

**THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON  
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TEACHING:  
A Participant-Observation Case Study of Karnatic  
and Queensland Instrumental Music Teachers in  
Context**

by

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**This thesis is dedicated to my mother:**

**Pamela Smith**

## **DISCLAIMER**

The following work presented for this thesis contains, to the best of my knowledge, no material previously published or written by another person, nor submitted for the award of any other degree at this or any other university, except where due reference is made in the text.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis aimed to investigate the unique relationship that exists between music and culture. More specifically, the purpose of the research was to determine to what extent culture is reflected in music teaching and learning. Understanding the effect that culture has on music knowledge transmission processes will assist in developing a framework for current music education practices to address the cultural diversity that is present in contemporary teaching and learning environments. An exploration of how music teachers teach, and how the cultural and social surrounds influence these practices in various contexts provided important information in developing such a framework.

As such, a participant observation case study of ten music teachers who taught either the South Indian music tradition known as Karnatic music in Tamil Nadu, India, or Queensland, Australia, or who taught predominantly Western music in the Queensland instrumental music context, was carried out. Through a comparative study of these teachers it was observed that there were more similarities than differences in the methods of teaching used by the teachers. Both aural/oral and written modes of communication were used in each context albeit at varying levels. It was also discovered that the surrounding cultural rules and rituals, that were practised, significantly influenced the meaning attributed to the music teaching process for each of the teachers.

In the main, for teachers of Karnatic music a strong spiritual attachment to both the gods and goddesses associated with the Hindu religion and the teachers' own teacher/*guru* was evident. Conversely, in the Queensland instrumental music teaching context, powerful economic forces affected the approach that these teachers implemented. It is argued that with an awareness of these findings, music teaching and learning practices may more effectively meet the needs of students (a concern consistently raised in the literature) in the contemporary music education context.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This thesis is primarily concerned with the influence of culture on music teaching and learning. The relationship between music and culture is well established in the literature. A number of early authors (Lomax, 1976; Feld, 1984; Blacking, 1973) have attempted to build greater understanding of the relationship between music and culture. Further, there is evidence in the literature that the relationship is so closely aligned that the two phenomena are virtually interchangeable (Herndon and McLeod, 1982; Merriam, 1964). Lomax (1976) for instance, has argued that song structure directly reflects the social structure of a given society. Feld (1984, p. 406) holds a similar view in noting, “for all societies, everything that is musically salient will be socially marked”. Blacking (1973) has also contributed to the discussion by asserting that the performance and appreciation of a particular music is largely dependent upon one’s belonging to the culture in which that music exists.

While it could be argued that the above views may overstate the relationship between music and culture, there is little doubt about the interconnectedness of these two phenomena and the conclusion that all music is inherently cultural in its manifestation and bears a direct relationship to the culture in which it is produced. Walker (2001, p. 3) agrees that “music works as a cultural system in itself, but one which refers to and reflects the larger culture in which it was situated and which gave it form and meaning within its own systems of thought and action”. Similarly, Vella

(2000, p. 24) states “[music’s] definition needs to take into account variables ranging from the cultural conditioning and expectations of the participants, the social function of the music and its familiarity to the listener, to the physiological factors that affect how we listen”. Both these views are pertinent for this research as they propose that music meaning changes within and across context, time, space and people. Understanding that the whole environment in which music is a part, and how the society shapes the organisation of sound, and equally important how sound affects and influences society, is relevant for this study. Further, the notion that the systems and processes that are used to communicate, teach, and assess knowledge about music and culture, are also encompassed within a social and cultural context, is important. When contemplating music teaching and learning, Elliott (1994, p. 9) notes the importance of having some conception on what music actually is. He states that:

Without a prior sense of what ‘music’ is, it is impossible to justify the place of music teaching and learning in any educational scheme, let alone explain how the significance of music might be realised in one particular scheme.

### ***The Research Problem***

Music education research in Australia and internationally consistently acknowledges the interplay between music, culture and education (Campbell, 1992; Dunbar-Hall, 1999; Nettl, 1998; Swanwick, 1999; Walker, 2001). As a result, there has been, in recent times, an increasing willingness to engage the musics of other cultures outside of the traditional Western music culture (Vuillamy and Lee, 1989). Leong (1997, p. 120) for instance, comments that:

Classrooms are [becoming] more multicultural which has led to an interest in multicultural music education and conscious efforts to integrate musics of diverse cultures into regular curriculum.

In spite of the importance afforded the role of culture in music education in the literature, the relationship between music and culture and how these in turn impact upon music teaching practices remains largely ambiguous. In practice, little is actually known about the specific function that culture plays in guiding how music teachers teach. Additionally, not fully understood is the extent to how this knowledge may make teaching practices more effective given the multicultural nature of studios and classrooms in Western education contexts. This is particularly apparent in instrumental music teaching where a limited amount of research currently exists. The absence of literature concerning the influence of culture on instrumental teaching practices indicates that little is known about this subject and further research is required. In evidence, Zhukov (1999, p. 248) notes generally that research into instrumental music teaching is in its infancy and makes a concerted call for more research.

Swanwick (1996, p. 22) suggests that “all is not well with music education, and its practice does tend to revert to very limited ideas of musical experience and associated teaching models” and suggests a generic concept of music is needed, one in which culture can be ‘transcended’ (Swanwick, 1999). Walker (2001, p. 17) on the other hand believes that “immersion in both musical and socio-cultural dialectic defines the process of music education and sets the parameters for pedagogy”. Whatever the suggestion is for improvement in music education practices, the view for change is prevalent.

### *The Research Rationale*

Though the impact of culture on music and education is seen as important in the literature, few robust reasons are offered for why it is important. Most of the research and literature addressing culture is focussed on philosophical, theoretical and value assessments of the importance of culture rather than on practical application and the benefits derived within the context of teaching instrumental music. One clear exception rests in the experience and work of some ethnomusicologists who have written extensively on the nature of music cultures other than Western Art music (Blacking, 1973 and 1979; Ellis, 1985; Merriam, 1964). Many texts authored by ethnomusicologists are seminal to understanding the role that culture plays in music teaching and learning. While much of this work does not extend specifically to the role of culture in instrumental music teaching albeit formal music education contexts, I nonetheless have chosen to utilise ethnomusicology and the work of prominent ethnomusicologists as a major philosophical and academic resource in the development of this research.

Commenting on the value of an ethnomusicological approach to research in discovering what is important in the music education context, including influence of culture, Stowasser (1992, p 16) notes that:

Ethnomusicology is primarily concerned with the objective study of music within cultures other than one's own; application of the same objectivity to the study of traditional secondary school music education in Western society reveals that, in general, the theory and the practice of a small, elite subculture has been imposed upon adolescent students regardless of their heterogeneous cultural backgrounds. Thus, ethnomusicological approaches may help us to identify the cause of the problem; but we need additional data in order to find a solution.



Not having a theoretical and practical basis on which to examine, analyse and respond to the influence of culture in the music teaching process means that instrumental music teachers have no way of engaging the influence of culture in a systematic and consistent way. A lack of understanding may also mean that vital aspects of the relationship between music and culture and its impact upon the teaching process may be overlooked. Moreover, responding to the influence of culture is more by default than design and augers for the need to develop new knowledge in this area.

Without a clear understanding of the ways in which culture influences music there is no consistent way of determining whether certain practices are more important than others in conveying music knowledge. As such, it may not be possible to respond to cultural aspects of music in a meaningful way within the tuition process, or to isolate which practices are more effective in reflecting culture, thereby limiting the capacity to transfer such knowledge to teachers so that they are more able to respond to diversity and difference in their tuition practice. Ultimately it may also mean that teachers are not able to engage effectively and apply the resources that students bring to the learning experience from their cultures and communities of origin.

The potential impact of not addressing this deficit of knowledge may result in continual limiting education practices in the area of music teaching and learning as espoused by a number of authors (Stowasser, 1992; Swanwick, 1996; Walker, 2001). More specifically, limited understanding of how culture, music and education interact; limited capacity to gauge the extent to which culture is a determining factor in conveying music knowledge; limited capacity on which to make decisions about

the importance of culture and whether it should be a consideration in the delivery of instrumental music education content; and, limited capacity to amend teaching practices to be more or less reflective of culture may result.

The benefits of building knowledge in this area include the potential to make informed decisions about what aspects of the interaction between culture, music and education are critical to conveying music knowledge in context. In addition, knowing the extent and nature of culture's influence may enable teachers to potentially amend their approach to teaching where particular practices do not contribute markedly to transferring music knowledge. It may also increase the capacity for teachers to not only teach music from other cultures but also teach culturally thereby enriching the teaching experience and supporting greater opportunities for diversity.

### ***Background to the Study***

The impetus for this study came from my experiences as a secondary classroom teacher in the early 1990's in Queensland, a volunteer teacher in India in 1993 and my reflection on the music learning experiences I had in India once I returned to Australia to teach music in Australian schools. I began to realise that in what appears to be quite different musical styles the co-existence of both aural/oral and written means of communication in each of the contexts occurred but at different levels and that perhaps an awareness and understanding of this in music teaching practices could improve student outcomes.

Throughout my primary, secondary and tertiary education in Australia I learnt various aspects about music and related concepts. In addition to the courses offered in these formal learning institutions, I was encouraged to have private tuition in violin, piano and theory of music. As a result of these lessons my teachers supported me through external assessment controlled by the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB). Levels of achievement in music practice and theory, as defined by this organisation, are accepted means of measuring students' musical ability in Australia. In fact entry requirements of many tertiary institutions mention specific AMEB grades that a student should have achieved if expecting to be accepted into such courses although these at the same time, are no guarantee of entry. Despite being a suitable way of assessing students' musical ability the criteria as set out by the AMEB are only one way of recording musical capacity and standards.

During my tertiary experience as a violin major, where I studied to become a secondary music teacher, I first experienced the theoretical framework and general philosophy of ethnomusicology. This field of study has contributed significantly to the development of this research. Through fieldwork, readings and participation in various music ensembles where notated music was not the focus of performance, different ways to learn became apparent. In many of these situations I participated as a member of a group and the teacher presented music knowledge to the group learners in a sequential manner using predominantly aural/oral modes of communication.

Important as these experiences were, the major influence on this study is my experience of learning *Karnatic* (South Indian) music (See Appendix A for glossary of terms) while I lived and worked as an Australian Volunteer Abroad in Chennai (then Madras) in 1993. Throughout this time I received tuition in traditional Karnatic vocal and violin music. Whilst learning this traditional music I was able to observe how a music, different to the one I had spent most of my life learning is taught, and how this knowledge may serve different purposes to music teaching and learning practices in Western society. My judgement of this musical tradition was through pure comparison to my previous experiences of music. Most notably is that my learning in the West was more reliant on written means of communication and my experience in India was reliant on aural/oral means. During my earliest experiences of the Karnatic music practice and pedagogy I believed that Australian music teaching practices could benefit from a similar ‘intercultural’ exchange. As such, I am indebted to the experiences brought to me to work in another country and the opportunity to immerse myself in another musical culture.

As the diversity of the student population in Australian classroom settings increases, the need to develop, adapt and test new approaches to music teaching that are not only timely and evidence-based, but also culturally relevant and accessible, should become more paramount and hitherto there have been few attempts made in Australia to address this. Some of the most pressing concerns I brought to this research, included questions about the inordinately low retention rate of students in senior music and continuing in instrumental music programs, balancing student needs (such as their preference for practical activities) with institutional requirements (for example, theory based assessment), and the appropriateness of current

instrumental music teaching content and teaching methodologies for students from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds.

### ***The Research Aims***

This thesis examines how culture influences instrumental music teaching practices. In particular, it explores the extent to which culture is reflected in these practices and the implication of this knowledge for music teaching and learning generally. It focuses on the *how* and the *why* rather than the *what* of instrumental music teaching and seeks to contribute to understanding the unique role that culture plays in transferring music knowledge. In this sense, the research is principally concerned with the relationship between instrumental music teachers and their societies, and the social nature of the teaching process as well as with how instrumental music teachers attribute, understand, and utilise cultural meaning in their work with learners. These relationships, processes and meanings are often intrinsic and usually unstated but nevertheless contribute significantly to the teaching process and ultimately to learning outcomes.

The main aim of this research is to contribute to greater understanding of the relationship between cultural forces and instrumental music teaching practices and the extent and nature of how music and culture, relate, interact and influence one another. With this purpose in mind, the research seeks to explore important concepts associated with investigating the extent and nature of cultural influence reflected in instrumental music teaching. These are: Teachers, Teaching Methods and Modes of Communication, and Cultural Influence in the Teaching Context. The research will explore these concepts within two distinct music cultures in three settings, that is

Karnatic music teachers in Chennai, India; Karnatic music teachers in Brisbane, Queensland; and ‘Western’ instrumental music teachers in Brisbane, Queensland. The focus will be restricted to formal teaching and learning within these contexts.

To this end, the research will concentrate on answering the following questions: How do instrumental music teachers’ experiences of learning music, learning to be a teacher, and teaching reflect the influence of culture? How do the teaching methods and modes of communication used by instrumental music teachers reflect the influence of culture? And how does the context in which instrumental teaching practices take place reflect the influence of culture?

### ***Structure of the Thesis***

Chapter Two is primarily concerned with defining research parameters of the phenomena of music, culture and teaching and learning, and how these relate and impact on each other, via a literature review. It will explore both ethnomusicological and educational perspectives on these concepts in music teaching and learning discourse. As this research explores the Karnatic music tradition a significant section of this chapter will discuss music teaching and learning in this context. The chapter concludes with research that has attempted to address the impact that culture has on formal educational practices such as those encountered in instrumental music teaching and learning contexts.

Chapter Three proposes the methodology that would best examine how the culture of a particular environment is reflected in instrumental music teaching processes. I outline the reasons for the selection of and the appropriateness of the participant

observation case study method. I explain and describe further my role as a deep insider researcher and as an instrument for qualitative research. I also outline measures undertaken to increase the trustworthiness and authenticity of the research. The chapter outlines the advantages and weaknesses of participant observer case study methodology and seeks to counterbalance the weaknesses through the implementation of these systems and the transparency of the research process.

Chapter Four centres on an examination of instrumental and vocal music teachers from the Karnatic tradition and will highlight how culture is reflected in teaching practices of Karnatic teachers in India and Queensland. In particular, the chapter explores their learning experiences and backgrounds, the teaching methods and modes of communication used by them, and the cultural influence on the context in which the teaching takes place.

Similarly, Chapter Five provides an in-depth review of Queensland instrumental teachers with the aim of uncovering how culture is reflected in teaching practice of Queensland instrumental music teachers. Of particular interest in this chapter are the backgrounds of the teachers, their learning experiences, methods and modes of communication and the cultural influence on the context in which private studio and school instrumental music tuition occurs.

In conclusion, Chapter Six presents the research findings and compares the various teaching contexts in terms of the major research questions. The chapter focuses on determining the extent to which culture is an influential factor in teaching instrumental music and how is it reflected in specific cultural contexts. It therefore

provides insight into how teachers, their teaching methods, and the teaching context are influenced by culture and the implications for instrumental music teaching practices more generally.

Understanding the interplay between culture and music and teaching and learning processes may assist in highlighting the essential aspects of instrumental music teaching which contribute significantly to conveying music knowledge and feature meaningfully in learning outcomes particularly for students that come from culturally diverse backgrounds. The following chapter explores these concepts via a literature review.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### *Introduction*

The concepts of music, culture, and teaching and learning have been the focus of much music education research (Brennan, 1992; Campbell, 1996; Dunbar-Hall, 1999; Lundquist and Szego, 1998; Volk, 1998). Understanding how these phenomena relate is integral in answering this thesis' questions: how is culture reflected in the teaching and learning of instrumental music, and what are the implications of this knowledge for current instrumental music teaching practices. Accordingly, this chapter will explore the literature on music and culture and the interaction between these phenomena, particularly in the teaching and learning environment, and how this relationship impacts on its products, processes and practice.

As this study is concerned primarily with how culture is expressed in instrumental music teaching and learning the literature presented herein will focus on work that illustrates the diverse nature of the meaning of music as perceived in the teaching and learning context. An examination of music and culture within teaching and learning contexts, and comparatively across cultures, will provide a range of methods, frameworks and theory. When discussing the interaction between culture and music an examination of both ethnomusicological and music education literature that focus on how the transmission of music knowledge is communicated in context will be presented.

This examination will include literature that discusses non-western music cultures as they hold critical significance to this study. Accordingly, this chapter will explore literature on the South Indian Karnatic music tradition and its teaching practice. As this tradition is acknowledged as an aural/oral tradition, some sources of information for this literature review have come from personal interviews with people who practise this art professionally. This is due to the fact that extensive information is not available in written form but found in people's direct knowledge and experience.

### ***Music and Culture***

Research about music has generated diverse beliefs, views and theories that explore its nature and meaning. A recurring theme in the literature is the view that the particular cultural context that surrounds a distinct music practice influences the music being produced within those cultural boundaries (Herndon and McLeod, 1982; Lomax, 1976; Merriam, 1964; Nettl, 1992). More specifically, Harris (1980, p. 19) views culture as “learned and shared behaviour”, something in which feelings are expressed through a number of factors including “language, art and religion”. Radocy and Boyle (1979, p. 27) state that “culture clearly affects musical behaviour [and that] music may influence the culture [in which it is produced]”. Research in the field of ethnomusicology offers detailed analyses that explore the interaction and unique relationship that exists between music and culture. Merriam's work, *The Anthropology of Music* (1964) is particularly influential in this area and is still considered a reliable source amongst students and academics (Campbell, 1991; Elliott, 1995; Swanwick, 1996). The text outlines the importance of cultural influence on music traditions and notes the significance of this when exploring

teaching and learning practices (Merriam, 1964, p.145-163). More specifically, Merriam believes that “concepts and behaviours must be learned, for culture as a whole is learned behaviour, and each culture shapes the learning process to accord with its own ideals and values” (p.145). Merriam explores the process of enculturation and explains that learning is a life long process where culture persists.

It is through education, enculturation, cultural learning, that culture gains its stability and is perpetuated, but it is through the same process of cultural learning that change takes place and culture derives its dynamic quality. What is true for culture as a whole is also true for music; the learning process in music is at the core of our understanding of the sounds men produce (Merriam, 1964, p.163).

Nettl (1975, p. 71) agrees that “through an enculturation process, each social order develops its institutions and artefacts for perpetuation of itself, and music’s existence is one of the few things common to all cultures”.

Expanding this further, strong support exists in the ethnomusicological literature for the idea that music can tell us many things about a particular culture through its instruments, instrument makers, and its performance structures that encompass the interaction between performers, audience and/or composers (Lomax, 1976; Merriam, 1964; Spearitt, 1980). Lomax’s (1976) work is significant in this area, as it explores the way that culture is specifically reflected in music practice and it highlights a correlation between social structure and song structure. Lomax (1976, p. 12) believes that a culture’s song performance style “has a special cultural and social role to play among human communication systems”. Even earlier, Lomax (1968, p. 133) had written that “a culture’s favoured song style reflects and reinforces the kind of behaviour essential to its main subsistence efforts and to its central and controlling social institutions”. Further, Feld’s (1984) work with the Kaluli people in the

highlands of Papua New Guinea demonstrates a similar relationship between social structures and musical experience as discovered by Lomax (1976).

...Kaluli seem to have no investment in rationalising differences in competence; they simply assume that skills for interpreting and making sounds are naturally acquired and required, and that with instruction and encouragement, all children will learn to sing and compose as part of their general socialisation (Feld, 1984, p. 391).

Views such as those expressed by Feld (1984), Lomax (1976) and Merriam (1964) highlight the impact that culture has on music and in some cases music on cultural expression with each author concluding that music is in fact 'culture' and cannot be separated from life experience. Similarly, Dewey (1958, p. 326) notes that "for while it [art] is produced and is enjoyed by individuals, those individuals are what they are in the content of their experience because of the cultures in which they participate".

Taking a slightly different view, Blacking (1973, p. 10) argues that music is a "product of the behaviour of human groups, whether formal or informal: it is humanly organised sound". Blacking's use of the phrase 'humanly organised sound' denotes a sense of music beyond an unintentional or random sound event but as a process that is purposefully engaged in by the members of a particular society albeit in ways which align with dominant or accepted socio-cultural norms. Walker (1990, p. 195) holds a similar position.

The place of music in the belief systems of all cultures suggests that music itself must be, to some degree, systematically organised, just as the society to which the music contributes such a powerful force is systematically organised.

What is inherent in both these views is that music is as much organised by its presence in a context as it is influential on that context and this dynamic interaction is best understood as a whole system.

Harwood (1976, p. 529) explores this notion further by suggesting “that music functions symbolically in several ways”. These include the expectations of the performers and audience, the standards of judgement proper to the culture, the context proper to a particular performance, and the listener’s way of perceiving the world in general (p. 529-530). Such conditions could well apply to instrumental music teaching in that it relates to commonly held and culturally determined expectations, standards, appropriate context and perceptual appreciations. Accepting these, it is important to recognise the cultural influence and unique interplay between the many roles evident in the music-making and learning process. Merriam (1964, p. 7) supports this view, stating that “music is a product of man and has structure, but its structure cannot have an existence of its own divorced from the behaviour which produces it”. He believes that to conceive music as an organised sound, the behaviours involved in its production and meaning underlying these behaviours must be understood.

Equally significant in the notion of ‘organised’ sound is that a number of elements of music can be treated or used in certain ‘organised’ ways (Blacking, 1973). This idea embraces the view that music constitutes various elements such as pitch, rhythm, harmony, melody and form (Turek, 1996). Andersen (1991) and George (1987) present these elements as common to all music cultures. Others perceive the common elemental approach to understanding music useful to a point, but note that it

fails to capture the less tangible socio-cultural meanings assigned to the processes of making music (Pratt, 1990; Small, 1998; Smith, 1998). Blacking (1979) and Walker (2001) argue that if elements of a given piece of music generated in another cultural context correspond with the tonal patterns, melodic composition or rhythmic structures found in Western Art music, it is a less than robust method of analysis since such observations rarely give rise to any meaningful understanding of the social institutions, social practices and social meanings which underpin the process of music in a given society.

There is also some evidence to suggest that an elemental approach may have a detrimental affect upon student outcomes. In particular, Walker (2001, p.16) posits that “just concentrating on the musical elements and performance techniques alone without developing an understanding of what the music is about [its archaeology] left some students feeling bored and alienated.” Additionally, the elemental framework for understanding music may obscure other equally important phenomena (Pratt, 1990; Smith, 1998). Smith (1998, p. 10) claims that using an elemental approach “is bound to deprive students of potentially exciting and enlightening opportunities to share music interculturally, not simply viewed from west-centric perspectives...”. Pratt (1990, p. 32) provides an expanded list of elements he terms ‘raw materials’, which constitute such ideas as pitch organisation, space and density. These present broader concepts of what musical elements are, and Pratt (1990) critiques the common notion of the other more general aspects of music. Elliott (1995, p. 21) highlights that it is important to recognise that the preceding common elements that are seen to constitute music are “features of some music, but they are not necessary features of all music”.

These aspects aside, an elemental approach may assist in understanding unfamiliar musics as well as bridging various music practices (Glickman, 1996), but it is equally important to be aware of views such as Campbell's who states that "music is not a universal language: it communicates fully only to those who know the unique treatment of its components" (Campbell, 1991, p. 101). Campbell continues to caution against attempting to derive meaning from the elements that constitute a particular music since such meanings are likely to be culturally and contextually specific (1991, p. 101).

At this juncture, it is important to emphasise that some cultures view music as a distinct phenomenon integrated with other experiences in cultural life. For example, Nattiez highlights Nwachukwu's work with the *Igbo* who see singing, performing with instruments and dance as one unified experience (1990, p.59). Similarly, in Australian Indigenous culture, music is not isolated from the performance of dance, song and its connected meaning to land forms (Ellis, 1985, and Payne, 1988). Ellis (1985, p.70) makes note that there is no word for 'music' in the Aboriginal context and that there has been, in the past, a strong tendency for researchers to measure music to Western Art music theory and frameworks (Oku, 1994).

We tend to understand unknown music by means of the concepts of our familiar music. Therefore, one may easily misinterpret world musics with the conceptual approach, which is based on Western music (Oku, 1994, p. 120).

As a result of their work with non-western cultures, Gourlay (1978) and Smith (1998) assert that ways to assess musical behaviour, structures and processes without measuring them to Western constructed models is paramount and long overdue. In

relation to this suggestion, Lamasisi (1992, p. 223) discusses the wrongheaded expectations for him to present research on Papua New Guinean music, in a 'eurocentric' framework in order to validate the research findings. Lamasisi (1992) further notes that the process of documenting many non-western music cultures brings many anxieties for 'insiders' of the culture under investigation. Both McAllester (1984) and Steier (1991) highlight this dilemma. Consequently, a large array of experiences, activities and artefacts are necessarily excluded by a Western Art music's elemental focus and analysis (Spearritt, 1980).

In support, Stock (1994, p. 8) notes that:

...we cannot necessarily apply our own, familiar, definitions of music to foreign musical sounds, and that basic, fundamental principles which we take for granted in our own music may not be reflected in other kinds of music.

It has been argued by some authors (Walker, 1990; Shepard and Wicke, 1997) that sound and the nature of its organisation through the use of elements by people are important considerations in reaching an understanding of music but these are not the only aspects that require attention. It is also clear that, as Walker (1990, p.194) asserts, "western music theory reflects a culture that values predictive and descriptive functions of scientific method" something, which cannot readily be applied to more holistic cultural practices such as those encountered in non-western music traditions.

Nattiez (1990, p. 47) asserts that "music is whatever people choose to recognise as such, noise is whatever is recognised as disturbing, unpleasant or both". This infers that peoples' experience of sound organisation in a particular context affects how they perceive music. As this research centres on the relationship between culture, music and education sensitivity to the influence of culture not only in terms of the



way teachers teach music but also how they conceptualise and understand it is desirable. It is therefore anticipated that advancing a definition of music as Nattiez (1990) suggests, offers a greater degree of responsiveness as a research tool than imposing a foreign definition of music upon the participants in the study.

### ***Meaning in Music***

A related issue that has been identified in the literature is the importance of meaning in music. A number of authors (Small, 1996; Blacking, 1973; Reimer, 1989) comment extensively on this aspect of the relationship between culture and music. An integral part of the music making process according to Blacking (1973) and Small (1998, p. 9) are the non-music elements that “contribute to the nature of the event that is a musical performance”. Blacking (1973, p. 17) believes that “all processes relevant to an explanation of musical sound” are to be explored or a “context-sensitive analysis of the music in culture” must occur if the true meaning is to be gained. This includes understanding the purposes of non-music elements such as spiritual significance that includes such aspects of loyalty or economic import, social purpose or event biological structures (Blacking, 1973, p. 17). These are usually learnt in the teaching and learning context whether conscious or unconscious but nevertheless a significant part of the process.

Bennett Reimer (1989) argues that music is more than just the experience of making and can be defined by its aesthetic contribution to art. In particular, Reimer (1989, p. 23) believes that “to translate the ‘meaning’ of art into non-artistic terms, whether cognitive or emotional, is to violate the meaningfulness of aesthetic experience”. Reimer’s philosophy reflects the work of Langer (1953 and 1958) whose “key claim

is that the aesthetic qualities of musical works capture and represent the *general* forms of human feelings” (Elliott, 1995, p. 28). Therefore, the musical material or work, not the practice, becomes the focus of meaning in this context.

Views such as Langer’s and Reimer’s were influenced by the work of Mursell in the 1930’s and 1940’s and Leonhard in the 1950’s. From these beginnings, a philosophy for Music Education was developed called Music Education as Aesthetic Education (MEAE). The main ideal behind this philosophy according to Reimer (1989, p. 95) is “to help people share the meanings which come from expressive forms”. For Reimer, central to music education is aesthetic experience through the music work. Expanding this view further Reimer (1989, p. 117) notes that “the responsibility of music education, at every level and in every part of the music program, is to reveal more fully the musical conditions which should be perceived and felt”. Elliott (1995, p. 28) claims that this type of music education “is grounded in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries assumptions of the aesthetic concept”, and as such there is clearly a need to move forward in terms of music education’s philosophical thinking generally.

Aside from the many proponents that consider the value of music as being located in the music-making process or as an aesthetic experience, Langer (1953) and Swanwick (1999) situate music-making within a broader dynamic of symbolic form and meaning. Langer’s philosophy has greatly influenced research in music education (Reimer, 1989; Swanwick, 1979 and 1988). Swanwick’s (1999) work for example reflects that of Langer’s as he views music as a primary mode of communication where music acts as a discourse between actors within the musical

experience: a symbolic exchange between audience and performer. Similarly, Suzuki (1982) sees music like language operating on a different level through symbolic processes using different units of exchange. For Swanwick (1996, p. 19) “the pedagogical emphasis would be on music-making as a way of understanding ourselves and others, on direct knowledge of music rather than knowing about its cultural genesis, on music as human discourse – a non-referential activity but one which is highly expressive”.

In Swanwick’s (1999) more recent work he asserts that the musical work provides an essential basis for deriving symbolic meaning. This resonates with Reimer’s aesthetic argument. One of the difficulties with discerning symbolic meaning through the musical work is that it may be misleading on two fronts. Musical works as products of culture are contextually specific and bounded by time and place (Dunbar-Hall, 1992). As such, their meaning is limited and not necessarily transferable (Walker, 1990). To illustrate however, Swanwick (1999, p. 46-51) provides an example of ‘teaching music musically’ using a small excerpt of music composed by the author, which is characterised as Hungarian.

**Diagram 1: Hungarian excerpt composed by Swanwick (1999, p. 50)**

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "Take a ver- y sim- ple norm, Some el- ab- or- a- tion, Feel the im- pact of the form, Here's the de- vi- a- tion." The first system starts with a piano dynamic marking 'f'. The fourth system is marked 'rit.'

The problem with identifying this small musical work as ‘Hungarian’ is that while it may use melodic, rhythmic and tonal structures if analysed by the common elemental approach, that are similar to music produced by native Hungarians and, to the uninitiated, may even sound ‘Hungarian’, it cannot be defined as ‘Hungarian’ unless the work undergoes a verification process of authenticity (Campbell, 1996) by the Hungarian people themselves. Walker (1996) agrees and argues that unless such a work undergoes a verification process to establish its authenticity by those who know the musical tradition most intimately, the use of melodic, rhythmic and tonal structures that are similar to music produced by musicians from a particular cultural background

and, to the uninitiated, may even sound like music from a specific cultural tradition, it cannot be defined as such.

Further to this, Campbell (1996) believes that it may not be possible or even desirable to “transcend” (Swanwick, 1999) the cultural and social origins of a particular music. In addition, Walker (1996) similarly asserts that transcendence may disrupt a particular music tradition’s symbolic meaning. In this sense, for a musical experience to be symbolic it must be broadly reflective of the culture and social circumstances that produced it in order for it to be meaningful. From this stance, Swanwick’s (1999) position may negate the importance that social function plays in defining a piece of music within a given culture and which only ‘insiders’, through their in-depth appreciation of the music and its social construction, can accurately recognise and interpret meaning.

Walker’s (1992) work with the Pacific Northwest Indian people provides a strong case against transcendence. He writes that in order to teach something about the potlatch ceremony one must actually have attended and participated in one (1992, p. 172). In this sense, Walker is suggesting that non-music aspects contribute just as much, if not more to the meaning of music and that music taken out of this context will not have the same meaning.

This aside Boyce-Tillman (1996, p. 45) believes that “such a philosophy...spells death to any attempts at multiculturalism in education”. Swanwick’s theory of the “space between” (1999) then can be placed into contemporary education practice that values the diversity of music cultures and the increase in global communication

whereby musicians “transcend” (1999) their own music culture to create new ones. On the other hand, Born and Hesmondhalgh (2000, p. 31) state, “there is a need to acknowledge that music can variably both construct new identities and reflect existing ones”. McAllester (1996, p. 66) states that “it is better to teach anything about other cultures [music] than nothing at all”, however, Miller (1996, p. 71) notes that there are cases where some music simply cannot be taught because of the value and meaning that it holds. He believes that one must experience the holistic picture in order to truly understand this worth.

