Ethnomusicology has a tradition of the researcher being involved (complete participation) in music making as well as learning to play in the tradition being researched. Stock (2003) articulates the benefits and importance of being an involved participant-observer:

> As part of this process of trying to become an insider, at least temporarily, in the community under examination, ethnomusicologists normally learn to perform together with the subjects of their study. This provides close access to the heart of the performance event and direct personal musical experience, and those studied often share their thoughts and actions much more deeply with a co-performer than with an external observer. (p. 136)

In a classroom music context, I interpreted this participant-observation stance to mean working alongside the teacher and co-playing with the students, at least initially. A benefit was the relationships I built with the participants. Playing music was quite a different experience to watching. I experienced positive feelings from being unobtrusively involved in the music making. A disadvantage of complete participation is that it restricts the nature and the range of the data that is able to be collected (Baker, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). It was difficult to document the classroom environment and undertake a formative analysis while being involved. I found it necessary to periodically step back to take a photo or write notes in a journal.

A tension in relation to participant-observation is the extent of my influence on the findings (Baker, 2006). As a musically knowledgeable adult in the room, I was aware that my presence could influence student experiences. To minimise this influence and inclined by my prior teaching experience, I gravitated towards being a teacher assistant. I would help students with tuning instruments, or if they were stuck on how to play a particular chord I would show them the chord shape. The teacher's practice may have been influenced by follow-up research conversations when I was testing out ideas about their teaching that I had observed, and thereby providing feedback. Similarly, as the interviewer I will have influenced participant responses in interviews.

I varied my participant-observation stances to build on the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of different stances. I spent an initial familiarisation period so that everyone would feel comfortable with me in the room. I avoided the impression of a "researcher" by delaying my observations until as soon as possible after the lessons. I often wrote observations in the car before I drove home. Afterwards, I typed the notes, adding more detail to the account. After this initial period, I was still generally involved in what was occurring. I made audio-recordings using a small hand-held Zoom H1 recorder. Once everyone was relaxed with the audio-recording I made video-recordings using a small camera on a tripod. Towards the end of the data

collection I adopted a more fly-on-the-wall stance. At this point, I only responded to direct student requests for help rather than joining in as I had done previously. These requests still occurred frequently, particularly from the primary students. Standing back increased my confidence that I was having minimal influence over what was occurring and allowed me to write detailed notes in-situ.

## Reflexivity

Reflexivity or self-awareness is crucial when the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation (Creswell, 2007; Willig, 2013). One aim of reflexivity is to mitigate researcher bias which is influenced by age, musical background, race, gender, and class, all of which were relevant to interpreting engaging classroom music teaching in this context. Because my interpretations and choices of what to include and omit formed the analysis, I maintained an awareness of my previous experiences and habits of mind. I challenged my previous assumptions about and ways of looking at classroom music environments. I balanced this with drawing on my prior knowledge and experiences where appropriate. I was mindful of my own biases and sought to confirm my interpretations by involving the teacher-participants in the research process.

A key consideration of ethnography is the balance of power between the researcher and participants. Research that is done "to" rather than "with" the participants is problematic because it removes agency from the participants (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). To mitigate this problem and to strengthen my interpretation of the data, I involved the teacher-participants in the research process wherever possible through extensive member checking or participant feedback, particularly of interview transcripts. Also, by means of the researcher conversations following lesson observations were used to verify my observations of what the teachers were doing, why, and how the students responded. Thus, the participant perspectives co-constructed the observation data. I also involved Eddie as a co-presenter and co-author when he and I presented a peer reviewed paper at a national conference (Wilson & Trzeciak, 2016).

I involved the teacher-participants in member checking and invited them to contribute to the emerging interpretations. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) refer to this as respondent validation and note that participants may have access to additional contextual knowledge of events that are not available to researchers. Participants' experience of events is important and may "alter the plausibility of different possible interpretations of the data" (p. 182). At the same time, there are limitations to respondent validation. Participants generally interpret data with different criteria from that of the researcher and this was an ongoing dilemma for me. Rather than providing a definitive endorsement of my interpretations, following Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), I viewed the participants as "well-placed informants on their own actions. They are no more than that; and their accounts must be analysed in the same way as any other data, with close consideration being given to possible threats to validity" (p. 182).

Signalling reflexivity and the centrality of the researcher in producing ethnographic texts, I included my own reflective account of my practice in the introductory thesis chapter. I wrote reflexively throughout the findings, accounting for my presence and participation in the research and writing in the first person where appropriate. I acknowledge that my background influenced my perceptions which shaped all stages of the research process. Constructing data from multiple perspectives and procedures was one strategy to promote reflexivity. Other strategies included: an initial focus on building relationships; an extended period in the setting; follow-up research conversations; and involving the participants in member checking during the data collection, and subsequent analysis and writing up. These strategies encouraged the participants to generate and verify observations and interpretations.