Behaviours associated with music making cannot be isolated from the social and cultural context in which such behaviours take place, because it is within this space that music has purpose and is assigned meaning (Walker, 1996). Small (1998) and Elliott (1995) concur that music’s meaning is located in the process of music making. David Elliott (1995) in his prominent text, *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education*, explains further that “before there were musical compositions there was music making in the sense of singing and playing remembered renditions and improvisations; that many cultures still view music as something people *do*” (p.49). For Elliott (1994a, p. 9) “music making is essentially a matter of knowing how to construct musical sound patterns in relation to the traditions and standards of particular musical practices. Music-making is essentially a matter of procedural knowledge, or non-verbal knowing-in-action”.

Green (1988, p. 141) argues for a “dual integral meaning of music” which is determined by the surrounding context – whether formal or informal. This duality includes both inherent and delineated meaning of the music context (Green, 1988, p.

141). In this view the aesthetic concept of art consists of any delineated meaning for the listener or learner – a meaning detached from social or cultural purpose but one that can see the music work objectively. Inherent meaning on the other hand, according to Green, occurs for learners in their own temporal world where the creative experience of musical material has personal meaning (1988, p.25). Green argues that both have relevance in an attempt to redefine meaning of music in context. Similarly, Merriam (1964) and Dillon (2001) argue that when people engage with others in the music-making process they tend to identify as part of a group and value their role as an individual within the group. In this light, the construction of roles and social meaning within the context of ‘music making’ is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

### ***Music Teaching and Learning***

It is seen that investigating music practices can provide information on the meaning associated with the culture in which it is produced, some have recognised that the processes and structures evident in music teaching and learning systems reflect cultural ideals and values (Campbell, 1991).

Music tells us something of the particular culture from which it comes....and each musical culture also has its own way of being processed....[T]he musical culture of a society is very much affected by the way it is transmitted, learned and taught. If we wish to know why a music is as it is, one place to look is the system of transmission (Nettl, 1998, p. 27).

As Nettl has described, the way that people teach music can tell us a great deal about the cultural context in which the teaching takes place. Campbell (1991, p. 113) argues further that “the style and purpose of music in a society greatly affects its

manner of acquisition, teaching techniques and learning strategies”. The methods and strategies used in communicating music knowledge can be varied and complex and Campbell (1991) discusses various ways of learning music knowledge such as rote learning, demonstration, imitation, memorisation and repetition.

Corpataux (2002) notes that music knowledge in many cultures is acquired through the process of “impregnation”. He (2002, p. 11) states that “impregnation is somewhat different from imitation, as imitation is a voluntary act. By impregnation, I am referring to learning that occurs through immersion in the local culture”. A distinction is made here between cultures that value learning through immersion and ones where learning takes place in more formal situations. According to Dunbar-Hall (1999, p. 48) this contrast is an important factor in determining how culture is reflected in teaching and learning and notes a number of ethnomusicologists who have recognised this.

Blacking (1973) discovered through work with the *Venda* people that the most informative context in regard to learning was by observing children. Blacking (1973, p. 97) observed that children learnt through the imitation of elders. He (1967) observed earlier that games played an important role in the transmission of music knowledge amongst the *Venda*. Most learning in the *Venda* context appeared to be less rigid than in formal learning environments and acted as events to empower all children and young adults. Learning in this context can be said to be more cyclic in nature in that it is not time-dependant or product expectant (Blacking, 1973).



Another example is Colin McPhee's (1938) work, which has been quoted extensively in the area of Balinese gamelan (Lundquist, 1998; Merriam, 1964; and Walker, 1998). McPhee (1938) was perhaps one of the first to thoroughly explore learning processes in cultural context. The specificity to which McPhee (1938) describes the transmission of music knowledge in gamelan indicates the importance and impact of the Balinese culture, including the religious significance, on music learning processes is prominent. In particular, McPhee's (1938) work highlights that the way young Balinese children are exposed to the gamelan, in that they just observe rather than participate until they are ready, is a natural style of learning. Similarly, once participating in the group learning process the 'teacher' exposes music knowledge phrase by phrase.

The method of the teacher is strange. He says nothing, does not even look at the children. Dreamily he plays through the first movement. He plays it again. He then plays the first phrase alone, with more emphasis. He now indicates that the children are to commence... The phrase is repeated, and they try again... Bit by bit the children who are learning the melody go from phrase to phrase forgetting, remembering, gaining assurance... At the end of an hour, however, several can play through the whole melody (1938, p. 7-8).

Of note is McPhee's description of the group learning process. McPhee (1938, p. 12) believes that learning in a group rather than placing importance on the individual emphasises the construction of Balinese music itself stating that "the general effect does not depend so much upon the excellence of the individual as upon the unity of the group". This process of learning is present in the Indian music group context where the teacher plays new pieces to their students, phrase by phrase, gradually building up to the memorisation of an entire piece (V.Shankar, 1983, p. 171).

In Indigenous communities of Australia, these approaches have also been observed (Ellis, 1985; Bell, 2002; Moyle, 1992). It is evident that melody is learnt through imitation of members of a clan that are recognised to ‘own’ the songs being taught, concepts such as rhythm and text are consistently presented as a unified whole (Ellis, 1985, p. 115) and a recognition of the connection between songs and the land is consistent in the literature (Bell, 2002; Ellis, 1985; Hudson, 1997; Moyle, 1992; Payne, 1988). Ellis (1985) also highlights that music making may act as a way of communicating in context and says this is of particular importance in the Indigenous Australian context (1985, p. 15). She emphasises the significance that music itself can transmit important messages in the way that it is communicated. Similarly, McAllester’s (1984) work with the *Inuit* in North America also highlights the importance that music has in the process of communication.

Additionally, Hughes and More (1997) in comparing Aboriginal (in particular *Yolgnu*) ways of learning with institutionalised forms, believe that the *Yolgnu* learn through observation and imitation rather than through verbal instruction. More specifically, Hughes and More (1997, p. 10) argue that:

The focus in Aboriginal learning is on mastering context-specific skills. Mastery of context-specific skills is in contrast to a school education system which seeks to teach abstract content free principles which can be applied in new previously inexperienced situation...*Yolgnu* learners are more person-oriented than information oriented, and there is no institutionalised officer of “teacher” in *Yolgnu* society.

Merriam (1964, p. 146) also discusses the difference between formal and informal learning environments where more restrictive formal learning occurs in places such as schools and informal learning situations refer to more unstructured learning spaces

where socialisation takes place. Further, Ellis' (1985, p. 38) distinction between 'western' or more formal and informal learning environments concerns the style of learning whether linear and constrained or cyclic and more holistic in nature. Stowasser (1995, p. 261) aligns this with students' music experiences.

Students come into the music class with a range of musical backgrounds but all of them have encountered a great deal of music by the time they reach adolescence. Much of their music learning may be intuitive rather than formal, in which case it will be holistic rather than analytical.

In her book *Aboriginal Music: Education for Living* (1985), Cath Ellis details the experiences 'Western' tertiary music students had when learning music from traditional elders from the *Pitjantjatjara* region. In particular, Ellis notes that the students recognised that Western Art music practices operate as an exclusive tradition whereas the Aboriginal processes were based more on incorporation (p. 85); secondly that the students' own music education knowledge was enhanced as a result of their experience (p. 129); and lastly that a problem occurred in finding a balance between using oral and visual modes of communication whereby the visual focus was often disadvantageous particularly in memorisation (p. 131). These observations may relate to other non-western contexts such as the South Indian Karnatic music context.

### ***Music Teaching and Learning in the Karnatic Context***

Traditionally, Karnatic music was taught in a system called *gurukula* (V.Shankar, 1983; Viswanathan, 1977). In this system of learning students would leave their own family and live with their *guru* for the entire time of tutelage. Part of this learning process included an holistic spiritual journey, which was made by the student –

music and life were integrated. “All our waking hours were spent in the lap of music, listening, learning, practising, in an atmosphere charged by the very presence of the *guru*” (Shankar, 1969, p. 14).

It has been noted that students would spend hours learning from their *guru* as well as practising each day, all combined with worship of the Hindu religion (Krishna, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998; and Maya Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998). Payment for lessons would be through reciprocal duties such as house cleaning, cooking and showing dedication to learning through practise. It was not necessary for students and their families to have money for this privilege (Shankar, 1969). Prior to being accepted by a *guru*, the student would need to display commitment to learning and their family would also need to be in agreement. Once the decision to learn music was made between the *guru*, the student and their family a ceremony would be held in a temple to consummate this decision: to make music a way of life (Broughton et. al., 1994; Shankar, 1969).

The transmission of Indian music knowledge in the *gurukula* style is largely aural/oral (Shankar, V. 1983, p. 171). Consequently, the methods of rote learning and repetition are consistently used in the Karnatic music tradition (Campbell, 1991).

For the first five or six years, the student relies completely on the guidance of his *guru*. This is because the *guru* teaches everything to the *shishya* individually and directly, according to our ancient oral traditions (Shankar, 1969, p. 13).

Although the *gurukula* way of teaching and learning is still practised (Pesch, 1999), it is now more common for students to attend weekly lessons and pay for this tuition in monetary terms (V.Shankar, 1983, p. 172). This current system could be

attributed to the influence of the West where Indian students are now expected to attend school, making it impossible for the *gurukula* system to be as widespread as it once used to be (Joshi, 1963; Subrahmanya, 1985). For L'Armand and L'Armand (1983, p.413) the decrease in the practise of the traditional *gurukula* system of learning means "musical instruction is now available to a much wider circle of people".

It is also evident that with the decrease in the practice of the intensive *gurukula* style of learning the use of written music has become prevalent (V.Shankar, 1983, p. 175). Panchapakesa Iyer (1992) sees the introduction of visual representation systems as a benefit for the music culture in India, and believes that it assists in the preservation and maintenance of the tradition. For some (V.Iyer, 1992; Sambamoorthy, 1992) the introduction of printed music has improved music education in India.

Music education being associated with the sense of hearing has been traditionally orally taught, generally learnt sung and practised. It may be said that after the availability of printing press facilities, music education has progressed. Nowadays when the principle is to know easily and experience quickly, it is indispensable to publish books suitable to teach subjects quickly and by self learning (V.Iyer, 1992, p. iv).

Consequently, written music has become integral to the teaching and learning process (Panchapakesa Iyer, 1992). Rowell (1992, p.7) says that, "the sole purpose of notation is to remind [the students] of what [they] have already learnt". It is important to note that although Indian songs are notated, this notation is not a complete representation of the notes sung or played in performance (Pesch, 1999, p.5). While the introduction of visual representation systems has assisted in the transmission of music knowledge, it has in no way ignored the importance of transmitting knowledge both aurally/orally (as in vocal teaching), and visually

through demonstration (as in instrumental teaching) (Krishna, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998; and Maya Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998).

Conversely, Shankar (1969, p. 13) believes that the introduction of written music has had a negative impact on the ancient system of *gurukula* and argues that every effort should be made to maintain Indian music traditions. Similarly, Khali (Interview, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1997), Krishna (Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997), Maya (Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998), and Vishnu (Interview, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997) believe that learning in the *gurukula* approach is more beneficial in terms of increased learning outcomes, and that their strong connection to their *guru* came from their intensive tutelage and interaction with their *guru* when they participated in the *gurukula* style of learning.

Despite the opinion that the *gurukula* tradition of learning is more effective, Viswanathan (1977, p. 15) believes it “unwise for the student of music to commit so many years of his youth, when he cannot be certain of success in a music career”. As a result, Viswanathan (1977) believes that teachers have had to devise new ways to teach so that more music knowledge can be learnt in less time.

Aside from this, the group context for learning is still prevalent in beginning learning stages in India (Campbell, 1991). The configuration of groups depends on the progress of the students individually, as in traditional Balinese culture (McPhee, 1938). Each group may slowly gradually change with additions or subtractions according to improvement in students themselves (Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> Feb 1997). However, increasingly, tuition is presented on an individual basis as teachers

are realising the benefit of intensive learning with the result of faster knowledge acquisition (Sambamoorthy, 1992, p. 2).

In relation to teaching process, Shankar, V. (1983) states that when beginning to learn Karnatic music, the teacher slowly introduces the initial material presented to a novice student. It is noted that this practice is consistent amongst Karnatic music teachers, given the extensive use and availability of set texts (Panchapakesa Iyer, 1992). Pesch (1999) for example, describes the beginning processes of learning to comprise firstly an introduction to the *swara* (notes) in particular *raga* (scales) and then these elements are combined with *tala* (rhythm). This gives the student a sense of the cyclic nature of Indian music. A sequential passage of learning then occurs where, once the teacher feels confident that the student has grasped the concepts of melody and rhythm, new knowledge is offered (Pesch, 1999). Within the lesson context old material is reiterated for the majority of the lesson time, only then is new material taught to the student (Khali, Interview, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1997; Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997; and Vishnu, Interview, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997). Similarly, more repertoire will be introduced only if the students can demonstrate that previously transmitted music knowledge has been retained to the teacher's satisfaction (Shankar, 1969, p. 13).

In summary, the traditional *gurukula* system has diminished over time. This has been perceived to have both positive and negative impacts on the teaching and learning of Karnatic music. The advent of print has enabled a greater number of students to access and participate in the learning of Karnatic music. With the exception of some minor adaptation due to the introduction of printed learning

materials, the processes for conveying music knowledge between teacher and students in the Karnatic tradition have remained largely intact. The literature has identified the teacher/student relationship as an essential source of meaning within the systems of learning Karnatic music.

### ***Music Teaching and Learning in the Western Context***

In recent times, a combination of ethnomusicological and educational theory (Andersen, 1991; Campbell, 1996; Volk, 1998) has tried to address the concept of a more “contextual approach” (Walker, 1996 and 2001) to music teaching and learning. These interactions have developed as a consequence of the large growth of multicultural education and the view that music education can be viewed as a globally unique form of communication. An ongoing problem however, rests with reaching an agreed definition of multiculturalism (Rizvi, 1986). Volk (1998, p. 3) highlights that the term multicultural has as many diverse meanings as music itself. Further, Dunbar-Hall (1992, p. 188) and Elliott (1995, p. 291) attempt to define multicultural music education concluding that as music itself is multicultural then so should music education.

While this may be the case, a number of authors (Leong, 1999; Stowasser, 1997; Walker, 2001) have continued to acknowledge the tendency of music education practices to reflect Western values and conceptions of music. Similarly, the perception that Western culture disconnects the meaning that student’s desire in their music studies in institutionalised settings, is a consistent theme in the literature (Jansen, 1997; Wojtowicz, 1990).



Music learning in schools [or formal situations], which is of an academic nature, is often decontextualized from children's realities. This is why children often learn songs that are never sung outside the classroom. These songs are simply not meaningful to them (Corpataux, 2002, p. 11).

The literature (Dillon, 2001; Green, 1988; Lean, 1997; Lierse, 1997; Pollak, 1991; Small, 1977) points to a lack of inherent meaning in formal institutionalised contexts will result in students seeking access to meaning outside of the school's confines. For the pragmatist, music-making must be the focal point of curriculum in order for music programs to survive (Elliott, 1995, p. 173).

Included in the pragmatist view for music education is the idea that music is a process that any student can engage in (Dillon, 1997) with some (Bandt, 1991, Pollak, 1991) arguing that the process of music-making strengthens community identity. Similarly, the argument that music curriculum, as Elliott (1995) espouses, should focus more on the processes of music-making than products of high performance standards is recurrent (Campbell, 1992; Rosevear, 1997). Others (Bridges, 1994, p. 52; Stowasser, 1997, p. 5) believe that to continue focusing on more performance based outcomes will perpetuate the experience of elitism in west-centric music education practices. Pollak (1991, p. 37) agrees saying that music education needs to create a new approach.

An approach that enables people to create their own music. An approach that ceases to promote the cult of the expert in music. An approach that leads people to *believe* that they can create their own music. An approach that draws on all the diversity of traditions that are present in our community. An approach that encourages our inherent musicality. An approach that brings people together in the creative act of music making.

Expanding this, Shankar (1969) and Glickman (1996) believe that the methods and resources used to teach music from cultures, which are predominantly aural/oral ones, by requiring students to read and write music from these cultures, loses the important meaning behind such musical cultures. Smith (1998) agrees that this focus ultimately limits students' learning experiences, especially if they are from culturally diverse backgrounds. With this view in mind, a number of intercultural approaches to music education have been offered in the literature (Boyce-Tillman, 1996; Rose, 1995; Smith, 1998; Walker, 1996) with many still acknowledging the need for further research.

To this end, Walker (1996) suggests a more contextual approach to music education where the socio-cultural meaning behind particular 'musics' becomes the focus, rather than the meaning it may provide to the individual in the form of its contribution to the listener's emotional response. Walker (2001, p. 13) consolidates this framework later.

For a theory of music to underpin a philosophy of music education, it must, I argue, deal in what a culture believes music is and how music functions within the culture. A study of music in any culture requires no less than a thorough immersion into the value systems of that culture.

It has been noted that many music cultures value teaching processes that are predominantly aural/oral. In the contemporary education context Stowasser (1995) advocates high level audiation skills in music students. She believes that this would "provide a means towards the musical ends of enhanced performance, enriched creativity, enlightened appreciation and, above all, imaginative teaching" (1995, p.

257). Stowasser (1995) also expresses concern that aural skills are, in the main, excluded from the music program, including both classroom and instrumental practices, due to high emphasis on assessment, but if taught well can make a great difference in the skills and understanding of the music student. Similarly, Leong (1999, p. 128) believes that any “aural education that is effective...needs to be inclusive...and integrated into the entire music curriculum”.

Campbell (1991) presents a number of methods such as the Dalcroze, Kodaly, Orff and Suzuki methods that are used more predominantly in music learning contexts for young children given their approach to a more integrated curriculum. She however, notes that these methods either focus on the development of music skills aurally or as symbolic form (1991, p. 214). As such, Campbell presents a model showing the modes of learning that may be experienced as a result of the use of one of these methods.

**Diagram 2: Receptive and Participatory Experiences in Music, In Three Modes**

(Source: Campbell, P.S. 1991, p. 213 adapted from Sandra Stauffer)

**[This table is not available online. Please consult the hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library]**

While these methods are gaining popularity in the music teaching and learning context Campbell (1991) highlights that each of these methods of teaching tends to focus on just one of the modes of learning presented in the above table, and suggests that “the balance of experiences in these modes is present in the programs of successful music teachers” (p. 213). Therefore, multi-modes of learning are said to be more effective and strongly advocated (Gardner, 1983; Wright, 2003).

In the instrumental music teaching and learning context, the increased adoption of methods of learning, such as the Suzuki and Yamaha methods, has been attributed to the fact that they focus on aural development, as well as that they tend not to enforce the elitist and exclusive nature of instrumental music learning (Bridges 1994). For Miyoshi (1997, p. 62) the selection of teaching methods and materials must “stimulate children’s interest in learning and expression”. Miyoshi believes that the Suzuki method is one such method.

It is said that the essence of the Suzuki method is in its clever encouragement of motivation. It has a starting point that prepares familiar music for children and develops the children’s interest (p. 62).

The Suzuki philosophy, according to Breen and Hogg (1999) espouses that every person is inherently musical and can from a young age be nurtured to perform. Similarly, what is regarded as important in the Suzuki approach is parental involvement, the group learning structure (Suzuki, 1983) and the focus of learning

via aural means (Tannhauser, 1999). Suzuki (1982, p. 15) believed that “one of the worst enemies of musical education which creates monotony, is written music”.

Another method prevalent in the Australian context (particularly in Queensland) is the Kodaly method of learning (de Vries, 1999). Johnson (1999, p. 30) attributes this to the desire by teachers to have “comprehensive music education to all people”. Like the Suzuki method, the Kodaly approach to learning music is grounded in the idea that as children learn language aurally/orally in the initial stages of learning, then music should also be taught this way (Choksy, 1974).

In the instrumental music teaching and learning environment these methods have sought to provide an alternative to the domination of student performance measure by external examining bodies, such as the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB) (Forrest, 1994; Stowasser, 1994). Stowasser (1992, p. 25) believes that the perpetuation of measurement of instrumental music students’ ability to organisations such as AMEB reinforces a linear-logical mode of culture and education. Further, Forrest (1994, p. 87) states that “the external examination system should never be seen as a substitute for a quality classroom music program”. This also relates to instrumental music practices (Bridges, 1994).

Literature that explores the influence of culture on instrumental music teaching practices is limited and what is available is predominantly published in the United States. For example, Colwell and Goolsby’s text, *The Teaching of Instrumental Music* (2002), although useful on the technique of instrumental playing, does not investigate diverse modes of communication nor does it explore culturally inclusive

methods for particular use in the studio context. Similarly, the dominance of tutor books such as *Standard of Excellence* (Pearson, 1993-1996) and *All For Strings* (Anderson and Frost, 1985), both published in the United States, in the Australian instrumental music context, do not present content or method that could be considered multicultural in nature. Despite this oversight both texts are recommended as the set text for use in schools by the Queensland State Department of Education (Department of Education Manual – The State of Queensland 1999-2001). Such resources can be “educationally limiting” (Walker, 2001, p. 16) as they tend to present repertoire from a purely west-centric framework.

In the Australian context, it is evident that researchers are concerned with problems, such as those outlined above, that instrumental teachers and their programs face (Hogg, 1993; Lean, 1997; Roulston, 2000; Tannhauser, 1999). These issues are often concerned with the way that current practices are elitist and culturally exclusive. Similarly, much literature acknowledges the lack of research in the instrumental music teaching and learning field. Zhukov (1999) expresses a recurring sentiment that, “as the research into instrumental teaching is still in its infancy, there is an urgent need for further investigations in this area” (p.248).

### ***Summary***

The review of the literature has centred on music, culture and teaching and learning as concepts that relate to how culture is expressed in music teaching and learning processes. The key findings in the literature review include the following points: definitions of music abound, as such there is no single definition which is universally accepted; music and its meaning are contextually specific in that they reflect the

broader cultural and social environment in which the music is produced relative to a particular point in time and place; music is an inherently human experience and the construction and attribution of its meaning is bound in the social relationships surrounding its production more so than it is reflected in specific elements, texts and sounds; in the same way that music is culturally and socially determined, so too are the systems of teaching and learning supporting music's transmission.

There is widespread acknowledgement of the importance of culture in music education and instrumental tuition generally. Though there is little evidence of this subject receiving specific treatment within the literature it points to a significant dearth in terms of research on the influence of culture on instrumental music teaching practices and processes. There are a large number of texts within the instrumental music genre written for particular instruments, which focus on building technique and skills. These texts typically deal with practice drills and playing exercises. It is not evident however that culture or its influence is widely considered within these texts. Any reference to culture is implicit and tends to reflect the dominance of the Western music tradition.

The literature generally approaches the concept of culture in music education and instrumental music teaching from a philosophical and theoretical perspective rather than in an applied sense that views culture's influence on music education and instrumental music tuition in terms of its practical impact. As such, there is a need for more research and discussion on the ways that culture influences instrumental music teaching practices within the context of teaching 'in situ' and the measures that instrumental music teachers undertake to respond to these influences.

Most literature on the subject of music education and instrumental music teaching is inherently ‘west-centric’ in nature and does not extensively explore non-western music traditions and cultures. There is little research on non-western conceptions of instrumental music or the ways in which it is taught outside of the ‘West’. A clear exception is the work undertaken by ethnomusicologists who have approached musicology from an anthropological and sociological perspective and have expanded the ways in which music, its meaning and function, and the processes that produce and transmit it between teacher and student manifest.

Whilst musicology and music education philosophy provide arguments for examining how culture and music are inextricably linked there is a need to apply these theoretical models to ‘cultural cases’ and examine what the observation of practice can add to theory and in turn test the robustness of the theoretical constructs. Herein lies the purpose of this thesis, which seeks to compare and contrast Karnatic music in South India, Karnatic music in Australia, and Western music practices in Australia and utilise these contexts to better understand the phenomenon of how culture is reflected in instrumental music teaching and learning.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Introduction*

This chapter proposes a methodology to examine how cultural influence is reflected in instrumental music teaching practices. In order to carry out inquiry that explores the nature of cultural effect on instrumental music teaching practices, I have chosen to conduct research that is cross-cultural in nature. This kind of focus provides the opportunity to starkly contrast the music traditions under investigation as well as the modes of communication used in transmitting instrumental music knowledge in these contexts. Consequently, I have chosen two music cultures in three distinct settings to explore. The first culture, the Karnatic music tradition, is placed in two geographical settings – in Tamil Nadu, Southern India, and Queensland, Australia. The second culture, where Western Art music is predominantly taught, investigates instrumental music teaching practices in Queensland, Australia.

In addition to being able to contrast these two music traditions it was necessary to study multiple case studies by way of comparison. Therefore a number of teachers in each context were observed in their teaching environment. In this way, questions pertaining to cultural influence, and importance of this on teachers, teaching methods and modes of communication, and teaching contexts, could be answered. Only then would an understanding of the way teachers teach and why they teach the way they do in context would be gained. Within this chapter I will outline the research design,

the sample and its selection, and the scope of the study in terms of people, place, time and limitations.

### *Selecting An Appropriate Methodology*

As the research encompassed human interaction and social meaning, and the expression of unique cultural values and beliefs, I felt that the study required an interpretative methodology. This methodology needed to rigorously organise and analyse multiple data forms that were capable of capturing both deep ethnographic perspectives as well as a range of observational data that other scientific methodologies cannot. In this way, participation observation was the most suitable method given the high level of immersion required, and the responsiveness of the method to diverse research settings and complex research problems arising from social phenomena. Jorgensen (1980, p. 23) notes that “participant observation concentrates on in-depth description and analysis of some phenomenon or set of phenomenon”. This is important to consider given the nature of this study.

As this study is cross-cultural in nature it is anticipated that the researcher will act (sometimes simultaneously) as a ‘participant’ in, and an ‘observer’ of diverse practices for imparting music knowledge through written and/or aural/oral means with the purpose of examining the meaning, impact and significance of culture in relation to instrumental music teaching practices as social phenomena in context. To this end, immersion in the music cultures concerned was critical to building trusting relationships with the teachers as well as fostering opportunities to elicit meaningful data (Berg, 2001; Jorgensen, 1980). In support of deep engagement with the teachers involved in the research, Jorgensen (1980) notes that beginning to understand the

actions and interactions between student and teacher in cultural context requires longitudinal and intensive observational study.

The methodology of participant observation requires that the researcher become directly involved as a participant in peoples' daily lives. The participant role provides access to the world of everyday life from the standpoint of a member or insider (Jorgensen, 1980, p. 20).

As a participant I am able to see first hand, cultural aspects and meaning that impacts on the way the teachers perceive music teaching and learning. Similarly, beginning to discover the philosophy of these teachers and information about their work may assist in developing more effective or culturally recognisant instrumental music teaching practices in Australia. The results from this research have the potential to highlight information that could be beneficial to instrumental music education in Queensland and more broadly, Australia. This may be particularly important in terms of reflecting and responding to cultural influences in a multicultural environment such as Australia, and it may also address culturally determined means of communicating instrumental music knowledge such as the use of aural/oral and/or written modalities.

### ***Similar Studies***

Over the past few decades an increase in educational inquiry that focused on cross-cultural studies has occurred. This has largely been a response to the issue of multiculturalism – a subject of inquiry that has affected many areas of research. As a result, music educators naturally explored research that focused on music cultures other than Western Art music in order to find out how these musics could contribute to formal music education settings. The majority of this information was found in the research of ethnomusicologists. Consequently, a large increase of publications

and music education conferences addressed the influence of multiculturalism on music education (Anderson, 1991; Dunbar-Hall, 1999; George, 1987; Leong, 1997; Volk, 1998). Of note is the work of Patricia Shehan Campbell (1991, 1992, 1996).

Campbell's publication *Lessons from the World: A Cross-Cultural Guide To Music Teaching And Learning* (1991) highlights the need for music teaching and learning to shift its focus from one on music literacy and performance skills to one that recognises the importance of the aural learning process (1991, p. 291). It also advocates the interaction between teachers and students as an act of cultural transmission given that many other cultures share their music in this way. Her emphasis on the need to recognise the actual processes of teaching and learning when developing inclusive curriculum rather than remain product centred is important considering the diversity of students who learn music (1992, p. 40).

In 1996, Campbell compiled opinions of eight reputable ethnomusicologists on a number of issues related to teaching music from various cultures. Strongly evident, was their advocacy for including varied repertoire in the music curriculum. This was due to the fact that as music was found in many cultural domains, music education practice provided the perfect forum in which to display multicultural pedagogy. In addition to this view, Campbell highlighted a number of other issues related to the inclusion of music from other cultures in the curriculum. These include authenticity and cultural change, how much should be taught and when should it be taught, what level of knowledge the teachers require, and how should this music be taught.

Although these points were addressed briefly the major focus of the document remained on developing an inclusive music program with the use of more varied music content. Of particular significance for this research is the fourth item – how should music from other cultures be taught? Campbell has provided the basis for such research but it was determined that in order to begin to answer such a question a comparative case study between music practices in a Western context and in a different cultural context, such as that found in Karnatic music teaching practices, that specifically addressed how culture influences instrumental music teaching practices should take place.

### ***Selection Of Research Settings***

Two distinct music cultures in three settings were selected as sites to collect data for the research. The first music culture is the South Indian or Karnatic instrumental music tradition as experienced in two settings: Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India; and Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. The second music culture for the research is Queensland instrumental music teaching practices as taught in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. The research settings have been selected with the purpose of comparing and contrasting different instrumental music teaching contexts. To this end, these settings provided opportunity to record culture as expressed and experienced in actual instrumental music tuition events involving music teachers and their students.

The instrumental music tradition of South India has been chosen as a result of my experience as a volunteer teacher in India in 1993. The data presented for the first two teachers in this setting therefore constitute ex-post facto data that was collected in the form of observations and discussions that were recorded in journal entries,

musical transcriptions, sound recordings and film. Data relating to the remaining three Karnatic instrumental music teachers was collected during the candidature in Brisbane, Queensland. These teachers contributed to my continued involvement in learning this tradition once I had returned to Queensland, Australia. The second research setting involved my experience as a student and teacher or colleague with five Queensland instrumental music teachers in Brisbane, Queensland. Data for the teachers in this setting was also collected during the candidature. The nominated settings show the interaction between culture and teaching in order that these phenomena may be compared and contrasted.

### ***Selection Of Teachers***

Since the central aim of this thesis is to highlight the way culture influences instrumental music teaching practices, teachers are logically and practically well placed to assist in the research as key informants. The development of continued relationships and networks with these teachers is envisaged. It is anticipated that these relationships would be established and fostered through my involvement in the various cultural settings chosen for the research.

### **Brief Description of Instrumental Music Teachers Studied**

*Karnatic instrumental music teachers studied in Southern India:*

Parvathi: Karnatic vocal teacher and traditional *Bharata Natyam* dancer

Maya: Karnatic violin teacher and performer

*Karnatic Instrumental Music Teachers Studied in Queensland Australia:*

Khali: Karnatic vocal music teacher.

Krishna: *mridangam* performer and teacher

Vishnu: Karnatic violinist and teacher

*Western Art Instrumental Music Teachers Studied in Queensland Australia:*

Karl: Professional orchestral violinist and private tutor

Anne: School stringed instrumental music teacher and private tutor for violin and piano

Tina: School multi-instrumental music teacher

Chen: Professional orchestral violinist and private tutor

Jodie: Suzuki trained music teacher

In each of the above contexts I sought permission from the teachers to access their teaching environments to observe the ways in which they taught music to their students. The extent of my engagement and the broad selection of data that was collected during the research indicate a level of acceptance by the teachers and students of me as both a learning peer and teacher of music. My participation in the situations allowed me to both observe teaching processes and structures as well as directly experience these processes as a student. This was necessary to understand the purposes and meaning behind the teachers' transmission styles.

### ***Ethics: Anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent***

#### *Anonymity*

All appropriate controls have been put in place to maintain the anonymity of the participants of the research. The data was de-identified and coded so that teachers, learning situations and students' identities are protected. To this end, the teachers were given pseudonyms and descriptive details of the learning events were presented in a format that is sufficiently ambiguous so not to disclose specific location details.

#### *Confidentiality*

All original records will be securely stored for future reference but will not be released to any audience, at any time, for any purpose except wherein the law requires disclosure of such records. Further to this, the original participants of the study will be notified should records be required.

#### *Informed consent*

All participants were advised prior to participating in the research of the intended use of the data to support the development of the candidate's doctoral thesis. Precautions to ensure anonymity and confidentiality were outlined and the informed consent of all participants was sought. (See Appendices B and C for a copy of the informed consent form used in this research as well as a sample letter given to a study participant).



### ***Data Collection Methods***

A number of strategies were employed in the collection of data to gain a picture of instrumental music teaching practices (see Table 1). Firstly, I kept journals that documented observations made in the learning situations. In each of the journal entries the ethnographic setting was described, the number of students in attendance noted, and the processes used by the teacher to transmit knowledge will be recorded. Music content was also dictated and/or transcribed using appropriate notational systems where necessary. In addition, tape recordings of the events were made where permission was given by the teachers so as to provide an additional mechanism for confirming the accuracy of observations.

In regard to the ex-post facto data collected in India in 1993 the same methods for collecting, recording and storage were used with a view for interpretation at a later date (See Appendix D for samples of Journal of Events). Aside from the recording of observations in context, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the teacher sample during the researcher's candidature. An outline of questions and prompts used in the semi-structured interviews is recorded in Appendix E. Transcriptions of these interviews were made and are quoted in the body of the thesis. A sample of interview transcripts with Krishna and Anne appears in Appendix F.

**Table 1: Data Collection Processes used in this research**

<b>Data Instrument</b>	<b>Data Form</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
Semi-structured interviews	Text and transcripts	Teacher perceptions and reflections on instrumental music teaching
Field notes and journals	Text and diagrams	Observations of instrumental music teaching
Transcript paper	Music notations and transcriptions	Compositions, scales and exercises used during instrumental music teaching
Tape Recorder	Sound recordings of speech and music	Aural/oral representation of instrumental music teaching practice and teacher perceptions
Camera	Photographs	Visual representation of teachers, teaching practice and socio-cultural environment

***Data Schedule***

The 55 events that constitute the data documented herein were chosen from many more observations made with each of the teachers throughout the time of the study. The main consideration in selecting the nominated events was their relevance to the scope of the research, the central problem, and questions under study. The data schedule of the events drawn upon for analysis is outlined in Table 2.

**Table 2: Data Schedule**

<b>South Indian Instrumental Music Teachers</b>									
<b>Events with Parvathi:</b>		<b>Events with Maya:</b>		<b>Events with Khali:</b>		<b>Events with Krishna:</b>		<b>Events with Vishnu:</b>	
Event Number	Date	Event Number	Date	Event Number	Date	Event Number	Date	Event Number	Date
Event1:	February 6 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 6:	April 6 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 13:	September 12 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 22:	September 9 <sup>th</sup> 1996	Event 25:	July 31 <sup>st</sup> 1997
Event2:	February 7 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 7:	April 9 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 14:	September 17 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 23:	February 11 <sup>th</sup> 1997	Event 26:	October 4 <sup>th</sup> 1997
Event 3:	February 13 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 8:	April 10 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 15:	October 13 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 24:	March 18 <sup>th</sup> 1997		
Event 4:	February 14 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 9:	April 20 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 16:	July 21 <sup>st</sup> 1997				
Event 5:	February 18 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 10:	May 9 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 17:	July 26 <sup>th</sup> 1997				
		Event 11:	May 21 <sup>st</sup> 1993	Event 18:	August 16 <sup>th</sup> 1997				
		Event 12:	May 24 <sup>th</sup> 1993	Event 19:	October 29 <sup>th</sup> 1997				
				Event 20:	November 5 <sup>th</sup> 1997				
				Event 21:	December 13 <sup>th</sup> 1997				
<b>Queensland Western Art Instrumental Music Teachers</b>									
<b>Events with Karl:</b>		<b>Events with Anne:</b>		<b>Events with Tina:</b>		<b>Events with Chen:</b>		<b>Events with Jodie:</b>	
Event Number	Date	Event Number	Date	Event Number	Date	Event Number	Date	Event Number	Date
Event 27:	March 25 <sup>th</sup> 1995	Event 34:	March 12 <sup>th</sup> 1998	Event 44:	November 12 <sup>th</sup> 1997	Event 49:	December 10 <sup>th</sup> 2001	Event 51:	February 26 <sup>th</sup> 2002
Event 28:	April 9 <sup>th</sup> 1995	Event 35:	March 19 <sup>th</sup> 1998	Event 45:	November 12 <sup>th</sup> 1997	Event 50:	December 10 <sup>th</sup> 2001	Event 52:	February 26 <sup>th</sup> 2002
Event 29:	May 21 <sup>st</sup> 1995	Event 36:	April 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1998	Event 46:	November 12 <sup>th</sup> 1997			Event 53:	March 5 <sup>th</sup> 2002
Event 30:	May 28 <sup>th</sup> 1995	Event 37:	April 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1998	Event 47:	November 17 <sup>th</sup> 1997			Event 54:	March 5 <sup>th</sup> 2002
Event 31:	August 10 <sup>th</sup> 1995	Event 38:	April 2 <sup>nd</sup> 1998	Event 48:	November 17 <sup>th</sup> 1997			Event 55:	March 5 <sup>th</sup> 2002
Event 32:	March 24 <sup>th</sup> 1996	Event 39:	September 29 <sup>th</sup> 1998						
Event 33:	November 3 <sup>rd</sup> 1997	Event 40:	April 20 <sup>th</sup> 1997						
		Event 41:	October 27 <sup>th</sup> 1998						
		Event 42:	November 3 <sup>rd</sup> 1998						
		Event 43:	November 10 <sup>th</sup> 1998						

### *Analysis of Data*

In collating and recording the data a number of analytical themes emerged. These themes align with the main research focus in investigating and comparing the reflection of cultural practice and values inherent in vocal and instrumental music teaching processes and environments. In particular, the similarities and differences between the South Indian and Queensland Western Art instrumental music teaching contexts including communication styles focusing more specifically on aspects of aural/oral and written traditions was explored. This comparative approach sought to investigate the surrounding roles, rules and rituals both musical and non-musical that contributed to the expression of culture in the context of instrumental music teaching. As an analytical process, I underwent an in-depth examination by comparing the specific learning and teaching processes involved in each of the contexts.

Through the observations made in context, the study examined the methods employed by transmitters to deliver musical material including visual, kinaesthetic, technical, verbal and non-verbal methods of communication; the order this material was offered to the student as a beginning, intermediate or advanced student; how errors are corrected within the lesson context and to what extent these are considered important or not; the composition of the situation, whether in a group or individual learning context, and the impact of this on the learning process; the 'extra-musical' ritual evident in each context; and how the music in each context reflects the particular cultural environment in which the music is made.

### ***Coding categories: Research Focus and Key Research Questions***

The following range of coding categories was therefore explored: Teachers, Teaching methods and modes of communication, and Teaching context. The main question that informs the research project is: What is the extent and nature of cultural influence upon the teaching practices of instrumental music teachers?

#### **The Teachers:**

This category includes elements such as the teacher's cultural background, biography, experiences of learning music, experiences of learning to be a teacher, experiences of teaching, meaning attributed to music as a cultural form, important influences and teachers, and teaching philosophy.

The major question for this category of data within the research is: how do instrumental music teachers' experiences of learning music, learning to be a teacher, and teaching reflect the influence of culture?

#### **Teaching Methods and Modes of Communication:**

This coding category includes teaching processes/pedagogy, identified learning outcomes, techniques of communication – verbal and non-verbal, aides to learning, use of aural/oral or written modalities, methods of correction such as repetition, rote learning, demonstration and the skill of memorisation, payment/remuneration systems, individual and group learning, treatment of performance, and sequential exposure to instrumental music knowledge which impact on the extent to which culture is reflected in these processes and structures.

The major question for this category of data within the research is: how do the teaching methods and modes of communication used by instrumental music teachers reflect the influence of culture?

**Cultural Influence in the Teaching Context:**

This category includes roles, rules and rituals, physical teaching environment, social and cultural history of country of origin, spiritual significance in music, teaching and performance, social function of music, teaching and teachers, context of lessons and performances, cultural import given lineage, gender roles and impact upon music and teaching, and time, space and context as a reflection of culture.

Given this focus the following question will be addressed: how does the context in which instrumental teaching practices take place reflect the influence of culture?

Data aligned with the coding categories outlined above, was analysed to identify similarities and differences in instrumental music teaching practices and processes across the range of learning situations studied in the research. This was particularly useful in determining the extent and nature of cultural influence in teaching practices and processes when the data was compared in different culturally specific learning contexts. Table 3 lists all of the relevant data elements, or by specific coding category, represents the analytical framework of the study.

**Table 3: Analytical Framework for the Research**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Teaching Methods</b>	<b>Teaching Context</b>
Cultural background	Teaching Processes/Pedagogy	Roles, Rules and Rituals
Biography	Identified learning outcomes	Physical teaching environment
Experiences of learning music	Techniques of communication – verbal and non-verbal	Social and cultural history of country of origin
Experiences of learning to be a teacher	Aides to learning	Spiritual significance in music, teaching and performance
Experiences of teaching	Use of aural/oral or written modalities	Social function of music, teaching and teachers
Meaning attributed to music as a cultural form	Methods of correction	Context of lessons and performances
Important influences/Teachers	Payment/remuneration systems	Cultural Import given lineage
Teaching Philosophy	Individual and group learning	Gender roles and impact upon music and teaching
	Treatment of performance	Time, space and context as a reflection of culture
	Sequential exposure to instrumental music knowledge	

***Limitations of Research Methodology***

When one embarks on any research endeavour, personal, social and cultural biases are brought to bear. The research process will always be laden with information that has been informed and affected by previous experiences. On this matter, Corbin and Strauss (1990, p. 14) note that “(t)here are no objective observations only observations socially situated in the worlds of the observee and the observed”. Conducting research therefore presents challenges in separating the researcher’s perspective and experience from that of the research subject. Similarly, Gourlay (1978, p. 2) states that previous experiences are ‘constraints’ and that in the field of ethnomusicology researchers hold with them personal, situational and universal constraints. Though these may not necessarily have to be viewed as constraints but rather as implications, their recognition for the purposes of this research is important.

With particular reference to the current research, information on South Indian instrumental music and its practices are to be drawn only from my learning experiences in India as well as continuing experiences in Australia. These

experiences although brief have broadened my knowledge base about not only Karnatic music and its associated teaching styles but my own previous musical experience in Australia. Caution must be exercised however, in that these experiences are not continually referenced to my longer experience of learning and teaching Western Art instrumental music in Queensland, Australia.

The important point though is to be cognisant of the value base that frames one's perception of the world and to consistently run checking processes as the research is undertaken. This is particularly pertinent given the concern that "the sheer presence of a [researcher] within a community will interfere with his informants' behaviour (Konig, 1980, p. 417)." This view purports similar sentiment to Dillon's (2001, p. 80) view that "[the researchers] are in themselves the instruments of research".

### ***Strategies To Address Limitations***

A number of strategies were employed to address potential limitations, eliminate bias and improve the validity of the data. These include adherence to the principles of appropriate research design and analysis; the use of a partner-observer as a trustworthy and honest measure; use of aids such as tape recorders, photographs, sketches, diagrams, journal and field notes, notation of music, to help ensure accuracy. In addition the use of a 'member check' with key informants in the field in order to test and compare the research findings with the lived experience of the participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994); long termed engagement spanning six years; a variety of data sources – multi-variant; and multiple contexts for comparative analysis including India, Australia, and the Indian-Australian community were used.



### ***Quality Research Design***

The quantity of events to be studied coupled with the qualitatively different roles that are likely to be assumed by the researcher within each of the events are expected to reduce the potential for researcher impact bias. Assuming a number of roles during the research including an observer, student and teacher will ensure that a range of perspectives, perceptual and observational roles are canvassed with a range of people across a range of contexts. Further, care was taken to ‘step back’ from the situations and apply a number of lenses on these situations ensuring that the trustworthiness, authenticity and fairness of the data was maintained.

### ***Long term Engagement and Member Checking***

This research was carried out over a period of six years allowing extensive data collection. Similarly, ongoing contact with the teachers involved during this time enabled me to develop a personal rapport with them as well as with their students, which in turn facilitated trustworthiness and authenticity in the information shared. In addition, transcriptions were made of the semi-structured interviews and then shared with the participants as a formal member check process to ensure that the information recorded was correct (See Appendix G for a copy of the interview and member check register). All changes and/or further comments nominated by the teachers were recorded immediately.

### ***Summary***

In this research I have chosen participant observation as the methodology most appropriate to the study given its capacity to engage subjects and elucidate deep insider information that other scientific methodologies cannot. The reason for

choosing an interpretive paradigm such as participant observation for a method of inquiry is that it enables the researcher to search deeply into the topic and reflect on what they have found.

Participant observation also provides the means by which to address the thesis' main question concerning the reflection of culture in instrumental music teaching practices. Being able to observe the way teachers teach and ask them what is important to them about this profession, and participate in the learning sessions that they direct is of most benefit for this particular type of study. I have also discussed the details of the research design including the sample of instrumental music teachers and its selection, and scope of the study to two distinct research settings that being, South Indian instrumental music teaching in Southern India and in Queensland, as well as Western instrumental music teaching in Queensland.

As a participant I am able to see first hand cultural aspects and meaning that impacts on the way the teachers perceive music teaching and learning. Similarly, beginning to discover the thoughts of these teachers on their work may assist in developing more effective or culturally recognisant instrumental music teaching practices in Australia.

The results from this research have the potential to highlight information that could be beneficial to instrumental music education in Queensland and more broadly, Australia. This may be particularly important in terms of reflecting and responding to cultural influences and culturally determined means of communicating instrumental music knowledge.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE KARNATIC MUSIC TEACHING CONTEXT

#### *Introduction*

In the literature review it was shown that teaching methods are a point of access for gaining information about the culture in which the teaching takes place. This includes both musical and non-musical aspects that are apparent in the teaching context. The following discourse focuses on how culture is reflected in the work of the Karnatic music teachers observed.

In the South Indian or Karnatic music tradition, five teachers were observed in order to identify how culture was reflected in their teaching practice. All of these teachers identified as Indian, and as Karnatic music teachers. Two of the teachers lived in Chennai, South India; these teachers constituted ex-post facto data. A further two teachers lived permanently in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia; and the remaining teacher had visited Australia to complete further study, but now lives in California. For these teachers their culture was an important aspect of their teaching philosophy and practice.

#### **Defining Karnatic Music**

Within the continent of India, two classical music traditions exist: the Karnatic and Hindustani traditions. Karnatic music is often broadly defined as South India's classical music tradition (Khali, Interview, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1997; Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997; Maya, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998), and Hindustani music is

designated to being produced in the North of India. Viswanathan (1977) supports this by providing a definition on a geographical basis by saying that the Karnatic system of music usually prevails in the States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala.

### *The Karnatic Music Teachers*

#### **In India:**

##### *Parvathi: a Karnatic Vocal Teacher*

In 1993 I was employed as a volunteer teacher in South India. While there, I intended to learn something about the local music. The people with whom I worked for six months in a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) knew a woman who taught traditional classical Karnatic vocal music. They introduced me to Parvathi who was a Karnatic vocal teacher as well as a Principal of small local Matriculation school. An arrangement was made for me to begin regular lessons - up to four a week - with Parvathi at her house. I participated in group vocal lessons with Parvathi for approximately six months. The lessons cost twenty rupees (an equivalent of one Australian dollar) and were paid monthly.

In the learning context with Parvathi, my role was as a student in a small group situation and I was expected to behave in the way that other young Indian students would in a lesson. Some of the lessons had up to eight students attending, including me, and others just two. On one occasion I was taught on my own. At no time was the construction of the group the same. Each time I attended a lesson different students would be in attendance and many came and went before my 'lesson' was

actually taught. Similarly, the level of students in the groups varied from beginner to more advanced with the more advanced students often joining in the singing when beginner lessons were taught. In each of the learning sessions with Parvathi, Tamil was the predominant language spoken. Many of the students were bi or multi-lingual, with English being one of their languages. Only occasionally would English be used when Parvathi addressed me or other students who also spoke another language – usually Hindi. In this context I participated in a number of concerts that were held at the school in which Parvathi worked and I also accompanied her to many other concerts held in various temples in the surrounding area.

When asked about her own music learning experiences, Parvathi said that she started to learn music from a young age at the request of her parents as well as by her desire to learn. Parvathi initially learnt Karnatic vocal music from her maternal grandmother, as she lived in an extended family situation. She would often attend all of her grandmother's teaching sessions and either observe the students or join in the lessons. She said that she enjoyed the opportunity to participate in music lessons almost everyday and that she could learn very quickly by participating in most of the lessons that her grandmother taught. When she became more advanced she began lessons with a well-reputed female singer and teacher as her grandmother believed that she could no longer teach her further skills.

Apart from the skill that she had gained in Karnatic vocal music, Parvathi also learnt the traditional South Indian dance form: *Bharata Natyam*. She believed that her skill in this dance form outweighed her singing standard, enabling her to perform dance professionally until she married. Parvathi indicated that she was disappointed that

she no longer performed *Bharata Natyam* but given her commitments with her own family and the school it was no longer possible.

*Maya: a Karnatic Violin Teacher*

After I had been learning traditional Karnatic vocal music with Parvathi for approximately one month I found a Karnatic violin teacher (there was some difficulty in finding a violin teacher as I lived some distance away from the city centre and there were no teachers available in the local villages). Maya was recommended to me by the owner of a music shop in Chennai city. Many reasons were presented to me as to why Maya was a 'good' teacher and why I should have commenced learning with her. Prominent among the reasons were that Maya's brother was a well-known performer of Karnatic violin, and that her skill in teaching and performing Karnatic violin herself, in India and abroad, was extensive. Her high status was also justified by her connection to *Sri Tyagaraja*, one of the trinity of composer Saints of Karnatic music (*Muttusvami Dikshitar*, *Syama Sastri* and *Sri Tyagaraja*) through her family lineage. Her brother was taught by their grandfather, who was taught by their great-grandfather, who was taught by *Sri Tyagaraja*. As a result of this lineage, her family was known to uphold the Karnatic music tradition in an authentic manner. She was said to be the best and probably most available for lessons.

In my first meeting with Maya we discussed (with her son assisting as translator) many aspects of music including her desire to learn Western Art music. She indicated that I was to learn on an individual basis, as there was a short time before she was going to leave for the United States to give performances and workshops.

She believed I would learn a lot more in this particular context than in a group. She explained that she never took more than thirty individual students so that she could teach every one with equal professionalism and concentration. An explanation was given on how allowances are made now due to students' schooling arrangements and other commitments and as a result lessons are attended once a week for one hour. Maya spoke very highly of a Japanese student who participated in the *gurukula* tradition, an approach to teaching and learning that did not occur as much as it used to.

Eventually I had up to three lessons a week with Maya. She indicated that each lesson cost fifty rupees (an equivalent to two Australian dollars) however, she said that some families paid less if they were unable to afford this cost. I inquired about when the payment was required but she would often avoid the issue and her son indicated that not to worry about that now. I therefore had to keep a record of the number of lessons that I had with Maya and pay her the entire fee at the end of my tuition time her with.

Maya said that her teaching style reflected her own learning as she emphasised the importance of upholding tradition. Although her students did not participate in the traditional *gurukula* style of learning that she learnt under, they still experienced the methods used by her father and brother. The repertoire taught by Maya was also taught to her as she had completely memorised the material. Adherence to tradition was always an important issue for this teacher.

### *Other Music Experiences in India*

Apart from the lessons that I had participated in with Parvathi and Maya in India, they both encouraged me to be involved in extra-musical events that would enhance my learning experience by immersion into the Indian culture. For example, as Parvathi was the Principal of a local school, her private music students often performed at school concerts. On two occasions I was asked to participate as a student vocalist in these concerts. This gave me the opportunity to understand the importance of music in displaying the culture of the students and allowing them to publicly show what they had learnt with Parvathi. These nights were always filled with excitement and colour and students were as a result, given the opportunity to feel proud of their achievements.

With Maya however, events such as these did not occur. She believed that many teachers expected their students to perform before they were ready to do so. Similarly, she believed that many students made the transition from student to teacher too quickly, in order to earn money. This was seen to be a detriment to the standard of both teachers and performers of the Karnatic music tradition. Maya had believed that I had achieved a great deal of knowledge and technique in Karnatic violin playing and hoped that I would continue to practise once I returned to Australia. Before the end of my tutelage with Maya, I gave an informal performance with her son, Krishna, accompanying me on *mridangam* (a two headed drum) to a select audience. This was considered my debut – an occasion in the Karnatic music tradition where the student is given permission by his or her *guru* to ‘publicly’ perform when they reach a suitable standard of performance. Maya and her family had organised a large celebratory feast following my performance and this lasted for



some hours. This event was considered a major milestone in my Karnatic music learning cycle.

### **In Queensland, Australia:**

*Khali: Karnatic Vocal and Violin Teacher*

After returning to Australia, from India, I contacted an organisation, that collated a directory of musicians, in search of a Karnatic music teacher to continue my studies in this tradition. They informed me that Khali taught privately, traditional Karnatic vocal music in her 'Music School'. In this learning environment Khali taught me Karnatic repertoire, some Hindustani songs as well as smaller devotional songs known as *bhajans*.

Within this learning environment I participated in a number of roles - that of student, accompanist and transcriber. These roles changed on a regular basis. These changes affected any remuneration expected from me by Khali. Initially when I was learning with Khali, which was predominantly in vocal tuition, I paid Khali for the acquisition of this knowledge. When I shifted to playing more violin in the events however, I was assigned the role as transcriber and then accompanist for her other music students. In this instance I was no longer expected to pay. Additionally, when I participated in learning in a group context with other vocal students I still was not expected to pay (as the function of these events was in preparation for various concerts) although at times Khali indicated that she wanted me to once again become her student. Finally, when I participated in learning with another student on *veena* (a traditional South Indian stringed instrument) we both paid for the tuition. In this case

Khali provided us with the melodic material and I did not have as much expectation placed on me to transcribe songs, although it still did occur.

I would regularly grapple with my relationship with Khali as my desire was to continue learning the Karnatic tradition the way I had in India not to spend most of my contact with her transcribing songs. Upon reflection of this context however, I have grown to realise that my repertoire of Karnatic songs has extensively increased with Khali and that I have continued to learn Karnatic music, albeit in a different context and manner to how I had learnt in India. I have participated in many concerts with Khali both as violinist for her students and with Khali herself in solo performances. In 1996 Krishna (the son of my violin teacher Maya in India) arrived in Brisbane. I introduced Krishna to Khali and many performances involving the three of us resulted.

In regard to her own learning experiences, Khali was taught Karnatic music by her father in Bombay, a northern city in India where Karnatic music would not normally be taught. In addition, she participated in many other lessons that took place in the family home where her father taught. She said that this enabled her to learn more quickly given the increased exposure and repetition. Her father would always expect her and other students to memorise the melodic material taught however, they each had notebooks that contained every piece they learnt. These books formed the basis of the program Khali now taught in Australia.

*Krishna: A Mridangam Teacher and Performer*

When I began tuition with Maya in India I met her son Krishna. Krishna began learning a traditional South Indian drum – the *mridangam*, at a young age (three or four years of age) and attributed his interest to genealogy. However, Krishna explained that his particular choice of instrument was different to the ‘melodic’ choices made by other family members, except a great uncle who also was a drummer interested in ‘rhythm’. The importance of family lineage was stressed a number of times by Krishna in our discussions. The teachers’ lineage and the success of their other students was said to be a very important factor in determining the ability of the teacher. Krishna would talk a lot about the *guru*/student relationship and discuss in detail how his teacher taught him the *mridangam*.

Krishna performed extensively and had at times taught his *guru*’s younger students. He also pursued another career option in Information Technology. This found him move to Brisbane, Australia in 1996 to complete a Masters in Information Technology. In Brisbane, Krishna stated that there was not much opportunity for performance as a *mridangamist* due to the severe lack of Karnatic musicians in Brisbane. Despite this, I introduced him to Khali, which led to his participation in many concert programs. He also performed at many music festivals, in Queensland, Sydney and Melbourne. In addition, while in Brisbane he tutored some students – both Australian and Indian-Australian. Teaching assisted Krishna financially through his degree. I attended a number of lessons as a student with Krishna. I was always conscious, however, of learning an instrument that appeared to be male-dominated in India. This made me feel uncomfortable learning drumming despite Krishna reassuring me that it was acceptable for women to do so. No remuneration

in monetary terms was expected by Krishna from me in this particular learning context. For Krishna the exchange of music knowledge (where I was able to discuss Western music concepts) was considered 'payment'. Krishna now lives and works in the United States with a large technology firm and continues to perform on *mridangam* with other Karnatic musicians.

*Vishnu: A Karnatic Violin Teacher and Performer*

Khali, my Karnatic vocal teacher in Australia, had told me about Vishnu, a Karnatic violinist. Vishnu had lessons with Khali for a short period of time as well as accompanied her students on some occasions. Khali was somewhat disgruntled that Vishnu was no longer coming to her as a student and believed that although he was giving solo performances this was not appropriate for him for in her opinion he needed to practise more and gain more music knowledge prior to public exposure. I met Vishnu at a performance I had given and invited him to share with me some of his experiences as both a violinist and student of Karnatic music.

Vishnu had learnt music as a child but he said that his attitude towards learning was not appropriate as he took his lessons, with his first *guru*, for granted by not practising enough. When Vishnu was older however, he began learning with a different *guru* – a well-known woman in the field of Karnatic music, in the South Indian town of *Coimbatore*. He believed that even though he committed to learning later in life he said that he progressed quickly as he was able to participate in a semi *gurukula* system of learning with this teacher. This entailed his involvement of between two and four music learning sessions per week as he had, at the time, no other commitments. He explained that he had changed his approach to learning

Karnatic music Vishnu was able to understand important concepts more in-depth which enabled him to appreciate such a rich music tradition. With this *guru* Vishnu began performing more regularly as well as attending many other performance all of which enhanced his learning journey.

Vishnu had come to live in Australia with his family in 1991. Vishnu plays violin in Australia both for enjoyment, and to maintain the skills he had gained in India. As Vishnu worked full time as a certified practising accountant in Australia he did not have time for extensive performance preparation. Vishnu's sister was a *veena* player and they would often combine their efforts in any concert. Their mother who also had an extensive knowledge of Karnatic music supported them during concerts.

Vishnu and I discussed the aspects of Karnatic music both in a musical and non-musical nature. Vishnu talked in great detail about the *raga* and how he aimed to 'hear' the sound of each note in his head via the continual practise of exercises. He enjoyed experimenting with composition especially in *alap* style. Vishnu also liked to play Western Art music songs on violin. This was without changing the tuning of the violin and still while seated in the Karnatic posture and style. In regard to non-musical information, Vishnu spoke more of his respect to not only his *gurus* but for the musical aspect of Indian culture noting that the Arts play a large part of spiritual life.

Similar to the learning context with Krishna, Vishnu did not expect payment for his sharing of music knowledge. At a particular point it was indicated that Vishnu was

interested in collaborating with me in performance as a favour for the time he spent discussing issues on Karnatic music.

### *Other Experiences of Karnatic Music in Queensland*

After my return from India, I continued to learn Karnatic music in Brisbane, Australia. Although these experiences have been very different and in some ways problematic in regard to my role, and assumed 'expert' knowledge, they have provided many other musical paths and insights that I would not have had the privilege of experiencing if I had not lived and worked in India and consequently, wanted to continue my study in this music tradition in Australia.

The following section of the chapter will explore how the culture of Indian teachers affect the way in which they teach, as well as the environment in which they teach. These aspects are important to understand when considering teaching and learning processes and practices in the Karnatic context.

### *The Teaching Methods and Modes of Communication*

In the Karnatic music context a set progression of music material is taught to students, from beginner to more advanced level. In most cases the students are initially taught the *Mayamalavagowla raga* – a *raga* that consists of the entire seven *shruti* – *Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, and Ni*, as well as having the same ascending order of notes (*arohana*) to the descending pattern (*avarohana*).

### Transcription 1: Mayamalavagowla Ragam



**sa ri ga ma pa dha ni sa' sa' ni dha pa ma ga ri sa**

Krishna explained that this *raga* is used first by many Indians as they like to follow tradition as well as the reason that the unique feature of the *raga*, whereby note pairs occur – *Sa-Pa*, *Ri-Dha*, *Ga-Ni*, *Ma-Sa*, all fifths - makes it easy for students to learn.

Similarly most traditional classical Karnatic music follows a particular form where songs can be broken down into short melodic sections, making it suitable to learn the piece in parts. Traditional songs called *Keertanam*, consist usually of three composed sections called the *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and *Charanam* (See Appendix H for an example) each of which are repeated, with an improvised section called the *alapana* preceding these. Depending on the level of the students the *alapana* may be omitted or alternatively quite lengthy and it is not usually notated but rather improvised. Each of these sections is usually broken down again into smaller phrases that align with the *tala* being used. According to Vishnu, this form allows the teacher to teach small sections at a time until the entire piece is memorised. In some instances only one section was taught in the lesson context and only once this was memorised were the others taught. With Khali, for example, some pieces were extremely ornamented and the *raga* used was not a common one therefore, not totally familiar to the students making the piece more difficult to learn. She would

therefore teach the piece very slowly and would not continue a new section until the students displayed confidence in the previous section (See Appendix I).

After the teacher played each pattern, the student was expected to play it for the teacher in exactly the same manner. If an error occurred then the teacher would repeat that particular pattern until the student played it correctly. The patterns would then be played in totality without any stopping in between. This was done via aural/oral means of communication and by watching the teacher intently.

“Karnatic music has been compared to learning a verbal language in that it is learned best through an oral tradition” (Campbell, 1991, p. 130). Through the observation of these teaching and learning environments the most striking feature in regard to teaching was the reliance on aural/oral means of communication. All the teachers in this context stated at the beginning of learning that their music tradition was an aural/oral tradition and has been so for a long time. Campbell (1991, p. 125) believes that this mode of communication reflects the ancient Indian culture where recitation of Vedic scriptures comprised religious worship.

The teaching of music in our country from age-long time followed the traditional method of Vedic chanting. *Shruti-s* or the Vedas and *Smriti-s* or traditional texts based on code of laws were not studied through written texts. The roots *sru* to hear and *smru* to remember evoke the basic elements which are synthesized in the classical pedagogical approach. The method is aural and the student learns through repeating the teacher’s rendering verbatim. The student is expected to listen carefully the teacher’s exposition, absorb it keenly in his memory, and closely reproduce the original. Perhaps it is this auditory principle that has brought about the customary rendering of each line in a musical composition twice (V.Shankar, 1983, p. 171).

Repetition and rote learning were methods used consistently in the Karnatic context.

As illustrated by V.Shankar (1983), the actual construction of Karnatic music lends



itself to repetitive rote learning as the pieces can be easily broken down into smaller sections, which are expected to be memorised. Through the observation of the Karnatic teachers aural/oral means of communicating music knowledge was consistent as well as demonstration by the teacher and then observation and copying by the student. This is also supported by Campbell (1991, p. 131-132). Vishnu said that repetition secured the song, and more importantly the *raga*, in his mind. He was always worried that he would play a note outside the *raga*.

An integral process used in the aural/oral approach is the use of memorisation. Memorising the musical material was an expectation of each of the teachers within this context apart from Khali and Vishnu. For Parvathi, Maya and Krishna memorisation of musical material by the students enabled them to focus purely on performance rather than being distracted by text. Similarly, each teacher in this context (apart from Khali) would not allow students to continue learning new material unless the previous lesson's material was memorised.

The Karnatic music teachers believed that memorisation contributed to the students' spiritual journey, a process entwined in learning Karnatic music. More specifically, it was seen that memorisation of melodic material particularly, assisted the performer to get immersed in the music itself enabling freedom to experience higher spiritual feeling associated with enlightenment. Worship of *gurus*, gods and ancestors are all combined into this journey when learning Karnatic music for these teachers.

With Khali and Vishnu, who taught Karnatic music in Queensland, Australia, however, their students – both Indian and non-Indian - were not expected to

memorise the melodic material learnt. This was due, in part, to the function of these particular contexts, which was usually in preparation for an upcoming concert. Therefore for Khali and Vishnu it was vital that practise towards the performance was consistent whether memorised or not. Khali's students tended to rely more on the written text and *swara* more often even in performance, despite this not being the case with the Karnatic teachers in India. Khali explained that given the number of performances that she does with her students it is necessary to learn new material quickly therefore students usually have a written form of the music in front of them on stage. V.Shankar (1983, p. 175) agrees that “[m]any aids have been resorted to in modern methods of teaching. Amongst these, notation has come to play an important part”.