## Ethics

I followed the ethical principles and procedures

required by the University and the Department of Education & Training (DET). However, ethical research behaviour is not simply following initial processes and procedures; ethical dilemmas can surface throughout the research to which the researcher needs to be attuned (Brinkman & Kvale, 2008).

When the teachers allowed me into their classrooms and told me their stories, I was aware of how much trust was placed in me as an unknown researcher. The lengthy nature of the time period, the relationships developed, and the sharing of sensitive professional information in semi-structured interviews between researcher and participant created a unique situation. The ongoing importance of conducting myself ethically and sensitively in navigating my relationship with the participants was foremost in my mind.

Willig (2013) contends that researchers should aim to preserve the psychological well-being and dignity of the participants at all times. While my research was focussed on describing the teacher's practice, there were implications for the effectiveness or otherwise of their practice. While my research focussed on explaining teacher practice, I was conscious my interpretations could potentially imply criticism.

Willig (2013) and O'Toole and Beckett (2013) encourage researchers to go beyond doing no harm to providing benefits to the participants. In my study, the teachers may have derived benefit from the opportunity to extensively discuss and debrief about their teaching. In addition, in making myself available to help where possible as a critical friend, I was led by the participants. I worked alongside Eddie and Chris designing rubrics for assessment and reporting. I moderated some of Eddie's assessments with him. Any benefits to the student participants were indirect: having a second musically knowledgeable adult present may have contributed to educational benefits. The process of discussing their experiences of music lessons may have promoted deeper reflection on their learning and made it more explicit.

## Reflection

The methodological choices I made addressed the aim of contributing to a better understanding of classroom music teaching approaches that promote engagement. Although laid out as a sequential narrative in this article and in the thesis, the research process was not linear and there was much back and forth between the various aspects in a dialogical process. Reflecting and making decisions was hermeneutic, which entailed dialogic and iterative cycles of thinking and interpretation informed by my experiences and background. For example, making decisions on methodologies involved evaluating the impact of each decision against other related aspects. For instance, the methodologies that I drew on suggest different participant-observation stances, all of which potentially influence the findings.

Through the process of conducting the fieldwork, I learnt much about the importance of relationships. During the time I spent in the classrooms, I gradually became aware of the complexities of the environment, the established routines, the connections between the teacher and students and the students with each other. I became immersed in the environment and shifted from seeing myself as an outsider to feeling more an insider. Establishing relationships with the participants was crucial to my being accepted into the classroom environment and making the research possible. Positive connections with participants also facilitated interviews and the insights the teachers and students shared. Being immersed in the context was a strength of the research. I came to understand in a holistic sense what the teachers were doing to engage the students.

## Limitations

The approaches and practices that the teachers drew on to foster engagement and the characteristics of engaging teaching are particular to the context of the two schools and the two teachers. This particularity raises several questions which provide starting points for further research. For example, how teachers from western-art music backgrounds and inexperienced teachers use Musical Futures as part of their practice to engage students. The findings

are not generalisable; however, music educators in similar school situations may use the findings as a tool for reflection in relation to their own practice.

I collected the data over 11-months, a relatively long time-frame. However, the findings still present a point in time snapshot. Even during the research, Chris and Eddie's teaching practice evolved. Influences on their practice, such as policy at both school and at government level, not to mention COVID, continue. So, if I visited their classrooms now, six years later, I would not expect their teaching to be the same.

I found that my role as the researcher undertaking participant-observation provided valuable insights that could not have been obtained using another method. However, this role was challenging. As an experienced teacher and less experienced researcher, I sometimes found it difficult to wear my "researcher hat". As a teacher, my inclination is towards continually evaluating what is occurring from the perspective of student learning with a view to further improvement. In contrast, the ethnographer role is focussed on describing what is occurring rather than seeking to influence it. The same balance of when to step in and when to stand back that I observed the teachers sometimes struggling with was difficult for me as a researcher. I was aware of a tension between the insights I gained from being involved in the classroom activities and standing back to observe to minimise my influence on the findings. Deciding which stance to take was not straightforward. Standing back was not necessarily the least intrusive option. Not speaking or reacting while writing notes or video-recording can be very uncomfortable for the participants and significantly alter their behaviour. I prioritised the need to build and sustain relationships with both the teachers and the students.