Khali also tried to make her music school practice more contemporary by including different instrumentation such as clarinet, flute and keyboard as she had students who also learnt these instruments in the Western music tradition. She believed that parents appreciated this in an Australian/Indian context. The students also seemed to enjoy the opportunity to play traditional Indian music on these instruments.

Despite the claim that the Karnatic music tradition is an aural/oral tradition by the Karnatic teachers, written forms of the South Indian music material were used in each of the teaching situations (See Appendix J), with the exception of Krishna. Krishna explained that he, at times, used written material but in my observations no form of written music was used. He said that when learning percussion instruments, memorisation of rhythmic ‘sound’ patterns in particular orders was more prevalent. This is supported by Booth (1995) and Flindell (1999). In the other teaching

situations however, the written forms of the musical material used the specific ‘sol-fa’ developed. This form of notation parallels with ‘sol-fa’ used in the Kodaly method of learning. In the notated forms of music only a basic representation of the melody was given. The ornamentation called *gamaka*, was not notated as it was understood that the teacher themselves interpreted the *raga* in their own unique way. It was also very difficult to notate *gamaka* therefore the students were just expected to replicate the ornamentation in the way their own teacher sung or played it.

For Karnatic musicians learning from just a skeletal form of notation still allows personal interpretation of the *raga* especially through the *alapana*. It is known that this section is usually improvised using the notes from the *raga* but mostly the performer has an idea of how they will portray the *raga* in their performance. These aspects of the performance give the performer their ‘signature’, and determine the difference between a ‘good’ or average performance (Khali, Interview, 13<sup>th</sup> December 1997; and Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997). Therefore it is the moments of ornamentation and improvisation that are not notated generally.

In the South Indian context the sequence of transmission is approached in the same way from teacher to teacher. Old material would be reiterated at the beginning of the lessons to ensure thorough memorisation of this material. If the teacher was satisfied with development and progress then new material would be presented. Contrarily, if they were not happy with the students practise then the previous lesson would be repeated until they knew that the student understood and had memorised the material. This made progress slow for some students. Krishna provides a detailed description of his lessons in learning *mridangam*.

He [*Guru-ji*] would ask a student to come and play some particular rhythm and usually start with what has already been taught. Only until that student comes to realise these old lessons the teacher will then teach the new lesson and get the student to repeat it until they are satisfied that they understand it and then the student will leave.

New lessons are learnt only when the old lessons are rehearsed or played that's when everyone starts playing together. I used to love the joint sessions for example, it brings a sense of competition and a sense of teamwork. It's really nice to hear so many drummers play the same beat in synchronisation – it's really exciting.

Probably I would have normally two lessons per week and each lesson lasts probably forty-five minutes to one hour it really depends on if you were a beginner. There is not much to teach a beginner, what matters is how much practise you put in after I teach. I could just teach you one concept and if you grasp that there is nothing more to be done in that lesson (Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997).

When Parvathi and Khali taught they would always sing with the students. When they sang there was a feeling that the students had more confidence and errors did not seem as obvious. Once the material was memorised the students would look at their teacher to gain acceptance from her and to also demonstrate that the material was memorised. Maya would only play violin when demonstrating or accompanying students when a whole song was played, therefore the students in this context would often be playing by themselves and Maya listening. This was similar to Krishna's experience in learning *mridangam*.

When teaching new material, with each of the Karnatic music teachers, the *raga* would be sung or played initially in its ascending and descending form. The teacher would then demonstrate the whole piece for the student. With Khali, I would often play while she sang the piece if I was able to pick up the notes that she was singing or play notes of the *raga*. The written material was either a printed book where the *svaras* of the songs were written or the teacher or students would write the *svaras*

themselves into an exercise book for the student. After this occurred the teachers would do different things. Maya for example, would always write the material (even beginning lessons as learnt with Parvathi) for the student in a designated book herself – ensuring that it was transcribed correctly. For Maya, this written material was only to be used by students for home practise purposes. She at no time, in the lessons, referred to any written form for she had completely memorised all of the material.

In my days of training, I did it whole time. There were no other activities like school. So it was different from the way I teach now. Now students do not have much time. What I do is teach the students the *sahityam* (the lyrics) and the notation in one class. I also get them to sing the songs. When they come for the next class I expect them to have learnt them by heart and then I teach them how to play it. I would then teach them vocally the next lesson. This way I find it easier, and so do the students. They have had time to learn the *swaras* and lyrics and the song and they are familiar with what they are about to learn to play. It saves me time too and I find this method quite effective (Maya, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998).

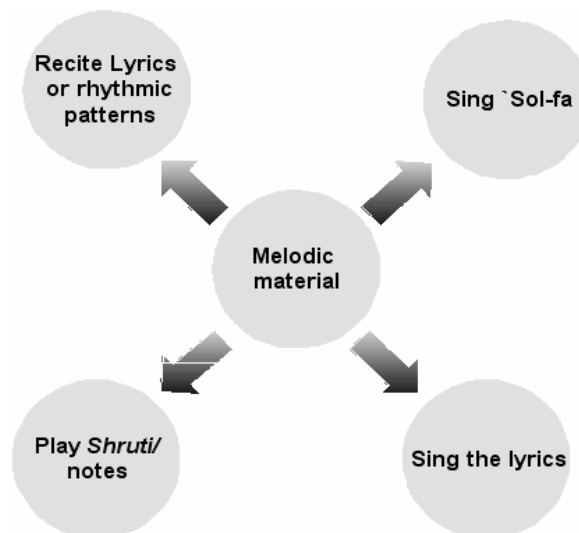
In my experience with Maya she approached teaching new songs slightly differently to the description above. Maya taught the *sahityam* and the *swaras* in the one lesson and I was not expected to memorise the lyrics but unless I had memorised the *swaras* I was unable to learn new songs. I was so eager to please her that I made sure that all the material that she had given me in a lesson was memorised before the next. She would always get me to sing through the lyrics first and then play the melody on violin. Songs would only be written by her in an exercise book.

Khali, however, required the students themselves to write new songs in their own books and would on occasion refer to certain books given to her by her father as a tool for checking whether she had remembered the material correctly. Many of the songs had not been transcribed therefore a lot of lesson time was devoted to working out the ‘sol-fa’ to songs. This was usually left to my aural skills. While Khali sang

the song slowly, sometimes repeating sections, I wrote down the *shruti*. On occasion Khali would also make suggestions as to what the notes were. Much of the *gamaka* in the songs would not have been notated but understood. Time length of notes was also usually not notated unless notes were long. In the lessons where new material was taught a tape recorder was used so that they too could be used as a resource in practice and for the purpose of transcription at home if not completed in the lesson. The process of writing in this case contributed to the learning process itself or familiarising oneself with the music while transcribing it.

The use of written material was more evident when learning new material and then further into the learning process students would begin to memorise material and no longer required text to assist them once the pieces were learnt.

**Diagram 3: Ways of presenting music material in South Indian music learning**



Each of these methods would introduce the student to new pieces phrase by phrase but not all techniques were used by each of the teachers. Krishna would play very slowly what he wanted the student to copy. This would be repeated a number of

times until Krishna thought the pattern was understood by playing correctly a number of times (perhaps not necessarily memorised) then he would move to a new concept. Once up to four of these were learnt this way they were then placed side by side to make a longer rhythm. The use of story telling and reminiscing was also evident.

With Vishnu, his account of learning a song is indicative of Karnatic teaching process in general.

Each lesson would start with a repeat of the old music that I learnt. Old songs and old lessons would be repeated for about half an hour and then towards the end I would be learning two lines of a new song. At a stretch you can't learn one song as it never goes into your mind. That is the first reason and it is not effective. So the next day this new lesson will be old and it is like a cycle. I would be adding two new lines each lesson so to learn a song fully would take probably two weeks. I mean five to six lessons depending on how many lessons I attend a week (Vishnu, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997).

Smaller sections of the piece, usually *Keertanam*, would be learnt separately starting from the beginning of the song. As previously highlighted, the sections of *Pallavi*, *Anupallavi* and *Charanam*, would be divided according to the *tala* of the piece. Repetition was consistently used in each of the contexts so that the students would begin to memorise the small sections of the piece. Once the first section was learnt then the next part *tala* cycle of the piece would be taught. Usually these two sections were then joined together to make two whole *tala* cycles. This would continue until the whole piece was learnt – up to six lessons as illustrated by Vishnu. Many of the sections would be repeated in the song as this followed the general form of Karnatic songs. Therefore, a number of ways to present music material by the Karnatic teachers were used however, in the main each teacher used the same methods for teaching new songs with each of their students.

With Parvathi only beginner lessons or melodic exercises called *Sarali Varisai*, *Jantai Varisai*, *Dhattu Varisai* and *Thalas* were taught. These were all represented in ‘sol-fa’ form in the text *Ganamrutha Bodhini: Sangeetha Bala Padam*. Each of these exercises used the written form of English *svara* (See Appendix J – Parvathi and Vishnu’s music).

With Maya the beginning lessons quickly moved to simple songs *Geetham* and then more complex Karnatic devotional pieces, *Keertanam*. It is the *Keertanam* that form the repertoire of a performance program of traditional Karnatic music. Khali continued expanding the Karnatic repertoire as well as teaching small devotional songs called *Slokams* and *Bhajans* as well as Hindustani songs.

In the Karnatic context it was noted that with Maya, Khali and Krishna that the notion of ‘practise’ sessions where the teacher totally alert and listening even though not in the same room to what the student was playing and would comment, “You practised well”.

Once I went to his house and finished my lesson and he just took up all my lessons from the basics and patiently I went through every one of them. I did not miss anything and I practised really hard and then my master came upstairs. He was absolutely pleased. I remember that expression on his face and he said, “I am so happy. I am very pleased with your attitude. You probably did not know but I have been listening to you from downstairs and you did really well playing from the basics and not forgetting anything” (Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997).

Part of my lessons consisted of a “practise” session where after the student before me had finished their lesson the teacher would also exit the music teaching room. She



would always indicate for me to practise. During this time I would play through the pieces that we had worked on in the previous lesson. These pieces would have also been practised internally on the two hour train journey going to my lesson as well as at home between lesson times. It was here that the majority of my memorisation would take place.

Although the physical setting may have been different in these contexts, the placement of both teacher and student/s were the same. In each instance the teacher sat facing the learners and where in the case of group tuition in learning environments with Parvathi and Khali, the students sat in a circular formation facing and in front of the teacher. It did not matter how many students were present and when they arrived to enter the lesson space, only one line would be formed by students shifting on the floor to fit newcomers into the circular formation.

In addition to this factor, the development of melody and memorisation are important aspects in the South Indian learning environment, moving from student to student around a circle assists in this process. The circular formation allows students to have different levels of knowledge while attending the same lesson time. With students hearing different lessons continuously regardless of being more advanced or learning earlier material, this repeated exposure would ensure complete understanding and familiarity of Karnatic music knowledge. It would also encourage students at less advanced levels to want to learn further.

The significance of the space in group teaching in the Karnatic context reflects the cyclic nature of the music and melodic structure itself. Both Krishna and Khali

discussed the importance of the ‘complete cycle’ in Indian music. According to Krishna, as a *mridangam* performer, the *tala* provides the driving force and moves the music to and from rhythmic climaxes. This creates the feeling of completion and to both performers and listeners or enlightenment. The repetitive cycle inherent in Karnatic music has been said to contribute to spiritual fulfilment. Vishnu commented on a similar theme.

The simple view of this would be when you involve yourself fully that is when you get to relax because when you are one hundred percent involved in music it is something like a tranquilliser. The feeling is amazing. The satisfaction and the happiness you get inside yourself when listening to your music, pure original music of a high standard - that is higher level – it is like you are on drugs – the state of mind is very peaceful like yoga or meditation. You get that much involvement. Your music is one hundred percent involved. When you reach that you are thoroughly relaxed and enjoying yourself, you will be doing everything you need to do. A professional artist will be able to do this at ease (Vishnu, Interview, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997).

As previously noted, the connection to spirituality through music performance is highly evident and valued in the Karnatic context.

In regard to time in the South Indian context the duration of a lesson was never explicitly stated. The teacher would just say on what day and time to come for a lesson. It was assumed that learning environments with Maya and Khali had a designated time of approximately one-hour for tuition. These events were often of a longer duration. The learning environment with Parvathi had an understood time length of thirty minutes for each event. Within this thirty minutes the actual singing time never exceeded twenty minutes and as in one lesson with Parvathi only five minutes was spent actually singing. Sometimes I would be in attendance up to one and a half hours with many pupils coming and going in this time.

In most learning contexts in the Karnatic tradition if an error was made repetition of the problem area would occur until it was played or sung correctly. In performance however, errors were often overlooked so that songs continued without disruption in *tala*. The problem areas in the pieces were always placed back into the context of the whole piece. On occasion other exercises were employed to improve the playing of the parts where errors were made. Repetition was the major technique used to correct errors because it was believed that once memorised no errors should occur. Maya believed that “if students concentrate while learning, practicing and rendering, we can avoid most mistakes. So naturally, my expectations for a good student are not to make too many mistakes” (Maya, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998).

Krishna recalled his experience when learning - “Guru was very patient. He also often joked and pointed out the mistakes in a very humorous way. The kids would just laugh and of course understand clearly what the mistake was”. (Krishna, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998) Krishna also commented on how he was able to learn more by observing how the teacher corrects students. “I wanted to see what kind of mistakes the student makes and how the master corrects this how his attitude is patient” (Krishna, 10<sup>th</sup> October Interview, 1998). It is relevant that he gained more knowledge observing how to correct errors as it places importance on the value of his own *guru*.

If Vishnu made an error he would repeat the section concerned until he played correctly and then continue on from this point until the whole piece was played. His mother kept *tala* with her right hand facing the stage so that Vishnu could see where the rhythmic cycle was so that if the beat or sub-division were lost he would know

when a new cycle would be starting. This indicates the importance of the cyclic formation of Karnatic music aligning with the more holistic view of music and life.

Unlike vocal and instrumental lessons that I have experienced in the Western context, there was no mention of specific technique desired when performing Karnatic music such as vibrato or tone quality. The only case where technique was emphasised was with Krishna. He believed that technique on the *mridangam* had to be mastered in order to perform.

The student always exactly replicates the teacher and the student gets the attitude, the posture, the manners, even the voice of the teacher - they start singing just like the teacher does. So it is very very important for the teacher to be proud of himself and always remember that his students will only be a reflection of and representation of his attitudes, abilities, and ideas (Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997).

In terms of my experience in learning vocal music the most noticeable difference between Karnatic vocal music and Western vocal music is the ‘nasal’ timbre of Karnatic music. I found myself often trying to copy the sound produced by not only the teacher but by the other students. No obvious mention to me was made in regard to the quality of sound expected when singing traditional Karnatic vocal music. The timbre was to my ‘Western-trained’ ears different, and I felt that my smooth sounding voice was extremely obvious. So gradually from lesson to lesson I would increase the amount of ‘nasalness’ in my voice until I thought I was replicating the sound of most of the other students. I am unsure as to whether it was expected of me to sing with this tonality and also whether it was recognised or appreciated.

As previously mentioned all of the South Indian teachers indicated that the way of learning their music tradition was through oral means. However, in all of these

teaching situations texts were used as a basic guide to learning songs and to assist in remembering the songs (See Appendix J). As demonstrated, the teachers in the Karnatic context commented on the benefit of using text to assist in the memorisation process so that eventually the texts are no longer required.

*Ganamrutha bodhini* makes the whole thing easy. It has set notes, the tala notations everything. You just read the book and it takes you from the beginning lesson to intermediate. The second book takes you from intermediate to advanced level. When I reached Keertanam level I did have my own booklet where my guru used to write his own songs the ones he thought I could cope with – its was at the discretion of the teacher (Vishnu, Interview, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997).

In the lessons with Parvathi the harmonium was also used to maintain a fifth and octave drone while the students sang. She would also play the specific notes that the students were required to sing in their lessons on the harmonium. Similarly, a *shruti* box was used by Khali to play the drone of *Sa Pa Sa*’ in this context. In this learning environment also the tape recorder was used mainly to maintain and ‘hold’ the music knowledge being learnt in order to revise this. Tape recording in the context with Parvathi was not allowed. Maya allowed this but only when performing not in other parts of the lesson as she did not see it relevant to do so.

### ***Cultural Influence on the Karnatic Music Teaching Context***

“Music has always played a major role in the social and spiritual life of India” (Pesch, 1999, p. 9).

In the Karnatic music context the meaning associated with the teaching process is entwined with many cultural aspects, particularly the Hindu religion. For each of the teachers the most important function of teaching Karnatic music was to maintain the tradition as well as allow participants to express their own culture and spirituality. Performance, and the process of learning Karnatic music create opportunities for people to express their ‘Indianess’. For Parvathi and Maya, transmitting Karnatic music knowledge was a way of maintaining this tradition amongst the South Indian population as well as being a form of income for them. For Khali, Krishna and Vishnu being able to both teach and perform in Australia was not only a means of continuing the Karnatic music tradition but more importantly, to maintain a certain sense of Indian identity in a country not of their origin.

For Maya, being able to teach Karnatic music was an honour given her family’s continuous involvement in the tradition. Teaching and performing traditional Karnatic violin music was her life. The consistent mention of her brother, father, grand-father, and their direct lineage to *Tyagaraja* – one of Karnatic music’s composer saints support the family’s extended knowledge of the Karnatic tradition. Regular performance events in India and overseas had gained Maya a reputation of being a ‘good’ Karnatic violinist. In Ludwig Pesch’s publication (1999) *The Illustrated Companion to South Indian Classical Music*, Maya and her family are

mentioned in the listing of notable South Indian musicians. Teaching students Karnatic violin music was part of Maya's role to pass on music knowledge given to her through this lineage. In this sense the spiritual meaning behind having access and maintaining this knowledge was Maya's reason for existence in this life. Khali noted that it was not her choice to teach music but something expected of her and given to her by 'god'. These feelings were attributed to supernatural beings, something that Walker (1990) argues is inherent in many music cultures. For the majority of Karnatic teachers the reason for teaching was to impart music knowledge to others as well as continue a tradition that they once experienced as students.

Integral to the process of upholding the Karnatic music tradition is the relationship between the teacher and the student. The student/teacher relationship is very important and it is expected that the student respect the teacher totally.

My own teachers were very strict. I first learnt from my father and then my *anna* (elder brother). Both were strict teachers. When it comes to music, the nature of our relationship would be of a teacher and student. There was never a partiality between students (Maya, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998).

It was common for the *gurukula* system to have been practised in the Karnatic music teaching tradition. With the growth of formal educational institutions such as matriculation schools students attend lessons once a week and are taught in one on one tuition style. Teachers of Karnatic music are compelled to offer this style of tuition.

The extended process of musical absorption, implicit in the *gurukula* system is a crucial factor in the mastery of techniques of *alapana* performance. Nevertheless, modern social and economic conditions make it unwise for the student of music to commit so many years of his youth, when he cannot be certain of success in a music career. He often tries to combine musical training with a conventional education and is denied the advantage of prolonged, uninterrupted absorption. The teacher must therefore devise a system of effective musical training which can be completed in a shorter time (T.Viswanathan, 1977, p. 15).

It was discussed earlier that Maya had faced this issue with teaching her own students. The group context however, is prevalent in beginning stages of learning. The configuration of groups depends on the progress of the students individually. Each group may slowly gradually change with additions or subtractions according to improvement of students themselves.

My *guru* was one of the best teachers and his sons and his grandsons are illustrious performers. His school was so populated that you can't afford to find the time to give individualised tuition so about ten people would sit and learn the same lessons and play together.

There would always be lots of students. There would be people coming and going. There would be a group of students with the *guru* all the time and I used to be the last to leave (Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997).

Vishwanathan (1973) says that, originally, the learning of traditional Indian music occurs in groups with the teacher. This is supported by Campbell (1991), Merriam (1964), Shankar (1969), and Krishna (1997, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February). Contrary to this however, in the teaching environments with both Maya and Khali (mostly) the lessons were presented as individual tuition.

Similarly, the progression from beginner to more advanced student to performer was quite clear in this context. Once a student had reached a particular level in performance a debut would be arranged by the teacher. This acted as not only a



vehicle for the student to be able to show their skill but also for the teacher to gain their reputation.

It is mostly the teachers' responsibility to bring up his student so after two or three years of coaching, when the teacher feels the student is really competent he will arrange for a debut. It is here that the *guru* gets the name and popularity. The student gives credit to the teacher (Vishnu, Interview, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997).

Wade (1989) has noted that this is also evident in performance practice. Krishna commented that the learning process is never ending but consistently in contact with *guru* seeking acceptance.

He [the student] has to learn as much as possible off his guru and then he has to grow by himself and start learning by himself that is when the real education starts when you finish your formal training and become a professional we have start performing outside so that is when the real training starts and that is when real learning starts you start learning more and more after that because you are out in the field you come across unexpected situations, unexpected challenges and you start learning unless you keep learning and everyone else keeps learning you cannot survive in the field so after sometime the student becomes really proficient in lessons and is successful and people say so and so is your *guru* they are a great artist and this make the *guru* really happy (Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997).

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the teacher to produce 'good' students in order to maintain their reputation. "In the absence of worthy disciples a teacher would have been faced with the decline of his own lineage – *gurushisya parampara*" (Pesch, 1999, p. 28).

A related issue is the notion of what makes a 'good' teacher.

The parents of the students (in the case of children) should cooperate. They should understand that the interest on the part of children probably comes only later on (in most cases). The parents should make sure that going to class and learning and practicing become routine habit. I strongly encourage parent to accompany the children to the classes. Patience for the teacher is

most important. The teacher should develop a good method of teaching. The teacher should set standards, should have self-discipline (Maya, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998).

A good teacher would first be able to analyse their own students and find out what the student's problem areas are, what skills he needs, where he is struggling, and form their teaching and lesson structures in such a way that this improves the particular skills in that particular student. Like if a student particularly lacks speed the teacher should anticipate that and give appropriate exercises within the students reach and they are able to pick up (Vishnu, Interview, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997).

For me, the only thing that matters in this is that the student should enjoy playing or singing and should eventually become a good musician. Everything else is secondary...I follow the method by which my guru used to teach me (Krishna, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998)

In maintaining the tradition many non-musical aspects occurred in the Karnatic teaching environments. In each of the Karnatic contexts it was expected that students and other visitors took their shoes off at the door before entering a house. This custom pays respect to the people who live in the house and also has religious significance. Similarly, before each lesson teachers would conduct various rituals that gave thanks and worshipped a number of Hindu deities. Parvathi gave respect to *Sarasvathi* the goddess of wisdom and knowledge, by expecting her students to sing *Sa-Pa-Sa'-Pa-Sa* at the beginning and end of the lessons.

**Transcription 2: Melodic Phrase sung or played for Devotion.**



She also had many pictures of *Sarasvathi* in her house as well as a shrine dedicated to her. Maya's favourite god was *Ganesh*, the elephant headed man. Her shrine was

full of various sized and shaped *Ganesh* statues and pictures (See Appendix K). When she began lessons students were expected to pay their respects in the shrine as well as putting *bindi* on their foreheads. Every instrument would have *bindi* on it made of sandalwood powder and *kuncham*. Maya placed the same on my violin and gave me the materials to do this once I returned to Australia. In addition, at the beginning of each page in a workbook Maya would also place a symbol in the middle of the top of the page that represented *Ganesh* (See Appendix H – Maya’s music). She would often talk about her love for him. Maya also worshipped *Tyagaraja* by always including one of his compositions at the end of every one of her concert programs.

Khali on the other hand worshipped *Krishna*. This is reflected in her choice of repertoire as many of the songs were devotional ones about him. Prior to learning new songs, Khali would consistently discuss the significance of the meaning of the song and its relation to the *Divine Mother* – Krishna’s mother *Sarasvathi*. A lot of the concerts were also attributed to events or associations around *Krishna*’s life. Khali, like Parvathi and Maya, had a shrine in her house that was devoted to *Krishna* and she would do *pooja* everyday in respect to *Krishna*. This spiritual connection is indicative of Karnatic music teaching and learning contexts.

India’s peculiar genius is reflected in her music. This music has been developed with a strong spiritual background. Music and Dancing are the only arts which are given a divine origin in India. Music is a path to reality. The great exponents of music in India have been men of high spiritual calibre. Musical knowledge coupled with devotion alone can lead one to taste the joy of spiritual bliss (Sambamurthy, 1990, p. 14).

The ritual associated with the Karnatic music tradition is inextricably linked with the Hindu religion. In some ways the gods and goddesses of Hinduism are then

transformed by the teachers into their own *gurus*. In this sense the teachers also had the desire to uphold the tradition of their own *gurus* although at differing levels. The lineage of the teachers and their own teachers' teacher was spoken of consistently in this context. In Vishnu's case, he was apologetic that his first teacher was unknown but then justified his performance skill saying that his second *guru* was more reputable. This aligns with the caste system in India. In terms of access to learning, initially only people who were from the Brahmin caste were able to learn music (Wade, 1989; and Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997).

There was a disparity between the view that one must follow the tradition of their own teacher otherwise their technique would not be authentic, or encouragement of innovation and developing one's own performance technique occurred.

My *guru's* type of playing is very unique and great, so my objective was never to deviate from that because it is part of a tradition and it has been formulated by very great experts so what I always keep in mind is if I am going to deviate from that do I really improve on it? If I am not improving on it just for the sake of being an individual I am not going to be benefiting. So this is how I see it (Krishna, Interview, 11<sup>th</sup> February 1997).

Vishnu on the other hand explained that for Indian people who are not 'musicians' the addition of other features such as electronic instruments was acceptable.

There are different schools or forms of Karnatic music. So even though we generalise everything as Karnatic music there might be different styles. People have their own which they usually modify. Sometimes this comes from Western music influence (Vishnu, Interview, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997).

Khali's and Vishnu's approach however, was realised in a culturally diverse context in Australia, not one that is monocultural as encountered in India. Khali modified her practice in Australia to include other forms of Indian music as not all

Australian/Indians are Tamil. The argument between tradition and innovation is not new (See McAllester, 1984; Walker, 1990).

In the Australian/Indian context many aspects differed to that of the teachers in India. One example already highlighted was that the reliance on written music was more prevalent in the Australian environment. Similarly, the integration of other less 'traditional' practices such as including other instrumentation, performing Western style pieces, performing with musicians from other cultural backgrounds (as in the case of Krishna) or composing new *ragas* were common practice. However, in the main the meaning and purpose of teaching Karnatic music and related aspects was the same.

Despite many influences and changes occurring to this tradition the majority of aspects of both the musical elements and transmission processes according to Krishna and Maya (Interviews, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998) have remained largely untouched. Where change is evident, some performers and teachers have embraced additional technologies and methods to improve their own practices (V.Shankar, 1983). Earlier writings however, express concern over large changes, such as loss of interest in upholding tradition (Shankar, 1969).

Krishna commented on his disappointment that many Indian musicians began teaching before they were competent to do so in order to earn money. He believed that this decreased the quality of practices in the Karnatic music tradition. Despite this Krishna realised that the tradition was changing in many ways affected by the fast pace of Indian life and its desire to reflect Western culture.

Influence from the West has affected teaching practices in a number of ways including the dominance of individual tuition, that lessons were offered once a week upon payment, and that students attended formal schooling institutions five to six days a week. In the teaching context individual tuition was more prevalent with the Karnatic teachers. As previously mentioned Maya thought that students learn a lot more in this particular context and given the decrease in incidence of traditional *gurukula* system this way of teaching was desirable. The group contexts were more prevalent with beginner students however, did still occur with more advanced students present. Yet in interviews with both Maya and Krishna both teachers claim that there has been limited impact on the traditional music practices of south India from the west.

I think that there has been not too much impact from the West yet. One notable difference is that more advanced students have started to use tape recorders (Maya, Interview, 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998).

That being so, Rangaramanuja Ayyangar in Pesch (1999, p. 10) believes that the classical Karnatic tradition has only “profited from the influences it has incurred from the West”. As a result “the teaching of music at institutions to large numbers of students has come into practice”(T.Viswanathan, 1977, p. 15). As noted earlier, Shankar (1969) however, sees influence from the West as detrimental.

Vishnu stated that for more advanced students it is best to learn on an individual basis.

Music is a gift of grace from the gods if you are doing something extra then it is more a blessing. It is a combination of the work you put in, the grace, the background you have, the opportunity you have, the monetary – I suppose what you earn or what you are willing to pay to go under a professional tutelage (Vishnu, Interview, 4<sup>th</sup> October 1997).

Vishnu's comment from one concerned with spiritual 'godliness' to emphasising the monetary cost of tuition is relevant as it indicates the influence of value afforded economics in the teaching environment from one that valued more the commitment of the student to not only the *guru* but also the chosen Hindu deities. This is an important point when investigating cultural change in context. Payment in the *gurukula* system used to be made in kind through chores and practise (Pesch, 1999, p. 40) however, contemporary practice costs in monetary terms.

In each of the learning environments with Parvathi and Maya and to a lesser extent Khali it appeared that my presence gave the respective teachers an increased status as practitioners due to the fact that I was non-Indian or Western. With Krishna and Vishnu my interest in their music opened avenues for them to learn more of Western Art music, a desire they both had for sometime. They believed this would assist in making them better musicians particularly if they were able to read music in traditional western notation. In addition they believed that performance opportunities would be available to them more readily especially if they were to perform with musicians from other cultural or music interest backgrounds.

In the Indian environment however, other issues were prominent. For Maya, her passion lay in performance but the opportunity for her to do this was limited as a result of gender implications. Maya's father restricted her performance opportunity

when she was younger so she did not decrease her brother's performance status. This is reflective of the gender inequity evidence in many Indian traditions such as arranged marriages, marriage dowry and more generally the caste system (Mehta, 1982).

For Parvathi the impact of the social structure in terms of gender was very high, for she indicated on a number of occasions that she had always wanted to continue performing but after her arranged marriage was unable to do so. Although she enjoyed teaching at both the school and home it would not have been the choice she would have taken had she been given the freedom to perform.

### ***Summary***

It has been shown that many aspects both musical and non-musical in nature are influenced by cultural forces in the Karnatic context. Although it was stated that the tradition was an aural/oral one the use of written text was evident in each teaching environment. Such a change is viewed as an advantage generally; however the aural/oral tradition is still highly valued and the teachers showed the desire to continue the tradition in the way that they are familiar.

Each of the teachers chose very similar ways of transmitting music knowledge; that is by breaking down the music content into small sections that fit the *tala* cycle, emphasising the importance of 'flow' in Indian music. It has also been argued that these ways of teaching reflect the way that the teachers were taught. This results in the fact that the teachers own *gurus* are viewed in high regard, and the teachers in the main valued the way they were taught and did not consciously change these methods.



Similarly, the teachers equated their own *gurus* to higher beings associated with the Hindu religion. In this sense their own *gurus* were worshipped in the same way as the Hindu gods and goddesses. In the Australian/Indian context performance practice changed slightly reflecting the nature of the ‘multicultural’ constitution of the environment. Despite any differences evident in the teaching methods and processes used, it is undeniable that, in the Karnatic music context, culture is an integral part of the teaching environment.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE QUEENSLAND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TEACHING CONTEXT

#### *Introduction*

In order to explore how culture is reflected in music teaching practices I wondered how different cultural contexts approach the teaching of music. Therefore to compare the Karnatic context with another, five teachers were observed in Queensland, Australia who primarily taught music from the Western Art tradition. It was envisioned that these teachers would provide a broad range of instrumental music tuition occurring in both the public (in schools) and private (at home) sectors, reflecting the Queensland instrumental teaching system. Among these teachers four taught violin, with one of these also teaching piano and music theory, and the remaining was a multi-instrumental teacher for brass and woodwind instruments.

#### *The Queensland Instrumental Music Teachers*

##### *Karl: A Professional Violinist and Teacher*

I first met Karl in 1995 in the capacity as both a colleague and as a student. For approximately three years I learnt violin with Karl and I also observed him teach other students in this time. I would attend a weekly one-hour lesson that cost thirty-five Australian dollars. Often the lessons would exceed one hour but the fee remained the same. Sometimes I would pay for a number of lessons in advance as many of Karl's students paid for their lessons in school term (up to eleven week) blocks.

Karl was born in Europe and migrated to Australia to work in a professional Australian orchestra. Karl taught private students to increase his income as he had said that wages and benefits in Australian orchestras were not as good as in European ones. He believed that this was probably because the Arts were not valued as much in Australia as they were in Europe, and therefore funding was limited. He was also interested in performing and wanted to do more solo work but found he never had enough time to prepare for it as the orchestra's performance load was quite heavy.

In the lessons, Karl would often recount stories about his music learning experiences that he had as a child and young adult. Many of these recollections showed that he fondly remembered both the intense and humorous occasions that he had with his music teachers particularly at the university level. Other experiences recalled were ones that occurred just before an examination where Karl had been practising intensely and his teacher would continue to place high expectations on him as their student. Karl also said that his main teacher would expect him to perform everything from memory. This was encouraged through repetition and thorough practise sessions. He said that total familiarity of pieces was desired so that interpretation of the music became a natural response. Karl believed that any pieces he learnt this way he would never forget as he had them constantly in his head.

Karl explained that there were a number of technical skills one needed to know in order to perform well and that in violin tuition there was a number of 'schools' or approaches to techniques that existed. Karl's teacher's approach was derived from his own teacher, Fritz Kriesler – a famous composer and violinist. This form of lineage was spoken of very highly even though Karl did not think that only one

method or approach to teaching was better than any other. The ultimate aim for Karl in teaching was to assist students in developing good tone, and in the case of stringed instruments, good intonation. He said that unless the sound quality was 'right' then a high performance level could not be achieved.

In each of the lessons with Karl, I was required to bring a number of music books that contained various scores of pieces and studies. The majority of these books contained repertoire that were based on the Australian Music Examination Board's list of pieces required for external examinations. At no time was I or his other students expected not to use the texts. Most of these texts cost between twenty and fifty Australian dollars. In conjunction with lesson fees, strings and other incidentals this made learning violin privately a costly experience, which would be beyond the reach of some (Stowasser, 1994, p. 199).

*Anne: An Instrumental Music Teacher in Schools and Private Studio*

Anne worked as an instrumental teacher both publicly (in a school environment) and privately in her home studio. She taught stringed instruments, piano, and theory of music. The school where Anne worked was an independent Christian school that catered for primary and secondary students (aged five to seventeen years) where she taught both age groups. Although the students attended their lessons in general class time, it was the parents' responsibility to pay for this tuition. This could mean that the students involved in this program were learning because their parents wanted and supported them to do so. These fees were considerably less than those lessons conducted in the private domain as they were delivered in a group context whereas individual lessons were predominant in the private context. Group lessons cost

between eight and ten dollars for half an hour and individual private lessons were twenty dollars for half an hour or thirty dollars for an hour - for more advanced students.

Anne would recruit new students annually at the school. This was usually done by asking the entire student body who was interested in learning an instrument. Students were then required to sit an aural skills test that Anne said determined their musical ability. Once students were chosen to participate in the program and had parent permission to learn, they attended lessons once a week for half an hour. Anne had difficulty in getting the students to arrive on time. When she identified a problem with student attendance or poor attitude, the parents would be contacted and a meeting organised with the student present. Anne indicated that most of the students' progress was slow. She attributed this to the feeling that most students did not practise effectively at home even though a note that recorded how much practise was done was sent home each week. Anne identified these problems as being ongoing with the majority of students.

In the actual lesson time, Anne enhanced the learning experience with her own techniques and methodology. She used a set text called *All For Strings* (Anderson and Frost, 1985) with the students but always accompanied this with her own music theory teaching resources. The students each had their own workbooks, particularly for music theory learning, and Anne would provide worksheets that were glued into these books. Often the students would forget their resources. Some even did not bring their instruments. Again, Anne saw both of these omissions on the part of the students as constituting an ongoing problem. With Anne, a great deal of time in the

allotted lesson duration was taken up with general conversation about things that were of a non-musical nature before playing of instruments occurred. As the lessons were only half an hour in length, and with students turning up late in some lessons, only five minutes of actual playing time would occur.

In the private context Anne taught approximately ten students. Some of these had learnt with her for some time and she had supported them through external examinations (mainly with the Australian Music Examinations Board - AMEB). The private tuition usually occurred on weekday afternoons and Saturday mornings. Extra lessons were always conducted closer to examination times. As most of the students participated in these exams set texts, as published by the AMEB, were used. In this environment Anne would also often enhance the lesson time with the use of a piano, getting the students to sing, clap, play and/or move.

Anne's experience of learning music appeared typical of learning instrumental music in schools in Australia (Bridges, 1994; Forrest, 1994). Anne began learning in her primary school's instrumental music program and pursued further learning with the same teacher in a private lesson context. Anne expressed her concern that creativity was not really encouraged in her learning. She said that as a child learning music she was discouraged from composing her own songs or learn songs aurally but was instead told to learn from written music. When Anne changed teachers she was told that her violin technique was not correct and she had to re-learn everything. She recalled this taking sometime and always felt quite inadequate especially since she was consistently compared to another more advanced student. Anne however, is glad that she pursued music teaching as a career and she says that one of her main

philosophies in her teaching practice was to encourage her students to create their own music as they learnt. On the other hand, she believed that participating in external examinations ensured that the students and their parents were able to gain concrete evidence of their performance standard.

*Tina: An Instrumental Music Teacher in Schools*

Tina was a woodwind and brass teacher. Tina, like Anne, trained as a classroom music teacher but taught instrumental music part-time. In her three days of work with the State Education Department she visited three different schools. Two of these were primary schools and the other a secondary school. As all three schools were public schools in Queensland, the instrumental students did not directly pay for their lessons. Similar to Anne's teaching situation, before being accepted into the program, students were required to sit a musical aptitude test. If their musical capacity was considered adequate then they could start tuition. Some students who were keen to participate in the instrumental program would not be allowed for one of two reasons - firstly, that their result in the aural test was too low or secondly, if there were not enough instruments to loan.

Tina felt that it was difficult to achieve what she wanted in each of these schools. She said that the program at one of the primary schools was more successful than the other two as she could put more effort into teaching, rehearsing, managing and conducting extra-curricular ensembles for competitions and concerts there. Taking these ensembles was an expectation at each of the schools but it was difficult to achieve a good result at every one of the schools. Additionally, there was always a problem with ensuring students arrived on time if indeed they came at all. This was

also the case with the general instrumental lessons. Most classes required Tina to ensure the students turned up on time.

Tina worked in schools that she described as being in low socio-economic areas. Many of the students were unable to purchase the required textbooks or buy their own instruments yet still maintained their participation in the program through a hire scheme. Tina believed that lack of parental support and interest contributed to the low commitment of students to learning music. For Tina teaching was her sole form of income and her comments on lack of student commitment and dedication led Tina to seek other employment options. Tina had wanted to be a performer but had not 'fit' in to tertiary courses given the focus on aspects other than performance such as musicianship, theory and literature. She felt that most tertiary courses are not adequate for people intending to play other types of music.

I observed that the majority of Tina's primary school students appeared to enjoy their lessons, as it was something different to their normal classroom environment. The students who arrived on time were excited about playing their instruments and often began to play before Tina asked them to do so. Tina used the set text *Standard of Excellence* (Pearson, 1993-1996) and accompanying compact disc, with each of her students. Tina thought it was an appropriate text as it was also available for all instruments, as an ensemble package, and it catered for most students' ability levels.

In regard to her own learning experiences, Tina said she was lucky to have had a number of very good teachers. She said that she had gained a 'good' level of skill as a woodwind player, but admitted to not committing herself enough to practise to



become a full-time professional performer, although sometimes she wished she had. She also felt that she was not successful in her performance status as the competition for woodwind places in ensembles was very high. In her lessons with her teacher at University, a lot of pressure was placed on students to prepare for examinations. She said that the results that students would gain reflected their teacher's ability and if students did not do very well in these examinations the teacher would then spend less time with them. She felt that the level of favouritism for some students at the tertiary level was significant and that it disadvantaged other students like her. Tina was pleased however that she had the opportunity to learn a large and varied repertoire written specifically for her instrument and hoped that this experience benefited her own students.

*Chen: A Violin Music Teacher*

Chen was a professional violinist who had, in the past, worked for a number of professional orchestras in Australia. His main income however, came from teaching private students. Chen had up to forty students who learnt on an individual basis in his home. Although Chen had enjoyed performing he said that teaching gave him the opportunity to pass on his knowledge to others. According to Chen his teaching technique comprised that of his own teachers in China and Sydney as well as including his own modifications.

Chen's philosophy towards teaching was an holistic one, in that he believed students needed support not only from their teacher but also from their parents, therefore the whole environment was important. Chen consistently focused on methods of practise, and would present various ways to the students as to how to perform a

particular piece. He emphasised the importance of practising correctly and said that if students did not do this properly, development and improvement was very difficult. On occasion I observed Chen teaching students how to breakdown a piece in order to practise more effectively. He would often request students to demonstrate how they do practise at home.

In regard to performance Chen would often include students' own ideas on how to present the music. He believed that different techniques were required to play different pieces. Chen's approach to pieces changed according to who the composer was and/or what era the piece was written in. He explained that if a student was to play Romantic music for example, a heavier bow technique and more vibrato was required than when performing Bach. In this context Chen paid much attention to detail.

When asked about his own music learning experience, Chen said that as a young child his parents encouraged him and his other siblings to learn violin through the Suzuki method. Chen participated as a student in a Suzuki school for only five years and then learnt from a teacher who had been trained in Europe and therefore used a very different method of teaching. He believed that the aural focus in the Suzuki method has benefited his overall musical capacity. However, he also said that in order to perform professionally it was necessary to learn as much repertoire as possible, and this was more achievable in an individual music lesson context with a teacher who had the reputation of a performer.

Once in Australia, Chen said his teacher at University had a strong focus on developing technique but also encouraged his students to perform expressively. It was in this context that Chen felt he learnt the most in violin performance. This was attributed to both ability and maturity level in that he was older and more able to put theory into practice. Chen said there was a difference in playing musically as compared to mechanically so a balance was required.

*Jodie: A Private Music teacher – the Suzuki Method*

In 2001, I met Jodie, a trained string teacher of the Suzuki method. Jodie conducted lessons on both a group and individual basis explaining that as students get more advanced individual attention is required for them to develop more quickly. The group lessons that Jodie facilitated were for children under the age of six. In each of these contexts the parents (usually the mother) were expected to attend, although this was less evident in the more advanced individual tuition situations. Parents in these situations either participated as a student themselves or just observed the lessons. Jodie said the main purpose for this was to ensure correct and thorough practise occurred at home.

Although Jodie used teaching methods other than those espoused by Suzuki, she said that she was committed to the four major objectives of the Suzuki method of teaching. They were: 1. Listening to recordings of pieces being played, 2. Striving for a good tone even in beginner stages, 3. Striving for accurate intonation, correct posture and proper bow hold and 4. Encouraging positive practise routines and techniques. These aims were usually more achievable, according to Jodie, if the parents were included in the teaching and learning process.

In her initial music learning experiences, Jodie learnt violin via the Suzuki method in Victoria. She changed teachers however when entering secondary school at the age of thirteen years. According to Jodie, this teacher used different modes of teaching and concentrated less on memory work and listening to studied works. In this context Jodie sat external examinations with Trinity College of London. She said that there was always a set repertoire of pieces that she had to choose examination pieces from. These pieces were the only ones learnt as well as required technical exercises such as scales and studies. Jodie said that her teacher would always teach other aspects such as aural skills and theory closer to examinations – usually about three weeks prior to the examination date. Jodie felt that the aural skills that she had developed while learning violin through the Suzuki method have assisted her in playing better, but she was disappointed that her later teacher did not develop these skills further.

Later in life Jodie travelled overseas and spent some time in Japan where she learnt more about the Suzuki method as well as teaching English. This experience led her to begin a music school where the Suzuki method was the main method of teaching and learning employed by her.

The following section of this chapter will compare the methods of teaching employed by these teachers. It will determine the similarities and differences in the teachers approach to transmitting music knowledge as well as explore the cultural influence on the choice and use of these methods. The meaning associated with

these practices will then be highlighted in order to seek out the impact of culture on these contexts.

### ***The Teaching Methods and Modes of Communication***

In each of the Queensland instrumental music teaching contexts reliance on written music, which was presented to students in traditional Western notational form, was strongly evident. At no time were musical pieces taught without this written form present in the teaching situation. This emphasises the importance of literacy in the Western education context. The actual music taught by the Queensland instrumental music teachers varied greatly as there were no common pieces taught by the teachers, aside from one piece that both Karl and Chen taught (See Appendix L). Much of this can be attributed to whether the student was a beginner or more advanced student, what text they used, and what the purpose of the learning was, such as working towards an external examination.

In three out of the five environments (that is with Anne, Tina and Jodie), a set textbook was used with the students – either *All For Strings*, *Standard of Excellence*, or *Suzuki Method for Violin*. Each of these texts was said to be the most common texts used in the group-learning situations, with the first two as suggested instrumental music texts by the Queensland Department of Education.

### **Extract from: Curriculum and Studies, CS-25: Instrumental Music Program**

#### **Recommended Texts**

2.23 The following tutor systems are designed for group tuition and should facilitate ensemble activities. For program conformity, the same text should be selected on an area basis. In addition, supplementary ensemble books provide enrichment of the basic program.

Woodwind/ Brass/Percussion

Recommended Text: PEARSON, Bruce, Standard of Excellence Books 1, 2 and 3. San Diego, CA: Kjos Music

Strings

Recommended Text: ANDERSON, Gerald and FROST, Robert, All for Strings, Books 1, 2 and 3 San Diego, CA: Kjos Music

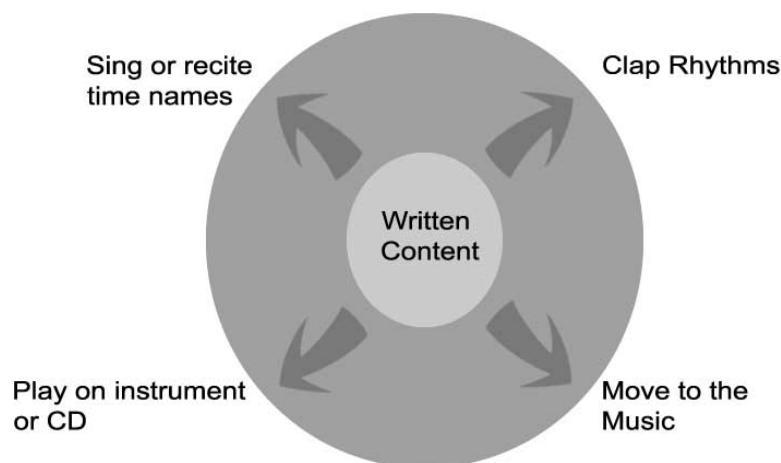
The texts used in each of the contexts with Tina and Anne, provided music material in a progressive format where the difficulty level would increase with each volume. With Karl and Chen however, a number of texts for more advanced students were used, and at times specific publications or editions were expected to be purchased as these were seen to be more authentic to how they were originally composed (See Appendix L for different publications of the same piece). Jodie also used additional material from various other texts. Therefore, in this context, the visual mode of communication is highly relied upon. Stowasser (1995, p. 257) supports this stating that the music learning context in the West spends most of its time visually analysing musical scores.

In regard to methods of teaching, demonstration was the most prominent method used in each of the teaching environments in this context. Each of the teachers would demonstrate the music by playing it on their own instruments or by illustrating with some other method such as clapping the rhythm, singing the melody and/or moving to the music while doing these actions. With Karl and Jodie demonstration of pieces was occasionally done by playing a compact disc recording. Tina used a compact disc, which accompanied the text, in almost every lesson. It was agreed by each of the teachers that demonstrating the music allowed the students to hear what the pieces they were learning 'sounded' like. They said that if the students did not

have some idea of the sound that they were required to produce then it was very difficult to play the piece correctly.

The following diagram outlines the ways in which music content in the written form was presented by teachers in the Queensland instrumental music teaching context.

**Diagram 4: Ways of presenting music material in the Queensland Instrumental music learning environments**



Anne's own experience highlighted that her main teacher would always play with her students. As a result, demonstration by Anne would be done by either singing or by playing on an instrument. This usually occurred with the student/s singing or playing in conjunction with the teacher. Anne also used other methods such as moving to the music or clapping rhythms. Anne explained that these ways of teaching reflect the various music learning experiences that she has had, such as those practiced in the Kodaly, Orff or Dalcroze methods. These methods have permeated both instrumental and classroom practices in Queensland particularly (Bridges, 1994; Stowasser, 1997), and Anne said that she was taught via these methods in both her

primary and tertiary education but not so much in the secondary context. For Anne making the music learning experience enjoyable and varied for the student was a priority and she felt that using varied methods would assist this desire. This determination was a result of a negative experience that she had with a past teacher when she was younger.

One teacher I had was very strict and I used to be very scared going there. In fact I was so scared that I'd practise out of sheer fear. In my first lesson with her she made me and my mother sit down and say "Now it's very important for me to know whether your daughter is going to go on with violin as a career?" It was a real heavy thing you know (Anne, Interview, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1997).

Additionally, a large focus in the Queensland instrumental music teaching context lay on the development of technique required for playing 'quality sound' on the particular instrument being learnt in the Queensland instrumental context. For beginners constant mention by the teachers of hand positions, posture, or embouchure for example, were made.

In the beginning stages of learning I use the Suzuki texts and I record the lessons on tape for students so that they can listen to these pieces everyday. I combine other methods such as demonstrating the techniques or sounds I want them to produce...I also find it useful to be able to place students' fingers or hands in the correct positions and continuously remind them how these positions and their posture should be. If these aren't corrected in the beginning then it is more difficult to change later on (Jodie, Interview, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2002).

Techniques required to play the music correctly were explained and demonstrated in detail. The desired sound to be produced for the particular piece being studied would determine what techniques were to be learnt and employed when playing the piece. For example, in the contexts where the teachers taught violin, a faster piece would require different left hand techniques than a piece with a slower tempo and/or longer



notes. With Karl consistent referral to work taught in other lessons occurred so that any wrong technique being used would be monitored and altered if necessary. A great deal of teaching in the lessons with Karl was devoted to the improvement of technique. In these lessons attention to detail was prevalent. Karl appeared to have, more than any of the other teachers, an approach that focussed on improving micro-muscular technique required to play the violin. This focus, according to Karl, was largely a result of his Masters' research on violin bowing technique. Chen also spent a great deal of time on the development of technique, however this was not as extensive as in the context with Karl as teacher. As these teachers were both professional performers it could indicate the reason why they approached teaching this way.

I learnt with a teacher who had developed a particular school of violin playing technique. He has written music textbooks that follow this technique. What is interesting about this technique is that he teaches position changes differently to most people in that second position is taught before third. Most teachers do this the other way around. He also teaches in terms of positions on the fingerboard – like whole tone and half tone steps etc. Most of the books have short pieces. This is best in the beginning stages as students can really understand them and get to play them perfectly. The teacher would always play first and then the student would copy (Karl, Interview, 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 1997).

I try to use different methods with my students. There are many different schools of violin teaching, this may mean that just one is right for each and every student. I try to see what each student requires improvement, what the problem areas are such as intonation. This usually occurs because students are not relaxing or fingers are in the wrong position and not aware of how to accommodate pitch discrepancies by rolling fingers slightly (Chen, Interview, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2001).

As the quality of sound production was emphasised consistently in each of the Queensland instrumental music teachers' contexts, again constant explanation of various techniques occurred so that the 'right' sound could be achieved.

I encourage all of my students to perform, I teach them as performers as everyone is a soloist. They must have a concept of what the sound is in their heads. Students need to imagine the sound – the real quality. What is written is only a basic representation of the music. Dynamics, feeling and colour are not there (Karl, Interview, 3rd November, 1997).

When she taught me we would play it together I think and we'd keep playing it and wrong notes would be circled and of course I would get better at it the more I played it though it was a lot of aural work – knowing how it was suppose to sound (Anne, Interview, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1997).

The aural aspect of learning was therefore considered important. Despite this consideration, there was no time in the lessons with each of the Queensland instrumental teachers where written music was not used.

Coupled with the method of demonstration was consistent verbal explanation. Talking to, or discussion with, the students about the music being taught occurred regularly in these contexts. Additionally, conversation occurred at the beginning of each event, sometimes up to ten minutes in length. This was usually concerned with information non-musical in nature. This could indicate that both teachers and students utilised this time to 'warm up' to any practical work to be done in the lesson. Throughout the remainder of the lessons though, the teachers would consistently discuss verbally what they were teaching. In many instances more talking occurred in the lesson time than playing.

Duke's (1999) study of teacher and student behaviour in the Suzuki context discovered that in the lesson context student performance and teacher demonstration constituted only about thirty percent while teacher talking took up to sixty-five percent (p. 305). Contrary to this, Jodie who practised part Suzuki method would use repetitive playing frequently. The students in this context would play their

instrument for a longer period of time in the lesson duration than in any of the other environments. More listening and copying occurred with Jodie but always with the music present. As Jodie subscribed to using the Suzuki method her approach was quite different to the other teachers in this context. With beginners a lot of aural work occurred when learning the pieces. In this way performance and aurality were integrated. Jodie would consistently play short sections of pieces for the students to then copy. In her interview she made a distinction between being able to listen correctly rather than listening in an unengaged way. For Jodie, an approach that values aural modes of communication is more beneficial than one that focuses solely on written musical works. She indicated however, that many people perceive the Suzuki method to only develop players that are mechanical rather than musical, saying that this is probably because of the mass group-learning context which does not usually occur in the contemporary teaching and learning context. Jodie would regularly justify her use of the Suzuki method particularly in terms of performance standard.

I think that the Suzuki method is really good – it encourages anyone to be able to play, and play well, I think. Starting to learn by ear only, is great for really young kids who can't read yet. I try to encourage my students to listen well when they learn, especially when they are learning new songs. Many students find it easier to learn by ear and by watching what the teacher is doing. With more advanced students though they need the score as the pieces are much more complex and longer (Jodie, Interview, 5th March 2002).

It is evident therefore, that the teaching environment with Jodie was starkly different to the others in that an aural/oral mode of communication was much more prevalent. This follows the philosophy of the Suzuki method where the teaching method establishes the students' musical ability via aural/oral learning. In this way this context reflected an Eastern philosophy in a Western setting.

Differences in the teaching methods that were used by the teachers in the Queensland instrumental music context outweighed any similarities between the teachers. In this context there did not appear to be strong correlation between how the teachers taught and how they themselves were taught. The desire to develop and change the teaching approach for students was consistent for each of the teachers in this context. This was attributed by each of the teachers to the changing needs of students. This opinion is also made clear in the literature (Jansen, 1997; Wojtowicz, 1990). The differences in teaching methods and approach leads to the conclusion that the construction of lessons depended, in some respect, on the personality of the teachers themselves, as to whether they included extensive conversation in the lessons or had a more pragmatic approach and expected more actual playing of the instruments to occur.

With regard to lesson structure, as previously mentioned, each lesson began with general conversation while the students set up their instruments, music books, stands and chairs. This often took up to ten minutes. The lessons were then consistently focused, by relating them back to the previous one. This allowed for some kind of continuity in the learning of material. Where a set textbook was used the teacher would regularly ask the students what page they were up to. Comments such as “Play through last week’s lesson” or “Where are we up to?” from Anne and Tina indicated a reliance on the material existing in a written form. Anne would usually get students to play ‘last week’s lesson’ work before learning a new piece. Tina would always require students to do warm-up exercises before playing any whole piece. This often consisted of a scale or a related exercise. On occasion, Tina looked

forward a number of pages in the book to teach something new. The students would think that this was exciting.

Revision of old material was consistently done (although not in every lesson with Tina) in the group learning contexts. This usually occurred with the students playing through the material and if the teachers were pleased with how the students played it then a new piece would be introduced. In the situations where students learnt on an individual basis the teacher would generally choose the pieces on which to focus on in the lesson. Many of the pieces with more advanced students would take some weeks to be seen as being ‘completed’. There is strong evidence that the written score was the prime focus in the lessons and determined not only the structure of the lessons but overall teaching and learning processes used by the teachers. The form and length of the music contributed to the use of these processes.

It has been discussed that the music taught in this context varied greatly between each of the teaching environments. With the beginner students the pieces were presented in short form – that is no longer than twenty bars.

**Transcription 3: Extract Pearson, B. (1993, p. 22) “Turkish March by Beethoven” from *Standard of Excellence Book 2*. Kjos Music Company.**

**[This transcription is not available online. Please consult the hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library]**

Pieces such as these were easily broken down into smaller phrases by the teachers so that students could learn the whole tune slowly. The technique of immersion phrase by phrase has been highlighted by Campbell (1991) and Goolsby and Klinger (1998, p. 25).

Anne for example, would often require students to play only a small section of the music a number of times first and then continue this until the whole piece had been played. With the following piece two bars were played, then four bars, then eight bars at a time.

**Transcription 4: Anderson, G. and Frost, R. (1985, p. 23) “Lightly Row” from *All For Strings: Comprehensive String Method Book 1*. Kjos Music Company.**

**[This transcription is not available online. Please consult the hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library]**

Once Anne felt that the students could play each section of the new music she would then ask them to play the entire piece. The students would regularly make errors during their first attempt at playing the pieces. If this occurred Anne consistently interrupted them and would separate the area in which the error was made from the

rest of the piece and ask the students to play it again – up to four times. The students in this context rarely played a whole piece if longer than one page unless they were close to sitting an external examination or were being ‘tested’ by Anne herself.

In Tina’s teaching environment a similar technique was used. Pieces would be broken down into smaller sections and then placed back into a whole piece. Every time that the students would play a whole exercise they would do so with the compact disc recording that accompanied the set text. It was evident that in some of the student groups the levels of performance ability varied greatly. In these situations when the students would play the whole pieces with the compact disc some students would consistently make errors but time constraints disallowed any follow up by Tina with these students. Therefore, some students would continue through the workbook even if they could not play the pieces properly.

In the contexts with more advanced students such as those encountered with Karl, Anne (in the private context) and Chen, the music also consisted of sections that could be separated from the whole piece in order for the student to learn by progressing through each section. The teachers stated that the music was based on tonal harmonic chord progressions, and as a consequence, Karl, Anne and Chen who taught the more advanced students would always discuss the harmonic analysis of pieces to students explaining that it was important to be able to hear the harmonic progression, preparing fingering before playing. This was particularly prevalent when playing the violin so that intonation was more accurate.

**Transcription 5: Extract from Joachim and Moser (1976, p. 10) *Six Sonata and Partitas for unaccompanied violin by J S Bach*. International Music Company.  
(See Appendix M)**

*Translated to:*

**[This transcription is not available online. Please consult the hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library]**

and

**Transcription 6: Extract from Davisson, W. (1946, p. 6) *24 Capricen for solo violin by P. Rode*. Edition Peters. (See Appendix N)**

*Translated to:*

**[This transcription is not available online. Please consult the hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library]**

Students were required to play block chords (as represented in the translations) in order to become totally familiar with the harmonic progressions and shape of the fingers on the fingerboard (Karl, Interview, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1997).



Generally when the teachers corrected errors the section of the music where the error was made would be isolated from the rest of the piece and the student expected to play a number of times until correct, as previously illustrated by Anne. They would then play a larger section of the piece so that the more difficult area could be placed back into the context of the whole work.

If it was a really long piece we'd work on one section or one page first and so the only way that you'd know it would sound would be how they play it with you. In fact, listening to a piece on tape, other than ourselves, like taping before an exam, was beneficial (Anne, Interview, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1997).

Apart from performance work on the instruments, Anne and Tina would occasionally include theoretical concepts to teach in the lessons. With Anne for example, some of her student groups would be split in half with one of these group playing the violin and the other working on a theory worksheet. The students would then swap tasks halfway through the lesson. Separate books from the performance textbooks were used for music theory learning purposes and these were required at every lesson. The teachers who taught in the private context did not teach theoretical aspects in this way but would on occasion discuss theoretical concepts that related to the pieces being studied.

Another aspect of learning in these contexts was what the teachers called 'aural work'. This usually consisted of listening activities such as the teacher playing a piece or exercise and asking the students questions about what they heard. Mention of aural activities by the teachers in regard to external examinations was common as these were included as part of the examination process (see Appendix O for AMEB examination aspects). Most teachers admitted to only addressing this skill a few

weeks prior to the examination date. Stowasser (1995 p. 257) supports this stating that “the studio teacher...never found time for aural work until a week before the next AMEB examination”. Therefore, it is evident that what the teachers labelled practical, theoretical, aural and historical concepts of music were taught as separate skills not integrated aspects of music teaching and learning. As previously explored Jodie on the other hand integrated performance and aurality.

In each of these learning environments the physical setting was different. The teaching occurred in one of two environments – that is either in a school instrumental music program where group tuition is offered or in a private studio context where individual tuition was more common. The group context therefore occurred more frequently in situations where time constraints existed, usually as a result of whole school timetabling, and limited teacher contact due to the teacher only being present in the school one day a week. In the private context however, teachers would often allow lessons to go longer in duration than the allocated time and were able to offer other times during the week if required for further work. This usually occurred around examination time.

In regard to the environment in which the teachers taught, the teaching generally took place in a room that was designated for music learning purposes. In each context the position of the teacher and student varied as the teacher generally moved around the settings. In a group context, students would more frequently sit in rows with music stands in front of them and the teacher would be in a dominant standing position at the front of the room if not sitting amongst the students. It appears that the larger the group the more likely a teacher would take on a more dominant role.

In some of these cases, the student would be standing and the teacher sitting, giving instructions throughout the lesson time.

There did not appear to be any consistency in the number of students attending lessons in each of the contexts. Additionally, for each of these learning environments the allotted time for each event occurred each week at the same time, the same day and for the same length. This did not vary except where the length may have been increased at the discretion of the teacher. Students were reminded of the importance of turning up to the regular time and day given to them for music tuition.

Although each of the teachers in this context used similar methods of teaching and chose similar music content from set textbooks or examination repertoire lists, the teachers' approach to teaching was quite different. It is clear that the teachers' own experiences in learning music, in various contexts, has impacted on the way that they approach teaching practices but not necessarily where the teacher's would teach the same way as they were taught. The next section in this chapter consequently explores how cultural and social influences affect the Queensland instrumental music teachers' teaching.

### ***Cultural Influence on the Queensland Instrumental Music Teaching Context***

The teachers of music in Queensland, that primarily taught Western Art music, all displayed a passion for music generally. Although not all of them were professional performers they believed that performing was the most enjoyable aspect of their musical life and that teaching was a way of sharing this feeling. Anne, Tina and Jodie had wanted to become professional performers but indicated that at some stage

in their music learning experiences, usually at the tertiary level, they were unable to achieve this or had not been given the opportunity to do so. Tina particularly, felt that she did not receive the encouragement or opportunity to perform when studying at University.

It is really hard for wind players – there is not much opportunity for performance given the small amount in orchestras. I really wanted to play professionally but the first place where I studied never supported that. They really favoured a few students over all the others, especially ones that had achieved high grades with places like AMEB...I had some great teachers but I didn't get on personally with one of them. He had his favourites too and they always got to play the solos or more difficult parts. I really think that I was a great player and I really enjoyed it but never had the opportunity to realise this so I became a teacher instead (Tina, Interview, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1997).

In the main, the reason why the Queensland instrumental teachers taught music was for a source of income whether it was the only source or as a second job. For example, although Karl's main profession was performing, he felt that the need to earn more money through teaching was necessary. Karl commented that in Europe importance of artists, such as musicians, is much greater than in Australia. Consequently the wages and benefits were much less in Australia. For Anne, Tina and Chen, teaching became the only option for income as limited need for professional musicians in full-time employment, as well as the performance skill for some, led them to teach for an income. Anne, Tina and Jodie however, all performed in amateur music ensembles outside of work. Some of these performances were paid work but were never consistent. Therefore, the driving monetary force behind the teachers' employment reflects the economic pressure placed upon people working and living in Australia. Further, despite the teachers appreciating their experience in music and in the teaching and learning environment, they all indicated their desire to do things other than teach.