Researching from an insider perspective in your own context has well-documented pitfalls for compromising objectivity. Although this was not my own school, after spending nearly all year with the two teachers, I felt like I was researching my friends. For me, this raised issues about my ability to be critical. I was also conscious of my ethical obligation to do no harm to the participants, and the potential for the teachers to experience discomfort from reading my interpretation of their practice was significant. The way that a researcher writes about teacher practice is different from how it might be discussed between colleagues, even in peer-observation when there is a sense of a two-way conversation. While at times I felt a self-imposed pressure to be more positive, I was able to represent the teachers' practice positively because the research began from an asset-based perspective with two teachers whose classroom practice had been identified as likely to be promoting engagement. However, spending such a long time in the setting inevitably meant that teacher practices that did not promote engagement occasionally arose, and how to write about them sensitively was difficult.

Being so immersed in the context of the two schools, I was at risk of losing sight of the bigger picture. The starting point for the research was that these were schools in disadvantaged circumstances that appeared to be engaging their students in music lessons. After having spent considerable time collecting, analysing, and representing the data, I began to view the findings as the norm. It took some effort to stand back and be reminded that what the teachers had managed to achieve in their classroom music programs was remarkable in any school context, let alone in schools in challenging circumstances. State-wide VCE enrolments remain at around 4% of the cohort (VCAA, 2016b; VCAA, 2018). The 2005 Review (Pascoe et al., 2005) and the 2013 Review (Education and Training Committee, 2013) reveal the big picture and detail the paucity of curricular music provision in primary schools. However, the two schools in the study are testimony to the fact that quality music education programs and engaging classroom music teaching are possible in challenging circumstances.

## Advice

This will make my supervisors laugh, but my first piece of advice is to listen to them! Although I had

completed a small scale research project prior to undertaking my PhD, at the beginning of my PhD journey I was a novice researcher. Right from the beginning, I wanted to do in-depth study in school music classrooms but I had no conception of the amount of data that is generated through ethnographic research with modern recording devices. My supervisors kept telling me that what I originally planned was too much and that I would be 'drowning in data'. I modified my original intentions and I still had a huge amount of audio and video data. Along with written data, I then had to process, transcribe, analyse and represent this digital data, which undoubtedly added to my thesis completion time.

My second piece of advice is not to underestimate the complexities of undertaking ethnographic research in classrooms. There were moments of sheer panic at the beginning of my data collection when I was acutely aware that if I was not able to build positive relationships with the teacher participants or if my interpretations of their practice were not accurate and they withdrew from the research, I did not have a project. Although I become more comfortable over time, there was an underlying worry that persisted and I went through a difficult period again when I was finalising the thesis. I found it challenging to write critically as a researcher rather than as a teacher.

I was fortunate to receive a scholarship and I was able to undertake my PhD full time. After many years of a full-time teacher salary, it was a shock, but I eventually learnt to budget. The benefits of this were that I had a desk at the University and I had four PhD colleagues whose desks were next to mine who I saw nearly every day. Most days we had coffee (not so good for the budget). Being able to discuss and test out ideas and experience the doctoral journal together was immensely helpful. Seeing the students that I now supervise undertake research in COVID has made me realise how lucky I was for the experiences I had. I encourage doctoral researchers to find your community of other doctoral researchers.

## References


Alexander, R. (2000). *Culture and pedagogy: International comparisons in primary education*. Blackwell Publishers.

Alexander, R. (2009). Towards a comparative pedagogy. In R. Cowen & A. Kazamias (Eds.), *International Handbook of Comparative Education* (pp. 923-942). Springer.

Baker, L. (2006). Observation: A complex research method. *Library Trends, 55*(1), 171-189. http://hdl.handle.net/2142/3659

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theories and methods*. Pearson Education.

Bresler, L. & Stake, R. (2006). Qualitative research methodology in music education. In R. Colwell (Ed.), *MENC Handbook of Research Methodologies* (pp. 270-311). Oxford University Press.

Brinkmann, S. & Kvale, S. (2008). Ethics in qualitative psychological research. In C. Willig & W. Stainton-Rogers (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 263-279). Sage.

Campbell, P. S. (2001). Unsafe suppositions? Cutting across cultures on questions of music's transmission. *Music Education Research, 3*(2), 215-226. https://doi.org/10.1080/14613800120089269

Creswell, J. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Sage.

D'Amore, A. (2008). *Musical Futures: An approach to teaching and learning* (2nd ed.). UK. www.musicalfutures.org/resource/musical-futures-an-approach-to-teaching-and-learning

Davis, S., & Blair, D. (2011). Popular music in American teacher education: A glimpse into a secondary methods course. *International Journal of Music Education, 29*(2), 124-140. DOI:10.1177/0255761410396962

Deshler, D. & Selener, D. (1991). Transformative research: In search of a definition. *Convergence, 24*(3), 9-22.