Within the Queensland instrumental music teaching environments there were a number of non-music 'rituals' that occurred. With Karl it was expected that shoes were taken off at the door. This was, I suspect, due to the fact that his wife was Japanese Buddhist. Further, in each of these contexts there appeared to be quite a definite routine in terms of construction of lessons. The conversation that occurred at the beginning of the lessons appeared to provide a special grounding in the relationships between student and teacher. It could also suggest that less actual 'teaching' took place and that this wasted constructive lesson time. Whatever the reason for verbal communication to occur consistently and generously in these events it holds important meaning in the way non-music messages are communicated in the Western Art music arena.

The relationship between students and teachers in the Queensland instrumental music environments was an important issue. This varied according to the age of the student, numbers participating and confidence, expectations and style of the teachers themselves. With a number of the teaching environments in the Queensland instrumenta music teaching environment recognition of the teacher as having more knowledge was expected in the form of respect and remuneration, yet the teachers often complained that this was not the case. In each of these learning environments reliable payment was an important concern of the teachers. Karl, Anne and Jodie complained about parents not paying on time. Another concern arising from this context was the fact that students' attitudes towards learning were deteriorating. Many of the teachers felt that it was the parents' choice for their child to learn music and although they paid money (in fees and/or accessories) for the privilege, the

teachers were still dissatisfied with the students' amount of practise and parental support generally. The teachers consistently expressed these sentiments.

“I think that parental involvement is extremely important. Without support from home, students will not achieve much. Practise is essential (Karl, interview, 3rd of November 1997)”.

Tina however, commented on the enthusiasm of some of her students and noted that the majority of these students came from low socio-economic backgrounds. She felt that even though the music itself was not always music the students enjoyed, they were glad to be participating in the program as they missed some of their regular classes to attend. Similarly, Karl and Chen commented that the majority of content required to be taught for external examination is not always relevant to the students' musical tastes.

In regard to the teaching and learning environment, most of the teachers said that they tried to create an enjoyable situation for their students to learn in. In some cases, such as those observed with Anne in the private context, and with Chen and Karl, the relationship between student and teacher was one showing mutual respect and more of an equal understanding. Being able to develop this, they believed, highlighted qualities of a 'good' teacher.

A good teacher really knows their students. They plan a program around each individual students' needs, and chooses really good repertoire for them. I also think that students should enjoy what they are learning otherwise you will lose them. I try to give my students new music all the time that is the more advanced ones. The beginners use the set text, which is pretty good really as it has the band music as well which is good. Music is really expensive to buy so it makes it much more accessible. I also like my students

to play in small ensembles all the time so that they can listen to each other and learn how to play as part of a group. Performing whether formally or less formally – for each other – is a really great experience (Tina, Interview, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1997).

A good teacher is probably someone I could relate to more easily because my nature is fairly soft. I still like to be pushed but in a warm situation. For example, by saying this is what you are going to achieve when you work hard (Anne, Interview, 20<sup>th</sup> of April 1997).

I have always loved teaching especially younger students. I find it challenging to keep thinking of new ways to teach them the same concept. I try to make it warm and fun but expect them to practise well. I always write down exactly what I want my students to practise such as do this five times a day etcetera. Many students do not know how to practise well and I feel this is an ongoing problem (Jodie, Interview, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2002).

The strong desire to make learning as enjoyable as possible for students was a consideration for the teachers in this context. This was attributed to the nature of the student in the Queensland context with the teachers saying that if the students are not enjoying learning they will not continue their involvement.

The purpose of these teaching situations also varied depending on the desire of the student or the student's parents and if in a school the expectations placed on the instrumental program usually by administration. In the main, the choice to learn a musical instrument was made by the students and then supported by the parents. This is particularly so in the contexts where tuition cost. Once a student had gained a particular level of performance in the school environment, they were encouraged to seek private tuition as the teachers felt that they would learn more in this context. In Anne's case, students were encouraged to learn from her privately.

Alongside the cost of the lessons (apart from with Tina), payment for many accessories, such as strings and reeds, are required in the Western context. It has

been stated previously, that in each situation written music was the main source of music information and students were expected to use these at all times. For more advanced students these texts (sometimes being just one piece of music) cost between twenty and fifty dollars. This makes learning an instrument in this situation a costly exercise for parents. In one of Tina's schools however, a hire scheme of instruments and school library of the textbooks had been established as Tina said that the students came from low socio-economic backgrounds. Many of these texts were said to be expensive and in conjunction with having to buy other accessories such as reeds or strings, and if paying for tuition and exams, learning music in this context was extremely costly.

The participation in external examinations with either the Australian Music Examinations Board or Trinity College Association was accepted by the teacher, student and parents and considered a natural progression and indicator of skill level, when learning music. Stowasser (1992) believes that "[e]xamination syllabuses such as those administered by Trinity College and the AMEB have been widely criticised in recent years for their antidiluvian approaches to music instruction, particularly with regard to the strict compartmentalisation they maintain between theory, history and performance" (p. 18) an issue raised previously in this chapter.

Even though the teachers supported their students through the examination process their own experience of this was one of a negative effect. It appeared that many of the teachers in this context felt that their experience in learning music was one of competitiveness and comparison. This feeling was particularly strong with both Anne and Tina. Anne for example, felt the pressure on having to achieve a particular



AMEB standard before entry into university music courses as well as constantly being compared to more advanced music students, as measured by their AMEB achievement. Similarly, the discouragement of her creating her own music even though she had showed interest in this, contributes to not only the elitist nature of Western music teaching practices but the reliance on repertoire considered the “Western Canon” (Walker, 2001, p. 16). In a similar light, Jodie felt that many teachers and educators in the tertiary sector had labelled her negatively as a result of her Suzuki training saying that many believed that Suzuki trained performers played ‘mechanically’ not ‘musically’. According to Jodie this opinion has prevailed in the Australian context for some time consequently, Breen and Hogg (1999, p. 48) justified the method by highlighting the number of musicians that were trained in Suzuki were in professional orchestras.

In the school context, teachers constantly felt the pressure on them to organise performances and events with the students. The sole purpose of music programs for administration in schools, according to Anne and Tina, was to create positive public relations and images of the school. Regular entry into external competitions was also expected and Tina believed the schools that achieved well at these undoubtedly contributed to a positive image of the school. As Anne worked in a Christian school the students would often perform in religious events in and out of the school environment. Despite these expectations on the teachers support was rarely given in terms of extra time or funding. This concern is raised regularly in the literature (Lean, 1997; Lierse, 1997; Roulston, 2000).

These concerns, including restriction to access to learning due to high cost, limited contact time, and culturally exclusive repertoire, indicate the importance afforded to economic forces in the Western context. Music in this context is in many ways connected to broader economic influences. This reflects the view espoused by Cath Ellis (1985) in the differences between Western education and Tribal education. Ellis claims that a balance between a traditional tribal 'education' context and Western system where a strong focus lies on money and literacy, as observed in these teaching contexts, would improve student learning outcomes. Further Ellis (1985, p. 156) states that "if there had been more thought applied to the nature of the culture conflict that arises from the superimposition of two such drastically different value systems, much of the worst of the educational conflict could have been avoided".

**Diagram 5: Ellis, C (1985: 157) *Aboriginal music education for living: cross-cultural experiences from South Australia*. University of Queensland Press, St Lucia.**

**[This image is not available online. Please consult the hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library]**

It appeared that these pressures led the teachers to develop both more varied teaching methods and performance opportunities for themselves and their students. This resulted in the teachers attempting to create more diverse teaching environments to better address the needs of their students better. Nevertheless, the enduring forces from the Western society in which these teachers lived and worked affected their practices by perpetuating the elitist consideration of the Western music tradition. Teacher training continues to support the elitism of the profession as does the music

content taught, current syllabi and policy decisions. Little has changed from Stowasser's (1992) view that these external forces continue to 'erode implementation' of desired outcomes. Therefore, even though the teachers consciously attempted to change the teaching methods and approaches from those that they experienced themselves, the continuance of involvement in organisations such as the AMEB and continued use of set text books that contain only visual representations of music as well as repertoire from the Western canon exclusively, perpetuates the elitist culture practiced in general instrumental music tuition programs.

### ***Summary***

The teachers of instrumental music in Queensland reflect values that are inherent in Western cultures. The overriding economic forces that affect the teaching and learning environments present in a number of ways. Firstly, the main reason why each of the teachers in this context taught music was to receive income. Although two of the teachers performed professionally, teaching was a source of extra income. For the remaining three teachers as performing was not an available option to them as a profession after university, they 'settled' with teaching as their main employment. Secondly, it was illustrated that the price of learning an instrument in this context is costly. Even in the public school environment where tuition is provided free of charge students were still expected to purchase texts and accessories required. A concerning issue for the teachers however, was the lack of commitment by the students to practise and get 'value for money'. The participation in external examinations was one way of consolidating students' capacity to perform to parents.

Another consideration in this particular teaching and learning context was the pressures placed on teachers to do tasks that other people in the teaching profession were not expected to do. These consistent pressures in some way affected the attitudes that the teachers had to the teaching profession as consequently the majority of the teachers in this context had stated their desire to do something other than teach. Despite this the teachers tried to make their teaching experience interesting and enjoyable for their students. As a result varied techniques were used in the teaching contexts to maintain student interest and the development of teacher/student relationship occurred regularly through discussion.

Through these preceding two chapters it has been illustrated how culture influences the teaching processes used by teachers in the Karnatic and Western instrumental music contexts in a number of ways. The following chapter will explore how both the Karnatic and Western contexts reflect one another as well as discuss the unique aspects of each of these contexts.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSION**

This thesis is a study of the nature of instrumental music teaching and learning in context. The main purpose of this research was to contribute to greater understanding of the relationship between culture, music, and teaching and learning. More specifically, it explored the extent and nature of how music and culture relate, interact and influence one another within the processes of instrumental music teaching. The literature review in Chapter Two revealed that while there is broad acknowledgement of the importance of culture in music education and instrumental tuition generally, there is limited research on the influence and specific role that culture plays in instrumental music teaching practices and processes. Moreover, the literature tends to:

- be dominated by Western music perspectives and focus largely on developing technique and skills for particular instruments
- provide a philosophical and theoretical point of view on culture rather than a view grounded in the practices and processes of teaching instrumental music and
- point strongly to the need for more research to better understand the phenomenon of how culture is reflected in instrumental music teaching and learning processes

That is what this research has demonstrated.

It was proposed in the methodology that observing the way that teachers teach music in different cultural contexts would provide substantial insight into the concepts, processes and structures utilised to convey instrumental music knowledge. As such, the methodology of participant observation was chosen to carry out this research as it provided firsthand opportunity to view instrumental music teachers in their own teaching environments. Chapters Four and Five consequently presented a number of cultural case studies that were developed from an extensive sample of instrumental music teaching events within the Karnatic music tradition in Southern India, Karnatic music tradition in Queensland, Australia, and Western music tradition in Queensland, Australia. It was in these two chapters that data was presented and analysed in alignment with the themes: Teachers, Teaching methods and modes of communication, and cultural influence on the teaching environment.

This final chapter presents the findings in response to the major questions posed in this research including:

- what is the extent and nature of cultural influence upon the teaching practices of instrumental music teachers?
- how do instrumental music teachers' experiences of learning music, learning to be a teacher, and teaching, reflect the influence of culture?
- how do the teaching methods and modes of communication used by instrumental music teachers reflect the influence of culture? and
- how does the context in which instrumental teaching practices take place reflect the influence of culture?

The research has confirmed that culture is a powerful and pervading influence on the process of instrumental music teaching. Cultural influence is evident in a variety of aspects including the music itself. One of the most striking influences was that of the teachers' own experiences of learning, and therefore the teaching practices of former teachers. An equally significant result was noted also in the teaching methods and modes of communication used by instrumental music teachers. In addition, many aspects in the instrumental music teaching context are also shaped by the culture in which it is immersed and this extends to both musical and non-musical elements including the meaning associated with these practices. These distinctions form the basis of the findings of this research and will be summarised in depth below.

### ***The Teachers***

The instrumental music teachers observed for this study were influenced largely by their own experiences of learning and by their experiences of learning to teach through the teaching practices of former teachers. This result was seen in both the Karnatic and Queensland instrumental music contexts but was more evident in the Karnatic context. Most of the Karnatic teachers in the study reported that they were strongly influenced by past experiences of learning. This was mainly due to the fact that past teachers played an important role in their lives and continued to do so with each of the Karnatic teachers through ongoing contact. The lineage to ones' teacher in the Karnatic context carried social, cultural and spiritual significance. A number of teachers in the Karnatic context for instance noted the direct relationship between their own performance and teaching style to those of well-regarded *gurus* or Karnatic music composers. Teachers in the Karnatic context were dedicated to continue their *guru's* tradition and the Indian culture in general.

In the Queensland instrumental music teaching context, teachers were not bound to maintaining a single approach to teaching. In fact, these teachers tended to borrow from a number of methods, which were often sourced to experiences they had during their music learning journey. This finding may reflect the point that Queensland instrumental music teachers are exposed to a greater range of methods than their Karnatic counterparts during the formative years of being taught to play or teach. At the same time, the Karnatic instrumental music teachers may have experienced social and cultural pressure to uphold a tradition that is inherently less eclectic. The end result is that teachers play an important role in ensuring cultural maintenance and adherence to the dominant cultural and social tradition. However, the extent of this influence is tempered by other factors at play within the learning and teaching process such as the broader teaching context.

It is important to note that teaching and learning takes place within a broader social and cultural environment. As such, the systems of instrumental music education play an important cultural and social role in conveying knowledge that is significant within the music tradition. In the Karnatic context this was illustrated by the importance ascribed to lineage with spiritual leaders, composers, performers and/or teachers; value afforded the maintenance of cultural traditions and adherence to authentic practices; relative status and reputation of given teachers and performers; and the perceptions in the broader community about what constituted a 'good' Karnatic teacher.



Though the Karnatic teachers in Queensland tended to maintain a commitment to the traditions and practices of instrumental music education like their South Indian counterparts, there was also a greater degree of variation in the way these teachers taught. Likewise, the content selected for lessons, and types of instrumentation and orchestration used varied from one teacher to the other in the Australian/Indian context. The research also indicated that the introduction of performance as a learning device occurred at a faster rate and there was a notable difference between this context and the Karnatic music teaching practices as observed in India.

In the Queensland instrumental music teaching context the broader social and cultural environment was also influential on the teachers' practice. Although adherence to tradition was not an overt expectation placed on these teachers, as was the case with the Karnatic teachers, the choice of repertoire reflected a longstanding selection made by teachers particularly if the content constituted examination repertoire. The teachers in the Western context also highlighted qualities of a 'good' teacher by reflecting on teachers with whom they had music learning experiences. In some instances, teachers' experiences of learning may have been negative, which led to at least one instrumental music teacher modifying her own teaching practice so as not to replicate a former teacher.

The Queensland teachers studied highlighted that the influence of past teachers was pervasive and was evidenced in their own teaching practices. A case in point was seen in the techniques and strategies relied upon to teach instrumental music, where a teacher's views on appropriate and effective means to convey instrumental music tuition generally indicated the guiding influence of significant role models, former

teachers and relevant and meaningful learning experiences during the early stages of skill development. The data confirmed the strong influence of past teachers, whether positive or negative, upon the teaching practices of the teachers in the study.

Further, there are differences in the way the influence of past teachers on the teaching practices of instrumental music teachers manifests in Karnatic and Western music contexts. Instrumental music teachers in the Western context may not be obligated to the same degree to maintain their lineage to a spiritual leader but may be strongly influenced to maintain connection to a particular performance, repertoire and/or teaching method such as the Kodaly or Suzuki method. Similarly, spirituality may not be a major decision point for students when choosing a teacher in Australia but they may be driven more by the teachers' success with student achievement in external examinations or entry into tertiary level music courses.

The pattern of past teacher influence extended to a range of elements within the teaching context. Repetition was frequently used to convey and ensure memorisation of melodic content. The use of repetition and the value afforded it are indicative of the degree of use and value given such elements by former teachers. A similar position can be noted in the tendency to use group and individual approaches to tuition and the selection of material for learning and performance. Decisions about the types of content and the most appropriate methods used are frequently determined not so much by the needs of the learner but by the span of experience, knowledge and skills which are often crafted in the likeness of former teachers.

This brings to the fore the notion that if no perceived value is derived from a particular approach then it is unlikely to be used extensively unless there are compelling reasons to do so, or that there are meaningful and accessible alternatives which deliver an equivalent result. Further, having access to a limited repertoire of training techniques and strategies may lead to the use of certain approaches more by default than by design. A teacher's preference for group or individual tuition shows more about the way such practices are viewed by former teachers than by their potential contribution to the learning process.

In order to understand the extent and nature of culture's influence on instrumental music teachers and their teaching practice, it is necessary to understand their formative experiences of learning music and teacher training. Formal teacher training appeared to be more evident in the Queensland instrumental music teaching context with each of the teachers having undertaken tertiary level study in music and education. In this environment the teachers noted the effect that their own instrumental teachers had on the way they taught whether reflective or not. In the Karnatic music context the progression from student to teacher was less formal and occurred on a more gradual basis within the group learning context. The finding that teachers tend to teach in the manner that they were taught may have implications on the capacity for teachers to respond to the learning needs of students. In the first instance, this approach is predominantly 'teacher-focussed' and not necessarily responsive to the unique learning needs of each student.

Teachers may have amassed from their teachers a limited range of skills, a narrow pedagogical focus and restricted repertoire for conveying instrumental music.

Moreover, teachers may learn less constructive means for transmitting music content generally. It may also affect the ways in which teachers introduce new material, and what methods they use when correcting errors. It is suggested then, that teachers become more aware of the influence that previous experience has on the teachers' own practice. Considering these issues is particularly salient given the increasing diversity within instrumental music programs in Australia.

### ***Teaching methods and modes of communication***

The research highlighted that the influence of culture manifests in the teaching methods and modes of communication used by instrumental music teachers in a variety of ways. Despite the vast array of strategies chosen by teachers to convey music knowledge, there was considerable similarity in the teaching methods and modes of communication used in both the Karnatic music and Queensland instrumental music contexts. This could indicate that music knowledge is transmitted in similar ways across a number of cultural boundaries.

The data showed that teachers within the Karnatic and Western contexts reflected culture in:

- the range of strategies selected to convey music knowledge
- the modes of communication used during lessons including verbal and non-verbal interactions
- the use of aural/oral and/or written teaching strategies
- the aids employed to assist understanding in the learning process such as notation and sound recordings
- the nature and frequency of group and individual lessons

- the lesson structure and its link to song structure or form
- the way in which new material was introduced and taught
- the interrelationship between particular foundational concepts such as music and rhythm and
- the relative value and importance afforded to technique and instrument specific skills (particularly in the Western context).

It is important to note that a number of strategies were common to both Western and Karnatic teaching contexts. As such it is difficult to conclude whether these methods are culturally determined. Rote learning, repetition and demonstration were observed in the teaching methods of all teachers in the study. Further to this, the teaching of new music material was similar in both contexts. Music content was typically taught phrase by phrase with the breakdown of a musical work. Therefore, these cases suggest that there are generic strategies which may be applied in different cultural contexts of teaching.

In contrast, cultural specificity can be seen in the way these generic strategies are applied to music content, which is inherently Karnatic or Western. Thus, cultural influence does not rest with these generic methods of teaching per se, but with the song structure to which they are applied. Repetition of small passages of *raga* and *gamaka* (ornamentation) are clear cases in point within the Karnatic context. The data also highlighted that there is also a direct relationship in each context between song structure or musical form, and lesson format. In particular, the study showed that the construction of lessons was different in each context.

Some of the instrumental music teachers demonstrated a willingness to innovate and use methods, which were not necessarily traditional. The data confirmed that Karnatic teaching processes have changed quite markedly over time. Increasing economic pressures have led to the use of individual lesson formats for advanced students over traditional group learning methods. The changes in teaching method demonstrated by Karnatic teachers in Queensland may correlate with demands other than cultural influence such as social demand.

In the same way, Western teaching methods have also been subjected to change over time with the increasing use of non-traditional methods such as Kodaly, Suzuki and Orff. Music content has also expanded to encompass a wider repertoire including music considered folk, popular or from other music cultures. While these styles were evident in the data the jazz genre and forms of improvisation were not taught in these situations and it is noted that for further research investigating this area would present new perspectives on the data. Within this research however, the Western teachers generally taught Western Art music repertoire.

Another point the data showed was that increasingly, Karnatic teachers are relying on printed material and notation placing an emphasis on music literacy as opposed to the pure use of aural/oral skills. These experiences are counter to persisting assumptions about the modes of communication that operate within the two teaching contexts. It is generally assumed that teaching within the Queensland instrumental music context is heavily reliant on music literacy and written modes of communication. Conversely, Karnatic teaching has been traditionally associated with an aural/oral mode of communication. The research demonstrates that these assumptions are

incorrect and that the line between aural/oral and written modes of communication is somewhat arbitrary. Aural/oral modes of communication do not exist exclusive of written modes of communication but interact on a continuum within both Karnatic and Western teaching contexts albeit to a different degree.

Some further notable distinctions were recorded in each of the teaching contexts including a major philosophical difference in the interrelationships between music theory and its application to teaching and ultimately, performance. Teaching practices in the Queensland instrumental music context for example, make a delineation between theory, practical skills and aural proficiency whereas Karnatic teachers present these aspects as an integrated whole. In addition, the study illustrated that (with the exception of percussion learning in the Karnatic context) teachers in the Western context generally placed stronger emphasis on the development of instrument specific technique.

With reference to these common teaching strategies, it is important to acknowledge the subtle differences that occur between different teachers, their experiences of learning and exposure to training, and the contexts of instrumental music teaching. The various ways in which teaching strategies are adopted and applied, as a result and as a response to the interplay between the preceding factors and the modes of communication used by the teacher are critical to this summation. The findings of this research demonstrate that this interplay is at the heart of cultural influence within instrumental music teaching processes and the modes of communication used by teachers. Understanding the difference that exists between usage of aural/oral and written modes of communication within music cultures and students' needs and

preferences to learning styles is integral in developing instrumental music programs in formal contexts.

The multiple ways culture manifests within the processes of instrumental music teaching in the Karnatic and Western contexts studied provides good evidence of culture's pervasive influence. At the same time, it is also important to note that no single aspect of a teacher's practice is likely to give rise to a definitive picture of cultural influence but rather, it is the complete system of methods, strategies and techniques which constitute a teacher's framework for teaching.

It could be argued that there are a finite range of strategies that ultimately can be used to teach instrumental music. As such, one could expect to see particular strategies in operation across many music cultures, which in essence form a set of 'common' strategies. This may mean that it is not possible to discern cultural influence through the use of a single strategy or method of teaching. Instead a broader sample of teaching practice is required to make an accurate judgement on the influence of culture.

### ***Cultural Influence on the Teaching Context***

The research indicated that many aspects in the instrumental music teaching context are influenced by the culture in which it is immersed. This extends to both musical and non-musical elements. While the teachers' own experiences and methods of teaching and modes of communication have been presented, culture also has an impact on the meaning of music making within these practices. In both the Karnatic and Queensland instrumental music contexts, it was evident that culture contributed



to the way that music knowledge was transmitted and the purpose of music teaching and learning in these contexts.

In the Karnatic context the Hindu religion permeated most aspects related to music teaching processes and practices. Devotion to various Hindu gods and/or goddesses was reflected through religious ritual and ceremony, adoration associated with the teachers' own *guru*, lineage as reflected in the teaching processes and ritual, and choice of music material for both learning and performance purposes. This devout spirituality undoubtedly influenced the context surrounding the Karnatic music teachers' practice, the inherently spiritual nature of the music, and the social function of teaching, learning and performance in the Karnatic tradition within a broader context of religious belief.

This cultural influence was seen strongly in a number of non-musical elements associated with the Karnatic teachers. Ritual was commonly used before and after lessons and reflected the spiritual and religious importance of the process of learning Karnatic music. It was expected that students would engage in these practices as a mark of respect for both the teacher and the Hindu deities to which they ascribed.

In the Queensland instrumental music context culture was reflected through:

- the way the teachers approached the structure of the lessons
- the reason why they chose teaching as a profession
- the participation in external examinations as a measure of performance standard

- the way that aspects of music such as practical and theoretical content were taught as separate ideas
- the expectation by people in the school communities for regular public performance to validate outcomes and display the quality of programs being offered and
- the cost of learning an instrument.

In this way religion and/or spirituality as an influencing force was superseded by other factors such as economic forces that influenced the way the teachers in this context approached music teaching and learning.

In a similar light, the purpose or function of maintaining the music tradition through the teaching practice varied between the Karnatic and Queensland instrumental music contexts. For Karnatic teachers, transmitting music knowledge to their students provided them with the opportunities to affirm their cultural tradition. As a result the teachers were committed to upholding the teaching tradition that they themselves had experienced. In the Australian/Indian context however, the teachers did claim that although they taught the same way in which they were taught slight alterations to either the music content, instrumentation or construction of lessons were on occasion made. The teachers attributed this to the constitution of Queensland audiences. As not all people engaging in performance practice were not 'South Indian' the teachers felt that a 'fusion' of styles and presentation was acceptable. If however, Karnatic teachers in the Queensland context were to teach how they teach in Australia, back in India, it would not necessarily be accepted as an 'authentic' approach to music teaching and learning processes. Ultimately though, playing and teaching Karnatic music enabled teachers to express their cultural

identity as Indian people. This was particularly important for Karnatic teachers in Australia.

For the Queensland instrumental music teachers the main purpose of teaching was to generate income. Although this was also a purpose in the Karnatic tradition it was not the main reason given by these teachers to why they taught music. Some instrumental music teachers in the study referred to their teaching practice as a calling. Others were compelled out of personal reasons including high expectations of such a career given significant lineage in a family line of performers and teachers, familial obligations arising from significant investment in lessons and instruments over a number of years; and lastly, the importance of religious and spiritual commitment.

Another aspect of culture that was important in the both contexts was that of class. In the Karnatic context learning the classical music tradition was tied to the Brahmin (higher) caste of people. These practices have subsided over time but are still evident. Similarly, in the Western context due to the cost of learning, only people who are able to afford to learn an instrument and maintain learning over a period of time can continue to do so.

Through the data a number of experiences and comments made by the female Karnatic teachers reflected the social and cultural constructions associated with gender. As such, women were traditionally expected to pursue teaching careers in Karnatic music rather than pursue performance careers. Another related factor that reflected the influence of culture on gender roles was that of instrument choice. The

learning of percussion instruments was male dominated although some women played them.

In addition, a number of traditional events were practised in the Karnatic tradition such as the musical debut, and elevation to teacher from student. The students, their parents and the community in which these events took place held each of these with respect and acceptance. In the Queensland instrumental context similar events occurred. Each of the teachers held performance events whose primary function was to consolidate what the students had learnt as a result of the lessons that they had attended. In the school context, individual and ensemble performances were often displayed so as to provide evidence that the program should continue to be supported by the school community. These events also functioned as positive public image for prospective clients. In the private context, these events were replaced with external examinations so that parents could be provided substantive feedback on what their child had actually learnt. Once the student had reached a particular level in these examinations he or she was considered eligible to teach although none of the teachers from this study had students at this level.

The teacher/student relationship that was developed in each context reflected broader cultural influences. In the Karnatic context respect of one's *guru* is considered an integral part of the learning process. This materialised in the actual performance practice of music content and as previously mentioned, in ritual conducted in this context. In the Queensland instrumental music teaching context however, the teachers complained of students' poor attitude to learning. Lack of practice, unreliability, and lack of commitment to learning were aspects that teachers were

consistently concerned about in this context. The relationship between teacher and student in the Western environment appeared to be more of an equal one than that observed in the Karnatic context where the teacher was viewed as having more knowledge and should therefore be respected for this.

The notion of what made a 'good' teacher was similar in both contexts. This could indicate that although the music content being transmitted was different the ways in which to communicate this and gain positive results from students requires particular qualities from the teacher despite the context in which the teaching takes place. Above all the teachers agreed that patience and the ability to judge what each individual student needs in the teaching environment were qualities that successful teachers would require for effective teaching to take place. Again this may not be conceived as a 'cultural' distinction but may ultimately have implications in various contexts.

Therefore, the data confirmed that culture influenced not only the teachers' own learning experience and the methods of teaching chosen by the teachers in transmitting music knowledge but also in the construction and existence of the environment in which they taught. The influence on these practices from the cultural and social surrounds is an integral aspect of the teaching process but is often understated. This is due in part to the subtleness of the cultural influences as discussed above, and the teachers themselves not being fully aware of the impact that culture has on teaching practices. Understanding this affect however, may assist teachers in producing outcomes faster and more effectively in the instrumental music teaching context.

### ***Implications and Further Research***

The findings of this research may have broader implications for the development of contemporary music teaching and learning practices. These include: providing insight into the way culture potentially influences how instrumental music is taught in other contexts and situations such as classroom music; enabling teachers to reflect on their instrumental music teaching practice and place it within a broader social and cultural context; providing teachers with a basis for a way of assessing and responding to cultural influence in instrumental teaching processes and practices; providing greater opportunities for teachers of instrumental music to utilise traditions other than their own to teach musical concepts – ‘teaching music culturally’; and, providing teachers with a greater repertoire of skills and techniques to work more flexibly with the cultural backgrounds and experiences of learners in their tutelage.

In regard to formal music education practices, it is critical to note that music knowledge can be demonstrated, recorded and assessed in various ways. These processes are integral to music teaching and learning practices and are grounded in a music’s cultural genesis. Music teaching and learning practices in the Queensland instrumental music context may however, overlook the importance of culture as non-western musics are often interpreted from a west-centric perspective. Such an approach may diminish the capacity for students, whose cultural and social experience rests outside the narrow boundaries of Western Art music, to engage, interpret and understand instrumental music in Queensland. Moreover, such approaches could also limit the potential for teachers to convey instrumental music

knowledge effectively to the learner and thereby reduce their fulfilment as professionals.

Being able to accept differences in the transmission and acquisition of music in various learning environments, as well as expanding the opportunities available for students to acquire music literacy skills in the Western Art music tradition are seen as necessary prerequisites for improving music education practices. This approach would respond to the unique interplay between culture and music as well as the requirement for monitoring, reporting and measurement of performance in the instrumental music context.

The next step beyond this research is the development and implementation of a model of teaching and learning based upon the key findings of this research. The model should provide opportunities to convey music knowledge which reflects the importance of a teacher's formative experiences in teaching and learning particularly the influence of past teachers. The model should also enable the use of a wide variety of teaching and learning practices, which are determined by the cultural and social demands of the learners. Finally, the model should reflect the importance of non-musical aspects of the music teaching process, which give meaning and social function to the processes of music teaching, learning and performing.

Implicit in the development and implementation of such a model is the need to answer key questions concerning whether it is possible to consciously change instrumental music teaching practices to reflect the cultural needs of students and learners, whether it is possible to apply different communication modes to different

students in group learning situations, whether there are there tools which teachers can use to reliably assess the cultural fit between their teaching practice, students and the learning environment, and, whether the findings of this research have broader import for music teaching generally. In particular, are the findings generalisable to other learning situations such as classroom music?

### *Summary*

At the very heart of this research is a fundamental question about the purpose of music and the systems for its teaching and learning. I have argued that the purpose of music is to affirm cultural identity and the systems for music teaching play as much a critical role in communicating cultural knowledge as they do in conveying knowledge of musical concepts within instrumental music teaching situations. Moreover, these musical concepts and the way teachers teach are culturally determined and reflects broader judgements about what is valuable to a society and its people. In this sense, for music teaching and learning practices to be ‘culturally responsive’ change is inevitable.



## APPENDIX A

### Glossary of Terms

Term	Meaning
<i>Adhi Talam</i>	An eight beat rhythmic cycle with accents on beats 5 and 7.
<i>Alapana</i>	The improvisatory section at beginning of a piece
<i>Anupallavi</i>	The section of a Karnatic song that follows the <i>pallavi</i>
<i>Anuswarams</i>	Notes used in Karnatic music
<i>Arohana</i>	The ascending pattern of a raga
<i>Avarohana</i>	The descending pattern of a raga
<i>Bhajans</i>	Short devotional songs
<i>Bindi</i>	Spiritual ornamental makeup worn by Hindus
<i>Charanam</i>	The section of a Karnatic song after the <i>anupallavi</i> where <i>shruti</i> is used rather than lyrics
<i>Dikshitar</i>	One of the three Karnatic composer Saints
<i>Gamaka/Gamakam</i>	The term used for any ornamentation or sliding between notes used in a raga

<i>Ganesh</i>	A deity of the Hindu religion (is depicted with an elephant head)
<i>Geetham</i>	Simple structured songs learnt after beginning lessons
<i>Guru</i>	Teacher
<i>Gurukula</i>	Traditional system of teaching
<i>Jantai Varisai</i>	Exercises learnt in beginning Karnatic lessons
<i>Karnatic/Carnatic/Karnatak</i>	South Indian classical music tradition
<i>Keertanam</i>	The second level of songs learnt in the Karnatic tradition
<i>Konnakal</i>	The syllabic technique used in rhythm learning
<i>Krishna</i>	A deity of the Hindu religion (is depicted blue)
<i>Kunchum</i>	Powder used to make <i>bindi</i>
<i>Lalgudi bowing style</i>	Violin bowing technique devised by Lalgudi Jayaraman
<i>Mayamalavagowla Raga</i>	A combination of notes to make a scale: C,d,E,F,G,a,B,C C,B,a,G,F,E,d,C.
<i>Mohanam Raga</i>	A combination of notes to make a scale: C,D,E,G,A,C C,A,G,E,D,C.

<i>Mridangam</i>	A two headed drum used in Karnatic music
<i>Pallavi</i>	The first section of a Karnatic piece
<i>Pooja</i>	Hindu ceremony that gives respect to the deities
<i>Raga - Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, Ni, Sa</i>	The ascending and descending order of notes employed in composition and performance
<i>Sanskrit</i>	Ancient Indian language
<i>Shishya</i>	Student
<i>Shruti</i>	Notes
<i>Shyasastry</i>	One of the three Karnatic composer Saints
<i>Swara/svara</i>	Notes
<i>Tala</i>	The cyclic rhythm – a major feature of Indian music
<i>Tyagaraja</i>	One of the three Karnatic composer Saints

## APPENDIX B

### Informed Consent Form

RE: Georgina M Barton – PhD Research.

As Part of my Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) research I will be examining the influence that culture has on instrumental teaching practices in both the public or school environment and private or studio setting. As part of the research I will be observing how teachers teach, that is what processes and procedures they use in the instrumental music teaching context.

The research will include observation of a number of lessons with each teacher involved, as well as taped interviews, and the collection of written documentation. Unless otherwise negotiated all materials will be treated as confidential. Participant's names will not be used in publication and all materials will be stored in secure location with access only by Georgina M Barton. Some of the material may be seen by Dr Adrian Thomas the official Queensland University of Technology supervisor of the PhD project to validate and authenticate results. In this light pseudonyms will be used in all references to the analysed information.

The project will be undertaken from July 1996 until August 2001. The duration of individual interviews will be approximately thirty to sixty minutes. If any audio taped materials are used in publication prior consent will be obtained from the participants in the study. It should be noted that the research does not involve any harm to individuals and the nature of the project and the use to which the materials will be put will be fully explained to the participants.

It is hoped that the research will lead to more effective ways of utilising culture in instrumental music teaching particularly in terms of curriculum, teaching resources and learning environments.

The participants have the right to withdraw at any time and any materials collected will be erased or destroyed. Any queries or complaints regarding this study can be address to the project supervisor Dr Adrian Thomas Queensland University of Technology telephone: (07) 3864 3294.

Georgina Barton

## Participants' Consent Form

I.....have read (or had read to me) and understand the above information and agree to participate in the study knowing that the data collected may be published, or provided to other researchers, providing my name is not used, and that I may withdraw my consent at anytime.

.....Date / /  
Signature of Participant (or authorised representative)

.....Date / /  
Georgina M. Barton (signature)

I further consent that video/audio taped materials o music performance or creative work may be used in publication.

.....Date / /  
Signature of Participant (or authorised representative)

.....Date / /  
Georgina M. Barton (signature)

## APPENDIX C

### Letter of Information for Teachers

To: Instrumental Music Teacher

Re: Consent to participate in doctoral research project

10/04/97

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Over the next three years, I will be undertaking a doctoral research project which will investigate the influence of culture on instrumental music teaching practices. The research will involve observation of instrumental teachers engaged in teaching primarily however, semi-structured interviews and the collection of relevant supporting documentation such as curriculum materials and teaching resources will also take place. At no stage during the research will the names of participants be used, and all interview data will be strictly confidential.

The research proposal will be submitted to the Faculty Human Ethics Committee (FHEC) for approval. Along with this, I am required to submit a letter indicating your consent to participate in the research.

Thank you for your assistance in the forthcoming research project and I look forward to working with you to further build instrumental music education in Queensland.

Yours sincerely

Georgina Barton

## APPENDIX D

### Sample of Journal entries – the Events

#### Event One – E1

##### Teacher

Parvathi

##### Date of E1

6<sup>th</sup> of February 1993

##### Number of participants

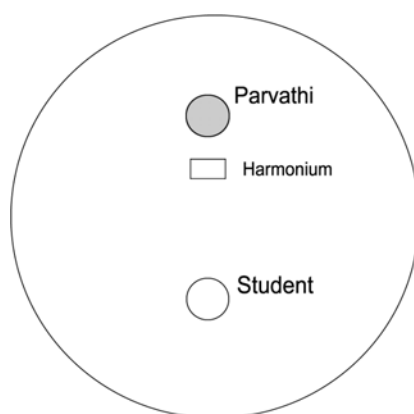
2 students and myself

##### Duration of event

Approximately 45 minutes

##### Ethnographic setting

#### Diagram 1 Parvathi - Event One



The darkest circle is Parvathi with the harmonium in front of her. The two students that I observed are the light grey circles. When I was invited to sit on

the floor these students had already finished their lesson and had left. I (white circle) then participated in a lesson with Parvathi on my own.

### **Process**

Event one is the first official lesson that I attended with Parvathi. I arrived at her house in the afternoon and walked to the front door of her house where I took my shoes off and I entered the front room where I was invited to sit on a couch by the wall. Parvathi was sitting on the floor in this room behind a harmonium with two girls sitting on her right learning some songs. I observed how Parvathi taught the girls. They appeared to sing some material that they had done before and moved on to a new song. Parvathi began by singing a short section with the length of four slow beats then the students repeated what Parvathi sang. This was repeated three times and a new four beat phrase was learnt in the same way. Parvathi then joined these to make an eight beat phrase. Parvathi sang the phrase through and then both Parvathi and the students sang together. Once this was done the teacher said in English “Practise for next time”, and then the students sang a short melodic phrase and left her house. Parvathi then invited me to sit with her and explained in English that like western music, Karnatic music is based on scales and beats. She then sang a *raga* (equable to a western scale) and explained that this *raga* used all the *shruti* (equable to western music notes) in Karnatic music. Before I sang the *raga* I was asked to sing a short pattern of notes that was the same as the girls sang before they left. Parvathi sang this pattern *Sa Pa Sa' Pa Sa* (equable to western sol-fa: doh, soh, doh', soh, doh):





After we had done this without any error and to Parvathi's satisfaction, she then told me about *tala* (equable to rhythm in western music) in Karnatic music. The *raga* that I had just learnt was now sung slowly to an eight beat pattern called *Adhi talam* and this was displayed through various hand movements. Table 3 shows the actions required for each *tala* beat in *adhi talam*.

**Table 1: Action associated with each beat in an eight beat cycle.**

Beats	Action
1	Right palm on right leg
2	Little finger on right leg
3	Ring finger on right leg
4	Middle finger on right leg
5	Right palm on right leg
6	Back of right hand on right leg
7	Right palm on right leg
8	Back of right hand on right leg

Parvathi showed me how to do this slowly by just counting the beats and demonstrating the beating on her right leg. This was then added to the singing of the *raga* as both the ascending and descending pattern had eight beats. I found it quite difficult to put all these aspects together. Each of these concepts were taught very slowly. The speed remained constant throughout the lesson and it was only this *raga* and the *tala* that were taught. I then sang *Sa Pa Sa' Pa Sa*

again and was told when to come to my next lesson and to practise the material that we learnt in this lesson at home.

### Event Two – E2

#### Teacher

Parvathi

#### Date of E2

7<sup>th</sup> of February 1993

#### Number of participants

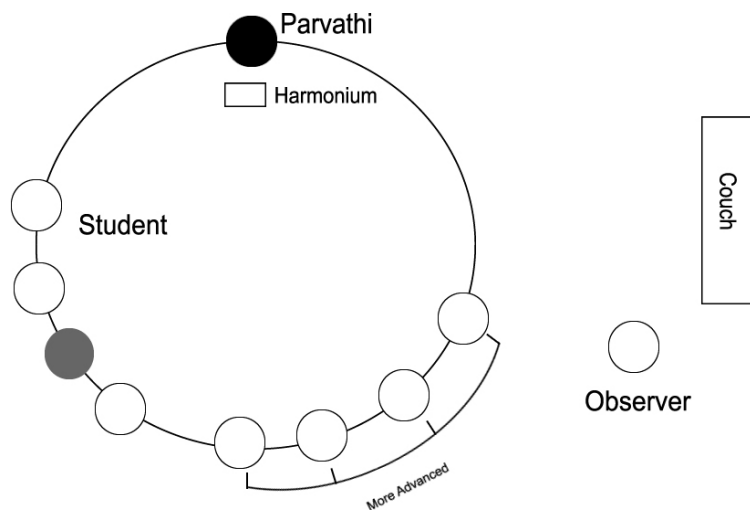
8 students and one teacher and one observer

#### Duration of event

25 minutes of instruction

#### Ethnographic setting

#### Diagram 2 Parvathi - Event Two



#### Process

When I arrived for Event Two, the second lesson with Parvathi, she was sitting behind the harmonium again but this time there were seven girls sitting cross-

legged in a circle around her. I joined the circle straight away this time. I observed that Parvathi played an A E and A on the harmonium and I was asked to sing *Sa Pa Sa' Pa Sa*.

Parvathi, the other students and I then sang the scale I had learnt in the previous lesson. This was sung with the *tala* beat kept on my right leg. As I was singing I would also observe how the other students were doing this. Parvathi then demonstrated how to double the speed of the *raga* by singing two notes to each *tala* beat,

### Transcription three



and to also quadruple the speed with four notes to each *tala* beat.

### Transcription four



We sang through the three speeds a number of times until Parvathi thought that I had understood the concept and grasped the change in speed with the *raga* and *tala* combined. I then sang *Sa Pa Sa' Pa Sa* again and left. The other students remained behind to participate in more tuition.

## Event Four – E4

### Teacher

Parvathi

### Date of E4

14<sup>th</sup> February 1993

### Number of Participants

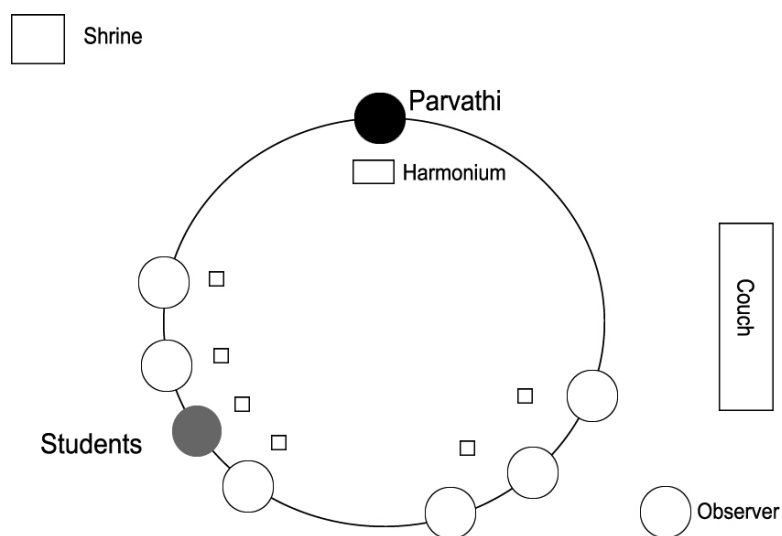
5 students

### Duration of event

15 minutes

### Ethnographic setting

### Diagram 4 Parvathi - Event four



### Process

In this event I first used a textbook for learning. Apart from myself there were four other girls in attendance. Parvathi asked one girl in Tamil to pass me a music book to read the lessons from. It was said to be in English where the

*shruti* were written with capital letters – *S R G M P D N S'*. This equalled the sol-fa that I was already familiar with – *Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, Ni, Sa*. Another girl arrived at the same time that I did so we both sang *S P S' P S* and sang from the book exercises one through to five.

### Transcription Five

#### Exercise one



#### Exercise two



#### Exercise three



*Exercise four*



*Exercise five*



With each exercise the pace was increased in the same way that the *raga* had been increased in previous lessons. I however did not sing the fastest speed - eight beats to a *tala* as I still was not totally confident with the names of the notes. In this lesson I was required to keep up with the others students by imitating both them and the teacher. Up until now I had only sang the *Mayamalavagowla raga* in its ascending an descending form. After these exercises were completed I stayed and observed the other students until they finished their lessons. We all sang *S P S' P S* when the lesson had finished and left together.

**Event Six - E6**

**Teacher**

Maya

**Date of E6**

6<sup>th</sup> April 1993

**Number of Participants**

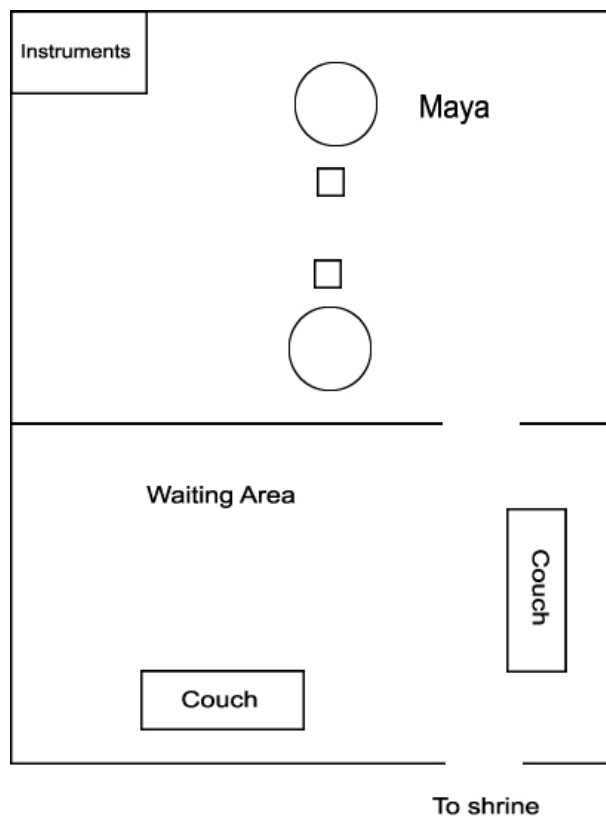
4

**Duration of event**

Approximately 120 minutes

**Ethnographic setting**

**Diagram 6 Maya - Event six**





## **Process**

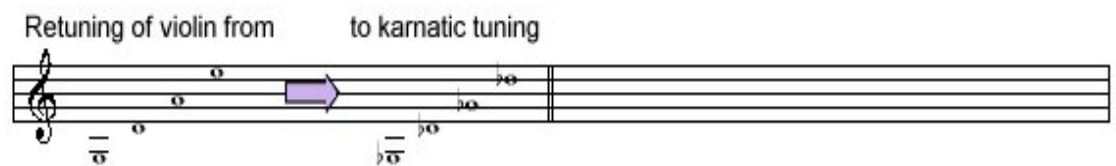
Event 6 was the first meeting that I had with Maya. The event began with a discussion with Maya and her son Krishna – a *mridangam* (south Indian double headed drum) player. Maya did not appear to have a great command of the English language therefore Krishna translated what Maya said from Tamil to English. She did at times however speak in English and I felt that she could communicate quite fluently, she however was not confident with her English skills. When Maya taught me she would often keep words to a minimum and demonstrate regularly what she wanted me to do. Maya and Krishna explained that most of their family members were professional musicians. Maya was a professional violinist and performed regularly throughout the south of India and in the United States of America. They explained that their family was the fifth generation from one of the composer saints of Karnatic music - *Tyagaraja*.

Maya's brother was one of the most famous Karnatic violinists in India. Maya had also taught in the United States and had currently about thirty private students in Chennai. Maya taught each student individually as she indicated that they learn more this way. Maya said that she was very interested in learning Western style violin and began to say that she thought that Western and Karnatic music were very different as one relied on notation and the other did not. We discussed the possibility of having four lessons a week. This I had not planned as I lived quite some distance from her house. However, after this meeting I was very keen to spend as much time as possible learning Karnatic music. Maya was only able to teach me for the next two and a half months as she was travelling to California, where her daughter lived, to teach and perform. Maya said that

having four lessons a week allowed me to learn a decent amount of material in this time, depending on my talent and the amount of practise I did. After quite a long discussion Maya and I entered her music teaching room. The room had many traditional Indian instruments including violins, *veenas*, *tamburas* and various drums in it. Maya invited me to play some western music on one of her own violins. The violin's strings were tuned differently to how I tuned the violin so I retuned it to fifths. I returned the violin to the traditional Indian tuning *Sa-Pa-Sa'-Pa'*.

### Transcription Six

#### Tunings



As a result of the lessons I had attended with Parvathi, I transferred the music material from voice to the violin myself prior to learning with Maya. This I demonstrated to Maya. She seemed impressed that I could demonstrate the first lessons on violin already. This inspired Maya to discuss her desire to learn about Western music and how Karnatic scales paralleled western scales such as a major scale or harmonic minor. Maya was able to tell me the names of some *ragas* that were the same as these scales. We both demonstrated these on violin together and separately. We also discussed the possibility of transposition with *Sa* in Karnatic music and the tonic in Western music (this reminded me of movable

*doh*). Maya then showed me how to sit on the floor and play the violin in the Karnatic style (sitting cross-legged with right leg out further and scroll resting on the right foot the chinrest on collar bone). This position felt very strange initially but it soon felt comfortable. We reiterated the first few lessons as outlined in my book (I had purchased the first text in learning Karnatic music – *Ganamrutha Bodhini- Sangeetha Bala Padam*). Maya demonstrated how I was to stretch my first finger back very close to nut when playing *Ri* and *Ni*. This also seemed strange to me as playing it this way sounded out of tune to my western-trained ear. Maya indicated that the ‘flatter’ it sounded the better. When I completed these first exercises Maya expected me to play *Sa, Pa, Sa’, Pa, Sa* (as in the vocal lessons with Parvathi) on the violin and then pack up.

**Event Ten - E10**

**Teacher**

Maya

**Date of E10**

9<sup>th</sup> May 1993

**Number of participants**

One teacher and one student

**Duration of event**

Approximately 50 minutes

**Ethnographic setting**

As per event 6, 7, 8 and 9

## Process

Maya explained in this event that as *gamaka* is the most important feature of Karnatic music it was essential that an understanding of this technique was gained. She said that there were quite a number of ways to decorate one melodic idea or phrase. Most *gamaka* occurs on *ri* or *da* to start with and that certain exercises develop skill in the other types of *gamaka* – such as (1) approaching a note from one note above, or (2) from one note below, or (3) one note above to one note below to the melody note, or finally (4) from two notes above. There are also some more complex combinations of some of the above. This led to an *alapana* (equable to improvisation in western art music) style of playing. Maya demonstrated the first example of *gamaka* using the *raga* called *Mohanam raga*.

## Transcription Seven: Mohanam Raga



*sa ri ga pa da sa' sa' da pa ga ri sa*

She then proceeded to play a pattern using the notes of this *raga*

**Sa Ri Ga Pa Ga Ri Sa Ri Ga Ri Sa Ri Ga Pa**

From this she expected me to continue the pattern by starting on Ri – R G P D P G R G P G R G P D. This was quite difficult to do at the tempo set, and still keep to the *talam*. If I made a small error I continued playing but if there was a difficult area I was stopped and the area was isolated and repeated over in the

same beat. In some areas I kept making errors so Maya just said “Practise for next time”. We then moved to a new piece called a *Keertanam*. These songs really sounded good and were fun to play. The songs were structured into a basic Karnatic song form and could be used as part of performance repertoire. The sections were called *Pallavi*, *anupallavi*, *charanam* and each section was repeated before moving to the next section. Maya now indicated to me whether the notes were flattened or raised when writing out the *raga* above the songs in my book. As the *Keertanam* were longer in length than *Geetham* it took longer to learn them in the same way that Maya taught then *Geetham*. Maya wrote them out in my book while I revised my previous lesson’s material. We would then sing through the *Keertanam* using the traditional Indian sol-fa and then with the lyrics (I still felt that the *Sa* was too low for my voice as it was not what I was used to in my vocal lessons). I then started to play through it on violin on my own this time and at other times Maya would play with me. Once she felt that I had familiarised myself enough to continue memorising the piece on my own at home the lesson ended.

### **Event Thirteen - E13**

#### **Teacher**

Khali

#### **Date of E13**

12<sup>th</sup> September 1993

#### **Number of participants**

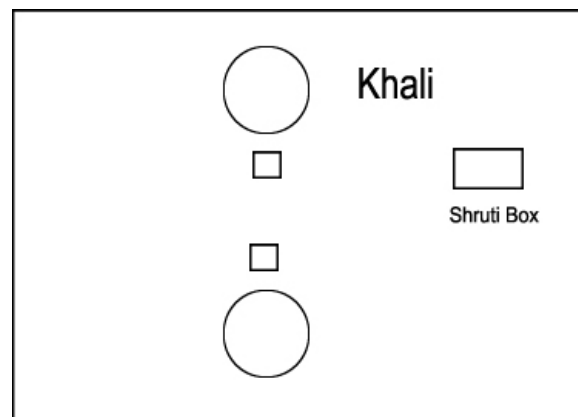
2 – one teacher and one student

### **Duration of event**

Approximately 80 minutes

### **Ethnographic setting**

### **Diagram 7 Khali- Event thirteen**



### **Process**

In this event the intention was to show Khali what knowledge I had already gained from my lessons in Chennai with Teachers A and B. It was also to plan where my Karnatic tuition would continue, from India to Australia, with Khali as my new Karnatic teacher. I wanted to continue my studies in Karnatic violin and Khali indicated that she had learnt this style from her father in Bombay at his music school. I played through *Jantai Varisaigal* (see transcription in event 7). Khali explained her knowledge of songs and thought that I could learn more repertoire with her. As she taught vocal music predominantly I was to start having vocal lessons with Khali every Monday for an hour. Each lesson cost eight dollars. I felt that Khali did not feel confident in teaching violin. I had thought that any songs I learnt with Khali I could later transfer to the violin, as

the melodic line learnt was the same that vocal performers sang. We started with a new *Keertanam - Mahaganapathim*. I was familiar with this piece as I had listened to it from a tape recording that I bought in Chennai.

In this event I noticed quite some difference between the way that my Maya had played this piece, the recording and how Khali was now teaching it to me. I gathered that the difference lay in the way that *gamaka* was employed as the notation in the book was basically just the ‘skeletal’ form of the piece without any ornamentation. As a result I decided to transcribe each example of this piece discovering that transcribing *gamaka* was a very difficult but possible task.

**Event Twenty-Six - E26**

**Teacher**

Vishnu

**Date of E26**

October 4<sup>th</sup> 1997

**Number of participants**

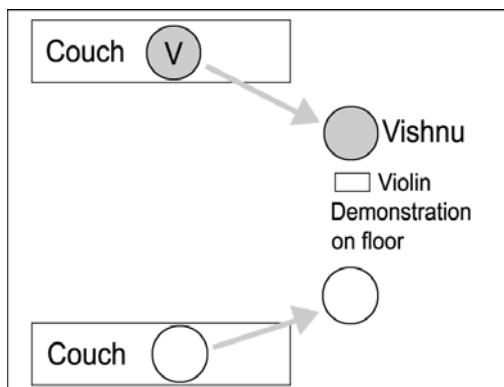
Two

**Duration of event**

Approximately 150 minutes

## Ethnographic setting

Diagram 13 Vishnu - Event twenty-six



## Process

Vishnu explained that he began learning with someone who was not a well-known performer or popular artist just a music teacher who had high devotion to the teaching of Karnatic music. He commented on the fact that he was never very committed to the learning of Karnatic music but two years before he migrated to Australia in 1994 he put more effort into it. Vishnu still felt that if he had practised as much as he should then he would now be professional. In the early learning context Vishnu was taught on an individual basis and then after reaching a certain level he was combined with others. There were never a set number of students. Sometimes Vishnu would start the lesson on his own or there would be three other students there and he would play along with them. *Ganamrutha Bodhini* was the set text used and Vishnu felt that this made teaching and learning a lot easier as everything was written out so you just read the book and go from beginner to intermediate level. A second text (*Geetham*)



takes you from intermediate to advanced and a third book (*Keertanam*) is the advanced level. At this level Vishnu's *guru* also wrote other songs in a separate book. The choice of these songs was at the discretion of the teacher. These would be ones particularly that the teacher thought that his hands would cope with. *Gamaka* was not notated and Vishnu felt that this technique could not be taught in a lesson as such but just replicated from the teacher's sounds. The student just sat and did this repeatedly until they got better and better. "Self realisation in music, that is very important for every person you have to realise where you are the quality of music and what you want to produce".

You practise until you get satisfaction not perfection strike a balance between one hundred percent markers and your own capacity. It depends on learning cycle and effort into advancing status and standard. Before migrating to Australia Vishnu wanted to maximise his learning in India so changed *guru* to one that was a professional artist. Vishnu felt he learnt more here by devoting himself more to music in terms of time and effort. Sometimes he would have two or three hour lessons five to seven times a week. He also spent a lot of time attending concerts and listening to performances and lessons. "In performance you need standard to go by especially for the listeners. It upholds the tradition".

We then talked about the different schools of Karnatic music and forms of representing this tradition. People often modify it now to suit their own and their listeners needs. Light music very popular now. Western music has influenced Karnatic style where there is not as much ornamentation and improvisation – more notation and added instruments such as bass guitar. The student still gives

credit to their teacher. Lessons start with old material for about half an hour then Vishnu would learn two lines only, of a new song so next time this would be an old lesson. It is a cycle where two new lines added each time until a whole new song is learnt. This would probably take about two weeks. However it would only be the skeleton of the song learnt and the student would then have to practice until totally familiar with song and add *gamaka* to make it sound better. Need it to go into your mind basic way to learn Karnatic music any stage musician does not have notes before him. Always learning always changing self-realisation is a never-ending process. Vishnu believes that he has the ability to keep it in his mind or realise this music knowledge but not the technical ability to replicate these ideas.

- It is a three part process:
- Conceive idea in mind
- Practise don't think get effect in fingers
- Synchronise both

This is an ongoing process and each concert that you do is a hard test at this. A good teacher can analyse their students know their problem areas, skills needed and form their teaching and lesson structures to help improve these skills. But don't have expectations too high some students may get there quicker.

Music is a gift grace from the gods if you are doing something extra it is a blessing...It is a combination of the work you put in, the grace, the background you have, the opportunity you have, the monetary (what you earn and what you are willing to pay).

## **Event Twenty-Seven– E27**

### **Teacher**

Karl

### **Date of E27**

March 1995

### **Number of participants**

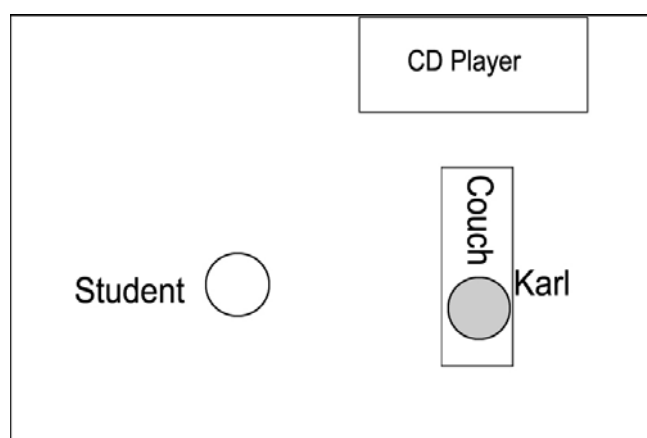
Two – one teacher and one student

### **Duration of event**

Approximately 70 minutes

### **Ethnographic setting**

### **Diagram 14 Karl - Event Twenty-Seven**



### **Process**

When I arrived to this event I was asked to take my shoes off at the door and told that this would be expected of me each time I came for a lesson. I was then invited into Karl's unit and asked to sit at a round table with chairs. Here we talked at great length about what I intended to achieve as a student learning violin. It was discussed that a particular examination level with the Australian

Music Examinations Board Associate of Music Degree or Licentiate Trinity College was desired as it was through these external examination bodies that learning levels in violin were accepted means of measuring violin students' performance and musical ability. Karl said that he was familiar with both of these examination schools and then suggested I play a piece on the violin so that it could be determined which level could be achieved and what pieces were required to learn. As Karl observed me play he made some comments and suggestions on what techniques needed correcting. At times he demonstrated these on his own violin so that I could further understand the concept that he was trying to explain.

Often I was requested to do the same after he demonstrated. I continued to play a piece I had learnt with a previous teacher. It became evident that Karl taught this particular piece differently to how I had learnt it previously. For example, specific fingering or placement of fingers on the fingerboard for particular notes was notably different to how my previous teacher had marked the score. Also the bowing patterns were different and expected articulations of notes were portrayed differently.

I played through the first distinct section of the piece while Karl made suggestions as to how to improve sound reproduction, bowing technique and what fingering I was to use when playing this phrase. Karl commented on the publication of the score and how some are better than others in terms of authenticity or how the composer originally wrote it. He felt that the particular edition that I had been using was not the best version in this case. I was then

asked to bring more music with me to the next lesson and an outline of repertoire required for the external examinations.

### **Event Thirty-Three – E33**

#### **Teacher**

Karl

#### **Date of E33**

3<sup>rd</sup> November 1997

#### **Number of participants**

Two

#### **Duration of event**

Approximately 90 minutes

#### **Ethnographic setting**

As per E27

#### **Process**

This Event was conducted as an informal interview between Karl and myself. Karl discussed at length his learning experiences as a violin student in Sweden. A well-known and respected violin teacher in Sweden had devised particular methods to teach specific violin technique and published relevant tutors for other teacher to use also. Karl felt fortunate to be able to learn with this teacher for five to six years and said that his technique is a reflection of this method and one he uses with his own students. Karl explained the content of the texts and showed how he felt the progression from one book to the next was appropriate for beginning techniques in violin tuition. He added that not all texts followed the progression and were therefore not as coherent.

In general, Karl felt it vital that the teacher first played pieces being learnt and then the student copy afterwards. This enabled the student to gain not only a visual concept of the piece from the score but also an aural one. He emphasised that right from the conception of learning, technique such as posture, right hand and left hand technique should always be corrected. Another important issue for Karl in the learning process was parental involvement. Karl indicated that if parents were not supportive of their children in learning then development and improvement would be limited as home practise was vital. Other issues were discussed in this event. Of note is the comment made by Karl about violin performance practice in the western art music tradition. Karl said that the creation of a 'good' sound on violin was the most overriding goals that violin teachers and students should have in teaching and learning. This was only possible if both the teacher and student have a concrete idea on what type of sound wanting to be produced. He believed that the written score was only a basic representation of a piece of music as aspects such as dynamics, colour and musically are not there on the paper. Without imaging the sound internally good performance on violin was not possible.

### **Event Thirty-Six - E36**

#### **Teacher**

Anne

#### **Date of E36**

2<sup>nd</sup> April 1998

**Number of participants**

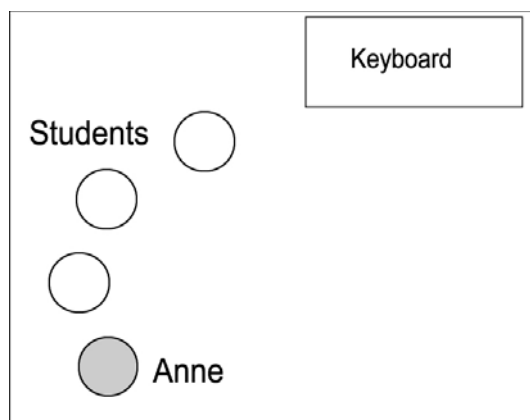
Three – Anne and two students

**Duration of event**

Approximately 30 minutes

**Ethnographic setting**

**Diagram 16 Anne - Event thirty six**



**Process**

At the beginning of this event Anne explained to the students that they would be required to attend another lesson in the following day so as to make up for a missed lesson time due to other events happening in the school. Anne then said that the first part of this event was going to concentrate on the students' theory lessons.