Dwyer, S. & Buckle, J. (2009). The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Research, 8*(1), 54-63. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800105

Education and Training Committee. (2013). *Inquiry into the extent, benefits and potential of music education in Victorian schools*. Parliament of Victoria.

Finney, J. (2010). *Music education in England, 1950-2010.* Ashgate.

Green, L. (2002). *How popular musicians learn*. Ashgate.

Green, L. (2008). *Music, informal learning and the school: A new classroom pedagogy*. Ashgate.

Hallam, S., Creech, A., & McQueen, H. (2011). *Musical Futures: A case study investigation*. http://www.phf.org.uk/downloaddoc.asp?id=754

Hammersley, M. (2011). Models of research: Discovery, construction and understanding. In M. Hammersley (Ed.), *Methodology: Who needs it?* (pp. 123-137). Sage.

Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in practice*. Routledge.

Jeanneret, N. (2010). Musical Futures in Victoria. *Australian Journal of Music Education*, *2*, 148-162.

Jeanneret, N., McLennan, R., & Stevens-Ballenger, J. (2011). *Musical Futures: An Australian perspective*. https://www.musicalfuturesaustralia.org/uploads/1/2/0/1/12012511/musical_futures_an_australian_perspective.pdf

Kervin, L., Vialle, W., Herrington, J. & Okely, A. (2006). *Research for Educators*. Thomson.

Lamont, A. & Maton, K. (2008). Choosing music: Exploratory studies into the low uptake of music GCSE. *British Journal of Music Education, 25*(3), 267-282. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0265051708008103

Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (3rd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Nettl, B. (2005). *The study of ethnomusicology: thirty-one issues and concepts* (2nd ed.). University of Illinois Press.

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. (OFSTED). (2006). *An evaluation of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Musical Futures project*. www.musicalfuturesaustralia.org/uploads/1/2/0/1/12012511/evaluation_of_musical_futures.pdf

O'Toole, J. & Beckett, D. (2010). *Educational research: Creative thinking and doing*. Oxford University Press.

O'Toole, J. & Beckett, D. (2013). *Educational research: Creative thinking and doing* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Pascoe, R., Leong, S., MacCallum, J., Mackinlay, E., Marsh, K., Smith, B., Church, T. & Winterton, A. (2005). *National Review of School Music*. researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/9459/1/music_review_reportFINAL.pdf

Renshaw, P. (2005). *Simply connect: Next practice in group music making and musical leadership*. www.musicalfutures.org/resource/simply-connect

Rice, T. (2013). *Ethnomusicology: A very short introduction.* Oxford University Press.

Ross, M. (1995). What's wrong with school music? *British Journal of Music Education, 12*(3), 185-201. DOI:10.1017/S0265051700002692

Simons, H. (2009). *Case study research in practice*. Sage.

Smith, L. (1978). An evolving logic of participant observation, educational ethnography and other case studies. *Review of Research in Education, 6*(1), 316-377.

Spruce, G. (2015). Music education, social justice, and the "student voice": Addressing student alienation through a dialogical conception of music education. In C. Benedict, P. Schmidt, G. Spruce & P. Woodford (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook for social justice in music education* (pp. 287-301). Oxford University Press.

Stake, R. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis.* Guildford Press.

Stock, J. (2003). Music education: perspective from current ethnomusicology. *British Journal of Music Education, 20*(2), 135-145. DOI:10.1017/S0265051703005357.

Turino, T. (2008). *Music as social life: The politics of participation*. University of Chicago Press.

VCAA. (2016b) *2015 Grade distribution for graded assessments VCE: Music performance*. https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/statistics/2015/section3/vce_music_performance_ga15.pdf

VCAA. (2018). *Grade distribution for graded assessments VCE: Music performance.* https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/statistics/2017/section3/vce_music_performance_ga17.pdf

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology* (3rd ed.). Open University Press.

Wright, R., Younker, B., Beynon, C., Hutchison, J., Linton, L., Beynon, S., Davidson, B. & Duarte, N. (2012). Tuning into the future: sharing initial insights about the 2012 Musical Futures pilot project in Ontario. *Canadian Music Educator, summer*, 14-18.

Yin, R. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Sage.

**Emily Wilson** is a Senior Lecturer and head of music education at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne. She lectures in music education at undergraduate and postgraduate level and for Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary pre-service teachers. She has over 20 years experience as a music educator. As a school teacher, she taught classroom and instrumental music at primary and secondary schools in Australia and the UK, including Head of Department posts. Her research interests include music education pedagogy and curriculum, student engagement, engaging teaching practices, and informal and formal learning in music education.