The students then opened books that contained handouts and notes that Anne had given them in previous lessons. The theory work was unrelated to any other musical content that the students learnt in this event. Anne identified a distinct difference between theory of music and playing (performing) within the event

context. The students focused on two specific theoretical concepts concerning note lengths and definitions of a number of words that are often used on western art music scores.

Anne then began the ‘practical’ part of the event. The content for this section of the event was largely from a set textbook that the students were required to purchase as part of their learning. Anne then asked the students which number exercise they learnt in the previous lesson and requested them to open their books to that page. One student commenced playing through this exercise and then a few beats later the other joined them. Anne then asked both students to play together by counting 1, 2, 3, 4. The next exercise was then taught. Anne first had the students sing through the exercise with her. They then proceeded to play the exercise on their instruments. Throughout this event Anne continuously corrected specific aspects of technique for violin such as right hand technique, left hand positioning and bowing technique. This was done in the middle of each time the students played through an exercise. Rarely did the students play through pieces in totality.

### **Event Forty-Seven - E47**

#### **Teacher**

Tina

#### **Date of E47**

17<sup>th</sup> November 1997

#### **Number of participants**

Five students and Tina

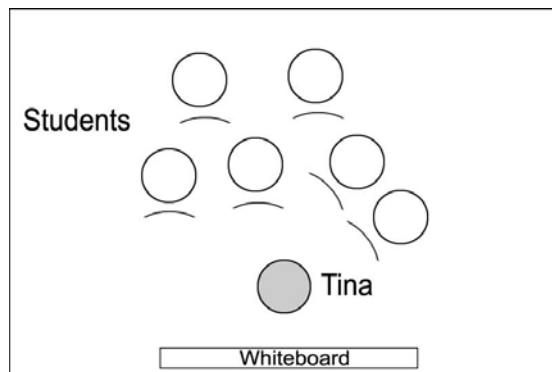


### **Duration of event**

Approximately 30 minutes

### **Ethnographic setting**

### **Diagram 19 Tina - Event forty seven**



### **Process**

At the beginning of Event 47 the students arrived at different times. Three students came into the room at the same time and then two others approximately five minutes later. During this time Tina was looking for previous material that the students were learning on a compact disc. The students had set up their instruments and music and began playing music material themselves. When they made any errors they showed awareness of these. One student started playing a set piece from the text. They played four beats of the piece and then another student sang the next phrase and continued the piece on their clarinet. This then prompted Tina to ask what a question about the dots above the notes. The student answered, looked at a definition written in their text, and began to play again in this fashion. Tina was still waiting for some students by this time. Tina then makes a phone call to find these students.

The students already present began to play the same song but actually started at different times. This was a piece they had not played before but was written in their textbook. Tina then explained music knowledge to the students based on this song that they chose to play. Within ten minutes the students have played through the first four bars five times with some discussion on rhythm and various notes and how they must sound particularly the higher notes.

### **Transcription Eight**



After learning this short section Tina exclaims that they could learn all of this for their graduation that was in two weeks time. Tina then expands her explanation on the rhythmic content by using a whiteboard to demonstrate these ideas. The next five minutes was taken up with each student playing at their own pace this particular song. They were not asked to play together but rather play on their own at the same time to get familiar with the piece. Tina still listened to them and sang any note when she heard them played incorrectly. Tina then got a trumpet to play through the piece with the students. Tina counted in “One, two, ready and...”. There was a rest in between the first section and second section of the piece. Tina then explains some aspects about the song in terms of its form and any perceived difficult notes or sections. The students are asked questions about the pieces form while they looked at the score.

Tina then got the students to play a part near the end that she thought would be difficult. The students and Tina all play to the end of the piece. They then play

the piece with a piano accompaniment and the compact disc recording. The speed on the recording is much faster. There are many errors played even by Tina but they continue until the whole piece is finished. Tina then says practise over the week that way they would be able to take it faster.

## APPENDIX E

### Interview Questions and Prompts

Do you remember your first music learning experience or formal music lesson?

Why did you learn music?

Who were your teachers if more than one? And why did you learn from them?

What did they do in an actual lesson? How did they teach you?

Was it a group context or individualised tuition?

Did the teacher demonstrate material to you?

What are qualities of a 'good' teacher?

Describe your relationship with your teacher/s

What do you consider important in your music culture's teaching and learning context?

In each of the interviews various other questions arose that were relevant to where the teachers' thoughts would lead. The interviews were thus, semi-structured following more of an oral approach to gathering of information. As such, below are the questions used in an interview with a professional tabla player in Brisbane that provided extra supportive information on Indian music teaching and learning.

### Semi Structured Interview Questions and Prompts

Describe briefly your musical training prior to learning tabla.

What was your interest in learning tabla?

Describe your teacher/s briefly.

Briefly recall your first lesson with your guru

Do/did you use any text in the lessons? If so, what are they?

What was the length of the lessons? If this varied why?

What were the techniques used by the teacher when learning a piece? Did they play the piece all the way through first? In sections?

In your experience do you think there are specific techniques used in percussion that are not or are used in learning melodic instruments?

Describe the stages used in learning eg. Vocal recitations, one hand technique only, how did the learning increase in difficulty?

What styles of teaching did the teacher/s use? – rote, aural emphasis, demonstration, written guides, memorisation?

Were the lessons conducted in groups or on an individual level?

Was payment required?

## APPENDIX F

### Samples of Interview Transcripts – Krishna and Anne.

#### *Interview with Krishna*

11<sup>th</sup> February 1997

*What can you remember of your learning experiences? Can you reflect upon your first musical encounter or lesson?*

Oh yes. It was fantastic I can say that I was probably three or four years old and I remember my father taking me. In my family everybody else were musicians as they played violin or musical instruments. It seems that when I was just a baby whatever I was shown I was fascinated with the *mridangam*'s sound. I was fascinated with them and I used to just observe them and interact with them since I was a child.

*So you had some contact before your first formal music lesson?*

Yes I displayed an attitude to rhythm it seems and so what happened is my family – everyone of my cousins said you better follow this desire because several generations had been in music so they said “Why don't you put this fellow into rhythm?”

*You make a distinction between melodic and rhythmic instruments with the latter being not musical?*

That's true. For the past four generations my family has been the forefront of music and they have mostly been in violin or vocal or something like that – nobody else has been into rhythm. Perhaps just for two generations before me there was one very old great-uncles who was a *gongeeba* [tambourine-like instrument] player.

*Who was your first teacher?*

The very first lessons I had was with a great master by the name of *Hariharis Brahmadi*. I remember him as an aging man and I also remember the *mridangam* being too big for me. I started beating just on one end of the drum like this – *Krishna demonstrates pretending to drum an upright mridangam*. I remember that I was fascinated with the lessons and I used to come back home and use a big box or tin that stored biscuits and keep drumming over and over. My parents especially ordered a small *mridangam* made for me. So that is how I

remember starting off and then I never looked back because I just continued playing more and more.

*Did you change masters?*

Yes after a few years I went and learnt from a gentleman who was one of the best teachers, and his sons and his grandsons are illustrious performers. Some of his students have really come to the forefront of *mridangam* performance. His school of music is really well known. But after a while I found that I was too young to go from my house to his house so someone who learnt with me would travel with me by bus as the house was eight or nine kilometres away. The music school was so populated that you can't afford to find the time to give individualised tuition so ten people or so would sit and learn the same lessons and play together.

*If you were learning more quickly than the others – how would that work?*

No problem the others would stop and the ones that learnt further would probably just go ahead.

*So would the students learn one at a time?*

Yes and no. When the new lessons are being learnt only when the old lessons are being rehearsed or played. That is when everyone starts playing together but I really used to love the joint sessions for example. It brings a sense of competition and a sense of teamwork. It's really nice to hear so many drums and drummers play the same beat in synchronisation. It's really exciting.

*What was the placement of teacher and students like?*

If I remember right, what happened was my teacher being a very diligent man he has been a successful professional drummer himself in his young days and then he retired and from the field he started teaching more and more so he would just recline in a chair.

*Would he have a mridangam to demonstrate rhythms on to the students?*

No basically, there were always some of us assistants who could just show us the basic movements and once the students have the basic strokes through unique verbal presentation we would just repeat verbally, telling them very slowly, those strokes. The master in this way can teach the student without using the *mridangam*. Our system is very very unique – a student can really learn a lot from a performing artist.

*Was he no longer performing as he had gotten old?*

He got old but he was good enough to make excellent performers out of us through his teaching. He was a very good teacher so its like you know you can become an excellent performer even by just learning from a non-performing

*guru*. So he used to just sit in an arm chair and relax and of course be very attentive and he used to direct us and teach us and scold us if we were not keeping up correct speed etcetera. He would use to tell us whether we were going too fast or too slow to the beat.

*Would the lessons be very planned and compartmentalised?*

Yes *guru* would start playing the first few lessons and he would see if everyone understood and were getting the strokes right and the right rhythm. Generally people tended to go faster – in Indian music we call this *kala prumanam* – it means tempo, *kala* means time and *prumanam* probably means dimension – the dimension of time. The tempo has to be maintained so if you start at the tempo you should have the training and the discipline to paly within that and maintain the tempo – not go too fast or slow.

*Do some pieces speed up though?*

Yes, but speeding up is done in a systematic way and a very regular manner. It is not a haphazard speeding up in this particular aspect. There is a difference between South Indian and North Indian classical music you get a bit more oh what do you call it... in south Indian classical music the speeding up is done according to a strict mathematical way.

*The interviewer then proceeded to explain the term rubato..*

North Indian is like that a bit more random. The speeding up is basically based on feelings and emotions of the artist and also how his hands and fingers cooperate. That is very important in increasing the tempo of an Indian piece. In the South Indian classical music the speeding up is done in a very systematic way. We start in a particular tempo and suppose you get a bit of force between two beats – that is you get two strokes in one beat [Krishna then demonstrated a tempo – at crotchet beats and then doubled the tapping – quaver rhythms, and then quadrupled the tapping – semiquaver rhythm, in the same tempo]

The tempo is maintained but the speed multiplies the speed increases in multiples like two or three or five. Even though it is not haphazard we can still convey a lot of emotions in multiplying the speed. In Karnatic music we have succeeded in showing more of a climax more emotions by doing it in a systematic manner. It need not necessarily be called the correct way to do it. It is just one way of doing it the North Indian classical music is equally developed, advanced and successful system of music it just follows a different route.

*How many lessons would you have a week and long would they be?*

Probably I would normally have two lessons per week and each lesson lasts probably forty-five minutes to one hour. It really depended on if you were a beginner. There is not much to teach you in more than half an hour. What matters is how much practise you put in after I teach. I could just teach you one concept and if you grasp that then there is nothing more to be done.



*Do you mean that the one concept would have to be memorised before you learn the next one?*

Yes. Basically the rhythms are, or the rhythmic patterns and strokes can be all learnt very quickly. It doesn't take long I mean. The volume of these is not huge.

*Is it the combination of these then?*

Exactly. You have to practise your strokes and keep it in your system in your mind keep it in your arms the muscles and the ligaments of your fingers have to twitch and operate at the particular speed. That requires practise and experience and training.

*Do you practise in your mind that is without the drum?*

It is a very good question actually. I have read somewhere you know that practising with the mind really makes you into a professional. I have come across great professionals in sport and other fields who are doing really well that practise in their minds. I haven't really been taught that but just for interest I used to visualise and practise it in my mind.

*Memory is an important part in learning Karnatic music though?*

Exactly.

*Did you have any form of written material in your lesson – that is rhythms written in symbols?*

Yes, we have written down those rhythms actually most of the musicians can perform without looking at any notes basically because we have it in our memory so we can always perform and another important aspect is that it is not always written down because the rhythmic aspects is always improvisation so we do not have notes.

The second master probably taught me for two or three years and I suffered another break. He could not go on with the lessons because he was too busy and I came to a stage where he wanted me to get another *mridangam* teacher. Somebody suggested I go to this last *guru* – my third *guru*. He is one of the foremost teachers and I was very lucky to go to him to learn for seven or eight years. He brought me to stage of learning where I am at today.

*To a suitable performance level?*

Yes. I started performing even before I came to my third *guru*. That is another thing I wanted to talk about – my debut with my second *guru*. I was about twelve years of age so I was professional even before my third *guru*.

*When you have debut is that when you can be classified as a performer and can earn money as a performer?*

In Indian classical music that is true. As a teacher you are not liked if you send your students to perform before they have learnt as much as they can from that particular teacher. So the teacher has to be really satisfied with the student – you know like the student is strong enough to take on the challenge of performing. There are two things the teacher takes a lot of pride in – the achievements of their students and the accolades they receive from this such as “oh he is the student of this great artist”.

The student has to learn as much as possible from his *guru* and then he has to grow by himself and start learning by himself. That is when the real education starts, when you finish your formal training and become a professional. When you have started performing outside that is when the real training starts and that is when real learning starts. Learning more and more and more after that happens because you are out in the field you come across unexpected situations, unexpected challenges and you start learning. Unless you keep learning and everyone else keeps learning you cannot survive in the field so after some time the student becomes really proficient in lessons and is successful and people say so and so is your *guru*. This makes the *guru* really happy. So that is the reason why a *guru* would never lie about their students and send them performing too early.

*Do they still comment of famous performers' gurus – such as your uncle?*

Yes. He has become so famous that probably his father (who has passed away now) would have been very proud to have called himself his *guru*.

*Krishna then continued to explain the importance of a Saint in Karnatic music composition and translated some of his lyrics. It stated that you should live life to its fullest and outlined the importance of the father/son relationship giving notoriety for the father when the son is good. Krishna explained that such a situation is the best any son can give his parent.*

*Does this apply to daughters and mothers?*

Of course yes. But in India it is more dominated by men. Women are not really expected to go out and earn. They are more to go into the domestic side of things so that is why I just refer to men. Even after marriage the son stays with his family but a daughter moves to her husband's family and treated as part of their family so completely identifies herself with that family.

*How is this attitude reflected upon your own mother who is seen as more of a teacher than a performer?*

What has happened to my mother is well, she is not performing as frequently as she was but she had the mental courage and ambition and determination to continue to learn by herself, to improve in herself, to gain more maturity and she

has performed. She has been active but they probably say that she is non-performer, but she feels she is a performer. The only problem is that my mother does not go and market herself and her musical talents. She just goes when people offer but she is very popular around the world. A lot of people really like her and she is well respected in her field. What my mother has done in the past few years is not only been seen as a performer but also accepted as a teacher and these two things are really integral you know. There are several rules for people to become teachers or performers. So if you can find to be both it really is fantastic. Fortunately my mother is one such person.

*Coming back to your learning experiences – can you describe what it was like with your third guru?*

OK I had lessons twice a week. I learnt as much as I could with this master by spending as much time as I could with him because I was always so determined about learning. Even if he was teaching someone else I would attend that lesson even if I had already learnt it. I was keen to help that student.

*Were these lessons conducted on an individual basis?*

Sometimes. The second master also had one to one it was completely personalised. He used to come to my house and teach me. The third master had every student come and play. He would ask a student to come and play a particular rhythm and usually start with what has already been taught. Until that student comes to realise these old lessons the teacher will only then teach the new lesson and get the student to repeat it until they are satisfied that they understand it and then the student will leave.

*Therefore you repeat what you have already learnt so the guru knows you are continuing with practise and only then you learn a new lesson?*

The new lesson could be two or three new rhythms. It depends on the ability of the student. If the student actually goes and practises really well and comes back to the master will be enthused to teach more and more otherwise if the student has not practised or understood the old lesson will be repeated until it is memorised.

*You could then stay on the same lesson for three months?*

Depending on the students. You could say it is an exchange if the student is really bad and hardly works they won't receive much.

*Did you get enthusiastic because of the way your third master was – that is a renowned performer?*

I was enthusiastic because my third master was a most successful *guru*. He had thousands and thousands of students and some of them have been as successful as him. He has a great reputation as a great master so initially I was taken with him and I really like the way he was teaching. I could see the foundation of his

school was strong and he could go into all aspects of teaching. For example, from the stroke to the theory, the methodology of teaching and notations, to the world of realisation and bringing with it the building of the sense of rhythm. You could be an expert of most senses including rhythm

*You mean you had control of technique as well as an underlying philosophy of the music?*

Yes you could put *talam* with it and keep the beat and some can be an entirely different rhythm by itself in all aspects. This *guru* was really good. I was so enthusiastic with this system I used to go a couple of hours before my lesson and wait for all the students who had come before me. Even when my turn came I would stay and play with others afterwards in the process I wanted to learn how her was teaching. Not only was I learning to play the *mridangam* but also learning how to teach the *mridangam*. I never got tired of listening or playing there. I used to sit for hours with all the students.

*Does this mean that just attending your own lesson would not have been enough for you to learn how to teach?*

I just wanted more and more. I was never satisfied with just one lesson. I knew the master really well.

*Would the other students mind you being there?*

No because it would be often that someone else would be there as each one comes and leaves another one comes etcetera. There would always be lots of students there. People would be coming and going.

*So there would be a group of students there?*

There would be a group of students with the *guru* all the time and I used to be the last to leave.

*There would never be just the teacher and student alone?*

No the students would come and sit quietly and wait their turn. The master would invite them when he was ready for them to come and play. The master would say "what are you doing?" and they would say "this is what I am learning" and he would say "ok if you are learning that then start from here", always a few lessons behind. I wanted to know how to teach I wanted to see what kind of mistakes the student makes and how the master corrects this. How his attitude is, how patient he is, how he corrects mistakes so I used to just sit and wait and wait. I liked listening. I like rhythm.

I go mainly on Sundays and spend half a day there and during the week on evenings. The master took it for granted that I would play at the end so he did not ask for me to play until everyone had left. He would say ok come and play. I used to play he used to be patient even though he would have seen fifty or sixty

students and he would be patient to teach me well. After that I always enjoyed helping him pack up.

*How long would the lessons usually go for and how much actual playing time would the students do?*

Fifteen to twenty minutes would be enough for a student to learn something new. You just come to learn and can do this effectively in fifteen to twenty minutes. That would give you something to practise for a few hours every day. It is probably a different system of music here. You probably just sit for an hour. I have seen you teach somebody for an hour and the teacher goes over the same stuff over and over again – it is not necessary. After some time the student probably has learnt enough to keep them occupied for an hour's time so basically when with a master you do not spend that much time with the master. If he is really attentive and very careful and alert he can just learn in just five minutes time.

*While you waited for the master did the students practise in another room?*

Yes, if the classroom has the opportunity it depends on the interest of the students. I always used to like going and practising. I remember on one particular occasion I finished off my training and I went upstairs to practise. I had learnt enough to play about two hours so I took up all my lessons from the basics and patiently went through every one of them. I did not miss anything and I practised really hard. One and a half hours passed away and then my master came upstairs he was absolutely pleased. I remember that expression on his face and he said “I am so happy, I am very pleased with your attitude. I just asked you to be playing for sometime but you probably did not know but I have been listening to you from downstairs and you did well really because I found that you have been very patient. You went through your foundations, you started from the basics. You played everything that I taught you I was happy that you had not forgotten anything.”

*That is the same with vocal and violin – you start with Jantai Varisaigal*

Yes in music as well as rhythm you go through the basic exercises which exercise your musical representations. For example, if it is going to be a drum you exercise the different fingers on the different strokes. If it is going to be vocal you will exercise your vocal chords on the different notes. If it is going to be violin you will again exercise your fingers on the strings for the different notes and representations so the quality and excellence of your music or any representation of music is not only based on your ideas because Karnatic Indian music is based on improvisation. So the quality and excellence of your ideas is the major factor as to what is good music for the listener but that is not the only thing. What kind of representation for example, I might have a brilliant tune but how good am I in reproducing it. So representing it through my voice, my hands through my fingers. How good is my technical presentation.

*So knowing the basics of each raga and tala is essential?*

Yes. We have to know the theory behind it and also the practical representation of that particular theory so it has to be good on both the quality and representation. The quality should be really good. The ideas have to be perfect that is what forms a good musician. Whether they are a drummer or a musician. I was fortunate enough to have both in my *guru* that quality of his rhythm strokes were very good. He also concentrated on me and how I played those strokes, how I held my hand whether it was relaxed whether too spread out or too close.

*Was your guru known for his own style of mridangam playing or technique? If so, did you replicate this?*

Yes. Different schools probably have different styles there are great experts in the field of drumming who would not care much about the fingering so their students themselves concentrate more on ideas and not on fingering. The student always exactly replicates the teacher and the student gets the attitude, the posture, the manners even the voice of the teacher. They start singing just like the teacher does. It is very very important for the teacher to be proud of himself and always remember that his students will only be a reflection of and representation of his attitudes, abilities and ideas.

*Is there a point though where you find your own style that you then teach your own students? For example, do you play differently to your teacher now? Were you given permission to do so?*

That is a very interesting question. What happens is that my objective initially was to abide as much as possible to my teacher's style because he abided it from his own *guru*.

*Does this reflect the respect that you have for your guru?*

Yes. His type of playing is very unique and great so my objective was never to deviate from that because it is part of a tradition and it has been formulated by very great experts so what I always keep in mind is if I am going to deviate from that do I really improve on it? If I am not improving on it just for the sake of being individual I am not going to be benefiting. So this is how I see it.

## ***Interview with Anne***

**20<sup>th</sup> April 1997**

*What can you remember of your learning experiences? Can you reflect upon your first musical encounter or lesson?*

Well I became interested in learning the violin from a young age as my brothers had learnt violin and of course I did one of those tests at school in the State system to see whether I should learn an instrument or not.

*Can you recall the test?*

I can remember the test but not the major details. I can remember that I did well in it so I followed my brothers and started learning in grade three [approximately seven years of age]. I guess I just wanted to play what my brothers did. I only knew of piano too as my mum played piano.

*Did you learn piano as well?*

Yes a bit. I used to teach myself piano until I was in grade eight at school [approximately twelve years of age]. Mum then let me get lessons and it was not until I started learning piano that I understood what sharps and flats were because I just did not stop practising.

*Tell me about your violin learning experiences.*

I started learning in a group situation and most of the time it was a group of three. The teacher was a great teacher and she used to like me. She was always involved in orchestras. Very quickly we were involved in the string ensemble and then the string orchestra and then I participated in the community youth orchestra which was a wonderful experience. You would make so many friends or we would see other people from school there. There was always heaps of encouragement.

*Can you recall the lessons – how you were taught, the context of the lessons?*

The lessons would be once a week in school time on a rotational basis so that we would not miss the same class lesson. It is still like this now. The lessons were half an hour long.

*Can you remember how the teacher actually taught you?*

We learnt from a book called “A Tune A Day”. I think that I still have it with all the pencil markings etcetera.

*Did the students in the group all play together or separately?*

I think we did a bit of both because I remember the other two girls learnt piano privately and I always remember that I was sort of lower in the group of three.

*Do you mean in standard?*

Yes. I had to work harder because I did not understand things I had to ask. I had to keep up with them because they seemed to understand these sharps and flats and I just had no idea what it was but I did not think that I was really missing anything because I was just learning as I was going.

*How did you grasp these concepts in your playing then?*

I think that the teacher use to always write directions and guidelines on the music so I would remember where to put my fingers.

*So it was a combination of the notation and other symbols? That is visual representations of the music?*

Yes, but it was a real listening thing like being able to hear what was wrong.

*Did your teacher play with you?*

Oh yes she played with us all the time.

*Did she play with you or on her own?*

She actually did both, but it depended on whether she was listening to us or not.

*What happened in your learning experiences then?*

Well I continued learning all through primary school and then moved to the orchestra as well. I guess I must have had a little bit more understanding of sharps and flats then without really understanding them because I had no real theory knowledge at all. I had never done any sort of theory and when I went into grade eight [high school] my mum and dad said they would let me learn piano from my brother's friend. I remember playing this thing that I taught myself on piano and she had to correct me a lot – show me where all the sharps were.

*Were you playing it incorrectly?*

Yes I was playing all the white notes and I had no idea until then. I got such a shock that I hated that song from then on.

*Did you piano lessons regularly?*

I had a lesson once a week. I think we started with some of the music I had tried to teach myself and then realised we could move on after I re-learnt the same songs that I had already known.



*How did she correct the songs – did she say they were wrong?*

Yes, I felt let down because I remember my mum buying all these John Thompson books for my brothers who were not really interested but I was always keen.

*Are these the texts you used to teach yourself?*

Yes that is how I taught myself and remember just looking one day really vividly racing into my mum and saying I understand it I can read it I can understand it.

*Do you mean seeing the notes on the staff and understanding where they were on the piano?*

Yes actually understanding how to read music – that is without the sharps and flats that is. I could understand where the notes were. I do not remember being terribly aware of the length of notes so I would just play them as I saw them. I know that I am better at keeping time on piano than I am on violin – I think it was a more natural thing on piano.

*So creating music yourself was really important to you? What happened once you were in high school?*

In year eight I was put into a music class with other students who had previously learnt music which was a great idea. Everyone played an instrument in that class. We had a hard test in the first week of school I remember to see what our standard was. Even though I had played violin for a long time [five years] I had no idea about theory. I was so upset.

*Did you realise that knowing theory was important for learning western music?*

Yes it was an important thing I think and I obviously missed out on that.

*Do you think it is necessary to know theory to be able to have an enjoyable musical experience?*

I think that you can really enjoy music without knowing about it well. I did. I did enjoy making up my own songs and like I say it came as a real shock to me and then it was only once that I started to understand the system that I could start to enjoy it once again.

*Do you mean that you only started to enjoy the musical experience once you felt you were at a better standard according to the other students in the class?*

Yes that makes sense.

*Do you think then that your learning style has been forced to change – that when you were teaching yourself it was more of an aural experience but when compared to others it relied more on theory and written scores?*

I think it did change my enjoyment of things because all of a sudden it seemed hard whereas I remember I taught myself a whole song. The other girls in music however, were probably better at that but I also remember that my solo was different to theirs it was a bit more emotional it was not technical because I had no idea what to do.

*Did you learn violin at high school?*

Yes I learnt through the state school system at high school and with a different teacher than my primary school violin teacher. He was nice but his main instrument was cello. I learnt using Suzuki books and I again had to teach myself a lot. I can remember him saying to me “I can’t teach you much more because you are getting better than me”. I remember having real enjoyment at playing those Suzuki things.

*Were there other violin students in your classes?*

Yes two other girls. I was better than one of them and the other was better than me because she used to practise every day and she had a private teacher. I thought I could have been as good as her if I practised every day and had a private teacher.

We had lessons once a week and used mainly Suzuki texts. Then from about grade nine or ten I had private lessons. In primary school I did external exams with Trinity College – I think up to about grade four. In grade eight I still did exams one on violin and one on piano I think I passed them both just. I still did not understand theory.

*When your teacher taught you the exam pieces what would they do?*

We would play it together I think and we would keep playing it and the wrong notes would be circled and of course I got better at it the more I played it although it was a lot of aural work.

*Did you play from the beginning of the piece to the end?*

Most of the time I think it would be played over and over. If it was a really long piece we would work on one section on one page first. So the only way that you would know it would sound would be how the teacher played it with you. In fact listening to a piece on tape other than ourselves like taping before an exam was beneficial although I did not do this too often.

*Did you learn other technical works?*

Yes I did scales but I can not say that I was very fond of them it was real battle. I remember getting private lessons for about six months. I think that is as long as my mother could handle it.

*Was it too expensive?*

No no. I remember asking one of the girls who played at the school what her teacher was like because I wanted to do private lessons so I went along to this lady. She was very strict and I used to be very scared going there. In fact, I was so scared that I would practise out of sheer fear. I remember the first lesson with her and she had my mother and myself sit down in the situation and she said “Now it’s very important for me to know whether your daughter is going to go on with violin as a career”. That is what she said and I remember that so vividly and of course I looked at mum and I did not know I was only young and that was a real heavy thing you know.

*Did you remember what you learnt with this teacher?*

I do not think it really stuck with me. I remember just the fear and I can’t remember any major techniques that she tried to teach me.

*I suppose that leads me to the question of what you think makes a ‘good’ teacher?*

Probably someone I could relate to more easily because my nature is fairly soft I still like to be pushed but in a warm situation. For example, by saying this is what you are going to achieve when you work hard. I think that if that had been an option I am sure it would have been a better situation for me.

*Anne then reminisced about another teacher she had a high school – who was principally a viola player. She commented on how he had extremely high expectations and kept comparing her to another better student.*

If I did not do things straight away he was disappointed in me and he would compare me with the other student. We were in orchestra together though.

*Did you enjoy the orchestra?*

Yes I loved it. I loved orchestra that was one of the reasons to play.

*What do you think makes a good performer?*

I guess a good performer is someone who not only looks confident but feels confident within themselves, with their own ability and is able to technically play the piece and show their personal interpretation through that piece. That makes a good performer or good player. What do they bring to the music? I remember having to play piece in class because things had to be taped for assessment and I thought I played the piece quite well and I remember the classroom teacher saying to me that it was a hard piece using it as an excuse to why I did not play too well.

*How did you then become a music teacher yourself?*

I started learning privately again in year twelve as there was a pressure put on me to decide what I would do after school. I went back to my primary school teacher and had been concentrating on piano exams even though my heart was not in it. I used to practice six weeks before the exam and go into it unprepared and get in trouble. I then did grade seven violin with the AMEB.

## APPENDIX G

### Interview Checklist and aliases and member check register

<b>Member Check</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Yes	18 <sup>th</sup> February 1993	Parvathi	Interview data authenticated without amendment
Yes	10 <sup>th</sup> October 1998	Maya	Interview data authenticated without amendment
Yes	13 <sup>th</sup> December 1997	Khali	Interview data authenticated without amendment
Yes	11 <sup>th</sup> February 1997 and 10 <sup>th</sup> October 1998	Krishna	Interview data authenticated with minor amendments
Yes	4 <sup>th</sup> October 1997	Vishnu	Interview data authenticated with minor amendments
Yes	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 1997	Karl	Interview data authenticated without amendment
Yes	20 <sup>th</sup> April, 1997	Anne	Interview data authenticated with minor amendments
Yes	17 <sup>th</sup> November 1997	Tina	Interview data authenticated with minor amendments
Yes	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2001	Chen	Interview data authenticated without amendment
Yes	5 <sup>th</sup> March 2002	Jodie	Interview data authenticated without amendment

## **APPENDIX H**

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## APPENDIX I

Transcription of lesson with Khali – the student copies each melodic phrase played by the teacher first.

S R G P G R S R G R S R G P

'Play'

R G P D P G R G P G R G P D

" (student shifts on 3rd string)

R G P G R G P D

(no shift)

S R G P G R G P D

G P D S D P G P D P G P D S

" error in timing

P D S R S D P D S D P D S R

"

D S R G R S D S R S D S R G

S R G P G R S R G R S R G P

APPENDIX J

This appendix is not available online. Please consult the hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library

APPENDIX K

Photo of Sarasvathi (as worshipped by Parvathi) and Ganesh (as





worshipped by Maya)

**A Photo of Maya's Shrine to Ganesh**



## APPENDIX L

Extract from Fischer, C. (1921, p. 1) *Third Violin Concerto in G Major by Mozart*, Fischer, New York.

Extract from Peters, C.F. (1930, p. 1) *Third Violin Concerto in G Major by Mozart* Edition Peters.

**[This appendix is not available online. Please consult the  
hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library]**

## APPENDIX M

Extract from Joachim and Moser (1976, p. 10) *Six Sonata and Partitas for unaccompanied violin by J S Bach*. International Music Company.

**[This appendix is not available online. Please consult the  
hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library]**

## APPENDIX N

Extract from Davisson, W. (1946, p. 6) *24 Capricen for solo violin by P. Rode*.  
Edition Peters.

**[This appendix is not available online. Please consult the  
hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library ]**

## APPENDIX O

Extract from 2003 Manual of Syllabuses – Music Syllabusees – AMEB – 2002, Melbourne – p. 11 and 13.

**[This appendix is not available online. Please consult the hardcopy thesis available from the QUT library ]**

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